

THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE

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VOL. XXXIX DECEMBER 1913 TO MAY 1914

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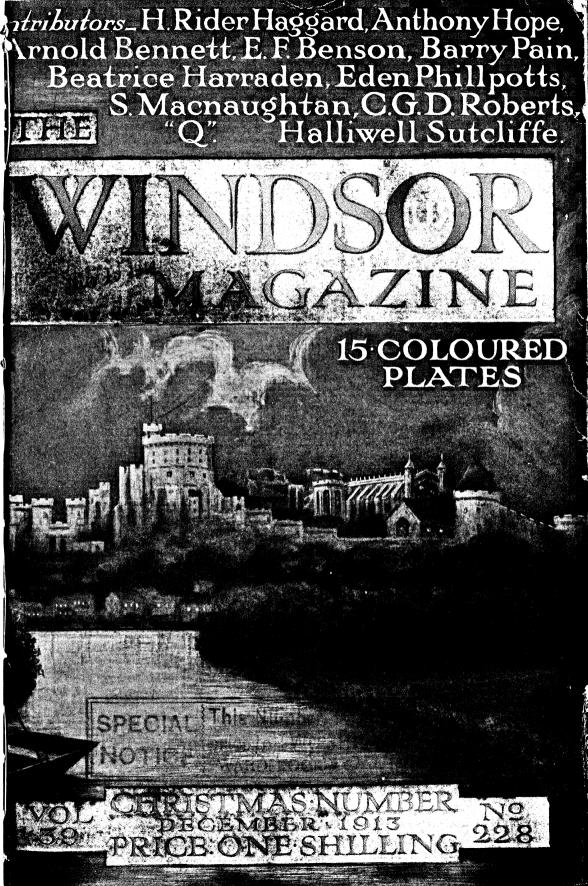
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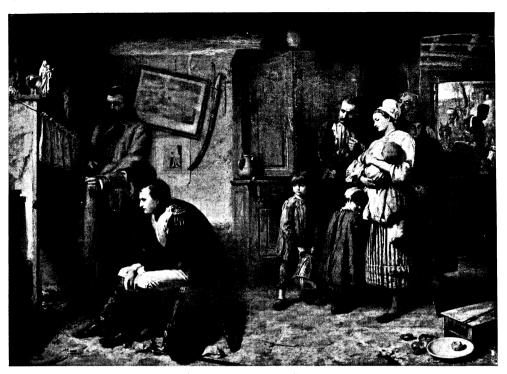
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"ON THE ROAD FROM WATERLOO TO PARIS." BY MARCUS STONE, R.A. Reproduced by permission of Messrs. Henry Graves & Co., Pall Mall, S.W., publishers of the large plate.

THE GUILDHALL ART GALLERY.

BY A. G. TEMPLE, F.S.A.,

Director of the Gallery.

The pictures reproduced by permission of the Corporation of London.

THE Guildhall Art Gallery has had the opportunity of constituting itself the most important municipal gallery in the Kingdom, and it rests with itself to occupy in the future that desired and not unattainable position. In the practical management of the vital requirements of a great and illustrious city, the Corporation of London has done much. Even with the wealth which is behind it, it is scarcely conceivable that it could have done more in the construction of its stupendously expensive bridges and viaducts, its preservation of open spaces, its erection of vast markets, its management of the police, its cleansing and lighting of the public thoroughfares, and its fervent devotion to education. Its deeds in all these directions are brilliant and farreaching, but the direction in which it must be pronounced to have fallen somewhat short is in the Arts. a direction which

brought lustre to the ancient principalities of Venice and Florence, and left its impress when all other developments of civilisation had passed into forgetfulness.

By a handful of energetic members of its body, it was prevailed upon to form a small school for the tuition of the art of music, which developed, in a surprisingly short time, into an important institution, commanding, on the part of the public, the widest appreciation and patronage; but for the arts of painting and sculpture, its efforts may not, perhaps, be considered to have been what they might have been, in view of the immeasurable power it has had to foster their growth, to the unerring exaltation of itself in so doing.

Many works of civic historical interest had come into the Corporation's possession since the great fire in 1666, when, to commemorate the services of the twenty-two

1913-14. No. 228.

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judges of the High Court who adjusted the claims of those whose property had lost its landmarks, it had their portraits painted — all of them full-length figures in their judicial robes — for perpetual exhibition at the Guildhall. Towards the close of the eighteenth century, Alderman John Boydell, the print publisher in Pall Mall—now the house of Messrs. Henry Graves

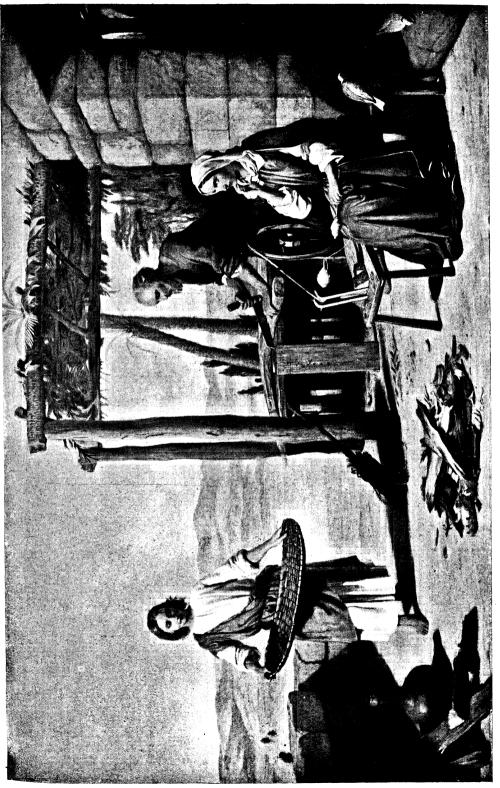
sword of honour from the City. Nelson was the only one of them who attended twice, once after Santa Cruz and once after the battle of the Nile. Gradually pictures came to the Guildhall, by presentation or bequest, mainly for their civic interest, and not by reason of any pretension of being great works of art. These were scattered through the various courts, committee



"SUN AND MOON FLOWERS." BY G. D. LESLIE, R.A.

and Co.—presented the Corporation with several fine works by leading painters of the day, and these included excellent portraits of notable naval commanders who at that time were rendering such high service to the State —Nelson, Heathfield, Rodney, St. Vincent, Howe, and Hood. All of these men had attended at the Guildhall, at the conclusion of some great exploit, and received a

rooms, and lobbies at the Guildhall, and it was not until 1886 that the Corporation, following the course of certain provincial municipalities, was persuaded to found a municipal art gallery at the Guildhall. It was done, however, in rather a half-hearted fashion, with a suggestion of scepticism as to its utility, and very small belief in its necessity. It adapted the old unused Law



"THE YOUTH OF OUR LORD." BY J. R. HERBERT, R.A.

Courts of the Queen's Bench and Common Pleas as an art gallery, acting, it would seem, with its proverbial caution, of seeing first how things were likely to go in a path which was wholly new to it, and one which, in its long career, appeared to be without anything in the nature of a precedent. But the Gallery was established, and then for nearly five them, and indulged in the delight of seeing and studying works which could not otherwise have been at their command. This exhibition was followed by fourteen others, attracting a total of nearly three millions of people, the entire selection of the works for each display devolving upon the same man, in whom the Corporation showed its

years it took its way almost unobserved, with an inactivity and monotony which, perhaps, for an entirely new institution, were not wholly with out justification.

Then the first awakening step was taken by the formation of a loan exhibition, to inaugurate the structural improvement of the Gallery, to which two commodious rooms had been added. The cost of the exhibition was borne by the Corporation, and its entire organisation was left in the hands



"HEAD OF A SPANISH GIRL." BY JOHN PHILIP, R.A.

of a then untried officer, who was fortunately able to determine upon and secure some two hundred works of distinctly individual character, which were selected by him from private owners all over the Kingdom, who readily supported so distinguished a body in so laudable an effort. One hundred and nine thousand of the public promptly responded to the advantage the Corporation held forth to sequence, and he predicted an illustrious future for the institution, a future which ought to have arrived before this, and may arrive yet, if only a broad view be taken of the sphere of usefulness and enlightenment involved in a sincere apprehension of the great benefits which would in such a case accrue to all sections of the public.

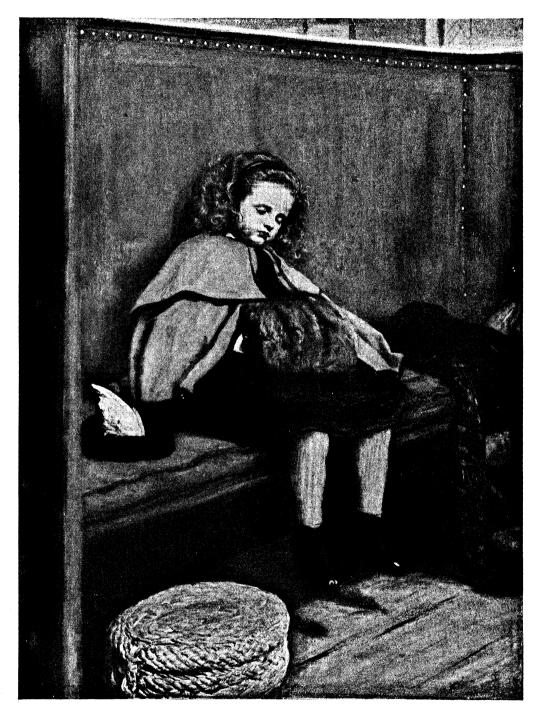
The Corporation's own possessions in

n showed its absolute confidence by leaving him with a free hand in this onerous aud responsible work.

These exhibitions commanded the appreciation of the late revered Lord Leighton, the President of the Royal A c a d e m y, and the head of the arts in this country, in whose eyes every step taken of this character was of moment. He never failed to visit every exhibition. From his point of view, such a distinguished and wealthy body, using its corporate powerin such a direction. was of the greatest con-



"MY FIRST SERMON." BY SIR JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS, BART., P.R.A. Reproduced from the original in the Guildhall Art Gallery, by permission of the Corporation of London.



"MY SECOND SERMON." BY SIR JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS, BART., P.R.A. Reproduced from the original in the Guildhall Art Gallery, by permission of the Corporation of London.

point of fine art were insignificant before the formation of these exhibitions. Its acquisitions since, by presentations and bequests, have been remarkable. Certainly one hundred thousand pounds would not cover their value. Here, then, surely was encouragement enough to suggest that it was on the right road in affording the new enterprise its warm adulation and its practical help. It took an excellent step, a few years ago, in granting an annual sum of money for the purchase of distinguished examples for the Gallery, and certain

augmented in recent years. Then a great stimulus to the development of the art movement in the City, and an encouragement to many wealthy and generous-hearted men to give or bequeath important works to the Gallery, would be the rebuilding of the present structure on lines which would admit of more space for the better display of paintings and sculpture than the existing, and merely adapted, accommodation affords. Plans for this have been carefully prepared and actually approved by the Corporation, and the matter only requires now the



"FLIRTATION." BY J. SEYMOUR LUCAS, R.A.

excellent works by painters of prominence were acquired under this grant. The principle adopted in these purchases was to encourage the living British artist by acquiring the work desired direct from him. Then, from motives of policy, it was considered advisable temporarily to suspend the holding of the loan exhibitions. This was, in one sense, a regrettable fact, since the public had grown accustomed to look for them; but, on the other hand, it gave the people the opportunity of seeing for a sustained period the Corporation's own art possessions, which had become considerably further orders of the Corporation to be proceeded with. These plans provide for a building on the present site, and not only admit of all the galleries being upon the same level, instead of on three levels, as is at present the case, but allow for ready access to considerable space for substantial extension in the future, should it be necessary.

It will be seen that something has already been done, in view of the imminent enlargement and development of the institution, for that must come. Gifts have been sought and obtained; money has been bespoken from sympathetic and generous individuals for the purpose of acquiring special works; and in one instance the whole of the purchasemoney—seven hundred and fifty pounds for an important Pre-Raphaelite work was

advanced privately, lest it should be lost to the Gallery by any delay occasioned in the collection of the requisite funds for its purchase, it being an accepted fact that it is by the possession of such distinctive examples as these that the fame of a public institution takes root in the esteem of the world.

Now let us see what the Gallery's permanent possessions are at the present time. I will make reference only to certain distinctive examples acquired during the past decade or so, which have had the effect of consolidating its importance as an up-to-date institution held in trust for the public. The noble gift of Sir John Gilbert, R.A., of eighteen of his works in oil and water-



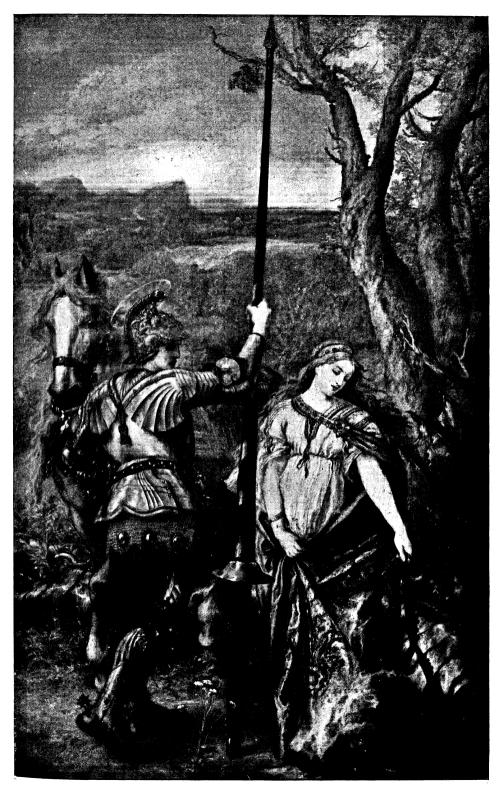
"PAUL AND VIRGINIA." BY ÉMILE LÉVY.

colour, followed, a few years later, by the bequest of Charles Gassiot in 1902, was just what the Corporation of London might expect from those who, loving art, saw a public body of such means and power laying itself out to advance its interests. Charles Gassiot had done business all his life in the City, was a Member and past-Master of one

of the chief City Companies, and his solace in life lay in his pictures. There are many like him in the City, who, if they perceive vitality in the City's institution, may follow in his footsteps. He left one hundred and twenty - seven pictures, of the value of seventy - four thousand pounds. These the City now possesses. One of them, the large Constable, "Fording the River," once in the celebrated collection of the late James Price, of Plympton, is one оf the painter's largest works, and one characterised by his most vigorous handling. In these days of expanding values of the works of certain painters, this particular work is worth to-day not far short of twenty thousand

the pounds, it having cost Mr. Gassiot, many

years ago, just a fourth of that sum. The wine business in which he was engaged involved Mr. Gassiot in close



"FAIR ST. GEORGE." BY SIR JOHN GILBERT, R.A.

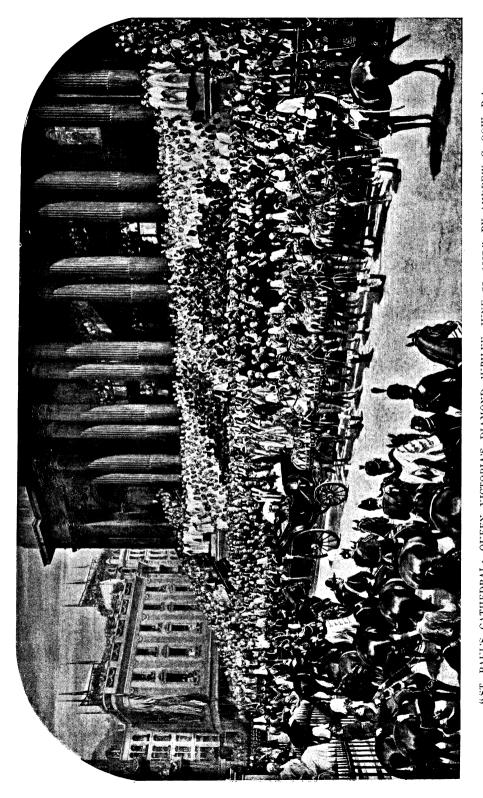
relations with Spain and Portugal, and it may be this, and his personal intimacy with those countries, which gave him his great liking for the works of John Philip. "Philip of Spain" he was wont to be being "A Spanish Wake," now in the National Gallery of Scotland. This fine piece of colour came from the collection of the late Sir John Fowler—the builder of the Forth Bridge—at the sale of

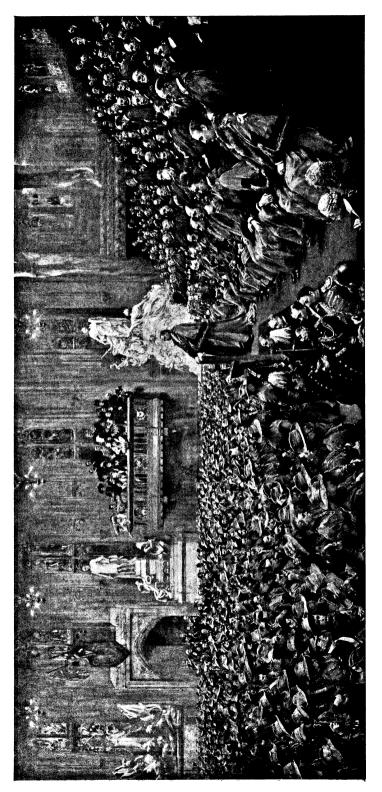


"TOO YOUNG TO BE MARRIED." BY THOMAS FAED, R.A.

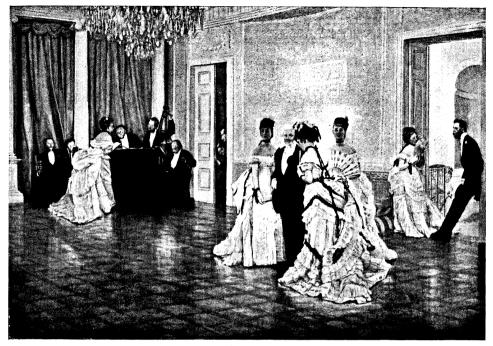
called. Mr. Gassiot possessed eight of his works. One he left to the National Gallery, and seven to the Guildhall. "A Chat Round the Brasero" is one of the two very finest productions of the painter, the other which it commanded nearly three thousand pounds.

The works of William Dyce, R.A., are scarce, even his own native city of Aberdeen not being able as yet to possess itself of an





"THE CITY OF LONDON IMPERIAL VOLUNTEERS' RETURN TO LONDON, OCTOBER 29, 1900." BY JOHN H. F. BACON, A.R.A. Reproduced by permission of C. W. Faulkner & Co., Golden Lane, E.C., proprietors of the copyright and publishers of the large plate.



"TOO EARLY." BY JAMES TISSOT.

example of him for its municipal gallery ; but there are two at the Guildhall, both of most excellent Pre-Raphaelite workmanship. The larger shows the poet George Herbert, at Bemerton, in a garden on the bank of a

river, repeating to himself his beautiful lines :---

Sweet day, so calm, so cool, so bright, The bridal of the earth and sky, The dews shall weep thy fall to-night, For thou must die.

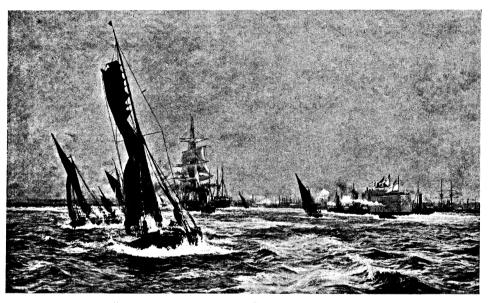


"THE LAST EVENING." BY JAMES TISSOT.

There is a humorous incident connected with this picture. The painter had included in the picture the figure of Izaak Walton fishing, and when told that the two men had lived at different times, and that he must certainly take out one, he said : "Oh, I'll take out Walton, but I'm hanged if I take out his fish-basket!" And there it remains, but without the fisherman. "Pleading," by Alma-Tadema, is one of those little touches of human feeling in ancient Grecian times, which ranks on a par with the wonderful little "Expectation," possessed by Mrs. Blackwell, at Harrow Weald. Two figures on a stone parapet, a sunny sky and a sapphire

apprenticeship to that individual method of treatment which marks his later work. It is interesting to know that this picture was purchased at the Private View of the Royal Academy by Mr. Gladstone when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Among the purchases the Corporation have made from the grant to which we have referred, works by three distinguished British painters have been secured, La Thangue, Tuke, and Arnesby Brown. I know of no better paintings by each of these men. The last-named painter's "River Bank" is a work the painter will not easily surpass, the robust expression,



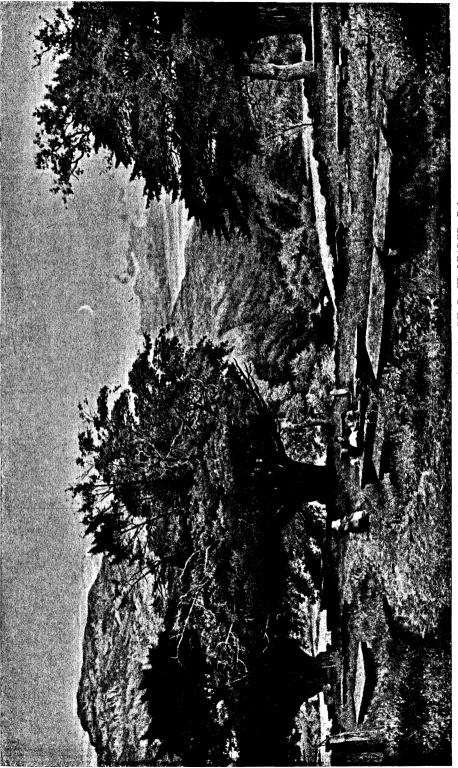
"COMMERCE AND SEA-POWER." BY W. L. WYLLIE, R.A.

sea, against which shines the pink blossom of a young fruit tree, are treated in the artist's most characteristic vein.

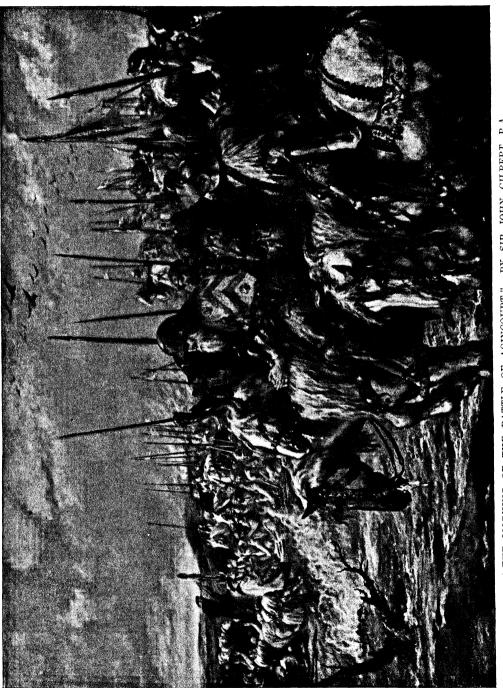
"My First Sermon" is a picture which commanded extraordinary popularity at the time it was painted, in the 'sixties, and Millais painted a sequel to it in "My Second Sermon." The first represents a little girl of about six years old, all attention, her first experience of a church service. In the sequel the novelty has worn off, and she is sound asleep. Finely-finished sketches in water-colours of these two works are in the possession of Mr. C. Langton, of Liverpool.

In "The Churchyard at Bettws-y-Coed," one encounters truly a characteristic work by Leader, painted forty-four years ago, when, one may say, he was serving his allied to the most sensitive tones, being very difficult indeed to copy or repeat. Indeed, those students who have set themselves to copy it invariably get to only a certain point of resemblance, and there stop short, the atmospheric effect being beyond their attainment.

The drawings of the carnivora by the late John M. Swan, R.A., deserve notice, the outcome of the unerring hand, united with a fundamental knowledge of their anatomy. To gain the form and miss the ferocity is the accomplishment of the tyro. Swan gets both. The weight of limb and the untamable soul of the brute are there in a few dexterous lines and touches. Such drawings are of special value in any public institution, for the student can gather much from them.



"THE CHURCHYARD AT BETTWS-Y-COED." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A. Reproduced from the original in the Guildhall Art Gallery, by permission of the Corporation of London.



"THE MORNING OF THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT." BY SIR JOHN GILBERT, R.A. Reproduced from the original in the Guildhall Art Gallery, by permission of the Corporation of London.



"THE SMILE." BY THOMAS WEBSTER, R.A.

Then Joseph Pennell's beautiful etchings, of firm but tenderest touch, of familiar spots in old London, his generous gift to the Gallery, are of lasting interest, and present the places with an accuracy in which the ideal is not absent. It is this element which gives them their real value. The glamour of time is upon them all, to which is added the lights of morning or the shades of evening, which emphasise their association with the human and the past.

By the generosity of a lady of very marked artistic discernment, Miss Evelyn P. McGhee, the Gallery has become possessed, among other exquisite examples in water-colour, of a group of Albert Goodwin's works in that medium—a group by which I know he is content to be represented, were they anywhere. It is much for one individual to do to make herself responsible for such a panel of beautiful work as these thirteen Goodwins The glowing "Durham," the present. sensitive "Boston," the serene delicacy of the "Locarno, Lago Maggiore," are all of them vibrative in the divers lights in which they are treated, and convey, as they are meant to, a vision of what should stamp itself on the mind—of the aspect these places present when seen with the eve of their true interpreter. The whole strong, yet modest, nature of the man is in them, no fruitless display, but an insistence on truth; no desire to popularise himself by their production, but an emittance of the beautiful by irresistible impulse. This is the true art, which thinks only of itself. and seeks neither reward or praise, but, on the contrary, sees with tranquillity others of lesser merit preferred before him in the high places. The track of beautiful things he will leave behind him, as his life's work is



"THE FROWN." BY THOMAS WEBSTER, R.A.

what he will be remembered by, when many whose names are now high-sounding will have passed into obscurity.

