

door, and say, 'I'll pay you next week or this day month, or I'm darned if I pay you at all.' Not a bit of it, you know; but he sends his wife (very often it is not his wife but one standing in the second rank that must be more obedient to his will) to tell a lie or shuffle out of something he oughtn't to want to shuffle out of, in connection with some dirty bit of business.

"Do real ladies ever come to a pawnshop?"

"Well, they do, and if a man's got any feelings at all anywhere about him he'll almost bleed to see one of these in so much misery and trouble. Of course it doesn't do in our business to mention names. But it wasn't so very long ago a lady, and she was a young lady too, with a thick veil over her face and a long cloak round her, comes to the counter where I was standing, and she asked me in a very low voice whether she could speak to me in a private room. So I took her back, when she undid a packet she had in her hand and she produces a gold watch and a pair of ear-rings, and two brooches, with some rings and a locket—such things as a woman has belonging to her when they have been given her by a lover or a husband. Well, she lays them all down on the table, and she says, 'How much money can you lend me on this jewellery?' So I value 'em up, and I said she could have £25 upon them. Then she burst into tears and said that wouldn't be enough by £15. She must have, she said, £40 before four o'clock that afternoon. It was a case of life and death. Well, you know, it isn't nice to hear a woman talk in that strain. And it isn't nice to lend more money on pledges than they would fetch if they had to be sold. So I had to tell the lady that it couldn't be done; she would have to give me more security.

When I told her that, she sat down on the corner of the table and thought for, I should say, quite five minutes. Then she said if I would take care of the jewellery she would be back again in an hour. She must, she said, if she sold her soul, have £40 by four o'clock that afternoon. Then she went away and in about an hour and a-half, while I was standing at my door looking down the street, I saw the lady get out of a cab, in company with a young girl. The girl, I suppose, had received her instructions, for she comes towards the door with a large bundle and asked me to take charge of it. She went away, and almost directly afterwards the lady comes again and walks into my private sitting-room. The parcel was undone, and I see that the lady had been pulling her wardrobe to pieces to raise more money. There was a watered lavender silk dress which I guessed had been made to go with a wedding-ring, and there was a lot of beautifully worked night-dresses and fine under-clothing, and much that women feel proud of to have by them in the drawers and wardrobe. 'Well, ma'am,' I said, 'you can have what you ask for, I suppose; as when good times come to you again you will be here and take them all back.' And then I see her handkerchief go to her eyes, and she got the money all in sovereigns and went her way. I learnt all about it afterwards. That woman had raised the money to save her husband being handed over that afternoon to the police and from the police to a judge and from the judge to Mount Eden. That was just it, and nothing else. Women will do such strange things to save vagabond husbands. And that man was an out-and-outer. Soon after I heard he had bolted and left her behind. I shouldn't like to say what she's doing, or rather I suppose what she has been obliged to do, to keep up her respectability. I know she redeemed her clothes and her jewellery; but I don't know where she got her money from to do it with. It was not my place to enquire.

"Yes, Mr Snyder, we do see strange things—that's just what we do. A woman once came to me and said she must have five pound. I asked what she had got to pledge, and what do you think she offered me as security? Why her marriage certificate. I told her it was of no value to me. Mainly marriage certificates were not so common in this part of the world as they should be, but still they wouldn't fetch anything when put up to auction. So she went away grieving. She said there was no fear of her not paying the advance, as she would not let it go away from her for a hundred-fold the money. But I couldn't see my way to business, Mr Snyder, not any how.

"Is pawnbroking a pleasant business, do you say? No, it's not a pleasant business, but it pays tidy well if you know

how to work it. You see, the interest allowed is very good, but the thing is to judge how much you should lend upon what is offered you to advance upon. Sometimes we give twice as much as the thing would fetch if it had to be sold. But then we know it's a thing that the person bringing it would not altogether part with for ten times its value; it's a family relic or something that belonged to good days, and has got pleasant memories belonging to it, that won't let it be parted with for good. Again, a thing may have cost as many pounds as wouldn't fetch shillings, because it's old-fashioned and out of the market. A pawnbroker has to know the value of everything, and he's got to know human nature,—he's got to put the two together, and make what he can.

"Yes, I have known such things. I have seen a woman come in and go behind the screen and slip off her petticoat to get a shilling on it, and I have seen a woman take off her child's boots to get a small, but I have never done that sort of business. It's not my line. There are places where such things are done, but not in this establishment."

**A BROKEN-HEARTED EDITOR.**  
Two days since I was struck exceeding melancholy in feeling, as I was compelled to listen to a narrative touching the misfortunes of an old and esteemed friend. He is a newspaper editor. By nature he is jovial, and by training a man who can adopt any policy required of him, but, as he told me in the course of our conversation, he was not up to the mark in advocating a "no policy principle."

