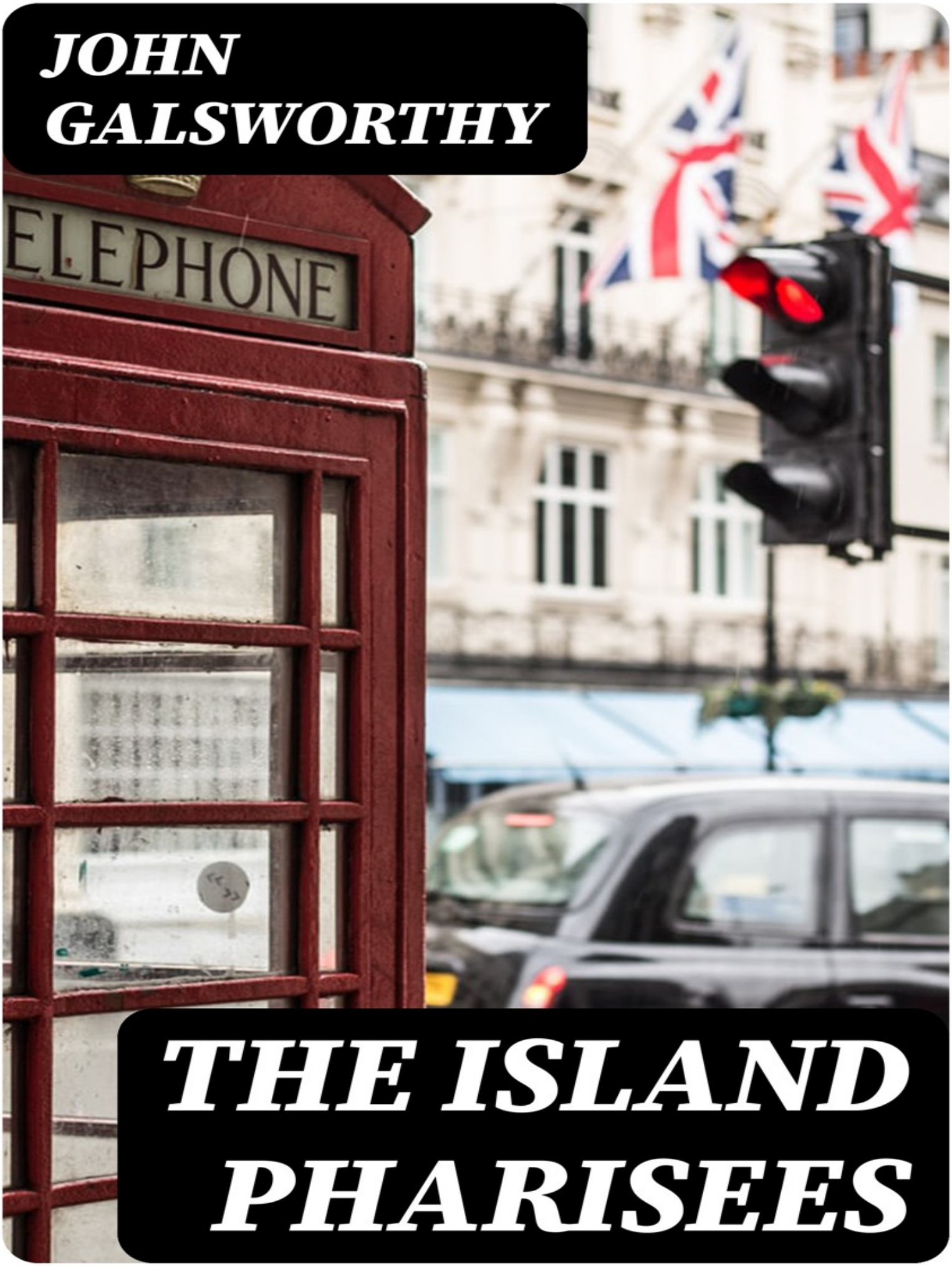
JOHN GALSWORTHY



THE ISLAND PHARISEES

John Galsworthy

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Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info

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PREFACE

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Each man born into the world is born like Shelton in this book—to go a journey, and for the most part he is born on the high road. At first he sits there in the dust, with his little chubby hands reaching at nothing, and his little solemn eyes staring into space. As soon as he can toddle, he moves, by the queer instinct we call the love of life, straight along this road, looking neither to the right nor left, so pleased is he to walk. And he is charmed with everything—with the nice flat road, all broad and white, with his own feet, and with the prospect he can see on either hand. The sun shines, and he finds the road a little hot and dusty; the rain falls, and he splashes through the muddy puddles. It makes no matter—all is pleasant; his fathers went this way before him; they made this road for him to tread, and, when they bred him, passed into his fibre the love of doing things as they themselves had done them. So he walks on and on, resting comfortably at nights under the roofs that have been raised to shelter him, by those who went before.