In the above few landmarks which I have indicated of the career of this latest venture of the Corporation, one is able with tolerable accuracy to forecast what such an institution as a permanent art gallery in the busy City of London might become, if wisely and liberally administered. Sought and unsought help it has had in most encouraging forms in its comparatively brief career of twenty-seven years; and it really rests now with the august body under whose control it is, to see to it that it takes a big step forward and assumes the position in the art world which assuredly, sooner or later, awaits it.

Not all the subjects alluded to in the foregoing brief survey of the Gallery's contents are here reproduced, because some of them do not lend themselves to reproduction by either of the methods employed to illustrate this article, and others have already been seen in these pages in the course of the series of articles on their respective artists' work. Others, too, from the canvases representing historical incidents, have been included in the series on "England's Story in Portrait and Picture," and therefore, from this section of the Gallery's varied catalogue, there have here been chosen only two of Sir John Gilbert's many fine works, and two scenes from the history of our own times, representing the stately ceremonial at St. Paul's Cathedral on the occasion of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, and the return of the City of London Imperial Volunteers to London in 1900. Such subjects find an especially appropriate home in this Gallery, within a stone's throw of the scenes which they represent.



"MOWING BRACKEN." BY H. H. LA THANGUE, A.R.A.

THE-HOLY-FLOWER by-h-rider-haggard

ILLUSTRATED·BY MAURICE·GREIFFENHAGEN

CHAPTER I. BROTHER JOHN.



DO not suppose that anyone who knows the name of Allan Quatermain would be likely to associate it with flowers, and especially with orchids. Yet, as it happens, it was once my lot to take part in an orchid hunt of so

remarkable a character that I think its details should not be lost. At least, I will set them down, and if in the after-days anyone cares to publish them—well, he is at liberty to do so.

It was in the year—oh, never mind the year! It was a long while ago, when I was much younger, that I went on a hunting expedition to the north of the Limpopo River, which borders the Transvaal. My companion was a gentleman of the name of Scroope—Charles Scroope. He had come out to Durban from England in search of sport—at least, that was one of his reasons. The other was a lady whom I will call Miss Margaret Manners, though that was not her name.

It seems that these two were engaged to be married, and really attached to each other. Unfortunately, however, they quarrelled violently about another gentleman with whom Miss Manners danced four consecutive dances, including two that were promised to her *fian é*, at a hunt bull in Essex, where they all lived. Explanations, or, rather, argument, followed. Mr. Scroope said that he would not tolerate such conduct. Miss Manners replied that she would not be dictated to; she was her own mistress and meant to remain so. Mr. Scroope exclaimed that she might, so far as he was concerned. She answered that she never wished to see his face again. He declared, with emphasis, that she never should, and that he was going to Africa to shoot elephants.

What is more, he went, starting from his Essex home the next day without leaving any address. As it transpired afterwards, long afterwards, had he waited till the post came in, he would have received a letter that might have changed his plans. But they were high-spirited young people, both of them, and played the fool after the fashion of those in love.

Well, Charles Scroope turned up in Durban, which was but a poor place then, and there we met in the bar of the Royal Hotel.

"If you want to kill big game," I heard someone say—who it was, I really forget— "there's the man to show you how to do it —Hunter Quatermain, the best shot in Africa, and one of the finest fellows, too."

I sat still, smoking my pipe and pretending to hear nothing. It is awkward to listen to oneself being praised, and I was always a shy man.

Then, after a whispered colloquy, Mr. Scroope was brought forward and introduced to me. I bowed as nicely as I could, and ran my eye over him. He was a tall young man, with dark eyes and a rather romantic aspect—that was due to his love affair—but I came to the conclusion that I liked the cut of his jib. When he spoke, that conclusion was confirmed. I always think there is a great deal in a voice; personally, I judge by it almost as much as by the face. This voice was particularly pleasant and sympathetic, though there was nothing very original or striking in the words by which it was, so to speak, introduced to me. These were—

speak, introduced to me. These were---"How do you do, sir? Will you have a split?"

I answered that I never drank spirits in the daytime, or, at least, not often, but that I should be pleased to take a small bottle of beer.

e declared, with emphasis, When the beer was consumed, we walked Copyright, 1913 by II. Rider Haggard, in the United States of America. up together to my little house on what is now called the Berea—the same in which, amongst others, I received my friends Curtis and Good in after-days—and there we dined. Indeed, Charlie Scroope never left that house until we started on our shooting expedition.

Now, I must cut all this story short, since it is only incidentally that it has to do with the tale I am going to tell. Mr. Scroope was a rich man, and as he offered to pay all the expenses of the expedition, while I was to take all the profit in the shape of ivory or anything else that might accrue, of course I did not decline his proposal.

Everything went well with us on that trip until its unfortunate end. We only killed two elephants, but of other game we found plenty. It was when we were near Delagoa Bay, on our return, that the accident happened.

We were out one evening trying to shoot something for our dinner, when, between the trees, I caught sight of a small buck. It vanished round a little promontory of rock which projected from the side of the kloof, walking quietly, not running in alarm. We followed after it. I was the first, and had just wriggled round these rocks and perceived the buck standing about ten paces away it was a bush-bok—when I heard a rustle among the bushes on the top of the rock not a dozen feet above my head, and Charlie Scroope's voice calling—

"Look out, Quatermain ! He's coming !"

"Who's coming?" I answered, in an irritated tone, for the noise had made the buck run away.

Then it occurred to me all in an instant, of course, that a man would not begin to shout like that for nothing—at any rate, when his supper was concerned. So I glanced up above and behind me. To this moment I can remember exactly what I saw. There was the granite water-worn boulder, or, rather, several boulders, with ferns growing in their cracks, of the maidenhair tribe, most of them, but some had a silver sheen on the under-side of their leaves. On one of these leaves, bending it down, sat a large beetle with red wings and a black body, engaged in rubbing its antennæ with its front paws. And above, just appearing over the top of the rock, was the head of an extremely fine leopard. As I write, I seem to perceive its square jowl outlined against the arc of the quiet evening sky, with the saliva dropping from the lips.

This was the last thing which I did

perceive for a little while, since at that moment the leopard—we call them tigers in South Africa—dropped upon my back and knocked me flat as a pancake. I presume that it also had been stalking the buck, and was angry at my appearance on the scene. Down I went—luckily for me, into a patch of mossy soil.

"Åll up!" I said to myself, for I felt the brute's weight upon my back, pressing me down among the moss, and, what was worse, its hot breath upon my neck as it dropped its jaws to bite me in the head. Then I heard the report of Scroope's rifle, followed by furious snarling from the leopard, which evidently had been hit. Also it seemed to think that I had caused its injuries, for it seized me by the shoulder. I felt its teeth slip along my skin, but, happily, they only fastened in the shooting-coat of tough corduroy that I was wearing. It began to shake me, then let go to get a better grip. Now, remembering that Scroope only carried a light single-barrelled rifle, and therefore could not fire again. I knew, or thought I knew, that my time had come. I was not exactly afraid, but the sense of some great impending change became very vivid. I remembered, not my whole life, but one or two odd little things connected with my For instance, I seemed to see infancy. myself seated on my mother's knee, playing with a little jointed gold-fish which she wore upon her watch-chain.

After this I muttered a word or two of supplication and, I think, lost consciousness. If so, it can only have been for a few Then my mind returned to me, seconds. and I saw a strange sight. The leopard and Scroope were fighting each other. The leopard, standing on one hind leg, for the other was broken, seemed to be boxing Scroope, whilst Scroope was driving his big hunting-knife into the brute's carcase. They went down, Scroope undermost, the leopard tearing at him. I gave a wriggle and came out of that mossy bed—I recall the sucking sound my body made as it left the ooze.

Close by was my rifle, uninjured and at full cock, as it had fallen from my hand. I seized it and in another second had shot the leopard through the head just as it was about to seize Scroope's throat.

It fell stone dead on the top of him. One quiver, one contraction of the claws—in poor Scroope's leg—and all was over. There it lay, as though it were asleep, and underneath was Scroope.

The difficulty was to get it off him, for the

beast was very heavy; but I managed this at last, with the help of a thorn bough I found, which some elephant had torn from a tree. This I used as a lever. There beneath lay Scroope, literally covered with blood, though whether his own or the leopard's I could not tell. At first I thought that he was dead, but after I had poured some water over him from the little stream that trickled down the rock, he sat up and asked inconsequently—

"What am I now?"

"A hero," I answered. (I have always been proud of that repartee.)

Then, discouraging further conversation, I set to work to get him back to the camp, which, fortunately, was close at hand.

When we had proceeded a couple of hundred yards, he was still making inconsequent remarks, his right arm round my neck and my left arm round his middle. Suddenly he collapsed in a dead faint, and as his weight was more than I could carry, I had to leave him and fetch help.

In the end, I got him to the tents by aid of the Kaffirs and a blanket, and there made an examination. He was scratched all over, but the only serious wounds were a bite through the muscles of the left upper arm and three deep cuts in the right thigh just where it joins the body, caused by a stroke of the leopard's claws. I gave him a dose of laudanum to send him to sleep, and dressed these hurts as best I could. For three days he went on quite well. Indeed, the wounds had begun to heal healthily, when suddenly some kind of fever took him, caused, I suppose, by the poison of the leopard's fangs or claws.

Oh, what a terrible week was that which followed! He became delirious, raving continually of all sorts of things, and especially of Miss Margaret Manners. I kept up his strength as well as was possible with soup made from the flesh of game, mixed with a little brandy which I had. But he grew weaker and weaker; also the wounds in the thigh began to suppurate.

The Kaffirs whom we had with us were of little use in such a case, so that all the nursing fell on me. Luckily, beyond a shaking, the leopard had done me no hurt, and I was very strong in those days. Still, the lack of rest told on me, since I dared not sleep for more than half an hour or so at a time. At length came a morning when I was quite worn out. There lay poor Scroope, turning and muttering in the little tent, and there I sat by his side, wondering whether he would live to see another dawn, or, if he did, for how long should I be able to tend him. I called to a Kaffir to bring me my coffee, and, just as I was lifting the pannikin to my lips with a shaking hand, help came.

It arrived in a very strange shape. In front of our camp were two thorn trees, and from between these trees, the rays from the rising sun falling full on him, I saw a curious figure walking towards me in a slow. purposeful fashion. It was that of a man of uncertain age; for though the beard and long hair were white, the face was comparatively youthful, save for the wrinkles round the mouth, and the dark eyes were full of life and vigour. Tattered garments, surmounted by a torn kaross or skin rug. hung awkwardly upon his tall, thin frame. On his feet were veld-schoen of untanned hide, on his back a battered tin case was strapped, and in his bony, nervous hand he clasped a long staff made of the black and white wood the natives call *umzimbiti*, on the top of which was fixed a butterfly-net. Behind him were some Kaffirs, who carried cases on their heads.

I knew him at once, since we had met before, especially on a certain occasion in Zululand, when he calmly appeared out of the ranks of a hostile native impi. He was one of the strangest characters in all South Africa. Evidently a gentleman in the true sense of the word, none knew his historyalthough I know it now, and a strange story it is—except that he was an American by birth, for in this matter at times his speech betrayed him. Also he was a doctor by profession, and, to judge from his extraordinary skill, one who must have seen much practice both in medicine and in surgery. For the rest, he had means, though where they came from was a mystery, and for many years past had wandered about South and Eastern Africa collecting butterflies and flowers.

By the natives—and, I might add, by white people also — he was universally supposed to be mad. This reputation, coupled with his medical skill, enabled him to travel wherever he would without the slightest fear of molestation, since the Kaffirs look upon the mad as inspired by God. Their name for him was "Dogeetah," a ludicrous corruption of the English word "doctor," whereas white folk called him indifferently "Brother John," " Uncle Jonathan," or "Saint John." The second appellation he got from his extraordinary likeness, when cleaned up and nicely dressed, to the figure by which the great American nation is typified in comic papers, as England is typified by John Bull. The first and third arose in the well-known goodness of his character, and a taste he was supposed to possess for living on locusts and wild honey, or their local equivalents. Personally, however, he preferred to be addressed as "Brother John."

Oh, who can tell the relief with which I saw him? An angel from heaven could scarcely have been more welcome. As he came, I poured out a second jorum of coffee, and, remembering that he liked it sweet, put in plenty of sugar.

"How do you do, Brother John ?" I said, proffering him the coffee.

"Greeting, Brother Allan," he answered. In those days he affected a kind of old Roman way of speaking, as I imagine it. Then he took the coffee, put his long finger into it to test the temperature and stir up the sugar, drank it off as though it were a dose of medicine, and handed back the tin to be refilled.

"Bug-hunting?" I queried.

He nodded. "That and flowers and observing human nature and the wonderful works of God. Wandering around generally."

"Where from last?" I asked.

"Those hills nearly twenty miles away. Left them at eight in the evening—walked all night."

"Why?" I said, looking at him.

"Because it seemed as though someone were calling me. To be plain, you, Allan."

"Oh, you heard about my being here and the trouble?"

"No, heard nothing. Meant to strike out for the coast this morning. Just as I was turning in, at eight-five exactly, got your message and started. That's all."

"My message——" I began, then stopped, and, asking to see his watch, compared it with mine. Oddly enough, they showed the same time to within two minutes.

"It is a strange thing," I said slowly, "but at eight-five last night I did try to send a message for some help, because I thought my mate was dying"—and I jerked my thumb towards the tent. "Only it wasn't to you or any other man, Brother John. Understand?"

"Quite. Message was expressed on, that's all. Expressed and, I guess, registered as well."

I looked at Brother John, and Brother John looked at me, but at the time we made no further remark. The thing was too curious—that is, unless he lied. But nobody had ever known him to lie. He was a truthful person, painfully truthful at times. And yet there are people who do not believe in prayer.

"What is it ?" he asked.

"Mauled by leopard. Wounds won't heal, and fever. I don't think he can last long."

"What do you know about it? Let me see him."

Well, he saw him, and did wonderful things. That tin box of his was full of medicines and surgical instruments, which latter he boiled before he used them. Also he washed his hands till I thought the skin would come off them, using up more soap than I could spare. First he gave poor Charlie a dose of something that seemed to kill him; he said he had that drug from the Then he opened up those wounds Kaffirs. upon his thigh, and cleaned them out and bandaged them with boiled herbs. Afterwards, when Scroope came to again, he gave him a drink that threw him into a sweat and took away the fever. The end of it was that in two days' time his patient sat up and asked for a square meal, and in a week we were able to begin to carry him to the coast.

"Guess that message of yours saved Brother Scroope's life," said old John, as he watched him start.

I made no answer. Here I may state, however, that, through my own men, I inquired a little as to Brother John's movements at the time of what he called the message. It seemed that he had arranged to march towards the coast on the next morning, but that, about two hours after sunset, suddenly he ordered them to pack up everything and follow him. This they did, and, to their intense disgust, those Kaffirs were forced to trudge all night at the heels of Dogeetah, as they called him. Indeed, so weary did they become, that had they not been afraid of being left alone in an unknown country in the darkness, they said they would have thrown down their loads and refused to go any further.

That is as far as I was able to take the matter, which may be explained by telepathy, inspiration, instinct, or coincidence. It is one as to which the reader must form his own opinion.

During our week together in camp and our subsequent journey to Delagoa Bay, and thence by ship to Durban, Brother John and I grew very intimate, with limitations. Of his past, as I have said, he never talked, or of the real object of his wanderings, which I learned afterwards, but of his natural history and ethnological—I believe that is the word —studies he spoke a good deal. As, in my humble way, I also am an observer of such matters, and know something about African natives and their habits from practical experience, these subjects interested me.

Amongst other things, he showed me many of the specimens that he had collected during his recent journey-insects and beautiful butterflies, neatly pinned into boxes, also a quantity of dried flowers pressed between sheets of blotting-paper, amongst them some which he told me were orchids. Observing that these attracted me, he asked me if I would like to see the most wonderful orchid in the whole world. Of course I said "Yes," whereon he produced out of one of his cases a flat package about two feet six square. He undid the grass mats in which it was wrapped, striped, delicately-woven mats, such as they make in the neighbourhood of Zanzibar. Within these was the lid of a packing-case. Then came more mats and some copies of The Cape Journal, spread out flat, then sheets of blotting-paper, and last of all, between two pieces of cardboard, a flower and one leaf of the plant on which it grew.

Even in its dried state it was a wondrous thing, measuring twenty-four inches from the tip of one wing or petal to the tip of the other, by twenty inches from the top of the back sheath to the bottom of the pouch. The measurement of the back sheath itself I forget, but it must have been quite a foot across. In colour it was, or had been, bright golden, but the back sheath was white, barred with lines of black, and in the exact centre of the pouch was a single black spot shaped like the head of a great ape. There were the overhanging brows, the deep, recessed eyes, the surly mouth, the massive jawseverything.

Although at that time I had never seen a gorilla in the flesh, I had seen a coloured picture of the brute, and if that picture had been photographed on the flower, the likeness could not have been more perfect.

"What is it ?" I asked, amazed.

"Sir," said Brother John—sometimes he used this formal term when excited—"it is the most marvellous cypripedium in the whole earth, and, sir, I have discovered it. A healthy root of that plant will be worth twenty thousand pounds."

"That's better than gold-mining," I said. "Well, have you got the root?"

Brother John shook his head sadly as he answered : "No such luck."

"How's that, as you have the flower?"

"I'll tell you, Allan. For a year past and more I have been collecting in the district back of Kilwa, and found some wonderful things—yes, wonderful. At last, about three hundred miles inland, I came to a tribe, or, rather, a people, that no white man had ever visited. They are called the Mazitu, a numerous and warlike people of bastard Zulu blood."

"I have heard of them," I interrupted. "They broke north before the days of Senzangakona, two hundred years or more ago."

"Well, I could make myself understood among them, because they still talk a corrupt Zulu, as do all the tribes in those parts. At first they wanted to kill me, but let me go because they thought that I was mad. Everyone thinks that I am mad, Allan—it is a kind of public delusion—whereas I think that I am sane, and that most other people are mad."

"A private delusion," I suggested hurriedly, as I did not wish to discuss Brother John's sanity. "Well, go on about the Mazitu."

"Later, they discovered that I had skill in medicine, and their king, Bausi, came to me to be treated for a great external tumour. I risked an operation and cured him. It was anxious work, for, if he had died, I should have died, too, though that would not have troubled me very much"-and he sighed. "Of course, from that moment I was 'supposed to be a great magician. Also Bausi made a blood brotherhood with me. transfusing some of his blood into my veins, and some of mine into his. I only hope he has not inoculated me with his tumours. which are congenital. So I became Bausi, and Bausi became me. In other words, I was as much chief of the Mazitu as he was, and shall remain so all my life."

"That might be useful," I said reflectively; "but go on."

"I learned that, on the western boundary of the Mazitu territory, were great swamps; that beyond these swamps was a lake called Kirua, and beyond that a large and fertile land, supposed to be an island, with a mountain in its centre. This land is known as Pongo, and so are the people who live there."

"That is a native name for the gorilla, isn't it?" I asked. "At least, so a fellow who had been on the West Coast told me."

"Indeed? Then that's strange, as you will see. Now, these Pongo are supposed to be great magicians, and the god they worship is said to be a gorilla, which, if you are right, accounts for their name. Or, rather," he went on, "they have two gods. The other is that flower you see there. Whether the flower with the monkey's head on it was the first god, and suggested the worship of the beast itself, or *vice versâ*, I don't know. Indeed, I know very little—just what I was told by the Mazitu and a man who called himself a Pongo chief, no more."

"What did they say?"

"The Mazitu said that the Pongo people are devils, who came by the secret channels through the reeds in canoes, and stole their children and women, whom they sacrificed to their gods. Sometimes, too, they made raids upon them at night, 'howling like hyenas.' The men they killed, and the women and children they took away. The Mazitu want to attack them, but cannot do so because they are not water people, and have no canoes, and therefore are unable to reach the island, if it is an island. Also they told me about the wonderful flower which grows in the place where the ape-god lives, and is worshipped like the god. They had the story of it from some of their people who had been enslaved and escaped."

"Did you try to get to the island?" I asked.

That is, I went to the "Yes, Allan. edge of the reeds, which lie at the end of a long slope of plain where the lake begins. Here I stopped for some time, catching butterflies and collecting plants. One night, when I was camped there by myself-for none of my men would remain so near the Pongo country after sunset—I woke up with a sense that I was no longer alone. crept out of my tent, and by the light of the moon, which was setting, for dawn drew near, I saw a man, who leant upon the handle of a very wide-bladed spear, which was taller than himself-a big man, over six-feet-two high, I should say, and broad in He wore a long, white cloak proportion. reaching from his shoulders almost to the ground. On his head was a tight-fitting cap with lappets, also white. In his ears were rings of copper or gold, and on his wrists bracelets of the same metal. His skin was intensely black, but the features were not at all negroid. They were prominent and finely-cut, the nose being sharp and the lips quite thin—indeed, of an Arab type. His left hand was bandaged, and on his face was an expression of great anxiety. Lastly, he appeared to be about fifty years of age. So still did he stand,

that I began to wonder whether he were one of those ghosts which the Mazitu swore the Pongo wizards send out to haunt their country.

"For a long while we stared at each other, for I was determined that I would not speak first or show any concern. At last he spoke in a low, deep voice, and in Mazitu, or a language so similar that I found it easy to understand.

"' Is not your name Dogeetah, O White Lord, and are you not a master of medicine?'

"'Yes,' I answered. 'But who are you who dare to wake me from my sleep?'

"'Lord, I am the Kalubi, the Chief of the Pongo, a great man in my own land yonder.'

"'Then why do you come here alone at night, Kalubi, Chief of the Pongo?'

"Why do you come here alone, White Lord ?' he answered evasively.

"'What do you want, anyway?' I asked.

"O Dogeetah, I have been hurt. I want you to cure me.' And he looked at his bandaged hand.

"'Lay down that spear and open your robe, that I may see you have no knife.'

"He obeyed, throwing the spear to some distance.

"'Now unwrap the hand."

"He did so. I lit a match, the sight of which seemed to frighten him greatly, although he asked no questions about it, and by its light examined the hand. The first joint of the second finger was gone. From the appearance of the stump, which had been cauterised and was tied tightly with a piece of flexible grass, I judged that it had been bitten off.

"' What did this?' I asked.

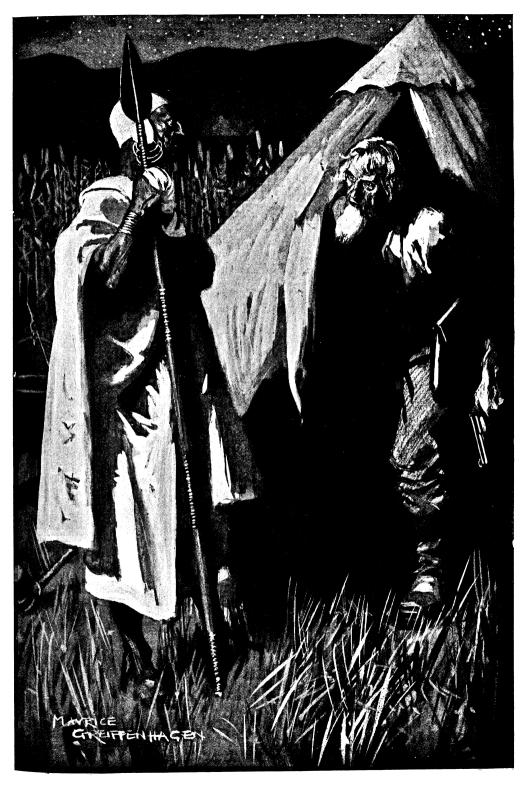
"'Monkey,' he answered, 'poisonous monkey. Cut off the finger, O Dogeetah, or to-morrow I die.'

"'Why do you not tell your own doctors to cut off the finger, you who are Kalubi, the Chief of the Pongo?'

"'No, no,' he replied, shaking his head. 'They cannot do it. It is not lawful. And I—I cannot do it, for, if the flesh is black, the hand must come off, too, and if the flesh is black at the wrist, then the arm must be cut off.'

"I sat down on my camp-stool and reflected. Really I was waiting for the sun to rise, since it was useless to attempt an operation in that light. The man, Kalubi, thought that I had refused his petition, and became terribly agitated.

"Be merciful, White Lord !' he prayed.



"For a long while we stared at each other."

⁶ Do not let me die ! I am afraid to die. Life is bad, but death is worse. Oh, if you refuse me, I will kill myself here before you, and then my ghost will haunt you till you die also of fear and come to join me. What fee do you ask? Gold or ivory or slaves? Say, and I will give it.'

"'Be silent,' I said, for I saw that, if he went on thus, he would throw himself into a fever, which might cause the operation to prove fatal. For the same reason, I did not question him about many things I should have liked to learn. I lit my fire and boiled the instruments. He thought I was making magic. By the time that everything was ready, the sun was up.

