

SIR HOWARD (drily). I told you you were not in a strong position, Captain Brassbound. (Looking implacably at him.) You are laid by the heels, my friend, as I said you would be.

LADY CICELY. But I assure you--

BRASSBOUND (interrupting her). What have you to assure him of? You persuaded me to spare him. Look at his face. Will you be able to persuade him to spare me?

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### ACT III

Torrid forenoon filtered through small Moorish windows high up in the adobe walls of the largest room in Leslie Rankin's house. A clean cool room, with the table (a Christian article) set in the middle, a presidentially elbowed chair behind it, and an inkstand and paper ready for the sitter. A couple of cheap American chairs right and left of the table, facing the same way as the presidential chair, give a judicial aspect to the arrangement. Rankin is placing a little tray with a jug and some glasses near the inkstand when Lady Cicely's voice is heard at the door, which is behind him in the corner to his right.

LADY CICELY. Good morning. May I come in?

RANKIN. Certainly. (She comes in, to the nearest end of the table. She has discarded all travelling equipment, and is dressed exactly as she might be in Surrey on a very hot day.) Sit ye doon, Leddy Ceecily.

LADY CICELY (sitting down). How nice you've made the room for the inquiry!

RANKIN (doubtfully). I could wish there were more chairs. Yon American captain will preside in this; and that leaves but one for Sir Howrrd and one for your leddyship. I could almost be tempted to call it a maircy that your friend that owns the yacht has sprained his ankle and cannot come. I misdoubt me it will not look judeecial to have Captain Kearney's officers squatting on the floor.

LADY CICELY. Oh, they won't mind. What about the prisoners?

RANKIN. They are to be broat here from the town gaol presently.

LADY CICELY. And where is that silly old Cadi, and my handsome Sheikh Sidi? I must see them before the inquiry, or they'll give Captain Kearney quite a false impression of what happened.

RANKIN. But ye cannot see them. They decamped last night, back to their castles in the Atlas.

LADY CICELY (delighted). No!

RANKIN. Indeed and they did. The poor Cadi is so terrified by all he has haird of the destruction of the Spanish fleet, that he daren't trust himself in the captain's hands. (Looking reproachfully at her) On your journey back here, ye seem to have frightened the poor man yourself, Leddy Ceecily, by talking to him about the fanatical Chreestianity of the Americans. Ye have largely yourself to thank if he's gone.

LADY CICELY. Allah be praised! WHAT a weight off our minds, Mr. Rankin!

RANKIN (puzzled). And why? Do ye not understand how necessary their evidence is?

LADY CICELY. THEIR evidence! It would spoil everything. They would perjure themselves out of pure spite against poor Captain Brassbound.

RANKIN (amazed). Do ye call him POOR Captain Brassbound! Does not your leddyship know that this Brassbound is--Heaven forgive me for judging him!--a precious scoundrel? Did ye not hear what Sir Howrrd told me on the yacht last night?

LADY CICELY. All a mistake, Mr. Rankin: all a mistake, I assure you. You said just now, Heaven forgive you for judging him! Well, that's just what the whole quarrel is about. Captain Brassbound is just like you: he thinks we have no right to judge one another; and its Sir Howard gets æ5,000 a year for doing nothing else but judging people, he thinks poor Captain Brassbound a regular Anarchist. They quarreled dreadfully at the castle. You mustn't mind what Sir Howard says about him: you really mustn't.

RANKIN. But his conduct--

LADY CICELY. Perfectly saintly, Mr. Rankin. Worthy of yourself in your best moments. He forgave Sir Howard, and did all he could to save him.

RANKIN. Ye astoanish me, Ledy Ceecily.

LADY CICELY. And think of the temptation to behave badly when he had us all there helpless!

RANKIN. The temptation! ay: that's true. Ye're ower bonny to be cast away among a parcel o lone, lawless men, my leddy.

LADY CICELY (naively). Bless me, that's quite true; and I never thought of it! Oh, after that you really must do all you can to help Captain Brassbound.

RANKIN (reservedly). No: I cannot say that, Ledy Ceecily. I doubt he has imposed on your good nature and sweet disposeetion. I had a crack with the Cadi as well as with Sir Howrrd;and there is little question in my mind but that Captain Brassbound is no better than a bregand.

LADY CICELY (apparently deeply impressed). I wonder whether he can be, Mr. Rankin. If you think so, that's heavily against him in my opinion, because you have more knowledge of men than anyone else here. Perhaps I'm mistaken. I only thought you might like to help him as the son of your old friend.

RANKIN (startled). The son of my old friend! What d'ye mean?

LADY CICELY. Oh! Didn't Sir Howard tell you that? Why, Captain Brassbound turns out to be Sir Howard's nephew, the son of the brother you knew.

RANKIN (overwhelmed). I saw the likeness the night he came here! It's true: it's true. Uncle and nephew!

LADY CICELY. Yes: that's why they quarrelled so.

RANKIN (with a momentary sense of ill usage). I think Sir Howrrd might have told me that.

LADY CICELY. Of course he OUGHT to have told you. You see he only tells one side of the story. That comes from his training as a barrister. You mustn't think he's naturally deceitful: if he'd been brought up as a clergyman, he'd have told you the whole truth as a matter of course.

RANKIN (too much perturbed to dwell on his grievance). Ledy Ceecily: I must go to the prison and see the lad. He may have been a bit wild; but I can't leave poor Miles's son unbefriended in a foreign gaol.

LADY CICELY (rising, radiant). Oh, how good of you! You have a real kind heart of gold, Mr. Rankin. Now,

before you go, shall we just put our heads together, and consider how to give Miles's son every chance--I mean of course every chance that he ought to have.

RANKIN (rather addled). I am so confused by this astoanishing news--

LADY CICELY. Yes, yes: of course you are. But don't you think he would make a better impression on the American captain if he were a little more respectably dressed?

RANKIN. Mebbe. But how can that be remedied here in Mogador?

LADY CICELY. Oh, I've thought of that. You know I'm going back to England by way of Rome, Mr. Rankin; and I'm bringing a portmanteau full of clothes for my brother there: he's ambassador, you know, and has to be VERY particular as to what he wears. I had the portmanteau brought here this morning. Now WOULD you mind taking it to the prison, and smartening up Captain Brassbound a little. Tell him he ought to do it to show his respect for me; and he will. It will be quite easy: there are two Krooboys waiting to carry the portmanteau. You will: I know you will. (She edges him to the door.) And do you think there is time to get him shaved?

RANKIN (succumbing, half bewildered). I'll do my best.

LADY CICELY. I know you will. (As he is going out) Oh! one word, Mr. Rankin. (He comes back.) The Cadi didn't know that Captain Brassbound was Sir Howard's nephew, did he?

RANKIN. No.

LADY CICELY. Then he must have misunderstood everything quite dreadfully. I'm afraid, Mr. Rankin--though you know best, of course--that we are bound not to repeat anything at the inquiry that the Cadi said. He didn't know, you see.

RANKIN (cannily). I take your point, Leddy Ceecily. It alters the case. I shall certainly make no allusion to it.

LADY CICELY (magnanimously). Well, then, I won't either. There! They shake hands on it. Sir Howard comes in.

SIR HOWARD. Good morning Mr. Rankin. I hope you got home safely from the yacht last night.

RANKIN. Quite safe, thank ye, Sir Howrrd.

LADY CICELY. Howard, he's in a hurry. Don't make him stop to talk.

