

NOT THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES of SIR ROGER BLOXAM

by

Aleister Crowley

CHAPTER suppose we say FORTY FOUR
KNOBSWORTHY BOTTOMS.

Aha! so that excites your curiosity. Oho! O no! this book is not for women, I swear it by the sacred tibia of Emmeline Pankhurst so I will tell you all, for I love you as you must love me for having spared you those first forty-three CHAPTERs. To it! then! To it!

Knobsworthy Bottoms is a delightful village in Derbyshire, where the Necks come from.

Nonsense; it is in Devonshire, where the cream comes from. and what has it to do with our story?

Nothing. Our story? Yes, yours and mine -- yours and mine -- yours and mine. Pause.

Another pause a little longer.

A short snappy pause.

A pause of languorous libido.

A pause of crescendo irritation.

A plain pause.

Five bars more.

Yes! that is settled. But I will not tell you what our story is about. I need not, because it is Just Our Story. Moreover I would a word with you: this. I will conceal our story; even when you have read it all through you will not know that I have written it. I will not have Sordello make mouths at my speech, any more than Catullus. But I will play Puck to you, my beauties; I will lead you through fire and water, air and earth, on a mad chase after a bauble. I will play the Comedy of Pan upon you, lovely listeners; and I will begin by deluding you into the belief that Our Story concerns NOT

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES

of

SIR ROGER BLOXAM.

CHAPTER SUPPOSE WE SAY FORTY-FOUR: Knobsworthy Bottoms.

CHAPTER ONE: The Love of a Pure Girl; the Quarrel; and the Mystery.

CHAPTER THREE: In Which the Reader is Introduced to the Hero.

CHAPTER FOUR: The Shadow of Tragedy.

CHAPTER SEVEN: Before the Beginning of Years.

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN: How Sir Roger Got His Nick-Name.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN: Of the Logos That Spake Never, and of His Witnesses.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN: Silence -- To Take the Sound of the Last Capitulum Out of the Ears.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN: Of the Monologue Between Sir Roger and the Mysterious Monk.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN: Of a Ladye Mine, and of the Dream She Had.

CHAPTER NINETEEN: Of the Combat Between Sir Roger Bloxam and Cardinal Mentula.

CHAPTER TWENTY: Of the Household Cavalry of the King of Sweden and Norway, What Came to its Best Regiment.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE: Contains What I Meant to Write in Chapter Twenty. Or Nearly.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE: A Plenary, Veracious, and Meticulously Scrupulous Account of What Happened to the Best Regiment of the Household Cavalry of the King of Sweden and Norway: Calculated to 33 Places of Decimals, by the Method of Hard Indurated Hunterian Logarithms.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR: Relapse of a Promising Young Novel into a Jolly Devil-May-Care Book.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE: How Sir Roger Comported Himself in the Debate with the C.U.N.T.S.

CHAPTER CXXVI: Sir Roger Goes to Switzerland.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN: Sir Roger Really Does Go to Switzerland.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT: Nothing Particular Happens to Sir Roger Bloxam in Switzerland;
So Why Worry?

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE: Sir Roger Bloxam at Cambridge, Amsterdam, and Birmingham.
An Adventure of Porphyria Poppoea. This Time We Mean Business.

CHAPTER THIRTY: A Short Chapter and a Gay One.

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE: An Interlude with Certain Critics.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO: Apologia Pro Novellissimo Suo.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE: Of Kitty Williams, Her Loves Pastoral, Paidoparthenical, and
Extraterminumuniversitatiduomillera-diodemagnaesantaemariaecclesiastical.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR: A Word on Pantomorphopsychonosophilosophy, including Arthur
Machen.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE: The Runic Plasm.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX: Of the Early Opinions of Sir Roger Bloxam Concerning the
Immortality of the Soul.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN: Of Frou-Frou, and Frisson, and Death.

CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT: How Sir Roger Bloxam Bethought Him of Choosing a Career.

CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE: Facts About the White Slave Traffic. 1917 A.D.

CHAPTER FORTY: Of Sir Roger Bloxam's Second Choice of Career.

CHAPTER FORTY-ONE: How Sir Roger Bloxam Repudiated a Naval Career.

CHAPTER FORTY-TWO: Sir Roger's Objections to the Study of Law.

CHAPTER FORTY-THREE: The Omnific and Grandiose Intermezzo of the Whistling Coon.

CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR: Vive l'Entente Cordiale!

CHAPTER MI: ``Washed in the Blood of the Lamb".

CHAPTER MII: Of How Sir Roger Bloxam Met Mr. Hank Farris.

CHAPTER MIII: Of the Despair of Sir Roger Bloxam Anent his Career; and of the Appeal that
He Made to the Cardinal.

CHAPTER MIV: Of the Despair of the Novelissimist; Anent His Career; and of the Appeal that
He Made.

CHAPTER MV: Heroic Resolution of the Novelissimist.

CHAPTER MVI: Of the Halt Caused by the Absence of a Novelissimatrix; and How the Lord Took Pity Upon the Innocence of Father Brown.

CHAPTER MVII: Reflexions upon Free Will and Destiny: Calculated to Elucidate the Complex of the Career of Sir Roger Bloxam.

CHAPTER MVIII: Of the Vicissitudes of Novellissimaking, an Example.

CHAPTER MIX: Of Canals.

CHAPTER MX: Of Things Human and Divine; Being Other Epigrams Laboriously and Pertinently Constructed by Sir Roger Bloxam, in the Very Primrose and Wood Anemone of His Youth.

CHAPTER ONE

THE LOVE OF A PURE GIRL; THE QUARREL; AND THE MYSTERY.

So you thought you were free of the City of Our First Forty-Three Chapters, eh? I am not so simple. I am a match for you, you may believe, by the Black Stone of the Kaabah. What can you do to argue with me? Ma Dia, but you are helpless in my hands as Colonel Gormley when he went to the woman without a whip. Also when he went with one. You can but throw Our Story in the fire; and you are already too interested to do that. For, as you know, it is not a true, succinct, elaborate, discursive, epigrammatic, apothegmic, pleonastic, tautological, and altogether ridiculous account of the Life and Adventures of Sir Roger Bloxam. Here you will find zeugma and hendiadys and parapsodokian and aposeiopsis and all of them in a synoptical epitome of utter sweetness of the old-fashioned molasses candy which I was sucking in the movies before I came in not to write this Life and Adventures of Sir Roger Bloxam. But have no fear; 'tis but a passing spasm; the Titan is unvanquished still; on the faith of St. Vitus, I will write this book on headier beverages than molasses. Apsinthion shall be my drink, sin my true love's forsaken me; for snuff I'll sniff the snowflakes of the coca-leaf; for smoke ``Roll me the rapture of amber again!" I musn't put these things clearly, because of the Harrison law, which Harrison is not Benjamin or Austin or Alexander but a bigger fool than all the three, and God forgive me if I have said too much, as it suddenly strikes me I have, thinking a second time of Austin.

Well, for perfume, I'll to the scent of ether and dream delightful decadent de'lices of San Francisco and Myriam Deroxe, the fairest and the finest and the -- here's to her in the Key of F major! and B! Oh the scherzo in A -- rondo; oh the finale in C! But if imagination fail me, then

will I swallow hashish, in the name of the Compassionate and Merciful God. and if my reader will to whirl in colour and form, let him quaff mescal to the glory of Quetzlcoatl, and it shall not fail him. Anon.

Hullo! is this capitulum too long, too short, too fat, too thin? 'Tis but our number One; a lad, nay, a babe of chapters, unsalted and unswaddled: he'll do, girls; he'll grow; carry him to his mother. But are you sure that you have properly introduced, in Antient and Primitive form, our hero? Is this book not the Life and Adventures of Sir Roger Bloxam? Nay, little sister; bear with me yet awhile. Imprimis: this book is not what you say: I told you before, but you would not believe me. And, in the neck and shoulders of our argument, Sir Roger Bloxam is certainly not our hero. No, Lilian, tease me not; for at this time I will not tell you. An adjuration? Verily, by the Pig's Knuckle and Sauerkraut at the Kaiserhof at Broadway and Thirtyninth Street New York City, N.Y. U.S.A. Mariana, you trust not such an oath? Good; then to the proof; continue to the end of the chapter, and see for yourself whether I betray the secret.

CHAPTER THREE

IN WHICH THE READER IS INTRODUCED TO THE HERO.

Yes, that was a shabby trick to stop the chapter there. And Mariana is crying. That has nothing to do with it. She is crying because of what I told her in Chapter Two -- and with good reason. And what was in Chapter Two? Wouldn't you like to know? Saucy!

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SHADOW OF TRAGEDY.

Rabbi Ischak ben Loria is so dreadfully serious about the number Four, by Gematria, Notariqon, Temurah, AiQ Bekar, and in every other mode of Exegesis that it is time for us to straighten our ties and try to look like a respectable novelist and his most charming reader on a sunny but not too sunny day towards the end of April. The autumn leaves were almost fallen; all nature seemed to sympathize with the great sadness of -- Please do not interrupt. Lola! I am not making a fool of myself. The scene of Our Story is laid in the Southern Hemisphere. That girl has put me completely off. We will begin again; one wintry day the good folk of New Orleans were being hurled at the rate of a thousand miles an hour and more into the shadow of the planet Terra, and -

Too scientific? I think so myself; besides, the whole business bores me. And, on another count, Not the Life and Adventures of Sir Roger Bloxam should begin at the beginning. Lucky this ain't

them! A further advantage of this course is that I shall have opportunity to expose rose prose, Ambrose, in my most mystic manner. I'll be Chrysostom of the Church of Fiction; you shall have asphodel and nectar to your chota hazri. Begin then, daughters of the sacred well that from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring; a perfect pianissimo like Ratan Devi's is appropriate to the first part of what is not the Life and Adventures of Sir Roger Bloxam.

CHAPTER SEVEN

BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF YEARS.

(Chapters Four, Five, and Six -- except Four -- have proved too pianissimo to print.)

The Universe slept, and shiny dreams confused it; its purity clouded over like Chalcedony. It was an absinthe dream --

Yea! let me fall off the water wagon; let me hie me to the Old Absinthe House, and pledge mine host in a bumper of green poison! --

for behold! in that clear diamond without flaw there gathered nebulae like a great mist of light.

And there was some perception of distinction, and thereby came hurt.

Close up, please, camera!

Now, Miss Eissiz, register despair!

Thank you. Now close up in the scene! Right.

In one nebula there was an insignificant body who is, (let me whisper, Helen) in one way the hero of Our Story. Closer up, there; ten yards' title, Helios. Closer up again -- so here we are back to earth after all, ready to begin a new chapter of what, please the pigs, shall not be the Life and Adventures of Sir Roger Bloxam.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE DAWN OF A BRIGHTER DAY

It has appeared from the foregoing, Muriel and Laylah, when you have quite finished, thank you -- presently! -- that even that which was most real about Sir Roger Bloxam was no more than the fucked out fag-end of a bad dream of the universe; and whether even the universe is real is of course a moot point. I like that word `moot'. But, as we shall see later, Sir Roger himself was not of prime importance, even to himself; for he was not himself. Hush! I'll explain it all later. I must begin like this if I'm to be properly mysterious, which, as I am Custos of the Illuminati, the Devil and Adam Weishaupt know I ought to be. (If you had only eighty cents to spare, would you buy ether or candy? 'Tis doubts like this that cloud the mind, and interrupt Our Story. Oh Lord! send

me two thousand dollars and let me finish the damned thing in peace! I promise not to use a stenographer -- "An easy promise!" sneers the Lord. "Abuse is your trade." Vell, then, I won't abuse her; and why should I want to butt in? Get on! Get on! Not even a preliminary Off.) I am glad that misunderstanding is over; but I have lost the golden thread, Medea; we shall never reach the heart of the labyrinth. Come, kiss me, Clio, let us start afresh; water thy horse with mine at the Circean spring; then let us mount the eager slopes of heaven, and, gazing upon earth, see in all due proportion that most fascinating shape, that soul Circean, that siren sun of a gun, Sir Roger Bloxam. For it is his Life and Adventures that are not to form the subject of Our Story.

CHAPTER NINE

ALAS! POOR YORICK!

(This chapter may be omitted with advantage.)

So ho! my hearties! then I have you at the point desired. You think I mean to trick you with infinite digression -- a Sterne chase of the Absolute. So ho! the will I e'en slip in a page of concise important facts, the basis of our whole work, even as a nymph surprised slips into her well, or as a physician slips his thermometer under your tongue. (We'll hope so.) And so we go about on the other tack, and gain a furlong on you all, unready skippers that you are, foolish virgins indeed, for that you will never come to the love interest. This is a bracing story, the yarn of a lone wolf, the best of Easter gifts for a Boy Scout; there is no sex in it. This is a brave book, a chaste book, the Book Valiant, the Book of a Loyal Knight, the Bible of a Parzival. C.W. Leadbeater shall not read Our Story; it shall not be filmed in Pathe;' or serialized in the Woman's Monthly. No, brother Sir Knights, gadzooks, gramercy on us! This Book be your Romaunt, the pillow of your slumbers, the candle of your vigils; and you shall salute me Guardian of the Graal, because I stood with Shakespeare and Aristophanes and Apuleius and Cervantes and Rabelais and Balzac and Sir Richard Burton who liked life whole and wholesome, hardy to the four winds, not mewling, puking, piffling, twaddling, bellelettrizing, Dameauxcameliarizing, Murgerizing, Lukizing, Omarizing, Wertherizing, Littlehellizing, sentimentalizing, squalling, squawking, weeping, deploring, and all the other participles in the language and outside it that may be quintessentialized as finding favour with the burgess. For you are cowardly dogs, you grocers, peddlers, Germans and Angles, and I'll none of you in Our Story. For us is the lusty Don, the fierce Egyptian, the black Irishman, the hot little devil of a Frenchman; but deuce a fat

ox-man that sits down and counts the money he has stolen, and lets life and adventures pass him by.

Sir Roger Bloxam was of an Irish father, and a Cornish mother -- putting aside all that business about the nebula, where, of course, he originally began. He was born in rebel Cork, and his first cry was interpreted by his father as "To hell with the bloody English!" It's a durthy lie; he was born in the very centre of England, just over the way from Stratford, at a Spa on the Leam. His mother was a Bishop, which is a corruption of Episkopos, for she traced her ancestry to a Greek, who had come to Cornwall with the Phoenicians to get tin; and that Greek was of Egyptian stock. I think Pythagoras had a thumb in the pie somewhere, for Episkopos is a corruption of Hapi-Sebek, so that there was honest crocodile blood and Nile water in the family. And the Nile is the daughter of the Mountains by the Moon; and both these are Chinese, for their names are given by Fohi in his trigrams; so that was where Sir Roger got his Mongolian appearance. The mother blood

was very strong in that race; the boy looked just as much a girl as any colleen, and had the fascinating ways of a wench from his cradle.

