

THE PORTALES DE SANTO DOMINGO STILL EXIST

A Return to Mexico

BY THOMAS A. JANVIER

THROUGHOUT all my wanderings, byways and back streets ever have been most to my liking. On coming into a new strange country it is well enough, of course, to go a stage or two upon main highroads, and to be at least on nodding terms with city thoroughfares; but the folk frequenting such crowded places—having been rubbed into a sort of common smoothness by their constant jostlings—have ceased to be typical: and the traveller who would do more than tickle the surface of things must go aside a little—along the foot-paths where the common people walk, and into the little streets where in their own way they live their lives out—really to get into touch with that new strange country's heart.

Such browsings in nooks and corners have a pleasant flavor everywhere. Human nature is much the same the world over; and the world over—I generalize broadly from the few parts of it which I

have visited—the well-disposed stranger who stops in humble places to have a dish of friendly talk with casual humble wayfarers has no need to fear rebuffs nor coldness. For the good coin that he offers, honest change will be given him; and he is sure to pick up a store of intimate knowledge about the land in which he sojourns, and equally is sure to find himself engaged in many pleasing small adventures, if he will but make the most of his opportunities for wayside gossiping by clinging closely to the skirts of happy chance.

Here in the City of Mexico my most profitable prowlings still are—as in ancient times they were—away from the town's cosmopolitan centre into the outer regions where its truly personal life goes on. I confess that I had my hesitations about beginning them again; and even about coming back to Mexico at all. In the old years, when this city for a while



THE EVANGELISTA WRITES LETTERS FOR PATRONS

was my home, things went slowly and very easily here—with only a gentle buzzing of new-born activity central over the terminal stations of the new railways, then just come in from the North. It was a pleasant place to live in. The days drifted past placidly—having even in what was looked upon as their strenuous mornings an agreeable touch of the languorous calm of elsewhere afternoons. Remembering all that, I could not but have my doubts as to how Mexico and I, under new conditions, would get on together. At the best it is a dangerous adventure to try to pick up again a long-interrupted friendship. In my case the risk was extrahazardous: because in the seventeen years of our separation I knew that I myself, being grown older and rustier, had changed for the worse; and I was assured that Mexico had changed so much for the better (as it was put to me) that I feared that the old-time charm of my dear city would be gone.

On the very threshold of my return this fear seemed to be justified. At the Colonia Station we found waiting to welcome us those whom—of all in the whole Republic—we most longed to see: but the vehicle in which they carried us

cityward—and actually over streets laid with asphalt—was an automobile! The asphalt alone would have dashed me. To find that subserviently smooth and characterless substance in the place of the masterful stones which I remembered—every one of them with a will of its own and a bump of its individual devising—was distinctly disheartening. As for the automobile—in the Mexico with which I was familiar, a flying-machine would have been no more out of place—it fairly numbed me with a gloomy surprise. A year or so ago, in Normandy, I felt that I was nothing less than an itinerant anachronism when I went motoring over roads trodden by Richard Cœur de Lion and William the Conqueror. Here in Mexico—where the transition from armored knights to automobiles has been practically instantaneous—the anachronistic elements of the situation were even more acute. An uneasy dread beset me that among the casual wayfarers whom we were liable to knock down and mangle (in the customary manner) might be Bernal Diaz, or Don Fernando del Tapia, or even Cortés himself; and the brilliant electric lamps which replaced in the streets the former dim oil-lanterns—while appreciably lessening the danger

of such encounters—only increased by their inappropriate modernity the confusion of my loosely hung ideas.

At the end of the run, being come to our hotel, a leisurely elevator ambled us upward to an apartment that included a white-tiled bath-room enshrining a porcelain-lined tub that was our very own. Elevators and private baths in Mexico! I went to sleep quite worn out with wondering: pursued by dizzied fancyings of the Spaniards fleeing on the Dismal Night along electric-lighted causeways, and of Alvarado making his famous leap—loop-the-loop fashion—in a motor-car!

