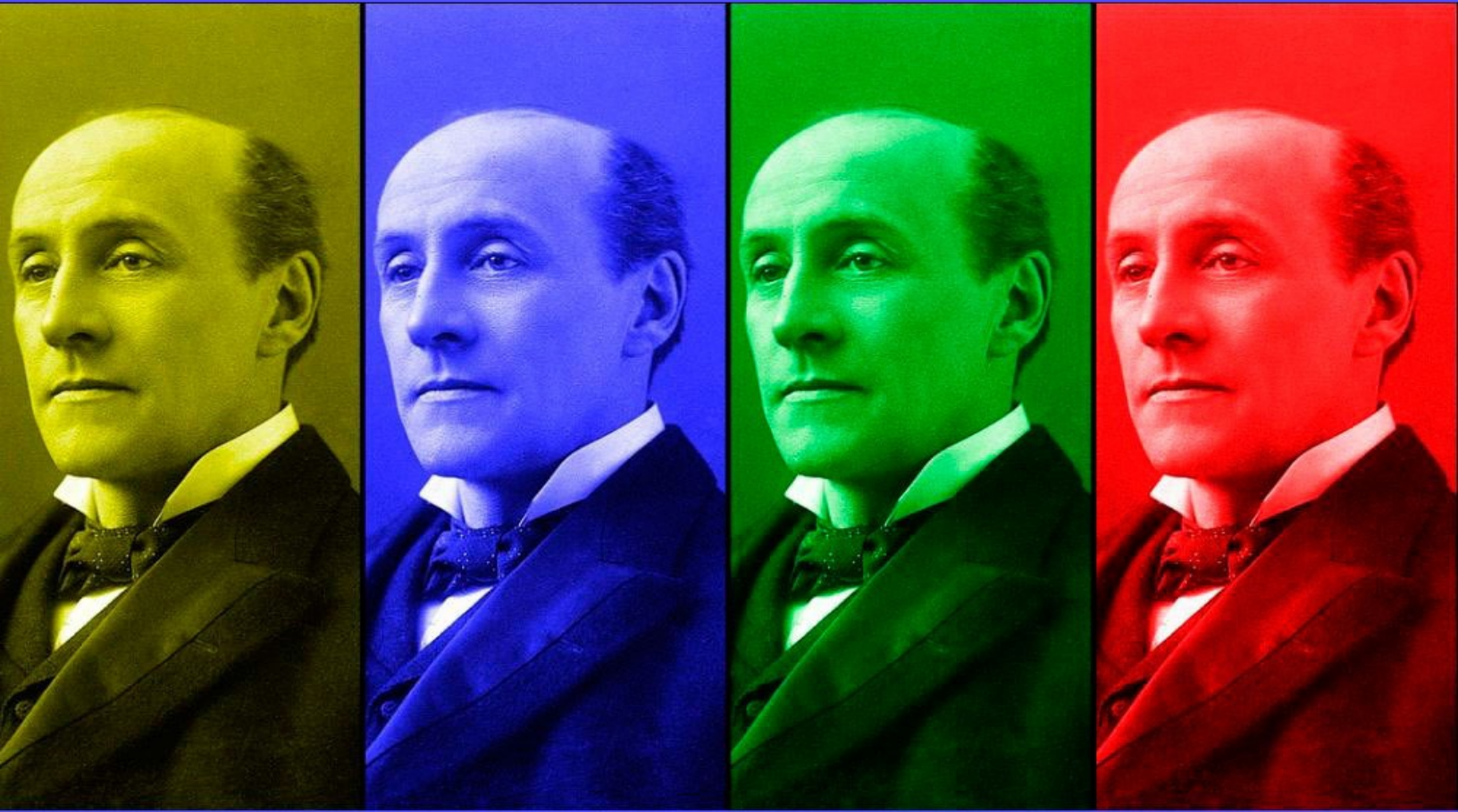


ANTHONY HOPE



A CHANGE
OF AIR

BIOGRAPHICALLY ANNOTATED

A Change Of Air

Anthony Hope

Contents:

[Anthony Hope - His Life And Work](#)

[A Change Of Air](#)

[Chapter I.](#)
[Chapter II.](#)
[Chapter III.](#)
[Chapter IV.](#)
[Chapter V.](#)
[Chapter VI.](#)
[Chapter VII.](#)
[Chapter VIII.](#)
[Chapter IX.](#)
[Chapter X.](#)
[Chapter XI.](#)
[Chapter XII.](#)
[Chapter XIII.](#)
[Chapter XIV.](#)
[Chapter XV.](#)
[Chapter XVI.](#)
[Chapter XVII.](#)
[Chapter XVIII.](#)

