

"NO MYSTERIES IN CRIME TO A GOOD DETECTIVE"

William J. Burns, Chief Investigator of the Famous Dynamite Cases, Talks of Modern Methods of Detecting Criminals—Every Thief Leaves Some Clue.

WHEN Br'er Jasper, the famous old negro minister of Richmond, Va., who had a philosophy all his own, solemnly declared that "de sun do move," he might well have added that the methods of those men whose occupation it is to discover the perpetrators of crime and who are commonly classed as detectives, also "do move" and progress.

No more are the gum-shoe methods of detectives whose chief outward characteristics were dyed moustaches and thick-soled shoes accepted of the world.

In their place, and more in harmony with the spirit of the times, has come forward a class of men who seek out, and usually discover, criminal offenders by keen judgment, and strong reflective powers. In other words, they "think with their heads, not with their feet," to use an ordinary expression.

In the latter class is William J. Burns, for twenty-two years a United States Secret Service operator, formerly one of the right-hand men of Chief of Police Willie of the Secret Service, and who, since leaving the service in 1906 to undertake the trapping and exposure of grafting public officials and others at San Francisco, has succeeded in sending a number of them from there and elsewhere to State prison.

"Is the world as honest to-day as formerly, or is there a greater tendency to crime than heretofore; a lower standard of morals?" I asked him a day or two since.

"The people are getting better. There is a tendency toward a betterment of public morals and conditions throughout the country. That condition is brought about by the agitation and succeeding graft investigations of the past few years, notably at San Francisco.

"Many people are of the opinion that the getting worse because of the fact that it is only in recent years we have been showing up the corruption that has existed for many previous years. The San Francisco graft investigation was the most thorough of its kind in the history of the country. There never was a case of graft and corruption on such a tremendous scale, involving as many people as high in various walks of life as San Francisco. The investigation there was carried to the very tip-top, to the very pinnacle, and there it was made so strong and so plain that the accused themselves finally receded from the position of defendants by denial of the commission of the acts charged. They finally resorted to the argument that it was a case of expediency.

"Now, this investigation was the most perfect and complete exposure that ever occurred. It was so plain and so overwhelming that the rich men involved out there were driven to the extremity of creating public opinion favorable to themselves, and they did that by resorting to the favor of the prejudice of the people out here.

"This has been an object lesson to the rest of the country. I have learned from all over the United States that the practical results obtained in San Francisco have extended everywhere. For instance, you have heard people say in connection with large corporations that after the graft exposures in San Francisco the men who belonged to large corporations began to look about and see whether or not the organizations to which they belonged were driven to that same extremity or not. Many evils were in that way corrected by high-minded men who were connected with these interests.

"I do not mean to convey the impression that all public service corporations are necessarily corrupt. On the contrary I know where one of the just corporations in the country determined that it would not have anything to do with corrupt politicians. As a result, a very large percentage of its gross earnings were spent in defending 'fake' damage suits.

"Is the present-day system of detecting crime acting as a deterrent to the criminal, generally speaking, or are there men who are still taking a chance as much as ever?" I inquired.

"The intelligent criminals of to-day are beginning to wake up to the fact that the modern methods used for the detection of crime are far more effective than they ever have been.

"In other words, men who in the contemplation of crime have figured out to themselves that they can carry out a criminal conspiracy without being detected, after going over the matter carefully, for a period, in one case, I know, of two years, attempted to carry out the plan.

"When he got through, and the investigation was made, he was perfectly astounded to learn that a camera had been had left open—the tracks had made.

"I have always contended that every thief leaves a track. There are no exceptions to this rule. There are no mysteries in crime to the detective who knows his business.

"Where crimes become mysteries it is because the man who makes the investigations lack resources. It is astounding how simple it is, sometimes, to clear up what, to the lay mind, appears a great mystery.