In accordance with my habit in foreign countries, my first wanderings were in the grand parts of the town: along the main central thoroughfares, and later through the whole new quarter that in recent years has sprung up on the city's western rim. In the course of them, because I carried with me my old loving memories, I got a good many bruises and even one serious wound; and at the end of them, because of my old conservatism, I had the feeling that an unwarrantable advantage had been taken

of my prolonged absence to infuse a jarringly youthful friskiness into my Mexico's sedate antiquity.

My serious hurt—the scar will be lasting—came when I found that the Portales in the Coliseo Viejo and Refugio and Talpaleros had been destroyed. Those arcaded sidewalks made one of the most picturesque bits in all the city; and of a Sunday or a feast-day—when the interarch spaces were filled with vendors of old books and old bric-à-brac—they were luminously exemplary of one phase of the city's character. I cannot reconcile myself to the loss of them. Their demolition was an archaeological crime. With the new buildings that I found scattered through the old streets—none of them objectionable, and some of them of an admirable elegance—I could not reasonably pick a quarrel: save on the ethical ground that they stood out in too arrogant contrast with, and so put shame upon, their modest old neighbors left over from an earlier and a simpler time. After all, I said to myself tolerantly, a city that is very much alive has the right to keep on growing; and a part of its growth necessarily must involve the destruction and the renewal of its out-



ONE OF THE TINY CAKE-STANDS

worn parts. This large view of the matter comforted me; and I found farther comfort in perceiving that, so far—with the lamentable exception of the Portales—nothing has been sacrificed in the making-over process that could assert a right, historical or artistic, to be preserved.

As for the new western suburb, I frankly accepted it as a legitimate growth: a pardonable development of the strong new life that is thrilling into energy my city's three centuries of drowsiness. As it stands on land that has been vacant since the morning of Creation, nothing has been lost in the making of it; and for the comfort and for the dignity of the city much has been gained. On its minor streets the small houses, having a well-to-do air about them, keep in friendly touch with the architectural traditions of the country; yet depart a little from those traditions in ways which make them less monotonous without and tell of a greater comfort within. On its grand street, the Paseo de la Reforma—while the old architecture fairly is broken with in favor of a new order, in some of its manifestations suggestive of a *mésalliance* between French Suburban and Euclid Avenue Renaissance—the effect of the rather spirited villas and of the graver palaces (the term is not an exaggeration) which rub elbows together for a half-mile or more is of an affluent impressiveness. And the Paseo itself—what with its great width, emphasized by its lines of trees and by its bordering gardens; its well-thought and well-worked central monuments—which set in rather trying contrast its double row of statues of Mexican heroes; and, above all, its superb perspective leading up to the hill and castle of Chapultepec—assuredly is one of the most original, and on large lines one of the most noble, driveways to be found in any land. In a word, I gave to the new quarter the refreshment of my approval: with the single reserve that it tended—by striking a note so modern—to force still farther into the background the old Mexico of my old ideals.

For this same reason I resented, and sharply, the American-built electric cars which nowadays go whizzing everywhere about my city, and the electric lamps

which at night fill it everywhere with an unseemly electric glitter. The little cars drawn by little mules, with drivers who at every corner outdid Gabriel with their tin-trumpetings, were characteristic institutions which I missed regretfully; and still more regretfully I missed the shadowy romance of the oil-lamp lighted streets: dotted—the dots growing fainter and fainter down the long perspective—with the serenos' lanterns, set in the middle of every crossway to warn evil-doers of the night that the city-watch was vigilant.

