

WHITMAN AS HIS OWN PRESS-AGENT

BY EMORY HOLLOWAY

YEARS ago, in a newspaper, I ran across a casual allusion to Walt Whitman's having been at one time connected with Alexander H. Shephard's *Washington Chronicle*. When recently the opportunity arrived for running the matter down, I found that the writer had his facts somewhat mixed. The *Chronicle* was friendly to Whitman and appears to have printed articles from his pen, anonymously; but it was never owned by Shephard. Yet Shephard was one of the owners of the *Washington Evening Star*, which, about 1870, was a sturdy champion of the poet.

The first editions of "Leaves of Grass" had no publisher except the author, who, to make headway against the prevailing ridicule and indifference, found it advisable to act as his own press-agent. Accordingly, he explained his new verse, not only in a classic preface to the poems themselves, but also through anonymous reviews in various newspapers. Throughout his remaining years he continued to exert an influence on what his friends, at least, should print about him. His guiding or restraining hand in the books by Burroughs, Bucke, and Traubel, for instance, is well known. Though he was pretty well advertised, if not widely read, by 1869, through the sale of the 1860 and 1867 editions, and the laudation of his friends Burroughs and O'Connor, he did not feel satisfied with the headway he was making with American critics. He saw no better way to remedy matters than to keep before the public eye the image of the picturesque personage of whom the book was an expression.

This he did in many indirect ways.

Sometimes he would criticize himself, or merely describe himself, in the third person, inserting little harmless phrases of doubt or criticism as a smoke-screen to conceal his authorship; or he would write something purporting to be an interview with himself; again, he would quote morsels from friendly European reviews. It is hard to tell just how many of the editorials about him in the *Star* and the *Chronicle* were directly inspired by him or how many were actually written by him, though in one or two cases we have, not only internal evidence as a guide, but the copy in his own manuscript. There is no such manuscript of the following, so far as I know, but it can hardly fail to impress the reader who is intimately acquainted with his style as coming from his pen. It appeared in the *Chronicle* on Sunday, May 9, 1869.

Walt Whitman, the poet, will complete the fiftieth year of his age the current May 31, 1869, having been born on that date, 1819. His friends in New York, Brooklyn, and elsewhere, will be pleased to learn that, on the verge of becoming half a centenarian, he retains his accustomed health, eats his rations regularly, and keeps his weight well toward 190 pounds.

Of the poetical merits and demerits of the subject of our item, concerning which the contest still rages in literary circles, we desire to say nothing. We will only mention here, for what it is worth, the judgment of a late German critic,¹ (Mr. Whitman's poetry has been translated and published in Germany), who characterizes him as "the most radically *Christian* and *Socratic* poet of any modern writer," inasmuch as he adopts for the chief reliance and ground-plan of individual and public excellence the elements of friendship, personal purity, and disinterestedness, the cultivation of "the inner light," and the like; and also in

¹ Ferdinand Freiligrath, in the Augsburg *Allgemeine Zeitung*, May 10, 1868. Freiligrath introduced Whitman to the Germans.

his treatment of the whole material frame of things, in its particulars and in its aggregate, as but the gateway, through death and decay, to spiritual existence, the only substantial one, and the purport, according to him, of all material objects and persons, and also the true key to all science.

We may add that the poems, "Leaves of Grass," originally published in New York about fourteen years ago, and since added to, and republished time and again in various cities, are still considered unfinished by their author. But we understand that the collection, revised, and including his new verses on religious themes, and forming probably the final digest and edition of the book, will be printed the ensuing Summer. "Democratic Vistas," a small prose book, will also be published during the Summer.

The article then proceeds to a more personal tone:

Mr. Whitman, at the present date, continues to occupy a third-class clerkship in the Attorney-General's office, where, since the close of the war, he has been employed successively under Attorney-Generals Speed, Stanbery, Bowning, Evarts, and Hoar. An inveterate pedestrian, and, like a true Greek, living much in the open air, he has long become a familiar figure in our city, and amid the varied and picturesque scenery of the District.