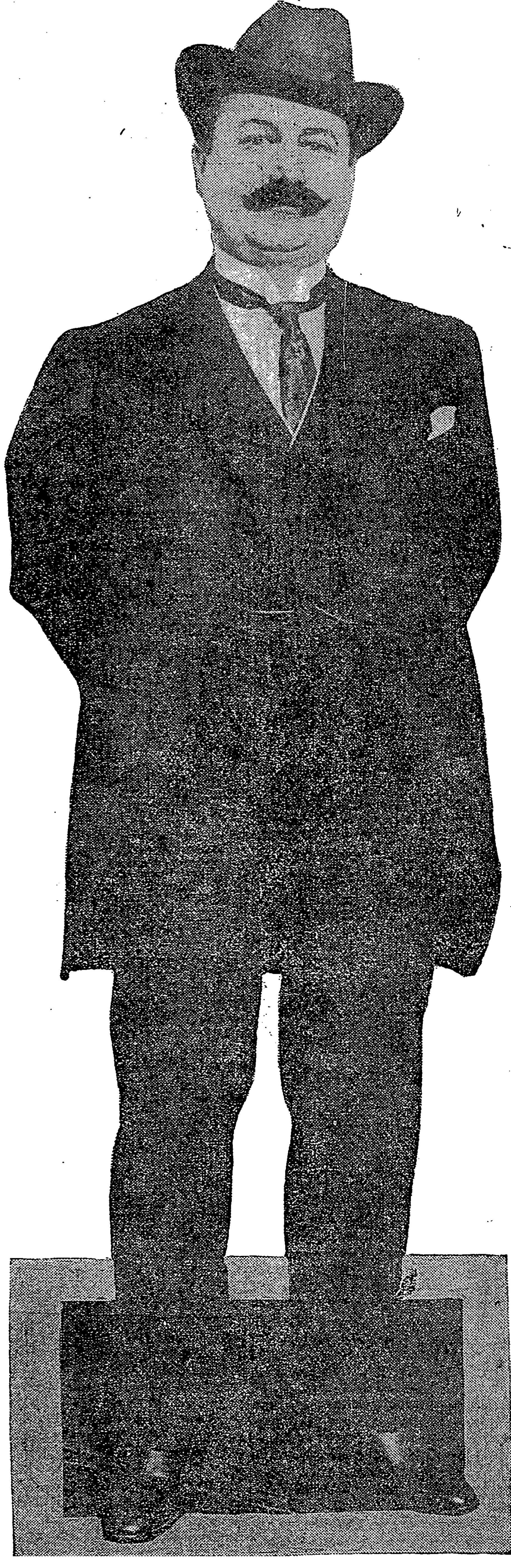
"Many people have charged that I use some uncaney methods for extorting confessions from criminals. As a matter of fact, this is entirely erroneous. I never in my life practiced what is known in polite circles as the third degree. I have never failed to explain my methods in all my public addresses. Every confession I have ever obtained has been through lawful methods. There has never been a confession repudiated in court that has been obtained by me, which proves they were obtained lawfully.

"I endeavor to follow the trend of the criminal mind in seeking a confession. It is always possible to gather supposed facts in every case upon which to form a theory. Then, by closely observing the criminal and following out a line of inquiry, you are able to determine when he is lying and when telling the truth. This, however, requires long practice and experience.

"One of the best illustrations tending to explain or describe this method is that of the one hundred dollar Lincoln head silver counterfeit investigation, carried on by me in Philadelphia.

"For more than two years the men who had been contemplating the counterfeiting of United States currency looked about to determine whether or not it was possible to stop every avenue of detection.

"Now, there were two points that described the tracks just suggested by me. First, the notes were so perfect that the counterfeiters were able to carry them to the bank and deposit them in the regular



Detective William J. Burns.

way, the bank being thereby made their distributor.

"The question arose, when they were discovered, to be counterfeited, as to what possible method could be followed to disclose the identity of the criminal.

"The case having been assigned to me for investigation, I started with a theoretical principle. I determined from the experience of the note that a camera had been used and from the photograph a steel plate had been made. The deduction I made from these two facts was that whoever did the work was able to successfully etch on steel, and must be a man or men, thoroughly versed in the art of photographic mechanical processes.

"Therefore my idea was to consider as the possible criminal every man in the United States who could do such work. I located Taylor and Bredell at their place of business, Ninth and F Street, Philadelphia. I did not have a speck of evidence against them, but according to my theory, which was predicated upon the general situation, I determined these were the criminals. It took one year to gather the evidence upon which they were arrested and convicted.

"Now, also, in this same case, it was demonstrated what finesse was necessary to obtain a confession.

