

From Immigrant to Inventor

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II.—THE HARDSHIPS OF A GREENHORN

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS



My first night under the Stars and Stripes was spent in Castle Garden. It was a glorious night, I thought; no howling of the gales, no crashing of the waves, and no tumbling motion of the world beneath my feet, such as I experienced on the immigrant ship. The feeling of being on *terra firma* sank deep into my consciousness and I slept the sound sleep of a healthy youth, although my bed was a bare floor. The very early morning saw me at my breakfast, enjoying a huge bowl of hot coffee and a big chunk of bread with some butter, supplied by the Castle Garden authorities at Uncle Sam's expense. Then I started out, eager to catch a glimpse of great New York, feeling, in the words of the psalmist, "as a strong man ready to run a race." An old lady sat near the gate of Castle Garden offering cakes and candies for sale. A piece of prune pie caught my eye, and no true Serb can resist the allurements of prunes. It is a national sweetmeat. I bought it, paying five cents for it, the only money I had, and then I made a bee-line across the Battery Park, at the same time attending to my pie. My first bargain in America proved a failure. The prune pie was a deception; it was a prune pie filled with prune pits, and I thought of the words of my fellow passenger on the immigrant ship who said that "no matter who you are or what you know or what you have you will be a greenhorn when you land in America." The prune-pie transaction whispered into my ear, "Michael, you are a greenhorn; this is the first experience in your life as a greenhorn. Cheer up! Get ready to serve your apprenticeship as a greenhorn before you can establish your claim to any recognition," repeating the

words of my prophetic fellow passenger who had served his apprenticeship in America. No prophet ever uttered a truer word.

The old Stevens Hotel, a white building with green window-shutters, stood at the corner of Broadway and Bowling Green. When I reached this spot and saw the busy beehive called Broadway, with thousands of telegraph-wires stretching across it like a cobweb between huge buildings, I was overawed and wondered what it all meant. Neither Budapest, nor Prague, nor Hamburg looked anything like it. My puzzled and panicky expression and the red fez on my head must have attracted considerable attention, because suddenly I saw myself surrounded by a small crowd of boys of all sizes, jeering and laughing and pointing at my fez. They were newsboys and bootblacks, who appeared to be anxious to have some fun at my expense. I was embarrassed and much provoked, but controlled my Serbian temper. Presently one of the bigger fellows walked up to me and knocked the fez off my head. I punched him on the nose and then we clinched. My wrestling experiences on the pasturelands of Idvor came to my rescue. The bully was down in a jiffy, and his chums gave a loud cheer of ringing laughter. I thought it was a signal for general attack, but they did not touch me or interfere in any way. They acted like impartial spectators, anxious to see that the best man wins. Suddenly I felt a powerful hand pulling me up by the collar, and when I looked up I saw a big official with a club in his hand and a fierce expression in his eye. He looked decidedly unfriendly, but after listening to the appeals of the newsboys and bootblacks who witnessed the fight he softened and handed me my fez. The boys who a little while ago had jeered and tried to

guy me, evidently appealed in my behalf when the policeman interfered. They had actually become my friends. When I walked away toward Castle Garden with my red fez proudly cocked up on my head the boys cheered. I thought to myself that the unpleasant incident was worth my while, because it taught me that I was in a country where even among the street urchins there was a strong sentiment in favor of fair play even to a Serbian greenhorn. America was different from Austria-Hungary. I never forgot the lesson and never had a single reason to change my opinion.

A gentleman who witnessed the fight joined me on my return trip to Castle Garden, and when we reached the employment bureau he offered me a job. When I learned that one of my daily duties would be to milk a cow, I refused. According to Serb traditions, milking a cow is decidedly a feminine job. Another gentleman, a Swiss foreman on a Delaware farm, offered me another job, which was to drive a team of mules and help in the work of hauling things to the field preparatory for spring planting. I accepted gladly, feeling confident that I knew all about driving animals, although I had never even seen a mule in all my experiences in Idvor. We left for Philadelphia that forenoon and caught there the early afternoon boat for Delaware City, where we arrived late in the afternoon.

As we passed through Philadelphia I asked the Swiss foreman whether that was the place where a hundred years ago famous Benjamin Franklin flew his kite, and he answered that he had never heard of the gentleman, and that I must have meant William Penn. "No," said I, "because I never heard of this gentleman." "You have still to learn a thing or two about American history," said the Swiss foreman with a superior air. "Yes, indeed," I said, "and I intend to do it as soon as I have learned a thing or two about the English language"; and I wondered whether the Swiss foreman who had never heard of Benjamin Franklin and his kite had really learned a thing or two in American history, although he had lived some fifteen years in the United States.

There were quite a number of farmers on the Delaware boat, every one of them wearing a long goatee but no mustache;

such was the fashion at that time. Every one of them had the brim of his slouch hat turned down, covering his eyes completely. As they conversed they looked like wooden images; they made no gestures and I could not catch the expression of their hidden eyes; without these powerful aids to the understanding of the spoken word I could not make out a single syllable in their speech. The English language sounded to me like an inarticulate mode of speech, just as inarticulate as the joints of those imperturbable Delaware farmers. I wondered whether I should ever succeed in learning a thing or two in this most peculiar tongue. I thought of the peasants at the neighborhood gatherings in Idvor and of their winged words, each of which found its way straight into my soul. There also appeared before my mental vision the image of Baba Batikin with fire in his eye and a vibratory movement in his hand accompanying his stirring tales of Prince Marko. How different and how superior those peasants of Idvor appeared to me when I compared them with the farmers on that Delaware boat! "Impossible," said I, "that a Serb peasant should be so much superior to the American peasant!" Something wrong with my judgment, thought I, and I charged it to my being a greenhorn and unable to size up an American farmer.

At the boat-landing in Delaware City a farm-wagon was awaiting us, and we reached the farm at supper-time. The farm-buildings were fully a mile outside of the town and standing all by themselves; there was no village and there were no neighbors, and the place looked to me like a camp. There was no village life among American farmers, I was told, and I understood then why those farmers on the Delaware boat were so devoid of all animation. The farm-hands were all young fellows but considerably older than myself, and when the foreman introduced me to them, by my Christian name, I found that most of them spoke German with a Swiss accent, the same which the foreman had who brought me from New York. One of them asked me how long I had been in the country, and when I told him that I was about twenty-four hours in the country, he smiled and said that he thought so, evidently on account of the unmistakable signs of a greenhorn which he saw all over me.