To be sure, the little points of light still are at the crossways, but they are lost in electric blazings; and the muffled figures of the serenos, of old so alluringly mysterious, are changed into mere commonplace policemen in the electric glare. As to the classic spectres of the streets of Mexico, a very sturdy imagination is required now-a-nights to have faith in them. The *Vaca de Lumbre*—that devilish fire-breathing cow which comes out from the Potrero de San Sebastian at midnight and goes galloping about the city, luminous with an unholy halo of hell-fire and darting forth living flames from her nostrils—can make but a poor showing with the best of her infernal pyrotechnics against arc-lamps. La Llorona, the Wailer—who wanders shrieking for her lost children, and who incidentally kills with her icy breath whoever is luckless enough to encounter her—is so essentially a spirit of darkness that her wailings under electric lights really would have to take the form of apologies. And Don Juan Manuel—that sinner above all sinners, who roves at night, his hand muffled in his cloak holding a keen dagger, questioning whom he meets “what hour is it?” and then slaying whom he has questioned—could make no excuse for his incongruous presence in a well-lighted thoroughfare. The natural reply to his question would be: “Why don't you look at your watch?”—and even a spectre of Don Juan Manuel's known malevolence, being addressed so prosaically, would not have the effrontery to venture upon romantic crime. Assuredly, I said to myself in the course of my first evening's walk, a legendary city is taking dangerous chances when it jeopardizes its legends by tampering

with electricity; and, in my heat over the concession that had been made to mere popular convenience, I confess to having had some pretty harsh thoughts about the City Council and the Mayor!

Yet another atmospheric change wholly to my unliking was the new flavor that I found in the streets of Plateros and San Francisco—virtually a single street, the most fashionable in the city—where lines of English signs, backed by notices in the shop-windows that English was spoken by the shopkeepers, and where the preponderating presence of my own country-folk speaking unmistakable

American with an incisive energy, did their bad best to destroy the old-time foreign charm.

Still more seriously disconcerting was my discovery, on my first Sunday, that the church parade on San Francisco—an ancient institution of the capital—had lost its most entrancing distinction from church parades elsewhere. In the days that are dear to my memory, the ornate youth of the city lined up against the house fronts—with the look of uncapped caryatides—and along the narrow pavement in front of them the ladies of the city streamed homeward from the churches clad in seemly black of a richness and wearing on their heads black lace mantillas: a garb in which the plainest of women becomes a bewitchment, and that so ravishingly enhances the beauty of a beautiful woman as to make her seem a landfall in the latitude of dreams! The parade still goes on. The young men still stand in their caryatid row; and still (very handsomely, I think, under the existing conditions) look, and

even speak, their admiration as the ladies still stream past them—but the ladies no longer wear black, and their grace-giving mantillas are gone! To their undoing, they are clad in silks of dynamic colorings, not always harmonized; and upon their unhappy heads are the hideously



MOST APPETIZING MEAT STEWS SOLD FROM DOORWAYS

huge hats of the period—and the result of casting aside a beautiful racial dress for an ugly passing fashion is so disastrous that to comment upon it would be not less ungallant than unkind. To find the women of Mexico thus helping in the hapless work of uprooting ancient customs—and in a manner so conspicuously to their own disadvantage—was my most painful blow!

Having come upon so much that was changed in the body and in the soul of my city, in its high places, I had my hesitations—as I have said—about resuming my prowlings, of old always so delighting, on its lower planes. Over there was my last chance—and I was shy of taking it. If it failed me, my moody doubts would be resolved into the gloomy certainty that I had done unwisely in seeking to revive a love which better had been left to smoulder warmly deep-bedded in the embers of the past.

In a way, the investigations that I dreaded to venture upon were compelled

by a practical necessity: the need that we should search for our old lavandera, Joséfa Correa—whose home, in the Street of the Little Magueys, was in the humble northern quarter of the city that precisely corresponds with the East End of London and the East Side of New York.

Joséfa was a most lovable old body who for a long time was both our washerwoman and our friend. Her semi-weekly visits gave us always a cordial pleasure; and her talk—of which she was no miser—gave us always much of interest to ponder upon: she being a very wise old woman, with views of life that were large and sound. Moreover, she was a link between the new Mexico and the old—between the Clerical times and the times which came in with the Laws of the Reform. In her politics she was a conservative; but not narrow. "Porfirio is a little hasty," she once said, "but he means well"—and she showed a most intelligent appreciation of the betterments which have come to Mexico under this great and wise dictator's rule. Some good things had been lost, she said, in the course of the change; most notably—this was a natural reflection from her standpoint—the kindly care that of old was taken by the Churchmen of the very poor. But she approved, on the whole, of the new order of things: holding that the lower classes had a better chance to make a good life for themselves under the new dispensation than had been open to them under the old ordering—when each social stratum stayed fixed in its appointed station; and when the poor, with few exceptions, remained the poor from the beginning to the ending of their toiling days.