"You see," he says, "the newspaper I am on belongs to a lot of shareholders, and every one of them have their own particular views how a paper should be written. One lot don't approve of the Government being written down; another don't believe in it being written up; and a third lot want to know what the juce newspapers want meddling with the Government at all for. I'm not a bad sort of a hand at a newspaper, as you know, but sometimes I feel that if my mother had never brought me into the world I should have been a much happier man; or, if my father had made a shoemaker of me, I should have been a more useful member of society."

"The clerk in the office who takes the advertisements for our paper says he'll have to drop down to drinking or something worse to relieve the mental torture he is made to endure. One shareholder brings him an advertisement and wants it done at half-price, and the advertisement must, of course, be placed at the top of a column, so that, the clerks says, without the columns can be made all tops the advertising shareholders will refuse to pay any more calls.

"Referring back to my own case. Before I begin to write an article I have to go to the manger for a subject, and he's about as much puzzled as I am what to do.

"The other day we had a long talk together as to what should be the question to be discussed for the next article. He said he was quite sure he didn't know; for if we praised the policy of the present Government, we should have nine-tenths of the customers highly indignant, and if we didn't praise it—well we could guess the consequences—perhaps a month's notice to move on. Then the manager rested his throbbing brow on his bloodless hands and thought intensely for thirty-five minutes when his countenance became suddenly illuminated; he sat erect in his seat and in joyous accents exclaimed, 'I have it—write about the Khan of Khiva.' Poor fellow! he had forgotten for the moment I had used up all the geography books said about Khiva, and all that travellers had said about the Khan. 'Yes,' he said pathetically, 'I see that won't do; can't you write about some social or domestic subject—milk for instance; I know my penn'orth of milk contains a considerable admixture of water. Go in about adulterations. It's popular, you know.' I said it struck me somewhat that we had lately been dealing in too many milk and water subjects. He admitted this at once and suggested 'soap' as a good subject, but I told him if the article was to be as soft as those which had gone before, I thought the public had quite as much or perhaps a little more than they cared for.

The manager then placed his now burning brow upon his trembling palm for another thirty five minutes when he said, 'I think you should go in for a policy which may be designated the "evasive"—something for instance in the following style:—"We

believe that the policy of the present Government has been dictated by wise consideration. There is it is true those who consider the very reverse. It is seldom even the deepest thinkers view a question from both sides, knowing that if they should make the attempt it might lead them into a labyrinth of conjectural fallacies, devoid of antithesis, and alike unsatisfactory to those who think one way, as those who think another. To err is human, to forgive divine." That's something of the sort of thing. If it doesn't please all the shareholders, it will not displease them, because they won't know how to pick holes on it.'

"Snyder, my dear fellow, you are out of doors, and about a good bit. Do look up something for me, in which I shall be able to get back ever so little of my long lost self-respect and independence. I don't care what it is, so long as it is not to edit a shareholder's newspaper. I don't mind driving a cab, or a watering-cart, or running messages, or being ckeck-taker at a theatre, or being messenger in a Government office at £50 per annum, where I have to touch my hat to all to whom I open the door. I wouldn't mind placing myself between two boards, announcing the fact of some draper ruining himself by selling off under cost price. Do, Snyder, there's a good fellow, do look out for me."

**ON TROTTERS AND OYSTERS.**  
We live and learn, that's what we do, or how should I come to know that the consumption of trotters has a moral bearing on society, and that society, under such a mysterious influence, undergoes considerable modifications for the worse?

I learned all this, after the hour of eleven o'clock at night, from a trotter-man. He was a little the worse for liquor our at the time, or a little the better for it, just according to the point of view the matter may be looked at from. He was very old, very decrepit, very much wasted, and wore a decidedly dissipated air. He stopped me in Queen-street, just as he stepped from the door of a public-house. He said he had just got four trotters left in his basket, which I could have four half-a-crown; or if didn't approve of half-a-crown, I could have them for any smaller sum I liked to give a name to; or if that didn't answer, I could have 'em for half price less than nothing, as he considered I had a mean and cheese-paring look about me.

I was not offended, nor did I give expression to any feeling of indignation. I wanted to learn all about trotters, and in almost no time I got to the bottom of my subject, and had turned it inside-out. Trotters, I found, was not good moral feeding. No one as a rule had any appetite for 'em until after eleven o'clock at night, and before three in the morning; and then, in order to their proper enjoyment, it was requisite to have taken in a considerable amount of beer previous to commencing on them. I asked the old man whether the sale of trotters was a profitable occupation, and he told me it was not. Men only followed the pursuit under a pressure of circumstances, all combining in that direction.

