

character of the newspaper he prefers. If you can get a glimpse of the page he is most keenly interested in—sporting, financial, society, or whatever it may be—you have a hardly beatable point from which to work.”

Lack of additional space precludes a

further elaboration of the subject. The effort has been made, accordingly, merely to indicate the conscious or unconscious application of what you will grant may be called psychology to the sale of novels on trains by the men whose task it is to sell them.

George Jean Nathan.

BEST SELLERS OF YESTERDAY

III

ARCHIBALD CLAVERING GUNTER'S "MR. BARNES OF NEW YORK."



ABOUT the year 1880 a man who had worked as a mining and civil engineer and chemist in various parts of the West, and as a stock broker on the San Francisco Exchange, removed to New York with the determination of embarking upon a literary career. His natural inclination was for the stage, and among other scenarios that he had jotted down was one of a drama about a Corsican Vendetta. That this scenario was not worked out in the way originally planned was entirely due to a casual remark. Among Archibald Clavering Gunter's acquaintances in the city was a well-known New York man by the name of Banks, who possessed an ample fortune and whose main occupation in life seemed to be that of killing time. Mr. Banks was a member of the New York Rifle Club, and upon a memorable occasion had won for America an international match by showing himself to be absolutely devoid of nerves, and scoring bull's eye after bull's eye just as if nothing at all depended upon the accuracy of his aim. One day he fell into conversation with Mr. Gunter and the talk turned to the subject of books. "I say, Gunter," drawled Banks, "I'll bet you to save your life you couldn't put me in a book and make me interesting." Then and there the challenge was accepted, the idea of the play dropped, and Mr. Gunter began mentally to plan the story which

afterward became known all over the world as *Mr. Barnes of New York*.

II

It was Mr. Gunter's first idea to call his story *A Corsican Vendetta*, the title which he had given to the projected play. He had already in mind the duel scene at the beginning of the book and the tragic chapters at the end. Mr. Banks's challenge had resulted in the introduction of a certain Thomas Jefferson, which was the original name given to the hero of the story. The first draft was written in New York. On short notice Mr. Gunter's business called him to San Francisco and he left for the West, leaving the manuscript behind. His stay in San Francisco proved much longer than he had anticipated, and being unable to get hold of the original manuscript, he began the work of writing the whole tale all over again. But try as he would he could not remember the name that he had given his hero, and chancing to meet a friend from New York by the name of Barnes while he was thinking over the matter, Mr. Thomas Jefferson became Mr. Barnes of New York. Not only the beginning and the end, but most of the other episodes of the story had been thought out long before, but the railway journey from Paris to Nice, during which Barnes starves Enid Anstruther into amiability and friendliness, grew out of the writing of that part of the book. The fine and dramatic description of the bombardment of Alexandria, with which *Mr. Potter of Texas* opens, was originally designed for *Mr. Barnes of New York*. On this subject Mr. Gunter had had information at first hand from an

American naval officer who had watched the bombardment from the deck of the Richmond. This the author supplemented with his own knowledge of the city of Alexandria and from the most reliable newspaper accounts of the action. British officers who read *Mr. Potter of Texas*

ter, represent the type of American abroad that we like to think has become extinct. It's dominant trait was irrepressible "cheek." Mr. Barnes, for example, was a crack pistol shot, and had plenty of cash, and on five minutes' acquaintance he was certain amiably to inform any



ARCHIBALD CLAVERING GUNTER

were in the habit of expressing astonishment at the accuracy of the description. But finding that it did not fit into *Mr. Barnes of New York*, Mr. Gunter saved it for the later book.

III

Mr. Barnes and his successor, Mr. Pot-

stranger of both these facts. Yet he was just the hero to fit the book. His crude vigour carries along a story that is equally crude and vigorous. He is thirty years of age and has been travelling about the world with the irresponsibility of a millionaire and a certain kind of American in fiction, when chance, in the form of an invitation from an acquaintance, a