[Chapter XIX.](#)
[Chapter XX.](#)
[Chapter XXI.](#)
[Chapter XXII.](#)
[Chapter XXIII.](#)
[Chapter XXIV.](#)
[Chapter XXV.](#)
[Chapter XXVI.](#)
[Chapter XXVII.](#)
[Chapter XXVIII.](#)

*Jazzybee Verlag Jürgen Beck
86450 Altenmünster, Loschberg 9
Deutschland*

ISBN: 9783849647889

*www.jazzybee-verlag.de
www.facebook.com/jazzybeeverlag
admin@jazzybee-verlag.de*

Anthony Hope - His Life And Work

By Frederick Taber Cooper

It is a sufficiently pleasant task to undertake to write a brief appreciation of Mr. Anthony Hope. The prevailing urbanity of his manner, the sustained sparkle of his wit, the agreeable expectation that he arouses of something stimulating about to happen, largely disarm criticism. Besides, he does not seem to demand to be taken too seriously; he is not a preacher or reformer, he is not trying to revolutionize the world; he is too well pleased with men and women as they actually are, to desire to make them something different. In short, he is a suave and charming public entertainer, and like all wise entertainers he alters the character of his program in accordance with the fluctuations of public taste. And being both versatile and farsighted he is usually in the van of each new movement. The God in the Car, his story of gigantic land speculations in South Africa, with the Herculean figure whom he chooses to disguise under the name of "Juggernaut," appeared in 1894, thus antedating by five years The Colossus, by Morley Roberts. Phroso, with its romantic setting among the islands of modern Greece, anticipated by a year Mr. E. F. Benson's analogous attempts, The Vintage and The Capsina. When the revival of the English historical novel was at its height, he succeeded once more in coming in ahead of his competitors, and Simon Dale, which appeared in 1898 and is a study of Restoration manners, with Nell Gwynn for its central interest, led the way for The Orange Girl by Sir Walter Besant, issued in 1899, and F. Frankfort Moore's Nell Gwynn, Comedian, which was not published until 1900.

But although he so cleverly adapts himself to the trend of public taste, Mr. Anthony Hope is not an innovator; he adapts but does not originate. Yet it is no uncommon thing

to hear him erroneously praised for having created two new and widely popular types of fiction, the Zenda type and that of The Dolly Dialogues. Now, The Prisoner of Zenda, as we remember at once when we stop to think, is not the first up-to-date sword and buckler story of an imaginary principality; it was preceded, by nearly a decade, by Stevenson's Prince Otto; and the only reason that it so often gets the credit of being the forerunner of its class is simply because it was done with a defter, lighter touch, a more spontaneous inspiration. Similarly, The Dolly Dialogues are not the first attempt to imitate in English the sparkle and the piquancy of the Gallic dialogue in the form that "Gyp" and Henri Lavedan have made familiar.

Although it is quite likely that at that time Anthony Hope had never even heard of it, The Story of the Gadsbys had at least three years the start of The Dolly Dialogues, and even though it was done with a heavier hand, it succeeded in getting a greater effectiveness out of the type.

But, after all, statistics of this sort, while interesting to a person of precise and inquiring mind, have little or no bearing upon the sources of enjoyment which a surprisingly large number of people undoubtedly find in Mr. Hope's writings. And there is variety enough among them to suit all tastes. He began in a spirit of blithe and irresponsible romanticism; he has gradually come, in his later years, to look upon life in a rather matter-of-fact way and to picture, by choice, the more serious problems of life in the social world to which he belongs. Yet his novels, even the most ambitious of them, never suggest the ponderousness of a novel-with-a-purpose; he never forgets what is expected from a conscientious entertainer. And one reason why he so uniformly succeeds is that he is an exceedingly good craftsman; he has mastered the sheer mechanics of his art. It is never wise for a novelist, whatever his literary creed may be, to be wantonly scornful of technique. There are

just a few erratic geniuses who, because they have in them certain big thoughts that are struggling for utterance and apparently cannot be uttered in the simple usual way, boldly break the established rules and make new ones to suit their needs. To draw an offhand parallel, they are somewhat in the position of a man who, although untrained in public speaking, is listened to indulgently because of the importance of what he has to say. But your public entertainer enjoys no such license; and the lighter and more irresponsible his theme the more perfect must be his execution. And it is because Mr. Hope possesses that magic touch of the born story teller, that such delightful triflings as *The Dolly Dialogues* and *The Indiscretion of the Duchess* seem to linger in the memory with perennial youth, while many another weightier volume has faded out with the passage of years.