Suddenly one day, without intending to, he notices a path or opening in the hedge, leading to right or left, and he stands, looking at the undiscovered. After that he stops at all the openings in the hedge; one day, with a beating heart, he tries one.

And this is where the fun begins.

Out of ten of him that try the narrow path, nine of him come back to the broad road, and, when they pass the next gap in the hedge, they say: “No, no, my friend, I found you

pleasant for a while, but after that-ah! after that! The way my fathers went is good enough for me, and it is obviously the proper one; for nine of me came back, and that poor silly tenth—I really pity him!”

And when he comes to the next inn, and snuggles in his well-warmed, bed, he thinks of the wild waste of heather where he might have had to spend the night alone beneath the stars; nor does it, I think, occur to him that the broad road he treads all day was once a trackless heath itself.

But the poor silly tenth is faring on. It is a windy night that he is travelling through a windy night, with all things new around, and nothing to help him but his courage. Nine times out of ten that courage fails, and he goes down into the bog. He has seen the undiscovered, and—like Ferrand in this book—the undiscovered has engulfed him; his spirit, tougher than the spirit of the nine that burned back to sleep in inns, was yet not tough enough. The tenth time he wins across, and on the traces he has left others follow slowly, cautiously—a new road is opened to mankind! A true saying goes: Whatever is, is right! And if all men from the world's beginning had said that, the world would never have begun—at all. Not even the protoplasmic jelly could have commenced its journey; there would have been no motive force to make it start.

And so, that other saying had to be devised before the world could set up business: Whatever is, is wrong! But since the Cosmic Spirit found that matters moved too fast if those that felt “All things that are, are wrong” equalled in number those that felt “All things that are, are right,” It solemnly devised polygamy (all, be it said, in a spiritual way

of speaking); and to each male spirit crowing “All things that are, are wrong” It decreed nine female spirits clucking “All things that are, are right.” The Cosmic Spirit, who was very much an artist, knew its work, and had previously devised a quality called courage, and divided it in three, naming the parts spiritual, moral, physical. To all the male-bird spirits, but to no female (spiritually, not corporeally speaking), It gave courage that was spiritual; to nearly all, both male and female, It gave courage that was physical; to very many hen-bird spirits It gave moral courage too. But, because It knew that if all the male-bird spirits were complete, the proportion of male to female—one to ten—would be too great, and cause upheavals, It so arranged that only one in ten male-bird spirits should have all three kinds of courage; so that the other nine, having spiritual courage, but lacking either in moral or in physical, should fail in their extensions of the poultry-run. And having started them upon these lines, it left them to get along as best they might.

Thus, in the subdivision of the poultry-run that we call England, the proportion of the others to the complete male-bird spirit, who, of course, is not infrequently a woman, is ninety-nine to one; and with every Island Pharisee, when he or she starts out in life, the interesting question ought to be, “Am I that one?” Ninety very soon find out that they are not, and, having found it out, lest others should discover, they say they are. Nine of the other ten, blinded by their spiritual courage, are harder to convince; but one by one they sink, still proclaiming their virility. The hundredth Pharisee alone sits out the play.

Now, the journey of this young man Shelton, who is surely not the hundredth Pharisee, is but a ragged effort to present the working of the truth “All things that are, are wrong,” upon the truth “All things that are, are right.”

