

8th avenue to room 305 at No. 47 W. 42d street. Its new officers are John T. McRoy, president; John J. Hopper, vice president; Fred R. Seemans, treasurer; Jos. Dana Miller, general secretary; E. H. Underhill, financial secretary; Grace Isabel Colbron, recording secretary, and the following directors: James MacGregor, Benjamin Doblin, F. C. Leubuscher, Ernest Engholm and Otto David.

—The Federal court at Indianapolis on the 13th, on writ of habeas corpus, discharged William J. Burns, the detective, from custody under indictment of a State grand jury for kidnapping J. J. McNamara. The Federal judge, A. B. Anderson, decided that the requisition of the Governor of California, when allowed by the Governor of Indiana, created a right of arrest and extradition under the Constitution of the United States which Federal courts have jurisdiction to protect. The indictments have consequently been quashed by the State court. [See The Public, vol. xii, p. 682.]

—The old great granite building of the Equitable Life Assurance Society in New York City, covering the block bounded by Broadway, Nassau, Cedar and Pine streets, was, except for its fire-proof vaults, entirely destroyed by fire on the 9th. The property loss was roughly put at \$6,000,000. Six lives were lost. Cash and securities to from \$300,000,000 to \$400,000,000 were removed intact on the 11th from the vaults of the Equitable Trust Company and the Mercantile Trust Company in the ruined building. The vault of the Equitable Assurance Society contains about \$300,000,000 more and is still to be reached.

## PRESS OPINIONS

Herbert S. Bigelow.

Cleveland (Ohio) Plain Dealer (Dem.), Jan. 10.—Herbert S. Bigelow of Cincinnati is to be president of the Constitutional Convention. He was the logical man for the place. The convention is composed of a clear majority of radicals, and the person who best represents this prevailing sentiment among the delegates is he who has preached the now triumphant doctrines in and out of season for years past.

Chicago Daily Tribune (Rep.), Jan. 13.—Mr. Bigelow has been an ardent advocate of the Initiative and Referendum for a decade, and will use all his influence to write them into the new Constitution. He places this first among the measures he represents.

Youngstown (Ohio) Vindicator (Ind.), Jan. 12.—The majority of the Constitutional Convention showed in its first short session that it is not made up of a set of gullible amateurs as the leaders of the minority plainly supposed. The attempt to commit the Convention to the rule of a Committee on Committees, to be made up of one member from each Congressional District to be selected by all of the members from each District, was a transparent

device to hand over the Convention to the control of a designing minority. The scheme on the surface looked plausible, but it took Doty of Cuyahoga but a few minutes to expose the clumsy attempt at cunning, crafty manipulation so that its failure was inevitable and prompt. The majority of progressives will have to keep themselves awake, but the first session proved them much keener witted than their adversaries.

## RELATED THINGS

### CONTRIBUTIONS AND REPRINT

#### PERSIA—MORITURA.

John Galsworthy in the London Nation of December 30, 1911.\*

Home of the free! Protector of the weak!  
Shall we and this great grey ally make sand  
Of all a nation's budding green, and wreak  
Our winter will on that unhappy land?  
Is all our steel of soul dissolved and flown?  
Have fumes of fear encased our heart of flame?  
Are we with panic so deep-rotted down  
In self, that we can feel no longer shame  
To league, and steal a nation's hope of youth?  
Oh! Sirs! Is our star merely cynical?  
Is God reduced? That we must darken truth,  
And break our honor with this creeping fall?

Is freedom but a word—a flaring boast?  
Is self-concern horizon's utter sum?  
If so—today let England die, and ghost  
Through all her godless history to come!  
If, Sirs, the faith of men be force alone,  
Let us ring down—the farce is nothing worth!  
If life be only prayer to things of stone—  
Come death! And let us, friends, go mocking  
forth!  
But if there's aught, in all Time's bloody hours,  
Of justice, if the herbs of pity grow—  
O native land, let not those only flowers  
Of God be desert-strewn and withered now!



## LITTLE STORIES OF MINOR REFORMERS.

### 3. The Woman Who Only Wanted Facts. For The Public.

The young school teacher had been working hard in a new district, trying to settle neighborhood quarrels and build up a run-down school. He felt that something quite worth while had come out of his long winter's work; but when the term ended, and his friend Roberts came in one midnight, down from the pines of Shasta, and

\*See recent news articles in The Public on Persia's loss of independence and constitutional government under coercion from Russia supported by England. Volume xiv, pages 1196, 1219, 1244, 1267, 1312; current volume, pages 37, 62.

shouted at his window: "Come out, and saddle, and take a trip with me, and have adventures," he rose with joy to the suggestion.

