

JEROME K. JEROME.

The Mark Twain of England, Tells of His Struggle in Life.—
An Interview With the Greatest British Humorist.

He Lives Near Richard Croker, Living the Life of a Gentleman Farmer—Has
Been in Turn Clerk, Schoolmaster, Actor, Newspaperman, Editor, Play-
write, and Has Forced Recognition Only After a Tremendous Fight With
Fortune—His Home Life Is Ideal and His Friends Are Seen Only at Luncheon.

your business, sir. He says ter tell you he doesn't know you."

"But I have an appointment."

"Yes, sir, but he doesn't know you. You'll excuse me, sir, when I mentioned the name, sir."

"It is Jerome K. Jerome I wish to see."

"Oh, excuse me, sir. I thought you was Mr. Jerome. This is Mr. Croker's place. You're at the wrong house."

"Pardon me, my mistake. Does Mr. Jerome not live near here?"

"Jerome, sir; I never heard of 'im, sir."

"Thank you."

And thus ended the mistaken visit to the home of the Squire of Wintage. Later I found Mr. Jerome feeding sugar to his horse. His stable keeper stood close at hand. After we had talked a while I induced the author to resume the pose so that I might make a note of the situation with a camera.

Incidentally Americans should know (in order to avoid all possible blunders) that Jerome K. Jerome is pronounced Jer-um K. Jerome, the first syllable being accented; at least so I was informed. His friends call him Jer-um—sometimes indeed "Jerry," his acquaintances, Mr. Jerome. The Jeromes are spelled alike, but pronounced differently—a little way the English have.

It should not be assumed from this, however, that Mr. Jerome is of the genius pompous. He is simplicity itself. This is the keynote, or one of them, of his personality. He never makes any effort to impress you with the fact that he is at all distinguished, though his personality soon impresses the listener. He can say the most commonplace thing in a most entertaining manner. If he speaks of having been among the flowers and the birds you can smell the perfume and hear the twitter of the little "feathered beasts" among the branches. It is not the "things" he says, but the artful way he says it that makes the charm of this English gentleman. And yet withal he is not an easy man to interview.

Jerome has had a hard life. When one considers what he has passed through it is difficult to realize how there remains within him enough native humor to have turned out such a work as "Three Men in a Boat" and other tales of laughter. The musings in "Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow" strike us as Jerome-like only where they touch us with a tinge of pathos, when they graze the high spots. The light butterfly humor seems a strange plant to have sprung from the seed of hardship and want. Not that Jerome has passed through the "fog" of the "presidency" lane. But he has "had his troubles," none the less; his school has been hard—for a humorist. There is more "meat" between the lines in "On the Stage and Off" than there is in print. The unwritten tells a striking story of privation and suffering, a hard battle with harder times, a stinging indictment of the dishonest theatrical man, a plain recital of the wrongs

to which the unfortunate actor of England is heir.

Jerome is 41 years old. In turn he has been a clerk, a school master, an actor, a newspaper man, a journalist, a note taker, an editor, a play-wright, and an actor-manager, quite an experience to crowd into a single life and yet meet success. A Jack of all trades and a master of one. This sums up Jerome.

But with all his humor, a close observer can note a tinge of bitterness in this square-jawed man, a little worldliness in his conversation. It is difficult for him to refrain from saying bright things, but one cannot but think he tries his best when he talks for publication. It seems as if unconsciously he realizes that his brain is his bank and he hates to give away his capital.

His face the interviewer as he might face a necessary operation. He is considerate, will answer questions in an affable manner, but he won't volunteer much. His manner is solemn; he never gets away from the serious side of the question.

"America would like to know more of you personally, Mr. Jerome, something more of your early career. It has been quite varied, has it not?"

"Each man in his time plays many parts," and I think I have played my share."

"You were born—"

"Yes, in the coal district of Walsall. My father was an independent miner. He owned property in coal mines, but at an early age, through the flooding of the mines, I was thrown more or less on my own resources."

"Pretty rough. We were just having a quiet little chat."

"Yes. A few puffs at a most villainous cigar."

"And your early education?"

