



SOME READERS OF ADVERTISEMENTS.

## SOME AMERICAN ADVERTISEMENTS.



**I**F, as the saying goes, you may tell a man by his friends, what may you tell a people by? Answers by the score suggest themselves. Most nations you may tell by their food, or more particularly by their manner of cooking it. There is a world of significance, for example, in the different points of view from which an Englishman and a Frenchman regard even a humble chop. The latter brings into play all his delicate culinary skill, and does his artistic best to deprive the chop of its ovine personality, either by making a ragout of it or smothering it with spices and condiments; whilst, on the other hand, the brutal Saxon, providing he has not been Gallicised out of his old habits, likes his meat, no less than his drink, to be strong, to be characteristic of its parentage, and, despising all savoury adjuncts, flings his chop on the gridiron and devours it solemnly, without caring to civilise his repast by any attempt to transform into gravy, by the addition of a little flour, the sanguinary juices of the meat. Again, how easy it is to tell a nation by its tailor, its linendraper, its hatter (if not too mad), its bootmaker, and glover! Who could not detect, among a thousand, the Venetian by his curly hat, "a world too wide for his shrunk" visage, the Turk by his trousers, the Parisian by his shoes, the Berliner by his great-coat, the New Yorker by his collar, the man of Madrid by his superfluity of dress, the Hottentot by his superfluity of nakedness?

Between Jonathan and John, however, there exist so many more points of similarity than of difference, that it is the more interesting to observe our divergences, to make a note of those matters and manners in which our paths fork away in different directions. In journalism, for instance, there is a noticeable dissimilarity, both in form and substance, to which it would be almost trite to refer; and, if our press is flouted by the smarter papers over the water for its heaviness and its solemn propriety, we, for our part, say unkind things about the flippancy, the slanginess, the impudent intrusiveness of Brother Jonathan's journals. There is, no doubt—and we admit the fact with joyful alacrity—a vast gulf between the tone of the mammoth newspapers of London and New York. What, for example, would be Mayfair's feelings if, taking up their London daily one fine morning, they found under the heading of "Personal Notes" a batch of gossipy paragraphs dished up in pearl type in the true Transatlantic style, something after this fashion:—

Lawyer Lewis is building a row of cottages at Clapham.

Pickled cucumbers disagree with Mr. Irving.

If there is anybody who enjoys an innocent joke more than Mr. Toole, it is his friend the Rev. Spurgeon.

Mr. Bright uses a gold toothpick.

It is not so much, however, by what the journalists write—though of course they must trim their style to suit their readers' tastes—as by what those readers themselves write that we can properly estimate the difference between the folk of the United Kingdom and the United States; and no better glimpse can be had of them than in the advertisement columns of their respective newspapers, where they are crying their wants and their wares. Englishmen are most decorously dull in giving expression to their needs. A plain, unadorned, cut-and-dried sentence is all they dare or care to indulge in; never by any chance does



the advertiser betray any warmth of personality, any eagerness about the issue of the appeal. To judge from the uniform colourless style of their advertisements, one would imagine all the maids and cooks and men applying in a daily paper for situations to be totally wanting in individuality, to be all of one pattern, one shade, one size. As for hinting that advertiser is club-footed, and consequently slow about his work, or has a squint, and is consequently unreliable on the box, whoever dreams of brightening the dull monotony of the advertisement columns by making such important admissions?

Very much more lively are the advertisements of our American cousins. There is a frank, outspoken cordiality in their tone which is very engaging. From the wording of many of them, it is almost possible to spell out the advertiser's character. What an horizon there is about the following advertisement, for instance, in which a city gentleman not only tells us what he wants, but why he wants it. It occurs in the *New York World* :—

I WANT a house below 80th St. for my family, returning from Europe. Full particulars, K., 270, *World*, uptown.