SIR HOWARD. Very good, very good. (He comes to the table and takes Lady Cicely's chair.)

RANKIN. Oo revoir, Leddy Ceecily.

LADY CICELY. Bless you, Mr. Rankin. (Rankin goes out. She comes to the other end of the table, looking at Sir Howard with a troubled, sorrowfully sympathetic air, but unconsciously making her right hand stalk about the table on the tips of its fingers in a tentative stealthy way which would put Sir Howard on his guard if he were in a suspicious frame of mind, which, as it happens, he is not.) I'm so sorry for you, Howard, about this unfortunate inquiry.

SIR HOWARD (swinging round on his chair, astonished). Sorry for ME! Why?

LADY CICELY. It will look so dreadful. Your own nephew, you know.

SIR HOWARD. Cicely: an English judge has no nephews, no sons even, when he has to carry out the law.

LADY CICELY. But then he oughtn't to have any property either. People will never understand about the West Indian Estate. They'll think you're the wicked uncle out of the Babes in the Wood. (With a fresh gush of compassion) I'm so SO sorry for you.

SIR HOWARD (rather stiffly). I really do not see how I need your commiseration, Cicely. The woman was an impossible person, half mad, half drunk. Do you understand what such a creature is when she has a grievance, and imagines some innocent person to be the author of it?

LADY CICELY (with a touch of impatience). Oh, quite. THAT'll be made clear enough. I can see it all in the papers already: our half mad, half drunk sister-in-law, making scenes with you in the street, with the police called in, and prison and all the rest of it. The family will be furious. (Sir Howard quails. She instantly follows up her advantage with) Think of papa!

SIR HOWARD. I shall expect Lord Waynflete to look at the matter as a reasonable man.

LADY CICELY. Do you think he's so greatly changed as that, Howard?

SIR HOWARD (falling back on the fatalism of the depersonalized public man). My dear Cicely: there is no use discussing the matter. It cannot be helped, however disagreeable it may be.

LADY CICELY. Of course not. That's what's so dreadful. Do you think people will understand?

SIR HOWARD. I really cannot say. Whether they do or not, I cannot help it.

LADY CICELY. If you were anybody but a judge, it wouldn't matter so much. But a judge mustn't even be misunderstood. (Despairingly) Oh, it's dreadful, Howard: it's terrible! What would poor Mary say if she were alive now?

SIR HOWARD (with emotion). I don't think, Cicely, that my dear wife would misunderstand me.

LADY CICELY. No: SHE'D know you mean well. And when you came home and said, "Mary: I've just told all the world that your sister-in-law was a police court criminal, and that I sent her to prison; and your nephew is a brigand, and I'm sending HIM to prison" she'd have thought it must be all right because you did it. But you don't think she would have LIKED it, any more than papa and the rest of us, do you?

SIR HOWARD (appalled). But what am I to do? Do you ask me to compound a felony?

LADY CICELY (sternly). Certainly not. I would not allow such a thing, even if you were wicked enough to attempt it. No. What I say is, that you ought not to tell the story yourself

SIR HOWARD. Why?

LADY CICELY. Because everybody would say you are such a clever lawyer you could make a poor simple sailor like Captain Kearney believe anything. The proper thing for you to do, Howard, is to let ME tell the exact truth. Then you can simply say that you are bound to confirm me. Nobody can blame you for that.

SIR HOWARD (looking suspiciously at her). Cicely: you are up to some devilment.

LADY CICELY (promptly washing her hands of his interests). Oh, very well. Tell the story yourself, in your own clever way. I only proposed to tell the exact truth. You call that devilment. So it is, I daresay, from a

lawyer's point of view.

SIR HOWARD. I hope you're not offended.

LADY CICELY (with the utmost goodhumor). My dear Howard, not a bit. Of course you're right: you know how these things ought to be done. I'll do exactly what you tell me, and confirm everything you say.

SIR HOWARD (alarmed by the completeness of his victory). Oh, my dear, you mustn't act in MY interest. You must give your evidence with absolute impartiality. (She nods, as if thoroughly impressed and reprov'd, and gazes at him with the steadfast candor peculiar to liars who read novels. His eyes turn to the ground; and his brow clouds perplexedly. He rises; rubs his chin nervously with his forefinger; and adds) I think, perhaps, on reflection, that there is something to be said for your proposal to relieve me of the very painful duty of telling what has occurred.

LADY CICELY (holding off). But you'd do it so very much better.

SIR HOWARD. For that very reason, perhaps, it had better come from you.

LADY CICELY (reluctantly). Well, if you'd rather.

SIR HOWARD. But mind, Cicely, the exact truth.

LADY CICELY (with conviction). The exact truth. (They shake hands on it.)

SIR HOWARD (holding her hand). Fiat justitia: ruat coelum!

LADY CICELY. Let Justice be done, though the ceiling fall.

An American bluejacket appears at the door.

BLUEJACKET. Captain Kearney's cawmpliments to Lady Waynflete; and may he come in?

LADY CICELY. Yes. By all means. Where are the prisoners?

BLUEJACKET. Party gawn to the jail to fetch em, marm.

LADY CICELY. Thank you. I should like to be told when they are coming, if I might.

BLUEJACKET. You shall so, marm. (He stands aside, saluting, to admit his captain, and goes out.)

Captain Hamlin Kearney is a robustly built western American, with the keen, squeezed, wind beaten eyes and obstinately enduring mouth of his profession. A curious ethnological specimen, with all the nations of the old world at war in his veins, he is developing artificially in the direction of sleekness and culture under the restraints of an overwhelming dread of European criticism, and climatically in the direction of the indiginous North American, who is already in possession of his hair, his cheekbones, and the manlier instincts in him, which the sea has rescued from civilization. The world, pondering on the great part of its own future which is in his hands, contemplates him with wonder as to what the devil he will evolve into in another century or two. Meanwhile he presents himself to Lady Cicely as a blunt sailor who has something to say to her concerning her conduct which he wishes to put politely, as becomes an officer addressing a lady, but also with an emphatically implied rebuke, as an American addressing an English person who has taken a liberty.

LADY CICELY (as he enters). So glad you've come, Captain Kearney.

KEARNEY (coming between Sir Howard and Lady Cicely). When we parted yesterday afternoon, Lady Waynflete, I was unaware that in the course of your visit to my ship you had entirely altered the sleeping arrangements of my stokers. I thank you. As captain of the ship, I am customarily consulted before the orders of English visitors are carried out; but as your alterations appear to conform to the comfort of the men, I have not interfered with them.

LADY CICELY. How clever of you to find out! I believe you know every bolt in that ship.

Kearney softens perceptibly.

SIR HOWARD. I am really very sorry that my sister-in-law has taken so serious a liberty, Captain Kearney. It is a mania of hers-- simply a mania. Why did your men pay any attention to her?

KEARNEY (with gravely dissembled humor). Well, I asked that question too. I said, Why did you obey that lady's orders instead of waiting for mine? They said they didn't see exactly how they could refuse. I asked whether they considered that discipline. They said, Well, sir, will you talk to the lady yourself next time?

LADY CICELY. I'm so sorry. But you know, Captain, the one thing that one misses on board a man-of-war is a woman.

KEARNEY. We often feel that deprivation very keenly, Lady Waynflete.

LADY CICELY. My uncle is first Lord of the Admiralty; and I am always telling him what a scandal it is that an English captain should be forbidden to take his wife on board to look after the ship.