To meet again this sage and dear old woman was a pleasure to which we looked forward, in returning to Mexico, with a warm eagerness. But, being come upon the very edge of it, we had our doubtings and our fears. The lower-class Mexicans rarely are long-lived—and our Joséfa, we reflected sorrowfully, was an old woman when we parted from her seventeen years ago.

At that parting she gave us instructions for finding her when—at the end of the twelvemonth or so that we fancied would be the limit of our absence—we should return to Mexico. Such instruc-

tions were necessary. As the poor are prone to be, Joséfa was migratory in her habits. Two or three times in the course of our four years' acquaintance she had changed her dwelling place; and she was quite of the opinion that her flittings—the pleasurable excitement incident to which seemed to be the main cause of them—would continue, and that the Calle de Magueyitos (in which we left her) soon would cease to be her home. It therefore would be best, she said, to give the Magueyitos the go-by and to obtain her new address by going direct to her kinsman Don Juan Guzman Rosales: who surely would know it; and whose abode, in the Tercera de Soto, was as permanent as that of the Archbishop—and almost as well known! She spoke of this relative with a pride that was justifiable. He was a Profesor de Armas, and the actual proprietor of a tiro de pistola—a shooting-gallery. He was all that, on her word! Any one, for streets around, could and gladly would direct us to him. But, in point of fact, directions would be needless—because in two ways his house in the Third de Soto was conspicuous above all the other houses in the block: on the front of it we would find painted (very well done, too) a picture of a Señor Caballero firing a pistol at a target; also, from within the house would come a noble crackling of pistol-shots, and with this the clash of swords. Mistakes about that house were impossible. The sword-play and the shooting were continuous. All day long caballeros came to Don Juan's gallery to perfect themselves under his instruction in the art of arms. And so we parted from our Joséfa: holding to her future whereabouts—in the person of her stably eminent relative—what had the look of being a permanent clue.

It was this clue that we followed hopefully—but of course not directly. Going straight from one point to another—and so missing side chances of investigation and adventure—is among the rarest of my indiscretions. The Tercera de Soto—the Calle de Soto is made up of nine blocks numbered sequently—bore northwest by north from our starting-point, and I therefore laid my course for it northeast northerly: a course that car-



THEY EAT MORE FOOD IN PUBLIC

ried us down past the Cathedral to the Plazuela de Santo Domingo; and thence by a long leg westward—through a street cut up under seven names into seven sections—to our prescribed landfall.

In the matter of reviving my wavering faith in the permanence of Mexican institutions, that was a happy voyage. We were no more than past the Cathedral than I was again in the atmosphere that I longed for—with nothing to suggest the intruding foreign element but the American-built electric cars; and those so packed with men in cotton shirts and cotton trousers, and with women in calico petticoats and rebosos, that their Americanism was reduced to the lowest terms. Being come to the Plazuela, I was made yet more happy by finding the Portales de Santo Domingo—as characteristic and as picturesque as the others which so outrageously have been demolished—still blessedly existing: with their shoe-shops, and their little puestos for the sale of toys and sweets, and their line of evangelistas writing letters for those to whom penmanship is a sealed mystery—all as it had been, and as it ought to be. The only

inroad upon the customs of antiquity that I noted was an evangelista (who ought to have been ashamed of himself) hard at work upon a typewriter; and obviously taking in his manipulation of that pernicious instrument an unseemly pride.