The first impression of an American farm was dismal. In the messroom, however, where supper was served, everything was neat and lovely, and the supper looked to me like a holiday feast. I became more reconciled to the American farm. The farm-hands ate much and spoke very little, and when they finished they left the dining-room without any ceremony. I was left alone and moved my chair close to a warm stove and waited for somebody to tell me what to do next. Presently two women came in and proceeded to clear the supper-table; they spoke English and seemed to pay no attention to me. They probably thought that I was homesick and avoided disturbing me. Presently I saw a young girl, somewhat younger than myself. She pretended to be helping the women, but I soon discovered that she had another mission. Her appearance reminded me of a young vila, a Serbian fairy, who in the old Serbian ballads plays a most wonderful part. No hero ever perished through misfortune who had the good fortune to win the friendship of a vila. Supernatural both in intelligence and in physical skill, the vilæ could always find a way out of every difficulty. I felt certain that if there ever was a vila this young girl was one. Her luminous blue eyes, her finely chiselled features, and her graceful movements made a strange impression upon me. I imagined that she could hear the faintest sound, that she could see in the darkest night, and that, like a real vila, she could feel not only the faintest breezes but even the thoughts of people near her. She certainly felt my thoughts. Pointing to a table in a corner of the dining-room, she directed my attention to writing-paper and ink, placed there for the convenience of farm-hands. I understood her meaning, although I did not understand her words. I spent the evening writing a letter to my mother. This was my wish, and the vila must have read it in my face.

One of the farm-hands, a Swiss, came in after a while in order to remind me that it was bedtime and to inform me that early in the morning he would wake me up and take me to the barn, where my job would be assigned to me. He kept his word, and with lantern in hand he took me long before sunrise to the barn and introduced me to two mules which he put in

my charge. I cleaned them and fed them while he watched and directed; after breakfast he showed me how to harness and hitch them up. I took my turn in the line of teams hauling manure to the fields. He warned me not to apply myself too zealously to the work of loading and unloading, until I became gradually broken in, otherwise I should be laid up stiff as a rod. The next day I was laid up, stiffer than a rod. He was much provoked and called me the worst "greenhorn" that he ever saw. But, thanks to the skilled and tender care of the ladies on the farm, I was at my job again two days later. My being a greenhorn appealed to their sympathy; they seemed to have the same kind of soul which I first observed in my American friends who paid my fare from Vienna to Prague.

One of my mules gave me much trouble, and the more he worried me the more amusement he seemed to furnish to the other farm-hands, rough immigrants of foreign birth. He did not bite, nor did he kick, as some of the mules did, but he protested violently against my putting the bridle on his head. The other farm-hands had no advice to offer; they seemed to enjoy my perplexity. I soon discovered that the troublesome mule could not stand anybody touching his ears. That was his ticklish spot. I finally got around it; I never took his bridle off on working-days, but only removed the bit, so that he could eat. On Sunday mornings, however, when I had all the time I wanted, I took his bridle off, cleaned it and put it on, and did not remove it again for another week. The foreman and the superintendent discovered my trick and approved of it, and so the farm-hands lost the amusement which they had at my expense every morning at the harnessing hour. I noticed that they were impressed by my trick and did not address me by the name of greenhorn quite as often. They were also surprised to hear me make successful attempts to speak English. Nothing counts so much in the immigrant's bid for promotion to a grade above that of a greenhorn as the knowledge of the English language. In these efforts I received a most unexpected assistance, and for that I was much indebted to my red fez.

On every trip from the barnyard to the fields, my mules and I passed by the su-

perintendent's quarters, and there behind the wall of neatly piled-up cord-wood I observed every now and then the golden curls of my American vila. She cautiously watched there just like a Serbian vila at the edge of a forest. My red fez perched up on a high seat behind the mules obviously attracted and amused her. Whenever I caught her eye I saluted in regular Balkan fashion, and it was a salute such as she had never seen before in the State of Delaware. Her curiosity seemed to grow from day to day and so did mine.

One evening I sat alone near the warm stove in the messroom and she came in and said: "Good evening!" I answered by repeating her greeting, but pronounced it badly. She corrected me, and when I repeated her greeting the second time, I did much better and she applauded my genuine effort. Then she proceeded to teach me English words for everything in the dining-room, and before that first lesson was over I knew some twenty English words and pronounced them to her satisfaction. The next day I repeated these words aloud over and over again during my trips to the fields until I thought that even the mules knew them by heart. At the second lesson on the following evening I scored a high mark from my teacher and added twenty more words to my English vocabulary. As time went on, my vocabulary increased at a rapid rate, and my young teacher was most enthusiastic. She called me "smart," and I never forgot the word. One evening she brought in her mother, who two weeks prior to that time was taking care of me when I was laid up from overzealous loading. At that time she could not make me understand a single word she said. This time, however, I had no difficulty, and she was greatly surprised and pleased. My first examination in English was a complete success.

At the end of the first month on the Delaware farm my confidence in the use of the English language had grown strong. During the second month I grew bold enough to join in lengthy conversations. The superintendent's wife invited me often to spend the evening with the family. My tales of Idvor, Panchevo, Budapest, Prague, Hamburg, and the immigrant ship interested them much, they

said. My pronunciation and grammar amused them even more than they were willing to show. They were too polite to indulge in unrestrained laughter over my Serbian idioms. During these conversations the vila sat still and seemed to be all attention. She was all eyes and ears, and I knew that she was making mental notes of every mistake in my grammar and pronunciation. At the next lesson she would correct every one of these mistakes, and then watched at the next family gathering to see whether I would repeat them. But I did not; my highest ambition was to show myself worthy of the title "smart" which she had given me.

One evening I was relating to the superintendent's family how I refused the first offer of a job at Castle Garden, because I did not care to accept the daily duty of milking a cow, which, according to my Serbian notions, was a purely feminine job. I admitted that Serbian and American notions were entirely different in this particular respect, because although over a hundred cows were milked daily on the farm, I never saw a woman in any one of the many barns, nor in the huge creamery. I also confessed that both the vila and her mother would be entirely out of place not only in the cow-barns but even in the scrupulously clean creamery, adding that if the vila had been obliged to attend to the cows and to the creamery, she would not have found the time to teach me English, and, therefore, I preferred the American custom. Vila's mother was highly pleased with this remark and said: "Michael, my boy, you are beginning to understand our American ways, and the sooner you drop your Serbian notions the sooner you will become an American."

