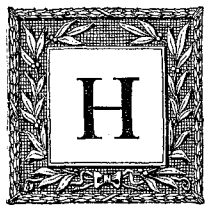


An American Citizen

BY MEREDITH NICHOLSON

[These articles about "REAL PEOPLE WHO ARE REAL SUCCESSSES," depict those whose achievements, founded on character, have made them valuable and respected citizens. The test is not money or fame.]



He gives you at once an impression of solidity; a person not to be jostled or pushed. Of good height and substantially built, at seventy-eight he still carries himself erectly; walks with the air of a man who knows his destination and will arrive on time. The color of health is in his smooth-shaven cheeks. His smile is worth waiting for and his laugh has the ring of honest mirth. You feel that here is a man of cheerful yesterdays and confident to-morrows. A prosperous farmer you might say, in town to sell cattle; or if you met him in a seaport you might think: here is a fine type of the mariner, a retired captain perhaps, still capable of going down to the sea in a ship which he will most certainly carry to its destination and bring back to the home port in safety.

Such a man is Lucius B. Swift, an American citizen.

In a vote conducted recently by the *Indianapolis News* to determine the ten greatest citizens of the Hoosier Commonwealth my hero did not, I believe, receive a single ballot. And this is not surprising. His achievements are not of the sort that speak strongly to the popular imagination. Nothing spectacular: no loud trumpetings; no fireworks; unknown indeed, even by sight, to a large majority of the three hundred thousand inhabitants of the city where he has lived for forty-three years. Money has never figured importantly in his scheme of things; if it had, he might be rich. His ideals of what constitutes a fame worth the winning are not those of that considerable number of persons who are convinced that getting there is the main business of life. And yet, I feel that my hero has arrived, though not by the usual means of transportation or acclaimed in the common terminology of the heralds of success; yet, somehow, he has attained an altitude that makes it necessary for us to lift our eyes a bit if we would rightly see him.

I shall not commit the indiscretion of

attempting to estimate the number of American citizens who always put their country first; but I shall say without a moment's hesitation that Lucius B. Swift is entitled to sit in the front row of any gathering of such patriots. And if an investigation should be made to disclose just how many of those present really had made tangible and concrete sacrifices for their country's good and for the good of humanity, I am sure that my hero would be singled out for special praise, though he would be deeply embarrassed to find himself thus singled out for attention.

So far as my contemplation of the human species has gone, Mr. Swift is unique. I have never known a man who would risk so much for a cause as he. A foolish man, it may be said, to have spent so much time working for the public interest where there was not the slightest chance that he would be thanked for it; where, in fact, in most cases, he laid himself open to abuse or ridicule in undertaking disagreeable tasks which were, as he often heard, none of his business. Herein lies the admirable, the distinguishing thing about him: a conviction, deeply inbred in his nature, that democracy presupposes the sincere interest and devoted service of every individual, and that the public business is every citizen's concern.

I picture him as a serious, earnest, plodding boy in his early years spent on the farm in Orleans County, New York, where he was born; and we may be sure that he made the most of his opportunities at the Yates Academy, less than a mile away, where he laid the foundations of his education. Directly descended from William Swift who settled on Cape Cod in 1637, a good deal of American history had passed into his blood when he began to hear of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and the bitter controversies of the fifties centering at last in the name of Lincoln. At the first call for troops Lucius, then sixteen, enlisted, but after drilling for many weeks was rejected because of his age. His company went away without him; whereupon he borrowed money from a neighbor to carry him to its camp in

Maryland, where by a patriotic fiction his age was put down as eighteen and he was accepted. I shall say, without the slightest fear of contradiction, that this is the first and only time in the course of his seventy-eight years that Lucius B. Swift ever lent himself to duplicity. I had known Mr. Swift ten years before I learned that he had served three years as a private soldier in the Civil War, and then the fact was mentioned casually that he might testify to the spirit of democracy that animated the men in the ranks.