The Institutions of this country, like the Institutions of all other countries, are but half-truths; they are the working daily clothing of the nation; no more the body's permanent dress than is a baby's frock. Slowly but surely they wear out, or are outgrown; and in their fashion they are always thirty years at least behind the fashions of those spirits who are concerned with what shall take their place. The conditions that dictate our education, the distribution of our property, our marriage laws, amusements, worship, prisons, and all other things, change imperceptibly from hour to hour; the moulds containing them, being inelastic, do not change, but hold on to the point of bursting, and then are hastily, often clumsily, enlarged. The ninety desiring peace and comfort for their spirit, the ninety of the well-warmed beds, will have it that the fashions need not change, that morality is fixed, that all is ordered and immutable, that every one will always marry, play, and worship in the way that they themselves are marrying, playing, worshipping. They have no speculation, and they hate with a deep hatred those who speculate with thought. This is the function they were made for. They are the dough, and they dislike that yeasty stuff of life which comes and works about in them. The Yeasty Stuff —the other ten—chafed by all things that are, desirous ever of new forms and moulds, hate in their turn the comfortable ninety. Each party has invented for the other the hardest names that it can think of: Philistines, Bourgeois, Mrs.

Grundy, Rebels, Anarchists, and Ne'er-do-weels. So we go on! And so, as each of us is born to go his journey, he finds himself in time ranged on one side or on the other, and joins the choruses of name-slingers.

But now and then—ah! very seldom—we find ourselves so near that thing which has no breadth, the middle line, that we can watch them both, and positively smile to see the fun.

When this book was published first, many of its critics found that Shelton was the only Pharisee, and a most unsatisfactory young man—and so, no doubt, he is. Belonging to the comfortable ninety, they felt, in fact, the need of slinging names at one who obviously was of the ten. Others of its critics, belonging to the ten, wielded their epithets upon Antonia, and the serried ranks behind her, and called them Pharisees; as dull as ditch-water—and so, I fear, they are.

One of the greatest charms of authorship is the privilege it gives the author of studying the secret springs of many unseen persons, of analysing human nature through the criticism that his work evokes—criticism welling out of the instinctive likings or aversions, out of the very fibre of the human being who delivers it; criticism that often seems to leap out against the critic's will, startled like a fawn from some deep bed, of sympathy or of antipathy. And so, all authors love to be abused—as any man can see.

In the little matter of the title of this book, we are all Pharisees, whether of the ninety or the ten, and we certainly do live upon an Island. JOHN GALSWORTHY.

January 1, 1908

PART I

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THE TOWN

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CHAPTER I

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SOCIETY

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A quiet, well-dressed man named Shelton, with a brown face and a short, fair beard, stood by the bookstall at Dover Station. He was about to journey up to London, and had placed his bag in the corner of a third-class carriage.

After his long travel, the flat-vowelled voice of the bookstall clerk offering the latest novel sounded pleasant—pleasant the independent answers of a bearded guard, and the stodgy farewell sayings of a man and wife. The limber porters trundling their barrows, the greyness of the station and the good stolid humour clinging to the people, air, and voices, all brought to him the sense of home. Meanwhile he wavered between purchasing a book called Market Hayborough, which he had read and would certainly enjoy a second time, and Carlyle's French Revolution, which he had not read and was doubtful of enjoying; he felt that he ought to buy the latter, but he did not relish giving up the former. While he hesitated thus, his carriage was beginning to fill up; so, quickly buying both, he took up a position from which he could defend his rights. “Nothing,” he thought, “shows people up like travelling.”

The carriage was almost full, and, putting his bag, up in the rack, he took his seat. At the moment of starting yet another passenger, a girl with a pale face, scrambled in.

“I was a fool to go third,” thought Shelton, taking in his neighbours from behind his journal.

They were seven. A grizzled rustic sat in the far corner; his empty pipe, bowl downwards, jutted like a handle from his face, all bleared with the smear of nothingness that grows on those who pass their lives in the current of hard facts. Next to him, a ruddy, heavy-shouldered man was discussing with a grey-haired, hatchet-visaged person the condition of their gardens; and Shelton watched their eyes till it occurred to him how curious a look was in them—a watchful friendliness, an allied distrust—and that their voices, cheerful, even jovial, seemed to be cautious all the time. His glance strayed off, and almost rebounded from the semi-Roman, slightly cross, and wholly self-complacent face of a stout lady in a black-and-white costume, who was reading the Strand Magazine, while her other, sleek, plump hand, freed from its black glove, and ornamented with a thick watch-bracelet, rested on her lap. A younger, bright-cheeked, and self-conscious female was sitting next her, looking at the pale girl who had just got in.