In times past, in New York, he frequented the top of the Broadway omnibuses, and became a well-known pet of the drivers. Here he has to content himself with the platform of the street-cars, often riding out to Georgetown, or to the Eastern Branch. On Pennsylvania avenue or Seventh street or Fourteenth street, or perhaps of a Sunday, along the suburban roads toward Rock creek, or across on Arlington Heights, or up the shores of the Potomac, you will meet moving along at a firm but moderate pace, a robust figure, six feet high, costumed in blue or gray, with drab hat, broad shirt-collar, gray-white beard, full and curly, face like a red apple, blue eyes, and a look of animal health more indicative of hunting or boating than the department office or author's desk. Indeed the subject of our item, in his verse, his manners, and even his philosophy, evidently draws from, and has reference to, the influences of the sea and sky and woods and prairies, with their laws, and man in his relation to them; while neither the conventional parlor nor library has cast its spells upon him.

Possessing singular personal magnetism, and frequently beloved at sight, yet Walt Whitman's nonchalance, large adhesiveness,² and a certain silent defiance both in his poetry and appearance, have long laid him open to caricature and sarcastic criticism. Then there have been imputations of a virulent description, such as ignorance, drunkenness, and lust, to which mental aberration and moral obliquity have been strenuously added. Very little, however, do these charges trouble the subject of them.

² A phrenological term which Whitman was fond of using to designate a personal attraction between men that is stronger than ordinary friendship. The "Calamus" poems celebrate it.

"In early years," said Mr. Whitman, lately in conversation, "I suffered much at the fate of being misrepresented and misunderstood—at the lies of enemies and still more the complacent fatuity of those I loved. But I see now that it is no detriment to a hardy character, but is perhaps the inevitable price of freedom, and a vigorous training and growth; and that even slanders mean something to every real student of himself, and as it were betray to the commander of the fort where his embankments are openest to the enemy, and most need strengthening and the guard."

There are numerous pictures, frontispieces, photographic, and other pretended likenesses of Walt Whitman, whose great bulky head, wooly beard, carmine cheeks, and open throat attract the artists. Most of these pictures are bad, some of them comically monstrous (as in Hotten's London edition of Walt Whitman's poems). Mr. Gardiner, on Seventh street, however, has a capital photo, taken in 1863. Messrs. Seybold & Tarris, on the Avenue, below Sixth, have a good head, just taken, very strong in shade and light. William Kurtz, New York, has two or three noble photos. Charles Hine, the artist, same city, has a fine portrait in oil, life size.

II

Since Lowell's publication of Whitman's "Bardic Symbols" in the *Atlantic Monthly* nearly a score of years before, nothing from the latter's pen had found a welcome there, until, in February, 1869, he placed "Proud Music of the Sea Storm" for one hundred dollars. The manuscript was presented to the editor, James T. Fields, not directly, but through Emerson, who, according to Whitman, had offered his services in the matter. The incident has interest as showing both the relation of Whitman and Emerson at the time and the precaution Whitman was taking not to have the poem rejected by the magazine which was more or less the arbiter of literary elegance in America. Nor did he lose any time in capitalizing his success, if we may judge by the comment of the *Star* on January 18, probably before the magazine was on the Washington news-stands:

The claims of Walt Whitman to the position of a poet are so far recognized by the literary set in Boston, who consider their *dileta* supreme law in matters pertaining to letters, that the *Atlantic* for February contains a long poem from his sturdy pen, and one of the very best, to our notion, that he has yet written. Between *Blackwood* and the *Atlantic* he is now pretty well endorsed on both continents—a circumstance that may be very

gratifying to his friends, but which, we suspect, matters very little to him.