I doubt whether any other private soldier in that war saw it with quite Swift's detachment. The attitude and demeanor of his comrades interested him; he weighed and considered the merits of his commanders—saw the whole business from the view-point of a serious lad capable of understanding that he was participating in a great episode of history. In a paper he prepared several years ago, Mr. Swift gave his impressions as an enlisted man of life in the army just before the battle of Chancellorsville. By this time he was a seasoned soldier with battles in the Valley of Virginia against Stonewall Jackson, sixteen weeks in Southern prisons, and two winter campaigns behind him. The end of the second day at Chancellorsville saw him again Jackson's prisoner, followed by a magical parole from Libby Prison after twelve days. He writes:

"On the evening of Sunday, April 26th, the order was issued to march next morning, each man to carry eight days' rations and sixty rounds of cartridges; three days' rations and forty rounds were the usual load. Next morning each man was left to judge for himself the amount of food which would last him eight days. I counted three meals a day, with three hard-tacks and one slice of bacon for each meal. I therefore carefully arranged in my haversack seventy-two hard-tacks, twenty-four slices of bacon, twenty-four tablespoonfuls of coffee and the same number of sugar, a quart cup, a spoon, a towel, a comb and soap. In my knapsack I had one suit of underclothing, one pair of socks, and a blanket, and my overcoat was rolled in my piece of a dog-tent and strapped on the outside. The march began, the 11th corps now under General Howard taking the lead, and then we followed and after us came the

5th corps under General Meade. This was the flanking column. We were now 40,000 strong. Our route was west up the Rappahannock. After a few miles began the usual casting off of winter surplus, which always occurred on the first spring march and the road was strewn with overcoats, blankets and articles of every kind to lighten the load. The dogwood was in blossom and the grass was green in the fields, but there were no signs of cultivation; the country was sleeping, waiting for the war to cease. We felt well and marched easily. There was in my company a sprinkling of all kinds of spicy Irishmen and a few Germans. The rest were mostly American farmer boys like myself and included twenty school-teachers. With such a combination there was no lack of conversation and jokes, and the march was not always dull plodding. To a great extent officers and men were school and village comrades. The officers of my regiment, as a rule, were men of substance and character at home and were respected by us. Our colonel was a real father of the regiment and our other officers, although often our schoolmates and boy companions and but a single remove from actual comradeship now, were yet officers having the right to command, and no enlisted man ever for a moment trespassed upon that right. Our captain often urged the sergeants to keep a line between themselves and the other men, but we could not bring ourselves to do it with old schoolmates and when off duty we were simply comrades with them. But on duty, the matter was different; we expected to be obeyed without demur and I never knew of but one case of disobedience."

All this was discipline, preparation for other tasks that were to engage his interest. Honorably discharged in June, 1865, Sergeant Swift having, in a manner of speaking, already taken his postgraduate course in the school of war, took up what was by contrast the rather prosaic business of completing his preparation for college. He had saved something from his army pay, and on his discharge in June he went back to school, at the same time assisting in the labor of the home farm. He chose the University of Michigan as his college, it being at that time one of the few American institutions that did not re-

quire Greek, which he lacked. He was graduated from Michigan in the class of 1870 and returned to Medina, near the home farm, where he spent two years in a law office. Having left the university in debt, he decided to teach until the debt was paid. The authorities of his alma mater recommended him for appointment as teacher in the public schools of LaPorte, Indiana. There in due course he became superintendent, and in 1876 he married Miss Mary Ella Lyon, a graduate of Elmira College, whom he had brought to LaPorte to join his teaching staff. Meanwhile Mr. Swift put in his leisure reading law. By 1879 the Swifts, by their joint labor, had accumulated twenty-five hundred dollars. They removed to Indianapolis, where Mr. Swift passed the examination for admission to practise in the United States courts. He knew only one person in the Hoosier capital, the state superintendent of public instruction. His receipts for the first year were thirty-five dollars. In the second year he did much better and felt encouraged to hang on. Mrs. Swift taught in the high school for a year and then became, and continues to be, her husband's self-effacing co-worker, as zealous in public service as he.

