The Mysterious Notes

When the landlady knocked, Godfrey Leate was sitting moodily in an armchair, staring at the well-worn hearthrug which matched the shabby room. He was thinking that he had very little interest in life, that he was not succeeding as he hoped to do.

"It was someone to see you, sir." The landlady held a card in her hand. "She wanted you to remember to call to-morrow, and said her father had meant to write. This is the address in case you'd forgotten it, the young lady told me."

"But there's some mistake. 'Philip W. Bromwich, 17, Chalfont Avenue.' I don't know anyone of that name. Why didn't you ask her to wait?"

"She wouldn't disturb you, sir. 'Does Mr. Leate live here?' she said. 'Then I'll just leave a message.'"

"Queer!" He stared at the card again. "How long ago——"

"She's only this minute gone."

Leate snatched up his hat, and, brushing past her, clattered down the stairs to the street. In the distance he saw a feminine figure, and began to run. The girl glanced round.

"You've just been to number three, where I live," he panted. "Couldn't quite understand. I'm sorry——"

The suspicion of a smile hovered on Miss Bromwich's lips.

"So am I." Then she stammered: "I mean, because you've been put to this trouble. I pronounced the name quite distinctly."

"Leate?" he responded jerkily. "Yes But that—that's me, you know. L-e-a-t-e—Godfrey Leate. I'm positive!"

She laughed outright.

"Of course you are. This is too absurd! Are we in Porson Gardens?"

"Porson Street. Porson Gardens is that new road they've just opened—the first turning on the right there."

"I'm very much obliged. Would you believe, now, there's a Mr. George Leete—double 'e'—staying at number three? Isn't it a wonderful coincidence? Unfortunate, though." She stopped assuming a dignified air. "Good-afternoon! Thank you for running out."

Godfrey Leate did not, of course, turn to look after her. He seemed, nevertheless, to be still regarding her charmingly flushed face. He drew himself up as he walked back along Porson Street to No. 3. The encounter had affected him strangely.

"If only she'd been right—if I'd been invited there!" Then he shrugged his shoulders. "H'm! A likely thing! 'Chalfont Avenue'—they're big houses. Her family's well-off. Best thing to do's to forget her, once and for all."

It was aggravating, however, to find that the girl frequently occupied his thoughts. A day or two later, on the railway-station platform, he mentioned the affair to a friend.

"Why, I know old Bromwich well! Often catches this train up. There he is, by Jove!"

Godfrey Leate clutched his arm, and whispered an excited query.

"Yes, I suppose so. Yes, yes; he lives there. Introduce you?"

Next moment the elderly gentleman was smiling affably.

"Ah, Mr. Leate, you're the one who spells it 'e-a'! Ha, ha! Porson Street, not Gardens—eh? My daughter told me about you."

Leate often met him after that, sometimes near home, with his daughter. At last, at the beginning of the summer, he was invited to Chalfont Avenue for a tennis-party.

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"I thought I wasn't mistaken!" remarked the prosperous-looking young man, shaking hands warmly. "How queer, meeting you again!"

Godfrey Leate smiled.

"I recognized you directly, Carshott."

"I can't have altered much. You haven't seen me since that last prize-giving day, just before we left."

They began to discuss old days and schoolfellows.

"I'm on the Stock Exchange now. Just started on my own," Carshott observed presently. "Doing well, too."

"I wish I could say the same."

"Still at—what was the name of the firm?"

"Grandison's—yes."

"We ought to see something of one another." Carshott hesitated awkwardly. "I say, if you want a tip I can give you one. There's a chance of making a bit. Keep it quiet, though. Buy Wataki Gold Mines. They're dirt cheap. You'll never regret it if you risk a hundred pounds."

"Gently, man!" Leate laughed ruefully. "I haven't so much in the world."

"Fifty, then. They'll boom, I tell you! Come, now, let me buy you two hundred."

"I—I'll let you know. Thanks awfully, all the same."

"By to-morrow, or Thursday morning at the latest. Here's my 'phone number."

They parted at the next corner. Godfrey Leate stood pondering a moment. Fifty pounds! It seemed a bagatelle, no doubt, to the flourishing broker. If Carshott only knew that he was in debt!

"Gamble with fifty pounds—me!" he muttered sardonically, on his homeward journey.

His room had never looked so cheerless as when he lit the gas. Everyone seemed to prosper; he was left behind in the race.

The letter on the side-table failed to attract his attention at first. It bore no address, and had evidently been delivered by hand. Another dunning note, doubtless. At last he tore it open pettishly.

"What—what——"

Stupidly he stared down at the banknotes. Mechanically he counted them. Sixty-five pounds in all!

"Why, where on earth did they come from? Not a word of explanation, either!" he cried. "Nobody'd send money to me. Nobody'd have any reason to. Nobody——"

His voice dropped. He frowned disgustedly. The solution was obvious. Slowly he turned the envelope over.