KEARNEY. Stranger still, Lady Waynflete, he is not forbidden to take any other lady. Yours is an extraordinary country--to an American.

LADY CICELY. But it's most serious, Captain. The poor men go melancholy mad, and ram each other's ships and do all sorts of things.

SIR HOWARD. Cicely: I beg you will not talk nonsense to Captain Kearney. Your ideas on some subjects are really hardly decorous.

LADY CICELY (to Kearney). That's what English people are like, Captain Kearney. They won't hear of anything concerning you poor sailors except Nelson and Trafalgar. YOU understand me, don't you?

KEARNEY (gallantly). I consider that you have more sense in your wedding ring finger than the British Admiralty has in its whole constitution, Lady Waynflete.

LADY CICELY. Of course I have. Sailors always understand things.

The bluejacket reappears.

BLUEJACKET (to Lady Cicely). Prisoners coming up the hill, marm.

KEARNEY (turning sharply on him). Who sent you in to say that?

BLUEJACKET (calmly). British lady's orders, sir. (He goes out, unruffled, leaving Kearney dumbfounded.)

SIR HOWARD (contemplating Kearney's expression with dismay). I am really very sorry, Captain Kearney. I am quite aware that Lady Cicely has no right whatever to give orders to your men.

LADY CICELY. I didn't give orders: I just asked him. He has such a nice face! Don't you think so, Captain Kearney? (He gasps, speechless.) And now will you excuse me a moment. I want to speak to somebody before the inquiry begins. (She hurries out.)

KEARNEY. There is sertainly a wonderful chahn about the British aristocracy, Sir Howard Hallam. Are they all like that? (He takes the presidential chair.)

SIR HOWARD (resuming his seat on Kearney's right). Fortunately not, Captain Kearney. Half a dozen such women would make an end of law in England in six months.

The bluejacket comes to the door again.

BLUEJACKET. All ready, sir.

KEARNEY. Verry good. I'm waiting.

The bluejacket turns and intimates this to those without.

The officers of the Santiago enter.

SIR HOWARD (rising and bobbing to them in a judicial manner). Good morning, gentlemen.

They acknowledge the greeting rather shyly, bowing or touching their caps, and stand in a group behind Kearney.

KEARNEY (to Sir Howard). You will be glahd to hear that I have a verry good account of one of our prisoners from our chahplain, who visited them in the gaol. He has expressed a wish to be cawnverted to Episcopalianism.

SIR HOWARD (drily). Yes, I think I know him.

KEARNEY. Bring in the prisoners.

BLUEJACKET (at the door). They are engaged with the British lady, sir. Shall I ask her--

KEARNEY (jumping up and exploding in storm piercing tones). Bring in the prisoners. Tell the lady those are my orders. Do you hear? Tell her so. (The bluejacket goes out dubiously. The officers look at one another in mute comment on the unaccountable pepperiness of their commander.)

SIR HOWARD (suavely). Mr. Rankin will be present, I presume.

KEARNEY (angrily). Rahnkin! Who is Rahnkin?

SIR HOWARD. Our host the missionary.

KEARNEY (subsiding unwillingly). Oh! Rahnkin, is he? He'd better look sharp or he'll be late. (Again exploding.) What are they doing with those prisoners?

Rankin hurries in, and takes his place near Sir Howard.

SIR HOWARD. This is Mr. Rankin, Captain Kearney.

RANKIN. Excuse my delay, Captain Kearney. The leddy sent me on an errand. (Kearney grunts.) I thought I should be late. But the first thing I heard when I arrived was your officer giving your compliments to Leddy Ceecily, and would she kindly allow the prisoners to come in, as you were anxious to see her again. Then I knew I was in time.

KEARNEY. Oh, that was it, was it? May I ask, sir, did you notice any sign on Lady Waynflete's part of camplifying with that verry moderate request?

LADY CICELY (outside). Coming, coming.

The prisoners are brought in by a guard of armed bluejackets.

Drinkwater first, again elaborately clean, and conveying by a virtuous and steadfast smirk a cheerful confidence in his innocence. Johnson solid and inexpressive, Redbrook unconcerned and debonair, Marzo uneasy. These four form a little group together on the captain's left. The rest wait unintelligently on Providence in a row against the wall on the same side, shepherded by the bluejackets. The first bluejacket, a petty officer, posts himself on the captain's right, behind Rankin and Sir Howard. Finally Brassbound appears with Lady Cicely on his arm. He is in fashionable frock coat and trousers, spotless collar and cuffs, and elegant boots. He carries a glossy tall hat in his hand. To an unsophisticated eye, the change is monstrous and appalling; and its effect on himself is so unmaning that he is quite out of countenance--a shaven Samson. Lady Cicely, however, is greatly pleased with it; and the rest regard it as an unquestionable improvement. The officers fall back gallantly to allow her to pass. Kearney rises to receive her, and stares with some surprise at Brassbound as he stops at the table on his left. Sir Howard rises punctiliously when Kearney rises and sits when he sits.

KEARNEY. Is this another gentleman of your party, Lady Waynflete? I presume I met you lahst night, sir, on board the yacht.

BRASSBOUND. No. I am your prisoner. My name is Brassbound.

DRINKWATER (officially). Kepn Brarsbahnd, of the schooner Thanksgiv--

REDBROOK (hastily). Shut up, you fool. (He elbows Drinkwater into the background.)

KEARNEY (surprised and rather suspicious). Well, I hardly understahnd this. However, if you are Captain Brassbound, you can take your place with the rest. (Brassbound joins Redbrook and Johnson. Kearney sits down again, after inviting Lady Cicely, with a solemn gesture, to take the vacant chair.) Now let me see. You are a man of experience in these matters, Sir Howard Hallam. If you had to conduct this business, how would you start?

LADY CICELY. He'd call on the counsel for the prosecution, wouldn't you, Howard?

SIR HOWARD. But there is no counsel for the prosecution, Cicely.

LADY CICELY. Oh yes there is. I'm counsel for the prosecution. You mustn't let Sir Howard make a speech, Captain Kearney: his doctors have positively forbidden anything of that sort. Will you begin with me?

KEARNEY. By your leave, Lady Waynfiete, I think I will just begin with myself. Sailor fashion will do as well here as lawyer fashion.

LADY CICELY. Ever so much better, dear Captain Kearney. (Silence. Kearney composes himself to speak. She breaks out again). You look so nice as a judge!



A general smile. Drinkwater splutters into a half suppressed laugh.

REDBROOK (in a fierce whisper). Shut up, you fool, will you? (Again he pushes him back with a furtive kick.)

SIR HOWARD (remonstrating). Cicely!

KEARNEY (grimly keeping his countenance). Your ladyship's cawmpliments will be in order at a later stage. Captain Brassbound: the position is this. My ship, the United States cruiser Santiago, was spoken off Mogador latest Thursday by the yacht Redgauntlet. The owner of the aforesaid yacht, who is not present through having sprained his ankle, gave me sertn information. In cawnsequence of that information the Santiago made the twenty knots to Mogador Harbor inside of fifty-seven minutes. Before noon next day a messenger of mine gave the Cadi of the district sertn information. In cawnsequence of that information the Cadi stimulated himself to some ten knots an hour, and lodged you and your men in Mogador jail at my disposal. The Cadi then went back to his mountain fahstnesses; so we shall not have the pleasure of his company here to-day. Do you follow me so far?

BRASSBOUND. Yes. I know what you did and what the Cadi did. The point is, why did you do it?