“There's something about that girl,” thought Shelton, “they don't like.” Her brown eyes certainly looked frightened, her clothes were of a foreign cut. Suddenly he met the glance of another pair of eyes; these eyes, prominent and blue, stared with a sort of subtle roguery from above a thin, lopsided nose, and were at once averted. They gave Shelton the impression that he was being judged, and mocked, enticed, initiated. His own gaze did not fall; this sanguine face, with its two-day growth of reddish beard, long nose, full lips, and irony, puzzled him. “A cynical face!”

he thought, and then, “but sensitive!” and then, “too cynical,” again.

The young man who owned it sat with his legs parted at the knees, his dusty trouser-ends and boots slanting back beneath the seat, his yellow finger-tips crisped as if rolling cigarettes. A strange air of detachment was about that youthful, shabby figure, and not a scrap of luggage filled the rack above his head.

The frightened girl was sitting next this pagan personality; it was possibly the lack of fashion in his looks that caused, her to select him for her confidence.

“Monsieur,” she asked, “do you speak French?”

“Perfectly.”

“Then can you tell me where they take the tickets?

“The young man shook his head.

“No,” said he, “I am a foreigner.”

The girl sighed.

“But what is the matter, ma'moiselle?”

The girl did not reply, twisting her hands on an old bag in her lap. Silence had stolen on the carriage—a silence such as steals on animals at the first approach of danger; all eyes were turned towards the figures of the foreigners.

“Yes,” broke out the red-faced man, “he was a bit squiffy that evening—old Tom.”

“Ah!” replied his neighbour, “he would be.”

Something seemed to have destroyed their look of mutual distrust. The plump, sleek hand of the lady with the Roman nose curved convulsively; and this movement corresponded to the feeling agitating Shelton's heart. It was

almost as if hand and heart feared to be asked for something.

“Monsieur,” said the girl, with a tremble in her voice, “I am very unhappy; can you tell me what to do? I had no money for a ticket.”

The foreign youth's face flickered.

“Yes?” he said; “that might happen to anyone, of course.”

“What will they do to me?” sighed the girl.

“Don't lose courage, ma'moiselle.” The young man slid his eyes from left to right, and rested them on Shelton. “Although I don't as yet see your way out.”

“Oh, monsieur!” sighed the girl, and, though it was clear that none but Shelton understood what they were saying, there was a chilly feeling in the carriage.

“I wish I could assist you,” said the foreign youth; “unfortunately——” he shrugged his shoulders, and again his eyes returned to Shelton.

The latter thrust his hand into his pocket.

“Can I be of any use?” he asked in English.

“Certainly, sir; you could render this young lady the greatest possible service by lending her the money for a ticket.”

Shelton produced a sovereign, which the young man took. Passing it to the girl, he said:

“A thousand thanks—'voila une belle action'.”

The misgivings which attend on casual charity crowded up in Shelton's mind; he was ashamed of having them and of not having them, and he stole covert looks at this young foreigner, who was now talking to the girl in a language that

he did not understand. Though vagabond in essence, the fellow's face showed subtle spirit, a fortitude and irony not found upon the face of normal man, and in turning from it to the other passengers Shelton was conscious of revolt, contempt, and questioning, that he could not define. Leaning back with half-closed eyes, he tried to diagnose this new sensation. He found it disconcerting that the faces and behaviour of his neighbours lacked anything he could grasp and secretly abuse. They continued to converse with admirable and slightly conscious phlegm, yet he knew, as well as if each one had whispered to him privately, that this shady incident had shaken them. Something unsettling to their notions of propriety-something dangerous and destructive of complacency—had occurred, and this was unforgivable. Each had a different way, humorous or philosophic, contemptuous, sour, or sly, of showing this resentment. But by a flash of insight Shelton saw that at the bottom of their minds and of his own the feeling was the same. Because he shared in their resentment he was enraged with them and with himself. He looked at the plump, sleek hand of the woman with the Roman nose. The insulation and complacency of its pale skin, the passive righteousness about its curve, the prim separation from the others of the fat little finger, had acquired a wholly unaccountable importance. It embodied the verdict of his fellow-passengers, the verdict of Society; for he knew that, whether or no repugnant to the well-bred mind, each assemblage of eight persons, even in a third-class carriage, contains the kernel of Society.

But being in love, and recently engaged, Shelton had a right to be immune from discontent of any kind, and he reverted to his mental image of the cool, fair face, quick movements, and the brilliant smile that now in his probationary exile haunted his imagination; he took out his fiancee's last letter, but the voice of the young foreigner addressing him in rapid French caused him to put it back abruptly.