She also explained to me the position of the American woman as that of the educator and spiritual guide of the coming generation, emphasizing the fact that the vast majority of teachers in American primary schools were women. This information astonished and pleased me, because I knew that my mother was a better teacher than my schoolmaster, an old man with a funny nasal twang. Her suggestion, however, that I should drop my Serbian notions and become an American as soon as possible disturbed me. But I said nothing; I was a greenhorn only and did not desire to express an opinion which might

clash with hers. I thought it strange, however, that she took it for granted that I wished to become an American.

The next day was Sunday, and I walked to church, which was in Delaware City. The singing of hymns did not impress me much, and the sermon impressed me even less. Delaware City was much bigger than my native Idvor, and yet the religious service in Idvor was more elaborate. There was no choral singing in the church of Delaware City, and there were no ceremonies with a lot of burning candles and the sweet perfume of burning incense and there was no ringing of harmonious church-bells. I was disappointed, and wondered why Vila's mother expected me to drop my Serbian notions and embrace America's ways, which, as far as public worship was concerned, appeared to me as less attractive than the Serbian ways. Vila's family met me in front of the church and asked me to ride home with them. A farm-hand riding in a fine carriage with his employer struck me as extraordinary, and I wished to be excused, but they insisted. No rich peasant in Idvor would have done that. In this respect Delaware farmers with their American ways appealed to me more. Another surprise was in store for me: Vila's mother insisted that I share with the family their Sunday dinner, just as I shared with them the divine service. I saw in it an effort on her part to show an appreciation of my religious habit and to encourage it, thus proving in practice what she preached to me about the spiritual influence of the American woman. During the dinner I described the Sundays of Idvor, dwelling particularly upon the custom among the Serbian boys and girls of kolo dancing on the village green in front of the church on Sunday afternoons. Vila approved of the custom enthusiastically, but her mother thought that a walk through the peach-orchards, which were then in full bloom, was at least as good. Vila and I walked together that Sunday afternoon. My attendance at church gained for me this favor also.

He who has never seen the Delaware peach-orchards of those days in full bloom, when in the month of May the ground is a deep velvety green, and when the Southern sky seen through the golden atmosphere of a sunny May day reminds

one of those mysterious landscapes which form the background in some of Raphael's Madonna pictures—he who has never seen that glorious sight does not know the heavenly beauty of this little earth. No painter would dare attempt to put on canvas the cloth of flaming gold which on that balmy Sunday afternoon covered the ripples of the sun-kissed Delaware River. Vila asked me whether I had ever seen anything more beautiful in Idvor, and I said no, but added that nothing is as lovely and as sweet as one's native village. When I informed her that some day I expected to return to it, enriched by my experiences in America, she looked surprised and said:

"Then you do not intend to become an American?"

"No," said I; and after some hesitation I added: "I ran away from the military frontier because the rulers of the land wanted to transform me into a Hungarian; I ran away from Prague because I objected to Austrian Teutonism; I shall run away from Delaware City also if, as your good mother suggested, I am expected to drop my Serbian notions and become an American. My mother, my native village, my Serbian orthodox faith, my Serbian language and the people who speak it are my Serbian notions, and one might as well expect me to give up the breath of my life as to give up my Serbian notions."

"You misunderstood my mother, Michael," said the vila; "she only referred to your notions about woman's work, and you know that European women are expected to do the hard work for which men only are strong enough."

"Very true," said I; "the strongest and ablest men in Europe spend the best part of their lives on battle-fields or training for the battle-fields; this is particularly true of the Serbian people. This forces our Serbian women to do some of the hard work which men should do." This gave me a fitting opportunity to say a few things in favor of the spiritual influence of the Serbian women by describing the position of the Serbian woman as she is represented in the Serbian ballads—of Chouchouk Stana, the wife of Haydouk Velyko, who urged her hero husband to sacrifice his life rather than surrender the eastern frontier of Serbia, which, during

the Serbian revolution, he was defending against vastly superior Turkish forces; of the maid of Kossovo, who at the risk of her life and liberty visited the battle-field of Kossovo in order to administer the last spiritual aid to the fallen and dying heroes; of Yevrosima, mother of Prince Marko, the national hero of the Serbian race, whose counsel and advice were the only guiding star to Marko throughout his stormy life. I also told her that I would not be a witness to that heavenly scene on the banks of the Delaware that Sunday afternoon if it had not been for my mother, who urged me to go into the world and learn new things, which I could not learn in my native peasant village. Young Vila was much impressed by my Serbian tales, and by my pleading in behalf of the Serbian women, and then she asked me whether I ever heard of Martha Washington, the wife of George Washington, the national hero of America. I confessed complete ignorance. Pointing to the golden ripples of sun-kissed Delaware River, she said that it did not always look as bright and peaceful, and then described its appearance when in the middle of winter its surface is covered with broken ice, which, tossed by the waves of the angry river, makes a passage across it next to impossible. But in January, 1777, George Washington, the commander of the retreating American armies, crossed it, and on the other side of the river, near Trenton, surprised the advancing victorious British armies and defeated them, turning American defeat into American victory. "Washington," she said, "just like Haydouk Velyko, was ready to sacrifice his life while crossing the treacherous ice-fields of the angry Delaware in order to strike a timely blow for the safety of his country." And she was inclined to believe, she said, that Martha Washington acted at that critical moment just as Chouchouk Stana did. From that day on Washington was to me the Haydouk Velyko of America, and the name of the Delaware River inspired me always with thoughts of deep veneration. Vila showed me that America, like Serbia, was also a land of heroes. The rest of that glorious Sunday afternoon was spent in Vila's answering my numerous questions concerning George Washington and the war of the American Revolution. It was the

most inspiring afternoon which I ever experienced in America, up to that time, and I felt that, after all, there might be many things in America which are just as great as those great things of which the Serbian gouslar sings in the national ballads of Serbia. Vila succeeded in welding the first link between my Serbian traditions and the traditions of America. I apologized to her for misunderstanding her mother's suggestion that I become an American as soon as possible, and confessed that I was much less anxious than I thought I was a few moments ago to run away from the shores of the historic Delaware.