KEARNEY. With doo patience we shall come to that presently. Mr. Rahnkin: will you kindly take up the parable?

RANKIN. On the very day that Sir Howrrd and Lady Cicely started on their excursion I was applied to for medicine by a follower of the Sheikh Sidi el Assif. He told me I should never see Sir Howrrd again, because his master knew he was a Christian and would take him out of the hands of Captain Brassbound. I hurried on board the yacht and told the owner to scour the coast for a gunboat or cruiser to come into the harbor and put persuasion on the authorities. (Sir Howard turns and looks at Rankin with a sudden doubt of his integrity as a witness.)

KEARNEY. But I understood from our chahplain that you reported Captain Brassbound as in league with the Sheikh to deliver Sir Howard up to him.

RANKIN. That was my first hasty conclusion, Captain Kearney. But it appears that the compact between them was that Captain Brassbound should escort travellers under the Sheikh's protection at a certain payment per head, provided none of them were Christians. As I understand it, he tried to smuggle Sir Howrrd through under this compact, and the Sheikh found him out.

DRINKWATER. Rawt, gavner. Thet's jest ah it wors. The Kepn--

REDBROOK (again suppressing him). Shut up, you fool, I tell you.

SIR HOWARD (to Rankin). May I ask have you had any conversation with Lady Cicely on this subject?

RANKIN (naively). Yes. (Sir Howard grunts emphatically, as who should say "I thought so." Rankin continues. addressing the court) May I say how sorry I am that there are so few chairs, Captain and gentlemen.

KEARNEY (with genial American courtesy). Oh, THAT's all right, Mr. Rahnkin. Well, I see no harm so far: it's human fawilly, but not human crime. Now the counsel for the prosecution can proceed to prosecute. The floor is yours, Lady Waynflète.

LADY CICELY (rising). I can only tell you the exact truth--

DRINKWATER (involuntarily). Naow, down't do thet, lidy--

REDBROOK (as before). SHUT up, you fool, will you?

LADY CICELY. We had a most delightful trip in the hills; and Captain Brassbound's men could not have been nicer--I must say that for them--until we saw a tribe of Arabs--such nice looking men!--and then the poor things were frightened.

KEARNEY. The Arabs?

LADY CICELY. No: Arabs are never frightened. The escort, of course: escorts are always frightened. I wanted to speak to the Arab chief; but Captain Brassbound cruelly shot his horse; and the chief shot the Count; and then--

KEARNEY. The Count! What Count?

LADY CICELY. Marzo. That's Marzo (pointing to Marzo, who grins and touches his forehead).

KEARNEY (slightly overwhelmed by the unexpected profusion of incident and character in her story). Well, what happened then?

LADY CICELY. Then the escort ran away--all escorts do--and dragged me into the castle, which you really ought to make them clean and whitewash thoroughly, Captain Kearney. Then Captain Brassbound and Sir Howard turned out to be related to one another (sensation); and then of course, there was a quarrel. The Hallams always quarrel.

SIR HOWARD (rising to protest). Cicely! Captain Kearney: this man told me--

LADY CICELY (swiftly interrupting him). You mustn't say what people told you: it's not evidence. (Sir Howard chokes with indignation.)

KEARNEY (calmly). Allow the lady to proceed, Sir Howard Hallam.

SIR HOWARD (recovering his self-control with a gulp, and resuming his seat). I beg your pardon, Captain Kearney.

LADY CICELY. Then Sidi came.

KEARNEY. Sidney! Who was Sidney?

LADY CICELY. No, Sidi. The Sheikh. Sidi el Assif. A noble creature, with such a fine face! He fell in love with me at first sight--

SIR HOWARD (remonstrating). Cicely!

LADY CICELY. He did: you know he did. You told me to tell the exact truth.

KEARNEY. I can readily believe it, madam. Proceed.

LADY CICELY. Well, that put the poor fellow into a most cruel dilemma. You see, he could claim to carry off Sir Howard, because Sir Howard is a Christian. But as I am only a woman, he had no claim to me.

KEARNEY (somewhat sternly, suspecting Lady Cicely of aristocratic atheism). But you are a Christian woman.

LADY CICELY. No: the Arabs don't count women. They don't believe we have any souls.

RANKIN. That is true, Captain: the poor benighted creatures!

LADY CICELY. Well, what was he to do? He wasn't in love with Sir Howard; and he WAS in love with me. So he naturally offered to swop Sir Howard for me. Don't you think that was nice of him, Captain Kearney?

KEARNEY. I should have done the same myself, Lady Waynflete. Proceed.

LADY CICELY. Captain Brassbound, I must say, was nobleness itself, in spite of the quarrel between himself and Sir Howard. He refused to give up either of us, and was on the point of fighting for us when in came the Cadi with your most amusing and delightful letter, captain, and bundled us all back to Mogador after calling my poor Sidi the most dreadful names, and putting all the blame on Captain Brassbound. So here we are. Now, Howard, isn't that the exact truth, every word of it?

SIR HOWARD. It is the truth, Cicely, and nothing but the truth. But the English law requires a witness to tell the WHOLE truth.

LADY CICELY. What nonsense! As if anybody ever knew the whole truth about anything! (Sitting down, much hurt and discouraged.) I'm sorry you wish Captain Kearney to understand that I am an untruthful witness.

SIR HOWARD. No: but--

LADY CICELY. Very well, then: please don't say things that convey that impression.

KEARNEY. But Sir Howard told me yesterday that Captain Brassbound threatened to sell him into slavery.

LADY CICELY (springing up again). Did Sir Howard tell you the things he said about Captain Brassbound's mother? (Renewed sensation.) I told you they quarrelled, Captain Kearney. I said so, didn't I?

REDBROOK (crisply). Distinctly. (Drinkwater opens his mouth to corroborate.) Shut up, you fool.

LADY CICELY. Of course I did. Now, Captain Kearney, do YOU want me--does Sir Howard want me--does ANYBODY want me to go into the details of that shocking family quarrel? Am I to stand here in the absence of any individual of my own sex and repeat the language of two angry men?

KEARNEY (rising impressively). The United States navy will have no hand in offering any violence to the pure instincts of womanhood. Lady Waynflete: I thank you for the delicacy with which you have given your evidence. (Lady Cicely beams on him gratefully and sits down triumphant.) Captain Brassbound: I shall not hold you responsible for what you may have said when the English bench addressed you in the language of the English forecastle-- (Sir Howard is about to protest.) No, Sir Howard Hallam: excuse ME. In moments of passion I have called a man that myself. We are glad to find real flesh and blood beneath the ermine of the judge. We will all now drop a subject that should never have been broached in a lady's presence. (He resumes his seat, and adds, in a businesslike tone) Is there anything further before we release these men?

BLUEJACKET. There are some documents handed over by the Cadi, sir. He reckoned they were sort of magic spells. The chaplain ordered them to be reported to you and burnt, with your leave, sir.

KEARNEY. What are they?

BLUEJACKET (reading from a list). Four books, torn and dirty, made up of separate numbers, value each wawn penny, and entitled Sweeny Todd, the Demon Barber of London; The Skeleton Horseman--

DRINKWATER (rushing forward in painful alarm. and anxiety). It's maw lawbrary, gavner. Down't burn em.

KEARNEY. You'll be better without that sort of reading, my man.