"'Now,' I said, 'let me see how brave you are.'

"Well, Allan, I performed that operation, removing the finger at the base where it joins the hand, as I thought there might be something in his story of the poison. Indeed, as I found afterwards on dissection, and can show you, for I have the thing in spirits, there was, for the blackness of which he spoke—a kind of mortification, I presume had crept almost to the joint, though the flesh beyond was healthy enough. Certainly that Kalubi was a plucky fellow. He sat like a rock and never even winced. Indeed, when he saw that the flesh was sound, he uttered a great sigh of relief. After it was all over, he turned a little faint, so I gave him some spirits of wine mixed with water, which revived him.

""O Lord Dogeetah,' he said, as I was bandaging the hand, 'while I live I am your slave! Yet do me one more service. In my land there is a terrible wild beast, that which bit off my finger. It is a devil. It kills us, and we fear it. I have heard that you white men have magic weapons which slay with a noise. Come to my land and kill me that wild beast with your magic weapon. I say, come, come, for I am terribly afraid !' And indeed he looked it.

"'No,' I answered, 'I shed no blood. I kill nothing except butterflies, and of these only a few. But, if you fear this brute, why do you not poison it? You black people have many drugs.'

"'No use, no use,' he replied, in a kind of wail. 'The beast knows poisons. Some it swallows, and they do not harm it. Others it will not touch. Moreover, no black man can do it hurt. It is white, and it has been known from of old that, if it dies at all, it must be by the hand of one who is white.'

"A very strange animal,' I began

suspiciously, for I felt sure that he was lying to me. But just at that moment I heard the sound of my men's voices. They were advancing towards me through the giant grass, singing as they came, but as yet a long way off. The Kalubi heard it also and sprang up.

"'I must be gone,' he said. 'None must see me here. What fee, O Lord of Medicine, what fee ?'

"'I take no payment for my medicine,' I said. 'Yet stay. A wonderful flower grows in your country, does it not — a flower with wings and a cup beneath? I would have that flower.'

"'Who told you of the flower?' he asked. 'The flower is holy. Still, O White Lord still, for you it shall be risked. Oh, return and bring with you one who can kill the beast, and I will make you rich. Return and call to the reeds for the Kalubi, and the Kalubi will hear and come to you.'

"Then he ran to his spear, snatched it from the ground, and vanished among the reeds. That was the last I saw, or am ever likely to see, of him."

"But, Brother John, you got the flower somehow."

"Yes, Allan. About a week later, when I came out of my tent one morning, there it was standing in a narrow-mouthed earthenware pot filled with water. Of course, I meant that he was to send me the plant, roots and all, but I suppose he understood that I wanted a bloom. Or, perhaps, he dared not send the plant. Anyhow, it is better than nothing."

"Why did you not go into the country and get it for yourself?"

"For several reasons, Allan, of which the best is that it was impossible. The Mazitu swear that, if anyone sees that flower, he is put to death. Indeed, when they found that I had a bloom of it, they forced me to move to the other side of the country, seventy miles away. So I thought that I would wait till I met with some companions who would accompany me. Indeed, to be frank, Allan, it occurred to me that you were the sort of man who would like to interview this wonderful beast that bites off people's fingers and frightens them to And Brother John stroked his death." long white beard and smiled, adding: "Odd that we should have met so soon afterwards, isn't it ?"

"Did you?" I replied. "Now, did you indeed? Brother John, people say all sorts of things about you, but I have come to the conclusion that there's nothing the matter with your wits."

Again he smiled and stroked his long white beard.

CHAPTER II.

THE AUCTION ROOM.

I po not think that this conversation about the Pongo savages who were said to worship a gorilla and a golden flower was renewed until we reached my house at Durban. Thither, of course, I took Mr. Charles Scroope, and thither also came Brother John, who, as bedroom accommodation was lacking, pitched his tent in the garden.

One night we sat on the stoep smoking. Brother John's only concession to human weaknesses was that he smoked. He drank no wine or spirits, he never ate meat unless he was obliged, but I rejoice to say that he smoked—cigars, like most Americans, when he could get them.

"John," said I, "I have been thinking over that yarn of yours, and have come to one or two conclusions."

"What may they be, Allan?"

"The first is that you were a great donkey not to get more out of the Kalubi when you had the chance."

"Agreed, Allan; but, amongst other things, I am a doctor, and the operation was uppermost in my mind."

⁴ The second is that I believe this Kalubi had charge of the gorilla god, as no doubt you've guessed; also that it was the gorilla which bit off his finger."

"Why so ? "

"Because I have heard of great monkeys called sokos, that live in Central East Africa, which are said to bite off men's toes and fingers. I have heard, too, that they are very like gorillas."

"Now you mention it, so have I, Allan. Indeed, once I saw a soko, though some way off, a huge, brown ape which stood on its hind legs and drummed upon its chest with its fists. I didn't see it for long, because I ran away."

"The third is that this yellow orchid would be worth a great deal of money if one could dig it up and take it to England."

"I think I told you, Allan, that I valued it at twenty thousand pounds, so that conclusion of yours is not original."

"The fourth is that I should like to dig "p that orchid and get a share of the twenty thousand pounds." Brother John became intensely interested.

"Ah," he said, "now we are getting to the point. I have been wondering how long it would take you to see it, Allan; but if you are slow, you are sure."

"The fifth is," I went on, "that such an expedition, to succeed, would need a deal of money, more than you or I could find. Partners would be wanted, active or sleeping, but partners with cash."

Brother John looked towards the window of the room in which Charlie Scroope was in bed, for, being still weak, he went to rest early.

"No," I said, "he's had enough of Africa, and you told me yourself that it will be two years before he is really strong again. Also there's a lady in this case. Now listen. I have taken it on myself to write to that lady, whose address I found out while he didn't know what he was saying. I have said that he was dying, but that I hoped he might Meanwhile, I added, I thought she live. would like to know that he did nothing but rave of her; also that he was a hero, with a big H twice underlined. My word, I did lay it on about the hero business with a spoon, a real hotel gravy spoon. If Charlie Scroope knows himself again when he sees my description of him-well, I'm a Dutchman, that's all ! The letter caught the last mail, and will, I hope, reach the lady in due course. Now listen again. Scroope wants me to go to England with him to look after him on the voyage—that's what he says. What he means is that he hopes I might put in a word for him with the lady, if I should chance to be introduced to her. He offers to pay all my expenses and to give me something for my loss of time. So, as 1 haven't seen England since I was three years old, I think I'll take the chance.'

Brother John's face fell. "Then how about the expedition, Allan?" he asked.

"This is the first of November," I answered, "and the wet season in those parts begins about now and lasts till April. So it would be no use trying to visit your Pongo friends till then, which gives me plenty of time to go to England and come out again. If you'll trust that flower to me, I'll take it with me. Perhaps I might be able to find someone who would be willing to put down money on the chance of getting the plant on which it grew. Meanwhile, you are welcome to this house, if you care to stay here."

"Thank you, Allan, but I can't sit still for so many months. I'll go somewhere and come back." He paused, and a dreamy look came into his dark eyes, then went on : "You see, brother, it is laid on me to wander and wander through all this great land until—I know."

"Until you know what?" I asked sharply.

He pulled himself together with a jerk, as it were, and answered with a kind of forced carelessness—

"Until I know every inch of it, of course. There are lots of tribes I have not yet visited."

"Including the Pongo," I said. "By the way, if I can get the money together for a trip up there, I suppose you mean to come, too, don't you? If not, the thing's off so far as I am concerned. You see, I am reckoning on you to get us through the Mazitu and into Pongoland by help of your friends."

"Certainly I mean to come. In fact, if you don't go, I shall start alone. I intend to explore Pongoland, even if I never come out of it again."

Once more I looked at him as I answered-

"You are ready to risk a great deal for a flower, John. Or are you looking for more than a flower? If so, I hope you will tell me the truth."

This I said as I was aware that Brother John had a foolish objection to uttering or even acting lies.

"Well, Allan, as you put it like that, the truth is that I heard something more about the Pongo than I told you up-country. It was after I had operated on that Kalubi, or I would have tried to get in alone. But this I could not do then, as I have said."

"And what did you hear?"

"I heard that they had a white goddess as well as a white god."

"Well, what of it? A female gorilla, I suppose."

"Nothing, except that goddesses have always interested me. Good night."

"You are an odd old fish," I remarked after him, "and, what is more, you have got something up your sleeve. Well, I'll have it down one day. Meanwhile, I wonder whether the whole thing is a lie—no, not a lie, an hallucination. It can't be, because of that orchid. No one can explain away the orchid. A queer people, these Pongo, with their white god and goddess and their holy flower. But, after all, Africa is a land of queer people and of queer gods, too."

And now the story shifts away to England. (Don't be afraid, my adventurous reader, if ever I have one; it is coming back to Africa again in a very few pages.)

Mr. Charles Scroope and I left Durban a day or two after my last conversation with Brother John. At Cape Town we caught the mail-a wretched little boat you would think it now-which, after a long and wearisome journey, at length landed us safe at Plymouth. Our companions on that voyage were very dull. I have forgotten most of them, but one lady I do remember. I imagine that she must have commenced life as a barmaid, for she had the orthodox tow hair and blowsy appearance. At any rate, she was the wife of a wine merchant who had made a fortune at the Cape. Unhappily, however, she had contracted too great a liking for her husband's wares, and after dinner was apt to become talkative. For some reason or other, she took a particular aversion to me. Oh, I can see her now, seated in that saloon, with the oil lamp swinging over her head. (She always chose the position under the oil lamp, because it showed off her diamonds.) And I can "Don't bring any of your hear her, too. elephant-hunting manners here, Mr. Allan "--with an emphasis on the "Allan "-" Quatermain; they are not fit for polite society. You should go and brush your hair, Mr. Quatermain." (I may explain that my hair sticks up naturally.)

Then would come her little husband's horrified : "Hush, hush ! You are quite insulting, my dear ! "

Oh, why do I remember it all after so many years, when I have even forgotten the people's names? One of those little things that stick in the mind, I suppose. The Island of Ascension, where we called, sticks also, with its long, swinging rollers breaking in white foam, its bare mountain peak capped with green, and the turtles in the ponds. Those poor turtles! We brought two of them home, and I used to look at them, lying on their backs in the forecastle, flapping their fins feebly. One of them died, and I got the butcher to save me the shell. Afterwards I gave it as a wedding-present to Mr. and Mrs. Scroope, nicely polished and lined. I meant it for a work-basket, and was overwhelmed with confusion when some silly lady said at the marriage, and in the hearing of the bride and bridegroom, that it was the most beautiful cradle she had ever seen. Of course, like a fool, I tried to explain, whereon everybody tittered.

But why do I write of such trifles that have nothing to do with my story?

I mentioned that I had ventured to send a letter to Miss Margaret Manners about Mr. Charles Scroope, in which I said, incidentally, that if that hero should happen to live, I should probably bring him home by the next mail. Well, we got into Plymouth about eight o'clock in the morning, on a mild November day, and shortly afterwards a tug arrived to take off passengers and mails, also some cargo. I, being an early riser, watched it come, and saw upon the deck a stout lady wrapped in furs, and by her side a very pretty, fair-haired young woman clad in a neat serge dress and a pork-pie hat. Presently a steward told me that someone wished to speak to me in the saloon. I went and found these two standing side by side.

"I believe you are Mr. Allan Quatermain," said the stout lady. "Where is Mr. Scroope, whom I understand you have brought home? Tell me at once."

Something about her appearance and fierce manner of address alarmed me so much that I could only answer feebly—

"Below, madam, below."

"There, my dear," said the stout lady to her companion, "I warned you to be prepared for the worst. Bear up; do not make a scene before all these pcople. The ways of Providence are just and inscrutable. It is your own temper that was to blame. You should never have sent the poor man off to these heathen countries."

Then, turning to me, she added sharply: "I suppose he is embalmed? We should like to bury him in Essex."

"Embalmed !" I gasped. "Embalmed ! Why, the man is in his bath, or was a few minutes ago !"

In another second that pretty young lady who had been addressed was weeping with her head upon my shoulder.

"Margaret," exclaimed her companion she was a kind of heavy aunt—"I told you not to make a scene in public! Mr. Quatermain, as Mr. Scroope is alive, would you ask him to be so good as to come here?"

Well, I fetched him, half-shaved, and the rest of the business may be imagined. It is a very fine thing to be a hero with a big H. Henceforth—thanks to me—that was Charlie Scroope's lot in life. He has grandchildren now, and they all think him a hero. What is more, he does not contradict them. I went down to the lady's place in Essex, a fine property with a beautiful old house. On the night I arrived there was a dinnerparty of twenty-four people. I had to make a speech about Charlie Scroope and the leopard. I think it was a good speech. At any rate, everybody cheered, including the servants, who had gathered at the back of the big hall.

I remember that, to complete the story, I introduced several other leopards, a mother two three-part-grown cubs, also and wounded buffalo, and told how Mr. Scroope finished them off one after the other with a hunting-knife. The thing was to watch his face as the history proceeded. Luckily he was sitting next to me, and I could kick him under the table. It was all very amusing, and very happy also, for these two really loved each other. Thank God that I, or, rather, Brother John, was able to bring them together again.

It was during that stay of mine in Essex, by the way, that I first met Lord Ragnall and the beautiful Miss Holmes, with whom I was destined to experience some very strange adventures in the after-years.

After this interlude I got to work. Someone told me that there was a firm in the City that made a business of selling orchids by auction, flowers which at this time were beginning to be very fashionable among rich horticulturists. This, thought I, would be the place for me to show my treasure. Doubtless Messrs. May & Primrose—that was their world-famed style—would be able to put me in touch with opulent orchidists who would not mind venturing a couple of thousands on the chance of receiving a share in a flower that, according to Brother John, should be worth untold gold. At any rate, I would try.

So on a certain Friday, about half-past twelve, I sought out the place of business of Messrs. May & Primrose, bearing with me the golden cypripedium, which was now enclosed in a flat tin case.

As it happened, I chose an unlucky day and hour, for, on arriving at the office and asking for Mr. May, I was informed that he was away in the country valuing.

"Then I would like to see Mr. Primrose," I said.

"Mr. Primrose is round at the rooms selling," replied the clerk, who appeared to be very busy.

"Where are the rooms?" I asked.

"Out of the door, turn to the left, turn to the left again, and under the clock," said the clerk, and closed the shutter.

So disgusted was I with his rudeness that I nearly gave up the enterprise. Thinking

better of it, however, I followed the directions given, and in a minute or two found myself in a narrow passage that led to a large room. To one who had never seen anything of the sort before, this room offered a curious The first thing I observed was a sight. notice on the wall to the effect that customers were not allowed to smoke pipes. I thought to myself that orchids must be curious flowers if they could distinguish between the smoke of a cigar and a pipe, and stepped into the room. To my left was a long table covered with pots of the most beautiful flowers that I had ever seen, all of them orchids. Along the wall and opposite were other tables closely packed with withered roots, which I concluded were also those of orchids. To my inexperienced eye, the whole lot did not look worth five shillings, orchids. for they seemed to be dead. At the head of the room stood the rostrum, where sat a gentleman with an extremely charming face. He was engaged in selling by auction so rapidly that the clerk at his side must have had difficulty in keeping a record of the lots and their purchasers. In front of him was a horseshoe table, round which sat buyers. The end of this table was left unoccupied, so that the porters might exhibit each lot there before it was put up for sale. Standing under the rostrum was yet another table, a small one, upon which were about twenty pots of flowers even more wonderful than those on the large table. A notice stated that these would be sold at one-thirty precisely. All about the room stood knots of men-such ladies as were present sat at the table-many of whom had lovely orchids in their buttonholes. These, I found out afterwards, were dealers and amateurs. They were a kindlyfaced set of people, and I took a liking to them.

The whole place was quaint and pleasant, especially by contrast with the horrible London Squeezing my small person fog outside. into a corner where I was in nobody's way, I watched the proceedings for a while. Suddenly an agreeable voice at my side asked me if I would like a look at the catalogue. I glanced at the speaker, and in a sense fell in love with him at once. As I have explained before, I am one of those to whom a first impression means a great deal. He was not very tall, though strong-looking and well-made enough. He was not very handsome, though none so illfavoured. He was just an ordinary fair young Englishman, four or five-and-twenty years of age, with merry blue eyes and one

of the pleasantest expressions that I ever saw. At once I felt he was a sympathetic soul and full of the milk of human kindness. He was dressed in a rough tweed suit rather worn, with the orchid that seemed to be the badge of all this tribe in his buttonhole. Somehow the costume suited his rather pink-and-white complexion and rumpled fair hair, which I could see, as he was sitting on his cloth hat.

"Thank you, no," I answered ; "I did not come here to buy. I know nothing about orchids," I added, by way of explanation, "except a few I have seen growing in Africa, and this one." And I tapped the tin case which I held under my arm.

"Indeed," he said. "I should like to hear about the African orchids. What is it you have in the case—a plant or flowers?"

"One flower only. It is not mine. A friend in Africa asked me to—well, that is a long story which might not interest you."

"I'm not so sure. I suppose it must be a cymbidium scape, from the size ?"

İ shook my head. "That's not the name my friend mentioned. He called it a cypripedium."

The young man began to grow curious. "One cypripedium in all that large case? It must be a big flower."

"Yes, my friend says it is the biggest ever found. It measures twenty-four inches across the wings—petals, I think he called them—and about a foot across the back part."

"Twenty-four inches across the petals and a foot across the dorsal sepal," said the young man, in a kind of gasp, "and a cypripedium! Sir, surely you are joking?"

"Sir," I answered indignantly, "I am doing nothing of the sort. Your remark is tantamount to telling me that I am speaking a falsehood. But, of course, for all I know, the thing may be some other kind of flower."

"Let me see it. In the name of the goddess Flora, let me see it!"

I began to undo the case. Indeed, it was already half open when two other gentlemen, who had either overheard some of our conversation, or noted my companion's excited look, edged up to us. I observed that they also wore orchids in their buttonholes.

"Hullo, Somers!" said one of them, in a tone of false geniality. "What have you got there?"

"What has your friend got there?" asked the other.

"Nothing," replied the young man who

had been addressed as Somers, "nothing at all—that is, only a case of tropical butter-flies."

"Oh, butterflies !" said Number One, and sauntered away.

But Number Two, a keen-looking person with the eye of a hawk, was not so easily satisfied.

"Let us see these butterflies," he said to me.

"You can't," ejaculated the young man. "My friend is afraid lest the damp should injure their colours. Ain't you, Brown?"

injure their colours. Ain't you, Brown?" "Yes, I am, Somers," I replied, taking his cue and shutting the tin case with a snap.

Then the hawk-eyed person departed, also grumbling, for that story about the damp stuck in his throat.

"Orchidist!" whispered the young man. "Dreadful people, orchidists—so jealous. Very rich, too, both of them. Mr. Brown— I hope that is your name, though I admit the chances are against it."

"They are," I replied ; "my name is Allan Quatermain."

"Ah, much better than Brown! Well, Mr. Allan Quatermain, there's a private room in this place to which I have admittance. Would you mind coming with that "—here the hawk-eyed gentleman strolled past again— "that case of butterflies?"

"With pleasure," I answered, and followed him out of the auction chamber down some steps through the door to the left, and ultimately into a little cupboard-like room lined with shelves full of books and ledgers.

He closed the door and locked it.

"Now," he said, in the tone of the villain in a novel, who at last has come face to face with the virtuous heroine, "now we are alone. Mr. Quatermain, let me see—those butterflies."

I placed the case on a deal table which stood under a skylight in the room. I opened it, I removed the cover of wadding, and there, pressed between two sheets of glass and quite uninjured after all its journeyings, appeared the golden flower, glorious even in death, and by its side the broad green leaf.

The young gentleman called Somers looked at it till I thought his eyes would really start out of his head. He turned away, muttering something, and looked again.

"Oh, Heavens!" he said at last. "Oh, Heavens, is it possible that such a thing can exist in this imperfect world? You haven't faked it, Mr. Half—I mean Quatermain, have you?" "Sir," I said, "for the second time you are making insinuations. Good morning !" And I began to shut up the case.

"Don't be offended," he exclaimed. "Pity the weaknesses of a poor sinner. You don't understand. If only you understood, you would understand."

"No," I said, "I am bothered if I do !"

"Well, you will when you begin to collect orchids. I'm not mad, really, except perhaps on this point. Mr. Quatermain"—this in a low and thrilling voice, "that marvellous cypripedium—your friend is right; it is a cypripedium—is worth a gold mine!"

"From my experience of gold mines, I can well believe that," I said tartly and, I may add, prophetically.

"Oh, I mean a gold mine in the figurative and colloquial sense, not as the investor knows it," he answered. "That is, the plant on which it grew is priceless. Where is the plant, Mr. Quatermain?"

"In a rather indefinite locality in Africa, east by south," I replied. "I can't place it to within three hundred miles."

"That's vague, Mr. Quatermain. I have no right to ask it, seeing that you know nothing of me, but I assure you I am respectable, and, in short, would you mind telling me the story of this flower?"

"I don't think I should," I replied a little doubtfully. Then, after another good look at him, suppressing all names and exact localities, I gave him the outline of the tale, explaining that I wanted to find someone who would finance an expedition to the remote and romantic spot where this particular cypripedium was believed to grow.

Just as I finished my narrative, and before he had time to comment on it, there came a violent knocking at the door.

"Mr. Stephen !" said a voice. "Are you there, Mr. Stephen ?"

"By Jove, that's Briggs!" exclaimed the young man. "Briggs is my father's manager. Shut up the case, Mr. Quatermain. Come in, Briggs," he went on, unlocking the door slowly. "What is it?"

"It is a good deal," replied a thin and agitated person who thrust himself through the opening door. "Your father—I mean Sir Alexander—has come to the office unexpectedly, and is in a nice taking because he didn't find you there, sir. When he discovered that you had gone to the orchid sale, he grew furious, sir, furious, and sent me to fetch you."

"Did he?" replied Mr. Somers, in an

easy and unruffled tone. "Well, tell Sir Alexander I am coming at once. Now please go, Briggs, and tell him I am coming at once."

Briggs departed not too willingly.

"I must leave you, Mr. Quatermain," said Mr. Somers, as he shut the door behind him, "but will you promise me not to show that flower to anyone until I return? I'll be back within half an hour."

"Yes, Mr. Somers. I'll wait half an hour for you in the sale-room, and I promise that no one shall see that flower till you return."

"Thank you. You are a good fellow, and *I* promise you shall lose nothing by your kindness if I can help it."

We went together into the sale-room, where some thought suddenly struck Mr. Somers.

"By Jove," he said, "I nearly forgot about that odontoglossum! Where's Woodden? Oh, come here, Woodden; I want to speak to you."

The person called Woodden obeyed. He was a man of about fifty, indefinite in colouring—for his eyes were very light blue or grey, and his hair was sandy—toughlooking and strongly made, with big hands that showed signs of work, for the palms were horny and the nails worn down. He was clad in a suit of shiny black such as folk of the labouring class wear at a funeral. I made up my mind at once that he was a gardener.

"Woodden," said Mr. Somers, "this gentleman here has got the most wonderful orchid in the whole world. Keep your eye on him and see that he isn't robbed. There are people in this room, Mr. Quatermain, who would murder you and throw your body into the Thames for that flower," he added darkly.

On receipt of this information, Woodden rocked a little on his feet, as though he felt the premonitory movements of an earthquake. It was a habit of his whenever anything astonished him. Then, fixing his pale eye upon me in a way which showedthat my appearance surprised him, he pulled a lock of his sandy hair with his thumb and finger and said—

"Servant, sir, and where might this horchid be?"

I pointed to the tin case.

"Yes, it's there," went on Mr. Somers, "and that's what you've got to watch. Mr. Quatermain, if anyone attempts to rob you, call for Woodden, and he will knock him down. He's my gardener, you know, and entirely to be trusted, especially if it is a matter of knocking anyone down."

"Aye, I'll knock him down, surely," said Woodden, doubling his great fist and looking round him with a suspicious eye.

"Now, listen, Woodden. Have you looked at that Odontoglossum Pavo, and, if so, what do you think of it?" And he nodded towards a plant which stood in the centre of the little group that was placed on the small table beneath the auctioneer's desk. It bore a spray of the most lovely white flowers. On the top petal—if it is a petal—and also on the lip of each of these rounded flowers was a blotch or spot, of which the general effect was similar to the iridescent eye on the tail feathers of a peacock, whence, I suppose, the flower was named "Pavo," or peacock.

"Yes, master, and I think it the beautifullest thing that ever I saw. There isn't a 'glossum in England like that there 'glossum Paving," he added, with conviction, and rocked again as he said the word. "But there's plenty after it. I say they're a-smelling round that blossom like—like dawgs round a rat-hole. And "— this triumphantly—" they don't do that for nothing."

"Quite so, Woodden; you have got a logical mind. But look here, we must have that Pavo, whatever it costs. Now, the governor has sent for me. I'll be back presently, but I might be detained. If so, you've got to bid on my behalf, for I daren't trust any of these agents. Here's your authority." And he scribbled on a card : "Woodden, my gardener, has directions to bid for me.—S. S." "Now, Woodden," he went on, when he had given the card to an attendant, who passed it up to the auctioneer, "don't you make a fool of yourself and let that Pavo slip through your fingers."

In another instant he was gone.

"What did the master say, sir?" asked Woodden of me. "That I was to get that there Paving, whatever it cost?"