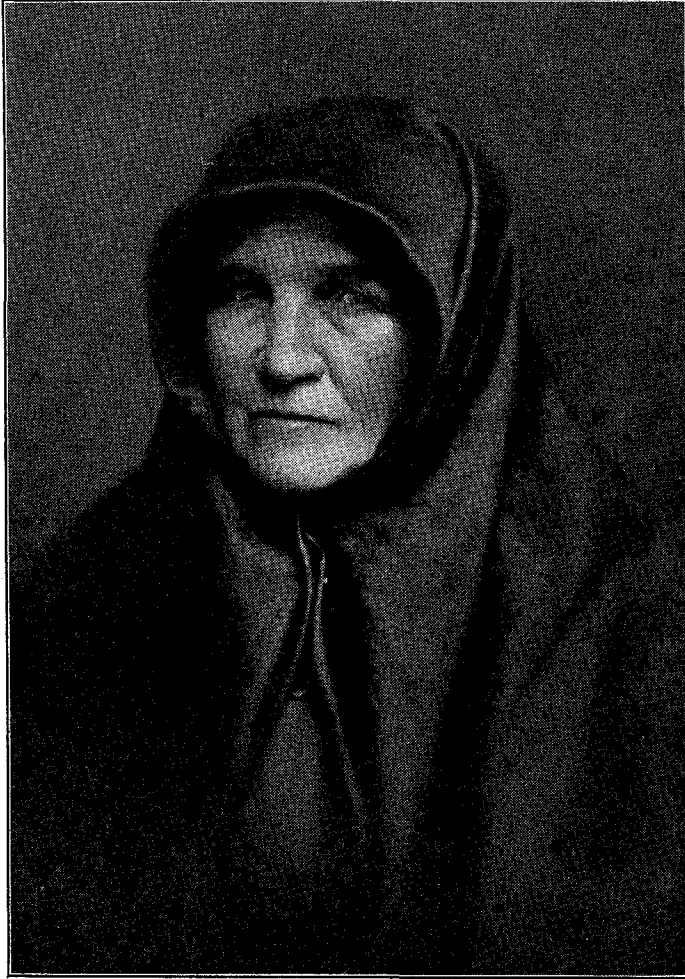
After Vila discovered my lively interest in American history, she continued her English lessons to me by telling me stories relating to early American history, which I repeated to her. Jamestown, South St. Mary, in southern Maryland, and Virginia figured big in these tales. When I first heard of the *Mayflower*, a year or so later, and its landing at Plymouth Rock, I wondered why Vila never mentioned that great historical event. She never mentioned Lincoln, and changed conversation when I once called him the American Prince Marko. America north of the Delaware River was very little in her mind, and even Philadelphia was mentioned only on account of the Liberty Bell and the Declaration of Independence.

One evening Vila's mother asked me about my mother and her hopes for my future. Remembering her remarks concerning the spiritual influence of the American women upon the coming generation, I gave her a glowing account of my mother, and wound up by saying that she did not expect me to become an American farmer, and that I came to America to learn what I could not learn in a peasant country like that of my native village. She was much touched, and then in simple and solemn language she revealed to me a new truth which I never forgot and which I found confirmed by all my experiences in this great land, the truth, namely, that this is a country of opportunities which are open equally to all; that each individual must seek these opportunities and must be prepared to make good use of them when he finds them. She commended me warmly for making good use of all the opportunities which I found on

the farm, and advised me strongly to go in search of new opportunities. Vila agreed with her, and I prepared to leave the hospitable shores of Delaware.

I made my return trip to Philadelphia

prior to that time. Every time I caught sight of my carpetbag with the good things which Vila's mother had put in, I felt that I was still near the vila and her honey-hearted mother. They were my



Olympiada Pupin, mother of Michael Pupin.

From a photograph taken in 1880.

on the same boat which brought me to Delaware City. Things looked different from what they did on my first trip. The farmers of Delaware, my fellow passengers on the boat, did not look like wooden images, and their speech was not inarticulate. I understood their language, and its meaning found a sympathetic response in me. The trip reminded me much of the trip on the Danube some eighteen months

American mother and sister. One of my fellow passengers pointed out Trenton to me and assured me that the boat was passing over the spot where Washington crossed the Delaware, and I remembered then the first view of the Cathedral of Karlovatz, the seat of the Serbian Patriarch, which was pointed out to me from the Danube boat by the theological students. I felt the same thrill in each case,

and I knew that America was getting a hold upon my Serbian heart-strings. My appearance attracted no attention, neither on the boat nor at Philadelphia after we landed. My hat and clothes were American, but my heavy top-boots, so useful on the farm, were somewhat too heavy for the warm June days in Philadelphia.

The Swiss foreman directed me to a Swiss acquaintance of his who had a small hotel in Philadelphia. He was very eager to have me take all my meals at the hotel, but my total capital of ten dollars made me cautious; besides, my days from early morning till late at night were spent in the heart of the city. No human being ever saw so much of Philadelphia during a stay of five days as I did, hunting for a job, searching new opportunities, as Vila's mother expressed it. But I searched in vain. I gained new information about William Penn and Benjamin Franklin and saw many buildings the history of which is attached to these two great names, and I wondered why Benjamin Franklin ever deserted Boston to search new opportunities in a place like Philadelphia. But he did it and succeeded. I was sure that neither he nor any other human being could walk more nor chase after a job more diligently than I did, but then he was an American boy and he had a trade, and I was a Serbian greenhorn who did not know anything in particular, except to drive a pair of mules. Besides, thought I, Philadelphia might have lost its wealth of opportunities since Franklin's days. Such was my consolation while resting on a bench in Fairmount Park, near the grounds which were being prepared for the Centennial Exposition of 1876. I was lunching on a chunk of bread and thinking what would happen when the last three dollars, the remnant of my ten dollars which I brought from the Delaware farm, disappeared. A husky farmer approached me and addressed me in English, asking whether I wanted a job. "I do," said I; "I have been chasing after one nearly a week, and I can't chase much longer, because I see that my weary farm-boots are showing many signs of distress in their long daily struggles against these hot Philadelphia pavements."