"The first elements of my education were obtained at a philological school. A pause. More puffs at that awful cigar. Jerome seemed to be thinking he never could have got along in the world if it had not been for that philological school."

"When about eight years old I went to a middle class school in London." (Pause.) "I was particularly fond of mathematics."

"Of mathematics?"

"And your literary tastes?"

"I think Colerage was my favorite author then; and tales of travel always interested me."

"When about 15, it was necessary for me to get some employment, and an old friend in the Northwestern railway found me a situation as a clerk." Jerome was almost funeral in his solemnity by this time. "I was at Euston station. I kept this position three years, and then could not stand it any longer. The routine was simply killing." Another pause; the villainous cigar again. "I made up my mind to get out of rail-reading."

"To let off steam? No attention paid to interruption."

"I wanted to go on the stage."

We sat fully a minute before the author spoke again. Then he resumed his narrative, as authors say.

"After some maneuvering I got an

engagement. I was then about 18, and I began the life of a traveling actor in the English provinces."

"An actor."

"Yes, in the provinces. Very few people know what that means. In the course of my adventures I came in contact with the kind of manager who absconds, and leaves his troop without funds; and I had a great many other experiences which were more interesting to read about than to participate in."

"I kept on acting for about two years. Then I began to write a 'tale. My first effort was a story called, 'The Prince's Quest.' It was published in a Roman Catholic paper. It amounted to nothing."

Jerome spoke in a low, mumbling manner. His eyelids nearly met. A shortsighted man might have thought he was asleep.

"What did you do after that?"

"I began writing letters to newspapers such as The Times on various topics of the day. I remember The Times referred editorially to one of my letters. I was immensely proud of that."

"Trouble in the Balkans?"

"No. I had written a satirical letter on the Nihilists in which I suggested that the Almighty had displayed great indecency in creating the human form. This letter was commented upon at some length."

"It then occurred to me to write about my stage experiences. An old actor criticized the work for me."

"An actor?"

"Yes. He did not volunteer the name. 'The work appeared weekly in a paper. I cannot say I made much out of that book.'

"And your next attempt?"

"The Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow. This was a success. In the meantime I had been doing a good deal of journalistic work in London. I reported inquests, fires—everything."

"On 'spec'?"

"Yes. The items were manifold and sent around to the various newspapers. Those that used them paid me three cents a line. It was 'hard lines' very often. My weekly stipend did not run into anything colossal. However, I managed to get along somehow."

A glint in his eye told the listener that despite his present comfortable surroundings, Jerome remembered in detail just how he "managed to get along."

"One day," he said, "I walked into the Sunday Times office and asked if they wanted a dramatic critic. I had had a good deal of experience on the stage. I was appointed critic, and wrote dramatic matter for that and other papers."

"And three men in a boat?"

"That story first appeared in Home Chimes. It had a big success."

Grasping a breathing space to change the subject, Mr. Jerome began to talk about his horses, and all efforts to get him to talk more about himself met with failure. Jerome is anything but an egotist. In fact, his modesty in this regard is refreshing to the weather-beaten interviewer who has so often to listen for hours to the most beautifully hand painted accounts of personal ac-

LEADS AT ISTHMUS.



Capt. Hiram I. Bears, although but 21 years of age, has already quite a naval record. He distinguished himself during the Boxer troubles at Tien Tsin and later led a company of marines up a steep cliff on the island of Samar and captured a Filipino stronghold.

rome too much. There is an air of determination and will power about him that makes one hesitate about forcing a point.

It is evident from a short chat with the author that he has gathered a good deal of sound philosophy out of his rougher experiences in life, and that he applies it now to good advantage. To wit, it has directed him to the choice of a farm life in England as an ideal of spending his days. His beautiful estate near quiet little Wintage, forgetting its close proximity to Wintage—is only two hours out from London, yet it is in the heart of the country. The house stands on the crest of a hill, and from the western windows a beautiful sweep of gentle home-like looking country presents itself. The home resembles those seen in the southern states today, and which Americans term "colonial." While there is no veranda, there is a porch with real "colonial" pillars so necessary to this type of residence.