As to the Bloxam side of the family, it was Greek also. Bloxam is plainly Floxam from Phlogs, a flame; whence, oh my lissome ones, we know that his great ancestor was the Sun. I have no time to tell you about fulgur, and flagellum; for I must whisper just one word of woe: Bloxam was not his name at all. Not his name, at all, at all, at all. No, sir! It is only the echo of the name of his name. His real name is a terrible secret, gay, porcine, choral, charitable, stiff, brilliant, dancing, horrific, ghrshu, ghrshoi (as Rabindranath Tagore would say) a brush name, a name like a hedgehog, a bristling name, a starry name, the secret title of the Master of all the Druids, a name so stupendous, tremendous, venerable and reverend, so unspeakable, unutterable, ineffable, incommunicable, indicible and aphasic that I have written it all over this book in characters so large that I hope it may escape observation. By the hand of Fatma, what a chapter! But genealogies are always the devil; even Saint Paul found it made trouble for the early Christians. However, be done with it! On to the Characteristic Incidents of Infancy. I can't do these; for one thing, I can't remember. But I'll steal all the Dionysus and Hercules thunder, and that of any other Famous Infants; and I'll fake the chapter somehow to look respectable enough. Mothers, be prepared to shed warm tears of exquisite whatever-it-is; race-suicides, thank God, you're out of it! Maidens, be warned; old maids, regret! Observe, nobody is altogether happy; we want to put

our money on all the horses in the race, and win every bet. No, Ada; no, Evangeline; no, Mimi; no, Gellia, Chloe, Lalage, Daphne, Chrysis, Sappho, Doris, Gerda, Jeanne, Rita, Le;'a, Mabel; no, all of you; to be or not to be, that is the question; to be both or neither at the same time is to be a Buddhist, and a Bhikkhu or a Phoongye or a Sayadaw or a Mahathera at that, probably an Arhan and certainly a Srotapatti -- which is going too far, even for sick girls as you, my satellites, my comets, my meteors, my planets that you are. Keep to your orbits; let who will be good, be clever!

Now you've mixed me all up, and we must broach a fresh hogshead of absinthe.

CHAPTER TEN

THE MURDER IN GREENCROFT GARDENS

(This is the last but one of those chapter-headings which have been designed merely to attract the favourable notice of the reading public; in future they will have some connection with the text, possible even a discoverable one, in certain cases of great gravity.)

How jolly it would be, and how easy to wander on for ever, canoeing, as it were, down a broad stream of absinthe to the Great Lakes of Dementia. But it may not be! Our hero -- even our echo-hero, Sir Roger Bloxam -- must be made sympathetic, interesting, vital. And he does not even exist so far; at least I've never let the reader get a glimpse of him. Yet it is he that makes me merry; and God help the men and women that cross the path of Astarte Lulu Panthea Crowley, beginning in about 1935, Era Vulgari. The truth is this; it is a very serious matter to get your hero on to the stage; for you have to do that for him; once there he'll start like a fighting-cock, if he's of the right stuff; but who'll break the champagne over the bows of my battleship? There's the D'Artagnan way of coming on, me father's sword, letter to the Captain of the Guard, no money; then a thwacking of a duel or two, and it's perfectly natural to be saving the queen's honour, and never riding at less than thirty miles an hour with sixteen bullets to the cubic inch of you.

And there's the Hamlet way of preparing the scene, and then flipping him on; and that way, which is Shakespeare's invariable way, makes the man natural from the beginning. Ibsen does the same; it is clearly right; one must not make one's man incredible from the moment of his appearance.

But what of the fantastics? Maitre Alcofribas Nasier cares for none of these things. Nor Aristophanes, huge of laughter, eater of conventions. The fact is that I had rather conceived Sir Roger Bloxam -- and the hero, of whom you hear some day, if you will -- in this Punch and Judy

spirit. This novel was not to be the tale of an Ego in a Cosmos, but the whirl of a Cosmos round an Ego. The scenery was to be stage properties; and now I hesitate whether I should not play in the wild woodland. Why not tell the truth? Because I do not know the truth; if I did, I were a greater philosopher than even myself.

Penrhyn Stanlaws told me that he liked a novel to begin ``Bang! A rifle shot rang through the woods" because you want to know at once ``who shot at whom, or what, and why, and did he hit or miss?" I tried this idea with the title of Chapter 44; but then -- UMUMUMUM -- alas! no need to tell what then! If Gwendolen Otter were here, she would tell me how to begin; if Anna Wright were here, she would shew me how to begin; if Berthe Leroux or Marie Maddingley or Peggy Marchmont were here, I would already have begun! I would I were afoot in the Sahara desert, with my untrusty chela, Lampada Tradam, his hair chopped to look like the devil, so that the Arabs may take me for a great sorcerer to have tamed him, and with Mohammed bin Rahman and el Arabi and that prince of fools, the camel-man. To camp at Wain t'Aissha for a month, and let the peace of the desert seduce the soul. Then could Sir Roger Bloxam prance it untrammelled, horsed and armed, a very scorpion of the sand.

Nay, the Old Absinthe House must serve my turn; I will take wings and follow the Mississippi to the sacred Delta; thence I will take passage in the Gulf Stream with those two spirits that loved the Albatross, and with them, by'r Lady, I'll put a girdle round the earth in forty chapters! But be prepared for all; you'll not know whether I'm a realist or a phantastic till you have finished Our Story and are ready to turn back to read it over again!

CHAPTER SIX HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-EIGHT KISSED AT LAST.

(This chapter has been suppressed by the Censor.)

CHAPTER ELEVEN OF PUBLISHERS: WITH AN AFRICAN FABLE.

I am but a green fellow, Mr. Putnam, Scribner, Macmillan, Houghton Mifflin, Mr. Podder and Spouton, Mr. Lousebrain? I am no novelist, I, Mr. Poop the Publisher? I do not know how to tell a story, ye dewlapped sow-bellied munchers of milk-toast, ye gross-butted itchy-palmed exploiters of Arnold Bennett and Marie Corelli and Elinor Glyn and Mrs. Humphrey Ward and Victoria Cross and Hall Caine? Why do not I take advice? I am young yet; I might learn, perchance? Learn your trade, ye snuffling, toads, ye gorbellied live stenchers that poison the wells

of the King's English before the Hanoverian turnips with their German brute gutterals and grunts. Oh! nothing right in England since we lost Plantagenet and Tudor. Take advice? Hear the tale of the Love of the Hippopotamus und the Tsetse fly. You see the difficulty. So did they. Thus they took counsel of the Puff-adder. Paint me the river-horse, tears streaming from his eyes, his fat soul melting in him from hoggish love, like a middle-class Englishman, a tradesman of the Petty Cury! Ha! quoth the wise Puff-adder, cocksbody, here's a knavish coil. Zounds; little sister Tsetse, dear, deadly little sister, eternal flit and fatal sting, more sinister than all thy kind because so silent, surely thou art True Woman. (True Womanhood, the Glory of the Nation. Insert in American edition.) But his thy raw Romeo, thy lard-Lothario, thy Georgie-Porgie, hath no scent of aught but grossness. Purge him with Krafft-Ebing, for diaphoretic let him swill Schrenk-Notzing, a barrel a does, flush well his kidneys with the works of Havelock Ellis. Then crown the labour with a gift of price -- Venus in Furs of Sacher-Masoch. So then, gramercy, an thou sting him, sister, it shall be Luv. Most willing, most assiduous, the hippopotamus applied his pinbrain to the work. Last of all, rapture filled his eyes -- now sting, cried he, that I may enjoy Luv! Alas! Alack! Woe! Misery! Wretched Me! Ai! Ai! Mierda! Ay di mi! Hilas! Govno! Sister Tsetse, that had stung horse, ass, mule, Englishman, and many another beast, could not get through the hide of her beloved. For know, the Hippopotamus comes of chapel folk, and hath been 'prenticed to the Northcliffes, the St. Doe Stracheys, and the Austin Harrisons, from whom that shell which pierceth three feet of Harveyized nickel steel battleship armour should rebound all merrily, methinks.

Then went this loutish lover, mewling and puling more hideously than before, until he seemed like an American clergyman, so sweating and so maudlin was he, back to the wise Puff-adder. O call up on Sir Crocodile, the good chiruggeon, says Puff-adder briskly, when the state of the case is made known; he shall perform epidermotomy, neurocalypsis; thou shalt have a tender part whereon thy love may sting thee.

But Sir Congo Crocodile F.R.C.S., M.C., was modern, the last word in surgeons, phallectomy his specialty; Monsieur Coupetout was his father in anatomy; he had deceived pedants when he studied at Bart's, for they confused his operations with the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew -- ho! one, two, three, nurse! give me the sponge; four, five, damn it, there's the jugular vein gone; six, tie that artery, you fool; seven, eight, calm, my friends, I've but perforated one lung; nine, bang goes the aorta, stitch him up, somebody; ten, he's dead, blast him, bring me another.

So Sir Crocodile made Mr. Hippopotamus as holy as Origen, as lorn as Abelard, alas! he made him not so lyrical as Atys. For he squeaked out, the British pig, the greedy, grocery, cottonseed-oily, dissenting- parsonious, Tennyson-reading, blubberly, Wiltshire, Dosssetshire, chaw-bacon, covenanting, cow-mooing, creature, none of God's! --

Ah! (he pronounced it like the Arabic Gha'in) I shall write to the Times about it. Speaking as a masochist, I am irrevocably wedded to good Sir Crocodile; speaking as an ex-hippopotamus, war is hell! And sister Tsetse laid a loving kiss on Brother Puff-adder's nose, and away! Who said I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier?

Now -- conceive if I in like case would take advice! Nay, I am sister Tsetse; but though I sting the world, I give the Sleeping sickness only to horse, ass, mule, or Englishman, oh cattle! cattle! cattle! Now I'll not stop to print the many words of my story, the story of my tale, how 'tis against the vice of pandering, against the folly of love out of one's sphere, and the rest; I'll flit on, to the tune of Tipperary, beauties o' mine, God bless you, dart on with the newest, the sweetest, the deeviest, most charming, most exciting, cocaineish, cantharidian, Peggy O'Neilish installment of -- Not the Life and Opinions (or was it Adventures?) of Sir Roger Bloxam.

CHAPTER TWELVE

HORRIFIC AND GROTESQUE COROLLARY OF THE FOREGOING ARGUMENT, PRESENTED AS AN EPICENE PARADOX.

Last night I dreamed that I was back in the Old Absinthe House, where stand the marble fountains worn by the nonagenarian drip of the water. I was that Apsinthion, the bitter spirit, oily with divine ghostliness, and fragrant with many an holy herb, dittany, marjoran, fennel, subtile and mocking, all inspiration. But none can drink me pure, nay, say not so, my brave disciples! Ye must add syrup of style -- add not too much, my danger's in my Technik! -- and stir with drop by drop of water that fountain that never faileth. So did I dream myself intelligible -- when Betty stirred, and cried ``A little higher!" Woman! always you bid us soar -- often you make us soar! I knew a wife that told her husband that she wished he were dead. He raised his lazy head, and asked her Why, in sooth? She said ``I want to be relict." And, indeed, Djuna, this is the end of the chapter. (Why support a lout like Courteney Lemon?)

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

OF THE QUALITY OF THE ANCESTRY OF SIR ROGER BLOXAM; HIS FOREBEARS, OF THEIR CHASTITY, DECENCY, FIDELITY, SOBRIETY, AND MANY OTHER VIRTUES.

A certain lady -- (lady -- lady -- lady --) daughter of a New England lumberman, seeking social distinction, espoused an ancient house agent (or Gott wot what) named Foster, a tripester, a chewed spaghetti, a cold Welsh rarebit. Now lively was the wench and high-coloured, with a mole between her buttocks, and her shoulder-blade fair and great as a wild strawberry. And she lived in Eighth Avenue New York, in an apartment house. Time made her bold, and she was gay and gracious, so that it pleased her perversion to wager with herself that she should enjoy a lover even in the bed with her goodman. Which device she prepared, bidding Sir Paramour enter softly through the unlatched door of the flat. But even as the other disciple did outrun Peter, so a citizen took the honor of that laggard lover. And this man was well bedrunken. A German-American was he, and well bedrunken, verily. So this one came upon the bed; the girl stirred not for caution, save to slip the sheet from off her body, and he knew not of her. "Nay!" quoth he to himself, "all men are equal; I will prove it heartily, and ease my nature." So with a blast and fanfare of great trumpets, he stated clearly, and proved with mighty measure, and great weight, the proposition of democracy. Then Jeanne, that wanton wife and wise in Havelockellisry the gentle sport, divined her lover for a fantastic, and lay still. But ere he fled he seized what to him seemed a lever appropriate to that throne whereon he squatted touchwise and pulled thereon repeatedly, so that the lumpish cuckoldly lubberly lout of a husband, waking, bethought him of that word of James the apostle "Husbands, love your wives and be not bitter against them" and put his hand upon her knee. "Shut up! old satyr" she cried loud, "I never shall understand sex. Oh mother, save me! Stop! you rascal, what do you mean by trying to lead me away from Pewrity, the uplift, the Inner Life, the supra-sexual sexuality!" Whereat he laughed, the toothless old dog! Then she "You disgust me -- you, with one foot in the grave!" Then he grabbed desperately -- alas! -- fell back, and murmured mournfully "I have at least one hand interred." No one of these three people could ever have been connected, however remotely, with any of the forebears of Sir Roger Bloxam.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

HOW SIR ROGER GOT HIS NICK-NAME.

Oh wonder! let us on, gay carls; I would tell you of the goodness and innocence of Sir Roger, Sir Roger, oh! my God! Sir Roger Bloxam, how it shewed even in his youth, and that moreover in suspicion, as the sun shines brightest when the darkest thunders break. D'ye remember: i' the Cloister and th' Hearth how the neighbours set a spy on the monk and his wife, and track them to

a wood -- but they are only discussing how to do good to the people of the town? Ay? They were foul dogs that thought ill of them, is't not so? For even thus, or not unlike, came adventure to Sir Roger when 'e was yet a stripling. 'T was a day holy and idle, the sun gold on the primroses of the woodland, and Sir Roger, being of age twelve years, and a lively boy, his thoughts divided between heaven and humanity, how he might help either, was strolling with another lad, one Charlie Preston, God bless him or God rest him, I know not which, and the devil take him too, for I care not.

Now then comes a young master following them, for he saw that which made him ponder. 'Sdeath, but these Puritans have evil minds, God rot their guts with their stale mess of barley-water! But when he came upon them privily, lo! then Sir Roger looked up frank and smiling, his eyes trembling with great joy and sweetness of child-holiness. Quoth 'a to the angry paedagogue: Nay, sir, 'tis natural error, and I pardon thee with my whole heart. For this my friend was stricken (by Heaven's will) with sudden pain-cramp of a limb. I therefore, crying on Aesculapius, did put my lips to it, sucking and soothing, lipping and licking, rolling my tongue about, nibbling it gently with my teeth to induce a proper flow of blood to the disordered place, all as my instinct of Healer-of-Men did direct me. So presently by the favour of God came relief by spasm and -- may it not have been the bursting of some internal abscess? -- the ejaculation of some humor -- salty, 'Od wot, and ostreosian, or methought so, and may Nature grant it be nutritious. Now by the Virtue of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Ghost, Three and One, to whom be praise and worship eternally, is my friend rid of his cramp. Amen!