In those days the bar of Indianapolis was unexcelled in the West, numbering among its distinguished members Benjamin Harrison, William H. H. Miller, John M. Butler, John T. Dye, William P. Fishback, Joseph E. McDonald, and Thomas A. Hendricks. Indianapolis society at that time was rather a tight corporation. It counted for much that one's folks could boast pioneer ancestors or at least had lived on Hoosier soil through the Civil War period and been identified with the valiant host that upheld the Union under the banner of the war governor, Oliver P. Morton. It was not easy for any newcomer without social or business connections to get a foothold. But the clients who began to find Mr. Swift in Room 2, Hubbard Block, clung to him. Many of them were Germans, who liked his industry and forthright speech and the care he brought to even the smallest commission. Note here this fact, that as his list of clients lengthened, those who brought him the most business were Germans, for we shall come back to this.

It was the way of the Swifts to make

haste slowly. They lived for eight years in three rooms, where Mrs. Swift did her own housework in addition to assisting at the office. Before I knew them I marked the couple in their goings and comings in our streets, accompanied usually by a dog that spent the day in the law office. Sometimes there was a market-basket, too, and books. Lucius B. Swift's name adorned the same door in the Hubbard Block till the building was torn down; and the story-and-a-half cottage on a side street where they still live has been their home for thirty-four years. If you pass that way you will know the place by the vines and flowers that all but hide the house.

Fierce partisanship, a characteristic of the Hoosiers from the days of Tippecanoe and Tyler too, has always made it more comfortable for an Indiana man to align himself with one or the other of the political parties. This is emphasized in the case of a lawyer, who may be assisted in developing a practice by participating in party affairs and gaining an office that will widen his acquaintance and create business contacts. Politics had been a subject much discussed in Mr. Swift's boyhood on the New York farm. Horace Greeley's *Tribune* was the family newspaper, and youthful interest in the slavery issue had been visualized for impressionable youth by the occasional appearance at the back door of the Swift home of a fugitive slave. Swift, the school-teacher and Civil War veteran, was disposed to take his politics seriously. He was influenced by the reading of the New York *Evening Post*, and *The Nation*, then conducted by E. L. Godkin, and *Harper's Weekly* under George William Curtis's editorship. Definite ideals of politics took form in his mind, strengthened by criticisms of Grant's two administrations, and the scandals of the Tweed ring in New York. Bossism, plunder, the bestowal of offices upon faithful henchmen, struck him as wholly irreconcilable with the spirit and promise of American institutions. It occurred to him that the nation he had carried a musket to preserve might still have some work for him to do.

While traditionally a Republican, he had done a good deal of thinking about politics when in 1884 Blaine was nominated for the presidency. To live in In-

dianapolis and affiliate with the Mugwumps was not calculated to promote a newcomer's fortunes either professionally or socially. The animosities left by the Civil War were still so bitter that to be a Democrat was a social disqualification, but to be a Mugwump was to be "queer"—at best the object of amused or cynical curiosity. It may be said of the Indiana Republicans who bolted the Republican presidential nomination of 1884, that they were fit though few. Mr. Swift was of that company, and he established enduring friendships with men he was to be associated with in other contests. Indiana rocked under the furious struggle. It was in that battle that Mr. Swift first displayed his fighting qualities as a civilian. He became chairman of the Indiana Mugwump Committee of One Hundred, and gave time sorely needed for his own affairs to assist in defeating Blaine. I find in one of his speeches a particular emphasis laid upon Cleveland's promises with respect to the merit system, a matter which had already attracted Mr. Swift. An address he delivered before the Freidenker Verein of Indianapolis, January 8, 1885, was I believe the first public utterance on this subject in Indiana. It was a vigorous and effective discussion of the spoils system in American politics, and it is not surprising that Horace White should have brought it to the attention of Carl Schurz and George William Curtis, and that Curtis should have remarked that it was the best thing he had seen on the subject, adding: "Isn't it strange that the cause should take root in Indiana?" It was strange indeed, stranger even than Mr. Curtis knew!