“From what she tells me, sir,” he said, bending forward to be out of hearing of the girl, “hers is an unhappy case. I should have been only too glad to help her, but, as you see”—and he made a gesture by which Shelton observed that he had parted from his waistcoat—“I am not Rothschild. She has been abandoned by the man who brought her over to Dover under promise of marriage. Look”—and by a subtle flicker of his eyes he marked how the two ladies had edged away from the French girl “they take good care not to let their garments touch her. They are virtuous women. How fine a thing is virtue, sir! and finer to know you have it, especially when you are never likely to be tempted.”

Shelton was unable to repress a smile; and when he smiled his face grew soft.

“Haven't you observed,” went on the youthful foreigner, “that those who by temperament and circumstance are worst fitted to pronounce judgment are usually the first to judge? The judgments of Society are always childish, seeing that it's composed for the most part of individuals who have never smelt the fire. And look at this: they who have money run too great a risk of parting with it if they don't accuse the penniless of being rogues and imbeciles.”

Shelton was startled, and not only by an outburst of philosophy from an utter stranger in poor clothes, but at this singular wording of his own private thoughts. Stifling his sense of the unusual for the queer attraction this young man inspired, he said:

“I suppose you're a stranger over here?”

“I've been in England seven months, but not yet in London,” replied the other. “I count on doing some good there—it is time!” A bitter and pathetic smile showed for a second on his lips. “It won't be my fault if I fail. You are English, Sir?”

Shelton nodded.

“Forgive my asking; your voice lacks something I've nearly always noticed in the English a kind of—'comment cela s'appelle'—cocksureness, coming from your nation's greatest quality.”

“And what is that?” asked Shelton with a smile.

“Complacency,” replied the youthful foreigner.

“Complacency!” repeated Shelton; “do you call that a great quality?”

“I should rather say, monsieur, a great defect in what is always a great people. You are certainly the most highly-civilised nation on the earth; you suffer a little from the fact. If I were an English preacher my desire would be to prick the heart of your complacency.”

Shelton, leaning back, considered this impertinent suggestion.

“Hum!” he said at last, “you'd be unpopular; I don't know that we're any cockier than other nations.”

The young foreigner made a sign as though confirming this opinion.

“In effect,” said he, “it is a sufficiently widespread disease. Look at these people here”—and with a rapid glance he pointed to the inmates of the carnage,—“very average persons! What have they done to warrant their making a virtuous nose at those who do not walk as they do? That old rustic, perhaps, is different—he never thinks at all—but look at those two occupied with their stupidities about the price of hops, the prospects of potatoes, what George is doing, a thousand things all of that sort—look at their faces; I come of the bourgeoisie myself—have they ever shown proof of any quality that gives them the right to pat themselves upon the back? No fear! Outside potatoes they know nothing, and what they do not understand they dread and they despise—there are millions of that breed. 'Voila la Societe'. The sole quality these people have shown they have is cowardice. I was educated by the Jesuits,” he concluded; “it has given me a way of thinking.”

Under ordinary circumstances Shelton would have murmured in a well-bred voice, “Ah! quite so,” and taken refuge in the columns of the Daily Telegraph. In place of this, for some reason that he did not understand, he looked at the young foreigner, and asked,

“Why do you say all this to me?”

The tramp—for by his boots he could hardly have been better—hesitated.

“When you've travelled like me,” he said, as if resolved to speak the truth, “you acquire an instinct in choosing to whom and how you speak. It is necessity that makes the

law; if you want to live you must learn all that sort of thing to make face against life.”

Shelton, who himself possessed a certain subtlety, could not but observe the complimentary nature of these words. It was like saying “I'm not afraid of you misunderstanding me, and thinking me a rascal just because I study human nature.”

“But is there nothing to be done for that poor girl?”

His new acquaintance shrugged his shoulders.

“A broken jug,” said he; “—you'll never mend her. She's going to a cousin in London to see if she can get help; you've given her the means of getting there—it's all that you can do. One knows too well what'll become of her.”

Shelton said gravely,

“Oh! that's horrible! Could n't she be induced to go back home? I should be glad—”

The foreign vagrant shook his head.

“Mon cher monsieur,” he said, “you evidently have not yet had occasion to know what the 'family' is like. 'The family' does not like damaged goods; it will have nothing to say to sons whose hands have dipped into the till or daughters no longer to be married. What the devil would they do with her? Better put a stone about her neck and let her drown at once. All the world is Christian, but Christian and good Samaritan are not quite the same.”