During the editorship of Professor Bliss Perry the *Atlantic* printed a number of things about Whitman, but during the last ten years I have had several articles on the poet returned with a courteous announcement that the magazine was closed to all articles about him. Whitman wished the public to believe him as indifferent to criticism, friendly or hostile, as the great poet he had described in his verse—an answerer of the profound questions of life, but not one to notice a critical attack. In the flush of his first inspiration he had boasted, with the boundless hope of youth:

I exist as I am, that is enough,
If no other in the world be aware I sit content,
And if each and all be aware I sit content.
One world is aware and by far the largest to me,
and that is myself,
And whether I come to my own to-day or in ten
thousand or ten million years,
I can cheerfully take it now, and with equal
cheerfulness I can wait.

But if all the references to his indifference concerning fame to be found in the Washington papers were inspired by him, that indifference was rather too vocal and insistent to be convincing. When Bayard Taylor and others travestied his American Institute poem in 1871, the *Evening Star*, using information it could hardly have had except from Whitman or his friends, countered by citing the poet's influence abroad.

The newspapers still keep up their talk about Walt Whitman. Here now comes the announcement that Roberts Brothers, of Boston, are to publish his late American Institute utterance in small book form. From abroad, we learn that the English poet and critic, Roden Noel, of aristocratic and Lord Byron lineage, has prepared a lengthy review of Whitman for *Dark Blue*, the new Oxonian magazine.

The truth about Whitman, as author not only of this American Institute piece but all else, is that his contempt for the "poets" and "poetry" of the day, his presentation of thoughts and things at first hand instead of second or third hand, his sturdy and old-fashioned earnestness, and his unprecedented novelty, make him a capital target for the smart writers and the verbal fops engaged in manufacturing items and "criticism." Then besides, to be candid, Walt Whitman is a pretty hard nut to crack. His involved sentences, always hiding at least half their meaning, his kangaroo

leaps as if from one crag to another, his appalling catalogues, (enough to stagger the bravest heart,) his unheard of demand for brains in the reader as well as in the thing read, and then his scornful silence, never explaining anything nor answering any attack, all lay him fairly open to be misunderstood, to slur, burlesque, and sometimes spiteful innuendo; and will probably continue to do so.

Like his own "Kosmos," he can be viewed from many and partial points of view, among the rest, from one or two whence he certainly appears gross, repellent, and dangerous. But his complete and permanent character—and that is the only just method of comprehending him—is nevertheless healthy, free, manly, attractive, and of a purity and strength almost beyond example. The basis of his principal poetry is the intuitional and emotional, actuated by what the phrenologists term self-esteem and adhesiveness. Like all revolutionists and founders, he himself will have to create the growth by which he is to be fully understood and accepted. This will be a slow and long work, but sure.

The reader who is familiar with Whitman's diction, phraseology, psychology and methods of anonymous self-defense will not be led by the candor of this passage hastily to assume that he had nothing to do with its composition. But the *Evening Star* took pains to present him in other lights than that of the misunderstood bard indifferent whether the laurel wreath should grace his good gray brow. Here is a little anecdote, from the issue of January 18, 1869, which I have never seen reprinted:

A moderate-sized oil painting has been placed in the window of Mohum & Bestor's store, on the Avenue to-day, that calls for special notice from all lovers of perfect art. It is called "The Cavalry Picker," and represents, in the midst of a lonesome Winter scene, probably in Virginia, in a bleak and freezing snow-storm, drifted, the ground white, a cavalry soldier, numbed and dead, fallen from his horse, extended on his back, a thin veil of snow drifted over his face, and the horse (a fine piece of drawing and painting) standing by, and peering over the dead soldier. The picture is by Mr. McLeod, of this city, and is a work that will make its own reputation.

We saw Walt Whitman standing before the window this morning, looking at it long. The tears fell down his cheeks, called forth by many sad reminiscences. "Write something about it," he said, "and tell the painter how profoundly it has affected me. I consider it, in its way, unsurpassed in all technical requirements, from the point of view of art merely. A typical incident of the great war; then mounting above, and spreading wide, it touches the universal human heart, and is as strong as it is manly and tender."