"Yes," I said, "that's what he said. I suppose it will fetch a good deal—several pounds?"

"Maybe, sir—can't tell. All I know is that I've got to buy it, as you can bear me witness. Master, he ain't one to be crossed for money. What he wants, he'll have—that is, if it be in the horchid line."

"I suppose you are fond of orchids, too, Mr. Woodden ?"

"Fond of them, sir? Why, I loves 'em!" Here he rocked, "Don't feel for nothing else in the same way, not even for my old woman "—then with a burst of enthusiasm—" no, not even for the master himself, and I'm fond enough of him, Heaven knows! But, begging your pardon, sir "—with a pull at his forelock—" would you mind holding that tin of yours a little tighter? I've got to keep an eye on that as well as on O. Paving, and I just see'd that chap with the tall hat a-looking at it suspicious."

After this we separated. I retired into my corner, while Woodden took his stand by the table, with one eye fixed on what he called the O. Paving and the other on me and my tin case.

An odd fish, truly, I thought to myself. Positive, the old woman ; comparative, his master ; superlative, the orchid tribe. Those were his degrees of affection. Honest and brave and a good fellow, though, I bet.

The sale languished. There were so many lots of one particular sort of dried orchid that buyers could not be found for them at a reasonable price, and many had to be bought in. At length the genial Mr. Primrose in the rostrum addressed the audience.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I quite understand that you didn't come here to-day to buy a rather poor lot of Cattleya Mossiæ. You came to buy, or to bid for, or to see sold, the most wonderful odontoglossum that has ever been flowered in this country, the property of a famous firm of importers, whom I congratulate upon their good fortune in having obtained such a gem. Gentlemen, this miraculous flower ought to adorn a royal greenhouse. But there it is, to be taken away by whoever will pay the most for it, for I am directed to say that it will be sold without reserve. Now, I think," he added, running his eye over the company, "that most of our great collectors are represented in this room to-day. It is true I do not see that spirited and liberal young orchidist, Mr. Somers, but he has left his worthy head-gardener, Mr. Woodden, than whom there is no finer judge of an orchid in England "—here Woodden rocked violently— "to bid for him, as I hope, for the glerious flower of which I have been speaking. Now, as it is exactly half-past one, we will proceed to business. Smith, hand the Odontoglossum Pavo round, that every one may inspect its beauties, and be careful you don't let it fall. Gentlemen, I must ask you not to touch it or to defile its purity with tobacco smoke. Eight perfect

flowers in bloom, gentlemen, and four-no. five more to open. A strong plant, in perfect health, six pseudo-bulbs with leaves. and three without. Two back leads which I am advised can be separated off at the proper time. Now, what bids for the Odontoglossum Pavo? Ah, I wonder who will have the honour of becoming the owner of this perfect, this unmatched pro-duction of Nature? Thank you, sir-three Four! Five! Six! Seven in hundred ! three places ! Eight ! Nine ! Ten ! Oh, gentlemen, let us get on a little faster. Thank you, sir-fifteen ! Sixteen ! It is against you, Mr. Woodden. Ah, thank youseventeen !"

There came a pause in the fierce race for O. Pavo, which I occupied in reducing seventeen hundred shillings to pounds sterling.

"My word," I thought to myself, "eightyfive pounds is a goodish price to pay for one plant, however rare. Woodden is acting up to his instructions with a vengeance."

The pleading voice of Mr. Primrose broke in upon my meditations.

" Gentlemen, gentlemen," he said, "surely you are not going to allow the most wondrous production of the floral world, on which, I repeat, there is no reserve, to be knocked down at this miserable figure? Come, come ! Well, if I must, I must, though, after such a disgrace, I shall get no sleep to-night. One!"-and his hammer fell "Think, gentlemen, for the first time. upon my position, think what the eminent owners, who, with their usual delicacy, have stayed away, will say to me when I am obliged to tell them the disgraceful truth! Two ! "----and his hammer fell a second time. "Smith, hold up that flower. Let the company see it. Let them know what they are losing."

Smith held up the flower, at which everybody glared. The little ivory hammer circled round Mr. Primrose's head. It was about to fall when a quiet man with a long beard, who hitherto had not joined in the bidding, lifted his head and said softly—

"Eighteen hundred!"

"Ah," exclaimed Mr. Primrose, "I thought so ! I thought that the owner of the greatest collection in England would not see this treasure slip from his grasp without a struggle. Against you, Mr. Woodden."

"Nineteen, sir ! " saidWoodden, in a stony voice.

"Two thousand !" echoed the gentleman with the long beard.

"Twenty-one hundred !" said Woodden.

"That's right, Mr. Woodden," cried Mr. Primrose; "you are indeed representing your principal worthily. I feel sure that you do not mean to stop for a few miserable pounds."

"Not if I knows it !" ejaculated Woodden.

"I has my orders, and I acts up to them.". "Twenty-two hundred !" said Longbeard.

"Twenty-three!" echoed Woodden.

"Oh, hang !" should Longbeard, and rushed from the room.

"Odontoglossum Pavo is going for twenty-three hundred, only twenty-three hundred!" cried the auctioneer. "Any advance on twenty-three hundred? What? None? Then I must do my duty. One! Two! For the last time—no advance? Three! Gone to Mr. Woodden, bidding for his principal, Mr. Somers."

The hammer fell with a sharp tap, and at this moment my young friend sauntered into the room.

"Well, Woodden," he said, "have they put the Pavo up yet?"

"It's up and it's down, sir. I've bought him right enough."

"The deuce you have ! What did it fetch ?"

Woodden scratched his head.

"I don't rightly know, sir—never was good at figures, not having much booklarning—but it's twenty-three something."

"Twenty-three pounds? No, it would have brought more than that. By Jingo, it must be two hundred and thirty pounds! That's pretty stiff, but still it may be worth it." At this moment Mr. Primrose, who, leaning over his desk, was engaged in animated conversation with an excited knot of orchid fanciers, looked up.

"Oh, there you are, Mr. Somers," he said. "In the name of all this company, let me congratulate you on having become the owner of the matchless Odontoglossum Pavo, for what, under all the circumstances, I consider the quite moderate price of two thousand three hundred pounds."

Really that young man took it very well. He shivered slightly and turned a little pale, that is all. Woodden rocked to and fro like a tree about to fall. I and my tin box collapsed together in the corner. Yes, I was so surprised that my legs seemed to give way under me. People began to talk, but above the hum of conversation I heard young Somers say in a low voice—

"Woodden, you're a born fool!" Also the answer. "That's what my mother always told me, master, and she ought to know, if anyone did. But what's wrong now? I obeyed orders and bought O. Paving."

"Yes. Don't bother, my good fellow; it's my fault, not yours. I'm the born fool. But, Heavens above, how am I to face this?" Then, recovering himself, he strolled up to the rostrum and said a few words to the auctioneer. Mr. Primrose nodded, and I heard him answer—

"Oh, that will be all right, sir; don't bother. We can't expect an account like this to be settled in a minute. A month hence will do."

Then he went on with the sale.

(To be continued.)

WOOD-SMOKE IN LONDON.

T reminds me of a valley Where, like sunlit golden bees, Doves float to the wood's recesses Down the corridors of trees,

And far smoke above the thatches Lingers slowly to the deep Azure of the heav'n of summer Near the cave of Merlin's sleep.

VICTOR PLARR.

FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE DUKE By ANTHONY HOPE

Illustrated by Charles Crombie



was characteristic of the Duke of Belleville—and to many the trait will seem a graceful one—to attach no exaggerated importance to the antiques and curiosities which he had inherited

from his ancestors or himself acquired by purchase. Indeed, he was accused of holding too lightly even things of real beauty or historic interest. For example, he gave the Queen Bess Flagon to a pretty girl whom he had never seen before and never saw again, just to please her—and himself. ("And two people better worth pleasing I can't imagine," reflected the Duke.) He presented his cousin, Lady Anastasia Vieilleroche-the name is pronounced Veelrock-with the shoes discarded by Marie Antoinette on her wedding-day as being too tight, though he well knew that her ladyship, having the family temperament and the smallest foot in London, would wear them-and wear them out-at her next dance, as in fact she did. And—but there is really no need to multiply instances of his good - nature, carelessness, or caprice, excusable only by the reflection that man's well-being lies not in the multitude of his possessions, but in the free play of the human spirit.

Yet he did attach a sentimental value to the sapphire which the Medici had in unredeemed pledge from Constantine Palaeologos, and Lorenzo the Magnificent gave to Simonetta Cattaneo for her weddinggift. Since that time—but never mind the rest of its history. The Duke valued it for Simonetta's sake, and dreamed, perhaps, in those idle fancies of his, that some day he would find another lady whose wearing of it should not seem sacrilege.

At seven o'clock on a December evening the Duke roused himself from a brief but well-earned repose. In the afternoon he had attended a charitable meeting at the Mansion House, which had been addressed by ministers of all—the Duke thought it must be all — denominations and other eminent persons.

"Frank," said he, "plain clothes, my Ribbon, Simonetta's Sapphire, and the revolver with the ivory butt."

"Yes, your Grace," said Frank, placing a whisky-and-Nocera-water on an adjacent table. "But may I suggest that your Grace's new Browning is a more useful weapon?"

"Not in all ways, Frank." The Duke smiled reflectively. "The old one comes in very handy sometimes, and—— No, I think I won't drink that stuff to-night."

Frank retired to the dressing - room adjoining. The Duke took a note from his pocket. It was signed "Stasy," and ran as follows : "Don't forget to-night. You promised, you know you did! She's perfectly charming, and he's— Oh, by the way, he *thinks* he's a cousin of the King of Spain, so call him Highness. And *please* wear your Blue Ribbon. I know you hate it, but do! Be there eight-fifteen sharp, and don't forget the sapphire."

"She's charming, and he thinks he's a cousin of the King of Spain! And I think —well, I don't quite know what I think," mused the Duke, as he smoked a cigarette. "However, I like to please Stasy, and it's some weeks since anything happened." He was still a little drowsy, and fell to thinking lazily in how odd a fashion people "bobbed up" in town for a season or two and then disappeared again, were somebody's cousins

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and very charming, gave and ate dinners, went away, and weren't missed. "So I dare say these people are all right," he ended charitably, as he shook himself out of his chair and repaired to his dressing-room.

At twenty minutes past eight a small but swift electric brougham, driven by Monsieur Ferdinand—his Grace's chief chauffeur—in person, was at the door. The Duke, having forgotten nothing—neither Ribbon, revolver, nor Simonetta's Sapphire—came out.

"Good evening, Ferdinand. To the Comtesse de Montcorné's place." He paused on the pavement, smiling at Ferdinand.

"Certainly, your Grace." Ferdinand, however, indulged in a slight lift of his bushy brows.

"You know her address? Ferdinand, it's wonderful how you keep up with things."

"She's taken Meldart Lodge for two months, your Grace, and she's been there six weeks already."

" Meldart Lodge ? "

"Regent's Park, your Grace."

"I know it, Ferdinand. A very quiet, rural situation."

"Rather remote, your Grace." Ferdinand liked the centres of life, a taste which may have accounted for a certain emphasis which he laid on the word "remote." "Yes, Ferdinand, rather — er — remote.

"Yes, Ferdinand, rather — er — remote. Well, go there." The Duke got into his brougham and seated himself so that the revolver with the ivory butt, which rested in his hip-pocket, might cause him no inconvenience.

They reached Meldart Lodge—a house with which the Duke was well acquainted —at twenty-five minutes to nine:

"You needn't come back, Ferdinand. I'll find my own way home. Good night," said the Duke.

"It's sometimes convenient to have a car handy, your Grace."

"Yes." The Duke gave a smile of reminiscence. "Well, I may telephone," he conceded, "but not after eleven-thirty."

Monsieur Ferdinand drove off. The Duke watched him go, walked up the steps, and rang the bell. "Stasy will be before me, I expect," he said to himself.

He was received by a butler and two footmen, all very tall men. The butler wore knee-breeches; the footmen were in somewhat elaborate liveries, full-bottomed coats descending over plush breeches, and had their hair powdered. The butler took his hat, one footman removed his overcoat, the other laid hold of the tails of his eveningcoat and gave them a discreetly gentle pull, presumably in case the coat should have rucked up at the collar while the Duke sat in his brougham. This delicate operation the second footman performed with his left hand.

What did he do with his right? Well, if he did anything—and really the Duke could not at the moment have sworn to that—it was most deftly and swiftly done. The faintest perceptible touch, yet enough to make the Duke wheel quickly round. The three tall men faced him, all silent, all expressionless and impassive, all with hands behind their backs. For a moment the Duke looked at them, a quizzical smile hovering about his lips. They stood there, pictures of deferential immobility; there, the three tall men, between him and the hall-door.

" Is it upstairs?" inquired the Duke.

"If your Grace pleases," answered the butler. With a bow, he preceded the Duke. The two footmen remained in the hall. As the Duke turned at the half-landing, and thereby became invisible from the hall, with a rapid movement he put his hand to his hip-pocket. The revolver with the ivory butt was gone.

"Well, I couldn't have tackled the lot. Besides, Stasy's here, I suppose," thought the Duke. And, abandoning a momentary impulse to try to recover the missing revolver, he followed the butler to the top of the stairs. He was frowning slightly, though the smile still played about his mouth. "That's why their coats are so baggy," he said to himself, with a nod of appreciation, as the butler threw open the door and proclaimed his name with a perfectly correct pronunciation. (Bevvle, it is, of course.)

With outstretched hands and a bright smile, with a decided touch—as he imagined — of Southern effusiveness, his hostess advanced to meet him.

For a moment the Duke's manner may have been somewhat absent—he was still thinking—but he recovered himself and took the offered hand. It was small and plump, as indeed was its owner, a little woman with very fair hair, a turned-up nose, and a pathetic expression. She was not pretty, but she was essentially appealing.

"It is kind of you to come, Duke," she said, "but, oh, what a disappointment about dear Lady Anastasia !"

"About——" The Duke's eyes travelled round the room, but he failed to perceive his cousin. "I've just had a telephone from her—at least, it was her maid who spoke. Such neuralgia, poor child ! She can't possibly come out."

"Neuralgia is very unusual in our family," the Duke remarked. "May I call her up and——"

"She's gone to bed, poor dear. I *am* sorry, but won't you put up with us? Oh, let me present you to his Highness Prince——"

She mentioned a name, but, on careful consideration, it seems more discreet not to mention it here. After all, the thick-set gentleman with bluish cheeks, raspy hair, and twinkling black eyes, may have been right in thinking himself cousin to the Catholic King, and no mere desire for actuality must tempt us to risk giving pain in Exalted Quarters. Let us just call him "The Prince," or—as the Countess called him—" Monseigneur."

The Duke made his bow—a rather reserved sort of bow—to the Prince, who gave his hand a hearty shake.

"Delighted to meet you, Duke, but I am desolated—desolated—about your charming cousin." By the way, both Prince and Countess spoke English very well, though with a foreign accent, and both with the same sort of foreign accent, as the Duke observed. The Duke bowed again. Foldingdoors on the side of the room opposite to that from which he had entered were noiselessly opened. Dinner was served in a room which was, as the Duke knew, ordinarily the back drawing-room. The Countess gave her arm to the Prince, the Duke followed them, passing the tall butler and the two tall footmen. On the second footman he bestowed a searching yet unobtrusive glance.

"But you'll show us the Simonetta Sapphire, all the same, won't you?" the Countess pursued over the oysters. "His Highness is so interested in it because it once nearly belonged to him."

"Perhaps it may some day," smiled the Duke. "These things pass from hand to hand, you know."

"Oh, you—you'll never sell!" She laughed merrily. "No, you're too rich! But, you remember, when poor Simonetta died——"

"No, no, dear Countess, when her husband died," corrected the Prince.

"Oh, yes! I'm so stupid! When her husband died, the Medici got it again----"

"Trust them !" The Prince chuckled jovially.

"And Catherine de Medici---"

"Marie, my dear Countess, Marie." The Prince's voice hinted at annoyance. Certainly the Countess was not telling the story well.

"Took it to France," she went on, raising her brows mockingly at her friend, "and Louis XIII.——"

"Fourteenth," sighed the Prince. His annoyance seemed to give place to despair.

"Gave it to his grandson, Philip IV.----" "Fifth," said both the Prince and the

Duke, exchanging a smile.

"Didn't I say Fifth? And he gave it to Monseigneur's—to the lady who——"

"Who later on married my great-greatgreat-grandfather and ——" The Prince here interrupted himself. "But the Duke knows all this," he said. And he added, smiling: "Really better than you seem to, Countess!"

"Oh, but show it to us first !" laughed the Countess. "Then all the history will seem so much more interesting."

Dinner had been served with remarkable smoothness and rapidity. The second footman —who seemed to devote himself particularly to the Duke—was one of the most gifted waiters the Duke had ever met. ("And what a gift it is!" he reflected.) They were already at the quails when the Countess asked to be shown Simonetta's Sapphire.

"Show it you now ? Oh, with pleasure," said the Duke.

The table was square and quite small. The three sat on three sides of it; on the vacant side, nearest the doors, stood a large and beautiful bowl full of apples. At this moment the butler was filling the Countess's glass, the first footman was handing Monseigneur dry toast, and the second footman was proffering red pepper to the Duke. To the latter it seemed, somehow, as though a rigidity fell on all the three—nay, on all the five, for the Prince and the Countess sat motionless. The Duke eyed the red pepper. He had a queer feeling that a commodity possessing the properties of red pepper would be better in his own possession, but, fearing to create suspicion, he refrained from seizing it.

"Dear Anastasia said you were always so good-natured about showing it."

"It's no trouble to show a thing if you happen to have it with you," laughed the Duke, as he put his hand into his waistcoat pocket.



"By Heaven, the revolver's gone, too!"

A stillness that seemed as though it could be felt settled on the room. The Duke had read about this kind of stillness, and had no difficulty in recognising it. "Other pocket, I suppose," smiled the

Duke. He tried it; he shrugged his shoulders, and, with a little frown, dived both hands into his trousers pockets. Both hands came up empty. "Really, it's very funny!" He dived into his coat-pockets,



explored again the pockets he had searched before, shook his head, and leant forward to the Countess. "I swear I had it, Countess," he said.

"But if you had it----" she cried.

"Of course I had it, Countess. Why, I promised Anastasia, and that's a thing I should never forget." He smiled deprecatingly. "I must have had my pocket picked." The Prince drummed on the table with his fingers. A flush of red mingling with his bluish tint turned his cheeks to purple. "I refused an important invitation addressed to a person differently placed from myself, it would have been a command—for to-night, on the faith of your Grace's promise, as conveyed to me by Lady Anastasia Vieilleroche. It seems incredible that—..."

"Won't you look again, Duke?" the Countess interposed pleadingly.

The Prince's pompousness did not avail to hide his anger and disappointment. In them the Duke found food for fresh thought.

"Cayenne pepper, your Grace?" asked the second footman patiently.

"No, thank you."

The second footman went to the sideboard, put down the pepper, and returned to his chosen place by the Duke's chair. The other two attendants did not move.

The Duke had, by now, little doubt of the nature of his company. "It all comes of letting that article about the sapphire appear in the magazine," he reflected ruefully. "Then these people got at Stasy-which isn't difficult—and dear Stasy always likes to exhibit me at the end of a string." He felt his position critical. If he searched himself too thoroughly, though he might not find the jewel, he was bound to miss the revolver ! To miss the revolver and yet to exhibit no suspicion-would that be plausible ? To miss it and exhibit suspicion -would that be safe ? Meldart Lodge was remote, and the three servants very tall. But, if he searched any more, miss it he must. The second footman at least probably all of them-knew that.

"Of course I'll search again," he said, as good-humouredly as the somewhat peculiar circumstances allowed. "But it's no use." He dived into all his pockets again—all except the hip-pocket. "It's not there," he said, looking round at them.

"Look again," said the Prince. His tone was imperative.

Then the Duke knew that the Prince knew that he had a hip-pocket; somehow the Prince had been informed of that. Probably they all knew it. There would be a signal arranged; anything would do —the bowl of apples, the handling of the pepperpot. Such a code was child's play to his friends of this evening, no doubt. As these thoughts passed quickly through his mind, the butler and the first footman, apparently in despair of securing any attention, carried off their respective burdens, and, returning to the vacant side of the table, stood there in attentive silence; they were thus well disposed to prevent any movement towards the doors on the Duke's part.

The Duke looked for a moment at the Countess. She appeared to be nervous and uncomfortable. The Prince looked purple and impatient.

"Well, of course," said the Duke, "it's just conceivable that, in absence of mind, I dropped it into my hip-pocket"—his hand moved slowly in that direction—" with my revolver." He gave a sudden and violent start. "By Heaven, the revolver's gone, too !" he cried, with an admirably simulated air of surprise and consternation.

"Revolver ! Surely you didn't bring----" began the Countess.

But the second footman interposed.

"Your Grace forgets," said he, with a deferential smile, "that, on removing your overcoat, your Grace placed your revolver in the pocket of it."

"That is so, my lady," added the butler, also permitting himself a deferential smile.

The Duke permitted himself a smile. The Countess and even the purple Prince allowed themselves a similar liberty.

"Your Grace will find it when you leave," pursued the second footman.

"Did I place a jewel-case there, too, I wonder?" asked the Duke.

"I perceived no other article—only the revolver, your Grace."

"Now that the revolver's off your mind, let's have the sapphire," said the Prince. He seemed hardly to care about keeping up appearances now; he spoke with a rude sneer.

The Countess suddenly laid her small plump hand on the Duke's arm and raised her appealing eyes to his. "You really may as well," she murmured, with a blush. "What's the use of a fuss?"

Something in her voice touched the Duke with a sense of that sympathy which all adventurous people have for one another, however widely different the sphere and method of their activities may be. He pressed the Countess's hand for a moment, and laughed.

"The last thing I want is a fuss," said he, "especially as I dare say other people aren't as careless with their revolvers as I seem to have been with mine. But I haven't got the sapphire, and that's the fact. Search me if you like."

The Prince lost control of himself. Half rising from his chair, he cried : "Hang it, we will!" But the Countess's plump little hand was on his arm now. "Oh, your temper!" she murmured, patting his coat-sleeve soothingly. "So dangerous! So bad!"

The Prince, very purple, seemed, all the same, to acknowledge the justice of her rebuke. He sank back into his seat again.

"You should exercise common-sense, Monseigneur," she pursued. "If the Duke had suspicions of us-""

"Oh, madame !" protested the Duke, with a smile.

"He wouldn't bring the sapphire. If he had no suspicions, he wouldn't hide it. If he had brought it, it was to show to ladies. Well, then"—she blushed more markedly— "he wouldn't have it in—well, in a place that was not convenable."

The Duke admired her common-sense; but it is, after all, characteristic of commonsense to confine itself to obvious alternatives.

"Why didn't you bring it, mon ami?" she went on, turning to the Duke.

"Well, really, I - I feel a bit awkward, and "-he indicated the tall servants—"we are not alone."

"Oh, yes, we are—quite enough alone," said she, with a smiling nod. "You're the only stranger here, Duke."

"Madame, I will be as candid as you are, if candour is to be the order of the day. The sapphire is valuable. I never take it anywhere without consulting the police."

"There, now, what did I say? I told you he wasn't a fool!" exclaimed the Countess. The Duke may have been mistaken, but he certainly thought that the remark was addressed, primarily at all events, to the second footman. "And what did the police say when you consulted them?"

"You'll excuse me? You know it's their business to be suspicious. They said that I knew too little of your-your *ménage*, Countess, and that they-""

"Knew too much?"

The Duke waved his hands. "I might tell you that. It would sound well. If I had wanted to bluff, I should have said that. But I prefer to tell you the truth. They said they knew nothing at all, but that, if I wished, they would make inquiries." At this point the Duke flattered himself that he was lying with a pretty discretion.

"And you said ?" pursued the Countess, with that appealing persistence of hers.

"Oh, I said," laughed the Duke, "that I should be better able to tell them about that if they'd call at my place to-morrow morning." He lit a cigarette. "Which," he added, through the first puffs of it, "they agreed to do."

With this the Duke rose to his feet, not being, however, quite sure how the company would receive his movement. The immediate result of it was a sudden turn of all heads towards the second footman. He, for his part, looked at the Countess and then held up his hand. Nobody moved.

"It's all quite understood between us," the Duke went on, assuming now an air of some authority. "You are to sacrifice my cousin's acquaintance and the remainder of your tenancy of this house—fortunately, only a fortnight."

"How do you know that?" blurted out the Prince.

The Duke took no heed of him. He knew now who were the leading spirits of the party, and Monseigneur was not among them. "On my part I agree to forget this evening, except so far as may be necessary to satisfy my cousin's curiosity. You may wonder that I make you this offer. You will hardly hesitate to accept it." He pushed his chair back from the table and, turning round, came face to face with the second footman. Their eyes met, the Duke's alert yet confident, the second footman's ruminative, puzzled, searching his opponent's face.

Looking into the second footman's eyes which were of the shade commonly called china blue—the Duke realised that he was not out of the wood yet. The second footman —whatever might be the case with his associates—was not satisfied. Then he must tread very warily; he must, above all, show no eagerness and no anxiety.

"You look thoughtful, my friend," he remarked. As he spoke, the little Countess rose suddenly from her chair, came to the second footman, and put her arm through his. The next moment the butler and the first footman took the two empty chairs and helped themselves, the butler to an apple, the footman to port. The Duke looked at his watch. "Masks off at ten-thirty, is it?" he asked the Countess, with a smile.