Accordingly, Mr. Hope belongs to that order of novelists about whom it is not only more enjoyable but more profitable to gossip genially than to weigh strictly in the balance. It is so easy to become garrulous over volumes that have worn well and afford many a pleasant hour of relaxation. It would be purposeless to take up serially each one of his many volumes, analyze and pigeonhole it according to its relative value. The better and the franker thing to do is to admit that there are certain volumes by Mr. Hope which gave the present writer genuine pleasure, and certain others that gave him no pleasure at all, and that those falling under the first division are the only ones which it seems worth while to discuss. In his earlier period the mere mention of Anthony Hope conjured up scenes of spirited adventure, reckless daring, gallant heroes combining the good breeding, the patrician ease, the assured manner of the better class of young Englishmen possessing the double advantage of birth and education, who, nevertheless, despite their studied reserve and

immaculateness of dress, are plunged by a whim of fate into adventures of extraordinary daring and sublime audacity, adventures that would have taxed the prowess of Dumas's Immortal Three. It is a clever formula, this trick of taking certain types of familiar everyday people straight out of prosaic actuality and compelling them, whether they will or no, to perform romantic deeds against a romantic background. This peculiar combination was certainly a happy thought. It appealed to that latent thirst for adventure which we almost all possess; it unconsciously flattered the reader with a new sense of daring, a feeling that he too, if thus suddenly and surprisingly transported into Zendaland, might similarly rise to the occasion and achieve great deeds. There is no purpose served by analyzing once again the story of *The Prisoner of Zenda*. It is one of those stories the artificiality of which stands out glaringly the moment one starts to lay its bones bare.

Any story which depends upon the chance resemblance of two human beings, a resemblance so close, so misleading, that even the wife of one of the two is at a loss to distinguish them, takes on, when stated briefly, apart from the glamour of the tale itself, an air of palpable falsity to life. And yet the fact remains that tens of thousands of readers have lost themselves, forgotten time and space, in their utter absorption in the dilemma of the Princess Flavia, who finds in Rudolph Rassendyl all the qualities which might have made it possible for her to love her husband, if only he had been as close a replica of Rassendyl morally as he was physically.

I do not mind admitting that personally I revert more frequently to *The Dolly Dialogues* than to any other volume by Mr. Hope. This is not merely because of the delicate touch and epigrammatic neatness for which they have been so universally praised. Superficially considered they are a

series of encounters between a sparkling and fascinating little lady and a sedate and nimble-witted gentleman, whom it is insinuated that the Lady Dolly has jilted. Now, the real fascination about these brilliant exchanges of repartee lies chiefly in the subtle and yet elusive implications that we are always on the point of reading between the lines, and yet never quite get in their entirety. That Mr. Carter has long been a worshiper at the shrine of Lady Dolly, that he has many a time felt a pang of regret that his fortune in life has made him ineligible, that he considers her husband not half grateful enough to Providence and that his own assumed air of sentimental resignation has in it a little touch of genuine regret, all this we get pretty clearly. And yet, we are well aware, all the time, that Mr. Carter, in spite of an occasional twinge of envy, would not change his condition if he could; that, although he may not be precisely aware of it, he is already confirmed in his bachelor habits; that he likes his freedom from responsibility, his harmless, unprofitable daily routine, his favorite corner in his favorite club, his innocent philandering with various young women, married and unmarried. He may, at times, deceive the Lady Dolly into commiserating him and blaming herself as a thoughtless coquette, but never for very long at a time. The whole thing is a sort of grown-up game of make-believe in which the players get a curious transitory, almost illogical enjoyment in feigning broken hearts and blighted lives. And yet there is just enough truth underlying it all to suggest that Mr. Hope was capable of more serious work than he had yet done. There was, for instance, everywhere a pervading suggestion of the infinite number of contradictory motives and impulses that determine every human action, and the impossibility which every man and woman must admit to themselves of deciding just how much gladness and how much regret is entailed in every least little thing that they do.