No false modesty or irritating reticence here. He introduces us right into the bosom of his family, and in imagination we assist at the joyful welcome which awaits Mrs. K. and the rest of the family alphabet on their arrival at their new house below 80th Street. Another pushing gentleman has for sale "an elegant four-storey brown-stone single-flat, well rented, in prime condition," which sounds, by the way, as if the advertiser were celebrating the praises of a brown-stone cow instead of a tenement. He adds briskly :— "No agents; this is no humbug, nor does it require a silvery-tongued agent to boom it up; it stands right square out and speaks for itself." That, indeed, is what most Americans may be said to do—"stand right square out and speak for themselves." The pet adjective with traders in house-property is "elegant." An advertisement which in our papers would figure as "Commodious shop, well situated," in a New York journal appears as "Elegant store in good location." Some brown-stone houses on sale are feelingly declared to be "perfect gems." In the exchange column some one wants to barter away an "Elegant Hudson River place, furnished," for (save the mark!) paintings. A queer commodity, surely. Trade must be taking to its primitive methods again. A very popular adjective among advertisers of the meeker sex is "refined." No matter what their wants or their station, they are all "refined."

CASHIER.—An American girl of refined habits, living with her parents, as cashier or in an office. B. M., East 25th St.; ring bell once.

There is something quite touching in that final word of caution to any possible applicant for B. M.'s services; and we are able, by a very slight demand on the fancy, to call up a vision of the refined American girl sitting in the parlour patiently on the alert for that one hopeful tinkle of the bell. What, by the way, would be the probable result of ringing it twice?

Would papa answer the summons in his slippers, mistaking it for the post? or mamma, believing it the baker? As lowliness of station and humbleness of circumstances impose no obstacle to the spread of refinement in America, neither, it would seem, does extreme youthfulness; witness the following :—

FOR ADOPTION.—Pretty, plump, healthy, refined one-week-old female infant; full surrender. Mrs. Dr. D—, West 35th St.

Here is more refinement on hire at a moderate figure :—

A REFINED WOMAN of business qualifications desires a position as commercial traveller or advertising agent for first-class house. Address E. L. B.

Among the matrimonial advertisements there are a few of a most enticing complexion :—

WHO wishes to marry an accomplished lady between 30 and 40, *petite*, entertaining, and not entirely destitute of this world's goods? Address, PETITE.

Could anything be put with more winning coquetry? How delicate and comprehensive the periphrasis—"not entirely destitute." Here is another to smack one's lips over :—

A HIGHLY ACCOMPLISHED, musical young lady, left alone in the world, with an estate worth 100,000 dols., would marry an aristocratic gentleman. Call or address Box C.

Come, gentlemen, who bids? Who is ready to barter an aristocratic exterior and a set of distinguished manners for 100,000 dols. and a refined bride? Happy the groom who wins her; may he never repent of his luck!

Where, by-the-by, have all the niggers gone? To be sure, after a look round, we find scores of them, or what we believe to be them, advertising for all sorts of billets, chiefly chambermaids' and waiters' places, but they no longer label themselves by the good old title; they have become "coloured people" now. "First-class coloured coachman" is urgently in need of a situation. "Smart young man (coloured)" wants a porter's place. Most of them shuffle their nationality into brackets, as if it might be regarded merely as a matter of insignificant detail whether they were coloured black, or green, or purple, or what-not. Admirable is the modest diffidence of that "Boy aged 18," who, applying for any sort of a post anywhere, gently hints at his descent by bracketing himself as an (Israelite). There is great virtue in the choice of that noun; even Shylock would hardly have been so obnoxious to the merchant-princes of Venice had he not owned himself Jew outright, but, adopting the milder periphrasis, called himself an Israelite, in brackets. There is a cunning circumlocution, a hopelessly innocent attempt at dissimulation in the advertisement of "A man, lately from Ireland." Irish, perhaps? Not he; he scorns the imputation. Thru, he has a touch of somethin' in his spache that sounds loike the brogue, but it's nothin' of the koind; he has a perpetual cowl'd in his head that makes him spake that way, ye see—it was born wid him, bad luck to it!



