

these means silences the enemy's battery.

Sometimes the classes overlap. As for instance, a keen and regular player may, by some more than usually gross bit of bungling on the part of the G.-C., be moved to a fervour and eloquence worthy of Juvenal. Or, again, even the absolute slacker may for a time emulate the keen player, provided an opponent plant a shrewd kick on a tender spot. But, broadly speaking, there are only three classes.

AN UNFINISHED COLLECTION

A silence had fallen upon the smoking room. The warrior just back from the front had enquired after George Vanderpoop, and we, who knew that George's gentle spirit had, to use a metaphor after his own heart, long since been withdrawn from circulation, were feeling uncomfortable and wondering how to break the news.

Smithson is our specialist in tact, and we looked to him to be spokesman.

"George," said Smithson at last, "the late George Vanderpoop----"

"Late!" exclaimed the warrior; "is he dead?"

"As a doornail," replied Smithson sadly. "Perhaps you would care to hear the story. It is sad, but interesting. You may recollect that, when you sailed, he was starting his journalistic career. For a young writer he had done remarkably well. The Daily Telephone had printed two of his contributions to their correspondence column, and a bright pen picture of his, describing how Lee's Lozenges for the Liver had snatched him from almost certain death, had quite a vogue. Lee, I believe, actually commissioned him to do a series on the subject."

"Well?" said the warrior.

"Well, he was, as I say, prospering very fairly, when in an unlucky moment he began to make a collection of editorial rejection forms. He had always been a somewhat easy prey to scourges of that description. But when he had passed safely through a sharp attack of Philatelim and a rather nasty bout of Autographomania, everyone hoped and believed that he had turned the corner. The progress of his last illness was very rapid. Within a year he wanted but one specimen to make the complete set. This was the one published from the offices of the Scrutinizer. All the rest he had obtained with the greatest ease. I remember his telling me that a single short story of his, called 'The Vengeance of Vera Dalrymple,' had been instrumental in securing no less than thirty perfect specimens. Poor George! I was with him when he made his first attempt on the Scrutinizer. He

had baited his hook with an essay on Evolution. He read me one or two passages from it. I stopped him at the third paragraph, and congratulated him in advance, little thinking that it was sympathy rather than congratulations that he needed. When I saw him a week afterwards he was looking haggard. I questioned him, and by slow degrees drew out the story. The article on Evolution had been printed.

"'Never say die, George,' I said. 'Send them "Vera Dalrymple." No paper can take that.'

"He sent it. The Scrutinizer, which had been running for nearly a century without publishing a line of fiction, took it and asked for more. It was as if there were an editorial conspiracy against him."

"Well?" said the man of war.

"Then," said Smithson, "George pulled himself together. He wrote a parody of 'The Minstrel Boy.' I have seen a good many parodies, but never such a parody as that. By return of post came a long envelope bearing the crest of the Scrutinizer. 'At last,' he said, as he tore it open.

"'George, old man,' I said, 'your hand.'

"He looked at me a full minute. Then with a horrible, mirthless laugh he fell to the ground, and expired almost instantly. You will readily

guess what killed him. The poem had been returned, but without a rejection form!"