certain Count Musso Danella, takes him to Corsica. The Count introduces Barnes to his ward, the beautiful Marina Paoli, who with her brother is the last of that ancient Corsican name. The brother, an officer in the French naval service, is expected to return at any moment, and Marina, who has been separated from him for three years, is awaiting him impatiently. The next day in Ajaccio Barnes witnesses a row between a French and an English officer, which results in a challenge for a duel, to take place the following morning at eight o'clock. Barnes, learning that the French officer is no other than young Paoli, resolves to interfere to prevent any fatality. He seeks out the seconds of the English officer, introduces himself very emphatically as "Barnes of New York," and finally persuades the English principal to promise to offer an apology. He makes, however, the fatal mistake of testing the pistols that are to be used, and explaining in just what way they are defective. At the meeting the apology is intentionally distorted by one of the English seconds to a form so grossly offensive that acceptance is impossible, and Barnes finds that all he has done is to let every one concerned know how weapons that normally aimed would be harmless for a hundred exchanges, may be made instruments of deadly destruction. The volley is fired and both men are hit. The Englishman is saved by a lucky penny and the Frenchman, apparently only badly wounded, sinks to the ground. The English officers are rowed away to their ship. Barnes, who has been educated as a surgeon, examines Paoli and finds that he is mortally hurt. Marina comes upon the scene, learns of the duel, and over the body of her brother swears the Vendetta.

IV

Book II opens in the Paris Salon a year later. The object of universal attention is a picture entitled "Murdered." Barnes, coming face to face with it, recognises it as a presentment of the duel on the beach at Ajaccio and knows that it has been painted by Marina Paoli, and that she has not forgotten her vow. But the impression that the picture makes is second to that made upon the American by an English girl whose name he

soon learns to be Enid Anstruther. The impression that he makes upon her is far from being so favourable, thanks to an American cattle king whose remarks are as compromising as they are audible. But Barnes is of too stern a stuff—he is too much of the American of the Archibald Clavering Gunter novel—to be rebuffed by mere looks of disfavour, and realising that there is no time like the present he decides to strike. Learning that his divinity is bound for somewhere in the south of France, though he does not just know where, he resolves that he shall go too. Chance causes Lady Chartris, Miss Anstruther's travelling companion—fair, fat and well beyond fifty—and her children to be left behind, and Barnes finds himself alone with the lady of his hopes in a French railway compartment. The beginning of the journey is far from being auspicious. The young lady recognises him as the reprobate of the Salon, to whom the name "Faust" has been applied, and is naturally inclined to regard his advances with distinct disfavour. Barnes, repulsed at every attack, decides upon a plan of campaign that he feels sure will prove effective—he will starve her into submission. To this end he brings every resource of money and wit into play, subsidising extravagantly a knowing guard, and ordering in advance by telegraph a sumptuous repast for himself. At Dijon, where there is a stop of twenty minutes for refreshments, the genius of the inspired guard manifests itself. He opens every door but that of the compartment in which are Barnes and Miss Anstruther and then is called away to the engine.

In this way ten minutes are consumed. Finally the young lady attracts his attention and expresses her wish for something to eat. The guard, with the comment that there is still plenty of time, departs to bring the bill of fare, but returns to say that there is no printed *menu*, and to enumerate with time-wasting deliberation a great list of possible dishes. When Miss Anstruther interrupts to say that anything will do so long as it is served quickly, he departs again, only to come back with the question, "Will Mademoiselle have it hot or cold?" Finally, just as the whistle is blowing for the train to start, he reappears followed by a boy

bearing a huge tray laden with dishes. But at the moment Miss Anstruther's hands are expectantly outstretched the guard's foot somehow gets in front of the boy, who falls headlong on the platform, and the door of the compartment is shut and locked with the comment "Macon is the next buffet. All aboard!"

When, a few minutes later, a huge hamper for Barnes appears, and that miscreant calmly turns his attention to its contents, Miss Anstruther, after a final struggle, yields and accepts his advances and his hospitality. True, there are moments when her suspicions are aroused. She remembers the episode of the guard, and her mind is somewhat perturbed by the fact that there are in the hamper two plates, two forks, two knives, and two wineglasses, but these suspicions she wisely curbs. There is one time, however, where she asks him very pointedly if it is his habit always to travel without any luggage; to which he retorts that he sometimes carries a cane on long trips, a remark which very clearly indicates Mr. Barnes's "cheek" and resourcefulness of character. But the girl is very genuinely impressed by his thoughtfulness and chivalrous attentions, and by the time that Nice is reached, Mr. Barnes has gone a long way upon his sentimental journey.

Meanwhile, that the tragic action of the story has not been at a standstill, is indicated by the fact that they have been followed by two mysterious men who, at Dijon, had temporarily left the train to send a telegram addressed to Count Musso Danella. At Nice, Barnes soon learns the meaning of this espionage—he has been followed in the belief that he is Enid Anstruther's brother—and with this knowledge there comes with a thrill to the American the memory that the name engraved on the pistols used in the duel at Ajaccio was that of Edwin Girard Anstruther, whom he has learned is an officer in the English navy, and who a year before had written his sister a letter from the ship *Vulture*, and had mailed it in Corsica.