DRINKWATER (in intense distress, appealing to Lady Cicely) Down't let em burn em, Lidy. They dasn't if you horder them not to. (With desperate eloquence) Yer dunno wot them books is to me. They took me aht of the sawdid reeyellities of the Worterleoo Rowd. They formed maw mawnd: they shaowed me sathink awgher than the squalor of a corster's lawf--

REDBROOK (collaring him). Oh shut up, you fool. Get out. Hold your ton--

DRINKWATER (frantically breaking from him). Lidy, lidy: sy a word for me. Ev a feelin awt. (His tears choke him: he clasps his hands in dumb entreaty.)

LADY CICELY (touched). Don't burn his books. Captain. Let me give them back to him.

KEARNEY. The books will be handed over to the lady.

DRINKWATER (in a small voice). Thenkyer, Lidy. (He retires among his comrades, snivelling subduedly.)

REDBROOK (aside to him as he passes). You silly ass, you. (Drinkwater sniffs and does not reply.)

KEARNEY. I suppose you and your men accept this lady's account of what passed, Captain Brassbound.

BRASSBOUND (gloomily). Yes. It is true--as far as it goes.

KEARNEY (impatiently). Do you wawnt it to go any further?

MARZO. She leave out something. Arab shoot me. She nurse me. She cure me.

KEARNEY. And who are you, pray?

MARZO (seized with a sanctimonious desire to demonstrate his higher nature). Only dam thief. Dam liar. Dam rascal. She no lady.

JOHNSON (revolted by the seeming insult to the English peerage from a low Italian). What? What's that you say?

MARZO. No lady nurse dam rascal. Only saint. She saint. She get me to heaven--get us all to heaven. We do what we like now.

LADY CICELY. Indeed you will do nothing of the sort Marzo, unless you like to behave yourself very nicely indeed. What hour did you say we were to lunch at, Captain Kearney?

KEARNEY. You recall me to my dooty, Lady Waynflete. My barge will be ready to take off you and Sir Howard to the Santiago at one o'clock. (He rises.) Captain Brassbound: this innquiry has elicited no reason why I should detain you or your men. I advise you to aht as escort in future to heathens exclusively. Mr.

Rahnkin: I thahnk you in the name of the United States for the hospitahlty you have extended to us today; and I invite you to accompany me bahck to my ship with a view to lunch at half-past one. Gentlemen: we will wait on the governor of the gaol on our way to the harbor (He goes out, following his officers, and followed by the bluejackets and the petty officer.)

SIR HOWARD (to Lady Cicely). Cicely: in the course of my professional career I have met with unscrupulous witnesses, and, I am sorry to say, unscrupulous counsel also. But the combination of unscrupulous witness and unscrupulous counsel I have met to-day has taken away my breath You have made me your accomplice in defeating justice.

LADY CICELY. Yes: aren't you glad it's been defeated for once? (She takes his arm to go out with him.)  
Captain Brassbound: I will come back to say goodbye before I go. (He nods gloomily. She goes out with Sir Howard, following the Captain and his staff.)

RANKIN (running to Brassbound and taking both his hands). I'm right glad ye're cleared. I'll come back and have a crack with ye when yon lunch is over. God bless ye. (Hs goes out quickly.)

Brassbound and his men, left by themselves in the room, free and unobserved, go straight out of their senses. They laugh; they dance; they embrace one another; they set to partners and waltz clumsily; they shake hands repeatedly and maudlinly. Three only retain some sort of self-possession. Marzo, proud of having successfully thrust himself into a leading part in the recent proceedings and made a dramatic speech, inflates his chest, curls his scanty moustache, and throws himself into a swaggering pose, chin up and right foot forward, despising the emotional English barbarians around him. Brassbound's eyes and the working of his mouth show that he is infected with the general excitement; but he bridles himself savagely. Redbrook, trained to affect indifference, grins cynically; winks at Brassbound; and finally relieves himself by assuming the character of a circus ringmaster, flourishing an imaginary whip and egging on the rest to wilder exertions. A climax is reached when Drinkwater, let loose without a stain on his character for the second time, is rapt by belief in his star into an ecstasy in which, scorning all partnership, he becomes as it were a whirling dervish, and executes so miraculous a clog dance that the others gradually cease their slower antics to stare at him.

BRASSBOUND (tearing off his hat and striding forward as Drinkwater collapses, exhausted, and is picked up by Redbrook). Now to get rid of this respectable clobber and feel like a man again. Stand by, all hands, to jump on the captain's tall hat. (He puts the hat down and prepares to jump on it. The effect is startling, and takes him completely aback. His followers, far from appreciating his iconoclasm, are shocked into scandalized sobriety, except Redbrook, who is immensely tickled by their prudery.)

DRINKWATER. Naow, look eah, kepn: that ynt rawt. Dror a lawn somewhere.

JOHNSON. I say nothin agen a bit of fun, Capn:, but let's be gentlemen.

REDBROOK. I suggest to you, Brassbound, that the clobber belongs to Lady Sis. Ain't you going to give it back to her?

BRASSBOUND (picking up the hat and brushing the dust off it anxiously). That's true. I'm a fool. All the same, she shall not see me again like this. (He pulls off the coat and waistcoat together.) Does any man here know how to fold up this sort of thing properly?

REDBROOK. Allow me, governor. (He takes the coat and waistcoat to the table, and folds them up.)

BRASSBOUND (loosening his collar and the front of his shirt). Brandyfaced Jack: you're looking at these studs. I know what's in your mind.

DRINKWATER (indignantly). Naow yer down't: nort a bit on it. Wot's in maw mawnd is secrifawce, seolf-secrifawce.

BRASSBOUND. If one brass pin of that lady's property is missing, I'll hang you with my own hands at the gaff of the Thanksgiving-- and would, if she were lying under the guns of all the fleets in Europe. (He pulls off the shirt and stands in his blue jersey, with his hair ruffled. He passes his hand through it and exclaims) Now I am half a man, at any rate.

REDBROOK. A horrible combination, governor: churchwarden from the waist down, and the rest pirate. Lady Sis won't speak to you in it.

BRASSBOUND. I'll change altogether. (He leaves the room to get his own trousers.)

REDBROOK (softly). Look here, Johnson, and gents generally. (They gather about him.) Spose she takes him back to England!

MARZO (trying to repeat his success). Im! Im only dam pirate. She saint, I tell you--no take any man nowhere.

JOHNSON (severely). Don't you be a ignorant and immoral foreigner. (The rebuke is well received; and Marzo is hustled into the background and extinguished.) She won't take him for harm; but she might take him for good. And then where should we be?

DRINKWATER. Brarsbahnd ynt the ownly kep'n in the world. Wot mikes a kep'n is brines an knollidge o lawf. It ynt thet ther's naow sitch pusson: it's thet you dunno where to look fr im. (The implication that he is such a person is so intolerable that they receive it with a prolonged burst of booing.)

BRASSBOUND (returning in his own clothes, getting into his jacket as he comes). Stand by, all. (They start asunder guiltily, and wait for orders.) Redbrook: you pack that clobber in the lady's portmanteau, and put it aboard the yacht for her. Johnson: you take all hands aboard the Thanksgiving; look through the stores: weigh anchor; and make all ready for sea. Then send Jack to wait for me at the slip with a boat; and give me a gunfire for n signal. Lose no time.

JOHNSON. Ay, ay, air. All aboard, mates.

ALL. Ay, ay. (They rush out tumultuously.)