Almost without warning Mr. Hope proved that the vague promise of more serious work was well founded, by producing what, I think, the sober judgment of posterity will recognize as his most ambitious and most enduring work, *Quisante*. Alexander Quisante, from whom the volume takes its name, is not an Englishman either by birth or ancestry. He comes of antecedents almost unknown beyond the fact that they are a mixture of French and Spanish. With scanty means he comes, an absolute outsider, preparing to lay siege to the political and social world of London. In every way he finds himself handicapped. The foreordained course of education through which the English ruling classes pass as a matter of course and by which their prejudices and points of view are determined, has not been his privilege. In addition to this he lacks that inborn refinement which sometimes makes up for good breeding and social experience. His taste is often exceedingly bad; his manner is alternately too subservient and too arrogant. Of the higher standards of morality he has no perception; he is the typical adventurer, unscrupulous, insincere, monumentally selfish. But, to offset all this, his intellect is quite extraordinary; his brain is an instrument marvelously under control, and he uses it at his pleasure, to bring the lesser intellects about him under his dominion. Above all, he has the gift of eloquence; and when he chooses to give full rein to his rhetorical powers, he can sway his audience at will, and thrill and sweep them with him through the whole gamut of human emotions. Of the men and women whom he meets, fully one-half are antagonized and repelled; the others give him an unquestioning, almost slavish devotion. But he has a personality which cannot leave negative results; it must breed love or hate.

The other character in the book who shares the central interest is Lady May Gaston, a woman who, by birth and training, participates in all those special privileges of rank and caste, all the traditions of her order from which Quisante is shut out. There is another man, one in her own class, who would be glad to make her his wife. He is in all respects the sort of man whom she is expected to marry; and she is not wholly indifferent to him. But she meets Quisante, and, from the first, comes under the spell of his dominant personality. There is much in him from which she shrinks. His social ineptitude, his faculty for doing the wrong thing, or the right thing at the wrong time, makes her shudder. Although fascinated, she is not blinded. She sees his vulgarities, she questions his sincerity, she even doubts whether he is deserving of her respect. Nevertheless, the spectacular, flamboyant brilliancy of the man dominates her better judgment, and in spite of her relatives' remonstrances, in spite of warnings from a member of Quisante's own family, she marries him, unable to resist the almost hypnotic spell cast over her by this man, who is something of a charlatan and something of a cad. The greater part of the book concerns itself with the story of the married life of this curiously ill-assorted couple; of his success in the public eye; of her gradual disillusionment, which, bitter though it is in its completeness, finds her somewhat apathetic, unable to feel the resentment that she knows she ought, unable to acknowledge that she regrets her choice. This, indeed, is the most interesting aspect of the book, the domination, mentally and morally, of a woman of rare sensitiveness and infinite possibilities by a man with whom companionship inevitably means deterioration.

The next of Mr. Anthony Hope's volumes, which personally appealed to the present writer, is entitled *A Servant of the Public*, and is enjoyable chiefly because of the tantalizing

witchery of its heroine. Ora Pinsent is a young actress, who has taken London by storm. She has a husband somewhere, it is said, " whose name does not matter "; indeed, it matters so little that it does not prevent her from letting Ashley Mead make ardent love to her, one Sunday afternoon, though all the while she " preserves wonderfully the air of not being responsible for the thing, of neither accepting nor rejecting, of being quite passive, of having it just happen to her." Thus with a single pen stroke Mr. Hope has set the woman unmistakably before us. Throughout the book she practices the art of having things just happen to her, the art of dodging responsibility. With Ashley she drifts, dangerously one thinks, at first, until one sees how easily she checks his ardor when she chooses, with a nervous laugh, and a low whispered " Don't, don't make love to me any more now." She talks much solemn nonsense about her duty to the husband whose name does not matter, and about her intention to renounce Ashley, although one realizes that there is really nothing to renounce, nor ever will be. And when the time comes for her company to leave London and start on their American tour, here also she plays the passive role, neither accepting nor rejecting. It is only when the weary months of her absence are over and she comes back as the wife of her leading man, that Ashley begins to see her as she really is; only then that he feels her power over him has ceased; only then that he can say, " I no longer love her, but I wish to God I did! " It is not easy to convey an impression of a woman's charm, when it lies not in what she says, but in the way she says it; not in what she does, but in the way she does it. But this is precisely what Anthony Hope has done triumphantly in his portraiture of Ora Pinsent, Ora, with her upturned face, with its habitual expression of expecting to be kissed, is one of the heroines in contemporary fiction that will not easily be forgotten.