As we made our westing toward the Calle de Soto—in spite of the ever-present electric tramway—the true Mexican flavor grew increasingly strong. In this region, and in the region eastward of the Volador, I am persuaded that little shops are crowded more closely together than in any other city (not excepting the shabby quarter of Naples) in the world; and nowhere, certainly, are minute commercial transactions carried on with a more spirited energy. Yet the lively chaffering—in contrast with White-chapel or Hester Street—rarely crosses the line of civility; and is apt to be lightened by a strong dash of chaff. The common people of the City of Mexico have inherited from both their Spanish and their Aztec ancestors a tradition of politeness; and on the Aztec side they have also a heritage of dry humor and of innate gentleness. That they have by



IN A "CASA DE VECINDAD"

both descents a strain of ferocity is true, and when pulque gets the worse of them they fight like incarnate devils; but that is the exception—their normal dealings with each other being carried on smilingly, and their voices having normally a kind ring. Their love for their children is in the way of being a racial touchstone. Only twice in all the years that I have been in Mexico have I seen even an approach to harshness with a child.

Quite as characteristic as the tiny shops which we passed were the tinier street eating-places. Probably the common people of Mexico do not eat more food than any other people; but they certainly do eat more food in public, in a casual and incidental sort of way, than overtly is consumed elsewhere. Partly to supply this extraordinary demand, partly by temptation to create it, eating-stands are scattered thickly throughout the poorer quarter. Everywhere are affable old women crouched in doorways who sell cakes and pastry and sandwiches of meat and radishes and lettuce dashed with chile; those of them in a large way of business having cooking establishments—a brazier of some sort—for the

frying of pancakes, and the baking of tortillas and tamales, and the making of most appetizing-looking meat stews: all of which both look and smell so enticingly, and are so cleanly made, that the blessed Saint Anthony the Abbot—should he chance to come walking with his pig Barabbas in Mexico—would have reason to be well on his guard! I have the impression that these excellent old women severally have their regular customers. Certainly, their patrons chat away with them in a most friendly fashion between mouthfuls, and usually stop to talk for a while longer when the eating is at an end: much as, in other social latitudes, a regular diner at a restaurant stops to pass with its proprietor—when dinner is over—a word or two of well-fed good-will.

Most refreshing of all the refreshments of this pleasing walk were our encounters with many sedate but lovable cats—of the kind which of old were a feature of every shop doorway in the city; but which now, disastrously, are missing from its grander parts. They are grave and dignified to a degree, these shop-keeping cats; and even, now and then,

a little offend good cat-manners by their too marked air of self-importance. But amiability is the very essence of their small beings—and to come again within stroking reach of their soft little jowls, and to hear them purr their acknowledgment (in cat Spanish) of my small courtesy, made me feel that I had found again the Mexico which too hastily I had fancied was lost.

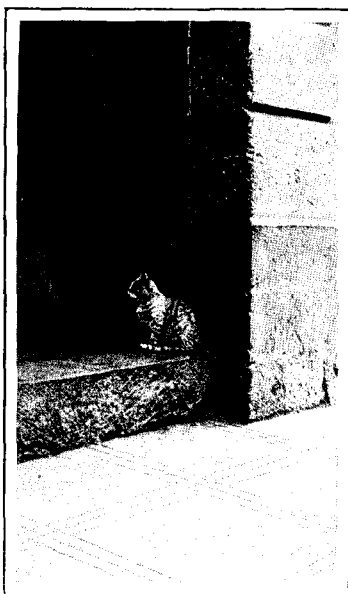
It was in a very happy spirit, therefore, that we came at last to the Tercera de Soto and began our quest for Don Juan Guzman Rosales, Profesor de Armas: whose abiding-place was as fixed as that of the Archbishop, and who was to tell us where our Joséfa lived.

But many things may happen—even to profesores de armas—in seventeen years. We went the length, and back again, of the Third de Soto: but on none of the houses was there a picture of a pistol-shooting caballero, and from none of them came the rattle of pistol-shots and the clash of swords.