"After Taylor and Bredell were arrested and notified by me of their rights, namely, that they did not have to make a statement, as whatever would be said by them would be used against them, I found a genuine one-hundred dollar Lincoln head United States note in a drawer in their room. I said to Chief Wilkie, who stood beside me, and within hearing of Taylor and Bredell, 'There is only one of these notes here. I wonder what they did with the others, assuming, of course, that they needed more than one note for a pattern piece. This promptly brought a question from Taylor and Bredell as to whether or not we had made

arrests in the case, and being assured that we had, promptly made a full confession.

"This illustrates how facts operate on the criminal mind.

"These, in my opinion, were the cleverest counterfeiters who ever operated in this country since the time of Charles Oelrich and Charles Smith, noted counterfeiters of their day, but of the old school, whose work was really more difficult, because Taylor and Bredell were aided by the up-to-date, scientific method of obtaining a photograph and transferring it to the steel plate, whereas in the old days counterfeiters were compelled to trace the entire note with an etching needle.

"Taylor and Bredell, however, displayed their cleverness as past masters in their craft when it was suggested to them that old Bill Brockway, a celebrated counterfeit, whose arrest had been brought about through my investigation of his crowd in New York in the early nineties and a statement appearing in the newspapers that Brockway agreed to give up his plates in consideration of being given his liberty. Following his particular arrest of which I speak he was sentenced to ten years in prison.

"Taylor and Bredell were given to understand by a lawyer, according to their own story, that if they could succeed in producing a counterfeit note they could probably make terms with the Government. They first attempted to gain release through bond, but were unsuccessful. They then succeeded in engraving an entire counterfeit of a twenty-dollar plate in the prison cell by aid of a spirit lamp. They accomplished this by attaching a blanket from their bed to a piece of black paper muslin that had been smuggled to them in one corner of their cell, and there, at night, while a dummy was placed in the bed to represent the men, engaged in engraving. After two months of this work they succeeded in

printing one of the best counterfeit notes ever made.

"The prison officials were so chagrined when they learned of this that they made a strenuous effort to disprove the story, but the evidence was so overwhelming and the confessions of the criminals so thoroughly corroborated that the officials found it futile.

"A very ludicrous event in connection with this case came to light. The Warden of the Cherry Hill Penitentiary, Borden by name, who, in his effort to all his confederates, the Warden of the penitentiary where Taylor and Bredell were confined, in an interview in a Philadelphia newspaper declared that the story of counterfeit notes having been made in prison was ridiculous.

"In order to convince him that such a thing was possible an investigation of his own prison developed the fact that an illicit whiskey distillery was in operation there. In his prison also were found men making counterfeit coins. This discovery cost him his job.

"Is there specialization in crime, as in business?" I asked.

"Assuredly," replied this remarkable detective, "there is. The criminal is progressive in crime, as in everything else, or, rather, as the country is in everything else."

"In all the large concerns throughout the country there are men who are constantly devising ways and means for robbing their employers. Many of them succeed, and are permitted to go un molested for years, but eventually the day of reckoning comes. While many of them

have never been caught, I know of cases where they stopped of their own volition because of the fear of detection when they learned of modern methods that are being applied in the detection of crime. The Illinois Central Railroad investigation at Chicago last year demonstrated that."

"It was recently asserted by a Judge of one of the largest courts in New York that criminals with organizations or gangs have financial backing. Following this, the question was asked, 'Where does the backing come from, and if it is from such sources that it is impossible to discover, do you believe such conditions exist?'

"Yes, there are criminal organizations such as you refer to throughout the country that have large financial backing, but it is not difficult to uncover these crimes or the sources from which they get their backing. Still, an investigation of that sort must be gone into deliberately and can never be exposed by spasmodic efforts.

"The yeggmen or safe blowers throughout the country are organized in bands. All have places where they are able to store their money. They deposit money with some well-known local celebrity of a city, who may happen to keep a saloon, a hotel, or lodging house, or gambling house. When they get into the hands of the police they immediately put themselves in touch with their backer, who promptly secures the services of a first-class lawyer.

"It has been said that instead of spending time, money, and energy to reform criminals more good would be accomplished by educating the children in such a manner that they would not turn to dishonest means for a livelihood. Do you agree with that?"

"I believe most absolutely in the educational system for correcting crime and safeguarding of youth. I believe that many young men are sent to the peniten-

tiary who could be saved from becoming convicts if they were kept away from gambling and similar evil influences. There are also many, many cases where young men, if instead of being sent to prison were released or were placed in some intermediary reformatory would come out useful men and lead thereafter honest, upright lives, and so not be branded as ex-convicts. For, after all, it is not the imprisonment that brings about reformation.