But that young master, skilled in physick, knew in himself that this was no true cure, but a cure by sympathy and transference; for lo! himself was attaint of that same plague. Which Sir Roger spying i' th' tail of his eye, the boy cries quickly to him: Good sir, God save you; will you not rest the inflamed limb between these cushion? Ay! warmth and softness, there's the rub! Move, an' it ease you! Stay, let me massage the swollen limb with that elastic, that electric Prometheus-reed o'mine. Do you feel nothing better? The fever flushes face and eyes; dear master, cry but upon God! Come, come, dear master, but say a prayer, and it may be that God will bless my feeble efforts. Feeble! cried he; preserve me from the strong, an' that be so. Ye're to massage, lad, back 'er, not to break. A prayer! A prayer! cried pious Roger; and at that the master sobbed ``Oh Christ!" and fell down utterly exhausted, but cured of cramps and fever -- and suspicion. And when 'a woke, there behold the boy with his innocent smile, his great open eyes turned piously

toward heaven, his hands laid as in benediction on the two limbs that by God's grace he had restored to well-being. So he cried out, that master, in these words ``Twelve years old! Jesus!" Now, as it chanced, this malady of cramp is oft of the remittent type, so that six times that afternoon the whole scene was repeated with slight variations. Also, Sir Roger was so slender and delicate and his feature so fine that -- in short, masters and comrades called him alike by the name of `Duodecimo Jesus'.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

OF THE LOGOS THAT SPAKE NEVER, AND OF HIS WITNESSES.

Now, by God wake up, if you have dozed! For here's the minute, sure enough. I don't know when, nor where, nor how; But 'twas one day or night, heartiest beauties, the Devil bless you all! I would I had Cervantes by my side, with his great quill like a plumed lance; or Blake, that made earth shake when Thel groaned. Ah! 'tis from Ossian, that trick; I've no such bravery of magick; my pen's no Mahalingam. And so when I've most bitter need of colour and size and light, I'm like a ghost i' the church yard, a scraped turnip with a candle, and a flapping sheet upon a pole.

Yet who should tell how gay Sir Roger met with God's vicar but I? Alack -- I may not tell. But of his meeting with the herald? Amen, that will I.

He was aware, Sir Roger Bloxam, of that pompous dwarf, fighting mad, the bantam soul of him afire, craning, straining, strutting stiff before him, the brave little fellow, a bare yard high, game, cocky, impudent, mocking, with his monk's hood drawn back from his bare poll, and -- since he was the Herald of God's vicar -- saying Nothing. Only he leapt and preened himself, and his followers swelled with pride. For he had attachis, this goodly cardinal ambassador, Signor Coglio the Florentine and brave Don Cojone of Logorno, stout and subtle they, secreting in themselves continually the mysteries of the Creation. No fear o' treachery there, by Zeus and his thunder! 'Twas their young sister Porphyria Poppoea, that with wantonness proclaimed herself, swinging her thurible whether ye would or no. Foul wench! What words are these? Art not ashamed? What heard I then? ``Asquith." Fie then! Sir Roger, canst thou not silence her? What's this mephitic borborygmus, this belch o' beastliness -- in a woman's mouth too? No Englishman within 3000 miles of me needs guess more than once what this word is -- God help him -- and me! There -- all our stomachs turn as the stench strikes our noses. I wish I could think of something utterly beastly, something worthy to mop its haemorrhoids, after a typhoid purge, with that pantomime flag, that barber's pole flag, that -- (``Of course, dear poet" quoth Anita, suave

and obscure, the gilt-toothed goddess from Japan, ``there's Woods") (Hush! Hush! 'Tis true, dear girl, but I'll not think of him, please God). Amen, and Amen -- of Amen!

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

SILENCE -- TO TAKE THE SOUND OF THE LAST CAPITULUM OUT OF THE EARS.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

OF THE MONOLOGUE BETWEEN SIR ROGER AND THE MYSTERIOUS MONK

Anita, sweetheart, by the flush of your Mongol cheeks, and the devilry in your long eyes, I swear I would that my words could tremble with such joy as your body, or your body with such anguish as my soul. For when Sir Roger saw that monk, in 's cardinal hat and Tyrian frock, confound him, he was shaken like a teak sampan in a typhoon, like a man in love with an Australian woman, like a flapper at the first sight of a matinee;'e hero, or like an American grandmother introduced to a new Tango lizard. He felt like a neuraesthenic who finds a Gila Monster in bed with him. Yet there was something in him that was not shaken, after all: Dai-Butsu was glad at heart when the earthquake tumbled the ruins of his temple about him at Kamakura, though I hope no harm came to the Iris gardens.

And so, cried Sir Roger, you are Cardinal Mentula di Caracco? Was there no law of praemunire to abate your insolence? You undercover before me, 'tis some grace in you, but your carriage is proud as Lucifer's, Sir Prelate!

At this the churchman uttered no word, but smote Sir Roger in the abdomen, like a goat butting. Enough! I'll not endure it! The knight was but a boy, but 'a was angered, 'Od wot. He loved not priests and their ogling, intriguing, domineering, subtle, persistent, pushing, pulling, alluring, menacing, ways -- now Attila, now Caesar, now Machiavelli, now Cleopatra -- and all so deft that it needs a sharp eye to see them. 'Sbodikins! do ye not know that your own thoughts are his before ye think them?

So good Sir Roger, boiling with wrath, tried courtesy. ``Pray rest awhile, good sir, kind sir, reverend sir, most venerable sir! Be at ease, sir, I pray you! Bid your followers loosen their coats, i' God's name, and for the love o' Christian charity, for 'tis plaguy hot," quoth he.

But to all this the cardinal answered not a word. For he had The Word, and would speak none other, and the moment was not come to send it forth. Ah! would ye had that Word, my darlings -- all that live -- for it is Silence, and a Seed that, falling into the Earth, is presently clothed about with leaf and flower and fruit. But Sir Roger was devilish annoyed at the dwarf's impudence.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

OF A LADYE MINE, AND OF THE DREAM SHE HAD.

'Twas at Torquay in Devon, land of stream and cream, 'o scaur and tor, o' moor gorse-golden, merry maids and proper men, tall fellows and bold, o' dells and coombes, and of cider stronger and sweeter than your Norman can make for all his cunning; and this girl was a play-actress, rosy as the apples, and white as the cream, and soft as the air, and high-spirited as the folk, of that enchanted dukedom. I know her name was langourous and lovely; but only the devil her master knows what it was; I shall probably remember it if I live to be eighty; but whether it's worth while to go through another forty years or so of European war in order to recall this detail is a matter rather for my readers than myself. The deuce take politics!

Whatever her name was, she was out walking. She was as pretty as a picture of Spring, for 'twas that which had got into her blood -- the good Sun grant it gets into mine this night, and stays there! So she was restless, so she walked up and down by the Sea, feeling the Sea's mood hers. I think she walked till moonset, but I'm not writing by the calendar, thank the Lord! We call it moonset; we declare moonset trumps. Good. Then she wandered on the face of the cliff for a while, and sought to tire her limbs. At last she came to a meadow; and there she called upon the Earth, lying upon the cool grass, and plucking out great handfuls. The daisies stared at her with great golden eyes, like Balzac's `Fille'. And so she dreamed that she was Earth itself, and a daughter of Earth, Titan, a giantess in the prime o' the planet. She lay like a great range of mountains athwart the plains, snow domes upon green alps. May the Lady of Dreams be ever near us, awake or asleep, with her hands full of loveliness. Carry your apron full, Our Lady, with cherry dreams, peach dreams, plum dreams, pear dreams, strawberry dreams, apple dreams, dreams that are clusters of the heaviest grapes! And fly also South and East upon occasion for we need tropical dreams, like mangoes, dates, pomegranates, lychees and mangostems!

CHAPTER NINETEEN

OF THE COMBAT BETWEEN SIR ROGER BLOXAM AND CARDINAL MENTULA.

I told you the lad was devilish annoyed. But it did not stop there; oh no, by the bones of Saint Bacchus, and the virginity of the Eleven Thousand Virgins, and the Holy Island of Iona! To be butted in the belly by a damned dwarf! The Bloxam blood boiled. Sir Roger was bored; he was fed up; he was peeved; he lost his shirt; he could not keep his hair on; he was wroth.

So he chased the poor Cardinal all round the town, as you never saw the Lion chase the Unicorn. Presently the dwarf spies a valley, and runs up it. There's a forest at the top, just where the great hill rises; so he tries to hide there. Lucky for him, there's a cleft in the mountain-side, so small that Sir Roger cannot follow him. (God knows he strove like a brave lad and good knight as he was!). But you cannot put a quart into a pint pot, or a bull into a calf skin. 'Tis one story how the Seventy-Two Jinn came from the bottle; another how King Solomon put them back again. Nulla vestigia retrorsum, by the shade of the lady that invented Caesarean section! Let's get on with the story! He pushed, he pulled, he wriggled, he heaved, he thrust, he lunged, he writhed, he twisted -- oh the Devil in the Belfry! he rocked, he charged, he did everything he could, God bless him! but the Cardinal was safely housed; 'twas a tight squeeze even for him. So presently the lad stopped struggling; he was too exhausted to be angry any more. Whew! what a hunt it had been! I sweat to think of it. So now the Cardinal comes forth; and he abated in his pride by the humiliation of having been forced to hide.

Confound all writing, and most of all the writing of novels. I never finished the story about the girl; better do it now, while I remember. She woke up. (There may be more than that, but by Buddha and Harpocrates and by their lotus-flowers, I know not of it.)

These chapters are infernally drawn-out; the style is laboured, the matter dull. Well, damn everything, I'm tired. Can't you let a man alone? I wish to Saint Gene; 'vie; 've I were in Paris on the Terrace of the Closerie des Lilas -- if there be absinthe available -- with Ida Nelidoff. No, I would rather be in Montigny (Saint Hubert hear me!) with my One Love, ruining the morals of the ducks at the Vanne Rouge with mustard, or lying on the top of the Long Rocher teaching the girl arithmetic -- three times twenty-one is sixty-three, three times twenty-two is --

Oh but what happened to brave Coglio and gay Cojone? They could not follow their master; they came nigh to be crushed between the ridges of the mountains. Says one ``I am more an ancient Roman than a Dane: there's yet some liquor left"; and the other ``Fill, fill the cup; what boots it to repeat?" So Don Cojone damns him for a coward. 'Twas fortunate Porphyria Poppoea brake out laughing wildly, a fanfare of folly. So Sir Roger Bloxam took his tablets, wishing to write a poem to her beauty; for she was a dusk rose of glory, no fault but this perversity of speech -- oh no more o' that, pray! And he wrote:

Her cheeks are pinks; what dastard pinked her?

Her soul's a Sphinx; God mend her

He could never get any further, for he could not find a rime. No poet, Sir Roger Bloxam, I'm afraid.

Suppose we get on to the pageant of the skating in Sweden. That is the real beginning of the story of Porphyria Poppoea; I simply invented the 'incident of boyhood' because all the other fool novelists do; and one must be conventional, mustn't one?

I think I'll have a last pipe of Lattakiah, the kind that Novotny sells -- four dollars a pound, worse luck! in the cubical packets of lead paper, with the pale grey-blue labels -- oh their arabic inscriptions! I wish that some Afrit would bear me on the horse of brass to a city in the desert, that I might recite 'The Great Word to become mad and go about naked' until I did.

Well, a pipe's the next best thing.

(No, Nan!)

CHAPTER TWENTY

OF THE HOUSEHOLD CAVALRY OF THE KING OF SWEDEN AND NORWAY, WHAT CAME TO ITS BEST REGIMENT.

'Tis true, 'tis no pity, that the folk of bard or tale-spinner should rise ever in revolt against him; for that's the sign of life in them. But where Porphyria Poppoea (of all people) deliberately interrupts my scandalous stories of her -- 'tis but natural, though in another sense devilish unnatural, by the word of some. But I respect them not; Nature's mantle is wide and blue as the sky herself; and she enfoldeth all. However, this is what Porphyria Poppoea did: she woke me just as I was ready to dream this chapter, and bade me wait while she conversed with her friend Edward. 'Tis a brave boy and a belov'd; he will not deal in aught but sacred merchandise. Robes for the priests, albs, amices, dalmatics, chasubles, rochets, copes, birettas, all things canonical and lovely these doth he buy and sell, and his whole soul is ornamented by his love for the figurative mystery of these holy vestments. For it seemeth (as I dream) that the priest is to the Most High God as is a woman to her lover, that his raiment and apparel are even as the silks and fine linens and laces of a courtesan, which she adorns herself withal, that she may make her lover mad with love. And the incense? Oh a surety it is so. Then he, being made God by the passion of God that floodeth him, transmitteth God to bread and wine, transmuteth them again to God. Then eateth and drinketh he that God, even (again) as a woman receiveth of the lover the fluid and solid substance of his being; and thus being made God once more, ex infero, he transmitteth upward that godhead by the transmutation of those received Elements into strength of body and

spirit that exulting poureth out its new divinity in praise and thanksgiving to the All-Father. I would also that ye take not how bread and wine be adorned for the priest, in golden paten and chased chalice. Behold then how complete and perfect is this -- true image of true Life! And is not our Father, the Sun, the giver of all Life, adorned with glory of rays? Now, brethren, let me counsel ye not to take this mystery away, unseemly twining blue ribbons in your crisp fine short bushy hair. Fie, lads! Never think of such a thing; there's glory and beauty to spare so long as the damned thing stands to attention at the word of command, obeys the ``Ready -- present -- fire" -- and never lets fly before the proper moment. ``Reserve your fire until you can see the whites of the enemy's eyes" is a good a rule in love as in war. Talking of love, you know the difference between a lady and a diplomat? If a diplomat says `perhaps', he means `no'; if he says `no', he's no diplomat. If a lady says `perhaps' she means `yes'; if she says `yes', she's no lady. (Not mine, the gibe, by Mercury the thief; but by Mercury the scribe, I gave it for posterity, damn 'em!)

Now Sir Roger Bloxam was destined to serve his country by this intellectual thimble-rigging; so of course he must make the Grand Tour, tra-la-la, and off he goes in his first Christmas vacation from -- no less than the Only Place I ever saw worth living in, the Only Place I ever loved, in That Particular Way. France I love, and Africa, and Asia, and may it please Allah el-Latifu that I may live and die between Djelfa and Nefta on the South, and between Auteuil and Belleville on the North; but these are loves of my conscious being. The Only Place is in my blood; I've three --- four centuries of atavism that curl round its ivied stones; I hate everything in its traditions from Henry the Eighth to Alfred Teenyson with the whole of my conscious mind; and I love it with my soul, and the soul of my soul, as I love No Place Else. It's a royal residence; none of your vulgar Buckingham Palace, the stuck-up stuccoed Hanoverian hausfrauhaus; none of your flaunting Windsor, your suburban Osborne, your tourist Balmoral; but a Cloister, a college, a sanctuary, sacred and central, the garden of youth, the meadow of wit, the midden of learning, the South Wall of Poesy. I hereby vow a sovereign to the Head Porter -- its Patron Saint -- next time I see the fountain in the Great Court. And I hereby give warning that I shall roll on the grass for sheer delight, and probably jump into the river with my clothes on. Now will somebody tell me why in the name of all that's inappropriate they built a thieves' kitchen, a beggar's boozing-ken, a cads' cradle, a dumping-ground for all the lousy, spavined, ring- wormed, scrofulous, soapless, paper-collared, dicky-wearing, frayed- trousered, dusty-bowlered, tooth-brushless,

frowsty, fuggy, onanizing, cheesy, onion-smelling, lantern-jawed, pi-inclined, lecture-keeping, hockey-playing, tub-pushing, beer-squiffy, syphilophobic, landlady's- daughter-cuddling, pseudo-blood, Union-haunting, Ciccu-jawing, mongrel-breeding, Math-Trip-mugging, oak-sporting, penny-nap- playing, Fabian, don-frequenting, stinks-stewing, proggings-fearing, touts next door? The educated reader will not hesitate to conclude that I refer to St. John's College, Cambridge, for the Hall is a dear little neighbour, and the Only Place I ever loved in the ancestral matter already described is of course the College of the Holy Trinity, where Sir Roger Bloxam spent the happy years of adolescence.