Not long ago a leading dealer in autographs said to me: "American writers rank thus—Poe, Whitman, Hawthorne; for collectors will pay for their manuscripts in that order." He seriously urged using the manuscript prices current as an index of literary merit. The *Evening Star* must have been familiar with this yardstick for the measurement of genius, for, getting its facts from Whitman or his friends, it tried to show that Walt Whitman, Unlimited, was a going concern. For example:

Walt Whitman on a Gold Basis.—The ever-increasing favor the American poet finds in Europe oddly contrasts with the treatment he has received in the past in his own country. No less striking a parallel is afforded between the offishness of publishers toward his writings here and the high pecuniary value set upon them by the same class abroad. For the group of poems from his pen, entitled "Whispers of Heavenly Death," which appeared in the last number of the English *Broadway Magazine*, the proprietors paid Mr. Whitman twenty-five dollars a page *in gold*. This amounts to about seventy-five dollars in currency for the whole—the composition occupying two[sic] pages of the magazine. It is needless to add that no other poet except Tennyson commands such a price in England.

When the Philadelphia *Bulletin* asserted that Whitman "never had an income of over \$900 a year," the *Evening Star*, joining battle on the facts, replied:

Oh, yes. The Blue Book puts him down: "W. Whitman, New York. Clerk, Attorney-General's office. Salary, \$1600."

Though Whitman had been receiving this salary for five years, this information seems to have struck the current journalistic mind as having news value, for in September, 1871, the New York *Evening Post* ran the following:

Walt Whitman receives a salary of \$1600 a year as clerk in the office of the Attorney-General and is said to be the richest man in Washington, because he never wants what he does not have. His philosophy is better than his poetry.

III

But Whitman did want what he did not have—increasing recognition at home, if not for himself at least for his poetry. He thought he was beginning to get it when

he was invited to deliver a commencement poem at Dartmouth in 1872; but though he conquered when he came, Professor Bliss Perry has shown that the invitation itself was a student joke at the expense of a rather conservative faculty. Whitman used the occasion not only to send copies to the press but to write an anonymous eulogy of his poem for a newspaper, though we do not know that it saw print. However, the *Evening Star's* leader on the Dartmouth poem is so full of Whitmanisms of thought, expression and even punctuation, as to convince me that either Whitman wrote it or someone so familiar with "Democratic Vistas" as to have caught both the gist of its meaning and its style. Here, in part, is the article:

Peculiar in literary form, echoing Whitman's fervid patriotism for the whole country, and totally unlike the classic or sentimental reminiscences of such occasions, its key-note seems to be an earnest conviction that the loftiest and most binding union and truest pride and glory of the United States (after the establishment of their material interests, which he thinks already permanently provided for,) are to be sought in new moral, patriotic, national literary development, on a scientific and spiritual basis, and always with a realizing sense of physical health, and finest and handsomest offspring.

For Walt Whitman, as we understand, while he admits the merits of the scientific and journalistic press of the day, avowedly views the whole tribe of poets and novelists with contempt. His notion is that for imaginative purposes the modern time, and the United States especially, can only fitly express and justify their vital and characteristic elements by new and native lyric, artistic, and even religious forms, and that, for present and future use, current poetry, art and ecclesiasticisms, however serviceable for their time in Europe and the past, are impotent for America, and incompatible with her genius.

Similarly, in the preceding year, Whitman had been elated to receive an invitation from the managers of the American Institute to deliver an original poem at the opening of their annual fair in New York. Perhaps he did not know that Horace Greeley, the president of the Institute, was the regular attraction on opening day, but that busy with a presidential bee in his bonnet, the sage of Chappaqua was pioneering in the Middle West. Whitman came to New York and, on September 7,

read his poem, "After All, Not to Create Only." Two days later, having found that much of the metropolitan press was disposed to make merry over his only half-inspired effort, he sent his own account of the occasion to the *Washington Chronicle* for publication as an anonymous letter from New York.