A day later found me in South St. Mary, in southern Maryland. I expected

great things here, having heard so much of its early history from Vila. I was engaged to drive a pair of mules, dragging cultivators through corn and tobacco fields. As far as skill and physical exertion were concerned, the job was easy. But the climate was deadly, and social life was even more so. The only interesting people whom I found there were those buried in the old cemetery, some two hundred years prior to that time, when South St. Mary was quite an important place, and when the original settlers brought many fine things from England, and even bricks with which they built their houses. The only diversion I found was to read the legends on the tombstones in the old cemetery near the village church. Chesapeake Bay and the Potomac River and the many inlets of the bay bordered by luxuriant vegetation gave the country a most picturesque appearance. The flourishing corn and tobacco fields suggested prosperity, but the only people who stirred and showed any activity were darkies, whose language I could not understand. I felt that as far as human speech was concerned, I was in a valley of silence, although the air was full of incessant sounds from all kinds of insects and water-animals. Mosquitoes, gnats, and flies, and the most oppressive, almost tropical, heat of the sun made work in the fields unbearable. Many a time while driving the phlegmatic mules through the broiling atmosphere of the tobacco-fields I thought of the icy blasts of the North Atlantic which I experienced on the immigrant ship less than three months prior to that time, and I prayed that one of those icy breaths of the polar regions might wander astray and reach the flatlands of Chesapeake Bay. My prayer was not heard, and I was happy to be still alive at the end of the month, and then I took my wages of fifteen dollars and made a bee-line for the north. I hoped that in New York I might be able to catch some of the cold North Atlantic breezes and, after cooling off, pick up one of the many opportunities in the metropolis, which on the day when the immigrant ship landed me at Hoboken seemed to be seething with life and activity and brimful of all kinds of opportunities.

The Chesapeake boat landed me at Baltimore in the early hours of a Sunday

morning, and the sound of beautifully tuned church-bells greeted me. I was told that Baltimore was a Catholic city and that the bells belonged to a Catholic cathedral. They almost persuaded me to stay in Baltimore and become a Roman Catholic, so sweet and soothing was their effect upon my soul. It recalled to my memory the lovely harmony of the church-bells of my native Idvor, and with that memory there appeared in my imagination the vision of my strongly orthodox mother and of St. Sava. This vision reminded me that I must say good-by to Roman Catholic Baltimore.

Forty-two years later I met Cardinal Gibbons in Baltimore during a visit to that city, when Johns Hopkins University conferred upon me the honorary LL.D. degree. I told him of the incident just referred to; he was in a jocular mood and said: "Too bad that you did not yield to the first effect of the Baltimore church-bells; you might be to-day the archbishop of this diocese, and perhaps even a cardinal." "But, in that case, I would not have to-day the honorary LL.D. degree of Johns Hopkins; I would not exchange that for any other honor," said I, returning jest for jest and watching the merry twinkle in the cardinal's fluorescent eyes. Some months later President Butler, of Columbia University, and I happened to be descending in the same lift at the Shoreham Hotel in Washington. Presently Cardinal Gibbons entered, and President Butler introduced me to his Eminence, who, recalling our former meeting in Baltimore, said, "I know Professor Pupin, and it is a great honor, indeed, to ride in the same lift with two eminent men who carry so many distinguished academic honors," and as he looked at me with a genial smile which was brimful of Irish humor, I knew that he wished to remind me in a good-natured way of my high rating of an honorary Johns Hopkins degree in comparison with the honors attached to the titles of archbishop and cardinal.

The Pennsylvania train from Baltimore to New York delivered me to a ferry-boat, which landed me on West Street, where I found a small hotel kept by a German, a native of Friesland. He was a rugged old fellow who loved his low-

German dialect, which I did not understand. He spoke in English to me, which, according to his son Christian, was much worse than mine, although he had been in America some twenty years. Christian was a yellow-haired and freckle-faced lad, of about my age, and we hit it off very well, forming a cross-matched team. He would have given anything, he said, to have my black hair and dark-red complexion. His almost white eyebrows and eyelashes and mischievous gray eyes and yellow freckles fascinated me. He was born in Hoboken and understood his father's low-German dialect, but whenever addressed in it, by his father or by the Friesland sailors who frequented his father's inn, he always answered in English, or, as he called it, "United States."

Christian managed somehow to get away every now and then from the little hotel and to accompany me on my many long errands in search of a job. His familiarity with the town helped me much to master the geography of New York, and to find out what's what and who's who in the great metropolis. He seemed to be the only opportunity which New York offered to me, and it was a great one. Every other opportunity which appeared in newspaper advertisements had hundreds of applicants, and they were lined up at the place of the promised opportunity, no matter how early Christian and I reached the place. I was quite sure that those opportunity-chasers lined up soon after the first issue of the morning papers. I was told that several years prior to that time (in 1873) occurred the Black Friday panic, and New York had not yet recovered from it. There were thousands of unemployed, although it was summer. One morning Christian told me that he had found a fine job for me, and he took me to a tug anchored quite near his father's hotel. There were quite a number of husky laborers on the tug, which took us to the German docks in Hoboken. We were to stay there and help in the loading of ships, replacing the longshoremen who were on strike. The job assigned to me was to assist the sailors who were painting the ship and things on the ship. We never left the docks until the strike was over, which lasted about three weeks. At its termination I was paid and the tug de-

livered me to the little hotel on West Street, where Christian received me with open arms. I had thirty dollars in my pocket, and Christian told me that I looked as rich as Commodore Vanderbilt, whom Christian considered to be the richest man in New York. Christian took me to Chatham Square to buy a new suit of clothes and other wearing apparel, and I thought that the Jewish clothing dealers would cause a riot fighting for my patronage. The next day when I appeared at the breakfast-table in my new togs, Christian's father could hardly recognize me, but when he did he slapped me on the back and exclaimed: "Who would ever think that you are a Serbian greenhorn?" "Nobody," said Christian, resenting his father's remark, and then he added with some hesitation: "But who would ever think that you are not a German greenhorn?" Christian's father rebuked him and assured me that he meant no offense when he jokingly called me a Serbian greenhorn.