"'G. Leate, Esq.' Or 'Leete'? H'm! Yes, it's as much 'double e, as 'e-a.' That chap in the 'Gardens' again!"

He fingered the notes enviously.

"If only they were mine! I'd write to Carshott——"

A footstep sounded on the landing. He looked out, and called to the landlady.

"Who left it, sir? A man—a servant, he looked like."

"He said nothing?"

"Only asked if this was the right place."

Leate closed the door again.

"I'll soon know. Let him come round if he wants the money. I'm not going to wait on him."

At night he stayed indoors. There was no news from Leete of the Gardens. In the morning he took the notes with him to town.

"I'll call on my way home," he reflected.

"Leate, you're wanted on the 'phone."

Just before noon the summons came. He walked across, and recognized Carshott's voice.

"Look here. You've never decided about those Watakis. Are you going to take my advice?"

"Yes," he heard himself answering. "Buy me two hundred. Thanks very much."

"Just in time," Carshott grumbled. "All right. Good-bye! Terribly busy."

Godfrey Leake moved back to his desk, staring into vacancy. He hardly realized yet what he had done. When consciousness came to him, he drew a sharp breath.

"Hallo!" A fellow clerk stepped up. "Anything wrong?"

But Leake only stared at him blankly.

* * *

"Yes, Watakis have fallen," Carshott admitted. Leake had burst into his office, pale and excited. "From five shillings to four, then gradually to three. I confess I can't understand it. Don't you worry, though. Hold on to them. I'll get the latest price." He turned from the speaking-tube. "Half-a-crown! Phew!"

"Here's the money."

"Oh, you needn't pay for them yet awhile!"

"Here's the money!" Leate repeated.

He hurried home that night, with nerves on edge. His conscience gave him no rest. What would the outcome be? Exposure—disgrace? George Leete had apparently discovered nothing as yet; but the fact brought small consolation.

He could not exult, either, on the following morning, when an unprecedented boom in Watakis commenced. A rich vein of gold was discovered on the property, and the shares rose by leaps and bounds.

Grandison's senior partner summoned him.

"I hear"—he coughed—"I hear, Leate, that you have made a considerable sum on the Stock Exchange, in Wataki Gold Mines."

"I bought at five shillings, sir, and was able to sell at twenty-seven-and-sixpence."

Leate waited for the expected reproof on the subject of gambling.

"H'm! Ah! You've shown considerable perspicuity."

"It was all due, sir, to a friend——"

"Remarkable business acumen," the senior partner persisted, "which deserves our notice. Mr. Peterson is leaving. You will take his place. Provided you give satisfaction, your present salary will rise in proportion. That's all. You may go."

Congratulations showered upon him. He winced as he received them. What a difference between his present position and that of a week ago! And yet his thoughts were bitter.

That evening, crossing the common near her house, he met Evelyn Bromwich. Before he realized it, he found himself declaring his love. Her low-voiced answer set his heart beating wildly. He looked down at her upturned face. Then suddenly, with a groan, he released her.

"What have I said? I'd no right——"

The girl stretched out her hand timidly.

"No, no; don't touch me! Forgive, and try to forget. I'm—I—I've stolen money!"

She gave a little cry as he turned and left her, stumbling blindly along the path through the trees.

* * *

Her note reached him in the morning—just a few lines:

"I don't understand. Won't you come and see me? It's cruel to explain. I can't believe what you said.—E."

Godfrey Leate shook his head despairingly. He had scarcely slept that night.

"I was mad to speak," he reflected dully, throughout the long, wearisome day of office routine.

"There's a young lady waiting to see you," announced Mrs. Cousins, when he reached Porson Street. "The same one. And this letter's come."

He was glad to have an excuse for pausing outside the sitting-room. He dreaded the thought of facing his visitor.

The American stamp on the envelope puzzled him. He pulled out the inclosure, and glanced over it dazedly. At the signature, "Frank Cobbold," he gave a start.

"Of course, you remember me, your companion at No. 3 five years ago. My little patent for type-writing machines—promised to pay you ten per cent. of the proceeds, if ever I sold the idea, in return for the help you gave me. Really apologize! You're wondering who sent that £65? First I meant to write; then I knew I'd be over from Paris for a day, and hoped to call. Next I found that time pressed, and I put the money in an envelope—forgot to enclose my letter of explanation—told my servant to deliver it—which I didn't discover till I was on the New York boat. Always was a happy-go-lucky chap—eh?"

At his shaky, high-pitched laugh, Evelyn Bromwich looked out into the hall.

"Stole from myself!" he cried, half hysterically. "Thought the money must belong to the other Leete—your friend. It was mine after all!"