"Do you believe the immigration of the lower classes from Europe to the United States has produced a new type of criminal?"

"I hardly think so," replied Mr. Burns. "The criminal rarely takes that precaution. Even the 'wisemen' don't. As a matter of fact, they never do exactly what you would expect them to do. Still, if they wore gloves when on a job it would reduce to the minimum the chances of detection. I will admit. But as I have already stated, it is very often the smartest criminals that fail to take what would seem to be the most easily adopted methods of preventing detection."

"Speaking from a professional standpoint, what is your opinion of the work done by the Italian police in the Camorrist case now in progress at Viterbo?"

"I think they are entitled to great credit. For years the officials there have been deterred through fear or something else from running down these criminals. I believe that there, also, the educational system is having its effect. Italian prosecutors have succeeded in arousing public conscience, so that it has brought about a more healthful public sentiment. This has a tendency to make officials more diligent in the performance of their duties. The same conditions have been noted in the United States, where we have had 'house cleanings' in some cities, notably in San Francisco, but there is plenty more of that work waiting to be done throughout the United States.

"And what is more, it is going to be done. Wait and see."

"Do you regard the finger-print system as a very important means for the detection of crime?"

"I do. I consider it one of the greatest methods ever invented for the detection of criminals, as much so as the photograph. Its possibilities are very great. Time and again the accuracy with which the criminal can be uncovered by this means has been fully demonstrated. Only the other day in New York a criminal on trial, after learning of the comparison made by the police of his finger prints

with those in his criminal history, promptly confessed.

"This, again, illustrates my assertion of the trend of the criminal mind. If the finger-print system had been in use earlier many of the great murders and crimes which are to-day still unsolved would have been detected. I am glad to know that up-to-date Police Departments throughout the country are adopting the finger-print system.

"But may not the criminals seek to overcome the danger which threatens them from the finger-print method by the use of thin gloves?" I suggested.

"I hardly think so," replied Mr. Burns. "The criminal rarely takes that precaution. Even the 'wisemen' don't. As a matter of fact, they never do exactly what you would expect them to do. Still, if they wore gloves when on a job it would reduce to the minimum the chances of detection. I will admit. But as I have already stated, it is very often the smartest criminals that fail to take what would seem to be the most easily adopted methods of preventing detection."

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"THIS IS THE IDEAL COUNTRY FOR ARTISTS"

Joaquin Sorolla, the Spanish Painter, Is Enthusiastic Over America and Talks of Chicago and New York as Art Centers.

THIS is the ideal country for artists," declared Joaquin Sorolla, as he looked out the other day from his apartments in the Hotel Savoy at Central Park and the white-flecked blue sky above it.

Two years ago, when he first brought to our shores his canvases crammed with laughter and sunlight and the dancing waves of his native Valencia's beaches, he said something to the same effect, only couched in less emphatic terms, to the same TIMES representative who found him at the Savoy last week.

Now, on the eve of his departure—he sails from New York on the Mauretania next Wednesday—and after having spent more than two months of wintry cold in Chicago, Sorolla's enthusiasm for this country of ours is greater than ever.

"The ideal country for artists!" To many that statement from a foreigner, and an artistic foreigner, at that, will seem unbelievable.

But they may rest assured of one thing, Sorolla says it as if he meant it. Though about to revisit his beloved Spain, though about to see his three children, from whom he has been separated several months, the snaps shot out from his lips with a good snap of the artist's restless eyes and an emphatic Spanish gesture that gave them a heaping measure of sincerity.

All remember how Sorolla took New York by storm on his previous visit—how something like two hundred thousand people journeyed out to the Hispanic Museum at Broadway and 156th Street during the short time that his paintings were exhibited there, and packed that little building to the doors in order to see his paintings, so full of life and light and brightness.

Since then the Spanish artist's success has steadily increased. On his return to Spain he found everyone, from King Alfonso and Queen Victoria down, overjoyed at the brilliant result of his New World venture and proffered of kind words and—what is more substantial—of orders.

When the energetic artist resolved to brave the Atlantic again last January he brought with him a number of canvases painted during his stay at home which have gone, in this country, like hot cakes. His exhibition at Chicago was so popular that most of the best canvases were snapped up by buyers almost at once.

For that reason it is that there will not be another Sorolla exhibition for the present in New York, the city which first brought him world-wide fame.

