

"I should think," said the traveler, "that his deference would be as disgusting as his poverty."

"He himself is disgusting," said the lady.

"Hum!" said the traveler.

The lady adjusted her golden pinch-nose.

"As an expert in these matters," said the charitable person, "I advise caution. I observe that he is not yet destitute. Even now he is about to eat a piece of bread."

"We," said the lord of the land, "are as earnest as you in our desire to help the deserving. I may say I approve of your aims—at any rate, to a large extent. But the time is not yet ripe. Let us come tomorrow."

They led the traveler away and talked kindly with him, and he said, "Hum!"

The next day they came to the field, and found the laborer dying. The traveler spoke with undue warmth as he climbed hastily over the fence. The others followed him through a gate. They found the traveler about to give food and drink to the laborer.

"Stay," said the charitable person, "you are evidently unaware of the iniquity of indiscriminate-ness."

"I can discriminate between a full man and an empty one," said the traveler.

"That," said the charitable person, "is irrelevant. Let me investigate the case."

Thereupon he questioned the laborer with great skill, which the lord and the lady were able to appreciate. The traveler was quite untrained, and merely fidgeted.

In due time the charitable person said: "I think this man is really destitute. It is time to help him a little."

"But, damn it, the man's dead," cried the traveler.

The other three were shocked, but they behaved with dignity.

"At least," said the lord of the land, "he died in a state of independence."

"And," said the lady, "uncomplaining, though perhaps ungrateful."

"And," said the charitable person, "he was not demoralized by aid before he was really destitute. There is even now a crust in his pocket, which I willingly overlook."

"He grew the corn for it," said the traveler.

"In my field," said the lord of the land.

"And yet," said the traveler, "he lived in abject poverty. It is disgusting."

"It is," said the lady; "but we will not reproach him for it now he is dead."

"Hum!" said the traveler.

"Besides," she added, kindly, but with conviction, "this sort of people knows no better."

"It is true, madam," said the traveler, "or he would have kept more corn for himself."

The lady raised her golden pinch-nose, and regarded the traveler with a frigid and calculated

stare. The lord of the land unconsciously assumed the attitude of his ancestors' portraits.

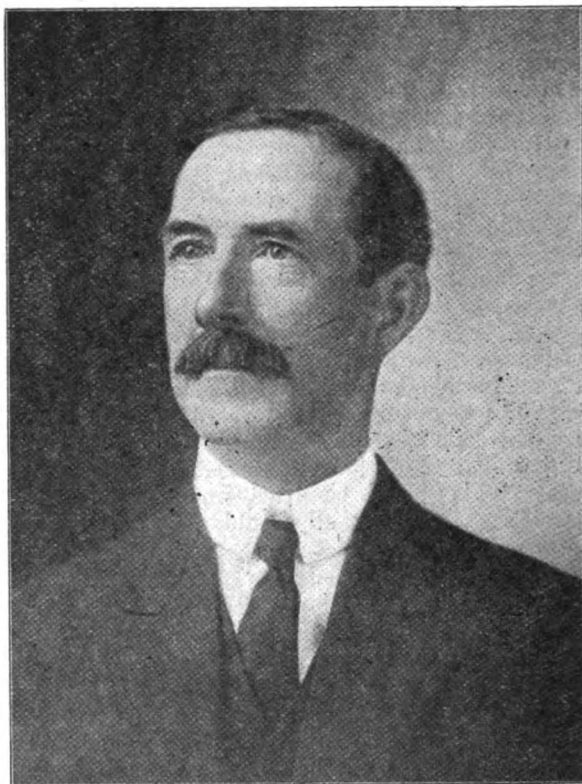
The charitable person moved a little away. He coughed.

"I think," said the traveler, "it is time to make things hum."

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CHARLES D. HUSTON.