Far and away the queerest advertisements are to be found under the heading "Medical and Clairvoyant," the majority of the advertisers being lady doctors and lady astrologists. It is rather subversive of one's faith in the much-vaunted hard-headedness and sceptical 'cuteness of the Yankee to come upon a quarter of a column of clairvoyant announcements in a prominent and popular New York journal, consisting of grandiose promises of fortune-telling, such as in this country would render the advertisers liable to summary conviction and three months' imprisonment as rogues and vagabonds. They all lay claim to be palmists, astrologists, and mediums; all "fully reliable," and prepared to do the most remarkable things at a strictly reasonable price. To Madam L—, for example, you need only bring a lock of the beloved one's hair (or in default, no doubt a lock of his wig would answer as well), and she promises to "make the one you desire to love you without fail; 50 cents." Professor L—, famous astrologer, "tells everything truthfully; 50 cents." But there are none of them quite equal to Mrs. Dr. —, which accounts for her fee being higher. She must indeed be a wonderful woman. This is her modest announcement, copied from a New York paper:—

CLAIRVOYANTS.

A.—AT LAST is to be found at her parlors, — — —, between 9th and 10th Sts., Mrs. Dr. —; can be consulted on all affairs of life, being a celebrated business clairvoyant, astrologist, and palmist, who has a reputation throughout the world for her accurate and truthful readings of the past, present, and future through her wonderful Egyptian magic mirror; removes evil influences and family estrangements; unites the separated, and causes speedy marriages; brings success to the unsuccessful, and tells when to make profitable investments in all kinds of business; those who wish to invest in stocks, grain, and petroleum will find it to their interest to consult Mrs. Dr. — before investing; consultations, 1 dollar; also tells full name and shows picture of the one you will marry for 1 dollar; strangers from other cities will save time and disappointment by calling on this genuine clairvoyant before going elsewhere, as her unprecedented success of the past will insure her the patronage of all seeking advice on business and private matters, as she advertises nothing but what she can do, and succeeds where all others fail; life-reading and picture by mail on receipt of 1 dollar, lock of hair, full name and date of birth; letters not containing fee will not be answered; hours from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Have we quite emerged from the Dark Ages, after all? We may flatter ourselves and one another that we have, but *have* we? Surely, after reading the above advertisement, which would seem to have strayed out of the columns of the *Egyptian Daily Papyrus* for the year 1887 B.C., we ought to hang our heads, and make an end of our posturing and boasting about the enlightenment and civilisation of the nineteenth century.

C. C. ROTHWELL.

BY MISADVENTURE.

By FRANK BARRETT Author of "Harlowe's Helpmate," "Hidden Gold," "The Great Hesper," &c.

"Revenge at first, though sweet,  
Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils."—MILTON.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.  
HOW IT ALL BEGAN.



MY name is Keene—Anthony Keene. I am a lawyer; sixty-four is my age. You may see what kind of man I am by my portrait: not over-pleasant with any one.

George Flexmore and I were friends. He was my first client when I set up in Coneyford, a

small town just large enough at that time, as I believed, to keep a lawyer of its own; there are a couple of us now, and we have as much to do as we need. Flexmore had just then come into a fortune of £30,000, and he did not know what to do with it. I prevented him from losing it, as he certainly would have done without proper direction, for he was an easy-going man, of a credulous disposition, such as your needy adventurer and shifty speculator love to

take in hand. For every man that has money there are ninety-nine who are anxious to spend it for him.

"If any one asks you for money, Flexmore," said I, "don't refuse him: send him to me." And he did so, with this result—he never lost a penny by these good-natured friends.

He had a great respect for me—more than I deserved, doubtless. He seemed to think that whatever I did must be right, and I believe it was the sheer force of example that kept him out of matrimony so long: because I did not care to take a wife, he thought it best to keep single. But the conditions were different. I am not an easy-going man, and marriage would have been purgatory for me or my wife, and the result must have been equally bad for both of us in either case. Besides, a lawyer has so much to occupy his thoughts in the interest of his clients that he has not an hour in the day to devote to anything else. But Flexmore had nothing to do from morning to night that might not very well be set aside to attend to the wants of somebody else; and as to worries—he hadn't enough to keep him from getting fat.

Now, a man ought to have solicitude for something beyond himself, if it's only to give reasonable activity to his faculties; and Flexmore felt this also. He saw