In New York, the Spaniard declares, he feels at home.

"It is the same sky that we have in Madrid," he said two years ago, when he first looked at it.

"I repeat what I said then: New York seems like Madrid to me," he told the TIMES man last week. "Here I never have the feeling of being away from my native land—a feeling which always came over me whenever I have gone from Spain to Paris, London, or other European cities. There is something cosmopolitan about New York.

"But Chicago is different. There I'm in a foreign land.

"For one thing, it is so cold!" The genial painter of Spanish sunlight shivered even in his warm hotel room at the very thought of those Winter months out West.

"Why, all the time I was out there, Lake Michigan was covered with a sheet of ice—b-r-r-r! I can see it still!

"Then, besides, all the buildings in Chicago are so black-covered with coating of smoke. I was in Chicago a trifle over two months and yet, upon my word, it took me two full months to learn that there is something artistic in layers of smoke—in the different tints of smoke—that there is beauty hidden away in smoke which some artist could find."

"But it seems to me that the beauty of Chicago can be found only by an Anglo-Saxon painter, not a Latin. It is there. Or that I am convinced. But, as I say, it took me two months even to realize that it was there.

"As to painting in Chicago, I confined myself almost entirely to portraits. And I wish to say right here that I never met with greater hospitality than I met among the people of Chicago. Honestly, I cannot find words strong enough to express my gratitude, to give an idea of the delightful reception they gave me. Chicago may be cold, but Chicagoans are not!"

He did not say "warm." He said the Spanish word for "hot," and he meant it.

By the far-away reminiscent look in his eyes it was easy to see that he was paying a genuine compliment. His Western welcome made him forget even those layers of smoke—even "Lake Michigan, b-r-r-r-r!"

"Do you think that your sojourn in Chicago will inspire you to paint anything?" he was asked.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Really, I can't say. I never can tell what I'm going to paint. I'm very impressionable. Perhaps, when I get back to Spain and sit down some day to paint, something that impressed me in Chicago may come uppermost, and I may put it on canvas."

"But I can't say for certain. One thing you must remember—all the impressions that I have received in this country, both here in the East and out West, have been through my eyes. I have received no help from my ears, because I have not been able to learn English."

"What!" exclaimed the visitor, remembering Sorolla's long sojourn here in 1909 and the four months that he has put in among us this time.

"I can't speak any more English than when he has been here," he insisted.

"You see, I'm not like some people who pick up a language easily. If I decided to devote, say, an entire Summer, to learning your language, I feel sure that I'd be able to speak it fluently. But I can't paint and learn English at the same time. It must be either one thing or the other."

"After all, why should I learn English? I have a good time without speaking it. It would be different if I should decide, say, to take up portrait painting as a specialty, instead of doing it merely as one of my lines."

"In that case, it would pay me to learn English, since it is the language of so many of those who sit for me."

"But I don't intend to make portrait painting my specialty."

Señor Sorolla has been busy enough in other lines, in spite of the demand for his portraits which, starting a few years ago, has kept up regularly, reaching high-water mark during his recent stay in Chicago. On the walls of his hotel parlor are a number of sketches dashed off by his active brush as he sits at the windows and looks out over the grass plot of the Plaza, over the golden statue of Sherman and the verdant masses of Central Park.

THE TIMES man wanted to get some of these sketches, in order that reproductions of them might grace the Sorolla interview. But the artist demurred, and was firm in demurring.

"These are the roughest sort of sketches," he objected, looking at his work with disparaging eyes. "You never can tell about the public. I'm afraid they wouldn't like them."

"But —"

"No, no, no." He shook his head, with adamant firmness. "Far too sketchy. I'm afraid. Better not."

So, with a last yearning look at a sketch of a lot of taxis and hansoms, depicted standing along the Fifth Avenue curb, THE TIMES man gave up the futile endeavor.

To console him, the energetic Spaniard burst into renewed praise of America.

"It's the country for me," he exclaimed, letting his eyes wander once more toward the animated street scene below him.

"I feel in my element here. Of course, there are some parts of Spain, like Catalonia and the port of Bilbao where people seem to be just as busy as you Americans, but then again there are other parts—and plenty of them—where there's no life at all.

"Why, do you know, when I go out on the street in some Spanish cities the peo-



Joaquin Sorolla.