Failing to find what we searched for, we applied ourselves to a botica on the corner for information. It was a small botica; but the little clerk within it was even disproportionately smaller, and very young. Indeed, he was so embryotic an apothecary that to let him loose at dispensing drugs struck me as being but a left-handed way of inviting the extermination by poison of the entire neighborhood. Yet it is but fair to add that he seemed to have an immense sense of his poisonous responsibilities, and obviously did his best to live up to them by affecting an air of age. So far as our search was concerned, he was useless. The shooting-gallery perceptibly touched his youthful imagination; but it was too remote to touch his youthful memory.

Checking his unprofessional interest in it, he answered gravely that Don Juan Guzman Rosales was all unknown to him, and that if ever there had been a tiro de pistola in the Tercera de Soto much time had been made since it vanished—and he so inflected the phrase “hace mucho tiempo” as to relegate Don Juan and the pistols to a period not less remote than the Spanish conquest.

At the panadería, on the opposite corner, better fortune attended us. The baker was an old baker; and his bakery—as he told us impressively—had been planted on that very corner by his father, before he himself was born. Assuredly, he said, he knew—that is, he had known—the Profesor de Armas whom we sought. Many and many a time he had practised with the pistol in Don Juan’s gallery. But, alas, he added, he should practise there no more! Don Juan was with the saints—and the pistol-gallery had ceased to be! Perceiving how greatly we were disconcerted by this intelligence—he was a most amiable old man and seemed truly desirous of helping us—he continued, encouragingly, that in the matter



A SHOPKEEPING CAT

of the señora lavandera whom we sought our case was not desperate. The family Rosales, from whom no doubt we could obtain the address of the lady washerwoman, was living he believed—he was not personally acquainted with its members—in a casa de vecindad, only a step away. The entrance to the tenement, he explained, was through the archway nearest to the corner; and, once within that archway, anybody could direct us to the Rosales dwelling. The matter was of great simplicity—we would have no trouble at all. And he accepted our thanks with a cordial dignity and wished us a very good day.

Casas de vecindad are little courts, open only to foot traffic, in which the little houses—usually of a single story—are as small as houses well can be. They are picturesque to a degree. On lines stretched zigzag bright-colored clothes hang out to dry in the sunshine; a swarm of women wearing bright-colored skirts and blue rebosos crowd the doorways; a minor swarm of children, clad more or less in sunbeams, roll on the ground contentedly; and always about the common hydrant, in the court's centre, is there a sociable group engaged in chattering talk. In these cheerful tenements men are seen only in the early mornings and at night-time. The husbands and fathers are laborers, who spend their days abroad.

Having found our court, and entered it, we addressed ourselves to the women about the hydrant. Our coming made a stir among them. Their gossipings—carried on in pleasant-sounding gentle voices—ceased suddenly as we approached. But they received us with a charming courtesy; and the eldest of them, in answer to our questioning, gave us the comprehensive information that the whole of the family Rosales—save one nephew, who had vanished into unknown parts—was dead! We gathered from what was told us that things had gone very badly indeed with these luckless Rosales after their head, the Profesor de Armas, had departed—as the baker had told us—to dwell among the saints; so badly that, really, they had acted with a sound discretion in making haste to follow him. But (as we never had so much as laid eyes on a single one of them) our regret for their misfortunes, ending in their extinction, was of an abstract and impersonal sort.

It was with a real anxiety, however, that we asked—on the chance that these friends of her relatives might have some knowledge of her—for information concerning our Joséfa; and the answer given us was the answer that we dreaded: our dear Joséfa was dead—had been dead

for seven years! There was a break in the woman's voice as she spoke, and a note of strong sorrow—which were explained when she added that Joséfa had been her close friend, and had died in that very court. Most of the others, we found, also had known her, and seemed truly to have loved her; and presently we all were talking away together—that she had been the friend of all of us sufficed to make all of us friends—as though we had known each other for years. What they told of her excellencies—her loving-kindness, her sagacity, her rectitude, her punctuality in her duties—tallied exactly with our own less extended knowledge of her admirable life; and we found a sorrow-touched pleasure in listening to their warm-hearted praises of this truly good woman: who had left behind her so sweet a memory among her intimates; and whose memory was dear to us also, although she had been but casually our friend. At last, with a great outburst of polite leave-takings, we came away from them all and homeward: happier for our encounter with that little friendly company, but with an under-sorrow because our dear Joséfa was gone.