Shelton looked at the girl, who was sitting motionless, with her hands crossed on her bag, and a revolt against the unfair ways of life arose within him.

“Yes,” said the young foreigner, as if reading all his thoughts, “what's called virtue is nearly always only luck.”

He rolled his eyes as though to say: “Ah! La, Conventions? Have them by all means—but don't look like peacocks because you are preserving them; it is but cowardice and luck, my friends—but cowardice and luck!”

“Look here,” said Shelton, “I'll give her my address, and if she wants to go back to her family she can write to me.”

“She'll never go back; she won't have the courage.”

Shelton caught the cringing glance of the girl's eyes; in the droop of her lip there was something sensuous, and the conviction that the young man's words were true came over him.

“I had better not give them my private address,” he thought, glancing at the faces opposite; and he wrote down the following: “Richard Paramor Shelton, c/o Paramor and Herring, Lincoln's Inn Fields.”

“You're very good, sir. My name is Louis Ferrand; no address at present. I'll make her understand; she's half stupefied just now.”

Shelton returned to the perusal of his paper, too disturbed to read; the young vagrant's words kept sounding in his ears. He raised his eyes. The plump hand of the lady with the Roman nose still rested on her lap; it had been recased in its black glove with large white stitching. Her frowning gaze was fixed on him suspiciously, as if he had outraged her sense of decency.

“He did n't get anything from me,” said the voice of the red-faced man, ending a talk on tax-gatherers. The train whistled loudly, and Shelton reverted to his paper. This time he crossed his legs, determined to enjoy the latest murder; once more he found himself looking at the vagrant's long-

nosed, mocking face. “That fellow,” he thought, “has seen and felt ten times as much as I, although he must be ten years younger.”

He turned for distraction to the landscape, with its April clouds, trim hedgerows, homely coverts. But strange ideas would come, and he was discontented with himself; the conversation he had had, the personality of this young foreigner, disturbed him. It was all as though he had made a start in some fresh journey through the fields of thought.

CHAPTER II

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ANTONIA

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Five years before the journey just described Shelton had stood one afternoon on the barge of his old college at the end of the summer races. He had been “down” from Oxford for some years, but these Olympian contests still attracted him.

The boats were passing, and in the usual rush to the barge side his arm came in contact with a soft young shoulder. He saw close to him a young girl with fair hair knotted in a ribbon, whose face was eager with excitement. The pointed chin, long neck, the fluffy hair, quick gestures, and the calm strenuousness of her grey-blue eyes, impressed him vividly.

“Oh, we must bump them!” he heard her sigh.

“Do you know my people, Shelton?” said a voice behind his back; and he was granted a touch from the girl's shy, impatient hand, the warmer fingers of a lady with kindly eyes resembling a hare's, the dry hand-clasp of a gentleman with a thin, arched nose, and a quizzical brown face.

“Are you the Mr. Shelton who used to play the 'bones' at Eton?” said the lady. “Oh; we so often heard of you from Bernard! He was your fag, was n't he? How distressin' it is to see these poor boys in the boats!”

“Mother, they like it!” cried the girl.

“Antonia ought to be rowing, herself,” said her father, whose name was Dennant.

Shelton went back with them to their hotel, walking beside Antonia through the Christchurch meadows, telling her details of his college life. He dined with them that evening, and, when he left, had a feeling like that produced by a first glass of champagne.

The Dennants lived at Holm Oaks, within six miles of Oxford, and two days later he drove over and paid a call. Amidst the avocations of reading for the Bar, of cricket, racing, shooting, it but required a whiff of some fresh scent —hay, honeysuckle, clover—to bring Antonia's face before him, with its uncertain colour and its frank, distant eyes. But two years passed before he again saw her. Then, at an invitation from Bernard Dennant, he played cricket for the Manor of Holm Oaks against a neighbouring house; in the evening there was dancing oh the lawn. The fair hair was now turned up, but the eyes were quite unchanged. Their steps went together, and they outlasted every other couple on the slippery grass. Thence, perhaps, sprang her respect for him; he was wiry, a little taller than herself, and seemed to talk of things that interested her. He found out she was seventeen, and she found out that he was twenty-nine. The following two years Shelton went to Holm Oaks whenever he was asked; to him this was a period of enchanted games, of cub-hunting, theatricals, and distant sounds of practised music, and during it Antonia's eyes grew more friendly and more curious, and his own more shy, and schooled, more furtive and more ardent. Then came his father's death, a voyage round the world, and that peculiar hour of mixed

sensations when, one March morning, abandoning his steamer at Marseilles, he took train for Hyeres.