Punctuation

PUPIL—Which is the proper punctuation to use after the word "cash" when entered up in the ledger?

TEACHER—Well, it's immaterial, but some people usually make a dash after cash.

Don't spend all your life splitting hairs.

Very Select

THE landlady was trying to impress the prospective lodger with an idea of how extremely eligible the neighborhood was. Pointing over the way at a fine mansion, she said in a hushed whisper:

"I think I can safely say that it won't be for five years at least. Much as I like this country of yours, each stay here makes me feel that I am badly in need of a rest.

"America exhausts a man. After my active four months here this time, I—why, I'm played out! Honestly, I am!"

"Bon voyage, Señor!" and, the room door closed on the smiling face and bright eyes of the Spaniard with an American heart.

ple actually get in my way they walk along so slowly. Now, I'm American in that—I walk fast.

"But no matter how fast I may walk, nobody gets in my way here in New York. Far from it! That's what I like about you people—the business and the life and the 'go' in you!"

"Look at the way you put up big buildings—in a few days, it seems to me. Where?" They don't do that in Spain.

"Now, I love activity, and the activity of Americans is what goes straight to my heart.

"And, mark my words, it will be a splendid thing for American art that activity. Out in Chicago, where they're so active that they claim their city will outgrow New York some day—will it, señor?—they have an excellent art academy, and there's a school of artists springing up there which is doing mighty good work.

"I repeat to you now what I told you when I first visited the United States: the best thing about American art is that it has no traditions. American artists have nothing to copy; all they do must be their own. If it is to be really good."

"Tradition is all very well. I like it in a way, but—but"—he waved an energetic hand—"oh, give me art without tradition!"

"Spain is check-foll of tradition. It is what keeps Spaniards back. I'll tell you an anecdote to illustrate what I mean.

"Some years ago an Englishman visited my friend, the well-known Spaniard, Francisco Giner de los Rios, at the old Spanish city of Toledo. His friend showed the visitor the sights of the town. The Englishman went wild with delight before all the ancient monuments of Toledo.

"This is splendid," he exclaimed. "I never saw anything like it. Why, here in Toledo you are exactly as you were hundreds of years ago. To me it seems ideal."

"It may seem so to you," said Giner de los Rios dryly. "That's because you live in the twentieth century. But to us Spaniards who wish we lived in that century Toledo is far from ideal."

"That's just the sort of thing I feel and say when well content and everything else. Traditions in painting and everything else. They're all very well for Americans and Englishmen who visit Spain, but—how about Spaniards who feel and think the way those Americans and Englishmen do?"

"But it will be good to get back to Spain. Why, do you realize"—the artist's look and voice became more eager than ever—"do you realize that my wife and I haven't seen our children for—let me see—four whole months! Last time, when we came to this country, we brought them with us, but this time I left my son Joaquin at school in London and my two little girls at Valencia."

"Oh, I'm wild to see them! How good it is to think that no ship crosses the ocean faster than the one we're going on!"

Talk of Spain called to Sorolla's mind memories of his young friend, King Alfonso.

"He and Queen Victoria," he said, "have presented two portraits, which I did of them not long ago, to the Hispanic Museum in New York. The canvases are already here. This was done out of gratitude for the kind treatment I have received at the hands of the Hispanic Society, under whose auspices both my New York exhibition two years ago and my recent exhibition in Chicago were held."

"There is the King's latest photograph"—the artist pointed to a mantelpiece. On it was a picture of the King mounted on a charger, which stood partly in shadow, while the monarch's good-humored, boyish smile and splendid military uniform appeared in bright sunlight. The photograph is inscribed in Spanish.

"To Joaquin Sorolla, the artist who, in contrast in lights will please him. Alfonso."

"He is a boy with a brilliant future," declared the artist.

"Well, bon voyage, Señor"—the TIMES man rose to go. "And, tell me, please, for it is a thing I want to know—how many thousands of Americans—when will you return to this country?"

Sorolla smiled. Again he gave the characteristic Spanish shrug of the shoulders.

"I don't know exactly," he said, "but I think I can safely say that it won't be for five years at least. Much as I like this country of yours, each stay here makes me feel that I am badly in need of a rest.

"America exhausts a man. After my active four months here this time, I—why, I'm played out! Honestly, I am!"

"Bon voyage, Señor!" and, the room door closed on the smiling face and bright eyes of the Spaniard with an American heart.