She led him to a chair. Pressing a hand to his forehead, he showed Frank Cobbold's letter, and told her everything.

"I am glad I came," she said gently. "Oh, you don't think the worse of me for coming here? I couldn't wait, you see. But now it's all right."

Leate covered his face.

"You always meant to repay——"

"I used the balance for my debts. Evelyn, you don't realize what I'm saying. I thought I was stealing—I thought so all the time. It was just as bad as if——"

"But the money was really your own."

"That makes no difference, I say!"

"Not if I—if I love you? Not even if I should have loved you always anyway?"

"It's not possible!"

But she bent down to him as she stood by his side.—London Answers.

LATEST PICTURE OF THE EMPEROR AND THE EMPRESS OF GERMANY

The Empress is one of the most charming royal matrons among European royalty.

SPORT AND THE GAME.

An Interesting Trait of the German Character.

An Englishman or an American finds it hard to conceive of "sport" except as embodied in some "game." But the German, says Ida A. R. Wylie in her book on Germany, gets his sport without finding it necessary to play any game at all. Exercise that brings him into close relation with nature is more to his taste. The man that sees no pleasure in tiring himself out on a tennis-court or a football-field travels miles on skees through the forests, skates every free minute of his day, and in the heat of the summer goes on long tours among the mountains.

At his own particular sports the German is a first-class man, and even the German woman reveals an energy that is simply astonishing. All German girls can skate well, most of them are good swimmers and walkers, and proficient in winter sports. It is only when you ask them to play games that they fall.

This dislike of games reveals an interesting trait in the German character, namely, indifference to a success the only value of which lies in the defeat of some one else. In school a German boy works hard, not for a prize, not because he wants to do better than a comrade, but because he sees a distinct personal value in knowledge. His attitude in sports is quite in keeping.

"And suppose I do run myself hot and tired over a ridiculous patch of ground after a ridiculous ball, and suppose I do win a game, what good will it do me?"

"You will have had splendid exercise," says the Englishman.

"Yes; but if I wanted exercise I would rather go for a walk through the forest or make a bicycling tour. Then I should perhaps learn something at the same time. At any rate, I should be enjoying nature."

"But then there would be no game!" retorts the Englishman.

"No game? What is the good of a game? Am I wiser or better if I beat you at tennis?"

"No, but the fun of it—"

"I don't see any fun in beating somebody at something which has no value. That is childish, and a waste of time."

ANCIENT TIMEPIECES.

The Water-Clock Was Made in Various Forms.

It is difficult to tell precisely when an instrument at all resembling the modern clock first appeared. In 1288, says the London Globe, a clock-tower and clock were set up in Westminster at the expense of Chief Justice de Hengham, as a punishment for falsifying the record of a fine; and weight-clocks are known to have been used in European monastic houses as early as the tenth century. It is doubtful, however, if these clocks had a dial face and hands. Probably they merely sounded a bell at stated intervals.

Sand-glasses boast an antiquity of more than two thousand years, and although now enjoying an honorable retirement or merely presiding in old-fashioned kitchens over the boiling of the breakfast egg, they formerly had a place in almost every parish church, where they served to keep the sermon within reasonable bounds. At one time the hour-glasses of superior quality contained not sand but egg-shells, which, when finely powdered and kiln-dried, were less likely to absorb moisture from the atmosphere.

Of even greater antiquity is the clepsydra, or water-clock, which was made in several forms. One of the simplest was the Hindu's copper basin, pierced with a small hole in the bottom, which, when placed in a vessel of water, filled and sank after a certain established interval. More elaborate forms were known in Europe and Egypt.

Although varying somewhat in construction, all used a "float." The float was placed either in a full cylinder from which the water gradually escaped by a hole in the bottom,—usually bored through a pearl on account of its resistance to erosion by the constant flow,—or in an empty vessel to which water was admitted from above. In both varieties the float, falling or rising as the case might be, pointed to the scale of hours marked on the side of the vessel. The float sometimes took the form of an miniature boat, in which an out-stretched oar was the pointer.

Clepsydrae such as these were used in the Athenian courts of law, and were put in charge of a special officer. One "water" apiece was allowed to plaintiff, defendant and judge. During the reading of any document that bore upon the case the flow of water was stopped. A clepsydra, which in its action and appearance foreshadowed the modern clock, carried upon its float an upright rod that acted on a toothed wheel, which in turn moved a hand upon a dial.

But the precursor both of the sand-glass and the clepsydra was without doubt the gnomon of the sun-dial; a simple rod which, standing upright in a sunny place, measured the passage of time by the moving shadow that it cast upon the ground.

The earliest time-teller at all conveniently portable was the dial-ring. Within its broad-banded circle the hours were engraved; a ray of sunlight falling through a small hole in the upper side of the ring when held erect gave the time approximately.