V

At Nice the plot moves swiftly. There are present on the scene besides Barnes, Miss Anstruther and Miss Anstruther's

friends, Lady Chartris and her daughters, the sinister Count Musso Danella, to whom Marina Paoli has promised her hand when he shall have enabled her to avenge her brother's death, and Marina herself who had gone as a nurse to the English hospitals in Egypt for the purpose of tracking down the slayer only to fall desperately in love with a young English officer who has been brought back to life by her devotion and care. The name of this officer who had almost made her forget her vow, is, she confides to Barnes, Edwin Girard Anstruther. Although they never knew the name of the Englishman who shot Antonio Paoli, and Barnes has never seen Enid Anstruther's brother, the circumstantial chain is too strong for him to doubt, and Barnes, meditating in a dazed, startled way, mutters to himself "Great heavens! if these two meet; and she should ever know."

Meanwhile Barnes's love affairs are progressing favourably though not as rapidly as he had hoped. Miss Anstruther is not a girl to yield after thirty-six hours' siege, and Barnes's impetuosity has won him a few well-deserved rebuffs. The comic action is sustained by the incorrigible Miss Maud Chartris, insatiably greedy for the *marron glacés* with which Barnes liberally supplies her, and which are less in keeping with her real age than the age she is forced to assume out of deference to an exceedingly vain mother. The latter, Lady Chartris, regards Barnes somewhat askance until she learns that his sister is the socially eminent Countess of Morington, a bit of information which Barnes is only too ready to impart. When Enid Anstruther, after some more or less embarrassing complications, finally consents to become Mrs. Barnes of New York, he imparts the information to Lady Chartris and there follows a little set-to which is exceedingly characteristic of them both.

Meantime Mr. Barnes has walked up and demanded the attention of Lady Chartris, and got it, from the very depths of her soul.

"My dear madam," he opens, "would you do me a favour; just write to Lord Ferris—you know where he is at present?"

"Yes!" murmurs the matron, "he is in Nice to-day; to-morrow he will be here."

"Precisely," continues the American; "write

to him in Nice, and incidentally mention in your letter, in a sort of casual, off-hand manner, that Enid is engaged to marry me."

"Engaged to marry *you*?" Lady Chartris repeats these words after him in a scream of astonishment.

"Yes—within two months!"

"Within two months!"

"I thought it just as well that Lord Ferris knew it, as it might save Enid some embarrassment, and that gentleman a useless jour-

ney, with disappointment at the end of it; besides it was a duty to you as Miss Anstruther's chaperon to tell you at once!"

"And Enid preferred you to a lord?" gasps Lady Chartris, for a lord is a big thing in her eyes, as her dead husband had only been a knight.

"She had that peculiar taste!"

"Very well! I presume you have enough to support her in the style in which she has been accustomed to live? You will excuse

*has forgotten his weed for over 167
eight hours all on account of the
girl who would sooner starve than
accept bread at his hands.*

*A muffled of the paper parcel
comes from Miss Anstruther's corner,
he glances at her. She has opened the
package, that apparently had been
full of bon-bons, and is taking from
it piece after piece of crumpled white
paper, ~~and~~ a look of amazed disap-
pointment ~~is~~ on her face. At last
she comes to the end and draws
out two miserable gum-drops &
a card with a word or two upon it.*

*The gum-drops, ^{straight} go to her mouth,
for ~~the~~ the moment of discomfort
she is able to resist such edible
morsels; she reads the card and
exclaims visionarily "The little friend!"
and gives one long hopeless sigh that
nearly ends in a sob that makes
Barnes go crazy to comfort her.
But he fights it down & ~~goes~~
~~continues~~ ~~he~~ opening his basket,
goes to eating his pâté de foie-gras
with very good appetite for he now
feels sure that his destiny will*

my asking the question, but Enid is very young, and I feel responsible to her brother for her not making a mistake under my charge!"

"Certainly!" says Barnes. "You have a perfect right to be answered on that point!"

"Very well!" here Lady Chartris becomes grandly important, "What are your expectations?"

"Expectations? Ah!—Oh, of money I suppose you mean? I haven't any!"

"No expectations? And you come here to marry a girl that was the belle of the last London season; whose family is one of the oldest in England, and who might make a grand match!"