Helena's Path deserves something more than a passing word of commendation, for it is an excellent example of Mr. Hope's deftness in doing a very slight thing extremely well. It has an outward framework of actuality, the atmosphere of present day English country life; yet into this he has infused a certain spirit of old-time chivalry and homage that gives to his whole picture something of the grace and charm of a Watteau landscape. The whole theme of the volume, which is scarcely more than a novelette, concerns itself with a right of way. The hero's estates lie somewhere on the east coast of England; but between his land and the strip of beach where he and his fathers before him have for generations been in the habit of bathing lies the property which the heroine has recently purchased; and, unaware of any right of way, she closes up the gate through which it is his habit to pass for his daily swim. He writes courteously but firmly, insisting on his right. She answers in the same spirit, emphatically denying it. He refuses to be robbed of his legal rights, even by a pretty woman; she refuses to yield, at a command, what she would have graciously granted to a prayer. As neither side chooses to adopt legal measures, a state of mimic war ensues, in which he continues to invade the enemy's territory, while she continues to barricade and entrench. And all the while, although they have not once met face to face, each is quietly falling in love with the other, so that when finally honorable terms of peace are concluded, it is already a foregone conclusion that the whole dainty little comedy will end with oaths of fealty and bestowal of favors worthy of a knight and a lady of the olden times.

With the passage of years, however, the author of *The Dotty Dialogues* has tended to give us fewer and fewer of these dainty trifles and more and more of his serious and careful social studies. In this class belongs *The Great Miss Driver*, and there is no exaggeration in saying that since the

publication of *Quisante* it is easily the biggest, best-rounded, and altogether worthiest book he has written. And yet, the first thing you are apt to think of is that the germ idea of the story goes straight back to *The Dolly Dialogues*; that in a superficial way, yes, and perhaps in a deeper way, too, there is a certain rather absurd similarity between them; just as though the author, having once made a pleasant little comedy out of a certain situation, had ever since been turning over in his mind the possibility of using it in a bigger and more serious way, until eventually he evolved the present volume. Not that Jennie Driver, heiress to Breysgate Priory, bears any close resemblance to Lady Mickleham beyond the very feminine desire for conquest, any more than the Mr. Austin of the one story is a close relative of Mr. Carter in the other. The resemblance lies in this, that both stories are told in the first person by the man who in his secret heart loves the woman of whom he writes, but knows that because he is poor, because he has the natural instinct of an old bachelor, because, also, she has given her heart elsewhere, he must remain content to look upon her joys and sorrows in the capacity of a friend, and not that of a lover. To this extent *The Great Miss Driver* may be defined as *The Dolly Dialogues* rendered in a different tempo.

Yet, such a definition gives no hint of the strength, the variety, the vital interest of this story. In the character of Jennie Driver Mr. Hope has given us a woman whose ruling passion is to hold sway, to fascinate and bend to her will every one who comes within her sphere. And because of this desire she can never bear to lose the allegiance of any man, no matter how mean and unworthy he has proved himself; and herein lies the source of her life's tragedy. She is not content to be merely the richest woman in the county, to play the part of Lady Bountiful, and build memorials and endow institutions with fabulous sums; she

wants also to be a social leader with undisputed right to take precedence over all the other ladies of the community, and this she could do if she married Lord Fillingford, whom she respects, and who badly needs her fortune; but not if she should marry Leonard Octon, big, brusque, rather brutal, who is cut by the whole county, and whom she happens to love. It is a rather unique situation in fiction for a woman to be forced into publicly slighting the one man on earth that she cares for; still more unique for a woman who is pledged to marry one man to be secretly meeting the other man, and thus atoning for deliberately cutting him whenever they meet in public. And, surely, it was a rather audacious thing for Mr. Hope to attempt to make us feel that in spite of her double-dealing Jennie Driver is a rather big and fine and splendid sort of woman; that she would have kept faith with Fillingford had he been big enough to trust her when appearances were heavily against her; and that in defying convention and scandalizing the little world she lives in by fleeing with Octon to Paris, she is doing the one big, brave, inevitable act. Yet, that is precisely what the author does succeed in making us feel; and when because Fate intervenes and wrecks the last chance of Jennie's happiness through the death of Octon, we not only sympathize with her bitterness toward the narrow-minded social circle that had forced her lover into exile, but we also glory with her in the big, carefully planned and altogether adequate revenge by which she forces the county to pay tardy homage to the name of Octon.