"You have puzzled my husband, and he's a very clever man," she said.

"Happy to make the Count's acquaintance, in a new and, I'm sure, much more pleasant capacity," remarked the Duke, smiling at the second footman.

"I'm wondering how it is that your Grace risked disappointing Lady Anastasia," said the second footman, who preserved throughout a pensive gravity. "Prudence before politeness sometimes? No?"

"I hardly think so, with your Grace. It doesn't accord with what I've heard of you."

"You think I've contrived to hide the thing since I came into the house?"

"Not since you've been in this room, I'm sure of that. But I'll do myself the honour of escorting you to the front door. If you have hidden it, I should wish it to remain where it is for the present."

The Duke laughed. "Let it remain where it is, by all means. I've no quarrel with that."

"Come, Duke," said the Countess. "Give me your arm. My husband will follow us."

The Duke obeyed, though clearly the act of courtesy would cripple his actions in case he wished to pick up Simonetta's Sapphire from an improvised hiding-place. Perhaps the Countess was awake to that consideration. They passed through the drawing-room, followed by the second footman three or four paces behind.

"I'm afraid," said the Countess, as they went downstairs, "that you think very badly of us."

"I beg your pardon?" The Duke had been thinking, but not of the moral character of his hosts.

"I mean—that we should adopt this this mode of life."

"Oh, on the contrary. It must be extremely interesting. I myself have always found a pleasure in evading the law—in the matter of motor-cars, for instance."

"Oh, but we never take those! That's very vulgar!" cried the Countess, genuinely shocked.

"I don't think I meant exactly what you do," smiled the Duke.

They were at the bottom of the stairs. The hall-door, the way of escape, lay before the Duke; it would be affectation to deny that he felt somewhat excited.

On approaching the door, still arm-in-arm with the Countess, still followed by the second footman, the Duke perceived his hat and coat on the table; and not in the pocket of the coat, but lying beside it, gleamed the ivory butt of his revolver. The Duke's first impulse was to disengage himself, rush forward, and seize it. The wisdom of "second thoughts" restrained him. He knew that the look of questioning was still in the second footman's eyes. Much as the Duke valued Simonetta's Sapphire, his keenest desire at that moment was the second footman's defeat. The little Counters let go his arm and took up his coat. "Let me help you on with it," she said.

Apparently the second footman had satisfied himself with regard to the coat at an earlier stage. At any rate, he paid no heed to it now. He took up the revolver and stood turning it over idly in his hands and frowning thoughtfully. Not looking at him, the Duke busied himself in adjusting his scarf and buttoning his coat. Then he took his hat in his left hand and held out his right to the Countess.

"I'll give your remembrances to my cousin," he said. "Of course you put her off to-night?"

The Countess nodded, the Duke smiled, the Countess opened the hall-door.

"Oh, but I hope I may have my revolver?" added the Duke. "It's an old friend." And on this spoken sentence there came into his head, urgent, vivid, charged with overpowering anxiety, the silent questions: "How did I say that? Was it right? Was it wrong? Was it too anxious? Was it overcareless? How, in Heaven's name, did I say that?"

The second footman raised his eyes to the Duke's face again and held the butt of the revolver towards him. "I'm afraid I've taken the liberty of removing the cartridges, your Grace."

"I thought that possible," said the Duke, smiling, as he put out his hand to take the weapon.

That sounds a simple thing to do. But if his hand trembled, if he snatched eagerly, if his eyes lit up with premature exultation? The second footman was—or seemed—a long time handing over the revolver.

"You felt me take it, didn't you?" he asked. "When you came in, I mean?"

"I thought I felt you—just felt you."

" I thought you did, too." Clumsy of me ! Here it is."

"If I'd had the sapphire, you would certainly have put me on my guard. But that wouldn't have been much use."

Not till he had said this did he put out his hand to take the revolver—a perfectly steady hand. Indeed, the Duke always declared and, if his word were doubted, maintained with something more than his usual warmth —that nothing whatever in his demeanour, neither hand, nor mouth, nor eyes, in the least betrayed him. "No, he thought of it himself," the Duke would say, "but, as the gods would have it, just too late."

However that may be—and the Duke was

not accustomed to claim credit undeserved just as he had restored the revolver to his hip-pocket and had backed politely to the door, which the Countess still held open for him, the second footman raised his hands high above his head for an instant, uttered a loud cry of "By Heaven!" and hurled himself forward towards the Duke.

The Duke sprang back, seizing the outside handle of the door, and thus wrenching the inside one from the Countess's grasp. He had time—time, and not a second more—to slam the door behind him, and he took the five steps that led down from it in a flying leap. Landed in the winding avenue which ran from the house to the road, he made the best speed he could.

He had need. He heard the door open again behind him, he heard the Countess shout: "Don't shoot, dear, don't shoot!" he heard the second footman's feet land on the gravel of the drive with a thud far heavier than his own had made. Distrusting the effect of the Countess's appeal, the Duke ran for life—and Simonetta's Sapphire.

The drive was perhaps a hundred yards long. The Duke had too big a start to be caught in that space—except by a bullet. The second footman ran well, but he did not gain much. "But he may catch me on the road—it's very quiet at night. And there are lamps on the road—they'll give him a better aim !" To run the hundred yards took him, perhaps, eleven seconds, but there is plenty of time for thought in that.

But suddenly he came to a stop. Suddenly, too, the pursuing feet behind him ceased to beat the gravel. A long, low, cautious whistle had sounded through the stillness of the grounds of remote Meldart Lodge. The Duke cast one look into the murky drive behind him, then he walked forward easily, a smile on his lips. He knew that whistle.

Outside the gate was Monsieur Ferdinand, not in the small electric brougham, but in a powerful touring car. He touched his cap respectfully.

"I didn't call you up, Ferdinand," remarked the Duke.

"No, your Grace," said Ferdinand; "but the fact is, happening to be in a public-house the other day, I happened to hear a man say that the lady at Meldart Lodge was no better than_____"

"Mere gossip, Ferdinand," said the Duke, getting in beside him. "There was no reason for you to come."

Ferdinand looked up at him. "Your Grace seems a trifle out of breath." Ferdinand touched him on the arm ; a slow, heavy, retreating step echoed from the avenue. Ferdinand chuckled softly.

"Have it your own way, Ferdinand," smiled the Duke. "I think I'll take a whisky-and-seltzer at the Blenheim Club."

"Very good, your Grace. I shouldn't wonder if you want it !"

* * * *

The Duke finished his narrative—and his chocolate. Lighting a cigar, he leant back in his chair and regarded his cousin with appreciative eyes. She had looked in on the way back from her morning ride. She wore a dark blue habit and a broad-brimmed black hat; her feet, in top boots, entirely warranted the disposal of the shoes that had proved too small for Marie Antoinette. Besides all this —to say nothing of the tilt of her nose, which, however, the Duke never failed to observe—her cheeks wore a bright flush, not entirely attributable to her recent exercise.

"That's all very well, Basil," said Lady Anastasia. "I dare say I ought to have tumbled to what they were, and I dare say you were very clever, as, indeed, you seem to think yourself——"

"Rather fortunate than clever," survey interposed the Duke.

"But if the people had been all right, and if they hadn't put me off, and if I had gone—___" The Duke smiled slightly, and Lady Anastasia looked haughty. "All of which are quite—quite—er—__""

"Probable hypotheses, dear Anastasia," the Duke suggested, with a nod.

"Just what I was going to say—quite probable hypotheses. Well, then, I should have been very disappointed and ashamed, because I'd promised them that you'd bring the sapphire, and you'd promised me that you'd bring it. I should have looked a fool, and you—well, it's the first time you ever broke a promise to me in your life."

"Talking of the revolver with the ivory butt," said the Duke, "here it is." He took it from the table. "It began life as a singlebarrelled pistol, and the story goes—I give it for what it's worth—that it was made for Napoleon during the Hundred Days, and that he carried it at Waterloo—in case of accidents. However that may be"—the Duke smiled—"he made no use of it."

" Accidents ? "

"You see the little round gold plaque on the top, with a crowned N and three tiny bees? Well, of course, that would be an obvious fake, if they were faking, wouldn't it? All the same, it does do this, you see."

As the Duke spoke, the little gold plaque with the three bees and the crowned N rose slowly on four tiny golden legs, and formed, as it were, a little tabernacle on the top of the ivory butt. "Room for a small bottle of poison, you see," remarked the Duke, "and just nice room for-"

"Why, I never thought of that !"

"No more did the second footman-till a moment too late."

An oblong ball of cotton-wool lay in the tabernacle, carefully attached to the four legs by fine twine.

"It wouldn't have done for it to rattle," the Duke pursued, as he broke the twine and took out the little bundle. Then the legs slowly sank down again, and the gold plaque fitted neatly, impeccably, into its place. The Duke laid the ball of cotton-wool on the table by him.

"How does that work?" asked Lady Anastasia, naturally curious.

"Just a spring," answered the Duke,

smiling. "Would you like to see if you can find it?"

She shook her head, and, taking up the ball of cotton-wool, disengaged the sapphire from its wrappings. It lay in her hand, and she regarded it for a long while. At last she raised her eyes to the Duke's.

"It was a shame to make you risk it," she said. "Is anything else in the world bluereally blue-except this?" She held it out towards him on the palm of her hand. "Just some eyes," said the Duke.

At this moment Frank entered. The Duke's air indicated surprise, if not displeasure. Frank carried a small antique leather case, open and empty, in his hand. He looked sadly flustered. The Duke turned to him, but Lady Anastasia's eyes were still set on the sapphire in the palm of her hand.

"I beg your Grace's pardon, but I-I can't see Simonetta's Sapphire anywhere this morning, your Grace."

"Oh, yes, you can, Frank, if you look in the right place," said the Duke.



THE LIVING FLAME.

HEN wild November's ruthless work is done,

And the last leaf is ripped from every tree, When the robbed hedgerows barely hold in fee A tithe of vanished wealth, new joys are spun And deftly woven by the untiring sun.

Distrustful souls! of late we feared to see. Like our best hours that do so quickly flee, The year's swift race of beauty wholly run. But on this sunlit, brave December morn

The living flame burns steady still, and bright; Though from the hedgerows half their wealth is torn,

New hidden treasure flashes into light;

Their winter darkness cannot be forlorn, For sparkling wings of birds illume their night.

MARIAN HOCKLIFFE.

"MON ABRI" v. "MON REPOS"

By BARRY PAIN

Illustrated by Tom Peddie



a street in the Fulham neighbourhood were two semi-detached houses, making one perfect block. On the fanlight over the front door of one was painted "Mon Abri," and on the fanlight of

the other, "Mon Repos." It was the one touch of sentiment that their builder and owner had permitted himself. All the rest was pure business. The partition wall between the two houses was, from a builder's point of view, particularly business-like, and suggested Euclid's definition of a line—length without breadth.

For a time perfect harmony prevailed between the families resident in the two houses. Mr. and Mrs. Cheeseman, at "Mon Abri," were an admirable couple and highly respectable. Mr. and Mrs. Fox, at "Mon Repos," were just as admirable and not less respectable. Getting their milk from the same milkman, suffering the same inconvenience from the road being up, having the same invitations to buy cheap coal thrust into their respective letter-boxes, they lived in natural harmony, inviting one another to tea at regular intervals, and exchanging a stately civility.

Then the blow fell. Mrs. Fox's mother was in failing health, and she lived in Brixton. Therefore Mr. and Mrs. Fox proposed in future to live in Brixton. They broke the news to the Cheesemans one Sunday afternoon, and Mrs. Cheeseman said that it was a blow.

"In a house like this," said Mr. Cheeseman, "everything depends on what you've got next-door. There has never been a hitch of any kind between us, Mr. Fox. It has been give-and-take the whole time, and we shall be very sorry to lose you. And if the new-comers are not satisfactory—well, we shall have to go, too."

For two or three months "Mon Repos" remained untenanted. Then one evening, on his return from the City, Mr. Cheeseman learned from his wife that the house was definitely let and the board was down. She had found out from the milkman, who knew nearly everything, that a Mr. and Mrs. Simpson had taken the house. He said he had seen them, and they seemed to be nice people.

"All that means," said Mr. Cheeseman darkly, "is that they are getting their milk from him."

"What I hope and pray," said Mrs. Cheeseman, "is that they haven't got a dog that will fight with my Loulou. If they have, it will make eternal trouble."

"Well," said Mr. Cheeseman, using a phrase that he had heard somewhere, "we can only wait and see. I've been a tenant here for over twelve years now, and I think I might say without conceit that a line from me to the landlord might have its effect."

On the day that the Simpsons moved in, Mrs. Cheeseman had much further information for her husband in the evening. "I must say," she said, "that, so far as I could tell from the window, she seemed a nice little woman. I thought the husband seemed rather worried, and I hope it is not financial trouble."

"It makes no difference to us, if it is," said her husband. "My principles about lending and borrowing are quite fixed. Still, he might just have been worried about the move. Men do get worried at such times. I was myself."

"Oh, you were!" said Mrs. Cheeseman. "More like a bear with a sore head than anything human. They've got quite nice furniture, too. As good as ours, and perhaps better. There was one picture I noticed I shouldn't have been sorry to have in our drawing-room. And they don't

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keep a dog. I suppose it will be my duty to call."

"As a matter of course," said Mr. Cheeseman. "But don't hurry it. People like to get settled down first. In a week or ten days will be quite soon enough."

But before that period had elapsed, a distressing incident happened.

Of course, Mrs. Cheeseman's watchful eye had detected that "Mon Repos" had a cottage piano, but it had aroused no suspicions in her. She had, a piano herself, and it was never used. They did possess a Mechanical Musicianette—an antiquated and imperfect form of piano-player—but they themselves had been unable to stand it, and it had been relegated to an attic. Besides, all respectable people had pianos, and all neighbourly people refrained as much as possible from using them.

Four nights after the Simpsons' arrival, as Mr. and Mrs. Cheeseman were finishing dinner, Mr. Cheeseman observed that they seemed to be having a little music next-door.

"Plays nicely, too," said Mrs. Cheeseman. Wonder if it's her or him?"

At nine o'clock Mr. Cheeseman, looking up from his newspaper, said : "They do keep on and on at it."

A little later Mrs. Cheeseman said : "What they're playing now is 'I Want to be Down Home in Dixie.""

"I wish to goodness they were!" said Mr. Cheeseman. "But, however, just for once in a way, so long as it's not made a practice of _____"

The music that one seeks has charms. The music that is thrust upon one, when one wishes to give attention to something else, has no emollient power upon the savage breast—or even on the civilised one. At ten o'clock—Mr. Cheeseman's usual bed-time he was beginning to be irritated.

As he switched off the light in the drawing-room, he said : " I suppose they will have the common decency to stop in five minutes now."

At half-past ten the piano at "Mon Repos" was still working vigorously. It knocked off for refreshments a few minutes before eleven, and then resumed again, coming to a final *fortissimo* close at eleven twenty-five. It was one o'clock before Mr. Cheeseman's lacerated feelings would allow him to sleep. During that period the irritation had become temper, and temper had become violent, till he was within appreciable distance of becoming a homicidal lunatic.

But in the morning, though he looked a

little weary, he had resumed his natural dignity.

"Surely," said Mrs. Cheeseman at breakfast, "it would not be out of the way if you sent a civil line to them, just pointing out-----"

"Oh, no," said Mr. Cheeseman. "Then they would write back, and we should write again, and it would be just like one of these comic stories."

"Suppose you mentioned it to the landlord?"

"Well, of course, if I did, out they'd go neck and crop. But I don't want to do anything unduly harsh at present. I may be driven to it, but I have another method to try first. They played till half-past eleven, as near as no matter. To-night I'm going to play till half-past twelve. Have our Mechanical Musicianette brought down into the drawing-room."

"Well, you know what it is. It's not in perfect order. It doesn't always strike the right notes. You said you never wanted to hear the thing again."

"I shan't be playing it for pleasure. I shall be playing it for self-defence. By the time they've heard that for four hours and a half, they will have learned a lesson—the lesson of give-and-take. I don't think we shall get any more trouble."

"Yes, but what about me?"

"After dinner you can just pop round to your mother's. She'll like it. You'll get back a little after ten, and upstairs, with cotton-wool in your ears, you might be able to sleep."

"Yes, but-" began Mrs. Cheeseman.

"You kindly do what I say. I've thought this thing out."

Mrs. Cheeseman always kindly did what he said, and after dinner the Mechanical Musicianette was ready for him.

"We've only got three rolls of music," said his wife apologetically.

"Quite enough," said Mr. Cheeseman, taking off his coat. "There was a good deal of repetition at 'Mon Repos' last night, as far as I remember. Now, then, you pop round to your mother's, and I'll get started. Reminds me of my old bicycling days."

"Mother will be sure to ask why you haven't come, too."

"Tell her I've got work to do."

The Musicianette started its fatal work, and Mrs. Cheeseman fied. She returned at ten minutes past ten, at a lucky moment, when he was just taking out one roll and putting in another. He had now removed his waistcoat.

"How's it getting on ?" she asked. "Oh, pretty well." He wiped the perspiration from his forehead. "It's in the ankles and front of the shin that I feel it most. However, if the bellows hold out, I shall. They'll get it in the neck right up till half-past twelve. And just get me a whisky-and-soda, dear. T know I don't generally, but this sort of thing takes it out of you."

here and there, and he wondered if the bearings had become heated.

At twelve he was in a state of extreme exhaustion, but he never gave way-never relaxed except to change the roll of music. But from twelve till half-past his eye was glued on the clock on the mantelpiece, and, as the clock struck half-past, he stopped abruptly in the middle of a phrase. He rose from his seat and, owing to cramp in the muscles, fell over. Slowly and laboriously he attained the perpendicular position. He



"'It's in the ankles and front of the shin that I feel it most."

She brought the whisky-and-soda just in time to hear the opening bars of the Musicianette's rendering of Mendelssohn's "Wedding March."

"They've had this four times already to-night," said her husband, without ceasing to pedal the infernal machine. "I shall be stiff to-morrow, but it's worth it. Good night."

Mrs. Cheeseman slept easily, and, with cotton-wool in her ears, was not at all disturbed. Downstairs in the drawing-room Mr. Cheeseman manfully plugged on. The Musicianette now took to skipping a phrase was far too tired to put on his coat and waistcoat again, and flung them over one arm. He took his glass in one hand and hobbled into the dining-room to refill it, and then he switched off the lights and hobbled slowly up to bed.

He could not sleep. His legs hurt him, and four unintermittent hours of the Mechanical Musicianette are lacerating to the nerves. He had been in bed about ten minutes when he heard the hoot of a taxi. The cab apparently drove up to his own door, and remained there with the engine whirring. Mr. Cheeseman

got out of bed and peered through the curtains.

The taxi-cab, however, had stopped, not in front of "Mon Abri," but in front of "Mon Repos." Out of it stepped Mr. Simpson in full evening-dress. He handed out Mrs. Simpson, in full evening-dress, gave her the latch-key, and proceeded to pay the cabman. They had probably been out the whole evening, and had absolutely missed the fine lesson of give-and-take which Mr. Cheeseman, at great personal inconvenience and suffering to himself, had delivered. Mr. Cheeseman's first thought was that on no account must anything be said about this to Mrs. Cheeseman.

At breakfast he appeared in the best of spirits, but refused to have the Mechanical Musicianette moved back again to the decent retirement of the attic. "You see," he said explanatorily, "you never know. It's not likely, but it is just possible that a second intimation will have to be given. If it is, I am prepared to do it. I'm getting into splendid training. I don't know that I shan't take up the bicycle again."

But Mrs. Cheeseman was dispirited that morning. Loulou, a dog of uncertain age, breed, temper, and appetite, was missing, and she was very anxious about him. She told her husband that she had already written out a notice destined for exhibition in the greengrocer's window, offering a reward for the dog's recovery.

"How much have you offered?" said Mr. Cheeseman at once.

"I have not named a sum. I have simply said : 'Will be handsomely rewarded.'"

"That's right," said Mr. Cheeseman. "And, of course, a shilling will be the limit."

When Mr. Cheeseman reached home that night, he found that his wife's spirits had quite recovered. She was volubly explanatory.

"Oh, my dear, such a lot of things have happened while you've been away. Do sit Loulou's back. Mrs. Simpson down. brought him. She found him three miles away from here. Just think of that ! He was obviously lost, and she bent down to see the name on the collar. She saw our address on it, and had the presence of mind to put the handle of her umbrella through it, so that she could keep him off her legs, and brought him back here. No words can paint how pleased that poor dog was to see me again. He must have been half-starved, for he ate cold mutton, and you know how he generally is about that-just as if he were a human being. And, of course, I simply had to ask

You must see that for yourself. her in. And I was rather embarrassed as to the reward, so I suggested she might like to have it for some charity in which she was interested. She wouldn't hear of it, and said she was only too glad to have been able to do a neighbourly act, and that she would soon make friends with the little dog. Oh. yes, and that's not all. It started, of course, with the talk about neighbourliness. She said they were afraid they had been a frightful nuisance the other night, with their piano, but it was not really their own fault. They had had a young man in to dinner, with whom Mr. Simpson had business relations, and that young man got to the piano, and no kind of hints would make him get away from it again. She said definitely that it would be the last time he would darken her doors. Then, of course, I was all on thorns about your going on so with the Mechanical Musicianette last night; but you need not be worried, dear, for that's all right, too."

Mr. Cheeseman did his best to look relieved.

"I think they must be fairly well connected. A rich relative had them to dinner last night and to a theatre afterwards, and then to supper at an hotel; so, by a merciful Providence, there is no harm done. Such a nice, friendly little woman she is !"

"Well, yes," said Mr. Cheeseman, "that is a bit of luck. Then, of course, I knew it would be all right. If they were out, no harm was done. If they were in, there was a lesson for them."

"Yes, but if they had been in, and hadn't needed the lesson?"

"Now, kindly do what I say and don't keep arguing. As the acquaintance has been begun in this informal way, I think it may go on informally, though I can't say I care much about Bohemianism generally. Is it Jane's night in on Sunday?"

"Yes."

"Then just drop Mrs. Simpson a friendly line, saying it would give us great pleasure if she and her husband would come in to Sunday supper. And what's that Musicianette doing down here? I do wish you'd have it taken up in the attic again !"

A fortnight later the following advertisement appeared in a popular newspaper: "Mechanical Musicianette, in fair working order, with three rolls of good music. Will accept gentleman's second-hand bicycle or part cash. Address E. C., Esq., 'Mon Abri,' etc."



Photo by]

P. Swift, Burslem. A POTTERY BESIDE THE CANAL FROM WHICH THE CLAY IS UNLOADED.

CLAY IN THE HANDS OF THE POTTER.

By ARNOLD BENNETT.

LTHOUGH the world, when it takes any interest at all in the Five Towns, identifies the district with clay, I do not think that I have ever seen Five Towns children playing at being potters. At the period when local history begins, earthen vessels were being made in the Five Towns, and certainly there is an unbroken record of at least twelve hundred years of pottery manufacture down there; it is equally certain that I myself have the clay in my blood, for my grandfather had the reputation of unsurpassed skill as a "turner," and scores of my forbears must, like him, have earned a living by the actual handling of clay. Yet I never felt any curiosity concerning the great staple industry-surely one of the oldest of man's crafts-until I was twenty-nine or thirty, when I wanted some information about it for a novel. The fact is that half the people of the Five Towns have no knowledge of the industry, and are quite content in their ignorance. The industry goes on behind the long, many-windowed mysterious walls of innumerable manufactories, and the ignorant half pass up and down the façades of those

buildings, and let the matter go at that. They see neither the raw clay, which is brought by sea and canals from afar off, nor the finished articles, which leave the works hidden in straw-stuffed crates. And if you want to buy a plate or a cup and saucer, there is positively no worse equipped place in the civilised world. This is, no doubt, human.

But when at last I did put myself to the trouble of visiting and comprehending a modern earthenware manufactory—it belonged to one of my uncles, and he was very proud of his new machinery—the gateway of romance was opened to me. I saw, as it were, in a sudden revelation, what a wonderful, tieklish, sensitive, capricious, baffling, unreasonable substance is clay. I could appreciate why its behaviour under handling had puzzled a whole province for a dozen centuries and more, and still puzzles.

In my uncle's manufactory some two hundred individuals spend their lives in trying to get the better of clay, with or without the aid of machinery. The machinery, in my opinion, despite my relative's pride in it, was not essentially very important; it only

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bullied the clay by physical force, or divided it into mathematically equal quantities, or shaped it into certain simple forms. The machinery was pretentious and blustering; it never helped in a real difficulty.

In an earthenware manufactory they have, after twelve centuries, thoroughly learnt one lesson, namely, that clay is a living thing, and therefore enigmatic. Indeed, it presents so many enigmas that the potters have had to divide their forces and attack the creature by instalments. A plate may appear to you to be a ridiculously simple article; and you think that, if you had to make it, you would up notions of the exceeding "plaguiness" of clay. And the hair of these youths, too, will turn, and the clay will still be inventing new problems for them.

These men have naught to do with the shaping of clay. They would be capable of looking at a plate and saying: "What is this? I have never seen such a thing !" Their affair is only with clay in the shapeless mass.