"I've something better than expectations. I've the *cash*!" says Barnes slowly.

"What is your income?" says the matron curiously.

"About sixty thousand a year!"

"Pounds?" almost screams Lady Chartris.

"No! only dollars, I am sorry to say; but it's enough!"

"Enough! I should say it was. Well, Burton—I suppose I must call you Burton now—you know Enid is my cousin; you've got the best girl in England and I hope you'll make her happy—Sixty thousand dollars; that's twelve thousand pounds a year—of course you'll make her happy. If I wasn't so young I'd kiss you; but it might make your *fiancée* jealous!" and she shakes his hand very cordially.

As his betrothed and Marina Paoli have become exceedingly intimate, Barnes's happiness is marred by the fear, which is almost a certainty, that his future brother-in-law is the object of the Corsican girl's projected vengeance. In order to set the last doubt at rest he starts for England in order that he may see a picture of Edwin Anstruther, the one that Enid usually carries in her locket having been maliciously abstracted by Maud Chartris. The latter young lady adds to her already long list of mischievous sins by hinting to Miss Anstruther that Marina Paoli is in love with Barnes, and stirring the English girl to jealousy. At this joint, Barnes being absent on his mission, the long absent brother appears, and between him and Marina the old love which began in the Egyptian hospital flares up into a fresh flame. Against it she struggles with all her strength; but it is too much for her,

and she has made up her mind to relinquish her vow just as the message comes to her from Danella, "I have found the man! He is near us, where we can reach him! Be happy."

VI

Edwin Anstruther has known of the existence of some vow that has influenced Marina's life, but he thinks that it is of a religious nature and laughingly foils all her attempts at confession. Marina's old servant Tomasso reproaches her for having forgotten that she is a Corsican, but finally falls at her feet, whimpering in pretended submission. But with the coming of Danella, Satan enters Paradise. The Count has been to Gibraltar in search of information regarding the movements of certain English ships and certain English officers. There he fell in with Anstruther, and while he did not question directly about the duel, he gathered a great amount of circumstantial evidence—enough to lead him to build a fine plan about inviting Anstruther to Corsica for a little moufflon shooting that may have some unusual results. He returns to Nice to hear from Marina's lips that she loves another man and will marry him, and that the name of this man is Edwin Girard Anstruther. "As he glances at the name upon the card, he almost utters a cry of hideous triumph, but by a desperate effort, fights down the joy in his heart."

Formally, and with all the punctiliousness of a gentleman of the old school, Count Musso Danella gives his consent to the marriage of his ward, Marina Paoli, to Edwin Girard Anstruther of the English naval service. Furthermore, he suggests a Corsican wedding in order that he may surrender Marina's property, and make a proper settlement of accounts. It is the last favour that he asks Marina, to see her wedded from her native village, in a manner worthy of the last daughter of the Paolis—that on her nuptial day she may be a true daughter of ancient Corsica. All this Burton Barnes learns when he returns to Nice to find that Anstruther and Enid and Danella and Marina have started for the scene of the wedding, and that a telegram to himself apprising him of the turn of affairs has been suppressed by the Count. Through

his mind there flashes the significant words that Musso used to him a few weeks before, "If we can lure him to Corsica and kill him there, Marina Paoli will be blessed by a native jury as the guardian angel of her brother's tomb." Barnes cables a warning message to Enid and then, finding that no regular steamer to Corsica will enable him to reach there in time, hires a felucca and, as they are out upon the open sea and the wind dies down cries, "Oh, God! for a little breeze to carry me to Corsica in time!"

VII

When the wedding party arrives at the Corsican port Danella's first move is to call at the telegraph office and inquire if there are any dispatches for Miss Anstruther or her brother. Finding Barnes's warning cable, he volunteers to take charge of it, and, needless to say, the American's message does not reach his *fiancée*. From the moment that she sets foot upon the island there is brought home to Marina from every side a spirit of that Corsica which, in her love, she has been endeavouring to forget. The eyes of the peasants, as she passes them on the road, light up with an ill-concealed hostility. The welcome of her own servants is forced and sullen. She is to marry one of the race who killed Antonio. But a strange change takes place the day of the wedding. Danella is subtly whispering that Marina is marrying into her husband's nation in order that some day she may be within dagger's reach of her brother's slayer. The Corsican spirit understands and approves.