He found her at one of those exclusive hostelries amongst the pines where the best English go, in common with Americans, Russian princesses, and Jewish families; he would not have been shocked to find her elsewhere, but he would have been surprised. His sunburnt face and the new beard, on which he set some undefined value, apologetically displayed, were scanned by those blue eyes with rapid glances, at once more friendly and less friendly. “Ah!” they seemed to say, “here you are; how glad I am! But—what now?”

He was admitted to their sacred table at the table d'hote, a snowy oblong in an airy alcove, where the Honourable Mrs. Dennant, Miss Dennant, and the Honourable Charlotte Penguin, a maiden aunt with insufficient lungs, sat twice a day in their own atmosphere. A momentary weakness came on Shelton the first time he saw them sitting there at lunch. What was it gave them their look of strange detachment? Mrs. Dennant was bending above a camera.

“I'm afraid, d' you know, it's under-exposed,” she said.

“What a pity! The kitten was rather nice!” The maiden aunt, placing the knitting of a red silk tie beside her plate, turned her aspiring, well-bred gaze on Shelton.

“Look, Auntie,” said Antonia in her clear, quick voice, “there's the funny little man again!”

“Oh,” said the maiden aunt—a smile revealed her upper teeth; she looked for the funny little man (who was not English)—“he's rather nice!”

Shelton did not look for the funny little man; he stole a glance that barely reached Antonia's brow, where her eyebrows took their tiny upward slant at the outer corners, and her hair was still ruffled by a windy walk. From that moment he became her slave.

“Mr. Shelton, do you know anything about these periscopic binoculars?” said Mrs. Dennant's voice; “they're splendid for buildin's, but buildin's are so disappointin'. The thing is to get human interest, isn't it?” and her glance wandered absently past Shelton in search of human interest.

“You haven't put down what you've taken, mother.”

From a little leather bag Mrs. Dennant took a little leather book.

“It's so easy to forget what they're about,” she said, “that's so annoyin'.”

Shelton was not again visited by his uneasiness at their detachment; he accepted them and all their works, for there was something quite sublime about the way that they would leave the dining-room, unconscious that they themselves were funny to all the people they had found so funny while they had been sitting there, and he would follow them out unnecessarily upright and feeling like a fool.

In the ensuing fortnight, chaperoned by the maiden aunt, for Mrs. Dennant disliked driving, he sat opposite to Antonia during many drives; he played sets of tennis with her; but it was in the evenings after dinner—those long evenings on a parquet floor in wicker chairs dragged as far as might be from the heating apparatus—that he seemed so very near her. The community of isolation drew them closer. In place

of a companion he had assumed the part of friend, to whom she could confide all her home-sick aspirations. So that, even when she was sitting silent, a slim, long foot stretched out in front, bending with an air of cool absorption over some pencil sketches which she would not show him—even then, by her very attitude, by the sweet freshness that clung about her, by her quick, offended glances at the strange persons round, she seemed to acknowledge in some secret way that he was necessary. He was far from realising this; his intellectual and observant parts were hypnotised and fascinated even by her failings. The faint freckling across her nose, the slim and virginal severeness of her figure, with its narrow hips and arms, the curve of her long neck-all were added charms. She had the wind and rain look, a taste of home; and over the glaring roads, where the palm-tree shadows lay so black, she seemed to pass like the very image of an English day.

One afternoon he had taken her to play tennis with some friends, and afterwards they strolled on to her favourite view. Down the Toulon road gardens and hills were bathed in the colour of ripe apricot; an evening crispness had stolen on the air; the blood, released from the sun's numbing, ran gladly in the veins. On the right hand of the road was a Frenchman playing bowls. Enormous, busy, pleased, and upright as a soldier, pathetically trotting his vast carcass from end to end, he delighted Shelton. But Antonia threw a single look at the huge creature, and her face expressed disgust. She began running up towards the ruined tower.

Shelton let her keep in front, watching her leap from stone to stone and throw back defiant glances when he