When they are gone, Brassbound sits down at the end of the table, with his elbows on it and his head on his fists, gloomily thinking. Then he takes from the breast pocket of his jacket a leather case, from which he extracts a scrappy packet of dirty letters and newspaper cuttings. These he throws on the table. Next comes a photograph in a cheap frame. He throws it down untenderly beside the papers; then folds his arms, and is looking at it with grim distaste when Lady Cicely enters. His back is towards her; and he does not hear her. Perceiving this, she shuts the door loudly enough to attract his attention. He starts up.

LADY CICELY (coming to the opposite end of the table). So you've taken off all my beautiful clothes!

BRASSBOUND. Your brother's, you mean. A man should wear his own clothes; and a man should tell his own lies. I'm sorry you had to tell mine for me to-day.

LADY CICELY. Oh, women spend half their lives telling little lies for men, and sometimes big ones. We're used to it. But mind! I don't admit that I told any to-day.

BRASSBOUND. How did you square my uncle?

LADY CICELY. I don't understand the expression.

BRASSBOUND. I mean--

LADY CICELY. I'm afraid we haven't time to go into what you mean before lunch. I want to speak to you about your future. May I?

BRASSBOUND (darkening a little, but politely). Sit down. (She sits down. So does he.)

LADY CICELY. What are your plans?

BRASSBOUND. I have no plans. You will hear a gun fired in the harbor presently. That will mean that the Thanksgiving's anchor's weighed and that she is waiting for her captain to put out to sea. And her captain doesn't know now whether to turn her head north or south.

LADY CICELY. Why not north for England?

BRASSBOUND. Why not south for the Pole?

LADY CICELY. But you must do something with yourself.

BRASSBOUND (settling himself with his fists and elbows weightily on the table and looking straight and powerfully at her). Look you: when you and I first met, I was a man with a purpose. I stood alone: I saddled no friend, woman or man, with that purpose, because it was against law, against religion, against my own credit and safety. But I believed in it; and I stood alone for it, as a man should stand for his belief, against law and religion as much as against wickedness and selfishness. Whatever I may be, I am none of your fairweather sailors that'll do nothing for their creed but go to Heaven for it. I was ready to go to hell for mine. Perhaps you don't understand that.

LADY CICELY. Oh bless you, yes. It's so very like a certain sort of man.

BRASSBOUND. I daresay but I've not met many of that sort. Anyhow, that was what I was like. I don't say I was happy in it; but I wasn't unhappy, because I wasn't drifting. I was steering a course and had work in hand. Give a man health and a course to steer; and he'll never stop to trouble about whether he's happy or not.

LADY CICELY. Sometimes he won't even stop to trouble about whether other people are happy or not.

BRASSBOUND. I don't deny that: nothing makes a man so selfish as work. But I was not self-seeking: it seemed to me that I had put justice above self. I tell you life meant something to me then. Do you see that dirty little bundle of scraps of paper?

LADY CICELY. What are they?

BRASSBOUND. Accounts cut out of newspapers. Speeches made by my uncle at charitable dinners, or sentencing men to death--pious, highminded speeches by a man who was to me a thief and a murderer! To my mind they were more weighty, more momentous, better revelations of the wickedness of law and respectability than the book of the prophet Amos. What are they now? (He quietly tears the newspaper cuttings into little fragments and throws them away, looking fixedly at her meanwhile.)

LADY CICELY. Well, that's a comfort, at all events.

BRASSBOUND. Yes; but it's a part of my life gone: YOUR doing, remember. What have I left? See here! (He take up the letters) the letters my uncle wrote to my mother, with her comments on their cold drawn insolence, their treachery and cruelty. And the piteous letters she wrote to him later on, returned unopened. Must they go too?

LADY CICELY (uneasily). I can't ask you to destroy your mother's letters.

BRASSBOUND. Why not, now that you have taken the meaning out of them? (He tears them.) Is that a comfort too?

LADY CICELY. It's a little sad; but perhaps it is best so.

BRASSBOOND. That leaves one relic: her portrait. (He plucks the photograph out of its cheap case.)

LADY CICELY (with vivid curiosity). Oh, let me see. (He hands it to her. Before she can control herself, her expression changes to one of unmistakable disappointment and repulsion.)

BRASSBOUND (with a single sardonic cachinnation). Ha! You expected something better than that. Well, you're right. Her face does not look well opposite yours.

LADY CICELY (distressed). I said nothing.

BRASSBOUND. What could you say? (He takes back the portrait: she relinquishes it without a word. He looks at it; shakes his head; and takes it quietly between his finger and thumb to tear it.)

LADY CICELY (staying his hand). Oh, not your mother's picture!

BRASSBOUND. If that were your picture, would you like your son to keep it for younger and better women to see?

LADY CICELY (releasing his hand). Oh, you are dreadful! Tear it, tear it. (She covers her eyes for a moment to shut out the sight.)

BRASSBOUND (tearing it quietly). You killed her for me that day in the castle; and I am better without her. (He throws away the fragments.) Now everything is gone. You have taken the old meaning out of my life; but you have put no new meaning into it. I can see that you have some clue to the world that makes all its difficulties easy for you; but I'm not clever enough to seize it. You've lamed me by showing me that I take life the wrong way when I'm left to myself.

LADY CICELY. Oh no. Why do you say that?

BRASSBOUND. What else can I say? See what I've done! My uncle is no worse a man than myself--better, most likely; for he has a better head and a higher place. Well, I took him for a villain out of a storybook. My mother would have opened anybody else's eyes: she shut mine. I'm a stupider man than Brandyfaced Jack even; for he got his romantic nonsense out of his penny numbers and such like trash; but I got just the same nonsense out of life and experience. (Shaking his head) It was vulgar--VULGAR. I see that now; for you've opened my eyes to the past; but what good is that for the future? What am I to do? Where am I to go?

LADY CICELY. It's quite simple. Do whatever you like. That's what I always do.

BRASSBOUND. That answer is no good to me. What I like is to have something to do; and I have nothing. You might as well talk like the missionary and tell me to do my duty.



LADY CICELY (quickly). Oh no thank you. I've had quite enough of your duty, and Howard's duty. Where would you both be now if I'd let you do it?

BRASSBOUND. We'd have been somewhere, at all events. It seems to me that now I am nowhere.

LADY CICELY. But aren't you coming back to England with us?

BRASSBOUND. What for?

LADY CICELY. Why, to make the most of your opportunities.

BRASSBOUND. What opportunities?

LADY CICELY. Don't you understand that when you are the nephew of a great bigwig, and have influential connexions, and good friends among them, lots of things can be done for you that are never done for ordinary ship captains?

BRASSBOUND. Ah; but I'm not an aristocrat, you see. And like most poor men, I'm proud. I don't like being patronized.

LADY CICELY. What is the use of saying that? In my world, which is now your world--OUR world--getting patronage is the whole art of life. A man can't have a career without it.

BRASSBOUND. In my world a man can navigate a ship and get his living by it.

LADY CICELY. Oh, I see you're one of the Idealists--the Impossibilists! We have them, too, occasionally, in our world. There's only one thing to be done with them.

BRASSBOUND. What's that?

LADY CICELY. Marry them straight off to some girl with enough money for them, and plenty of sentiment. That's their fate.

BRASSBOUND. You've spoiled even that chance for me. Do you think I could look at any ordinary woman after you? You seem to be able to make me do pretty well what you like; but you can't make me marry anybody but yourself.

LADY CICELY. Do you know, Captain Paquito, that I've married no less than seventeen men (Brassbound stares) to other women. And they all opened the subject by saying that they would never marry anybody but me.