But though we found her not, I am happy in the thought that it was Joséfa who brought me into touch again with the real Mexico of my affections; that it was my quest for her which gave me the comforting assurance—notwithstanding the many painful changes in my city—that the Mexico of the kindly, honest, lovable common people has not changed at all.

And I like to fancy that Joséfa, up there in heaven—laying aside the harp that probably rather bothers her, and gazing downward over the great golden walls with her earth-tired old elbows resting comfortably on the glittering parapet—watched us while we made our wandering search for her: and so knows the good turn that she has done me, and is glad too.



Foresight

BY NELSON LLOYD

I AM to die to-morrow. The clouds that have obscured the brink of life drift away as I come nearer. All is clear now; I see the sheer cliff, and then nothingness.

To-day, to the world's eye, Edward Garth is a strong man with years of happiness before him, but as I sit at this same desk writing, the end will come, to-morrow at five. One moment in God's sunshine, the next in His darkness; one moment envied for my riches and power, the next a mere heap! Beyond that I cannot pierce. My foresight carries me only to that instant when soul and body part. There the future closes about me as mysteriously as the past. When that moment comes, I would that I could pause at the brink, by the heap, by the lifeless body half stretched across the table, and know what those will say that held that I was mad. What will say Kraemler, and Ritzka, and Browning, the men of science, who, limping backward through life themselves, saw in prescience only madness. Learned egotists—if I was mad, you were blind!

So I move to the end, not with fear, but with elation. Of hope, I have none; I do not ask it. I know the hour, and there is no escape. To live would be to prove myself mad. To die is my victory. The heap upon the table will be the conqueror, and the conquered those wise men who, living, stand by it and wonder. They must admit defeat. How can they quibble longer when I have written to them to come to this room at five on the minute and see my proof?

Thus closes the journal of my friend Edward Garth. He did write after that, but disconnectedly. We found the pages scattered about him that day when we called "at five on the minute." To Kraemler and Ritzka these last incoherent scribblings meant madness. To me they meant madness, but it was only

the madness that Garth foresaw. He lived in the future, and when that future was narrowed down to minutes he lacked experience for the business of his brain. His past was gone. As he drew nearer and nearer the brink he could know nothing, see nothing, think of nothing but death. So he had said it would be. His nerveless hand clutched the pen; his cheek, still warm, pressed the page that held his last strange record.

"I am strong—every faculty is keen—sight, hearing, every sense—but my brain runs wild, like a mill with no grist—thinking over and over the little left—I am coming nearer and nearer—soon a blow—a blur—peace—and—a moment—and—" Garth had reached the edge of Life and stepped bravely on.

"Mad, Dr. Browning—your friend was brilliantly mad," Kraemler said to me, as we stood gazing at the heap.

There lay the body half stretched across the table. Here were Kraemler, Ritzka, and Browning, the men of science, the learned egotists. Was he pausing at the brink, I wondered. Was his soul lingering there to hear the verdict of the blind fools who had condemned him, because they saw not as he did? Could he know that the victory was his? I knew it. In my hand was the story of his life; there in the damp pages was the proof of it. Garth was dead; and, living, I was the witness of what he had foreseen.

"But was he mad, Dr. Kraemler?" I returned, in gentle protest. "And you, Ritzka, do you not feel some doubt as to the correctness of your conclusions? Perhaps we are blind. We live in grooves. We inherit from our ancestors absurd political systems and foolish theologies, and those who arise to attack and refute them we damn as revolutionists, demagogues, heretics. Even in our way of using our minds we are abject slaves to heredity. Generation after generation moves backward through life, seeing only