While watching Cleveland's struggle with the importunate job-hunters, very hungry and very thirsty by reason of their long exclusion from federal office, Mr. Swift addressed himself to the business—which was not strictly his business any more than it was that of any other citizen—of exposing the evil features of the management of the Indiana benevolent institutions. These were then operated under laws which made spoils of the jobs and gave the contracts to political favorites. There was now an Indiana Civil Service Reform Association, and under its auspices the Indiana Hospital for the Insane was subjected to a merciless scrutiny.

Having read himself out of the Republican party by supporting Cleveland, Mr. Swift did not hesitate to arouse the ire of the Indiana democracy by showing in what manner the party was using the hospital to strengthen the party machinery. A Republican legislature was not averse to laying bare Democratic iniquity, and an investigation was ordered. Mr. Swift, without pay, gathered and produced before a committee of the senate testimony in support of the charges. The committee's report, with this evidence, made a volume of one thousand three hundred and thirty-five pages! Not only was there a plain showing of favoritism and dishonesty as to contracts but there were cases of drunkenness and immorality among the attendants; helpless patients had been beaten and taunted by their guardians and rotten food was served to them. Mr. Swift spent three weeks, working day and night, presenting the evidence to the committee. This investigation initiated the processes by which the Indiana benevolent institutions were taken out of politics and established upon a business and humanitarian basis. Apart from the satisfaction of performing thoroughly and effectively a public duty, with resulting permanent benefit to his state, Mr. Swift got nothing for his meddlesomeness except, he once remarked to me with his characteristic chuckle, the loss of one valued client, a business man who had been one of the favored contractors!

President Cleveland, with the best intentions in the world, was unable to protect the classified service; and in September, 1886, we find Mr. Swift writing a pamphlet of fifty-three pages in small type, setting forth the manner in which the Pendleton civil-service law was being evaded in Indiana. It may here be said of Mr. Swift's speeches and pamphlets that they are excellent reading. For direct straightforward narrative the literary student would have difficulty in finding their equal. When he went after the management of the Indianapolis post-office in the first Cleveland administration he had, as usual, fortified himself with facts. When, among other things, he stated in Document No. 2 of the papers of the Indiana Civil Service Reform Association that a job had been found in the post-office for a man under indictment for a felony, he

did not merely make a statement; he presented the record of the criminal court to prove it. When he declared that, owing to the reduced efficiency of the post-office, sacks of mail were let lie undistributed so long that the rats ate into them, he knew what he was talking about. A difficult adversary is a man like Swift, who never loses his temper; who, with no motive but to render an honest public service, acts on the principle that a public office is a public trust; who is unmoved by criticism and goes tranquilly on his way, mildly amused when men inquire just what he expects to gain by projecting himself into matters which clearly are none of his business—such a man is indeed puzzling and disturbing to those who view with alarm the intrusion of idealism into politics.

Owing to the tremendous pressure for place, Cleveland had been unable to fulfil his pre-election promises as to the merit system, and in 1888 Mr. Swift supported General Harrison in the hope that the Republicans would stand for a stricter enforcement of the existing civil-service laws. His share in the fight on Blaine had made his name known to the leading Eastern Independents, who were not without curiosity as to the gentleman who had now begun at Indianapolis the publication of the *Civil Service Chronicle*, a journal conducted without profit or the hope of profit. They invited Mr. Swift to Baltimore to a conference of men interested in elevating the tone of American politics. It was then that he first met Theodore Roosevelt, in the office of Charles J. Bonaparte. This was the beginning of a cordial and intimate friendship that continued to the end of Roosevelt's life. Roosevelt was appointed to the Civil Service Commission by Harrison, and in 1889 visited Indianapolis at Swift's request to investigate the conduct of the post-office. On this occasion Roosevelt had luncheon with the Swifts in their cottage on Fourteenth Street, and Mrs. Swift cooked the meal.