Imagine yourself inside a huge barn-like edifice of a couple of acres, spanned by immense arches, like the ribs of some leviathan ship, (whose skeleton hull inverted the structure might be said to resemble,) & this building, crowded & crammed with incipient displays of goods and machinery—everything that grows & is made—& a thousand men actually engaged at work, in their shirt-sleeves, putting the said goods & machinery in order—all with a noise, movement, & variety as if a good-sized city was in process of being built.

In the middle of this, to an audience of perhaps two or three thousand people, with a fringe on the outside of perhaps five or six hundred partially-hushed workmen, carpenters, machinists, & the like, with saws, wrenches, or hammers in their hands, Walt Whitman, last Thursday, gave his already celebrated poem before the American Institute. His manner was at first sight coldly quiet, but you soon felt a magnetism & felt stirred. His great figure was clothed in gray, with white vest, no necktie, & his beard was as unshorn as ever. His voice is magnificent, & is to be mentioned with Nature's oceans & the music of forests and hills.

His gestures are few, but significant. Sometimes he stands with his hands in his breast pockets; once or twice he walked a few steps to & fro. He did not mind the distant noises & the litter & machinery, but doubtless rather enjoyed them. He was perfectly self-possessed. His apostrophe to the Stars and Stripes which floated above him, describing them in far different scenes in battle, was most impassioned. Also his "Away with War itself!" & his scornful "Away with novels, plots, & plays of foreign courts!"

A few of his allusions were in a playful tone, but the main impression was markedly serious, animated, & earnest. He was applauded as he advanced to read, besides several times throughout, & at the close. He did not respond in the usual way by bowing. All the directors & officers of the Institute crowded around him & heartily thanked him. He extricated himself, regained his old Panama hat & stick, and, without waiting for the rest of the exercises, made a quiet exit by the steps at the back of the stand.

The real audience of this chant of peace, invention, & labor, however, was to follow. Of the New York & Brooklyn evening and morning dailies, twelve out of seventeen published the poem in full the same evening or the next morning.

So much for the picture Whitman wished the public to have of his performance. His own words make clear how careful he was

to create a pose and to maintain it, the trademark of the new poetry. He had no doubt supplied copies of the poem to the press in advance, and I have found that a good many of them did print it, in whole or in part. But this does not mean that they all took it seriously. A humorous contrast to Whitman's description appeared in the *World's* report (September 8) captioned "Poetry and Ploughs." The reporter failed to see the thousands to which Whitman refers. (The *Tribune* estimated that there were 200-300 present.) "The vacancy caused by the absence of Mr. Greeley," said the *World*, "was regarded with painful emotion." The police were so little able to quiet the workmen's hubbub, even for the prayer of invocation, that it was impossible for Whitman's voice to carry more than fifteen feet. "After prayer the poet was introduced. The managers were all provided with printed proofs, which enabled them to follow the author as he recited his verses and put in the applause where it was proper to do so. No one among the meeting house benches could have heard anything the poet said." The report was accompanied by an editorial entitled "A Whitmaniacal Catalogue." The editor saw no "playful tone" in the poem, but satirized its prosaic formlessness, which is, of course, its weakest point.

Dropping the hand of the amiable Muse with a rude suddenness, born probably of a recollection of his duties as a compiler of a catalogue, Mr. Whitman returns to his work, and gives in rapid succession a list of everything on exhibition at the fair. Even when fairly in the midst of this prosaic task the painful confusion of his intellect is frequently manifest. He arbitrarily groups coffee-mills, mowing-machines, and anti-malarious pills under the singular heading of "rills of civilization," and boldly prophesies that these strangely composite rills will ultimately become pyramids and obelisks, upon which "powerful matrons" will gaze in admiration. It is true he expressly states that these matrons of the future will be

Vaster than all the old;

but why the vastness of a matron should induce her to regard rills of mowing-machines as identical with obelisks does not appear. Even the famous fat lady of Barnum's former museum, who, if not a matron, was at all events the vastest of modern females, would have repelled with indignation the idea that she could not tell a rill from a pyramid.