BRASSBOUND. Then I shall be the first man you ever found to stand to his word.

LADY CICELY (part pleased, part amused, part sympathetic). Do you really want a wife?

BRASSBOUND. I want a commander. Don't undervalue me: I am a good man when I have a good leader. I have courage: I have determination: I'm not a drinker: I can command a schooner and a shore party if I can't command a ship or an army. When work is put upon me, I turn neither to save my life nor to fill my pocket. Gordon trusted me; and he never regretted it. If you trust me, you shan't regret it. All the same, there's something wanting in me: I suppose I'm stupid.

LADY CICELY. Oh, you're not stupid.

BRASSBOUND. Yes I am. Since you saw me for the first time in that garden, you've heard me say nothing clever. And I've heard you say nothing that didn't make me laugh, or make me feel friendly, as well as telling me what to think and what to do. That's what I mean by real cleverness. Well, I haven't got it. I can give an order when I know what order to give. I can make men obey it, willing or unwilling. But I'm stupid, I tell you: stupid. When there's no Gordon to command me, I can't think of what to do. Left to myself, I've become half a brigand. I can kick that little gutterscrub Drinkwater; but I find myself doing what he puts into my head because I can't think of anything else. When you came, I took your orders as naturally as I took Gordon's, though I little thought my next commander would be a woman. I want to take service under you. And there's no way in which that can be done except marrying you. Will you let me do it?

LADY CICELY. I'm afraid you don't quite know how odd a match it would be for me according to the ideas of English society.

BRASSBOUND. I care nothing about English society: let it mind its own business.

LADY CICELY (rising, a little alarmed). Captain Paquito: I am not in love with you.

BRASSBOUND (also rising, with his gaze still steadfastly on her). I didn't suppose you were: the commander is not usually in love with his subordinate.

LADY CICELY. Nor the subordinate with the commander.

BRASSBOUND (assenting firmly). Nor the subordinate with the commander.

LADY CICELY (learning for the first time in her life what terror is, as she finds that he is unconsciously mesmerizing her). Oh, you are dangerous!

BRASSBOUND. Come: are you in love with anybody else? That's the question.

LADY CICELY (shaking her head). I have never been in love with any real person; and I never shall. How could I manage people if I had that mad little bit of self left in me? That's my secret.

BRASSBOUND. Then throw away the last bit of self. Marry me.

LADY CICELY (vainly struggling to recall her wandering will). Must I?

BRASSBOUND. There is no must. You CAN. I ask you to. My fate depends on it.

LADY CICELY. It's frightful; for I don't mean to--don't wish to.

BRASSBOUND. But you will.

LADY CICELY (quite lost, slowly stretches out her hand to give it to him). I-- (Gunfire from the Thanksgiving. His eyes dilate. It wakes her from her trance) What is that?

BRASSBOUND. It is farewell. Rescue for you--safety, freedom! You were made to be something better than the wife of Black Paquito. (He kneels and takes her hands) You can do no more for me now: I have blundered somehow on the secret of command at last (he kisses her hands): thanks for that, and for a man's power and purpose restored and righted. And farewell, farewell, farewell.

LADY CICELY (in a strange ecstasy, holding his hands as he rises). Oh, farewell. With my heart's deepest feeling, farewell, farewell.

BRASSBOUND. With my heart's noblest honor and triumph, farewell. (He turns and flies.)

LADY CICELY. How glorious! how glorious! And what an escape!

CURTAIN

## NOTES TO CAPTAIN BRASSBOUND'S CONVERSION

### SOURCES OF THE PLAY

I claim as a notable merit in the authorship of this play that I have been intelligent enough to steal its scenery, its surroundings, its atmosphere, its geography, its knowledge of the east, its fascinating Cadis and Kearneys and Sheikhs and mud castles from an excellent book of philosophic travel and vivid adventure entitled *Mogreb-el-Aksa* (Morocco the Most Holy) by Cunninghame Graham. My own first hand knowledge of Morocco is based on a morning's walk through Tangier, and a cursory observation of the coast through a binocular from the deck of an Orient steamer, both later in date than the writing of the play.

Cunninghame Graham is the hero of his own book; but I have not made him the hero of my play, because so incredible a personage must have destroyed its likelihood--such as it is. There are moments when I do not myself believe in his existence. And yet he must be real; for I have seen him with these eyes; and I am one of the few men living who can decipher the curious alphabet in which he writes his private letters. The man is on public record too. The battle of Trafalgar Square, in which he personally and bodily assailed civilization as represented by the concentrated military and constabular forces of the capital of the world, can scarcely be forgotten by the more discreet spectators, of whom I was one. On that occasion civilization, qualitatively his inferior, was quantitatively so hugely in excess of him that it put him in prison, but had not sense enough to keep him there. Yet his getting out of prison was as nothing compared to his getting into the House of Commons. How he did it I know not; but the thing certainly happened, somehow. That he made pregnant utterances as a legislator may be taken as proved by the keen philosophy of the travels and tales he has since tossed to us; but the House, strong in stupidity, did not understand him until in an inspired moment he voiced a universal impulse by bluntly damning its hypocrisy. Of all the eloquence of that silly parliament, there remains only one single damn. It has survived the front bench speeches of the eighties as the word of Cervantes survives the oraculations of the Dons and Deys who put him, too, in prison. The shocked House demanded that he should withdraw his cruel word. "I never withdraw," said he; and I promptly stole the potent phrase for the sake of its perfect style, and used it as a cockade for the Bulgarian hero of Arms and the Man. The theft prospered; and I naturally take the first opportunity of repeating it. In what other Lepantos besides Trafalgar Square Cunninghame Graham has fought, I cannot tell. He is a fascinating mystery to a sedentary person like myself. The horse, a dangerous animal whom, when I cannot avoid, I propitiate with apples and sugar, he bestrides and dominates fearlessly, yet with a true republican sense of the rights of the fourlegged fellowcreature whose martyrdom, and man's shame therein, he has told most powerfully in his *Calvary*, a tale with an edge that will cut the soft cruel hearts and strike fire from the hard kind ones. He handles the other lethal weapons as familiarly as the pen: medieval sword and modern Mauser are to him as umbrellas and kodaks are to me. His tales of adventure have the true Cervantes touch of the man who has been there--so refreshingly different from the scenes imagined by bloody-minded clerks who escape from their servitude into literature to tell us how men and cities are conceived in the counting house and the volunteer corps. He is, I understand, a Spanish hidalgo: hence the superbity of his portrait by Lavery (Velasquez being no longer available). He is, I know, a Scotch laird. How he contrives to be authentically the two things at the same time is no more intelligible to me than the fact that everything that has ever happened to him seems to have happened in Paraguay or Texas instead of in Spain or Scotland. He is, I regret to add, an impenitent and unashamed dandy: such boots, such a hat, would have dazzled D'Orsay himself. With that hat he once saluted me in Regent St. when I was walking with my mother. Her interest was instantly kindled; and the following conversation ensued. "Who is that?" "Cunninghame Graham." "Nonsense! Cunninghame Graham is one of your Socialists: that man is a gentleman." This is the punishment of vanity, a fault I have myself always

avoided, as I find conceit less troublesome and much less expensive. Later on somebody told him of Tarudant, a city in Morocco in which no Christian had ever set foot. Concluding at once that it must be an exceptionally desirable place to live in, he took ship and horse: changed the hat for a turban; and made straight for the sacred city, via Mogador. How he fared, and how he fell into the hands of the Cadi of Kintafi, who rightly held that there was more danger to Islam in one Cunninghame Graham than in a thousand Christians, may be learnt from his account of it in Mogreb-el-Acksa, without which Captain Brassbound's Conversion would never have been written.