The hope of the reformers centred again in Cleveland after his re-election in 1892, and in a long letter to Swift, dated November 28, 1893, Roosevelt wrote:

"I had a talk with the President the other day. It was mostly, however, about the disagreements in the commission: but

I am bound to say that the President, on the whole in the conversation, proved much more amenable to reason as regards civil-service-reform matters than President Harrison ever did. I personally never felt the hope, that so many reformers did, that President Cleveland would make a radical departure in favor of the reform. I thought that as regards the non-classified service he would do just about what has proved to be just about the case. President Cleveland is himself, I think, a much stronger friend of the reform than President Harrison but his party is much more hostile to it than was the Republican party, (I mean of course, the politicians who represent the parties here in Washington and elsewhere) and in consequence the net outcome has been very much the same in the two cases. Cleveland goes rather ahead of his party but does not think well enough of the reform to be willing to go so far ahead as to in any way jeopardize his party standing. Harrison, on the other hand, did not care to go ahead at all; he merely wished to keep abreast of his party in this respect; and so, as I said before, he and Cleveland stand about on the same plane in the matter."

But, in spite of this see-saw, Mr. Swift continued at his work of arousing sentiment favorable to the merit system, which was not, it must be said, a popular reform. Whenever opportunity offered, he delivered his lecture on American Feudalism, illustrating his points with concrete instances of the destructive results of the abuse of political power in Indiana and other states. Meanwhile he kept constantly in touch with Roosevelt, Bonaparte, Richard Henry Dana, and others of the Eastern reformers.

I am quoting the following letter, dated April 27, 1895, because it not only shows a charming side of Roosevelt's character but gives hints of his sense that his Indiana friend was a man of sympathy and understanding, willing to stand up and be shot at for a cause he believed to be right. Mr. Swift had written to express his regret that Roosevelt had resigned from the Civil Service Commission to become police commissioner in New York, and Roosevelt replied:

"No letter that I have received about my change to New York has pleased me as much as yours, for you are the only

correspondent who has understood how I felt about the Civil Service Commission here. I have for six years given all my energy and all my heart to the work. I can honestly say that I think I have accomplished something, and that the cause has made during those six years far more progress from the moral than even from the material side, though the latter, as shown by the figures in the increase of the classified service themselves, is sufficiently great. Now, I entirely share your belief that the Commission must not be dependent upon any one man. In the first place, I think the whole spirit of the Commission has changed. Mr. Procter has been on with me a year and a half. He is as high-minded and upright a man as I ever met, and our methods and desires are identical. I know that he will continue the work when I am gone precisely as he and I have carried it on while I was here. I can't help believing that any new appointee or appointees will do the same. I am continually receiving letters from men who say that they don't see how the Commission will get along without me; that I am essential to it, etc. In the first place no man is essential. There are always plenty to fill his place; and secondly, I think it unhealthy to encourage a feeling that a given man is all-important.

"As for what I can do in New York I confess I feel rather doubtful. The legislature has refused to pass the police bills which it ought to have passed, and I haven't any certain knowledge of how much power I will have. Of course very much depends also upon who my colleagues are. Then I fear that the reformers, in following the lead of Dr. Parkhurst, may expect too much. There are certain evils which I fear cannot possibly be suppressed in a city like New York in our present stage of existence. I shall do my best to find out how to minimize them and make them least offensive, but more than this I fear cannot be done. As for my own course, I am, as you know, in national matters a strong Republican, and differ from most civil-service reformers, I think, in being an advocate of a vigorous foreign policy; but as Police Commissioner I am sure I do not have to say that I will be quite incapable of considering any question of politics in the execution of my duty, whether in the ap-

pointment or removal of a man, or in the adoption of a line of policy.

"Pray remember me warmly to Mrs. Swift, and again let me thank you heartily and sincerely for your letter, which I shall keep."