Christian was anxious to have me replenish my fortune, which was considerably reduced by my purchases in Chatham Square. He called my attention that morning to a big German who was drinking beer at the hotel bar after delivering several baskets filled with bread, rolls, and pies, and said that he was a rich and stingy baker, whose wagon, standing in front of the hotel, needed painting badly. I saw that the lettering needed speedy restoration. I assured my chum that my experience as assistant to the sailor painters on the Hoboken docks, in addition to my natural skill in free-hand drawing, qualified me for the job of restoring the lettering; Christian chuckled and made a bee-line for the stingy German baker. I got the contract to restore the lettering for five dollars and my meals, he to pay for the paints and the brushes, which were to remain my property. Christian formulated the contract and specified its terms very clearly; he was my business manager, and he enjoyed it hugely. The next day I lunched with the baker's family, according to the terms of the contract, and after luncheon, as soon as the wagon had returned from its daily route, I started the work, interrupted by the supper only, and at nine o'clock in the evening the job was finished to the full

satisfaction of the party of the first part. That evening found me richer by five dollars, several paint pots and brushes, a huge home-made apple pie, and a new and encouraging experience. Christian, for some reason unknown to me at that time, seemed to look upon the whole affair as a joke, but nevertheless he paid many compliments to my success as an artist. The next day we left bright and early for his father's house in Hoboken, where in accordance with a plan conceived by Christian we were to spend some time in painting and papering several of the rooms. Profiting by the instructions which we received in sundry places, and after making several unsuccessful attempts, we managed to master the art and to finish the rooms to the full satisfaction of Christian's father, who confessed that no Hoboken expert could have done better. "This painting is much better than that which you did on the baker's wagon," he said, "because you added some dryer to the paint." "Right you are," said Christian, "but I am to blame, because I purposely avoided telling Michael to use some dryer on the baker's wagon. I wanted to make two jobs out of one." "There will be several jobs, I am afraid," said Christian's father, "because on the day after the lettering was done the baker's wagon was caught in a shower and all the fresh paint has been washed off, and the wagon looks like a show." Christian roared with laughter, but seeing that I looked worried he whispered in my ear: "Don't worry, it serves him right; he wanted a twenty-dollar job done for five dollars, because he took you for a greenhorn." Christian made a new arrangement for the relettering of the wagon and I earned another five dollars, but no home-made apple pie. The German baker in Goerck Street was neither as cordial nor as hospitable as he was before.

Christian encouraged me in the belief that I was a painter and paper-hanger, and I felt that I had a trade; that feeling gave me much confidence. Christian's mental attitude was a revelation to me. He actually believed that a boy can learn anything quickly and well enough to earn a living, if he will only try. He certainly could do anything, I thought, as I watched him in his little carpenter-shop in Hoboken. He also had a lathe and was

quite expert in wood and metal turning, although he never served apprenticeship, as they do in Europe, in order to learn these things. When I told Christian that, according to my information on the immigrant ship, I was doomed to serve in America my apprenticeship as a greenhorn, he said that a European greenhorn must have told me that, and added, in an off-hand manner, that I would be a greenhorn as long only as I thought that I was one. My description of a European apprenticeship amused him much, and he called it worse than the slavery which was abolished here by the Civil War a few years only prior to that date. When I asked him where he got all those strange notions, he told me that these notions were not strange but genuine American notions, and that he first got them from his mother, who was a native American. His father and his father's German friends, he admitted, had the same notions as that greenhorn on the immigrant ship. Christian certainly looked like a Friesland German, but his thoughts, his words, and his manner of doing things were entirely different from anything I ever saw in Europe. He was my first glimpse of an American boy, just as the vila on the Delaware farm was my first vision of an American girl, and her mother my first ideal of a noble American woman. They were the first to raise that mysterious curtain which prevents the foreign-born from seeing the soul of America, and when I caught a glimpse of it I loved it. It reminded me of the soul of my good people in Idvor, and I felt much more at home. The idea of being a greenhorn lost many of its horrifying features.

Christian left New York during that autumn to go into a shop in Cleveland. Without him, West Street had no attractions for me. I moved to the East Side of New York, so as to be near Cooper Union and its hospitable library. I spent many hours in it after my days of labor, or after my numerous unsuccessful daily trips in search of employment. It was my spiritual refuge when things looked black and hopeless. As winter approached, jobs grew alarmingly scarce, and my money was rapidly approaching the zero level. My hall-room in Norfolk Street was cheerless and cold, worse even than my little attic in Prague. Neither the room nor its

neighborhood attracted me in daytime; I preferred to walk along the endless avenues. This exercise kept me warm and gave me a chance to make frequent inquiries for a job at painters' and paperhangers' shops. When the prospects for work of this kind appeared hopeless, I struck a new idea. Instead of walking more or less aimlessly, in order to keep myself warm and familiarize myself with the ways of the great city, I followed coal-carts, and when they dropped the coal on the sidewalk I rang the bell and offered my services to transfer the coal from sidewalk to cellar. I often got the job, which sometimes was a stepping-stone to other less humble and more remunerative employment. After placing the coal in the cellar and getting my pay, I would often suggest to the owner that his cellar and basement needed painting badly; most cellars and basements do. The owner on being informed that I was a painter out of work, a victim of the economic crisis, often yielded. The idea of a young and ambitious painter being compelled to carry coal from sidewalk to cellar at fifty cents a ton made a strong plea, stronger than any eloquence could make. The scheme worked well; it did not lead to affluence, but my room-rent was always paid on time, and I never starved. Often and often, however, I had to keep my appetite in check. I always had enough to buy my bowl of hot coffee and a brace of crullers for breakfast in a restaurant on wheels, stationed near Cooper Union, where Third Avenue car-drivers took their coffee on cold winter mornings.

During periods of financial stringency my lunches were a bowl of bean soup and a chunk of brown bread, which the Bowery Mission supplied for five cents. It was a splendid meal on those cold winter days. But the Bowery Mission supplied a prayer-meeting with red-hot speeches as dessert; some of these addresses I really enjoyed; there were speakers, however, who offended me, because they confessed that they were reformed drunkards and godless men, and they assured their hearers, victims of the economic crisis just like myself, that they would prosper if they would only sign the pledge and vow to return to Jesus. I neither drank nor did I ever desert Jesus; the reformed drunkard's views of human life depressed me and

drove me away from the Bowery Mission and from the Bowery.