Even the Brooklyn *Eagle*, which Whitman had edited a quarter of a century before, though admitting that he had his points, was disposed to treat him rather as a freak, properly exhibited at a fair.

The most of it [the Institute poem], however, will be pronounced by the average reader hard, commonplace, realistic, prosaic, when it is not simple jargon—word-piling with no obvious purpose. Whether Whitman is to remain on view throughout the exhibition the advertisements do not state. If he is engaged permanently we advise the citizens of Brooklyn to go and see him. He has a special and local, as well as a general and national, reputation.

IV

But it was the *Tribune* that saw in the occasion opportunity for mirth unconfined. Bayard Taylor, who was the next year to defend American publishers, in the so-called Buchanan War, against what he termed the "intellectual convexity" of Whitman's ardent sponsors, sat down and composed parodies of the four poets most in the public eye—Bret Harte, John Hay, Joaquin Miller and Whitman. These the managing editor connected with a prose burlesque, representing the four poets as contending for first honors at the fair, each by celebrating himself. The tone of the Whitman travesty³ is well represented by the opening lines:

Who was it sang of the procreant urge, recounted
sextillions of subjects?
Who but myself, the Kosmos, yawping abroad,
concerned not at all about either the effect or
the answer.

But there were editors to praise Whitman's poem, including those of the Brooklyn *Standard*, the New York *Sun* and the faithful Washington *Star*, which blamed the *Tribune's* attitude on the jealousy of its own "kept poet." Altogether Whitman did create a stir, which may have been as much as he hoped for. Taylor doubtless never appreciated the full greatness of the man, yet one who has studied the record must appreciate the point he made in 1876

³ Reprinted, with the others, in Taylor's "The Echo Club and Other Literary Diversions" and in Henry S. Saunders' "Walt Whitman Parodies."

in answer to the charge that there was a literary cabal against Whitman among American publishers and editors:

The charge of a cabal among any portion of the authors of America, to persecute and suppress Walt Whitman, or anybody else, is an absurdity and an impertinence. Other writers have their contributions returned by magazine editors, and do not whine about it. Hawthorne was ignored during his best years, Emerson abused and ridiculed, and their friends never dreamed of imagining a conspiracy against them. No man in this country has ever been so constantly and skillfully advertised by his disciples as Walt Whitman. They have not only been sleeplessly watchful for attack, but they have resented indifference. They deny, for his sake, the right of a critic to be honest, the right of an editor to select, or the right of a publisher to refuse. Not patient for the final and irreversible decision of time, they angrily claim immediate acceptance of a theory of formlessness in literature which would send the world's great authors to the shade. If their master's new venture should fail, they will be chiefly to blame. He has wisely held himself aloof from their aggressive championship; and we heartily commend the silence and apparent indifference of "the good gray poet" to the imitation of his good green friends.

Whitman did often restrain his impetuous friends, less shrewd than he, and he professed not to have started the Buchanan War, though I cannot find that he was displeased with it. In fact, he made himself often enough the same charges against American publishers that Buchanan made when he opened hostilities. And had Taylor been able to see Whitman's practiced hand behind such articles, for instance, as I have quoted here, I doubt if he would have drawn a line between the good gray poet and his good green friends.

If there was jealousy in the heart of Taylor, there is, on the other hand, room to believe that Whitman found in him a natural rival and enemy. When Taylor was asked to write the poem for the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, Whitman was disappointed. He renamed the American Institute piece "Song of the Exposition" and further celebrated the occasion by issuing a Centennial Edition of his poems. Concerning these two occasions when his ambitions crossed those of Taylor, he afterward said to Horace Traubel:

It rather staggered me at the time to receive the invitation to make this poem: I was everywhere,

practically everywhere, disavowed—hated, ridiculed, lampooned, parodied; rejected by the notables everywhere. Then this invitation came. Of course my inviters were criticized for inviting, I was criticized for being invited—for accepting—all kinds of impolite things were said, mostly for my benefit: I even got a few anonymous letters from people who wanted to tell me "the plain truth," as one of them said. But the thing went off—went off all right—yes: was its own kind of success.