What a long time it has taken to get him away from it, even on that Christmas Vacation! It's not my fault, `honest to God it isn't'; it's this affair of Porphyria Poppoea and Edward. My idea was to give a succinct account of the facts; but she made such a fuss of her religious-furniture-fellow that I got quite ecclesiastical, and that drove out of my mind the desire to describe her early exploits with the `millingtery'. This was to have been a staccato chapter, a martinet chapter, a Halt-who-goes-there -- friend -- advance-friend-and-give-the-countersign chapter; and instead we have had a polite, learned, spiritual, academic chapter. However, it ought to go splendidly with the Cloth and the Gown -- the Blue Gown u;"ber alles -- so lets leave it at that, -- and draw a thick line.

Damn everything! all this time I've been far away in the clouds -- wondering when Edward will come back for another evening with Porphyria Poppoea! Is that a proper frame of mind for a popular novelist? By the impediment in the speech of William Somerset Maugham, by the Street-Arab accent of H. G. Wells, by the Black-Country-Twang that jerks from the Ruined Graveyard of Arnold Bennett, by the obese snobbishness of Marie Corelli, by the blue toe-nails of Victoria Cross, I deem it is not so. But what is a proper frame of mind? I had as lief have a cucumber-frame as a mind like any o' these; for cucumber is pretty good with salmon, and your popular novelist is good only with calomel, for those who react but with difficulty to twenty grains or so of that mild medicine.

So let's call it a day; we'll start off, very stiff and sturdy and new-manual-of-infantry-drill, with Sir Roger Bloxam already in Sweden.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

CONTAINS WHAT I MEANT TO WRITE IN CHAPTER TWENTY. OR NEARLY.

My friend St. Louis (alias Spiritus Sanctus) tells me that the Snow of Heaven only makes his nose cold, like a healthy dog's. He does not complain; he merely records the observation. But I'll bet him that his nose was not so cold as good Sir Roger Bloxam's, that third night after Christmas '95. For the boy was tired o' skating. He knew nobody in Stockholm but the stuffy old British minister, and his cappy shawly spouse; and he couldn't speak a word of Swedish, and he didn't like Punch. So as you all know, after about three hours trying the Inside Back Loop and Rocker for the love of the thing, you wish you had never seen a skate in your life. Sir Roger Bloxam was tired and cold and hungry. Cardinal Mentula and his little suite were with him, to be sure, but to all intents and purposes they had retired to their apartments. It's a hell of a life, isn't it, sometimes? Enthusiasm somehow flops When neither love nor dream outcrops From white or crimson poppy-tops. Hooray! I'm a poet. Well, he stood there, and dolefully executed a very inferior Outside Back Q, L forward Inside Counter, R forward Inside Loop, L Outside Back Bracket, missed the turn and set down with a fine British Damn. Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run By skaters many and strong; but the first to arrive, reminding me of Outram (wasn't it? my father was a great pal of the old boy's) at Lucknow, was James L. Dickson. L. stood for something Scottish, Laurie, or Leslie, or Levy, I think. Anyhow, 'twas a compatriot of sorts that rescued him; and that same British Damn, declaring Sir Roger Bloxam to be a colliguary of Chaucer and John Galsworthy (Oh God!) he said to him ``God save thee, lad! Zoops! hast harmed thee? Nay, th'art a gay lad and a gallant, 'ods fish, 'ods bodikins, 'ods teeth and whiskers; and may I be eternally damned if I'm not glad to hear me honest English speech in this country of Tandstickors and Smorgasbord!" You'd have been glad in his place, too, wouldn't you? And Sir Roger was comely and graceful, lissome as an ounce, playful as a kitten. And he was drest in his skating suit (knee-breeches and tunic with an Astrakhan roll collar, dbld silk, extr. pockt, 44 gs -- or so Nash of Savile Row was always telling him) with the most darling coquettish cap to match, like a Badenoch with out the knob and ribbons; and he wore it perched on one side of his head; oh yet! if you've guts in you, reader, which you must have, since you've come thus far in Our Story, you'd have beaten James L. Dickson by a short head on the post, with a little luck at the fall of the flag. So the new friends talked of England, home and beauty; for their paradox was to delight in the association of incompatible ideas. And Sir Roger Bloxam (the innocent) never guessed that James was clairvoyant. But he was. He could not see her, but he divined that

Porphyria Poppoea was not far away -- and he determined to obtain an introduction. Well, why not? James L. Dickson was an exceedingly nice man.

That night he dined with Sir Roger; the next night Sir Roger dined with him; on New Year's Eve he dined with Sir Roger again, and almost on the very stroke of the bell of St. Somebody's Cathedral that rang the Old Year out -- I don't remember my Swedish Saints -- he obtained the desired introduction to Porphyria Poppoea.

No, it doesn't sound very exciting; but there's nothing else to tell; why should I embroider to please you? Devil take you! James L. Dickson was satisfied; so would you have been -- that at least I swear by the faith of the Universal Testimony of all those who have been similarly favoured. Shut up!

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

DOES GET TO THE HOUSEHOLD CAVALRY AT LAST.

Porphyria Poppoea was perhaps a trifle sore at the rudeness of the Scotsman. A sensitive maiden -- and she was that, God Knows! -- expects more consideration than she got. He had no savoir faire, this James, this L., this Dickson; he was restless, he fidgeted, he said nothing wise, or witty, or even graceful; and he withdrew finally with abruptness. He had had much the worst of the encounter to tell the truth; she had been fully equal to the situation. She had taken his point, she had pressed him closely, she had pumped him dry; finally she had forced him to contribute all his present havings -- the savings of weeks, or so he swore -- to her pet charity (The Seamen's Mission, or some such name 'twas; I forget; this was in Stockholm twenty years ago, and more). What a Portia she would have made! I'm sorry for the man that asks a pound of flesh where she is! Yet, despite her victory, she was perhaps a trifle sore. ``Perhaps!" screams the girl Re;'ne;'e, looking over my shoulder. ``Don't you know if she was sore or not?" Silence is golden; I turn round; she turns round; she has now the opportunity to argue the point from analogy -- Mem: see Butler's Analogy -- but she's not arguing; she's gone to the drug store, and I can continue peacefully to record, in my own charming way, with just the limitations I desire -- oh not The Life and Adventures of Sir Roger Bloxam! But I think that I shall go to sleep for awhile, and try (once more) to get to the point in a new chapter. But I'll keep my promise, Cynara, in my fashion. Sore or not, she was following Sir Roger Bloxam with modesty and decorum through the streets, a few nights later, when Sir Roger was accosted by a Mysterious Stranger -- ha! ha!

we come to it at last -- who was dressed in the gorgeous uniform of the (now!) Household Cavalry.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

A PLENARY, VERACIOUS, AND METICULOUSLY SCRUPULOUS ACCOUNT OF WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BEST REGIMENT OF THE HOUSEHOLD CAVALRY OF THE KING OF SWEDEN AND NORWAY: CALCULATED TO 33 PLACES OF DECIMALS, BY THE METHOD OF HARD INDURATED HUNTERIAN LOGARITHMS.

Admiral Fitzroy, by no means the least of English poets, was wont to observe -- at least he was always putting it on his barometers -- ``Long foretold, long last: Short notice, soon past." So please settle down in that Oxford Basket Chair, draw the table close, for you'll need that jar you bought at Bacon's in your first teens because Calverle hypnotized you into doing so, fill the old Meerschaum (the nigger with the hat is the sweetest) with the pure Perique of St. James' Parish Louisiana, throw some coals and a log or two on the fire, and put your legs on the mantelpiece; for if the laws of weather apply to literature, this ought to be a terribly long chapter.

You can smoke a pipe, and find the port, while you wait; for I'm in no mood to write it just now. Do you realize it's half past three in the morning?

It was about eleven at night when Sir Roger Bloxam met Count Svendstrom. The Swede was under the influence of the prudish Queen, I suppose; for all he said was this ``Come, come! A boy of your age ought to be in bed at this time of night!" Sir Roger realized the good sense of his adviser; he acted at once on the word; and incidentally, he introduced the Count to Porphyria Poppoea. The Delight was mutual; the soldier waxed so enthusiastic that there was nothing for it but he must make a luncheon party for his brother officers the very next day; and Sir Roger made a hit indeed with his charming manners and his delicate boyish beauty and his sly wit. Porphyria Poppoea uttered not a single sound during the whole meal, though a Swedish bayonet is a sore tempter in this matter -- believe me who have eaten many such! -- but I never heard that her demeanour diminished the popularity either of herself or of Sir Roger Bloxam. You'll understand, dear Elizabeth, that as a self-respecting novelist, I should never let my hero -- or whom you think my hero -- go gallivanting about, at his age, with all sorts of strangers. No; the Cardinal and his followers were always with him. They have not been assertive, up to now; there's a time for everything; don't worry me, please!

Anyhow, after lunch, the old Colonel drew the Cardinal out, for he possessed much linguistic ability. The learned dwarf was encouraged, became excited. He expanded; he enlarged upon his subject taking those words of the Saviour that that which goeth into a man doth not defile him for his thesis. He touched lightly upon the lips, showing how idle and useless action of them must be accounted for at the Day of Judgment; passed by the teeth with tender and graceful touch, dealt pleasantly with the tonsils, which he compared to the pillars of King Solomon's Temple, and the uvula, a sort of guardian to the shrine; but he brought the head of his course to the throat itself, for it is here that speech begins, and therefore here that it must be brought to silence. The old Colonel sucked all this up with avidity, like a cat lapping cream; and when the good Cardinal, with a fierce spasm of eloquence, made that inimitable gesture of Saint Paul "Let me spend and be spent for you" the soldier bethought him that rarely if ever in all his life had he been so overwhelmed with the passionate torrent of that life-giving fervour which jets from the inmost being of the soul. Meanwhile the younger officers were introduced one by one to the happy Porphyria Poppoea. The party waxed merry, yea, exceedingly; but all good things have an end -- I know more good things than one that wouldn't be fun if they hadn't one -- and the time came at last for Sir Roger Bloxam to return to his hotel.

The Colonel bowed very low to the Cardinal, and addressed Sir Roger: "I assure you, sir, that in my opinion your guardian is indeed a Pillar of the Church. His utterance had found all the force of a Bull." But the younger men, who certainly were very drunk, cried in chorus: We have had a wonderful time in the pull-pit!

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

RELAPSE OF A PROMISING YOUNG NOVEL INTO A JOLLY DEVIL-MAY-CARE BOOK.

The fact is, I've been as sick as a dog. Not a nice dog, either! I'm just over my tuberculosis, which has been neuralgia, rheumatism, swamp fever, abscess of the liver, cancer, arthritis, osteoma, and one or two other things in turn, and last night I thought it must be gall-stones. But undeniably life's hard with gas leaking everywhere and poisoning one, and a series of sopranos taking lessons o'erhead, and Seven Tatosian Brothers ever and anon hammering tacks into carpets in the exercise of their unholy trade. (Curse all Armenians, anyhow!) But I'd take no heed to the pack of 'em had I but a story to tell, and I've none; I'm setting down plain truth, as I see it, for the God of Things as they Ought to Be. This novel's a tract in praise of chastity and some

such virtues of true Christian man and woman; and I'll say nothing but the truth -- Shall be Truth in armour, mind you, with rich furniture and a brodered veil upon it; but Sir Truth shall his name be, and no masquerader. And so I go aghast; for so great and so wonderful is the story of the Life and Adventures of Sir Roger Bloxam that it is well I have not That to write. (I told you a long while since, did ye believe? Let him that did take another drink, and a long one, praising me, and himself, and the sweet God of Truth that did make such understanding between us!) But I was better off before, in New Orleans, not a doubt of it, Edward or no Edward; for there in Dauphine Street there was no need of getting up or going to bed. I knew nobody, and nobody knew me; my loves were casual and lonely as my lunches. This is the proper life for the pure poet who would commune evermore with Beauty, enjoy the Beatific Vision, pace the sapphire pavement of the Throne of God, and compose hymns in praise of Apis over the Filet de Boeuf Robespierre at Antoine's, or of Pitma over Sister Green, the smooth, muscular, black-purple glory of her body was like the stone of that many-breasted beauty Diana in Neapolis. (Poor U.S.A.! as Porphyria Poppoea would Morse-Code if Sir Roger Bloxam ate some horrible bad food, ``in England we've a New Forest, date before 1100; and in Italy a New City, date before their fabled Jesus.") Which makes me wonder whether Jesus was not an American. Joseph and Mary are both common names here ('here', hell, hell, hell, that I must still write `here'!) There are several people in New York who at least look like Jews, talk like Jews, think like Jews, smell like Jews. The parents of Jesus may well have been Americans touring in Palestine. It is very American of Jesus that at twelve years old he should have been teaching all the most learned men their business, and that he should have `frozen out' the crowd in the Temple, which appears to have been the Wall Street of Jerusalem. The sublime ignorance of Jesus, his comic beliefs in the flood and other idiotic fables, his imbecile Puritanism, his determination to make God damn every one who disagreed with him, though he was himself too proud to fight, his servility to the Romans, his poor bluff about the `twelve legions of angels' which impressed Pilate as much as the existing bluff impresses Germany -- ``a million men between sunset and dawn" Bryan, Wm. Jennings of that ilk (-- oh well, they made good; but no matter!) -- all these things speak Jesus an American. Methinks I'll quit me novel awhile, and write this up for the Sunday papers, and get me some of their gods. N.B. There had better be plenty; this chapter has hardly been `jolly' up to now as the title did so loudly promise. Diseases -- Jews -- Americans: there's a descent of Avernus for you! A little dinner might brighten me up; say a Bronx, Little Necks, Gumbo, Shad, Jumbo Squab,

Squash, Terrapin, Individual Miss Jordan, Pecanisque, Fudge Sundae: oh help! Great Sprites of Soy, of Brillat-Savarin, of your pity hear me! Brighten me up? -- great Gaster, pardon me my sins! My grandfather's grandfather laid down a pretty pipe of gout-podagra in the cellars of my veins; but what should I hand on to my descendants if I drank a `Welch-ball'? Don't worry, you wouldn't have any descendants.

God help me! God help me! God help me! I've got to get up; so that's the end of the chapter.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

HOW SIR ROGER COMPORTED HIMSELF IN THE DEBATE WITH THE C.U.N.T.S.

This book is getting along very slowly; so I shall skip a century of chapters to encourage myself with the Illusion of Progress.