Another set of men take up the attack when the time comes for persuading clay to assume definite forms. And these men and their boys and their women-helpers

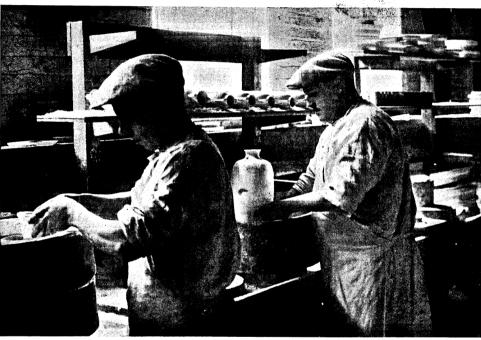


Photo by]

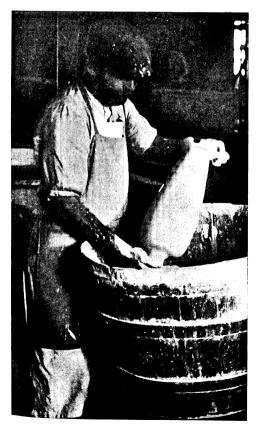
FILLING THE SAGGARS FOR THE OVEN.

[P. Swift.

just dig up the right sort of clay, fashion it, and then burn it. But the right sort of clay does not naturally exist. The basis of every earthenware manufactory is a workshop where bearded and reverend men thoughtfully examine several different natural sorts of clay, and cause them to be mixed together by the brute force of machines, in the hope that the product will be white and serviceable. These men are grey—they have grown grey in the vain study of bits of their motherearth, which still not seldom play them tricks —and they are the descendants of similar men. And by their side you will see a youth or two, watching them and helping, and picking

correspond better than the first group with your conventional idea of the potter. Their fingers really are manipulating a pale malleable substance which you would at once recognise as clay. Machinery helps them, but merely as a brainless servant. In many manufactures the man is the servant of the machine; it will probably never be so in The fingers of these men and boys pottery. are finer tools than any wood or metal could See the boy pull off a piece of clay be. from the big lump and roll it; watch his fingers-that boy's fingers might be twelve hundred years old in skill. Look away and then look back, and lo ! what was a hunch of clay is a little plate, and there is no clay left over. The boy had pulled off precisely the right quantity of clay for a vessel of which the dimensions had to conform precisely to a pattern.

See the man gazing at the plate, caressing it with a healing touch, and pushing it aside. See the man near by making a mug with his fingers over a revolving table. The mug grows like a flower; the man seems to be drawing it upwards by magic out of the table. The table comes to a standstill -and there the mug is, perfect! See the minor workers carrying off these soft and fragile vessels with apparent casual-If you or I touched one of them. ness. the result would be ruin. These people, however, understand clay—as well as clay can be understood—in that particular stage of its career. Their sympathy with clay shaped but unfired is the slow result of all those centuries. But their sympathy goes no farther than that. The idiosyncrasies of clay under fire are beyond their ken.



DIPPING THE WARE IN THE GLAZE. Two photographs by P. Swift.



MOULDING THE WARE FROM CLAY.

And we come back to yet another set of students of clay, the men who imprison the clay-now in the form of vessels, but entirely useless as such-in a vast fiery inferno, the men who victimise clay, who change clay so effectually that it can by no chemical process ever be changed back again to its original These men are more mystically state. priest-like than the others. They often work at night. Once a job is begun, they never under any consideration leave it till it is finished. A single indiscretion, and thousands of pounds' worth of moulded clay may be rendered futile and valueless. And they themselves do not know what is going on in the inferno which they have created. They can only hope that the clay under the ordeal of fire is not behaving too obstreperously, for it is obvious that they may not enter their own inferno to see how affairs are moving. They have to guess. They are very good guessers. They have been guessing since before the Norman Conquest of England. But a guess remains a guess. And when they let the fire die down, their pessimism or their optimism asserts itself, and during the cooling period torments or

enheartens them. The cooling period is long—nearly a couple of days—and even then the ovens are so hot that you or I could not enter them without fainting. But the potter, stripped to the waist, enters nonchalantly the ghostly interior, lined and piled with pale martyred vessels, and carries them out in parcels, and at last, in the light of day, the experts can regard the clay and decide whether it has beaten them again. It always does beat them to a certain extent. What is this yellow stain on this tea-pot? Nobody can tell. A caprice of the clay, the clay's freakish protest against fire.

particular part of the clay's evolution. Even the packer, sitting among straw and wrapping up each piece separately and protecting the clay from itself, has to know quite a lot about the wilfulness of earthenware when subjected to certain strains. Earthenware will often maintain itself intact in a railroad smash, only to shatter in the delicate touch of a general servant aged nineteen. Have you not heard her say: "Please'm, the handle came off in my hand." To the very last, clay is incalculable.

Decoration plays a more and more important part in the staple industry of the Five



Photo by]

DECORATING THE WARE.

[P. Swift.

Sometimes a whole ovenful of stuff is damaged, sometimes only a small percentage; but never, never does the entire consignment of clay behave as it was expected to behave and as it ought to behave.

And even now your simple, easy-looking plate is far from achieved. It looks rather more like a whitewashed dog-biscuit than a plate. It generally has to be decorated—at any rate, it has to be glazed—and it has to go through the ordeal of fire at least once more—perhaps twice more. And each further process is a new opportunity for the clay to prove its intractableness and its unforeseeableness. And each further process is presided over by lifelong students of just that

Towns. Housewives want gayer and more gilded crockery, and they also want to pay less for it. Hence the invention of cheaper methods of more gorgeous decoration. Now, clay is not so restive under decoration as might be imagined. But the antics played by fire on the colour-substances cause difficulties which rival the original difficulties due to the natural perverseness of the clay itself. And all this part of the manufacture is less interesting to the workman than the handling of the clay. It is an affair of the mechanical transfer of patterns designed elsewhere, and the mechanical application of pigments for which distant and unknown chemists are alone responsible. Nevertheless, the simpler



Photo by]

HOLLOW WARE PRESSER MAKING DISHES AND COVERS.

[W. Shaw, Burslem.

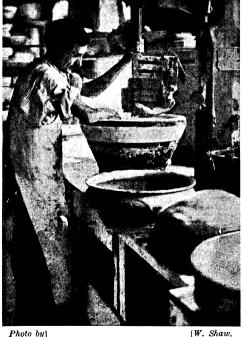
and better forms of decoration remain, and with them the unspoilt human interest that is inseparable from them. For instance, round the edge of that plate there may be a couple of rings of colour, one broad and the other narrow. In the Five Towns this is called "band-and-line" decoration. It seems, on the plate, to be too miraculously perfect for human accomplishment. And yet it was done by hand, and by a young woman's hand, and will probably always be so done.

In the manufactories, the painting-shops,



where the band-and-line goes forward, are the quietest and, as a rule, the cleanest of all the shops-often very noticeably more spick-andspan than the den in which the head of the enterprise conducts his wholesale schemes. For these painting - shops are under the dominion of young women who have an enormous idea of themselves as factors in the You may see them, if you arise universe. soon enough, on the early tram-cars and trains, or walking primly down the streets. They are very neat. They wear gloves-the supreme insignia of rank in these worlds within the world. Nay, I have seen them wearing kid gloves. They carry a small covered wicker-basket, which basket contains their dinner. They arrive at the "pot-bank" -as an earthenware manufactory is called in the Five Towns-and, lifting their skirts over the impurities that disfigure most parts of it, they reach their own sacred fastness, and put away their street things and don a large white apron-and when I say white I mean white. They then attend to their brushes and their colours, and they sit down, each of them, to a tiny revolving table, with a pile of plates or saucers or cups or mugs at one hand.

See them take a vessel and with one unerring gesture plant it exactly in the





MAKING BASINS.

Photo by] W. Shaw.

PRINTING DESIGNS.

centre of the table. See them take a broad brush and hold it firmly and gently against the edge of the now spinning vessel. The "band" is made; it is made in a second ! A thinner brush, and with equal precision the line is made. And that vessel is pushed off the table, and another pushed on. And then another, and then another. Dozens! Scores ! Hundreds ! And then a bell rings, or a hooter hoots, for one o'clock. And the young woman rises, goes elsewhere, primly eats her dinner, perhaps goes for a little walk. And when the next bell rings, or the next hooter hoots, she sits down again, and the table begins to revolve again. More More hundreds ! dozens! More scores ! At six o'clock she departs, gloved and hatted and mantled, and primly takes her tram-car or train, or perhaps walks home.

The next morning she starts afresh on exactly the same task. For you must remember that there are in existence millions upon millions of vessels decorated with bandand-line, and that they have all of them been painted separately by young women seated at revolving tables. It is a wondrous and a dreadful thought, but it is part of the singular romance of clay. The skill for the task is soon learnt. The task is monotonous in the highest degree. It is endless. You might suppose that its monotony and its endlessness would drive these young women into some form of lunacy or melancholia.

But no! The vocation merely endows them with a sort of benignant placidity. Their faces are like no other faces, their movements like no other movements. Such intellect as they have may not be highly developed, but they possess qualities of calm, of patience, even of mild spiritual dignity which are—well, nun-like! They are among the most curious products of industrialism. and among the most curious by-products of the Odyssey of clay.

No person of imagination who has taken the trouble to follow with intelligence the Odyssey of clay, from its stratum in the earth to its apotheosis on the domestic table, can pick up a simple plate without a certain emotion. The clay of it is indeed dead, but what adventures led up to its fiery demise, and what human associations are imbedded in its everlasting rigidity ! Strange, that Five Towns children do not play at being potters!



FITTING UP JUGS.

W. Shaw.

SHEPHERD SONG A

SHEPHERD, you are brave and brown, Many's the load you have set down, Many's the mile you've travelled; Damp your coat with many dews, There is moisture on your shoes, And your scarf's unravelled.

You are lean and well to see, As a sturdy forest tree;

Broad your weary shoulders; All the strength that you have spent Looms like some great monument Made of giant boulders.

Shepherd, you know naught of books, You have only honest looks, Country strength and bearing; Yet, for all a woman's dreams. You have all-or so it seems-Worth a woman's caring.

THE PROMISE

By EDEN PHILLPOTTS

Illustrated by Gunning King



IFE do look more and more like a game, the older I grow; and once I had a pretty proud fancy I was playing the game very clever, and sure to win handsomely if I only kept my head, and my temper, and

my health, and a few other things that also go to success. But as I got older and older, with the game still to win, I began to feel that the interest was shifting a bit, and that I wasn't pulling the strings no more. You get your childer and you order them; but if you live long enough, you'll find the boot's on the other leg, and they'll order you. For now they are in the centre of the stage, playing at hero and heroine; and you are no more interesting or important than any other old man or woman. And to accept the situation is hard for some natures, but never for mine. I do what I'm told nowadays, and I don't ask my childer to remember the past; because, if I was to do so, they'd only tell me that I did no more than my duty—same as they are doing theirs. And what could I say then? But there's the grandchilder now, thank God, and I'm a bit of a hero to them still, I do believe. To be something, even in a little child's eyes, is better than nothing at all.

Then, again, on a larger view, you may say that we don't play the game of life at all, but we *are* the game, and have to do what we must, same as billiard balls struck by a cue, or cards thrown 'pon the table on one another. Then, according to our value, shall we take the tricks or lose 'em. So at least it seemed in the very remarkable case of Luke Benjamin; and he showed this, among other things, that a man's value depends upon a lot that's hidden from mortal eyes. for rejecting Luke Benjamin, and even the architect didn't use him for his virtues, seeing that virtue had been left out of the unfortunate creature altogether; but he was, nevertheless, a man with the rights of a man, and in this law-abiding and reasonable place he was so regarded.

Luke Benjamin, as the name would tell you, was a foreigner. He might have been fifty years old when he came to Princetown, and during his grown-up life he'd worn out his welcome from one end of the west of England to the other. A very worthless, good-for-nought, and not in the least 'shamed of it. He'd never done anything worse than beg and shirk work and get drunk—at least, nothing he confessed to—but for these offences he'd been shut up times without count, and his name to a policeman or a justice of the peace was like a red rag to a bull.

And then, when in despair they told him, at Plymouth Police Court, they'd let him free if he'd only take himself out of the town and never set foot in it again, he consented, and broke new ground and came up to Princetown, on Dartmoor. But though it wasn't the place for him, for they all work hard there-from choice or necessity-yet he assured me that the sight of the convicts was always a great pleasure and interest to him. In fact, he'd spend hours and hours hanging over a gate watching 'em work; and he'd gaze into the faces of the "grey birds" and try to trace crime in 'em, and wonder what each man had done to earn quod.

"But for the grace of God, I might be among 'em !" he said once to me; and I said : "Don't you dare to take the Name, Luke Benjamin—a worthless wastrel like you! You ought to be among 'em, in my opiniou," I said, "and you're heading for it, and I'll be bound a lot of these poor fellows dou't deserve their trouble half as much as you do."

Not that you could fairly blame any builder

But he argued against me very steadfast.

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"I've got a peaceful nature by birth," he said, "and my only sin against the State is that I was born with a fatal distaste for work. 'Tis a very common human weakness, and when it happens in a man who's got plenty of cash—earned by somebody else, most times-nobody grumbles, and the man is just as respectable and well thought upon as any other man. So that shows it's not a crime against the State to be idle. But when a man like me, with no appetite for work, just asks to be left alone, then somebody must be up in arms and buzzing at him, and threatening and bullying and preaching and shouting him down, and all the rest of Same with the drink. If I'd got a it. castle to be drunk in, and a lot of footmen to carry me upstairs afterwards, nobody would think any the worse of me; but I've only got the street; and the police never will understand that the gutter was made for gentlemen like me, and that I've a perfect right to be there. No, they must come and pull me out and drag me off to the lock-up, as if I'd stole a purse or robbed a till. But one has got to be patient with the police. In fact, if you're my sort, you've got to be patient with every fool. We're not understood. The busy people, who want to earn money and make a splash, haven't got time to enter into our large pattern of mind, and I wouldn't blame them for that; but they can always make time to harry us and trouble us and try to make us feel like they do, which is about as silly as trying to make a butterfly feel like a bee."

I chid him oft, but it was all in vain.

"Won't do," he'd say. "You're the man who understands me, and I owe my life to you, and I'll pay the debt some day; but that'll be as Heaven wills. It'll happen, no doubt, for it's fixed very firm in my mind that I shall reward you richly."

And there it was. Luke sang my praises and agreed with my opinions, and hated my enemies and stuck up for my friends. In fact, he'd do anything mortal man could do for me—anything but work for me.

It happened that I won his friendship by a simple act of charity; and perhaps even that I might have shirked if I'd known who it was that I entreated well. I was riding home to Dunnabridge Farm, after a drink at the Duchy Hotel, and there, what should I see at the elbow of the road, at Cherrybrook Bridge, but a man lying on his face. He was in rags, and I thought him dead. So I lit down from my hoss and turned him over, and found Luke Benjamin. 'Twas dusk of an October evening, I remember, and then Luke came to his senses, and there was something about the chap's face that reminded me of my dead brother, Peter.

He lied to me at the time, and I didn't hear anything about the truth of him till long after. But he merely said he was tramping across Dartmoor to the sick-bed of his son at Moreton, and, being without food or drink, he'd fallen by the way. He prayed for a shelter and a bit of straw for the night, so I put him on my horse and walked to my place, not a mile from where I picked him up.

He got his shake-down and supper, and blessed me and my wife and children, and asked us to pray for his sick boy. Then I locked him into a shippon, where he couldn't do no hurt; and in the morning he said he'd slept very well and was feeling pretty good again. And then he refused to go. I reminded him about his sick boy, which he seemed to have forgotten, and he told me there was no danger; and later in the day he confessed that he hadn't got no sick boy.

"In fact, there's nobody in the world belonging to me," he said. "And I don't belong to anybody. But you're a good Samaritan, farmer, and it shan't be told that You'll never regret your I'm ungrateful. great Christian kindness to me. And no more shall I. Your reward is certain. I'll stop along with you for a week, if you please; and I don't say but I might mend a chair or two for you, if you'll get the cane. But be that as it will, I shall feel very kindly to you all, and be pleased to teach your sons a thing or two that they'll never regret learning."

Well, I reckoned that what he could teach my sons was little likely to help 'em in this world or the next; but if you'll believe it, the clever dog set about their lessons that very day; and what he did strive to put into Thomas and Arthur was a higher respect and regard for me! He sang my praises, I do assure you, to everybody at Dunnabridge, my wife included, and what could I do but laugh and let him stop his week ?

But talk about idleness ! I never see such idleness, and should not have thought it possible. A snail was a busy, bustling animal to Luke Benjamin. 'Twouldn't have troubled him in the least to be turned into stone, except for the smoking and drinking. He'd sit in the farmyard by the hour, just studying the creatures and their ways. He was full of wise sayings about 'em; and he was quite a pious man in his general opinions, you might say, though his ideas never took no practical shape. He held that he was made in his particular pattern by Providence; and he assured me it would be an ungrateful thing for him to repine, or wish himself better or different. Little by little the truth of him came out. He swore he was honest, and I believe that he was.

"Satan may find some mischief still for idle hands to do," he granted, "but not with a man like me. I'm far too lazy to tempt Satan or any other leading personage. I haven't got the nature to go to extremes in any direction whatever."

Of course he didn't mend no chairs or anything like that. Sometimes he'd talk, and he was always interesting to listen to; but often he was too lazy even to talk. Then he'd be silent for days, sitting out in the yard or under a stack; and now and again he'd go up to Princetown, just for the pleasure of watching the prisoners at their out-door labours. My boys liked him, and so did my wife, and he liked them; but I was his hero, and he'd praise me to my face without a blush, and never tire of saying that I was entertaining an angel unawares, and that some fine day he'd more than make up to me for my friendship and charity.

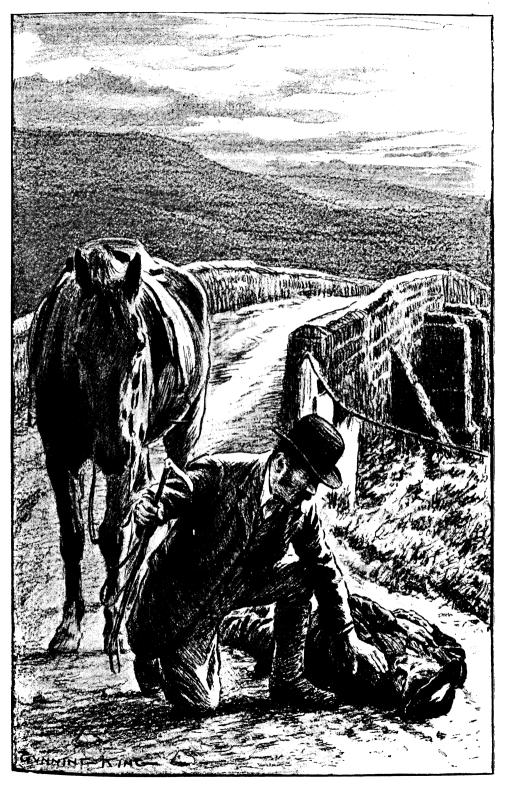
He stopped in and out and about the place for six months, till the winter was gone, and then he began to get restless and presently drifted away. He said he'd come back some day, and, of course, we all said he was a good riddance; but yet we missed him—me most of all, for I'm very much like other people—a thing we admit when we're old, but deny very fierce when we're young—and I "confess it was pleasant to have Benjamin think so highly of me and my opinions. Not that he ever followed them, else he'd have taken over regular work and strove to justify his existence; but no doubt it was beyond his power to do that.

He sent a letter once, three months after he had gone. A fine summer we enjoyed, and he said that he spent most of his time sleeping in the open down Salisbury Plain way; but he was coming back to see us some time, and he repeated what he said about doing me a good turn. "Be sure I shall," he said. "You might think nothing was more unlikely than for me to be able to help you, but it will happen—I'm dead sure it will some time. Not that I shall go out of my way to do you a good turn, or worry about it, or anything like that, because it ain't in my nature so to do." He wrote this too: "There must be cheerful takers as well as cheerful givers, and if it weren't for such as me, who go without a shred of false pride, and accept all that's offered, and ask for more in the largest spirit possible—if it weren't for us, then the likes of you couldn't shine as you do."

And some of what he wrote came true enough, for, with the short days, Luke Benjamin turned up again, and asked if he might have his straw in the shippon as before. He brought me a present of a book about artificial manures, and he brought my wife a rhyme-book, knowing her romantic feelings on that subject, and he brought each of my boys a knife. And he'd got the gifts quite clean and wrapped up in paper, though he was much as usual himself —all to pieces, with a bit of string for his braces, and his boots falling off his feet, and his hat an insult to a scarecrow.

He told us his adventures, which were not very interesting; but he was wiser than ever, and if he'd only lived as he talked, Luke would have been a very successful and satisfactory man. In one way he was changed, however, and even showed a flickering interest in work. A gipsy woman had taught him to weave witheys, in exchange for saving her child's life in a pond. It had fallen in under his nose, so he was forced, much against the grain, to rise up and go in the water and rescue it. And now he said that, if I'd buy the withey wands, he'd willingly make me a lot of good farm baskets.

It was better than nothing at all, and I liked the good-for-nothing cuss still, though only my own vanity made me, for he still kept up the nonsense about me being a man much out of the common, and so on, and held me up as a pattern husband and father to my family. Therefore he had his osiers, and started well; but too quickly he wearied of it and passed on his knowledge to my boy Arthur; and when Arthur could do it, then Luke Benjamin never touched another withey again. But he had an argument to show that all the credit for Arthur's baskets was really his, and that the more my son turned out, the more was the honour to him, and the better we ought to feed him and treat him. He was a sort of joke around the place, but I will say he knew his luck, which is a rare branch of knowledge. He was properly grateful, and while he took freely with both hands. he never undervalued and did honestly try, in his own



"So I lit down from my hoss and turned him over, and found Luke Benjamin."

casual, haphazard fashion, to make it up to us. Besides, such conscience as he had, he always patched up quite easy with the old story---that he was going to do us all a mighty good turn some day. He always swore to that, and declared that it was a great consolation to him.

"You wait, farmer," he said. "It'll all be cleared up some day. I don't know how, nor yet when, but it's got to happen as time goes on. I believe in God," he says, "and I know nothing falls out without a reason. You didn't find me and put me on your hoss and save my life without a reason, and that reason's a good one, and will most certainly come out some day."

Upon the strength of this he stopped, and then, with spring, he was off again. Four years it went on so, and the only quarrel that ever he had with me was that I didn't give him enough to drink; but no doubt he made up for that when the winter was passed. Moor-men called him my "lodger," and laughed at me a lot for being such a silly fool, which was natural enough in them; but it's easy to fall into a habit and very difficult to break away again, especially if another human creature's mixed up with So Luke, he came and went; and each it. year he was getting weaker and feebler along of his bad habits; but each year the winter with us, and the warm cast-off clothes he got, and the wholesome victuals, put him in good case again, so that, when spring came, he could go off on the tramp in pretty fair condition. The last time ever he returned to Dunnabridge, he came back ill with a cough and a pain in his chest.

"Tis all my own silly fault," he explained. "I went and did a bit of work, and now I'm punished for it. After some bad luck and being took up for begging, by a bobby that hid in the hedge and watched me, I wove a basket when I came out, and went watercress gathering. There I took a chill, along of getting wet to the knee and never minding it. And I shan't be the same man no more. I had pewmonia in the right lung, and it's a goner."

However, we pulled him together, and when he got off as usual in April, he thought he was cured.

But he never came to Dunnabridge again, and I remember, when he was due and didn't show up, that my wife said he'd doubtless died far ways off; and my son Thomas, a very thinking mortal, called home his great promise, and pointed out how it had come to nought, like promises so often do. But Luke knew what he was talking about, after all, as the sequel showed ; and when it was over, and the crowner had sat on his bones, and we found time to figure it up, we could see plain enough that the thing in his mind was true, and that, in a way the poor wretch little dreamed, he'd done the deed he always said he would do.

Just a card he was in the game—a card of little face value, God knew; but God also knew exactly when to use the poor creature for all he was worth; and though it ain't for me to say that he saved the game for a better than himself, yet my wife and family so regarded it, and do most steadfast to this day, and my neighbours likewise.

It fell out in this fashion. We'd given Benjamin up and—half glad and half sorry —were forgetting him, for he was a month behind time, and winter had come down upon us. Then there fell the annual supper of the Ancient Order of Buffaloes, up to Princetown, and, being a Buffalo and very proud of the Order, of course I went as usual.

Poor Johnny Slocombe, from Dartmeet, it was who called for me; and he'd got Ted Bassett, from Combstone, along with him in his market-cart, and Ted's son, young Ted, who was going to be made a Buffalo that very night. They stopped by appointment for me at the corner, by Brownberry Farm, and off we drove for Princetown as merry as grigs, though the night was rough and dark, and a good dollop of hail mixed with the rain. Little we knowed who was in poor Johnňy Slocombe's market-cart with us that night !

I mind how young Ted, who was a bit nervous of the ordeal afore him, kept asking me what they did to 'e to make 'e a member of the Ancient Order, and I was poking a bit of fun at him, and told him how he'd be called upon to do all manner of fantastic things, when suddenly Johnny pulled up-so sharp that we was all very near thrown out But none too soon had he of the cart. stopped, for his hoss was almost on top of a man lying full length in the road, and 'twas only Johnny's quick sight and the brave light thrown ahead by his lamp that saved us. Even as it was, the hoss-a young, rather fidgety mare, that little liked being stopped so short and sudden-had just touched the fallen man with a forefoot and cut the flesh on his shoulder.