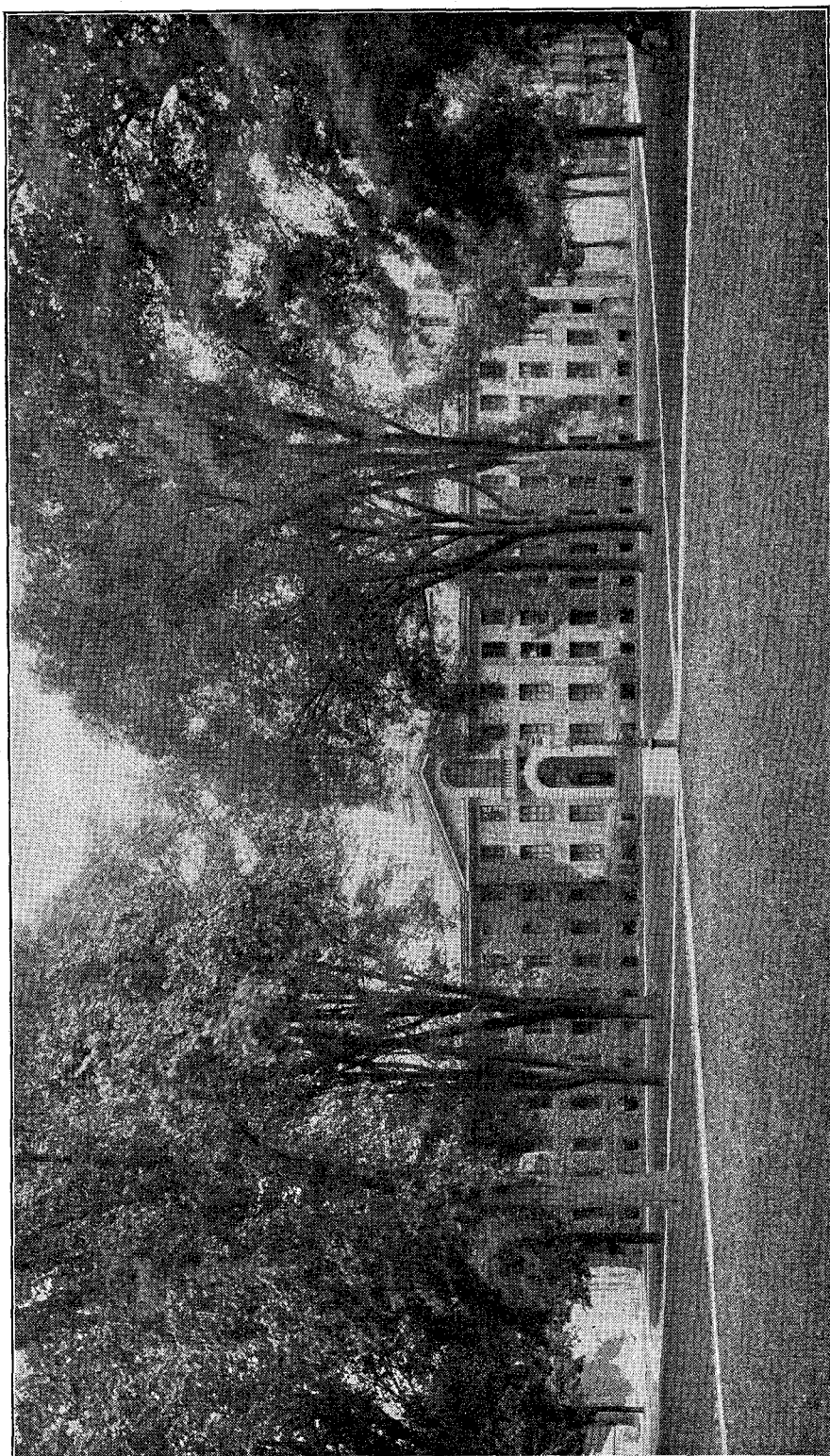
Carrying coal from sidewalks to cellars and shovelling snow from sidewalks during that memorable winter were healthful jobs and cheerful enough, but not very remunerative; painting cellars and basements on Lexington Avenue was more remunerative, but fearfully depressing. To spend one's time day after day in dark cellars and basements and pass the night in a cheerless hall-room in Norfolk Street, surrounded by neighbors who were mostly foreign-born of the most unattractive type, was too much for a Serbian youth who knew the beautiful world as one sees it from the pasturelands of his native village and from the banks of golden Delaware. The reading-room of the Cooper Union library relieved somewhat my mental depression, although it was packed with sad-looking victims of the economic crisis, who found their way from the Bowery to the reading-room in order to keep warm. I longed to see God's world of the country again.

The opportunity came, and about the middle of April of that year, 1875, I was on a farm in Dayton, New Jersey. My employer's family consisted of his wife and an elderly daughter, and I was the only farm-hand on the place. They were apparently pleased with my work, and the ladies took much interest in my personal welfare. But the farmer, call him Mr. Brown, took it into his head that a youth who had lived one whole winter in Norfolk Street, New York, near the ungodly Bowery, needed spiritual regeneration. He was a very pious Baptist, and I soon discovered that in his everlasting professions of omissions and commissions he was even worse than that reformed drunkard whose sermons drove me away from the Bowery Mission and its vigorous bean soup. Every Sunday his family took me to church twice and made me sit between the female members of the family. I felt that the congregation imagined that Mr. Brown and his family were trying their best to convert a godless foreign youth and make a good Baptist out of him. Mr. Brown seemed to be in a great hurry about it, because every evening he made me listen for an hour at least to his reading of the Bible, and before we parted for the night he would offer a loud and fer-

vent prayer that the Lord might kindle his light in the souls of those who had been wandering in darkness. I know now that he had in mind the words of St. Luke, "To give light to them that sit in darkness," but at that time I fancied that he referred to my painting operations in the cellars and basements of Lexington Avenue, and interpreted his prayers as having a special reference to me.

The joy of life which during the day I inhaled in the fresh fields of the early spring was smothered in the evening by Mr. Brown's views of religion, which were views of a decrepid old man who thought of heaven only because he had no terrestrial problems to solve. He did his best to strip religion of every vestige of its poetic beauty, and of its soul-stirring spiritual force, and to make it appear like a mummy of a long-departed Egyptian corpse. A Serbian youth who looks to St. Sava, the educator, and to the Serbian national ballads for an interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, could not be expected to warm up for a religion which farmer Brown preached. I thought of Vila and her mother on the banks of the golden Delaware, and of the glorious opportunities which they pointed out ahead of me, and I wondered whether farmer Brown was one of these opportunities; if so, then there were some opportunities in America from which I wished to run away.