With many strange ceremonies the marriage is celebrated, and the moment is ripe for the last act of Danella's vengeance. Before the eyes of the semi-savage Tomasso he thrusts a valise marked "G. A.," and contrives that this valise shall fall open revealing contents that transform Tomasso into a tiger thirsting for blood. Then the two go to the room where Marina is waiting the coming of her husband, and a little later, when Barnes arrives upon the scene, and, to his unutterable relief, finds Enid, there is borne to their ears a scream which makes the American fear that he is too late. These final chapters are the very essence of rousing old melodrama. Danella tells

Marina that her husband is her brother's slayer, and lays before her proof after proof. Having convinced her to a degree that she is almost at the point of madness he leaves her with Tomasso, but returns later to witness the final achievement of his vengeance. Marina, for a moment under the spell of the Vendetta, comes to herself and turns the dagger that has been placed in her hand against Tomasso. The latter, however, overpowers her and while holding her with one hand, strikes twice through the curtains at a form which has outlined itself against them. At this moment Barnes and Enid arrive to find a mad woman bemoaning wildly the murder of her husband. But an instant later Anstruther himself appears, and Barnes, who has guessed shrewdly, draws back the curtains, revealing the body of Count Musso Danella, who had returned to his own destruction. Of course it is soon explained that the "G. A." on the valise stood for George Arthur and not Gerard Anstruther, and that Marina's husband is quite guiltless of her brother's death. Of course, with Danella out of the way, it all ends happily within a few pages, and Barnes and Enid, and Anstruther and Marina see the coast of Corsica fade away in the dusk. Enid announces her intention of marrying Barnes at once by telling her brother that in three days she is to be the happiest girl in the world. "What a curious synonym for Mrs. Barnes of New York" laughs the American. And there the book ends.

VIII

In selecting *Mr. Barnes of New York* as the subject of a paper in the "Best Sellers of Yesterday" series, the writer had in mind, less the book itself than the four stories which illustrate Mr. Gunter's work when he was at his best. The choice might as well have been *Mr. Potter of Texas* or *Miss Nobody of Nowhere* or *That Frenchman*, which unquestionably should have been entitled *Monsieur de Vernay of Paris*. Perhaps the last-named book shows Mr. Gunter's invention at its best. Monsieur de Vernay is a Gallicised Mr. Burton Barnes. Like Mr. Barnes, he has lots of cash, and if he does not possess the eminence of the American in the matter of handling firearms, that is amply compensated for by the fact that

he is the king of wrestlers—the unknown who, with his face masked, had been setting Paris wild by the ease with which he has toppled over all the professional champions of Europe. It is in the last days of the Second Empire, and De Vernay's services to the Imperial cause have won him high recognition and favour. He scents a plot against the life of the Prince Imperial, a plot before the cunning of which the official police seem baffled and powerless, and it is about this plot that the story revolves. The conspirators are Alsatian socialists of the most extreme type, who believe that the death of the Prince Imperial will remove the ambition of Louis Napoleon, and above all, the Empress, to establish more securely the dynasty, and that this death will consequently avert the impending war between France and Germany. They design to entice the Prince Imperial into a cave in the Bois de Boulogne, in which he has been in the habit of playing, and when the plot is ripe, to fill this cave with poisonous gases. One of the arch-conspirators is the champion wrestler of Germany, and in one of the best scenes of the book he meets the Masked Man on the mat in a hall crowded by all the celebrities of Paris. Upon the body of the challenger are concealed the papers containing the details of the plot, and in the course of the fearful struggle he finds the hands of the masked wrestler feeling him over, searching, and not trying for a throw. Then he guesses; the thought comes to him that this Masked Man knows their secret, and must be badly disabled so as to make him powerless to betray or to interfere.

To any one who has ever seen Richard Mansfield in *Prince Karl* it is unnecessary to say that Mr. Gunter, who wrote that play, has humour. This humour has not always been of a very high quality; it has often been dependent upon absurd complications and misunderstandings of the customs of the country. Mr. Potter of Texas goes to a Paris café chantant and orders a drink from the modest seat which he takes far back from the performers. Becoming more and more interested in the houris on the stage, he draws nearer and nearer to the footlights, and finally precipitates a row as he

finds that he is being charged more and more for each successive drink. Although this is more or less horse-play, it unquestionably amuses you immensely. Considerable humour of much the same kind is built up about the predicaments of the little detective in *That Frenchman*. But a touch of a much higher order in the same book was when one of the conspirators was waylaid in the open street by members of the secret police disguised as thugs, who wished to search his person for incriminating papers which he was known to carry. In vain the attacked man shouted: "Help!" "Police!" "Murder!" His waylayers went on with their work without interruption. Finally, gaining wit from his danger, the victim bawls out lustily, "*Vive la République!*" and in a twinkling the street is filled with zealous gendarmes.