They slept awhile under some oaks by the river; they breakfasted with the ferryman, and crossed the Sacramento, to ride into another county. The old ferryman heard them telling mountain stories to each other, and he laughed aloud.

"Better go back, boys; don't go down into Tehama with such yarns. The Woman who asks Questions will pick you up and make you sorry for yourselves."

"And who is she?" asked the young school-teacher.

"She is a good, honest lady, an' well brung up. Everybody respects her. But she has taken to the business of straightenin' every mis-statement or piece of careless talk she hears, an' she is in dead earnest about reformin' all of us. Them stories you've been relatin' to each other is good ones, but she would say: 'Air them yarns gospel truth in all particulars?' An' she would make you sing small. Onc't she rose up right in a public meetin' an' called time on the speaker. You boys had better go back to Shasta."

"This is the adventure," said Roberts. "Never mind her name, nor where she lives. The fates will arrange a meeting."

They rode on together, and into one of the larger towns of the valley. "Real oysters for us, not out of a can," said one of them, as they entered a restaurant. It was crowded, and a tall, quiet, well-dressed, middle-aged woman sat on the opposite side of the same table. They bowed to her and went on with their talk.

"Really," said the young school teacher, "We ought to have some beer, for we have been living over a year on fried pork and Missourian coffee, with nothing else whatever."

"Stop slandering Missouri," said Roberts. "It's truly a fine American State, and lots of good coffee-makers come out of it. You never seem to get over Mrs. Sammy Parm's five-gallon coffee pot which she kept on the back of the stove all winter without emptying it, merely dipping out a cupful of grounds and putting in a cupful of coffee three times a day. Her coffee sent three teachers to the county hospital before you boarded there, and when you persuaded her to empty and scald the pot and make a new start we heard of it all the way from Igo to Horsetown by a special messenger."

At this juncture the woman opposite took a hand in the conversation by leaning forward and saying to Roberts in a well-bred and attractive voice:

"Pardon me, but I wish to ask you if it is the exact truth that the coffee you speak of did actually send three teachers to the hospital?" Then turning to the young school teacher she added:

"And did you really live a year on nothing but coffee and pork?"

"Madam," said Roberts, "we are your obliged servants, but I trust you will still further enlighten us on this matter."

She knit her brows and shook her head gently. "Sir," she said, "I fear I shall find it hard to explain myself. But you and your friend may not be aware that you appear to have been telling falsehoods. Do you think that your remarks set forth the plain, unadorned, literal and exact truth, as if you were a sworn witness in a courtroom?"

"No, madam," replied Roberts. "My feeble story was an innocent exaggeration, meant to promote cheerfulness and aid digestion."

She sighed, a long, heart-felt sigh, and at once nailed her colors, so to speak, on the outer walls.

"That is just it," she replied. "And you are teachers! Everywhere there is a departure from the good old rule that absolute truth-speaking is the one great virtue. Children are told fairy tales; young persons read novels, romances and poetry. There is even a belief in Santa Claus. Of course, we live in an atmosphere of what you call innocent exaggerations, but which seem to me plain perversions of the truth. Under such circumstances it becomes extremely difficult for anyone to really recognize a fact when they meet it. In my own case I may as well admit that I very seldom meet a person whose conversation simply gives the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

The young men looked around the room; everyone within earshot was listening with delighted attention. They looked at the troubled and very earnest fact of the woman before them. They looked in doubt at each other. Then Roberts rose to the occasion.

"Madam," he said with profound earnestness, "you can believe me when I say that both of us recognize and respect your point of view. There is far too much falsehood in our social sayings, and in most human affairs. There may well be differences of opinion in regard to the best methods of combatting this evil."

"There is only one way," she answered, "and that is to speak the exact, unadorned truth yourself, and to bear witness on all occasions against everything which departs from that standard."

"Madam," said Roberts in a voice of utter sincerity and persuasiveness, "how many men and women in this imperfect world have reached that level?"

Her air of gentle but profound combativeness slowly disappeared. In a voice as quiet as Roberts' own, she replied: "I cannot tell, but certainly not myself."