Notwithstanding the statement made at the beginning of this chapter, to the effect that Mr. Anthony Hope does not write problem novels, the volume entitled *Mrs. Maxon Protests* comes critically near the border-line. Mrs. Maxon is simply one more young woman who has discovered marriage to be something vastly different from what she

had imagined; and her difficulty is of the variety which she regards as almost humiliatingly commonplace namely, incompatibility. Her husband happens to be one of those narrow, self-satisfied, dictatorial men, with old-fashioned ideas about women in general and a rooted conviction that a man has a high moral responsibility for his wife's conduct and must mould her in all fashions to his own way of thinking. Mrs. Maxon bears the strain for five years; then she consults a lawyer. She learns that while she cannot get a divorce in England, she can leave her husband and he cannot force her to come back. At the time of their separation, or to be more accurate, her desertion of him for Maxon refuses to take the matter seriously there is no other man in her life; but in the weeks that follow during which she stays at the country home of some friends with lax ideas of life and a houseful of curious and often irregular people, she suddenly surprises herself by falling in love with a certain Godfrey Ledstone and promptly scandalizes society by eloping with him openly and unashamed. The rest of the book traces, with a clear-sightedness that Mr. Hope has not always shown in his books, the subsequent career of a woman who thinks that by the force of her own example she can bring the whole world over to her way of thinking. He does not spare us any of her disillusion, her humiliations, her heartache and loneliness. But through it all she is learning, strangely and cruelly learning, much that is exceedingly good for her. She is learning, for instance, that charity and sympathy and understanding are often found where least expected. She is learning, too, that there are many other standards in this world as well as her own and that they are just as reasonable and perhaps nobler. She learns that one of the best men she has ever had the good fortune to meet, loving her, pitying her, utterly disapproving of her, would nevertheless have made her his wife in spite of the scandal that had preceded and followed her divorce but for one

reason: he is an army officer, and a woman with a taint upon her name would lower the social tone of his regiment and be in some degree a menace to the moral tone of the younger set. It is a temptation to analyze at some length the separate episodes of this rather unusual book throughout the years while Mrs. Maxon is slowly finding her way out of the quagmire of her own making into a belated peace and happiness. Yet, after all, what the book stands for is so admirably summed up in the concluding paragraph that one cannot do it a greater service than to close with one brief quotation. It is a satisfaction to find a book written upon this theme which, while recognizing that there is much to be said on both sides, shows neither vindictiveness toward the woman nor a misplaced championship that would exalt her into a martyr.

In the small circle of those with whom she had shared the issues of destiny she had unsettled much; of a certainty she had settled nothing. Things were just as much in solution as ever; the welter was not abated. Man being imperfect, laws must be made. Man being imperfect, laws must be broken or ever new laws will be made. Winnie Maxon had broken a law and asked a question. When thousands do the like, the Giant, after giving the first comers a box on the ear, may at last put his hand to his own and ponderously consider.

Such are the volumes chosen as a matter of personal preference, out of the generous series that Mr. Hope has so industriously turned out, during a score of years. Another reader's choice might be different, and who shall say whether it would not be as well justified? Because, the first duty of a public entertainer is to entertain; and, taking this for a criterion, the most that any one can say of his own knowledge is, such-and-such volumes have entertained me. It is obvious that Mr. Hope's own preference is for his more

serious work, that with the passage of years he has grown more willing to allow the books of his romantic period to fade from sight. Yet, by doing this, he challenges a harder competition, a stricter measurement against a host of rivals. There has been no one to give us a second Prisoner of Zenda, excepting Mr. Hope himself, notwithstanding that many another writer has tried his best. But it would be easy to name a dozen contemporary novelists who could give us the annals of another Servant of the People, or chronicle some further Intrusions of Peggy, and one or two who, perhaps, could do it better. Mr. Hope is not one of the great novelists of his generation; but he is never mediocre, and even in his uninspired moments never dull. His Prisoner of Zenda and his Dolly Dialogues were both gems of the first water; his Quisante certainly suffers nothing by comparison with George Gissing's Charlatan, separated from it by barely a year. As a chronicler of English manners he is certainly of rather more importance than Mr. E. F. Benson or Mr. Maarten Maartens, although not in the same class with Galsworthy, Bennett, or W. H. Maxwell. He will be remembered, I think, somewhat as William Black and Marion Crawford are remembered, as having preserved a wholesome optimism, an unshaken belief in human nature, and as having done his part to keep the tone of the modern novel clean and wholesome.

A Change Of Air

Chapter I.

A Mission to the Heathen.

When the Great King, that mirror of a majesty whereof modern times have robbed the world, recoiled aghast from the threatened indignity of having to wait, he laid his finger with a true touch on a characteristic incident of the lot of common men, from which it was seemly that the state of God's Vicegerents should be free. It was a small matter, no doubt, a thing of manners merely, and etiquette; yet manners and etiquette are first the shadowed expression of facts and then the survival of them; the reverence once paid to power, and now accorded, in a strange mixture of chivalry and calculation, to mere place whence power has fled. The day of vicegerents is gone, and the day of officers has come; and it is not unknown that officers should have to wait, or even—such is the insolence, no longer of office, but of those who give it—should altogether go without. Yet, although everybody has now to wait, everybody has not to wait the same length of time. For example, a genius needs not wait so long for what he wants as a fool—unless, as chances now and then, he be both a genius and a fool, when probably his waiting will be utterly without end.