I am equally guiltless of any exercise of invention concerning the story of the West Indian estate which so very nearly serves as a peg to hang Captain Brassbound. To Mr. Frederick Jackson of Hindhead, who, against all his principles, encourages and abets me in my career as a dramatist, I owe my knowledge of those main facts of the case which became public through an attempt to make the House of Commons act on them. This being so, I must add that the character of Captain Brassbound's mother, like the recovery of the estate by the next heir, is an interpolation of my own. It is not, however, an invention. One of the evils of the pretence that our institutions represent abstract principles of justice instead of being mere social scaffolding is that persons of a certain temperament take the pretence seriously, and when the law is on the side of injustice, will not accept the situation, and are driven mad by their vain struggle against it. Dickens has drawn the type in his Man from Shropshire in Bleak House. Most public men and all lawyers have been appealed to by victims of this sense of injustice--the most unhelpable of afflictions in a society like ours.

#### ENGLISH AND AMERICAN DIALECTS

The fact that English is spelt conventionally and not phonetically makes the art of recording speech almost impossible. What is more, it places the modern dramatist, who writes for America as well as England, in a most trying position. Take for example my American captain and my English lady. I have spelt the word *conduce*, as uttered by the American captain, as *cawndooce*, to suggest (very roughly) the American pronunciation to English readers. Then why not spell the same word, when uttered by Lady Cicely, as *kerndewce*, to suggest the English pronunciation to American readers? To this I have absolutely no defence: I can only plead that an author who lives in England necessarily loses his consciousness of the peculiarities of English speech, and sharpens his consciousness of the points in which American speech differs from it; so that it is more convenient to leave English peculiarities to be recorded by American authors. I must, however, most vehemently disclaim any intention of suggesting that English pronunciation is authoritative and correct. My own tongue is neither American English nor English English, but Irish English; so I am as nearly impartial in the matter as it is in human nature to be. Besides, there is no standard English pronunciation any more than there is an American one: in England every county has its catchwords, just as no doubt every state in the Union has. I cannot believe that the pioneer American, for example, can spare time to learn that last refinement of modern speech, the exquisite diphthong, a farfetched combination of the French *eu* and the English *e*, with which a New Yorker pronounces such words as *world*, *bird* &c. I have spent months without success in trying to achieve glibness with it.

To Felix Drinkwater also I owe some apology for implying that all his vowel pronunciations are unfashionable. They are very far from being so. As far as my social experience goes (and I have kept very mixed company) there is no class in English society in which a good deal of Drinkwater pronunciation does not pass unchallenged save by the expert phonetician. This is no mere rash and ignorant jibe of my own at the expense of my English neighbors. Academic authority in the matter of English speech is represented at present by Mr. Henry Sweet, of the University of Oxford, whose *Elementarbuch des gesprochenen Engliach*, translated into his native language for the use of British islanders as a *Primer of Spoken English*, is the most accessible standard work on the subject. In such words as *plum*, *come*, *humbug*, *up*, *gum*, etc., Mr. Sweet's evidence is conclusive. Ladies and gentlemen in Southern England pronounce them as *plam*, *kam*, *hambag*, *ap*, *gan*, etc., exactly as Felix Drinkwater does. I could not claim Mr. Sweet's authority if I dared to whisper that such coster English as the rather pretty *dahn tahn* for *down town*, or the decidedly ugly *cowcow* for *cocoa* is current in very polite circles. The entire nation, costers and all, would undoubtedly repudiate any such

pronunciation as vulgar. All the same, if I were to attempt to represent current "smart" cockney speech as I have attempted to represent Drinkwater's, without the niceties of Mr. Sweet's Romic alphabets, I am afraid I should often have to write dahn tahn and cowcow as being at least nearer to the actual sound than down town and cocoa. And this would give such offence that I should have to leave the country; for nothing annoys a native speaker of English more than a faithful setting down in phonetic spelling of the sounds he utters. He imagines that a departure from conventional spelling indicates a departure from the correct standard English of good society. Alas! this correct standard English of good society is unknown to phoneticians. It is only one of the many figments that bewilder our poor snobbish brains. No such thing exists; but what does that matter to people trained from infancy to make a point of honor of belief in abstractions and incredibilities? And so I am compelled to hide Lady Cicely's speech under the veil of conventional orthography.

I need not shield Drinkwater, because he will never read my book. So I have taken the liberty of making a special example of him, as far as that can be done without a phonetic alphabet, for the benefit of the mass of readers outside London who still form their notions of cockney dialect on Sam Weller. When I came to London in 1876, the Sam Weller dialect had passed away so completely that I should have given it up as a literary fiction if I had not discovered it surviving in a Middlesex village, and heard of it from an Essex one. Some time in the eighties the late Andrew Tuer called attention in the Pall Mall Gazette to several peculiarities of modern cockney, and to the obsolescence of the Dickens dialect that was still being copied from book to book by authors who never dreamt of using their ears, much less of training them to listen. Then came Mr. Anstey's cockney dialogues in Punch, a great advance, and Mr. Chevalier's coster songs and patter. The Tompkins verses contributed by Mr. Barry Pain to the London Daily Chronicle have also done something to bring the literary convention for cockney English up to date. But Tompkins sometimes perpetrates horrible solecisms. He will pronounce face as fits, accurately enough; but he will rhyme it quite impossibly to nice, which Tompkins would pronounce as newts: for example Mawl Enn Rowd for Mile End Road. This aw for i, which I have made Drinkwater use, is the latest stage of the old diphthongal oi, which Mr. Chevalier still uses. Irish, Scotch and north country readers must remember that Drinkwater's rs are absolutely unpronounced when they follow a vowel, though they modify the vowel very considerably. Thus, luggage is pronounced by him as laggige, but turn is not pronounced as tern, but as teun with the eu sounded as in French. The London r seems thoroughly understood in America, with the result, however, that the use of the r by Artemus Ward and other American dialect writers causes Irish people to misread them grotesquely. I once saw the pronunciation of malheureux represented in a cockney handbook by mal-err-err: not at all a bad makeshift to instruct a Londoner, but out of the question elsewhere in the British Isles. In America, representations of English speech dwell too derisively on the dropped or interpolated h. American writers have apparently not noticed the fact that the south English h is not the same as the never-dropped Irish and American h, and that to ridicule an Englishman for dropping it is as absurd as to ridicule the whole French and Italian nation for doing the same. The American h, helped out by a general agreement to pronounce wh as hw, is tempestuously audible, and cannot be dropped without being immediately missed. The London h is so comparatively quiet at all times, and so completely inaudible in wh, that it probably fell out of use simply by escaping the ears of children learning to speak. However that may be, it is kept alive only by the literate classes who are reminded constantly of its existence by seeing it on paper.

Roughly speaking, I should say that in England he who bothers about his hs is a fool, and he who ridicules a dropped h a snob. As to the interpolated h, my experience as a London vestryman has convinced me that it is often effective as a means of emphasis, and that the London language would be poorer without it. The objection to it is no more respectable than the objection of a street boy to a black man or to a lady in knickerbockers.

I have made only the most perfunctory attempt to represent the dialect of the missionary. There is no literary notation for the grave music of good Scotch.

*Captain Brassbound's Conversion*

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