One Sunday evening, after the church service, farmer Brown introduced me to some of his friends, informing them that I was a Serbian youth who had not enjoyed all the opportunities of American religious training, but that I was making wonderful progress, and that some day I might even become an active member of their congregation. The vision of my orthodox mother, of the little church in Idvor, of the Patriarch in Karlovac, and of St. Sava, shot before my eyes like a flash, and I vowed to furnish a speedy proof that farmer Brown was wrong. The next day I was up long before sunrise, having spent a restless night formulating a definite plan of deliverance from the intolerable boredom inflicted upon me by a hopeless religious crank. The eastern sky was like a veil of gold and it promised the arrival of a glorious April day. The fields, the birds, the distant woods, and the friendly country road all seemed to



Nassau Hall, Princeton University.

I pointed out the elm in front of Nassau Hall where I breakfasted some forty years prior.—Page 422.

join in a melodious hymn of praise to the beauties of the wanderer's freedom. I bade good-by to the hospitable home of farmer Brown and made a bee-line for the distant woods. There the merry birds, the awakening buds on the blushing twigs, and the little wild flowers of the early spring seemed to long for the appearance of the glorious sun in the eastern sky. I did not, because I was anxious to put as much distance as possible between farmer Brown and myself before he knew that I had departed. When the sun was high in the heavens I made a halt and rested at the edge of woods on the side of a hill. A meadow was at my feet, and I, recalling the words of poet Nyegoush, watched for "the bright-eyed dewdrops to glide along the sunbeams to the heavens above." The distant view as seen from the elevation of my resting-place disclosed, near the horizon, the silhouette of a town with towers and high roofs looking like roofs of churches. After some three additional hours of wandering, I crossed a bridge over a canal and found the distant town. There seemed to be one street only where business was done; the rest of the town appeared to me like so many beautiful convents. The tramp of many miles through woods and meadows without any breakfast made me ravenously hungry and somewhat tired. The peaceful aspect of the monastic-looking town invited me to sit down and rest and enjoy some food. I bought a shining loaf of bread and, selecting a seat under an elm near a building which looked like the residence of the Archbishop of Prague, I started my breakfast. It consisted of bread only, and I enjoyed it as I never enjoyed breakfast before. Many boys, looking like students, passed by on their way to the ecclesiastical-looking building; one of them watched my appetite as if he envied it, and inquired whether I would like some Italian cheese with my bread. He evidently thought that I was an Italian, being misled by my ruddy cheeks and dark-brown hair. I answered that Serbian cheese would suit me better. He laughed and said that Serbia and Serbian cheese were unknown at Princeton. I answered that some day perhaps Princeton might hear from Serbia. It is a curious fact that, in 1914, I was the first man who was invited to Princeton to give an address on

the subject of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia. The late Moses Taylor Pyne was my host, and I pointed out to him the elm in front of Nassau Hall where I breakfasted some forty years prior to that time. The students received my address very enthusiastically; Dernburg addressed them two weeks later, and their heckling broke up the meeting.

After finishing the loaf I basked in the warm rays of the mellow April sun, and fell asleep and dreamed that in the building where the students went there was a large assembly of people who had gathered there for the purpose of conferring some academic honor upon me. When I woke up, I thought of the letter which I had written to my mother from Hamburg, a year prior to that time, promising that I would soon return rich in learning and in distinguished honors. The dream reminded me that my promise was carefully recorded in the mechanism which controls my consciousness.

Princeton was unlike anything that I had ever seen up to that time. I had read about Hilendar, the famous monastery on Mount Athos, on the Aegean Sea, founded by St. Sava in the twelfth century. I saw pictures of its buildings, where monks lived the life of solitude and study. Princeton, with its many monastic-looking buildings, I imagined was such a place, where young men were given every opportunity to study and become learned men so as to be able to devote their lives effectively to such work as St. Sava did. As I walked slowly and thoughtfully toward the railroad-station, a student met me and engaged me in conversation. He was a little older than myself; kindness and intelligence beamed from every feature of his handsome face. He knew a great deal about Serbia, and even about the Serbs of Austria-Hungary, and when I told him that I had come to America in search of knowledge, he expressed the hope that he might some day see me enrolled as a student in Princeton. A student at Princeton! With fellow students and friends like this divinely handsome and gentle youth who accompanied me to the station! Impossible! thought I, as I looked through the car-window and saw the academic halls of Princeton gradually disappear in the distance and realized at the same time that the train was taking

me back to the Bowery. Eight years later I read the letter which I wrote to my mother describing Princeton and, in order to encourage her, I expressed a strong hope that some day I might write to her and sign myself a student at Princeton.

I may add here that my good friend

Henry Fairfield Osborn, the distinguished scientist, was a sophomore at Princeton during that year. He might have looked just like that gentle youth who showed me the way to the railroad-station. President Wilson entered Princeton in the autumn of that year.

(To be continued.)

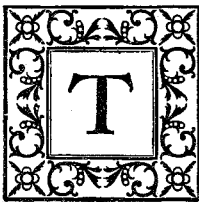


"An' where are they goin' now, I wonder? This ain't campaign time."—Page 430.

Hey, Toolan's Marchin'!

BY HENRY H. CURRAN

ILLUSTRATIONS BY THOMAS FOGARTY



HE Van Tassels of Park Avenue and the Toolans of First Avenue were two old New York families that had seen very little of each other in recent years. In fact,

they could hardly be said to have met at all, since that day away back in the nineties when the elder Van Tassel had taken the wrong train home on the elevated. That had been a bad day in "The Street," such as often came in those years, and Van Tassel had left his bankers and boarded the train at Hanover Square, completely lost in his anxieties. When the smoky little engine went puffing off to the right at Chatham Square, and led its clattering cars up Second Avenue, instead of Third, Van

Tassel still took no notice. At Thirty-fourth Street he got off, according to habit, walked north two blocks, and then most unaccountably turned to the east. It was not until he was brought up with a sharp jerk, by an insurmountable barrier, that he realized what had happened.

"Look out, mister—yer might hurt yerself." The dumpy little man with the red hair was leaning against a table on the sidewalk, on top of which rested a pile of chairs.

"My conscience!" exclaimed Van Tassel. Back of the table was a bed, turned on end and supported by a dilapidated bureau. A mattress, a bird-cage whose occupant had long since departed, a picture of a bunch of purple grapes, and a miscellaneous mess of clothes and cheap bric-à-brac helped make up the household pile that covered most of the sidewalk.