"And I myself, wish to become more truthful," said Roberts. "So we agree in this respect and doubtless in much more. Let us go into the pub-

lic square yonder, and sit on a bench under those elms and talk together, the three of us."

"I should like that," she told him, "but you must finish your meal, and I will wait over there."

"Madam," said the young school teacher, "according to its sign this restaurant is open day and night. There will be many more oysters later. My mother and sisters would be grieved, believe me, if they thought that we could keep you waiting like that." He paid for the untouched oysters, and the three went out together to the elms.

"There," as Roberts afterwards said, "We introduced ourselves to each other, and then the Woman who asks Questions told us more of her views, and how she came to take them up so hard. She had suffered even more than is usual in life from the petty and bewildering prevarications, concealments and dishonesties of those who were closely related to her. She was high-minded, and intensely loyal to her ideals of truth, but with all her abilities and really good education, she had not even the smallest gleam of humor, and practically no sense of proportion. She was desperately and painfully literal. So pathetic and yet so terrible a social reformer we had never before met with. And still we somewhat helped the situation; and then we went back, and had two plates of oysters apiece."

"What on earth could you and the other teacher say to that foolish woman?" asked the man to whom this last was told.

"We tried to show her that much of what she bore witness against was unimportant, and a thing to laugh at. She said she couldn't laugh at anything of the sort. Then we showed her the importance of concentration, and as we found she could really write very able articles—she showed us several—we told the proofreader story."

"What was that?"

"O! just about an old proofreader on a big newspaper who had the inside and was a tremendous student and worker. He pointed out by letter the next day every error of fact in the previous issue."

"Over his own name?"

"No, over an assumed name. And he became a terror, a wonder, a walking pestilence of fact-speaking. But we didn't tell her that. We showed her how she could give up all the lesser lines of her work, and center herself on letters to the newspapers, and articles and pamphlets, correcting every misstatement of facts that could be proven by quoted authorities. We urged her to sign the big and important ones with her own name, and the little ones 'Truthseeker' or 'Veritas.' So we left her, somewhat modified, and greatly encouraged."

"When this matter gets out," said the listener, "you will be slammed by every newspaper in the Sacramento Valley!" She has begun it already. And she does it very well indeed. When she finds

a glaring error in a newspaper article, and the editor doesn't wish to take it back, 'Veritas' just sends it to the rival sheet, with a scorching little footnote."

"Tell those editors," responded Roberts, "that if they will thank her, and then send her lots of novels to cut to pieces in their review columns, she may develop into a famous critic, and let up on the rest of it."

"Not novels," said the young school teacher, who had heard all this. "Tell them to let her review histories, and every sort of so-called fact-books, especially those that we use in public schools and other institutions of learning. Thus she will have much happiness and great fame."

CHARLES HOWARD SHINN.

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## BOOKS

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### THE GIFT OF SLEEP.

*The Gift of Sleep.* By Bolton Hall. Published by Moffat, Yard & Co., New York.

Although Mr. Hall tells many good and beautiful things about sleep, the best thing he tells us about it is that we ought not to worry if we do not get it. "The fact," he says, "that we confound rest and sleep makes us regard wakefulness as an evil." The popular notion that all of us need eight hours is sheer nonsense. One man may need less than another, and may need less at one time of his life than at another time. "Sleep," says the author, "is a natural need, and, like any other natural need, varies in degree in different persons. . . . Drowsiness is a sign that we ought to sleep, just as hunger is a sign that we ought to eat. Natural wakefulness means that we ought not to sleep. . . . We are slowly learning that there is no need or function of the body or of the mind that is exactly the same in all individuals, or that is always the same even in the same individual." Napoleon, Frederick of Prussia, and Richard Baxter were satisfied with four hours of sleep, and the author says that Paul Leicester Ford told him that he found four hours enough. Bishop Taylor is cited as believing in three hours, and I have somewhere read that Helmholtz predicted that with the great improvement in artificial light men would come to two hours of sleep.

However, the author gives us in this book many wise suggestions about going to sleep, some physical, such as deep breathing, and some spiritual, such as peace of mind. Much of the book deals with the ideas of harmony, peace, and rest, tells how we may attain these blessings, and so becomes a sort of philosophy of life. The reader is in danger of suspecting that some of the sermons might have been condensed into one, for there is nothing startlingly new in the wise and