

"Heavens!" gasped Tupper, "he's actually going to bring that thing in here!"

A moment later the dining room door opened and Courtland ushered in his guest. "Gentlemen," he said, "allow me to introduce my friend, Mr. Flinn." Mr. Flinn bowed awkwardly, and then, ignoring our somewhat constrained returns, began to take stock of the pictures and decorations on the walls. While this was going on, Courtland was engaged in giving orders to the astonished butler to place a chair and cover for Mr. Flinn. This done, he ceremoniously beckoned his guest to be seated. Mr. Flinn, finishing his open-mouthed inspection of the walls and buffet, closed his jaws with a snap, threw his hat under the table, and made the following remark: "Hully gee! youse guys is swells!" Then he seated himself with a sigh of content and prepared for food.

During this period Tupper's face had been a study. Such disgust as it expressed I have rarely seen depicted on a human countenance. Courtland, on the other hand, had maintained an appearance of the utmost gravity. In fact, he treated Mr. Flinn with the greatest courtesy, from time to time begging him to try this or that dainty which was placed before him, and even answering some of his grotesque remarks with, "Indeed! Why, my dear sir!" etc. Once or twice, however, when the offended socialist was not looking, he winked slyly in my direction, as though tacitly admitting me into the game. I began to enjoy the comedy immensely, especially when Mr. Flinn made one of his decidedly unconventional remarks, laved his hands with the contents of a water-carafe, or became unmindful of the difference existing between the uses of napkin and table-cloth. Of course there is nothing amusing in these things in themselves, but the way in which they affected Tupper, the socialist, the bosom-friend of the poor man, the champion of the oppressed (in theory!) was irresistible.

Meantime the tramp was progressing grandly, as far as the disposal of food and drink was concerned, and, as his heart warmed to the wine, his spirits rose, and he lost all signs of embarrassment. In fact, he began to assume an appearance of the utmost familiarity with his surroundings, and at last, lighting a cigar, and leaning back with his hands folded over his tattered waistcoat, he puffed lazily at the ceiling, and was content.

Courtland found it impossible to suppress an amused smile, but looking over to the still disgusted Tupper, he recovered almost immediately, and asked, with a slow drawl: "Say, old man, what's become of that lecture of yours on 'The Condition of the Poor in our Large Cities?'"

The great man scorned a reply, and I was almost expecting to see him leave the room, so pained was his appearance, when suddenly Mr. Flinn removed his cigar from his lips, and asked: "Gents, was any of youse ever in St. Petersburg?"