In a small flat in Chelsea, very high toward heaven, there sat one evening in the summer, two young men and a genius; and the younger of the young men, whose name was Arthur Angell, said discontentedly to the genius:

"The brute only sent me ten and sixpence. What did you get for yours?"

The genius blushed and murmured apologetically:

"That agent chap I've sold myself to got twenty pounds for it."

The second young man, who was not so young, being, in fact, well turned of thirty, and growing bald, took his pipe out of his mouth, and, pointing the stem first at the genius, then at Arthur Angell, and lastly, like a knife, at his own breast, said:

"Pounds—shillings—and pence. He sent me nothing at all."

A pause followed, and the genius began:

"Look here, you fellows——" But Philip Hume went on: "Ten and sixpence is a good sum of money, a comfortable sum of money, and, my dear Arthur, I should say the full value of your poem. As to Dale's poem, who knows the value of Dale's poem? By what rod shall you measure——" He broke off with a laugh at Dale's gesture of protest.

"I'm making the deuce of a lot of money," said Dale in an awestruck tone. "It's rolling in. I don't know what to do with it."

"Littlehill will swallow it," said Philip.

"You don't mean that he sticks to that idea?" exclaimed Arthur. "You don't, do you, Dale?"

"I do," answered Dale. "I'm not going permanently. I'm not going to forsake our old ways or our old life. I'm not going to turn into a rich man."

"I hope not, by Jove!" cried Arthur.

"But I want to see the country—I've not seen it for years. And I want to see country people, and—and——"

"It'll end in our losing you," prophesied Arthur gloomily.

"Nonsense!" said Dale, flushing a little. "It'll end in nothing of the sort. I've only taken the house for a year."

"A gentleman's residence," said Philip; "five sitting rooms, twelve bedrooms, offices, stabling, and three acres of grounds."

Arthur groaned.

"It sounds a villa all over," he said.

"Not at all," said Dale sharply; "it's a country house."

"Is there any difference?" asked Arthur scornfully.

"All the difference," said Philip; "as you would know if you moved in anything approaching respectable circles."

"I'm glad I don't," said Arthur. "What will respectable circles say to 'The Clarion,' eh, Dale?"

"Who cares what they say?" laughed Dale. "They seem to buy it."

Arthur looked at him with revengeful eye, and suddenly inquired.

"What about Nellie?"

"That's just the delightful part of it," answered Dale eagerly. "Nellie's been seedy ever so long, you know. She was ordered perfect rest and country air. But it didn't run to it."

"It never ran to anything here," said Philip in a tone of dispassionate acquiescence in facts, "till you became famous."

"Now I can help!" pursued Dale. "She and Mrs. Hodge are coming to pay me a long visit. Of course, Phil's going to be there permanently. You'll come too, Arthur?"

At first Arthur Angell said he would not go near a villa; he could not breath in a villa; or sleep quiet o' nights in a villa; but presently he relented.

"I can't stand it for long, though," he said. "Still, I'm glad you're going to have Nellie there. She'd have missed you awfully. When do you go?"

"Actually, to-morrow. I'm not used to it yet."

Arthur shook his head again, as he put on his hat.

"Well, good-night," said he. "I hope it's all right."

Dale waited till the door was closed behind his guest, and then laughed good-humoredly.

"I like old Arthur," he said. "He's so keen and in earnest about it. But it's all bosh. What difference can it make whether I live in London or the country? And it's only for a little while."

"He begins to include you in the well-to-do classes, and suspects you accordingly," replied Philip.

There was a knock at the door, and a pretty girl came in.

"Oh, I ran up," she said, "to ask whether this hat would do for Denshire. I don't want to disgrace you, Dale;" and she held up a hat she carried in her hand.

"It would do for Paradise," said Dale. "Besides, there isn't going to be any difference at all in Denshire. We are going to be and do and dress just as we are and do and dress here. Aren't we, Phil?"

"That is the scheme," said Philip.

"We shall care for no one's opinion," pursued Dale, warming to his subject. "We shall be absolutely independent. We shall show them that their way of living is not the only way of living. We——"

"In fact, Nellie," interrupted Philip, "we shall open their eyes considerably. So we flatter ourselves."

"It's not that at all," protested Dale.

"You can't help it, Dale," said Nellie, smiling brightly at him. "Of course they will open their eyes at the great Mr. Bannister. We all open our eyes at him, don't we, Mr. Hume? Well, then, the hat will do—as a week-day hat, I mean?"