It is apparent from the tone of Roosevelt's frequent letters to the gentleman in Room 2, Hubbard Block, that these two men, so unlike in temperament, antecedents, and training, had formed for each other the warmest admiration. Later, on occasions when Roosevelt visited Indiana and was overwhelmed by the "thunder of the captains and the shouting," I was amused to remember that Swift was the first man in the state to know him and rightly appraise his qualities. During his years in the White House, whenever Roosevelt wanted absolutely fair and just judgments of Indiana men who sought preferment, he consulted the unassuming, plain-spoken gentleman in Indianapolis. Mr. Swift, with no axes to grind, would, with the slightest encouragement, tell the truth!

Once an Indiana congressman had been at great pains to keep Mr. Swift's name off the list of prominent Hoosiers who were to meet the President, on one of the occasions when Roosevelt paid a visit to Indianapolis. But on the train the President remarked to Vice-President Fairbanks that he very much wished to see his old friend Swift, of whom he spoke with characteristic heartiness. A telegram was immediately despatched, inviting Mr. Swift to the Fairbanks residence. There the congressman and other leading Republicans saw the President greet Swift with a cordiality the least bit dismaying in view of the fact that the modest attorney—a "snivel service reformer"—was a rank outsider who didn't speak the Indiana Republican language at all! In vigorous fashion the President said in a tone audible throughout the room: "There's no time to talk here. I shall be in Oyster Bay shortly; I want you to come down to see me as soon as you can conveniently make the trip!"

Mr. Swift was not to remain an unhonored prophet in the land of his adoption. His fellow citizens began to respect him even where they continued to be puzzled by his sturdy independence, his bothersome stirring up of things that had pre-

viciously been permitted to pass as the mere routine of politics.

In his quiet, determined way he was establishing in Indiana a new standard of political service and patiently but stubbornly insisting upon its acceptance. Patriotism, in his view, is not wholly an affair of gunpowder, but, rightly interpreted, offers its daily opportunities and duties to all lovers of good government. As one of the chief protagonists of the civil-service cause he may be pardoned for pointing with satisfaction to the fact that when he became interested in the subject in 1883 there were only 14,000 positions in the classified service; now there are 400,000. The volumes of the *Civil Service Chronicle* (there's a set in the Harvard Library) are mighty interestin' readin' for the student of American politics.

In a modest way the Swifts prospered. Their circle widened slowly, but it embraced the people of the community best worth knowing. It was an honor to be bidden to dine, or for Sunday-morning breakfast, in the Fourteenth Street cottage. You were sure to find there interesting people and stimulating talk. If the Swifts acquired a rare print or a new set of spoons, or if Mrs. Swift created a new salad, it was a privilege to be asked to share in the celebration of the event. A cheerful outlook on life has always distinguished the Swifts, but at their table and at their fireside the serious problems of life and society and the trend of world affairs have never been neglected. The breadth of their interests is indicated by a few names of distinguished visitors to Indiana who have enjoyed their hospitality—Julia Marlowe, Carl Schurz, Charles J. Bonaparte, Richard Henry Dana, Professors Taussig of Harvard and Farnham of Yale, and Colonel Henry Lee Higginson. With all their keen interest in public affairs the Swifts kept young. They have always been particularly hospitable to ambitious young men and women. It occurred to them rather late in life that they had never danced, having been too busy in their youth for much recreation. So they established a Saturday-night supper with an hour of dancing.

While Mr. Swift never figured in spectacular cases, he established on a solid basis a good law practice. His participation in politics served to plant him in pub-

lic esteem as a man of absolute integrity. There was never any malice in his prodings of the incapable or corrupt; to those of us who have known him long he is endeared by a certain sweetness of temper and a delightful simplicity.

Never wasting ammunition or shooting merely to attract attention, he has through all his years in our town stood up stubbornly for clean politics and honest public service. When in 1899 a street-railway franchise was to be granted, he published a pamphlet on the subject warning the people against yielding their rights without an adequate return. He was right in his warning, though few realized it then. His protest passed unheeded, and his fellow townsmen are the poorer for their heedlessness.