Jerome's home life? It seems ideal. His wife, who pets the horses, plays the dogs and is a winsome favorite beloved

by man and beast for miles around, takes a sympathetic interest in all of her husband's work, while his daughter, Rowena—a buxom lass of 15—promises literary ability of a fine order. They ramble through the fields and drive and fish and otherwise work after the manner of the usual gentleman farmer of England.

The grounds surrounding the house are full of tiny nooks and corners where some of the more famous authors of the day occasionally turn out a little work. For instance, Israel Zangwill has a little nook under a tree. Other choice spots have been picked out by W. W. Jacobs and Pett Ridge.

When these persons are visiting and working at the Jerome house, "Goulds Grove," they meet at luncheon for the first time. All of them devote the early hours to work.

Jerome sits himself up in a study every morning and dictates to a shorthand stenographer. You might think that this manner of working would insure a large volume of matter from his pen, but he assured me his output, daily, was very small.

A Character Study of the Kaiser and His Heir Apparent



THE illness of William II, emperor of Germany, brings to mind the suddenness with which he was called upon to assume the reins of government and the possibility that his son, the Crown Prince Frederick William, may as suddenly be summoned to the throne. Whether such a summons would find the crown prince as well prepared as was his father is an interesting question. When William II, at the age of twenty-nine succeeded to the throne in 1888 after the ninety-nine day reign of his popular father, Frederick III. (Unser Fritz), there were few who did not realize that he would strive to the uttermost to make his presence felt not only in Germany, but throughout Europe. Born both Guelph and Hohenzollern, he had displayed as a young man the most striking characteristics of both of these illustrious lines. With the spirit of militarism imbued in him at an early age—for the Danish, Austrian and French wars had been events of his youth—pupil of his grandfather (William I.), of Bismarck and of Von Moltke, it was small wonder that he should in adolescence betray the sentiments and the tendencies that have combined to earn for him the appellation of "the war lord of Europe." In his childhood, too, was made manifest the self-consciousness that in later life expressed itself in seeming "grand stand plays," an apparent love for notoriety, the inclination to do the unexpected. Back of all this, however, was to be recognized the fact that in everything he did and in everything he said he believed he was pursuing a course in the interests of the fatherland.

Even in his childhood William learned lessons of responsibility. In his sixth year he was placed under the tutelage of an unyielding disciplinarian, Dr. Hintzpetter, and from that time until his entrance into the public school at Cassel he was educated along stern lines. His very toys were objects of the actualities of the career for which he was destined. At the school, where he received the same treatment as the boys who were not of royal blood, he was taught that he who would rule must first learn to serve. At the University of Bonn, where he mingled on equal terms with his fellow students, joining them in pranks and drinking bouts as well as in studies, his education was continued as it had been begun by Hintzpetter.

This, it might be imagined, would

have had as a result his development into the most democratic of sovereigns. But there were other influences at work, factors which combined to heighten the consciousness of his own

locate the self-consciousness that had always been so marked and was accentuated by the fact that in most quarters he and not his father was looked upon as the successor of the aged Wil-

ten flamboyant and extravagant, drawing into the full attention of the whole world. For the time being he seemed to push Bismarck to one side, becoming the central figure on the broad

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cialists as the enemies of the country and sought to fight them with their own weapons; small wonder, too, that he sided with his whole hearted efforts to promote the industrial welfare of Germany, he developed a far reaching militarism, upbuilding army and navy alike. Through everything ran the Hohenzollern love of power, most strikingly manifested perhaps in his self imposed role of preserver of the peace of Europe.

Ridiculed as he has been by the world at large, Emperor William has proved time and again that he is the possessor of a large fund of common sense. In nothing has this been so well shown as in the education of his children, more particularly the young crown prince, Frederick William, whom he has striven earnestly to fit for the kingship. Himself brought up in a stern school, he caused Prince Frederick to be placed at an early age in the hands of strict tutors and governors, and although the prince's education has not included the public school experience of his strong willed father, he, too, has attended Bonn, has enjoyed a thorough military training in barracks life, as did William II. himself, and has, in short, been made to feel that a monarch can no more afford to be idle than can his subjects.