Charles D. Huston, Mayor of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, for two terms (vol. viii, pp. 783, 822), and who upon the adoption there of the Des Moines plan of city government by commission was elect-



ed one of the five councilmen (vol. xi, p. 8), was born in Ohio in 1861. At the age of 13 he began learning the printer's trade, with which he is still connected; and in 1887 he settled in Cedar Rapids, where he served in the city council from 1898 to 1902, when he was elected for his first term as Mayor. At his election to the council two years ago, under the new charter, he had a majority of 2301 over the highest defeated candidate, out of a total of 6050, notwithstanding that he is a life long Democrat whilst Cedar Rapids is a Republican town; but at the election last spring the weight of partisanship was too heavy for him and he suffered defeat. Of Mr. Huston a fellow townsman says: "You can't mention a thing that Cedar Rapids has worth mentioning, without coupling it with the name of Charles D. Huston; the most

upright public servant we have ever had, the best hated man by those whose interests are selfish, the best loved man by those whose desires are for justice." His name is especially associated with the ownership by the municipality of its water plant and water power. Mr. Huston is a Democrat who learned his democracy from the teachings of Henry George.

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THE TRUTH AND JOHN BILLINGTON.

Leonard H. Robbins, in the Newark, N. J., Evening News.

John Billington was a leader of thought in a city proud and great,
And Billington's busy goose-quill was a pillar in the State,
And Billington's fame had borne his name to the country's furthest ends.
A powerful man was Billington, with powerful men for friends.

A Spirit stood by Billington's bed, one howling wintry night,
And Billington lifted a startled head and stared at the Thing in White.
"Away with you! To the devil with you!" he gasped, in a sleepy dread.
"You have sent me thither a thousand times; I am tired of the trip," it said;
"A thousand times you have heard me pray for half a chance and the light,
A thousand times you have turned me away—you shall hear me out to-night.
Though you waved me away with your pen to-day, you shall listen now, forsooth;
You shall hearken well to the tale I tell. I am the Spirit of Truth."

A phantom picture flashed in air at the foot of Billington's bed,
And Billington gazed in mild amaze, and his eyes grew big in his head.
He looked at a home of poverty. He saw a dying child;
He saw a young girl, sunk in shame, and a mother who never smiled;
A son bowed down and sullen, bearing the brand of a thief,
And a father hopeless and helpless, too sodden with rum for grief.
And over the picture, in letters of fire, "Want" was the word he read,
And Billington scowled to the Spirit, "What business of mine?" he said.

He looked and saw where, overtime, women and children toiled
Till worthless human hands grew weak and precious goods were spoiled.
He saw a boss with ugly eyes threaten a woman there
Whose hollow cheek foretold too well the end of her struggle and care.
Again he looked, and he saw the death in a driven workman's face,

While a hungry man stood waiting near to enter the empty place.

He turned once more to the Spirit of Truth, and "Bother your show!" said he;
"Scenes like this are common enough. What do they mean to me?"

"Look again," spoke the Spirit of Truth, and spread before his eyes

A smiling land of abundance that stretched to the circling skies;

A land o'erheaped with richness, a kingdom of corn and wine,

Where bounty waited, enough for all, in forest and field and mine.

But cunning and craft had seized the wealth with greedy talon and claw

And set it aside for private gain, and fenced it 'round with the Law.

"Look well," the Spirit commanded, and Billington answered flat:

"A threadbare subject, my shadowy friend. Where is the story in that?"

"God pity your stubborn blindness, man, and forgive you the chance you miss!

Away with your dead traditions! Is there never a story in this,

That Greed would garner the harvest, leaving the owner gaunt;

That the servants would sell to the master and thrive on the master's want?"

Then Billington spoke of property rights, and of customs hoar and old,

And argued his dread of a flag blood-red that would rise if the Truth were told.

"Oh fool!" the Spirit in anguish cried, "Must history make it clear

That yours is the hand that sows the seed of the pestilence you fear?"

"For ages long I have striven and toiled to free mankind from wrong.

I have pleaded and prayed for human aid to save the weak from the strong.

I have starved and fought and watched and wrought that the light might enter in

To end the sway of falsehood and banish the curse of sin;

And men have gone to the stake for me, and scorched in the cannon's breath,

And women have writhed in the torture and welcomed the arms of death,

That the Truth might live to serve the world—and then, when the fight seemed won,

I gave the standard to you to guard—to you, John Billington!

"I trusted you with my work to do; I gave you a charge to keep,

I placed in your hand a shepherd's staff to comfort my hunted sheep.

But now you turn it against me, and the Truth must go untold

While you devote your stewardship to the will of the power of gold,

To the pleasure of those who burden the poor, to the greed that fosters crime.