"You see, sir, it's me and the likes of me that can't get regular sort of work to do. We ain't strong enough for the wharf, and we can't do bush work, nor carry loads, nor do that sort of thing if we was ever so willing; and we ain't been learned a trade. So in course, as is quite right and proper, the Bobbies collars hold of us, and we are taken before the magistrate some fine morning after having been locked up over night, when the police pitches a yarn, and says we ain't got any visible or lawful means of support. Then the magistrate fiddles away with his gold watch-chain, and he says, 'Just so, that's it. Prisoner, if you won't work you must be made to. Three months in Mount Eden, hard labour, and short diet, will restore your constitution.' Then we get the sentence, and away we go. No in my case, when I come out, I get a basket and go into the trotter trade. It don't take no amount of capital, because, when you know how to go about it, trotters are to be got for nothing, and a man as can't get a basket somehow don't know much of the world, and ought to be kept in gaol everlastingly. Respectable people don't eat trotters; consequently we don't go to respectable people's doors to sell 'em; but, about eleven o'clock at night, a most unaccountable craving comes on for them in public-houses. They goes down with beer with a relish just as weal does with squeezes of lemons. Ladies and virtuous girls don't touch trotters. If you were to ask

a lady to buy a trotter of you she would turn up her nose and wouldn't give you an answer. A swell will take a couple sometimes when he's three parts sprung and want's to make a donkey o' himself. But if you believe me, the day a girl becomes disrepectable, and forgets herself, and her father and her mother, and takes to going wrong, she takes at the same time to trotters. Ask the police and they will tell you the same thing. Ask 'em the reason on it, and they are as ignorant as they are of their dooty. When a girl ceases to be ashamed of herself, she calls up the trotter-man, and she'll say, 'Old-un, give us a Bob's-worth of shanks,' and she'll eat a matter of four on 'em without finching, with often may be, two pint o' beer to keep 'em company. They always pay well as a rule, and they always stand beer to Old Trotters, as they call him, and if you'll let 'em chaff you without boiling over, they will lay in a stook to take home—such a home as it is, you know. Trotter dealing has its drawbacks; but it has its pleasures. There's beer and company goes with 'em. Then you do the policeman, which is always very soothing to one's feelings. You looks him in the face, and you holds your basket of trotters up, and you says quite bold, 'Ain't this here lawful and wisible means of support for you, or how much more of lawful and wisible support do you want?' Oh, yes, we see life as it is, when the hours are late. I don't so much care about the girls as go in for trotters. I look upon them as being so much out of repair, as will never stand a-mending; but I do about those young things as some of the swells—married swells very often—take into the bars and treat to glasses of wine. These girls don't care about trotters now, but with such gentlemen as they keep company with, they very soon will. If some of the parsons, or parsons' wives, or the missionaries, would only come out after hours of a night, instead of going to bed in a moral sort of a way, I don't say but they mightn't do a deal of good. O' course I know the thing couldn't be done for a married woman, you know, that's got children of her own, to go up to a swell after twelve o'clock, and say to him, 'That young woman, sir, will be safer in my company than in yours, and you have no business having her with you at this time o' night—she shall come along o' me.' I say I think something might be done—not always, you know, for some young women are very wisshus in following their own way, but still some of 'em might be saved by being set about in the right sort of way. What's the good of preaching sermons, warning people who never go inside a church, or givin' 'em good books which they never read? If girls were only looked up before they took to trotters, something might come out of it. Being pretty well tight you see, just now, I'm taken considerably out o' time. If girls will go in the way of comming to like trotters and beer, what's that to mothers and wives with respectable intentions?"

I wanted to know something more about trotters, and I asked where they wholesome, and I was told that, 'I should think they were—rayther. They were a sort of guide by which a man might regulate his diet. If a man could eat trotters without disturbing his digestion he might calculate upon living to a hundred, that is so far as regards his digestion; and even if he found he couldn't digest them without some discomfort, it didn't say he mightn't digest sawdust, or bathbrick, which was much easier for converting into nourishment than any underboiled trotter which had been steeped in strong lime water for the matter of twenty-four hours, to give it a beautiful witeness and solidity of flesh."

Trotters, it appears, have a flavour of their own, just as ortolans or truffles have. They can only be taken with beer after ten or eleven o'clock at night, and when the moral influences have gone to sleep. A trotter-man, I was told, never eats his own trotters, but will partake of one occasionally from the basket of a fellow trotterman, arising from a feeling that what the eye hasn't seen the palate won't turn against.

Then the old man joined me at the bar of the house opposite to where I had been gaining so much knowledge, and we partook of something out of the hand of the barmaid, and he opened up on a fresh subject. He asked, "What about oysters?" and I said, "Well, what about them?" It was then he proceeded to tell me that, having given the matter serious consideration for the greater part of his life, he had come to the conclusion that

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