"A week-day hat?" repeated Philip. "Dear old phrase! It recalls one's happy church-going youth. Have you also provided a Sunday hat?"

"Of course, Mr. Hume."

"And, Dale, have you a Sunday coat?"

Dale laughed.

"It's a pretty excuse for pretty things, Phil," he said. "Let Nellie have her Sunday hat. I doubt if they'll let me into the church."

Philip stretched out his hand and took up a glass of whisky and water which stood near him.

"I drink to the success of the expedition!" said he.

"To the success of our mission!" cried Dale gayly, raising his glass. "We will spread the light!"

"Here's to Dale Bannister, apostle *in partibus!*" and Philip drank the toast.

Chapter II.

The New Man at Littlehill.

Market Denborough is not a large town. Perhaps it is none the worse for that, and, if it be, there is compensation to be found in its picturesqueness, its antiquity, and its dignity; for there has been a town where it stands from time immemorial; it makes a great figure in county histories and local guidebooks; it is an ancient corporation, an assize town, and quarter-sessions borough. It does not grow, for country towns, dependent solely on the support of the rural districts surrounding, are not given to growing much nowadays. Moreover, the Delanes do not readily allow new houses to be built, and if a man lives in Market Denborough, he must be a roofless vagrant or a tenant of Mr. Delane. It is not the place to make a fortune; but, on

the other hand, unusual recklessness is necessary to the losing of one there. If the triumphs of life are on a small scale, the struggle for existence is not very fierce, and a wise man might do worse than barter the uncertain chances and precarious joys of a larger stage, to play a modest, easy, quiet part on the little boards of Market Denborough.

It must not, however, be supposed that the lion and the lamb have quite sunk their differences and lain down together at Market Denborough. There, as elsewhere, the millennium tarries, and there are not wanting fierce feuds, personal, municipal, nay, even, within the wide limits of Mr. Delane's tolerance, political. If it were not so, the Mayor would not have been happy, for the Mayor loved a fight; and Alderman Johnstone, who was a Radical, would have felt his days wasted; and the two gentlemen would not have been, as they continually were, at loggerheads concerning paving contracts and kindred subjects. There was no want of interests in life, if a man were ready to take his own part and keep a sharp eye on the doings of his neighbor. Besides, the really great events of existence happened at Market Denborough much as they do in London; people were born, and married, and died; and while that rotation is unchecked, who can be seriously at a loss for matter of thought or topic of conversation?

As Mr. James Roberts, member of the Royal College of Surgeons, a thin young man, with restless eyes and tight-shut lips, walked down High Street one hot, sunny afternoon, it never entered his head that there was not enough to think about in Market Denborough. Wife and child, rent, rates and taxes, patients and prescriptions, the relation between those old enemies, incomings and outgoings, here was food enough for any man's meditations. Enough? Ay, enough and to spare of such

distasteful, insipid, narrow, soul-destroying stuff. Mr., or, to give him the brevet rank all the town gave him. Dr. Roberts, hated these sordid, imperious interests that gathered round him and hemmed him in, shutting out all else—all dreams of ambition, all dear, long-harbored schemes, all burning enthusiasms, even all chance of seeking deeper knowledge and more commanding skill. Sadly and impatiently the doctor shook his head, trying to put his visions on one side, and nail his mind down to its work. His first task was to turn three hundred pounds a year into six hundred pounds. It was hard it should be so, and he chafed against necessity, forgetting, as perhaps he pardonably might, that the need was the price he paid for wife and child. Yes, it was hard; but so it was. If only more people would be—no, but if only more people who were ill would call in Dr. Roberts! Then he could keep two horses, and not have to "pad the hoof," as he phrased it to himself, about sweltering streets or dusty lanes all the long afternoon, because his one pony was tired out with carrying him in the morning to Dirkham, a village five miles off, where he was medical officer at a salary of forty pounds by the year. That was forty, and Ethel had a hundred, and the profits from his paying patients (even if you allowed for the medicine consumed by those who did not pay) were about a hundred and fifty. But then the bills—— Oh, well, he must go on. The second horse must wait, and that other dream of his, having an assistant, that must wait, too. If he had an assistant, he would have some leisure for research, for reading, for studying the political and social questions where his real and engrossing interest lay. He could then take his part in the mighty work of rousing——

Here his meditations were interrupted. He had reached, in his progress down the street, a large plate-glass-windowed shop, the shop of a chemist, and of no less a man than Mr. James Hedger, Mayor of Market Denborough. The member