In all of his earlier books and in most of his later ones, Mr. Gunter had one stock comic character—an undersized, inordinately conceited, monkey-like little man—usually an American Anglomaniac. The word "dude" has just been coined and had a significance which it does not have to-day. And Gussie Van Beekman of *Miss Nobody of Nowhere*, and Ollie Livingston of *Miss Dividends*, and the Anglo American cad of *Mr. Potter of Texas* were dudes. There is a variation of the character in *That Frenchman*, in the person of the little detective Microbe—he of the Mabile suit—whose gratitude to his patron De Vernay manifests itself in no uncertain way when the latter, through the cunning of Demidoff, is caught in the web of the Russian secret police.

IX

After sending the manuscript of *Mr. Barnes of New York* to half of the publishers in the United States, only to have it come back again and again accompanied by the conventional note of rejection, Mr. Gunter decided to publish it himself. Its success was as instantaneous as it was astonishing. Everywhere—in railway trains and in the deck chairs of ocean liners—the paper-covered yellow volume was to be seen. Contemporary criticism was outspoken in its praise. "Have you read *Mr. Barnes of New York?*" wrote the veteran Joe Howard. "If not, go and read it at once, and thank

me for suggesting it. I want to be put on record as saying it is the best story of the day—the best I have read in ten years.” “A capital story—most people have read it—I recommend it to all the others,” wrote James Payne in the *Illustrated London News*, while another writer in the same journal characterised Marina Paoli as “a giant creation—just as strong as Fedora.”

Tastes have changed. We like to think that had Mr. Gunter, in the full flood of his invention, been writing to-day, he would have produced work of equal interest and of far higher literary order. Nevertheless, it is worth while to call attention to those days of transition, nearly a quarter of a century ago, when the invariable question was “Have you read *Mr. Barnes of New York?*”

Arthur Bartlett Maurice.

BJÖRNSON'S PARIS DAYS

O love, so long as love you can,
O love, so long as love you may,
The hour will come, the hour will come,
When by a grave you'll mourn some day.



THESE warning lines of Freiligrath, heavy with longing and regret, have not ceased to echo through my soul since the newspapers brought tidings of the death of Björnsterne Björnson. He spent the last months of his fading life in Paris. Often during this time I passed the hotel in the Rue Rivoli where he lived, suffered and died. I avoided mounting the stairs to his sick-room. And he left Paris in his coffin, to commence the last journey to his beloved Aulestad, without my having seen him again, living or dead.

And yet there was a time when we were on terms of familiar intercourse, united by a warm friendship, which it seemed as if nothing could sever. Still, a few unduly hot words, a fit of ill-temper, sufficed to sunder it. Was the fault mine? Was it his? It would serve no purpose to consider this now. Probably we were both too easily excited and too obstinate. So, through a momentary outburst of anger on both sides, arose a rupture which never healed, because neither he nor I would be the first to do what was necessary. My hand never again rested in his, which had so often and so warmly clasped it.

Our relations began in the autumn of 1882 and lasted more than two years. In

the summer of that year Björnson had come to Paris with his wife and two little daughters (Dagny, at that time scarcely four years of age, and Bergliot, who was older) to make a long stay, and had set up housekeeping. True, it was very simple. Only the most necessary articles of furniture had been procured, and the fourth floor apartment which the family had hired in the Avenue de Niel resembled the interior of a tent in a camp. But it was a Field Marshal's tent. Madame Björnson had wonderful skill in creating an atmosphere of comfort and almost elegance from the simplest materials. A magnificent Polar bear skin, a narwhal tooth of extraordinary size, a Norwegian flag artistically draped, attracted the eye in her drawing-room and prevented it from lingering indiscreetly on the furniture and estimating its value. Where Madame Björnson ruled, no suggestion of Bohemian housekeeping, or even the idea of a temporary home, could ever arise.

Björnson sought in Paris both rest and stimulation. At that time the surges of party passion were running very high in Norway. Conservatives and Radicals were contending with the utmost bitterness, and they were on the eve of the impeachment of the ministry which was to terminate in the sentencing of the Prime Minister Selmer and the Cabinet to loss of office and forfeiture of any claim to pension. Björnson had been one of the instigators to the conflict. He felt that politics would take complete possession of him, and he did not wish to enter into