To illustrate the remarkable precocity of Sir Roger Bloxam, it may here be stated that he said, at the early age of nine, that Women can never be any good, just as if he were grown up and knew all about it. Well rebuked he the pudding-faced, sausage-bodied, flabbinesses of feminism, did he, the saucy youngster. ``Look you, thing", quoth he courteously (all things considered) to the Cambridge University New Testament Society and the Cincinatti Uplift New Thought Society, and other such, ``look you, a woman must either be a mother or not a mother." And all they cried ``Ay", assenting. ``Well then", he went on ``what is a mother? The most animal of all traits is motherhood. The nearer a mother is to the cow, the better mother she! What is her life? A menstruation, a befutterment, a gestation, a parturition, a suckling -- and so it goes. She cannot mix in society; her duties as well as her vanity forbid it. She must perforce leave dinner half tasted -- the baby's hungry! Oh God! I nauseate to contemplate the revolting details -- the filthy rags, the hideous sicknesses, the deformed belly, the foulness of childbirth, the cow-udders that appease the brat's yell -- oh God! How can she do aught human, when she is dragged down to beastliness for half her life? No, say what you will, a mother is but a sow, a wallowing sow." But one spake, saying: ``But all this does not apply to the woman who is not a mother. What of her?" ``Pah!" snorted Sir Roger, ``she is simply a bitch." But his opponent, staggering, struck his last blow. ``I'll grant you that", say he ``but what of the woman who, having been a mother, is now so no more?" ``Past bearing" began the child -- but he fell to the floor in a fit, and was awarded the fight on a foul.

By the coccyx of good Saint Antony of Padua, how I vomit at them! But the bitches are the best. (Memorandum to Publisher. Be sure to have this chapter illustrated by Charles Dana Gibson and Mr. Harrison Fisher.)

CHAPTER CXXVI

SIR ROGER GOES TO SWITZERLAND.

It has been said, I think by Andre;' Tridon, that it is such a pity that God has no Christian name -- for if He had, what anecdotes could not Frank Harris tell about Him?

But I cannot see that this has anything to do with the subject of our chapter, and though I could lead on to it -- quis dubi -- tat? -- why should I? Art cannot be forced. Audax omnia perpeti gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas -- libellum! So I might call the chapter De amicitiiis Francisci Harris, tell the scandal about the Holy Ghost, and call God Walter Pater.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

SIR ROGER REALLY DOES GO TO SWITZERLAND.

This adding on a hundred doesn't work at all; I am merely in despair that after so many chapters I am so little advanced with Our Story. (Yes, Our Story, Lionel, sweet boy! never forget; this is Our Story.)

You may well ask why this insistence on Sir Roger's visit to Switzerland. As you point out, he had been there already, and to France too, as a mere boy; and he had been all over Wales and Scotland even to Skye -- and what they did tell him in Glasgie, I'd be ashamed to tell you -- and in the English Lakes, and climbed all the mountains, and broke all the records -- Direct Climb of Mickledoor, first solitary Descent of the North Face of the Pillar Rock, first solitary ascent of Kenn Knotts Chimney, Twyll-Du, and dozens of other; yet I never said a word about it.

(Well, never mind that, says you: let's hear about the Glasgow business.)

Well, it came indirectly only on Sir Roger; the foot of the trouble was Cardinal Mentula. For that most learned and most subtle prelate had not yet found how to spend his evenings. When he got up every morning, he was still content to leave himself (in a manner of speaking) in the hollow of Sir Roger's hand as far as amusement was concerned. Happy indeed were the hours that he spent! But 'o nights, no! He was of the secret service, may be; he loved to seek out things usually hidden -- the Good, the Beautiful, and the Trou, as he never wittily observed. For he never spoke -- 'twas against his vow of silence -- though paradoxically, he was easily brought to con-fesses. (I abhor these Ente;'nte puns, don't you?) So in Glasgow his idea was to relieve the necessities of

the poor, and he would go out slumming with Sir Roger and the rest of the gang. I can see them now, the good knight as almoner with two shillings extracted from an indulgent mother and his purse full to bursting (that reads funnily, but it's quite all right), the Cardinal leaping and dancing and thumping before him all down the street, brave Coglio and gay Cojone as eager as you wish, and Porphyria Poppoea following discontentedly in the background, sulking, hidden in her cushions, and probably muttering to herself. Damn it! she was right always, that girl! If Sir Roger had only taken her advice all through, this would not have been so tragic a story. She was a good friend, if ever a man had one! But that pugnacious little devil of a dwarf, he was for ever getting his ward into trouble. His only idea seems to have been to spend, and spend, and spend; bad for him, and worse for Sir Roger, who lost wealth and health in humouring his caprices, and had nothing much but a hell of a good time to show for it. Well, down Sauciehall Street they go, the crowd of them, and the devil patron Saint of Glasgow) knows where else. And the result is that poor God-damned Cardinal Mentula -- wished. What did poor God-damned Cardinal Mentula wish? Poor God-damned Cardinal Mentula wished that he could say with Saint Peter that he had toiled all night and had caught nothing. Oh yes! He was converted to the doctrine of Heraclitus PANTA 'PEI. When somebody said "Das Ewig Weibliche zieht uns hinan" his unspoken comment was "More German Schrecklichkeit!" He would deliberately mistranslate "Ab ovo usque ad mala" and "Mulier desinit in pisces". To him "Nemo sapit omnibus horis" seemed like an Accusing Voice. Every morning he awoke to the battle-cry of Sursum Chordee (have I got that Latin right?) and if he was a dwarf before, he was now twisted and deformed to excite the pity of a pirate or an evangelical clergyman. By the Fallopian Tubes of Saint Theresa, God bless her, the dainty little mystic! I tell you honestly as man to man, he could hardly read a poem without feeling that the bard was laughing at him. "Men may come and men may go, But I flow on for ever" sounded like sarcasm. He hated the very name of Rupert Brooke. You see the whole catastrophe came on him like a thunder clap; and bless my psyche! if I haven't forgotten to tell you what it was. (Loud applause.)

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

NOTHING PARTICULAR HAPPENS TO SIR ROGER BLOXAM IN SWITZERLAND; SO WHY WORRY?

If two and a half years in -- that word Porphyria Poppoea uses after too much dinner too unwise - - doesn't destroy a man's sense of humour, it is probably time for him to die. When poison has

has merely the effect of laughing gas, there must be something radically wrong with the gassed. To proceed: Sir Roger Bloxam enjoyed himself thoroughly in Switzerland. The Cardinal never bothered him in such places. He doesn't know to this day why he doesn't like the Swiss, who were always perfectly charming to him. I refuse to describe glaciers, and all that sort of thing; I shall not tell of Sir Roger's adventures on the mountains. The whole subject bores me utterly; I'm sorry I ever brought it in. He wasn't consumptive; he never met a Maiden; he never had an accident; what in the name of the Master of any College, and of my beloved Umfraville, who pantamorphopsychonosophilographer that he is, writes a complete novel without introducing a single incident of any kind -- I refer to *The Buffoon* -- what, I say, is the use of going on? This is worse than *Clayhanger* and *Hilda Lessways* and that third pole-axe sequel -- God knows I never knew its name -- bound in one ghastly volume.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow

Sir Roger Bloxam had to go.

His safe return be now my boast:

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

Amen

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

SIR ROGER BLOXAM AT CAMBRIDGE, AMSTERDAM, AND BIRMINGHAM. AN ADVENTURE OF PORPHYRIA POPPOEA.. THIS TIME WE MEAN BUSINESS.

(CHAPTER CCCXXXIII. How Sir Roger Bloxam put to shame the vulgarity of a famous Wit. It was on the good ship *Campania* that the darling of our dreams returned from Jew York. See him upon the poop (yes, poop! poop! poop!) his eyes flooded with tears of joy as the city fell away on the horizon. In this most religious exercise he was joined by the world-famous wit Aleister Crowley. They sobbed with gladness in each others' arms. A Yank approached them. ``Waal, boys, what do you think of God's country?" Crowley looked at him with a tinge of sadness in his glance, and smiled softly ``Pox et preterea nihil." But Sir Roger liked it not; his mother had taught him to avoid the obvious. He made a darling little mone at the Nooyarker. ``Oh, sir, your national motto nearly serves us; why not *Et pluribus prunum?*")

I would I were *Philomena* for this one hour, to wound my breast upon this thorn, or *Hyacinth* to stain this one flower-page from my heart's heart. Pray, think not so ill of my *Porphyria Poppoea*; for in all her loves she had one love, and that for all her life. He was a man with golden hair so

fine and pale, yet, glowing, that one thought of Sun-rays incarnate in gossamer; and his face was like the harvest moon. He came up to his University every year; and there he met Sir Roger Bloxam at a club called the Knights of the Round Table. I must not tell his name: besides, would it sound sweet in your ears also? When he divined the presence of Porphyria Poppoea, he fell instant in love with her, and dared not speak, because he feared to offend Sir Roger Bloxam! 'Twas in a week of revelry, and this man played and danced for a dramatic club. Will God not give me a name for him? Some name of angel strength and sweetness? Surely Porphyria yearned for him as Phaedra for Hippolytus -- let that, then, serve! Well, the week parted and we did not see Sir Roger again. But when he left, he left a book, the *Legendes des Sexes* of Edouard d'Haraucourt, the Sieur de Chamblay, and in it he wrote five words. These words mean nothing: a chess-player might have used them in the beginning to enumerate his pieces; but when Sir Roger Bloxam read them, Porphyria Poppoea divined that Hippolytus loved her. She was a nymph of excellent modesty, and impudence unmatched -- o paradox sublime of God's invention! She lusted nobly for all love, and gave herself utterly and shamelessly; yet, despite herself, she acted in true Panic fear at the approach of her god. Thus, urgently desiring Sir Roger to take her to the Lake where Hippolytus had his palace, she forced the good knight to fly with her to Amsterdam; thence only she dictated letters so fiercely burning that her whole soul was lost in them. Safe, she became bold. Yet, by his letters, mocking and provoking, yet eager as hers, he drew her to him. Oh but she must turn to him, heliotrope! Thus she came back to England. And Sir Roger must perforce meet Hippolytus at the Queen's Hotel in Birmingham. "What a place for a romance! You jest!" Oh love knows not of time and space -- Always the time and place and the loved one all together! Sir Roger registered in the hotel book; at that moment Hippolytus walked in. "Hullo, monkey tricks!" cried he; and Porphyria Poppoea's soul went into shuddering blackness; for in his manner was no hint of all he had written. She was not loved! And after dinner he sat talking in his room with Sir Roger -- endlessly! 'Twas the last day of the Old Year -- the last hour -- Heaven and Hell in her heart. Sir Roger went to bed early, thank the Gods. And she -- she could not sleep. But ere the midnight car of Helios crossed the nadir Hippolytus had come into the room where she was, and possessed her. Of all her happiness I am quite unable to write; but pray you, weep with me, for now cometh an end. Alas! Alas! I will not speak of their joy by English lakes, of their passionate delight among the fells, of the terms they spent in Cambridge; for 'tis one monotone of honied music. But may

Sir Roger Bloxam be forgiven that he slew this loveliness! When he came of age, he wished to be rid of guardian and of handmaid; he thought them tyrants -- and then Porphyria Poppoea -- eternally chaste even in her wildest wantonness, resigned her lover. She made Sir Roger carry her to Switzerland. Yet in the Gare de Lyon she bade him write ``Did I say `Always'?" thinking that Hippolytus would understand that she still loved him, and -- may be -- follow her. Did he ever get the letter? Did he interpret it amiss? False friends had crept into their intimacy -- and also fear. I do not know how it was; but Porphyria Poppoea never renewed those hours -- that love -- that infinite passion of Hippolytus. Sir Roger Bloxam learned later that he, musing deeply as was his wont when walking, had passed Hippolytus in Bond Street, and that Hippolytus through that he had cut him purposely. Also, Porphyria Poppoea, fearful of a repulse, never followed up on her letter from the Gare de Lyon. Seven times the Father of all Light whirled Earth about him through the Zodiac -- and she knew surely that he was her true lover for all time and all eternity. So, weeping, she caused a great monument to be set up, with an inscription in the Persian language. And now and again she sent him messages; but his great heart was broken - - even as hers. Many a lover has possessed her since Hippolytus; but she has scorned them even while she abandons herself to their caresses. She loves Hippolytus. Hippolytus!

CHAPTER THIRTY

A SHORT CHAPTER AND A GAY ONE.

Come, let us be merry! This is the very devil, to moan and mope over the miseries of a morbid maid -- mistress -- misanthrope -- melomaniac -- moll! Come, consider rather how fine the weather is in June -- sometimes! Let us rejoice together over the fact that the interior angles of every triangle are together equal to the two right angles, barring the non-Euclidian geometries! Let us recall the fact that once upon a time we had Hope. It seemed possible to our blind sense that we might do constructive work, that we might help humanity, enrich the world with beauty and with music, with high thought and ecstasy of holiness. We wished to proclaim Will, and Love. And lo! the world has slipped over Niagara; it is smashed upon the rocks, its wreckage voided through the whirlpools of destruction. How shall I write poetry for the cave-man, about me? Here's Kipling, who wrote `Recessional' not long ago; he says ``Time shall count from the date when the English began to hate." It seems instane to build amid the roar of earthquake -- and I'm fitted for no other work. I can't turn into the cave-man overnight, and howl and trowl and hate, and cook the hearts and livers even of my country's enemies. I can't agree that Goethe was

no poet, Beethoven no musician, Du;"rer no draughtsman, Boehme no mystic, Frederick the Great no soldier, Kant no philosopher, Helmholtz no physicist, Ostwalt no chemist. I'll fight Germans, if they want to put "Entritt verboten" and a sentry at the Great Gate of Trinity. I've met German tourists, too, and I hate the whole tribe. I loathe German manners, German methods, German brutality; and I think it mere bad taste in Mark Twain to try to be amusing about the "awful German language" as I should resent a joke about the toothache if I had it. But I don't see why I should go insane in order to fight Germans; I think to keep a cool head were better policy. Baresark fury is out of date, some centuries. So I'll not deny plain facts; I'll not play into German hands by bringing false accusations and giving them a genuine grievance.

But what does it all matter? Civilisation has broken down; we must begin again, if any one of the white races survive, on fundamentals. New principles of morality, of politic, of economics. Well, there's one constructive work then -- when the chance comes! "I've often said to myself, I said, Cheer up, old chappie, you'll soon be dead, A short life and a gay one" can wait a little after all. My business is to proclaim Thelema, the New Aeon: Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Such considerations never troubled Sir Roger Bloxam during any part of his life at the University.

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

AN INTERLUDE WITH CERTAIN CRITICS.