In the first Bryan campaign he was at once active, speaking and writing against silver. He asked to be assigned to small meetings in country districts, where he could maintain a conversational tone in discussing his subject and invite and answer questions. He gave his whole time to the campaign. The receipts of his law office between Bryan's nomination and election day were exactly ten dollars!

When the German legions started across Belgium in 1914, Mr. Swift grew restless, and before the sinking of the *Lusitania* he saw clearly that the struggle was not one of nations but an assault upon democracy. The attitude of men of German birth or descent in America in upholding the German cause aroused his indignation and he wrote an essay, a calm consideration of the war in the light of German history. This, read before the Indianapolis Literary Club and elsewhere in 1916, was widely circulated as a pamphlet. Like all of Mr. Swift's utterances, this address contained no abuse; there was no calling of names; his information was drawn largely from German sources. His utterances were resented by his many German friends; the more influential of his German clients immediately withdrew their business. Only a few intimate friends knew of this, as it has never been Swift's way to whimper or covet the martyr's crown. He was more hurt by the severing of old ties of friendship than by the shrinking of his practice. A number of men who shared his feeling that Germany was wrong and that America "slept a base sleep beside

an idle spear," while all civilization was menaced, gave him a dinner in 1916. Roosevelt sent the following letter:

"I very sincerely wish that I could be present at the dinner in honor of Lucius B. Swift on May 2d. Mr. Swift has combined to a peculiar degree the qualities we like to think of as typical of American citizenship at its best. I have never met in public or private life a more entirely fearless and disinterested foe of every form of political corruption. Moreover, unlike many reformers of fearlessness and zeal, he has always kept a sane and well-balanced judgment. Recently he has been fighting against what is even a more deadly foe to this country than political corruption, for he has been fighting against the peculiar baseness of moral treason which, under the guise of hyphenated Americanism, has been attacking what is best and most necessary in our national heritage. There has been an organized anti-American propaganda, very powerful politically and even financially; and against this Mr. Swift has warred fearlessly, at a time when most men held their peace. I wish I could be present at the dinner in his honor."

When America entered into the war, Mr. Swift volunteered for service and was made chairman of the District Board at Indianapolis, a court of appeals for thirty-seven local draft boards. It was like him to take the difficult job seriously, giving to it long hours in a conscientious effort to deal justly with every case. In 1919 Mr. Swift was offered a place on the Sanitary Commission at Indianapolis, a board of three members about to erect a sewage-disposal plant for the city at a cost of two and a half million dollars. Having satisfied himself that the board was designed to do its work without political interference, and that the law protected the members from the axe of the spoilsman, he accepted. In 1921 the General Assembly added the collection of ashes and garbage to the duties of the board.

A political upheaval soon landed the Honorable Samuel Lewis Shank in the mayor's office, and he publicly announced that Swift must go. The commission employs many men, and Shank's followers clamored for jobs. In a statement issued to the public Mr. Swift said:

"I have other work suspended that I would rather do; and I could resign and have peace. But the law does not intend that a commissioner shall resign in the middle of his term because a mayor comes demanding an opportunity to turn the department into a political nest and I won't do it. Besides, for more than thirty years I have fought against using the civil service to pay political or personal debts, and I will not now turn my back upon my professions and by resigning aid the mayor-elect to beat the law and complete his Tammanyization of the entire civil service of the city."

At this writing Mr. Swift continues a member of the Sanitary Board, the only political office he has ever held, and this not of his seeking. The force of ash and garbage collectors, taken over from another board, consisted of colored men, every one a master politician, each with his pull. Their superintendent, a white man, carried a ward in the hollow of his hand. Another member of the board cooperated with Mr. Swift and step by step they have freed the entire department from every vestige of politics, the first instance of the kind in the history of Indianapolis. The helpless mayor has started a movement to get the board legislated out of office. Mr. Swift regards it as one of the greatest triumphs of his life to have been able to demonstrate that nothing is easier than to exclude politics from city government.