With his brothers Prince Frederick has tramped incognito through many parts of Germany, mingling with the commonalty, learning the aspirations, their hopes, their anxieties. As a finishing touch to this part of his education he has traveled abroad his father holding to the good old fashioned idea that nothing tends to round out a young man so completely as does travel. The result of all this is already apparent, and the general impression seems to be that the young prince—he was but twenty-one last May—will come to the throne enjoying the confidence of his people and well equipped for the arduous tasks that will accrue to him.

Personally he is tall, blond and of good physique, with pleasing blue eyes and just the trace of a blond mustache over a mouth that, it must be confessed, is like his chin, not particularly suggestive of strength. In his mental characteristics he is more like his mother than his father, and although he has inherited all the latter's love for outdoor life and, like him, an adept equestrian and an expert in military tactics it is thought by many that he will not develop into a great soldier. As yet he has not had any taste of the preparatory training in the various branches of military and civil administration which his father followed under the guidance of Bismarck.

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THE KAISER.

THE CROWN PRINCE.

power and develop an autocratic spirit even while he was plain Prince William of Prussia. What the school and the university gave him tempered this side of his nature undoubtedly, but could not efface his innate conviction of the divine right of kings or erad-

late the self-consciousness that had always been so marked and was accentuated by the fact that in most quarters he and not his father was looked upon as the successor of the aged Wil-

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SCIENTIFIC MISCELLANY.

Fresh revelations in the phenomena of high temperatures have been brought about by the new quartz vessels of German making. The vessels bear great heat without softening, and may be exhausted of air, while one end of a quartz tube may be safely cooled and the other end kept very hot. In such tubes, heated in an electric furnace, German chemists have

been studying the fusing and vaporization of metals in a vacuum. The varying behavior of zinc, cadmium, selenium, tellurium, lead, antimony, tin, bismuth, silver, copper and gold have been watched, the evaporation of cadmium beginning at 29 degrees C., while gold—the most refractory metal tried—distilled but little at 1,350 degrees.

The peculiar atmospheric or solar phenomenon known as Bishop's Ring seems

to be of very rare appearance. It was first observed in Honolulu by Rev. Seno Bishop, a few days after the Krakatoa eruption of 1883, and it has been seen but few times since. Mr. Forel has reported noting it on the first three days of last August from a height of 6,500 feet in the Alps. It appeared as a double ring around the sun, the inner portion being of bluish-silver color, while the outer part was a band of copper, 20 degrees wide, shading off into the blue of space.

Brain development is found by Prof. Sargel, of Munich, to have two periods of acceleration—from 10 to 11 and from 17 to 18 in girls, and from 12 to 13 and 19 to 20 in boys. At the period of most rapid increase in height, from 12 to 14 years, the growth of the brain is less than one-hundredth that of the body, but at 17 to 19 it grows one-third as fast, and at 20 reaches one-seventh of the body growth.

Carbon is the basis of all organic prod-

ucts, and a striking discovery of Julius Walther, a St. Petersburg chemist, is that this element may be made to enter into various combinations with oxygen and hydrogen by simple electrolysis of water charged with carbonic acid gas, the results being several sugars and vegetable acids from one form of simple apparatus. The water was charged with the gas evolved on pouring hydrochloric acid on marble. The anodes of the electric apparatus were brushes of platinum

and the cathodes were preferably of clay or silicon, and with large surface. The solutions about the anode and cathode were enclosed in separate clay receptacles, that of the anode being kept 5 degrees C. warmer than the other by a lamp. The current was gradually increased both in power and in intensity and at two volts and 0.5 ampere oxalic acid appeared, being soon followed by tartaric acid, and by citric sugar was produced at five volts and three amperes,

then grape sugar. The richness of the products in carbon seems to increase with increase in current and intensity.

Violation of the air by burning gas always causes a feeling of oppression. Dr. J. S. Haldane shows that this cannot be due to the increase of carbon dioxide, and he attributes the effect to sulphur compounds, chiefly sulphur dioxide.