One moment, ere we proceed! This breathless interest, this clamour to hear more of Our Story, dog-gone it, is parlous flattening, mighty perlite, but, by the shade of my first governess, unlady like. You must not grab the chocolate creams. You must not ask for a second helping of rice pudding, or encore a poem by W. B. Yeats. Wait, therefore, with hands folded, while I recount mine adventures of this day! 'Twas in a studio, and, while I snoozed, that lousy old lollipop, Leila, was being painted psychochromatically, by the hybrid host of mine, that Irish French Canadian Dutch Jew, that semi-sexual saphead, with his fish-belly face, his negroid hair, his slimoplastically deSemitized probiscis, his jaw like an old toothless hag's, his egotism bearing the same ratio to his personality, as his vanity to his good looks, and that's about the trillionth power of the factorial of the number of electrons in the universe to one poor lemon-pip. Painted, I say, by that ape, bug, clam, dingo, eel, frog, goat, hoopoe, ichthyosaurus, jigger, kite, lobster, mare, newt, ornithorhynchus, pig, quagga, rat, something, tapir, urethrocooccus, vaginophile,

wombat, xanthoplasm, yak, zebu, whom I am proud to call my friend. They had no brains; they could not talk; I'm tired of trains; get out and walk! So I took compassion, by the scruff of the neck, upon them, and offered to read them the manuscript of Our Story. I might as well have sent tickets for a Shaw play to Pinero or offered a position in the first line of the trenches to a fight-it-out-boys-to-a-finish-I'm-behind-you politician. True, Leila said, at first, that it was "mixed vivacity," and I'll take her to lunch for that; but Simeon Leon never caught on to it at all. You must have humour, sweetheart, to enjoy Our Story! If I could conscientiously have written The Life and Adventures of Sir Roger Bloxam, what a tale it would have been! What pep! What punch! what human interest! But as it is, it is but Mixed Vivacity. As if Mixed Vivacity wasn't the one hope of keeping sane amid this ghastly witch-rout of demons! Just look at me, myself; jhere's two chapters running with the war grinning through my magic mirror. A thousand days and a day of it, and more; oh let us keep one corner of the soul clean-swept, brimming with Mixed Vivacity! I want to splash about in the English Language like Richard Middleton's boy in the Sea. Damn seriousness, concentratian, purpose! Vive la de;mence All I'm afraid of is that they will call this a Futurist novel, and a Work of Art! I assure you that I'm only a wild boy out of school, leaping at every butterfly for sheer joy to be alive, not at all in pursuit of entomology. Curse all connectedness; it only leads to liquid fire and poison gas and submarines and Liberty Bonds; we've got back to the cave-man, so give me my edged flint and rein-deer bones. If you have no fun reading it, Ish Kabibble, I love writing it; and the psychoanalyst and the alienist can quarrel as they will over the aetiology and pathology and histology and diagnosis and prognosis of my case. This is a fine world to call any man a lunatic! Come, be Merry; live in the untainted sea of thought of thought, salt, sweet, fresh, cordial, kissed by the great sun of the soul. Leave the earth of action; it is befouled. Men are all mad; let me listen to the starlings. They shall preach as the sparrows preached to my dear master Laurence Sterne. Of all the easy asses, give me Saint Francis of Assisi -- preach to the birds and fishes, what impudence! Down on your faces, men, before a blade of grass! It has a thousand times more sense than you with your theologies and economics, that only lead to wholesale murder -- disguised under the finest names in the world. Oh dry up! this is not the way to write a novel, even a novel like this!

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

APOLOGIA PRO NOVELLISSIMO SUO.

Who said, by this was a novel? Who (also and moreover) defined a novel? Novellum -- that's a new little thing. Most novels are not that. This is the newest little thing yet writ -- even Lippy Leila and Sawny Simeon agreed to that! So let me flaunt it on my title: a novellissim! That will show that Our Story is no ordinary novel. Some readers read so wondrous carefully that it may be just the right time to tell them that!

And so they tell me that Our Story has no order, no form, no concentration -- ay! there's the rub! This talk of concentration is vile Puritanical tyranny, with its roots in bourgeois utilitarianism. Beauty is with the butterfly at least as much as with the ant. What says the Broadway Jew when he is `in love'? ``Get busy with your face, kid!" I know it saves time, but yet I feel a certain poignancy, as of loss, somewhere. Need I make further apology for the method of this novellissim? Well, Louis says, that we cannot help thinking a little of Laurence Sterne and Rabelais; to which I answer ``Would Got 'twere so!" when modern poetry scans, it must jbe a theft from Swinburne; when it doesn't, from Browning; where it's hashed prose, from Whitman. What's one to do? Faith, 'tis as bad as morals in the English mind. If one happens at any time to be alone, its onanism; with a woman, fornication; with a man or a dog, something worse; in a crowd, a ``priapic orgie." You can't get away from it. So why should we try, dear girls? We won't. Come off the grass! And that reminds me that I ought to tell you about Kitty Williams.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

OF KITTY WILLIAMS, HER LOVES PASTORAL, PAIDOPARTHENICAL, AND EXTRATERMINUMUNIVERSITATIDUOMILLERADIODEMAGNAESANCTAEMARIAE CCLESISTICAL.

``Xanthous as golden sunset were you, Kitty, from the curled hair to the flushed feet that lay like curled rose-petals, tiny in my hand. I quiver now, the glow of you yet radiant across the chill abyss of twenty times twelve moons." 'Twas thus that Roger wrote, as his trick is, to people who are not there -- and then, after a phrase or two, he will break off, and sacrifice to Memory, when Imagination happens to be busy elsewhere, and actuality gone out for a walk.

Kitty was flushed from crown to heel; it was a tawny gold of passion that flooded her. There was none of that dreadful milkmaid rosiness in her; here skin was pale, but it glowed like old ivory warmed through by blood itself. There was a curious fieriness in the hair and in the nails, as well as in the skin; yet 'twas so subtle a matter that it was rather felt than seen. She was graceful as a tiger-cub, and lithe, and hot; yet she had all the awkwardness of a young she-goat; for her vitality

tumbled over itself, fulvous as a burn in spate. Ay! she was muscular, nor spare nor plump; tall, not too tall; but what caught Sir Roger Bloxam was her temperament. There was the lass for him -- the true religious type. For her the good Cardinal never became tedious; never could he labour a point too fully, ejaculate too often or too long. Her dear little sisters, Connie and Annie, were full of him; brave Signor Coglio and gay Don Cojone counted them, you may believe it. Does it not remind you of Watteau, or of Corot, those scenes pastoral in that most fortunate corner wood on the road to Bishop's Stortford that lies just beyond the two miles from Great Saint Mary's, where ends the empery of proctor and vice-Chancellor and Esquire Bedell. All May term ye can revel it there, lasses and lads; there's grass and moss, and many a wild flower, all soft for the foot, or whatever ye dance withal. Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero Pulsanda tellus. But Kitty had Nijinsky's spring, even when her clinometer equation was cot 90. 'Twas in the early days of Dunlop; and Sir Roger was wont to say that his racing Humber had them, but Kitty never did. So there in the woodland they played many a pageant: the mystery of St. George, the Comedy of Pan, the Morality of the Wild Beast, the Argument of the Flood, a thousand merry and joyous rites of Saturn and Flora, of Dionysus and of Paphian Aphrodite, of her that reigns in Panormus, of him that guards great Lampsacus in his reverberating splendour. 'Twas wonder Cardinal Mentula took not Clergyman's Sore Throat, and Kitty Housemaid's knee. Gay scholar she, in every mood (??) and tense crissare: cevere, too, although another conjugation. As for brave Coglio and gay Cojone, they were involved in theological discussion anent the Kinesis. This was before the love of Porphyria Poppoea for Hippolytus, else there had been division of interest in the little world of Sir Roger Bloxam. Eheu fugaces! Termini Maiiae! The May week ended; Sir Roger ruffles it to Norway, flies back for one night to his sweet wench of Wales, then off he goes to Russia. I'll tell you of his love for Mathilde Doriac, when I feel in the mood.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

A WORD ON PANTOMORPHOPSYCHOLONOSOPHILOSOPHY, INCLUDING ARTHUR MACHEN.

Would I could write a glaucous ineluctable novel, like John Cowper Powys! With no more outfit than an ulcerated duodenum, he produced Rodmoor. He presses seaweed into the service of sadism, picks glaucous and amphibian diatoms from moonwort, and makes them inelectable and nearly everything glaucous. And that is a very jolly feeling, when one has a bout of malaria, as I have to-night, filling myself with quinine, strychnine, arsenic, and cascara sagrada, almost

ineluctably so. I expect to be pretty glaucous in the morning. What a lot of words there are which are more atmosphere than meaning! Definition is the curse of art; we want to wander in exotic heady gardens amid small glaucous govins, mellicose at our costals, ineluctably dalmatic! There should Euphorion woo Eumolpe with pantoums and purfled wisps of moonrise, the fritillaries of their pomegranate cusps fluttering mopishly in the flambiance of Ra's cadenza. The wigsbane should plex its arpling alianelle about their ramped olio; mammet and maropial flooze emphishly upon the szyenite. See? You remember Arthur Machen -- of the Angels of Mons, that gallant company! -- in his "White People" how he gets his horror from "wicked Voorish domes" by simply failing to explain "Voorish," and his final tragedy by just not saying what occurred. I must do this (or somewhat aequipollent, albeit solipsistically mine) for Sir Roger Bloxam: what rotten asses writers are! They're always introducing 'great Poets' without giving us a single line to taste them by, and so on. They're always leaving everything to the imagination of the reader. Poor fool of a reader! If he had any imagination, he'd be a creative artist himself. Anyhow, Rule One for writing a novellism shall be to cross the `i's and dot the `t's: except in the one show chapter, which I shall put in to prove that I can do it. It can come in here, as well as anywhere else; (be quiet, Elsie! I wasn't thinking of you) so good-night. Sleep well, wake fresh, and tackle Chapter XXXV in all its glaucous ineluctability. Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came!

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

THE RUNIC PLASM

Ambiguous, Childe Roger sees the rune of Unna Klopstock. Mobile Marry, but omen. "The grey knight's at the ferry; wink." He signed, pressed the plasm to his alb, pectoral-wise, with a norm that made groined transept and waly welkin giddy as the long-haired shagsters of Boeotia. Then clasps he speron to palfrey, with whinnying jennet lank adown the wet west wind. I now omit many adventures, but he gets to the ferry at last. The Grey Knight Is Not There. There is however an unambiguous rune, reading, in the character of Honorius: SVXIIIV. The II is a Roman Numeral; now it's quite easy, isn't it?

But when Childe Roger brings at last the mummied hand -- that had wrought such fearful mischief -- to the Master Egyptologist, that person pales anaemically, glares goitrously, yammers once, and then goes raving mad. At the same moment the clock of Big Ben strikes Thirteen (don't you think? Something ominous and totally disconnected). Of course, Childe Roger was never the same man after this adventure of the runic plasm; he retired to his castle -- but why did

he always order Dinner for Two, even when most alone? I doubt if even the old steward knows about this. He is palsied and hoar already, on account of the affair of the bedesman and the beldame, I suppose. Don't let us load any more trouble on to the back of the poor old steward! Whether Childe Roger's wife was a gorilla (thanks to clever chaperones this can easily be done now-a-days) or whether the First-Born son of the Bloxams is always a seal or a calf, as so often happens in the best-regulated old Scottish families, I shall leave, dear reader, to your imagination. You see, it would be saving of much trouble to leave the whole damned thing! I'm going on with this novellism in the grand old way. SVXIIIV. ("Same to you, only louder," cries the Bunyip girl.)

CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

OF THE EARLY OPINIONS OF SIR ROGER BLOXAM CONCERNING THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

IN his third year at Cambridge Sir Roger Bloxam, prompted by the Cardinal and his suite, was already a famous poet. In his second year he had taken the Chancellor's medal with a poem on 'Gehenna' -- not Ravenna, Mr Clever, of course,, you think you know everything. Ravenna was by Wilde and won the Newdigate, which rather gives Oxford away. No, Gehenna was a hell of a poem, and he ruined it quite correctly with 'senna'. But hje beat this hollow in a month. Yes: of course I mean to give the chapter and verse; I told you before I would never bluff. Here's the opening chorus. "From life hath death the power to bar souls? Are souls immortal? Are souls? Are souls?" He goes on "Are souls of boys with glamour gilded? Shall not love right the wrong the pill did?" referring, apparently, to the bitter pill of punishment for sin. Cf. Milton Paradise Lost: a much duller poem. The yearning earnestness of this poem won him many a friend. The exordium is truly superb.

Are souls divine? Those crimson piles
Bear witness, while the sun-god smiles.
Reared in the desert -- blood and wine
Answer our sob "Are souls divine?"
Is that last Angel's trumpet-boom
Not puissant on the mortal's tomb?
Are souls divine? Yes, cries the heart;
By the strong argument -- of art!"

Porphyria Poppoea was indeed his Egeria -- that's the cliché; isn't it? -- in philosophy. He was in her the whole of divinity. She taught him that he could shed mortality, and feel the better for it; and also that great lesson of unselfishness. For he was never able to behold her face to face, but in a glass, darkly; and love must come to him from another, and that other one like unto himself, id est, God. As he spent many an hour, his fingers coyly straying in her wine-dark hair, while her voice, like perfume, declared the glory and the goodness of God. I wish you could see her rosy lips pursed up and puckered with merry impudence -- yet utter holiness. See them part softly to the pressure of a gentle sigh! Hullo! what's this? what golden god comes flaming from the portal, his disk cloud-capped like a volcano? Let us cover our eyes in reverence, and begone -- is it not written ``Upon whom this stone shall fall?" You may not be expert enough in Attic to read KOPROS `O TEOS you are still playing with KUPRIS in the shade, or with the tangles of Neaera's hair. Shame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise, that last infirmity of noble mind, But the fair guerdon when we hope to find And think to burst out in sudden blaze Comes the blind Fury with the abhorre'd shears, and mixes our metaphors still more, I'm afraid. Surely this is the place to insert Sir Roger Bloxam's views on Death, regarded as an art, a science, and a social pleasure.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN

OF FROU-FROU, AND FRISSON, AND DEATH.

There is no frisson possible without the element of surprise, that is, of ignorance. AS one assimilates all books, all pictures, all things beautiful, enjoyment increases, but frisson becomes rare. To be blase;' is not to be impotent. But after loving say 1500 women it is unlikely that one will often discover a `new sensation'. A man may be most potent when he does find the right woman; which was not so at eighteen, when the rustle of every skirt produced its full physiological effect. Sir Roger Bloxam had many a year of this early stage. It was not only Kitty Williams; it was every landlady's daughter, every skivey, every barmaid. But 'twas all butterfly love once, twice, and thrice, and a new flower caught his fancy. Indeed, he was short with them; a quick-firing gun was he, by Gosh. He grew into a 16-inch gun, a 42-centimetre howitzer. It takes more to load such a gun -- but 'tis not smaller and impotent because you cannot fire it 600 times a minute! Don't be afraid of being blase;', darling; you're nearer `death', it's true; but that's because you've finished life, mastered it, put it in your breeches pocket. You've made yourself ready for a higher life by your familiarity with the lower. How dreadful to be always 15 or 25 or

35 or 45! You'd get more bored every day; suicide would soon seem the one way out. Surely by 35 the earnest man who had had all opportunities and lived every minute of his time has become one with all possible beauty. Is he likely to discover a new Beethoven at 40? No: he has taken all life in; if he is an artist, he can go on to give it out to others; bar that, his life may be pleasant, but it must be nigh stagnation, as regards new impressions. He must work on his material if grow he would. Once his creative force is spent, he is ready for death; and I cannot see but that death is a logical continuation of life. Not by man's logic, but by nature's, whatever that may be; but be sure, 'tis right, when we understand it. So as the poet says ``Give me passion, give me death!" For the two are one; and death shall be the orgasm wherein the true ego escapes the man, -- to spend -- given a suitable menstruum -- in energy in recreating body and mind, like a wanton God adorning himself with flowers and laurels. ``What a serious chapter! And you haven't mentioned the one great consolation to the dying, that we have no evidence of the continued existence of Australia beyond the grave."

CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

HOW SIR ROGER BLOXAM BETHOUGHT HIM OF CHOOSING A CAREER.