Well, down we jumped and fetched the lamp to the stranger; and the first thing it showed was the yellow face of Luke Benjamin. He was in a proper state of ruination—wet through and all skin and bones by the look of it; but he wasn't dead—at least, we didn't think he could be, for he was still warm to the touch; and, seeing he was right in the highway, he couldn't have dropped for long, else somebody would have found him, or run over him earlier in the evening.

Of course I had to stop, the man being a friend of mine, so to speak, and it was arranged that Slocombe and the rest should go on their way and report the trouble at Princetown, and see if they could get the prison doctor, a very merciful and kindly gentleman, to turn out and come to my help. Dark as a wolf's mouth by now it was, and blowing great guns; but with Bassett's help I carried the unconscious man into a gravelpit not far off the road, and wrapped my own heavy coat round him to keep life in his carcase, if it could be done.

They went off and left me to my watch, and I calculated that it must be a good hour and a half before rescue could be hoped for. So I set about Benjamin, and rubbed his body and slapped his chest and shouted to him; but I couldn't make him hear, and presently I felt his heart no more, and began to fear a good bit that he was gone. Time hung heavy, I do assure you, and when two hours were passed and nobody came, I began to worrit, though that's a trick foreign to my nature most times. I was so cold and wet as a frog myself by now, and felt terrible sure that Benjamin was dead. But it seemed a sin to leave him, for life's a mystery, and I knew that it was quite possible he might come to and cry for a fellow-creature to help him the moment my back was turned.

It looked clear enough, of course, that the poor wretch had come back to Dartymoor as usual, and was making for Dunnabridge, when the storm knocked him over like a starling, and the bitter cold dropped him only three mile from his haven. So there it was, and I waited another hour, and then felt that something must be done. And, Heaven forgive me, I was angered with Slocombe and Bassett, and actually cussed them aloud.

Smith Hill Farm happened to be the nearest human dwelling-place within reach, and there I ordained to run, for it looked now as if the prison doctor weren't going to turn out, and as if my pals wouldn't be back till after the Buffalo Dinner at the Duchy Hotel. I felt a good bit puzzled, naturally, and a good bit angered, I must say, for it seemed to me a thought unchristian on the face of it, and, for my part, I wouldn't have

left a dog or sheep in such a plight, let alone a man. However, I didn't waste much thought on that, but just propped up Benjamin with his back against the gravel-pit, and then went off across the moor to Smith Hill so fast as I could crawl. But the cramp was biting into my thighs something cruel, and my speed was poor. I knew Farmer French would be up along with the Buffaloes, though his missis was safe to be home; and so she was, and when she saw my plight and heard my tale, the first thing the woman done was to pour a glass of hot brandy and water into me, and fetch a few of her husband's clothes and make me don 'em. She was like thatsense made alive, you may say. Then she set off herself with me to the gravel-pit, and there was the poor tramp just as I'd left him, with his jaw dropped and his eves open, and the sleet slapping in his face and the wind lifting his tattered rag of a beard. Mrs. French held the lantern to him and said he was certainly dead.

"Us'll carry him to Smith Hill," she said. "That's the best."

And she was a strong hulk of a woman, very well used to men's work, so between us we took Benjamin—a light weight enough for two. Dead he was without a doubt, but she didn't mind a corpse more than she'd have minded a loin of beef, and decided that he'd better be left in the scullery.

"You go home," she said. "That's the place for you. You're finger-cold, and so like as not the marrow in your bones be frozen, and that's a very dangerous thing. And my husband will be back in half an hour or less, for 'tis after ten o'clock, and belike he'll throw some light upon it."

I was fairly beat by now, and took the advice of Mrs. French, a woman whose advice was always worth taking, in my experience. So home I tramped with my strange tale, and to bed I went, in some doubt how I'd find myself next morning.

But I was none the worse, though with day-dawn there came news that made me a melancholy and forlorn creature for many a day after. The mystery was explained afore cock-light, for then French rode over from Smith Hill himself, and told me of the terrible and fatal things that had happened.

It was like this. At Ockerry Bridge, between Two Bridges and Princetown—a tricky place in the dark—Johnny Slocombe and his party had come to grief. What went wrong actually won't be known till Doomsday, since there was none left to tell the tale, for Johnny had been pitched clean over the bridge

into Black-a-brook, and broke his neck on the spot ; and if he hadn't broke his neck, he'd have been drownded; and Ted Bassett had been crushed between the bridge and the cart, and was dead when they got to him; and young Ted still lived, but he'd fallen behind the horse and been kicked on the head; he died thirty-six hours after without recovering his wits. A wheel was off the market-cart, and it looked as if it had given way at the bridge and so caused the fatal accident. Or, of course, by some oversight, Slocombe might have driven into the bridge itself, for 'twas too narrow for safety all times, and never a dab of whitewash to show it in the dark.

So that was what Luke Benjamin done for me, and though the manner of the deed was hidden from him, yet the feeling that he'd do me a service some time was always there; and by his own death he most certainly saved my life, as every thinking man and woman agreed when the story came to be told.

'Twas a nine days' wonder and a great sorrow to many of us, besides the widows and children. And I put up a tidy bit of moor-stone to Luke, with his name and date, for he deserved it in my judgment. He was only the unconscious servant of the Lord, and it would be false sense and contrary to the intellects to praise him for what he done.



THE SISTER.

WHAT is balm for a soul distressed? Oh, sailor, tell to me! "A good ship in a fighting wind, glad of an angry sea, The leaping timbers 'neath your feet, the salt upon your cheek, Never soul could mourn, my sister—oh, never heart could break!"

What is joy for a stricken heart? Oh, hunter, tell me true! "A brave horse speeding o'er the plain beneath a sky storm-blue. The splendid life against your knee, the wind's hand in your hair, Never heart could grieve, my sister—oh, never could despair!"

What is good for a soul outworn? Oh, soldier tell to me! "A bright sword in your eager hand, a coming foe to see. When steel to steel breaks into song, and all the world is red, How could hope be lost, my sister, how could joy be dead?"

I am woman born, my brother; such deeds are not for me. "Then seek some solitary place beneath a cyprus tree, And dig a grave both wide and long—oh, dig it wide and deep, To hold a woman's restless heart and hush her soul to sleep!"

DORA SIGERSON SHORTER.

BOY SCOUT by S. Macnaughtan

Illustrated by Ernest Shepard



he walked he rattled. He was an ordinary \mathbf{not} Boy Scout, but a man of parts, a person of some experience and some consequence also; one who called boys twice his size cheeky beggars, and

who had smoked, did mother but know it. He could do most things, and, when well protected, he sometimes addressed the subalterns in his father's regiment by their surnames, to the awe and wonder of more respectful boys. His age was nine years, his height probably a little over four feet, and his muscles were, he believed, abnormally developed. This afternoon he was the guide, champion, and defender of an aunt who believed she was taking him out under her care for a little treat.

They went down to the pier first, to take the ferry to the other side. Thereupon their first panic seized them.

"We are done for, John," said his aunt; "the boat has sailed."

"It was that second helping of pudding," said her relative, and looked to her to get them out of the difficulty.

"Perhaps we might get someone to row us across," she ventured.

"That's it !" he cried joyously. "I know all the fellows down here, and I'll get one of them to find us a boat."

"We must pay them," she reminded him.

"Oh, that's my business," quoth he, and dived deeply into his trouser pockets, from whence he produced six hot coins which, he knew off by heart, totalled up to eightpence.

Feeling rich, he walked forward over the tarred boards of the pier with what might have been swagger or merely a seaman-like roll.

"Hulloa, you there ! What will you take us over to the other side for ?"

The man removed a pipe from his mouth,

and thought the trip might be done for ten shillings, "although," he added, "the tide 'ull be against us all the way."

"Say seven-and-six, and it's done," he said. To his aunt he whispered: "You won't mind standing the other seven shillings, will you? And that will leave me twopence just to have in my pocket."

"But, my dear, I think it is an absurd charge," she said hopelessly. "Why, the ferry isn't two miles across !"

"Still, the fellow is a great friend of mine," he urged. "A real good chap," he added, as he saw his aunt relenting.

"I don't mind five," she said.

At this moment the small steam ferryboat hove in sight, so panic number one was over, and the Boy Scout, whose height had dwindled a little during the last five minutes of uneasiness, cried : "I believe we're too early, after all. It's all the fault of my infernal watch !"

The old watch which his father had given him occasionally went for a few hours when it was constantly encouraged by shaking and tapping. He produced it from his pocket and held it knowingly to his ear.

"If you think we shall have time, I should like to fly back to the house for something."

She looked at his accoutrements and said: "My dear John, what can you have forgotten?"

Round his regulation Scout hat were twined fishing flies in great variety. He said this was a precaution, just in case they should come to a stream. Worms also, for a certain class of fish that would never accept anything else, were held securely in a small mustard tin. A pistol peeped knowingly from a revolver pocket, and a knife hung from a lanyard. A network of straps round the boy's small figure supported first, a tin case containing knife and fork; second, a folding tumbler; third, a water-bottle; and fourth, a small haversack. His hip and trouser pockets bulged with useful articles, while a disused fountain pen, which had flooded so many pockets with ink that it

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had been discarded by former irate possessors, lurked in his breast-pocket. A knapsack topped everything, and was surmounted by a mackintosh, which was securely held in place by both string and straps.

"What can you have forgotten?" said his aunt.

"It's that thing I had for taking stones out of horses' hoofs."

"But we are not going to ride or drive."

"Still, we might meet horses, and it would be awkward to be without it."

She thought they would take that risk rather than run the chance of missing the ferry. Save for the forgotten instrument, he seemed to be well equipped.

"I have a corkscrew, if you want it," he remarked, and patted his left-hand trouser leg.

They went to the town first, because his aunt, who was a maniac about picking up old furniture, had heard of a certain old black picture in a certain shop, which thing she was keeping a dead secret for the present, in case dealers might get hold of it. She believed dealers to be a class of person whom she frequently outwitted.

As they walked through the old Welsh town, her nephew suggested, being reminded of the fact by various piles of plums in a shop window, that fruit was a very appropriate ending to tea.

"It's very good stuff to top up with," he said. At the fruiterer's he demanded fourpennyworth of grapes, and when his aunt argued that the more usual proceeding was to buy this fruit by the pound, he remarked, "Oh, the woman knows me!" as sufficient explanation.

Most people knew him, and their walk through the town involved stoppages and hulloas, also "Well, Scout?" and a salute in reply. The people in the town remembered him as quite a little boy, and it was pleasant to return to old haunts as a man. He walked on the outside of the pavement in order to protect his aunt from any dangers of passing traffic.

The furniture shop was interesting, especially the front part of it, which contained both groceries and modern plenishings. There was a knife-machine which it was glorious to turn, and a gramophone which he was warned not to touch.

Meanwhile his aunt was trying to induce the gentleman in the antique department a small back parlour recently re-christened to sell her a picture for two pounds which he had often hoped to get rid of at two shillings. "It seems a shame to cheat people who do not know the real value of things," argued her conscience, which was a sensitive one; but she consoled herself with the thought that, as the gem was being sold in open market, there could be nothing wrong in obtaining it for the price asked for it.

"You will send it carefully packed," she said, and debated with herself whether or not the picture ought to be insured.

Her "find "—and unintelligible blackness with many cracks in it does constitute a genuine find—was as nothing compared with the treasure on which her nephew had laid hands. A sword, a short sword, a weapon such as might have been forged expressly for himself, a glittering manly sword in a sheath, from which he pulled it with a glorious feeling of discovery. Whom could it have belonged to? Who could have owned it and parted with it? Surely it was an unique thing, and to find it lying on a table in a small shop in Wales was simply startling. He drew it from its sheath once more and felt its edge with his thumb.

The shopman hazarded that it must have belonged to some midshipman, but he couldn't say for certain. But it was a genuine article and must be pretty old.

"I suppose it costs millions?"

"It's not very expensive, sir. There's few want them sort of things now, except as a curiosity just to hang on a wall."

"Fancy keeping such a beautiful thing as that as a curiosity ! Fancy hanging that sword on a wall !"

It seemed to him impossible.

"You don't really want it," pleaded his aunt. To his mother she always pretended that she thought him quite an ordinary little boy, and only in moments of weakness did she retail any of the remarks he had uttered. Also she knew him to be dreadfully spoilt. For a moment she tried the old-fashioned form of reproof, and warned him that little boys must not want all they saw. That tickled him a little, and he smiled in a way that showed the gap in his teeth.

"It's not every day that you see such a sword," he remarked. And the shopman quite agreed with him.

After all, they were not often out on a holiday together, and she satisfied her conscience by getting the shopman to take a shilling off the price of it.

Her nephew, when he had thanked her "too frightfully," told her that it was the greatest bargain he had ever heard of. If you had told him it cost ten times, a hundred times the money, he would have believed you. Even as a curiosity the thing must be worth pounds and pounds.

It took some time to buckle it on, for the

the only things that really suffered, when all the straps had been readjusted, were the grapes.

They walked out into the country towards the fishing village, where the women still



"He it was who first said to the chauffeur: 'Your wheel is in the ditch, man.'"

knapsack had to be removed first, and then some sort of cross-gartering at his back which required explaining with an acrobatic twist of his neck, and this disengaged automatically the system of supports in front. Zeal, however, and a knowledge of military matters can overcome most difficulties, and wear the felt caps and short red petticoats of long ago; and in that village there was a post-office.

By this time everything had begun to weigh about twice or three times as much as it had done on starting. Aunt and nephew took turns in carrying all the heavier things except the sword; and the sun was hot and there was a long pull up a Welsh hill, and both he and she were a bit the worse for wear when they reached the top. Straps begin to gall after the first mile or so, and a bottle of milk in a knapsack presses very deliberately on your shoulder-blades.

His aunt thought of a plan. She said : "We will go into the post-office and buy paper and string, and pack up the mackintoshes, and the guide-book to Wales, and the maps, and perhaps the fishing things, as we are not going to fish, and send them back by post."

"Not the sword," he said.

"No, but the water-bottle," she suggested.

"We might have tea now, and get rid of some of the other things that weigh," he said.

She made him laugh by telling him of a dragoman whom she had once had in Egypt, who always proposed an early lunch when he had any basket to carry. "For," he used to say, "it's far the simplest way of carrying food."

The woman at the post-office was delightful, and refused to charge anything for the paper or for the string. Also she seemed to have a genius for doing up parcels, and she labelled this one, and said it ought to arrive in a few days, and that they must not expect Welsh posts to be quite like those in England.

"Suppose you want your mackintoshes?" she said.

"I could always borrow father's," said the Scout.

They stepped out briskly after the lightening of their loads, and sat down on the shady side of a stone wall to have tea. He found that aunts' and nephews' tastes are quite different, and he did not quarrel with the fact. She liked bread and butter, and he liked things with jam inside. Wright, at home, had packed two of everything, which made division very easy, and there's nothing greedy about taking the second bit when you've first offered it fairly to someone else.

"I only hope you won't be ill," said his aunt.

"We've made one mistake," he said presently, almost enjoying the fact that there should be one small drawback to the enchanting feast. "We ought to have kept the tumbler and sent back the golf balls. I always like drinking tea out of a tumbler—it looks so jolly."

They planned future expeditions, chiefly

in the backwoods of Canada, and they talked also about the cake, which was probably about the best that cook had ever made. His aunt informed him that he would probably not care for sweets when he grew up—a statement which he declined to accept for an instant.

"Just you wait," he said. "I mean to take several cakes to the backwoods, and boil tea in a pannikin."

After tea he did some sword exercises for her special benefit, and he sheathed and unsheathed his weapon as a boy clicks the cover of his first watch—ceaselessly. He lunged at her, parried and made thrusts, then held the scabbard in its place, and sheathed the blade once more with the glorious swish which steel makes on touching leather. He showed her with a professional air how a well-tempered sword would bend without breaking; then she had to knight him with it. He drew several times on some harmless boys who passed, and who paused to ask if they might "try it."

She wished all boys had swords, for the joy it gave them, and she consoled those who were weaponless with the remains of the tea.

He wished they could camp out there for the night, under this very wall, where they would be perfectly snug, and where, as evening fell, a camp fire might be lighted.

"We could get the mackintoshes back from the post-office and lie on them," he said, and almost started in pursuit of them. The only consoling thing to think of, when the suggestion proved impracticable, was Canada with its backwoods and tea in pannikins.

Down below, long channels of water made great roadways through the meadows and the woods. The cornfields were hot and yellow under the sun, and it was far too hot to move. Even a Scout must rest sometimes and think over things—Canada and camps and such-like. He lay on his back and gave his opinions on various matters to his aunt.

Down the steep Welsh hill came a motorcar, and he and the boys of the village knew instinctively, as boys know things almost before they happen, that the motorcar was in difficulties. A small company of them streamed across the fields towards the lane. From what had seemed an almost deserted village appeared men and boys unexpectedly, and one or two girls carrying babies. They crowded round the car, one of the hind wheels of which was deeply embedded in a ditch, and looked at it, the men contemptuously, with their hands in their pockets, the boys with a desire to touch the engine and, if possible, to see the hood lifted up. They enjoyed the disaster with a sense of "Serve you right." If people will drive in motor-cars, they must expect hind wheels to go into ditches. Two ladies alighted from the vehicle and sat on the grass bank helplessly.

The Scout was the man of the moment. He it was who first said to the chauffeur: "Your wheel is in the ditch, man." He it was who took out a clasp-knife with an antiquated idea of cutting traces. He only it was who could lay his hand upon a hippocket in which there was a pistol wit¹, caps. It was he, he only, who remembered to tell the ladies not to be frightened. Now was the time to remember his Scout training and his promise to try and do one kind action every day. He stepped forward briskly and offered his services to shove up behind.

The chauffeur requested that people would stand back, and he tugged handles, turned wheels, and went through various gymnastic exercises which did not for a moment serve to dislodge the car from its drunken and unequal position in the ditch. Last of all, and as if under protest, he withdrew his legs from underneath the steering-gear and got down. This was the chance for the populace. They were going to see the hood lifted. dozen men and youths pressed forward, their heads under the raised tin hood, and their noses enjoying the fragrance of the engine. It was just then that the Scout had a brilliant suggestion. "Try turning that handle thing in front," he said to the chauffeur, and afterwards: "Couldn't you back her a little?" To put the matter briefly, he took full charge of the whole show.

His second-in-command was a Welsh labourer, perhaps six-foot-two in height, who said : "I do believe you will have to dig it out, stranger."

"He ought to turn the front handle," said the Scout.

The little girls kept on the outside of the group in case the car should start sudden and run over the babies. The ladies on the bank took out their watches, and hoped they wouldn't be late. They had motor-veils round their heads, and accepted the situation philosophically, on the whole, and one of them wished they had tea with them.

"The Cyclists' Rest," in the village, was suggested by one of the crowd as being a comfortable house of entertainment. "Where is it ?" said the ladies.

What better opportunity for a Scout than to assist women in distress? He walked ahead of them quickly and with head erect, to show the way, and only paused to explain at some length what the chauffeur ought to have done.

When he got back to the lane, the chauffeur had evidently taken his advice, or else the couple of spades which lay near had done their work, for the car was slowly gliding down the hill on four good rubber wheels.

So that excitement was over.

By now it was high time to be thinking of returning home. They went back to the shady side of the wall to gather up their things, and found the knapsack and the golf balls, the empty milk bottle, the compass and the haversack, but not the sword. The sword was gone.

"Good Heavens !" said the Scout.

He looked blankly about him. Just at first his loss was too great for complete realisation. He sat down as heavily as four-foot-nothing can sit, and ran his fingers through his hair.

" It's too awful," he said.

"Where can you have left it?" his aunt said weakly.

He hardly heard her. "I must find it oh, I must find it!" he said.

"Can anyone have taken it?"

Of course, someone must have taken it, but who? And why had they left the golf balls and the empty milk bottle and the haversack, all valuable things in their way, but none, of course, half so valuable as the sword?

There was nowhere particular to look for it—that was the awful and the disheartening part of the whole business. There was no hedge, no bush under which he could have inadvertently placed it, but just some sheep-trimmed grass under an old Welsh stone wall. Yet he wandered up and down within a radius of a hundred yards, searching everywhere for it.

His aunt thought they might make inquiries in the village, and they went to their friend at the post-office, but nothing could be heard of the sword. It was getting late now, but they went back to the wall and made another good search. After that there was nothing for it but to go home. They packed up everything that could be packed, and he buckled his straps listlessly about him, and fastened his now empty belt round his waist. The sight of the belt was, perhaps, what really overcame his fortitude, and the Scout turned his face to the wall and wept loudly.

His aunt was one of those silly asses who can't bear to see people crying, and whose eyes always fill with tears as soon as anyone else begins to weep. It was a comfort to feel her near him, and they wept together for a time.

"Did you ever have one of your own?" he asked suddenly. Perhaps he thought that her tears showed that she must once have suffered a like bereavement.

"I once had a doll," she said, "made of wax. I had hardly any toys when I was a child, and I loved this one so much that I took it to bed with me. In the morning it had melted, and I was scolded. That was all."

"A sword is such a splendid thing," said the boy. Who knows what he may have read into its possession?

"Yes, it's a fine thing," she said.

He slipped his hand into hers, and they began to walk home. Their heads were bowed. It was a sad and melancholy journey.

As they passed through the village again, they saw a group of men standing outside a small public-house and showing off some feats of sword exercises.

"Oh, John !" she gasped.

"It's my sword," he said. Then he began to revile them, at a distance, in no measured terms.

"I'll have their blood," was his first remark. "They knew it wasn't their sword. I'll jolly well tell them what I think about them." He even contemplated giving one or two of them black eyes.

"All right," said his aunt; "I will wait here for you."

"I thought you might come with me," he said.

"Well, you see, it's some way back, and I'm tired. Besides, I like you to be a man." And she watched his small figure advance falteringly, and then turn back.

"Come on, too," he said.

She rose, but had the tact not to take his hand again.

"I'll fight them for it," he said.

She hoped that would not be necessary.

"They deserve it," he remarked fiercely. "After all, to steal a fellow's sword is as about as disgraceful a thing as you can do, and I'll jolly well tell them so. I shall say : 'Give up that sword, and be jolly grateful if I don't have a go at you with it.'" "I don't know that I should say that," she said.

" Why ? "

" It might provoke hostilities."

"I don't care. They had no business to touch my sword."

"Don't attack them, John."

"Yes, I will," he said.

They were now close to the inn and to the group of men. Some of them sat on an old bench by the door, stained white by the weather, and others were laughing as they handed the sword about.

"I hope they won't mind giving it up," said his aunt.

"They might mind, but they'll have to do it."

"Ask politely, John."

"I thought you'd do the speaking," he said.

The group of men around the publichouse door began to grow larger.

"I'll wait for you here," she said.

"Well, I don't know what to say."

"Just say it's your sword, and that you left it by mistake under the stone wall."

"Suppose they don't believe me?"

She had not thought of that.

"Oh, nonsense! Johnnie, don't meet trouble half-way."

"Come with me."

She came with him, and, in order to take care of her, he slipped his hand into hers.

"Suppose they only talk Welsh," he said.

"They are talking English," she replied, as they drew within sound of the voices.

"Go on, John."

"Aunt, I can't—really and truly I can't. Please say it for me !"

Her voice sounded meek even to herself. "This little boy has lost his sword, and I understand—I am afraid you have got it," she said.

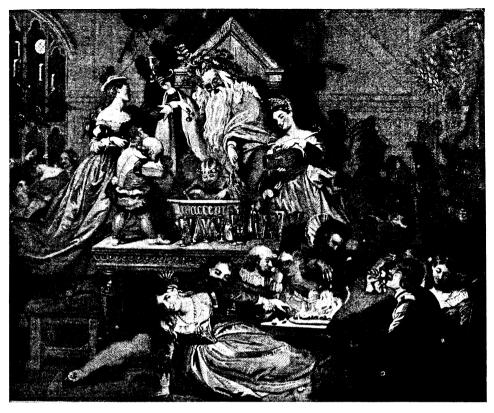
They handed it to her politely. "Oh, it's his sword, is it?" they said. "Well, he do be a fine soldier."

"Thank you very much," she murmured.

The Boy Scout pulled himself together and saluted.

They walked home across the fields, and, remembering how fond mother was of field daisies, they gathered two big bunches of them for her, and tied them together with some useful string which was found at the bottom of the haversack.

"You won't mind carrying them as we pass through the town?" he said. "Flowers rather spoil the look of a fellow in uniform."



"THE CHRISTMAS WASSAIL BOWL." BY R. W. BUSS.

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS, ANCIENT AND MODERN

BY OLIVER HYDE

T is the Christinas season, above all other popular festivals, that keeps a matterof-fact age in touch with the pleasant traditions, customs, and legends of our The quaint observances that ancestors. marked all the feasts of the Christian year have, for the most part, been utterly forgotten. Candlemas, Midsummer, and Michaelmas, to name but a few, pass without a memory of the popular rites formerly celebrated on these days, Easter is a wholly religious festival, but Christmas still calls forth many of those ancient pastimes and revels with which our forefathers used to speed the merriest season of the year.