The dial-ring held its place until comparatively recent times, since watches, although well-known, were still too expensive for general use.

CHAMPION HARD-LUCK STORY

$250,000 Taken Out of a Claim Abandoned as Worthless.

Murray Potts of Vancouver, B.C., an old Klondiker, says that the champion hard-luck story happened to a friend of his who staked claims on Sulphur Creek during the Klondike rush. The son of a powder manufacturer of Hamilton, Ont., he started north with $10,000. At Skagway he fell in with the Soapy Smith gang, was relieved of most of his money and proceeded to Dawson. He crosscut every twelve feet and sunk holes to bedrock for a mile on Sulphur Creek. This took a year, and he never got a color. He was taken down with scurvy, and spent three months in a hospital. Then he returned to Hamilton, thoroughly disgusted. Later a Scandinavian secured one of his claims on Sulphur Creek. Mr. Potts's friend had failed to go to bedrock in one place, mica sist being mistaken for the real article. The Scandinavian went through the mica to actual bedrock, took out $250,000 the first year and a similar amount for several seasons after that. The claim was lower 39 on Sulphur, one of the richest in the Klondike.

WHICH.

"A good appetite is a great advantage," said the physician.

"To whom?" asked Mr. Growcher; "me or the grocer?"

Mr. Binks, looking up from his paper: "Here's a firm advertising all sorts of patent medicines at half price." Mrs. Binks: "Just our luck! There isn't anything the matter with any of us!"

Casual Comment on Women's Activities and Interests.

Miss Agnes Weston, founder of the Royal Sailors' Rest at Portsmouth and Davenport, has received a cheque for 30 guineas from Admiral von Tirpitz, German Minister of Marine, for founding a cabin at the Portsmouth Sailors' Rest. The letter accompanying the cheque explains that it is sent with the approval of the Emperor in recognition of Miss Weston's kind hospitality in entertaining men of the battleship Von der Tann during the stay of the Coronation fleet at Spithead.

From California comes news of more importance than some would gather from the account. Miss Ada Yates, of Rockland, Illinois, beginning with the indispensable requisite of long study and experience, has now started in a large apartment house in Oakland, a department of child culture too long ignored. A large sunny room and part of the roof garden are cleared for the children, and there they find the companionship which no private family can give, and a far more competent supervision than is possible to the average mother. As an immediate advantage to the children of the well-to-do, and as an excellent profession for women, this carries conviction on its face, but the underlying meaning is even more impressive. It shows the slow but growing recognition of the needs of provision for our young citizens beyond that of home and school, and furthermore, of the value of highly trained specialists to meet the need. There are still plenty of persons who can imagine nothing possible for babies save the alternatives of a home or an orphan asylum; but in a few more years even these dullest minds will wake up to the fact that the child's world, too, does move.

To the President of the National Council, Mme. Moncd, in Paris, France, a unique honor has been accorded in creating her the first woman Chevalier de la Legion d'Honeur in France, for services rendered to the career of education. This distinction is a much coveted one and has hitherto only been accorded to men who have rendered distinguished services, either in the field of battle or in civil or other social service.

We injure our children's eyes for life by fixing them on the printed page for long continuous hours. We injure our own eyesight habitually by never looking an inch before our noses. It is lack of capacity that limits us: eyes are meant for long-distance work as well as short. It is lack of exercise. We live with our noses to the grindstone, and our eyes either fixed steadily on the grinding process, or shut on account of dirt. It would do our eyes good, and all the rest of us, to look elsewhere awhile. The housewife sees the dust on her parlor table, but she does not see the smoke and cinder that blackens her city. She sees that little Willy is looking tired. She does not see that all the school children are overcrowded and overworked. She sees her daughter's health has broken down after marriage. She does not see that all girls should know the chances and dangers of marriage before it is too late.

The merchant sees his profit and his loss in selling eggs. He does not see the injury to a thousand digestions from the eggs he sells. He sees that if John X. is elected it will be to his business advantage. He does not see that said election will injure the whole town. He sees that a certain indulgence will be a pleasure and a relief to him. He does not see that it will poison three generations. Now all these limitations and blindness are not for lack of eyes, but merely for lack of looking. You can't see anything unless you look at it.

We need more and more power to see our common interests, our collective interests.

That power is ours—if we will use it.

Let us lift our eyes from our noses,

Then we can lift our noses from the grindstone.

TRUE CHARITY.

It is the sweetest and most attractive of qualities. It smoothes away the angles, and rubs off the roughness, and diminishes the friction of life. It adds grace to daily courtesies, and makes burdens easier to be borne. The generous hand is the hand to cling to when the path is difficult. There is room for the exercise of charity everywhere—in business, in society, and in the church; but first is the need for it at home, where it is the salt which keeps all things sweet, the aroma which makes every hour charming, and the divine light which shines starlike through all gloom and depression.