A sapper, in sinking a well-shaft,
Was stricken by death with his fell-shaft
But Hindenburg said:

``He's much better dead --

``Kadaververwertungsgesellschaft!"

This is a very important passage, dear children, in the life of any man, when he decides to what he shall devote his life. For all courses are just equally vain and idle. This world is so obviously a rotten practical joke that a wise man is disgusted with it by the time he is twenty-five or so. The everlasting guffaw of God at his horseplay irritates the nerves. Only the artist who eschews the Learned Professions, and sticks to Beauty, is likely to enjoy life. But -- Usefulness -- that is not to be had. The Pragmatists define Truth as Usefulness -- and one can see the ghost of Pilate decorously concealing mouth with toga!

Sir Roger did not enter the School of Journalism, although they promised to teach him to write like this following:

HUNS CHEW PALS

EXTRA. VIA Amsterdam. June 19. The Kadaverwertungsgesellschaft have added a kitchen department by direct Imperial Order. Brochette d'Enfant Belge a;` la von Bissing is now a regular feature of the goulash-cannon, the children being spitted on bayonets, and toasted over burning cathedrals, libraries, Rembrandts, and other combustibles. The officers usually prefer the broiled breasts of violated nuns; sometimes, however, these are seethed in their own milk. But on those parts of the front where the supply of nuns and babies has given out, owing to the rigour of the British blockade, the German soldier subsists almost entirely on the bodies of his comrades. The men actually in the trenches are said to be lamentably tough, but the Landsturmiers afford excellent tripe. Men who have served in the German colonies and so ruined their livers furnish an admirable pate;' de foie gras for the tables of the higher officials. Bones not only supply glue for the Kaiser to paste his press-cuttings, and gelatine, of which motion-picture films are made, but commands a high price in Catholic Germany and Austria as authentic relics of the Saviour. The tough guts of the mountain regiments are used for violin-strings. The blood is invariably drained off and used as a substitute for red wine; this is the favourite drink of the Kaiser himself, Admiral Tirpitz, and Count von Reventlow. Hindenburg, on the contrary, eats British prisoners, raw.

(Pad this to four columns, double-leaded, and add confirmatory `statements of eye-witnesses', `what my wife's brother's wife's aunt's best friend heard from the chauffeur of somebody who once saw the Crown Prince at a review', `affidavit of an American professional divorce court witness', etc. etc.

Newspapers bribed by German gold may not accept this article; then, try them with this other.

FRENCH BOOZE STUNT

The French are openly boasting that the failures of the vines, ravaged by raiding Uhlans who have laid waste the country from the Belfort to Bayonne -- the censorship has suppressed this important news hitherto, but Truth will out -- has not diminished their supply of alcohol. It is well known that Frenchmen will not fight unless intoxicated. they have therefore replaced wine by `esprit de corps' (Translation `spirit from the body'). This beverage, a thousand times more pernicious even than absinthe, is distilled in immense retorts (etc., pile in with the scientific stuff). Frenzied by this demoniacal liquor, the wretches, although starved, diseased, crippled, -- not one per cent is between the ages of 8 and 80 -- beat off the gallant, well-ordered, determined

attacks of the noble German soldiers, who are, besides, too kind-hearted to advance against such miserable cowards.

(If this goes, try to derive 'poilu' from 'pois-e;'lu', i.e. 'selected pea' and prove that they make their soldiers into Erbsuppe. And write up Potage Bonne Femme.)

However, they tried to make Sir Roger reconsider his decision, as will be explained, by trying to rouse his indignation about the white slave traffic. Here is their little paper of statistics, from which a clever journalist can earn a fine income any day of the week, especially Sunday.

CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

FACTS ABOUT THE WHITE SLAVE TRAFFIC. 1917 A.D

Population of the United States 196,343,277

White Slavers (male) 85,671,242

ditto (female) 146,221,849

ditto (sexless) 196,343,277

Dope Fiends (all sexes) 621,387,551

Crooked politicians 91,729,984

Grafting policemen 112,478,236

Men higher up 38,211,719

Women spiders 29,322,963

Satyrs 84,716,437

Victims of lust 1,491,624,588

Sob-sisters .606

Clear-cut red-blooded straight-living young men 462-891-468

ditto including the President 462-891-469

Mrs. Wilson 1

Annual profits of White Slave Trust \$998,444,591,876,212,641,982.45 and a plugged nickel.

Tons of Chloroform used annually to stifle victims 611,343,528,941

Value of candy used annually for administering dope (average of 5 years)

\$711,812,369,745,382,118.16

ditto ditto chewing gum \$949,984,759,892,776,538.35

Pithy Points for Pornographers.

If the limousines used for kidnapping virgins were put in a straight line, it would extend from the Knickerbocker Hotel to Arcturus.

Mr. Lloyd George was awakened recently by the roar of the British barrage at Messina, a distance of 140 miles. If the shrieks of the chloroformed victims of lust in one week were simultaneous, he could hear them too -- a distance of over 3000 miles.

Yesterday, housewreckers broke into a cellar in the Bronx; they could not find a single body of a 'Ripper' victim. The unique event will be celebrated by a parade of the United Body-Snatchers. Every man, woman, and child in the United States consumes daily, on an average, fourteen and a half times his own weight in heroin.

The late Stanford White is said to have ruined 12,642 angel children in five months, when at the height of his career.

Evelyn Thaw and Lilian Russell are almost the only virgins left in the United States, if we exclude Vaudeville and cabaret performers. All others who may be proved medically to be virgins, must, according to a leading judge, be degenerates. The American woman is the purest in the world. The American man is a clean-cut, straight-living, red-blooded intellectual hero, a satyr who lives only to drag pure women to his hell of lust, the too easy dupe of the vile empresses of vice who throng every street.

Any American woman loses her virtue if she drinks a cocktail. The cocktails used for seduction in one night in the Tenderloin, if collected, would raise the level of the Ocean by eight feet and five inches.

Respectable looking old ladies are always procuresses. The action of the pure, high-minded, self-sacrificing, heroic, beautiful, fearless, dainty, pious, well-bred, chic, bully, dandy, American woman journalist has stamped all vice out of every corner of the country. Extra-marital intercourse is absolutely unknown from Maine to Texas. It only remains to tread upon the loathsome practice of intra-marital intercourse with a firm hand; it is the serpent in the Eden of Marriage. The birth-rate must be increased some thirty-fold and some sixtyfold and some an hundredfold; America needs workers.

I really cannot imagine why Sir Roger Bloxam declined this fascinating field of labour.

CHAPTER FORTY

OF SIR ROGER BLOXAM'S SECOND CHOICE OF CAREER.

If was reasonably hoped by many that, under the direct tutelage of so great and so upright a churchman as Cardinal Mentula, it would come about that Sir Roger developed into a theologian of the first water. The words "Holy Orders" were freely mentioned in connection with his name. None doubted his fundamental capacity. Yet -- could one so modest and so pious face a multitude, and deliver a sermon? 'Twas this, naught else, that determined his advisers to rehearse him. Fiat experimentatum in corpore vilo, cried they; and summoned the Master and Fellows of Saint Catherine's College to hear him, one Shrove Tuesday. It may well be that they chose the day badly; the God Pan is an ill councillor in speech and act, think you not, Euphemia?

"My text for this morning, dearly beloved; brethren," began Sir Roger, "is taken from Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans, the Twelfth Chapter and the Fourth Verse. "Many members in one body." The Fourth Verse of the Twelfth Chapter of Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans. "Many members in one body." What can be more glorious, dearly beloved; than this wonderful thought? Many members! Not one member only, not two, three or four members; not even several members; no, brethren; many members. Many members! There is no limit to the Divine Love; and in this fresh proof of the Great Mercy of God we are constrained to lift up our hearts in utter overflowing. Think of this apex and apostrophe of the Apostle, I beseech you: many members! Try to represent them to yourselves. Think of them in rows -- in files -- in squadrons. "Not in single spies, but in battalions." Think of them as the stars squandered over the whole field of fight. Think of the great loving-kindness of the Lord, his munificence, his bounty, nay, if one dare say so with reverence, his prodigality! Many members! Is it legitimate to pursue this analogy of stars, dearly beloved;? Surely we may do so. Surely we may reckon on the uniformity of His creation! So, just as no two stars are exactly alike, no two men, no two roses, we may assume that of all these many members the variety is infinite. Even as with the very noses upon our faces, where we perceive short noses, long noses, straight noses, bent noses, stumpy noses, lank noses, turned-up noses, pudgy noses, snouty noses, broken noses, red noses, pale noses, sensitive noses, vigorous noses, flabby noses, strong noses, fat noses, muscular noses, bulbous noses, vinous noses, warty noses, port-wine noses, itchy noses, greasy noses, dewy noses, Jewy noses, Hughie noses, bluey noses, ticklish noses, ready-to-blow noses, hairy noses, fairy noses, drooping noses, inquisitive noses, thoughtful noses, may it not be with these many members of which the Apostle of the Gentiles speaks with such eloquence and fervour even as it was given him of the Holy Spirit? Dearly beloved; brethren, were these two words alone -- many

members -- the very sum and apogee of the divine grace, what cause should we not have for thanksgiving? Should we not praise Him? Should we not extol Him? Yea, verily. But, by overplus and superstroke of mercy, the Magnificence of the Heavenly Bounty beggars our gratitude. How does the sublime phrase culminate? Many members. Ah, but where? Scattered and lost, as sheep not having a shepherd? Wasted as the sands of the desert? Nay, dearly beloved; 'd, it is not so! These many members are collected, concentrated, into One Body! It humbly seems possible to me that Saint Paul may have had the figure of the Empress Messalina in his mind when the Spirit of God led him to use this phrase of joy. In one body! Many Members! Many members in one body! What blessed words of comfort they are! Think of it; consider all that it implies. It might have been that all these many members were dispersed among an infinitude of bodies; it might have been that you or I might have had to eke out the exiguity of a single member with some such succeedaneum as a banana. But God is the author of all true riches; and He does not leave His servants without full provision. Many members in one body! Blesse; 'd, year blesse; 'd for ever be His name! We all of us know how unreliable is any single member; one may be weak, another weary, a third sick, a fourth grown old. Brethren, the Lord has foreseen all such calamities; He has provided against failure. In one body -- many members! Let us pray!"

We shall touch but lightly upon the painful sequel to this sermon; for a novelissim should be pleasant as ice-cream in Hell, or in New York in Summer. Suffice it to say that the congregation came up to congratulate the preacher, two by two, and then four by four, so that Sir Roger had his hands full. Ave Virgo, plena gratia! The boy remarked, after Blake, that you never knew what was enough till you knew what was too much -- and abandoned theology.

CHAPTER FORTH-ONE

HOW SIR ROGER BLOXAM REPUDIATED A NAVAL CAREER.

Carissima, do not fret; I shall not be horridly technical. I hardly know the difference between a midshipmate and a stopcock. My aquatics have been mostly on Cam and Indus. I can tell a brig from a schooner if I am drunk enough; and I know that once aboard a lugger, the girl is mine. I often recognise nautical words, such as fore-top-mizzen-spanker and taffrail-boom and trysail and careen and rum, but I'm not sure of the meaning of any but those `terms of endearment common among sailors' which, oh well! We must do our little best. We must bring a whiff of salty spindrift across the bows of our novellissim; bos'un, pipe all hands! Half-a-gale o' wine

nor'nor'east and a pint to the nor'ard. Typhoon off the port quarter, sir! `Bout ship, lads, hearty, yo-heave-ho! Ay, ay, sir! Quartermaster, heave the lead! Ay, ay, sir! One-and-a-half, one, mark six, one and eleven three, by God, she's struck! We're sinking by the poop! Mr. Carpenter, sound the fo`mast! Ay, ay, sir. Cyclone from sou'sou'west right of the larboard quarter. B'gosh, the barometer's dropping. 29,28,27 -- glory be, it's gone to zero. Oh! cracked the glass -- may be we'll live through it then! Man the pumps, lads! Yo-heave-ho! We're in the doldrums, and the ship's in stays. Put out the best bower, and lower the yawl! Ay, ay, sir! Run up the pennant to the fore halyards! Ring astern! Stand by to repel boarders! Our cutlasses! Ay, ay, sir! Show the dirty swabs etcetera etcetera!

Oh, I suppose it could be done; but please God it never shall be: simply rotten, showing off, what? Per Bacco, a straight narrative style is bad enough. In fact, between you and me, Lavinia, darling, it may be that some of our nautical writers conceal a certain disability in this respect by overloading their frigates with all that ship Ahoy stuff, eh?

So -- driven by the mephitic blast of the Simoom, Her Majesty's Ship `Electric Eel' plunged through the ruddy foam of the Red Sea. ``Suez!" cried the lookout suddenly; ``Suez Canal!" Devil take you all, my darlings! I'm not going to bother to finish this rotten chapter. It's obviously meant to lead up to a feeble joke about naval affairs being too shallow for a man of Sir Roger's penetraton. Let's get on to something jolly -- why not the story of the Whistling Coon?

CHAPTER FORTY-TWO

SIR ROGER'S OBJECTIONS TO THE STUDY OF LAW.

I shall leave this chapter entirely to the imagination of the reader -- see Chapter XXXIV for reflections on the morality of this procedure.

CHAPTER FORTY-THREE

THE OMNIFIC AND GRANDIOSE INTERMEZZO OF THE WHISTLING COON.

In the antechamber of the Rosicrician's cabinet stood a strangely carven pedestal, on which the young and elegant woman whom we have already introduced to the gentle reader as Flotilla was leaning. Her lustrous eyes exuded unfathomable sorrow as she gazed into the Magical Mirror of Zamboni. In those astral horizons she saw many a mystery ineffable, many a wonder mirific, many an arcanum irresolvable even in the limpid luminance of theophany. But, search as she might, her soul shrank from the Threshold of the Great White Way.

(That, you see, is how we link Lytton and Irvin S. Cobb; that is how we get from Bologna to Broadway.)

On the stage of a famous variety theatre, by Castor and Pollux, there stood a slight pale figure -- fill it up from the waste paper basket, please, Mr. Dollar-a-Syllable! -- his name don't matter; in the perfesh, he was The Whistling Coon. And in the audience was a -- oh! you know: I'm a tired novellissimist to-night -- call her Ethel. She wanted to get his job. She went to the stage door, and sent in her card. (By Serapis, this is a python of a story, cut it how you will!) He came out. They met. "Walk as we talk?" "Yes." They walked. (And now my style's getting like Aime;e Gouraud's, or whoever wrote 'Moon-madness' for her.) Well, presently the Whistling Coon said to Ethel: "I suppose you have whistled before?" She modestly replied: "I hardly like to call it whistling, you know, to you." "But you can whistle?" "Oh, well, I suppose I must say I can whistle." And he smiled a long, low, sad, subtle smile -- and they walked on. Now they were in the depths of the Park -- and he smiled a long, low, sad, subtle smile -- and he said "Now you can't."

CHAPTER FORTY-THREE

VIVE L'ENTENTE CORDIALE!

Well I am aware that this is a second edition of Chapter XLIV. But did not the first performance deserve an encore? Good.