I've only had a few such occasions to take care of. William [O'Connor] told Eldridge or somebody that I should have had the poem for the Centennial—that Bayard Taylor was unfit—that no one but Walt Whitman could have proved equal to the exigency: but William found few to take his view of the matter. I do not seem to belong to great show events—I am more like nobody than like somebody,—I was more used to being kicked out than asked in: I always went to the big powwows with the crowd, to look on, not with the nabobs, to perform.

Even here Whitman is trying to launch the idea that only prejudice and bad luck prevented him from being a literary lion. His unhappiness lay in his effort to be both journalist and poet, sensationalist and seer. He was an occasional poet, and our greatest; but the only occasion to which he could fitly respond, as in the case of his threnody on Lincoln's death, was some sudden and unpredictable eruption of his own emotions. The calendar had nothing to do with his creative impulses. It is a pity that he felt he had to advertise himself or go under; and that, if he must be his own press-agent, he injudiciously called attention to his worst poetry as well as his most sublime.

SOMETIMES WE ARE FOOLED

BY ELEANOR ROWLAND WEMBRIDGE

THOSE of us whose duty it is, working in the courts, to scrutinize humanity from week to week, as others scan merchandise, machinery or balance sheets, sometimes fall into the error of believing that we understand the race. There is an easy temptation, after handling a certain number of taciturn, unstrung, sly, or volcanic temperaments, to classify them into types, put them into pigeon-holes, and prophesy with some assurance what they will do next. This is a dangerous attitude of mind. For despite psychiatry, child guidance clinics, psychometrics, psycho-analysis, and learning curves, sometimes we get fooled. The case whose next move we charted with so much confidence shows a sudden burst of originality, and flops from its nook in the card catalogue to one quite different. Or, more likely, it refuses to be catalogued at all. Now and again, even a moron or a psychopath declines to act like one, but in a gust of primeval sagacity conducts his affairs in a crisis with the sure instinct of a bee.

It is these variants who give spice to our calling. Then Nature thumbs her nose at us, and reminds us that she still holds a few human riddles in reserve. The cases which I cite to prove the point (a point that hardly needs proving) are not important. No great matters hung in the balance of decision. But the memory of them serves to chasten my opinion when more critical emergencies arise. They are reminders that the astronomer may more accurately predict an eclipse a hundred years from now than a psychologist may foresee what this or that human being will do tomorrow.

To begin with the janitor. He was courteous, and industrious, and kept the place in order. As one of his tenants I had exchanged good-morning and good-evening with him for a year. I presumptuously thought that I knew what to expect of him as a worthy member of his calling. One evening, upon coming home earlier than usual, I observed from afar that there were guests in my apartment, one of whom was playing a Hungarian rhapsody. In considerable curiosity as to who my musical visitor might be, and as to how he had gained admittance, I entered—only to find the janitor, his kit of tools, with which he had been mending the radiator, forgotten on the floor, and the hands which I had mistakenly supposed trained only for the furnace and the pipes performing Liszt virtuosities on my piano!

He jumped to his feet with an apology. "Don't stop! Let me listen," I urged in vain. "You must excuse me, for I have work to do," he responded politely. "But I never *could* resist a Steinway."

And, snatching up his wrenches he disappeared, leaving me staring.

Some months later we moved, and in the course of readjusting the postal service, the following note arrived from our former custodian:

Pray forgive my perhaps unwarranted assurance in detaining your admirable psychological journal for what may seem an extended period. But it was late when it arrived, inadvertently delivered at the old address. Its wrapper, much attenuated, disclosed its character, and I made bold to investigate the contents. I am a subscriber now. Begging you to accept my apologies and thanks, I remain, etc.

Another shock! Having adjusted myself to a view of him as an artist in disguise, I