I shall not incur the wrath of the subject of this sketch by pointing to him with a fine gesture as an example worthy of all emulation. In his long life he has cared as little for praise as for blame. He was pleased, though, when in 1919 he was recalled to his alma mater to receive the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws in recognition of his unselfish and untiring efforts in behalf of clean politics. Here is a man who has never sought the easier way or evaded a responsibility. A full life, a life of usefulness, void of low aims or mean ambitions. After years of conflict he remains an optimist—the cheeriest man I know.

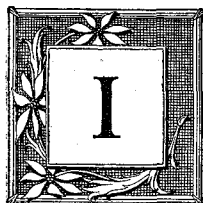
"I have no complaints about anything," he said the other day; "if I had to go to-morrow it would be all right. I've had a mighty good time!"

Loaded Dice

BY SHANE LESLIE

Author of "A Study in Smoke," etc.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY CHARLES BASKERVILLE



I WAS recently passing a few days at Monte Carlo, tempted more by the weather than by the spirit of gambling. I was mooning about in the sunshine, if I may so describe a very pleasant though unproductive manner of spending the time. The hothouse plants and tropical trees which grow out-of-doors in the Riviera are alone worth the pleasure of the trip. The principality of Monaco needs no foreign loans to run its government, for the tax paid by the Casino is sufficient to balance its expenses. The flowers benefit by the local affluence, for their beds are as carefully made as though they were occupying a royal suite, and they themselves receive as much toilet as ladies of fashion. Palms, prickly-pear cactus, and all kinds of thick, watery-fleshed plants thrive in the dry terraces between the mountains and the Mediterranean Sea. The top-heavy, gouty, black-fibred palm-trees give a ludicrous impression of old elephants' legs suffering, if such a medical horror is possible, from the disease called elephantiasis! The fruit of the prickly-pear looks like lumps of colored putty temporarily stuck upon the gawky leathery leaves. Another amusing plant with stiff spiked leaves a yard long looks, when it begins to wither, like strips of zebra hide cut into ribbons. Sun and dew work hand in hand all winter to make the vegetation as delightful to passing visitors to Monte Carlo as it must be consoling to constant losers!

Whether one hazards a stake or not, it is always interesting to sit outside the Casino and watch the different types who frequent that most levelling of institutions. Fortune is the most democratic of divinities, and often tosses into the lap of the humble what she has filched from the purse-proud. Great or small, adventurer or aristocrat, sharp or flat, she has a levelling effect on them all in time. They are all at the mercy of her infinite and ironical whimsicality.

Monte Carlo has this in common with

certain other places in the world, like Charing Cross Station, the Piazza of St. Peter's, and Niagara Falls, that the world, with or without his wife, passes there sooner or later. If you wait, you will soon run into an acquaintance, and already you have a curious feeling that half the people you have ever known have passed that way. For once I sat waiting an hour without recognizing a face. It was like a long run of the *rouge* at the table. The *noir* seemed more and more certain to come. The next to pass must be a friend. So it was, for I recognized the worn, old-fashioned features before me. But where had I met them previously? The name came back to me with an effort. I remembered now. It was an old friend of my father's, and we had met in Hyde Park twenty years before, when I was a boy at Eton. I never forgot the gold sovereign he gave me to take back to school. I remembered, too, my father having pointed him out to me as the greatest gambler of his generation. I vaguely knew that his whole fortune had disappeared at the tables.

I was feeling lonely, so I followed him into the gambling rooms and claimed acquaintance, which he was polite enough not to refuse. He was not gambling himself, so he had time to take me round the tables and explain to me in theory one or two unfailing systems for breaking the bank. In practice I afterward found out, and even suspected at the moment, they had as often bankrupted the would-be raptors of the bank, but he only remembered the one or two brilliant moments in his career when he had cleared out a table and left it closed for the day. I found it more interesting listening to this old-time player than watching the motley crowd who clutched the gold-spangled skirts of Fortune as she slipped by, in silences only broken by the mocking formulas of the croupiers and the whirling of the fatal ball. At the tables were sitting girls who had better been playing drafts in their schoolrooms, and hawk-eyed beldames who seemed ready to stake the price of their coffins on the winning