Glabrous was Cardinal Mentula as an emu's oef, chauv from his nasence; I ditties you that there in the sub of this over, not is this not? 'Twas as the crane of an old marcher in the ledges of the Shepherd-Follies; but it redded like a spall of agnew at the point, or like the altered drake at the blood, when bezin was. The nayne was scarce grander than a jamb of pullet, but never an hom dressed himself pluss superb, and he brilled like a spey, the spey of Arthur, Excalibur, or like the spew of Nimrod. Yes, he flamboyed like a stoil, like an aster tumbling, nay, semblable to the solil at haught south, in stey.

Perhaps we had better change the subject.

CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR

"WASHED IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB."

As Verlaine says, c'est a;` recommencer -- though that only proves -- to my mind -- that it was not properly finished. You don't expect an Eight to row over the course again ten minutes after the race, do you? These machine-gun men advertise their clumsiness, not their force.

The point is that we've got so mixed up over the chapters that we had better begin again well ahead of the hunt.

And her name is Mrs. Hunt.

And she's ordered to the front

With no hair on -- hair on -- hair on

her old toot -- toot.

Good night, everybody! (No, not you, Belgacem!)

CHAPTER MII

OF HOW SIR ROGER BLOXAM MET MR. HANK FARRIS.

How? Why, how should they meet, Clorinda? It was at lunch at Romano's, let me tell you that, in the grand days of their hors d'oeuvre, and when the cheese was ``le Fromage de M. Fromage."

There was a pretty decent Moselle, too, -- oh well, 'tis in vain to repine! Et puis, les filles! Merde pour New York! No matter. You shall have a new automobile, Sadie, if you can tell me why

Hank Farris, on seeing Sir Roger, was reminded of a night long ago when he had been driving with the Empress Euge;nie, poor dear fat old thing! and found himself in the Marlborough Club with nothing to do, when who should stroll up Pall Mall but dear old Willie Gladstone; ``Frank, dear old top," cried the Premier, ``let's wander up to Bond Street, and look for a bit of fluff!"

``Charmed, dear man!" I murmured, and off we went -- and ran right into Tom Carlyle. ``Ouch, ye sculduddery rascallions!" cried Carlyle, ``a braw day the day! D'ye no ken I'll gang whiles we`ye!" This was the very devil; Willie couldn't possibly do any business with that peevish old

fool on his arm. But as luck would have it, we found the Prince of Wales at the corner of Park Place, groping in the gutter for a shilling he had dropped, and there was Lily in the hansom screaming, and the cabman swearing that his fare was half-a-crown. ``Kommen Sie nur!" I cried in German ``Ned, Liebchen, wie geht's?" (The Prince spoke hardly any English, you know.)

``Donner und Blitzen," ye yelled, ``der verfluchte Schweinkopf!" and went on to curse the cabby in thick gutteral broken English. I tossed the man a sovereign -- jthe thing was becoming scandalous -- Lily jumped out of the cab, and in her hysteria threw her arms around Willie's neck. ``Take her home," I whispered, ``It's the only way out." For already a little crowd had collected, and any one of us might have been recognised at any moment! So poor dear Gladdie had to take on the Langtry -- he was never his own man again, through Hutch did his best, dear old Jonathan, what a man he was! As for Ned, he took Tom down to Marlborough House, of

course, I packed them off, and damned glad I was to get out of it so easily. Poor old Tom! I met him again a year later at Lady Devonshire's. ``Been back to Ned's, Tom?" I cried laughingly. He frowned at me. ``Na," says he, ``na! once a philosopher -- twice a pile-driver!" I don't know what the devil he meant. So I fired off Pokilothron' Athanat' Aphrodite at him on the chance of a hit, and he went off growling to talk to Bobbie Salisbury, just as Alf Tennyson came up, and pulled out the Manuscript of In Memoriam, and asked me to put it right for him. ``In Memoriam," I cried, ``In Victoriam, you mean!" digging his ribs, ``through as a matter of fact I don't believe he ever had the old girl!"

The effect of this sparkling anecdote was great upon Sir Roger Bloxam. I'll tell you about it some other time when I'm not so lazy, unless I forget, as I shall, for yours sakes, try to do.

On with the revel!

CHAPTER FORTY-SIX

OF THE DESPAIR OF SIR ROGER BLOXAM ANENT HIS CAREER; AND OF THE APPEAL THAT HE MADE TO THE CARDINAL.

Well, you know, it was a bit thick, eh, what? Time was passing; it's a damned bad habit of his; and Sir Roger was no nearer to the choice of a career than when he first put on his long trousers. His despair was positively frightful to witness. He ate, drank, smoked, rode, played cards or chess, tennis or cricket, went canoeing up to Byron's Fool, or pulled a skiff down to Dilton, and in a thousand other similar ways strove to express the anguish, agony, anxiety, worry, torture, grief, pain, torment, horror, apprehension, woe and so on that bit, clawed, scratched, tore at his vitals. It preyed upon hi so much that his favourite bull-dog, whose name was John Thomas, did not notice it. Nevertheless -- and that reminds me of a story. It was at a music-hall in the old days, and the manager came forward to introduce Miss Joconde Jujube, or whatever her name was. A drunken man in the stalls rose to protest: ``She's the lousiest old cow on the stage." The manager, unperturbed: ``That may bery well be, sir; nevertheless, she -- will -- perform."

Now, dears, get your laugh over, and we'll go on with the Awful Despair of Sir Roger. I feared that without the comic relief you might have lost your reasons.

For I fear that you will be in suspense yet awhile. I raised your hopes with the chapter-heading; you thought naturally enough that the appeal to the Cardinal would fix the whole caboodle. But alas! ``Oh woe to me that have to sing this thing!" as Victor Neuburg so selfishly says -- for his

hearers are in still more evil case -- through Sir Roiger did indeed consult Cardinal Mentula -- the dwarf was absolutely absorbed in Browning.

CHAPTER MIV

OF THE DESPAIR OF THE NOVELISSIMIST; ANENT HIS CAREER; AND OF THE APPEAL THAT HE MADE.

`Twere unreasonable to expect me to write a novelissim at Seaside, Long Island, with its vomit of sour-smelling canaille. Thence did I flee to the verandah; the mob is but a distant yowl, and the winds from the bay. But my legs are scorched by the whips of my great Father; and despite all manner of grease, they burn. Yet -- what else is there to do? Life's naught to me but worship, art, or love; and love's impossible amid these cattle -- 'tis plain bestiality. And so Religion too wears thin, since Love under Will is the law. What's left but art? What's art but St. Paul's `faith,' the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen? Then art should be able to move mountains: oh if one could only dump the Central Asiatic Plateau on to this infernal country! It's a curious thing, perhaps even a little morbid, the way in which hatred of America eats up all one's other passions. It's omnipresent. It's not pure hatred; it's loathing and disgust. And it certainly does interfere with the writing of a novelissim; for I'd more easily write sonnets when I'm seasick.

Now, upon what God shall I call? It's a far cry to Lochawe! There are no gods on the long-distance telephone. The most disreputable outcast of Olympus would hide this shame elsewhere -- so long as there was a latrine or a cicada outside America he would not haunt their pinchback palaces. I fear me I must call on their own deity, the dollar; and use him to get out.

CHAPTER MV

HERIOC RESOLUTION OF THE NOVELISSIMIST.

No, by the anvil of lame Vulcan, I'll not budge. I'll dree my weird. I'll take it out in art. Bricks without straw, by the Phoenix Wand of Cheops, and by the Crowns of the Upper and the Lower Nile! A puritan community can never breed artists, for they feed on beauty; and in America one has to go for beauty to the caterpillar. Yes, there are some pretty decent insects here, I must admit. Thus comforted, let us return to those enthralling vicissitudes in the career of Sir Roger Bloxam which were interrupted about a month ago, something suddenly, by my taking over The International.

You'll remember that Cardinal Mentula was absorbed in Browning. (The reader is requested not to attempt to parse Browning.) What's the object? cried Sir Roger. The Cardinal handed him a copy of Tristram Shandy. "How are you working?" Mentula passed him a Gulliver's Travels. "Is it hard?" Down came a copy of The Channings. "What's the colour of his hair?" He produced the Elegy in a Country Churchyard. "And how do you feel?" The busy churchman pointed to Jude the Obscure. "Hot work, eh?" The Cardinal laughingly opened a Tam-o Shanter. "Who is he?" An Erewhon was immediately indicated. "What's the best part of him?" Cardinal Mentula got out a volume of sermons by Dean Hole. "How do you know?" Evangeline was on the table in an instant....

I could go on for an hour; but I do hate all this bloody cleverness.

CHAPTER FORTY-NINE

OF THE HALT CAUSED BY THE ABSENCE OF A NOVELISSIMATRIX; AND HOW THE LORD TOOK PITY UPON THE INNOCENCE OF FATHER BROWN.

I am perfectly well aware, thank you, darling, that a month has slipped by, without my doing a line of the novelissim. You see, I hadn't time; for I had just taken up the work of The International. But I would have found time if I had had the One Thing Needful. And what's that, say you, Ambrosia? Natuer-lich -- a novelissimatrix. Gewiss. I'm really rather grateful to dear Maitland. He sent me to the Murray Hill Baths, where, by the Missing Section of Osiris, I met a Popular Movie Writer in the flesh. He calls his films "Shades and Shadows," "Right or Wrong?" and sich, and he talks as he writes. He spends a night of drunken orgie with a lady, and, on leaving, thanks her for a very pleasant evening. I didn't know that these things were! Then Maitland also told me of a Cingalese Joing, where I could get a really truly curry. And of course I ran right into my beloved Catherine. She was sitting in a little inner room, by the window, in the twilight. I could not see her clearly. But her magnetism drew me over to her. She was in a coarse white dress, smoking endless cigarettes, and drinking many an unfathomable seidel of beer. She looks a little like Soror Hilarion, and, a little like Frank Harris, and altogether like some kind of Chinese dog -- a barbarian brigand kind from beyond the Wall. So I shall call her Tchao, and that will be all right, won't it? I can lie about on the bed in our little room on Central Park West, while she wraps up the laundry in copies of the Evening Telegram, and write my nice novelissim. And, praise the pigs, I didn't have to appeal to the dollar; it was Father himself that gave me this dog. I'm telling you; it's a most amazing thing; the dear old boy is there with the

goods from noon to noon. ``Everybody works but Father" is no song for our little me; nage, by Wilkins! I'm a member of the Upper circles, by Aaron's rod that budded! This is the Inner Life, all right, my dear old H. P. B.! She's a Pennsylvania Dutch girl, this Tchao, no Frankfurter about her; but she's the Original Hot Dog. Also, b'gosh, one of Nature's children; she has no acquired technique; it's all talent ab ovo. But what talent! No: it's pure genius; she doesn't know how, and she doesn't know why; but she gets there. She inscribes me among the lyric poets, and the rest follow as Horace once indicated. A Week-end in this house needs the very opposite kind; but have no fear! In fact, your only dread be this, that I cannot find time to write Our Story.

CHAPTER MVII

REFLEXIONS UPON FREE WILL AND DESTINY: CALCULATED TO ELUCIDATE THE COMPLEX OF THE CAREER OF SIR ROGER BLOXAM.

My labour, most ambiguous Henri, will indeed have been waste matter, a very newspaper, if I have failed to bring into assimilation with your Vinnam the F.A.C.T. that whatever Sir Roger was, he was, and be damned to you! How could he have been otherwise? If he could, he would. And as otherwise I should have drawn him. But he being himself (poor devil!) he was just that. See you not how even our dreams, our wishes, all that we are, dates back to hidden ancestor-work? Only the Freudians go not far enough; the glowing seed that made my mind so brilliant had its origin in the Father of all brilliance, Our Lord the Sun. Thus once again, by yet another path, we reach the brave ``There is no part of me which is not of the Gods." Rejoice, o brothers, we are altogether of the divine substance. We neither think, nor feel, nor perceive, nor are, any other thing than that all-bounteous, all-beautiful One, that Lord in his splendour and his ecstasy that cometh and goeth in his chariot upon high, giving light and praise, yet neither moveth nor uttereth any Voice! For there is nothing in the Universe that is not of that Unity -- rejoice! rejoice! All paths are spectra, in the prism of consciousness, of that One Light; so that it mattered not to Sir Roger whether he were tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor, gentleman, apothecary, ploughboy, thief. Nor does it matter to you, does it, what I do with him? Little ones, it seems to me enough, maybe too much, that I should do aught at all. Very good, then: Sir Roger entered the Diplomatic Service. That finishes that, and I can take Tchao for a stroll in the Park.

CHAPTER MVIII

OF THE VICISSITUDES OF NOVELISSIMAKING, AN EXAMPLE.

Observe! Just as I was ready to begin, Tchao has taken to looking like a potato, and I have to call her Murphy.

CHAPTER MIX
OF CANALS.

The very A.B.C. of True Love is that a Canal is either Banal or -- not. Amen to that, with all my heart, quoth Sir Roger, and applied himself to the brandy. At the end of a long life let me lift up my voice and beaer witness to the eternal glory of Pan!

CHAPTER MX

OF THINGS HUMAN AND DIVINE; BEING OTHER EPIGRAMS LABORIOUSLY AND PERTINENTLY CONSTRUCTED BY SIR ROGER BLOXAM, IN THE VERY PRIMROSE AND WOOD ANEMONE OF HIS YOUTH.

To a pretty woman I prefer an ugly one, the uglier the better; for it is better to have a relief than a shock when I turn to the business end.

I hate Heine; for it is impossible to deny that he was a poet and impossible to deny that he was a Jew.

American women are anxious to safeguard the purity of their girls, because if they make it difficult for men to get them, they will be able to hire them for less money.

Woman is necessary to a man as a sewerage system is to a city. Cities on mountains need less attention in this respect; live therefore in the City of God upon the Mountain Abiegnus!

``It's love that makes the world go round." And round! -- and round! -- and round!!!

The University of Oxford was founded by the son of a butcher. (The bitterest remark that ever left those amiable lips.)

(In America) I love American women (-- it makes me think I am crossing the Atlantic Ocean.)

(Meaning: all A. W.'s have immense vesicae and I loathe to be in America.)

A woman's love. A play in 3 acts. For Mathematicians.

Act I 23

Act II 69

Act III 606

I like Lionel Parrish because he arouses in me precisely the sense of satisfaction which I have in regarding an exceptionally healthy motion.

Even when things are at the worst, one can always thank God that They haven't got claws.

Lord Kitchener died like a gallant gentleman. A classic example of protective mimicry.

Women are like toilet paper. Use them for your comfort and convenience, then put them where they belong.

Woman.

You dangle a carrot in front of her nose

And she goes wherever the carrot goes.

Cardinal Mentula once told me: The End justifies the means. Morals, conventions, etc. are but the codifications of those means which experience has shown to lead most directly to the end.

Exceptions occur, so that every act is a matter for individual judgment. Up, guards, and at 'em!

A philosopher reminds me of a guinea-pig chasing its own tail.

Half the joy of acquiring a new mistress is relief at getting rid of the old one.

Humanity did well indeed to honour Charles Darwin; he did his utmost to provide it with decent connexions.

Cardinal Mentula once began a play.

He. ``We've had our quarrel; but, on the whole, you've done what I wanted you to, so -- ''

You can make a joke that even an Englishman can understand, and only use two letters. Even an Englishman's imagination can supply the rest. -- One doesn't have even to use the two letters.

Married people are socially impossible; for you either make love to the woman, and lose his friendship; or you don't, and lose hers.