These customs, as is well known, had nearly all a pagan origin, but were turned to the service of Christianity by the pioneers of the new faith. The Church saw that it would be impossible to abolish the popular celebrations, so, instead of assuming a hostile attitude, it sanctified, as far as possible, the popular observance. Thus the great Nature feast, held at the winter solstice, to mark rejoicing that the sun was once more on his upward path, and that there was promise of a winter over and gone, was gradually associated with a joyful celebration of Christ's birth. The festival admitted many worldly elements. The old feasting was not prohibited, and the Yule of our Teutonic forefathers, with its coarse and careless revelry, prolonged for a month or more, preserved many of its characteristics under the new régime. The idea that Christmas is pre-eminently the time to indulge the appetite dies hard, even in a more refined age, and "good cheer" is still the watchword of the season. It was also a season for the relaxing of the stiffer social relations. In the period when, as the saying runs, " England was Merrie England," Christmas-tide saw master and servant join

without restraint in the season's revels, and meet on something of an equality. During these days lord and retainer were no longer separated at the board by the great salt-cellar, and they took part, on an equal footing, in the games and sports that were going. This passing equality may have been a survival of the Roman Saturnalia, during which the slaves enjoyed a temporary freedom.

This Christmas-tide freedom often passed into





"CHRISTMAS AMONG THE LOWER ORDERS." BY "PHIZ."

had a secular parallel in the Lord of Misrule, who held sway over the revels, and was formally commissioned to set himself and his subjects at variance with established law and order. Nor was this passing madness without its deep significance. Radically it was no mere wanton indulgence. Quite recently, Dr. J. G. Frazer has offered persuasive

"FETCHING HOME THE CHRISTMAS DINNER." BY JOHN LEECH.

licence, and even in the Church the Middle Ages permitted a curious levity which, to modern ideas, is hardly fitting, but in which an earlier age saw no real irreverence. Within the very walls of consecrated buildings a strange buffoonery was tolerated, and on December 6, the Feast of St. Nicholas (Santa Claus), a boy-bishop was appointed, who performed a travesty of the sacred office. At the Christmas feast itself this ceremony



"CHRISTMAS IN THE SERVANTS' HALL." BY "PHIZ."



suggestion as to the origin of such apparent irreverences as the appointment of the boy-bishop. There are gods who must triumph, and their representatives who must die. It is the root idea of the coapegoat. The mediæval boy-bishops enjoyed a brief moment of feigned power and passed away. Of the mystical significance of power underlying this apparently impious travesty, we have a curious indication in the sculptured figure of a boy-bishop in Salisbury Cathedral. The figure, clad in episcopal robes, has its foot on a lion-headed and dragon-tailed uponster, in allusion to the words of the commands. God save the King !" In France he was the "Pope of Fools," in Scotland the "Abbot of Unreason." To-day he survives as the clown in pantomime, although that genial character—at least, in his early and mid-Victorian acceptation—is somewhat on the wane.

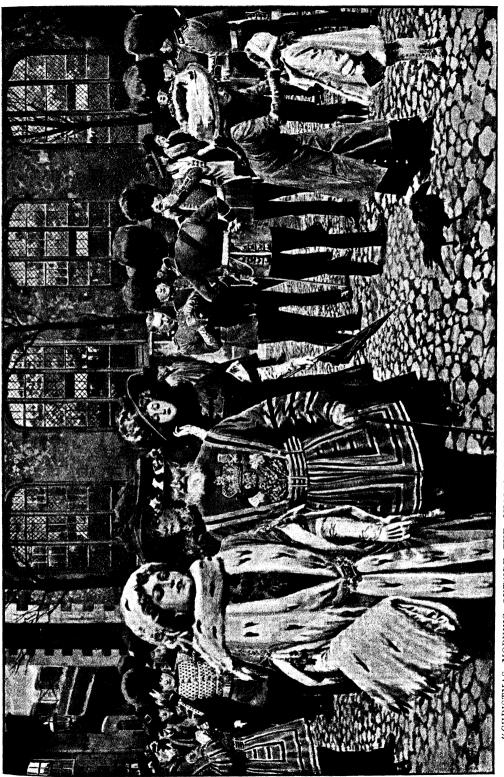
But the celebrations of the Christmas season in the mediaval Church were not wholly burlesque. The burlesque was only one incident in observances otherwise reverential. As early as St. Francis of Assisi, we have records of the pious symbolism that sought to bring home to the minds of



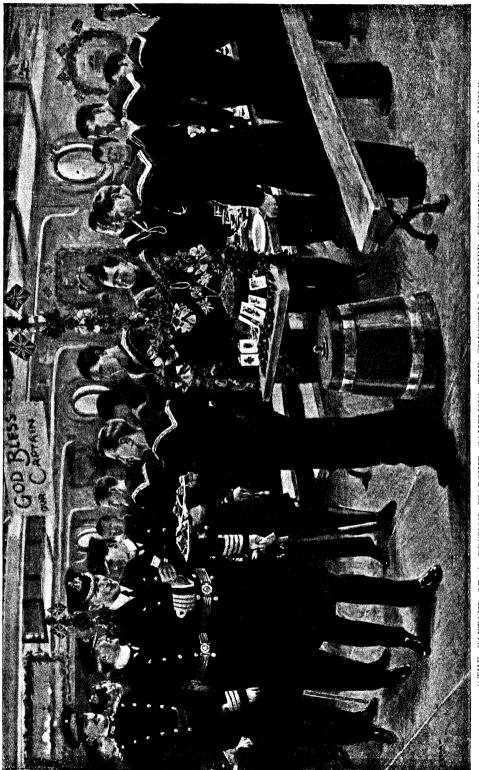
"A SWALLOW AT CHRISTMAS: RARA AVIS IN TERRIS." BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

Psalmist: "Thou shalt tread on the lion and the dragon."

On its purely secular side, this Christmastide parody of authority and revolt from legal restraint has an apt parallel in the ceremonies attending the temporary reign of the Lord of Misrule. At the Inns of Court he had all the semblance of royalty, his ministers, his guards, and even his two chaplains, who preached before him on Sunday in the Temple Church. He had even his formal warrant or commission, giving him "full power and authority to break up all locks, bolts, bars, doors, and latches, and to fling up all doors out of hinges, to come at those who presume to disobey his lordship's the people, by outward and visible signs, the mystery of the Divine Birth. The "crèche," or little tableau representing the scene in the stable at Bethlehem, is still to be seen in Roman Catholic churches, and with this custom is associated the beautiful story of St. Francis, which tells how the saint set up a manger in the woods, and brought thither, in order to complete the symbolism, an ox and an ass. Kneeling in ecstasy before the "Miracle," as it is still called, Francis appeared to his fellow-worshippers actually to hold in his arms the Divine Babe. The story is itself a symbol of the saint's triumphant faith, which could discern the Godhead through the



"CHRISTMAS MORNING OUTSIDE THE CHAPEL OF ST. PETER-AD-VINCULA, AT THE TOWER OF LONDON." BY F. MATANIA.



"THE CAPTAIN OF A BRITISH WARSHIP SAMPLING THE CHRISTMAS DINNER PROVIDED FOR THE MEN." From the coloured version, by Joseph Wilson, of the original black-and-white drawing by S. Begg. things of sense, and as such it is to be read.

This custom of setting up a little model of the manger, universal throughout the ancient Church, is still observed yearly in the Church and Cave of the Nativity, at Bethlehem. In the cave is a recess with an altar, under which, in the pavement, is a silver star marking, traditionally, the birthplace of the Saviour. Fifteen lamps light it, six belonging to the Greeks, five to the Armenians, and four to the Latins. At Christmas there is a service in the Franciscan Church adjoining the Church of the Nativity, at ten o'clock at Moslem attack. To-day, curiously enough, Turkish soldiers are on guard throughout the whole ceremony, as they are at Easter, in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to keep the peace between the rival sects of Latin, Greek, and Armenian Christians.

Closely associated with the manger symbols are those little semi-dramatic survivals of the story of the Magi and their star, which occur in Germany and Poland. The village boys go their rounds at Christmas-time, bearing a huge lighted star and singing appropriate carols. Three of the party masquerade as the Kings of the East, Caspar, Melchior, and



"CHRISTMAS EVE IN POLAND: PEASANTS FISHING BY LEAVE OF THE LANDOWNERS." BY CHARLES DE JANKOWSKI.

night. Thereafter, \mathbf{at} midnight, the worshippers go in procession to the cave. The Latin Patriarch carries in his arms a waxen effigy of the Infant Saviour resting on silken cushions which, in turn, are set on straw. At the recess in the Cave of the Nativity, the Patriarch gives the effigy into the care of a deacon, who afterwards places it on the silver star. Last of all, he bears it to the Chapel of the Manger, where it is left for the adoration of the people, on the spot where, according to the legend, the Magi worshipped the Divine Babe. The public is admitted to this chapel through a portal called "The Needle's Eye," a very low door, designed in former days for security against

Balthazar. With them they carry a little puppet show, in which scenes of the Nativity are enacted. Needless to say, they take a collection for their pains.

In the ancient Chester Mystery Plays occurs a Nativity drama, where the kings and the shepherds present their offerings with words of homely familiarity. The shepherd's verses are especially quaint :—

> Lo, Sonne, I bring Thee a spoone To sup Thy pottage withal at noone.

And one brings

A hook to pull down apples, pears, and plums, That olde Joseph may not hurte his thumbes.

Many interesting variants of this Christmas

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pageantry are alive to the present day. The Christmas Mystery has been revived in England in two exquisite plays, Miss Buckton's "Eager Heart "and Mr. Housman's

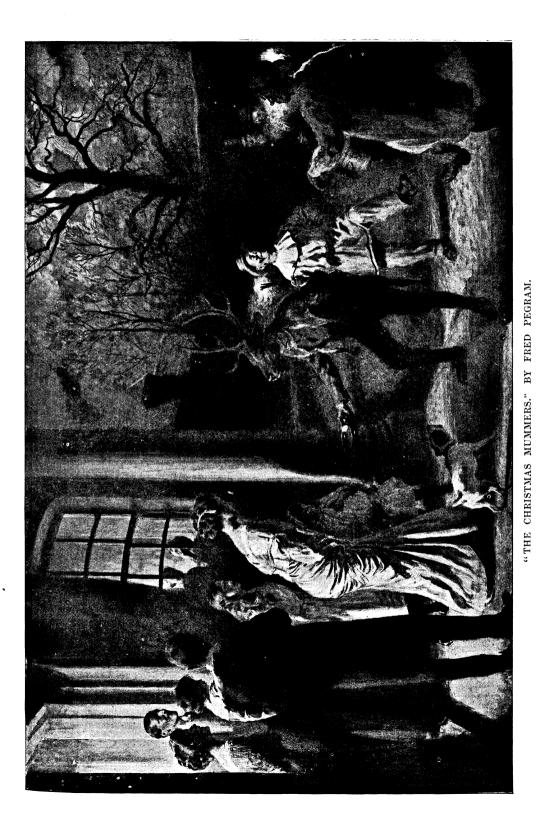
"angels" collect money from the charitable, and on Christmas Eve they distribute to the poor the gifts thus purchased. A figure of the Infant Christ is carried in these processions.



"A NEAPOLITAN SUBSTITUTE FOR THE CHRISTMAS TREE," BY F. MATANIA.

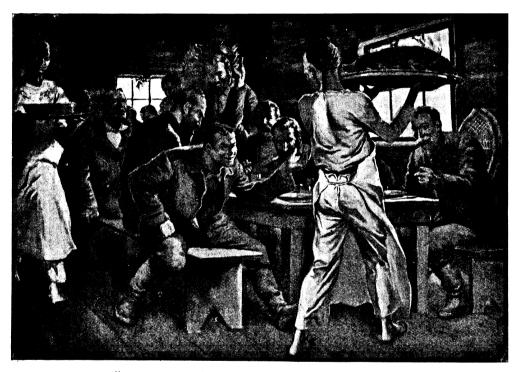
"Bethlehem." In Italy the survivals are very numerous. In Upper Lombardy, pipeplayers march through the towns and villages, followed by children dressed as white-robed angels and crowned with snowdrops. The

We have already alluded to the ancient Christmas-tide relaxation of the laws governing the relations of master and servant. An instance of this special grace may be traced in another Polish custom which we illustrate.



On Christmas Eve the peasants enjoy, by permission of their landlord, the right to hold a general fishing in preserved waters. As the rivers are usually frozen at that season in Central Europe, holes are cut in the ice, and through these the fishing is carried on with large scoop-nets. The fish thus caught are distributed among the villagers. Coming nearer home, we trace a curious survival, or, rather, restoration, of the sentiment that makes Christmas a time of freedom from ordinary obligations and duties. While so many good old customs As long as it hangs there, it is a sign that no unnecessary work shall be undertaken, and it is as effective as any trade union in limiting the output of labour. The custom had its origin in the chorus of a once popular music-hall song : "When the brick went up, we wouldn't work another minute longer."

Both in the Army and in the Navy, Christmas is a season of extra good cheer. When the sailors are just about to sit down to their Christmas dinner, just after Divine Service has been celebrated, the captain and officers visit the mess-room. At the end of



"A FRONTIERSMAN'S CHRISTMAS IN A CANADIAN LOG CABIN."

are dying out, new ones are, here and there, coming into being. About fifteen years ago the sergeants' mess of the 2nd Life Guards instituted an observance that is likely to last as long as the regiment. The custom has all the elements of a first-class superstition, and, should the record of its origin be lost, folklorists would devise all sorts of ingenious explanations. The facts are these. In the mess-room an ordinary builder's brick reposes in state on a silver-mounted ebony stand, covered by a glass case. At the beginning of the Christmas (and other) holidays, the brick is removed ceremoniously from its case and is hung by a chain over the canteen bar. each table stands the cook of the mess, with samples of the Christmas fare he has provided. These are tested by the officers, the good wishes of the season are exchanged, and the procession moves on.

On the question of Christmas fare alone, volumes might be written. The glorification of the season's good cheer is one of the most distinctive notes of Dickens, who has left an imperishable picture of the early Victorian Christmas. Good eating, choice drinking, and abundance of noisy merriment, great fires, big bundles of holly, and an atmosphere of genial stuffiness were the correct accompaniments of the festival. Dickens has made much of it, but nowhere better than in the Seven Poor Travellers, gathered together by chance in Watts's Charity at Rochester. The novelist realises the succulence of the viands, the mellow warmth of his own was accompanied by ample paunches, jolly noses, and apoplectic faces. It is in curious contrast to the more refined banquets that now do honour to Christmas.

One of the most amusing preludes to the

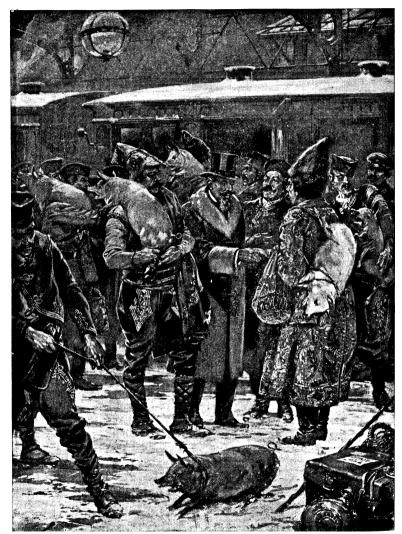


"PUTTING UP THE BRICK IN THE SERGEANTS' MESS OF THE 2ND LIFE GUARDS." BY S. BEGG.

special brew of spiced wine. That coarse, full-blooded, slightly gluttonous enjoyment symbolised by "Phiz" and Cruikshank in "Christmas Among the Lower Orders," "Christmas in the Servants' Hall," and the ridiculous allegory of "The Swallow," Yuletide feast is the pig market held every Christmas near the Parliament House in Belgrade. The pig is to the Servian what roast beef and turkey are to us. Humbler deputies travel back to their homes each with a live pig over his shoulder. Five M.P.'s were recently seen in one railwaycarriage, each with a yelling porcine companion beside him. Pigs, too, are a staple dish in the Far North-West, and the great moment of the Christmas feast in frontiersmen's log cabins is the entrance of

Ching, the inevitable and invaluable Chinese cook, with roast sucking-pig, done to a turn. More splendid is the ancient service of the boar's head, the immemorial tradition of Christmas at Queen's College, Oxford.

Christmas may have lostsomething of its riotous mirth, the wild wassailing of the baron's hall has given place to gentler sports, but snapdragon still lingers at oldfashioned parties, and exercises all its old fascination for young and old alike. Santa Claus, too, promises, happily, to be everlasting, and although we hear of sophisticated children who refuse to believe in him, their chance identification of the good saint with paterfamilias cannot really destroy the illusion or make the expectancy of Christ-Eve less mas absorbing. The Christmas pudding, too, is still stirred The mummers, it is to be feared, are gradually dying out. Once they were a regular feature of the season, but now they are seen only in a few parts of the country. The carol-singers are also becoming, if not extinct, at least some-



"PIGS AND POLITICS, A SCENE IN SERVIA: MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT TAKING HOME LIVE PIGS FOR THE CHRISTMAS DINNER." Drawn by H. W. Koekkoek from a sketch by Rook Carnegie.

by eager little hands in hundreds of homes.

The Christmas-tree is another institution that has a firm root. But abroad it has its variants. In Naples they arrange a grotto with a tableau of the Nativity. This is placed in the middle of the room, with a flight of angels hanging from the ceiling. what debased. Their singing is not what it was, although now and then a welltrained company may be heard. The same, unfortunately, is true of the waits. But enough of good old customs is left to make Christmas still the most genial feast of the year.

"The hole seems smaller, the ball bigger . . . and you see trouble all along the line.

T the outset, let me say that there is one phase of the game for which no amount of practice other than competitive is of any use. I refer to putting. Go out to the nearest green, and you will hole putts with the greatest ease, and this for the reason that nothing is depending on the result. Your nerves are at rest, and the ball is struck correctly. But what a difference when you are engaged in a match or playing in a competition ! The hole seems smaller, the ball bigger, and when you search for the "borrow," you see trouble all along the line. By the time you take up your position to play the stroke, you feel that, if it comes off, it will be something in the nature of a fluke. Putting is a psychological matter, and difficult of explanation; therefore, I repeat, that to practise putting is a sheer waste of time. I know that there are some who will be against me in this, but the majority will agree. Naturally, the beginner has to learn how to hold his club and how to strike the ball, learn to judge the strength of the greens, and many other matters. But this being acquired, to hole putts is quite another matter, and nothing but competitive practice is of use. This by the way. fact remains, and cannot be denied, that practice in other strokes is absolutely a necessity if one would improve. The leaders of every sport devote hours every day to the task of keeping in form, and without urging on golfers the necessity of spending hours every day on the golf course, yet would I suggest that, when off their game, they should not be

THE BEST METHOD OF PRACTICE

> By **EDWARD** RAY

> > Illustrated $\mathbf{b}\mathbf{y}$ A. WALLIS MILLS

so keen on playing matches just to oblige friends. Let me assume that a man is completely off his drive. He should stop playing, take a driver and half a dozen balls, and seek out some secluded part of the course, and there take himself seriously to task. Better still, he should invoke the aid of his professional, whose practised eye will at once discern the fault, and point out the remedy. It is difficult for even the leading players to know what they are doing wrong, for we have not the gift of seeing "oursels as ithers see us," and therefore one used to our methods can perceive at a glauce wherein we are different for the time being. But a warning must be uttered against the evil of accepting the advice of all and sundry. The average player, having missed a few drives, naturally appeals to his opponent, who assures him—and he is judging by his own methods—that he is doing this and that. The unfortunate takes the suggestion seriously, and in nine cases out of ten finds himself plunged deeper into the mire. The



[&]quot;It has been said that Mr. Balfour once spent a whole day in a bunker, learning to get out."

advice is well meant, but in order to put a player once more on the right track, one should judge of the fault by the player's own method of play, and not by one's

own. Therefore the professional, who is familiar with the styles of every member, is naturally the best court of appeal.

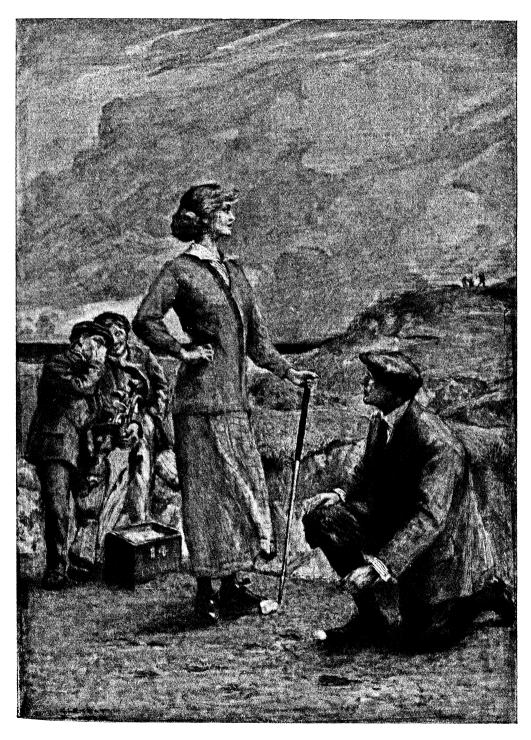
I repeat, then, when you are off, go out with the club that is the cause of your sorrow, and put in a couple of hours' practice at the stroke; you will soon strike the It has been said that correct path. Mr. A. J. Balfour once spent a whole day in a bunker, learning to I doubt the accuracy of get out. this statement, but he was certainly working on the right lines. In my own case, when I am due to play in an exhibition match or a tournament, I take out a few clubs and make certain that nothing is amiss. Mr. F. S. Jackson, the one-time cricketer, now a plus player, is thorough in everything he does on a golf course. Should he play one or two bad mashie shots in a round, the next day will see him out with the mashie and a dozen balls, and there he stops until the fault is eradicated. This is the reason that he has so quickly brought his handicap down to plus two. Attention to detail must have this result, unless one is proceeding on wrong lines, and, when this is the case, the player will never progress. The ordinary golfer is keen enough, but his keenness lies in a desire to get the better of a friend, and not, as it ought to be, to make himself perfect. For him to miss a stroke does not appear to be a serious matter, if his opponent does likewise; but this player will never be known as a golfer of merit.

Theories are apt to be upset when put into practice, but we should not too hastily condemn the theorist who is ambitious; and even if his theories do not survive, yet has he learnt what he ought not to do, and, knowing this, he has taken a step forward. I know a player who is constantly evolving fresh ideas in regard to golf, and the fact that he reduced his handicap from twenty to plus one, in the short space of six years, speaks volumes for his pertinacity. I do not think that to practise at a net is of much use, for even if the ball apparently goes straight, we cannot tell but what, without the net to stop its flight, it may not have been sliced.

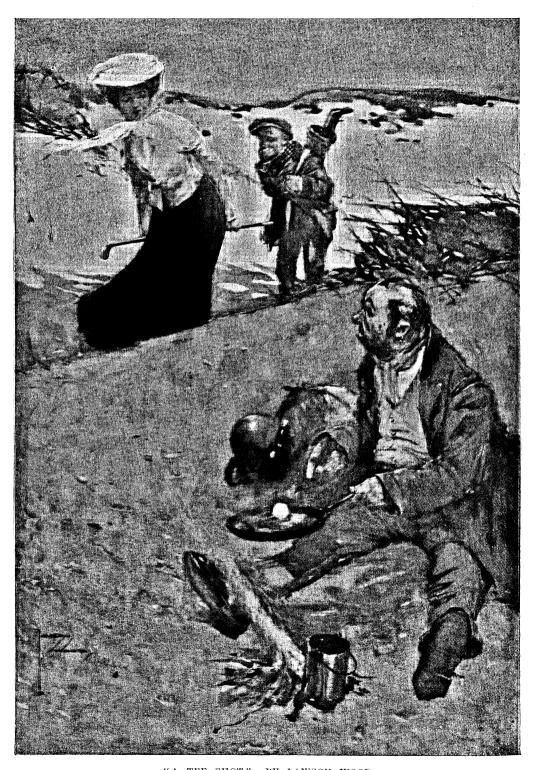
Of course, if a player is a novice, then to play at a net, in the presence of an instructor,



The criticism of the caddies.



"A DIFFICULT APPROACH." BY CLEMENT FLOWER.



"A TEE SHOT." BY LAWSON WOOD. Reproduced by permission of Richard Wyman & Co., Bedford Street, Strand, owners of the copyright and publishers of the large coloured plate.

is quite in order, for the swing has to be Captive balls are only fit for acquired. exercise, for no benefit can be derived from their use. Golf schools are the latest thing for golfers, and for the business man who has half an hour to spare, they offer an opportunity of freeing the shoulders without having to take train out of town. But. like nets and captive balls, the golf schools are only useful to the absolute novice, and he naturally turns to them as a means whereby he can acquire some little skill before exposing himself to the criticism of caddies.

Professionals, as a body, do not practise overmuch, though Charles Mayo has said that he puts in an hour on the green every day. The secret of J. H. Taylor's skill with a mashie lies in the fact that, when employed

when a player is out of love with a club that he replaces it, but I must say that a player should wait a little before throwing over a club. He should remember the many good strokes, and not think too much of the bad. Give the club a little time, for the fault is always with the man behind the gun, and we should not seek to ascribe our own failings to something else. How often have I known a man come to the club, fail to find an opponent, and go home again! Here is a missed opportunity to practise; but, as I have said, the average golfer does not take the game seriously enough. He probably envies the skill of the plus player, without stopping to think how he has won his way through. Again, if he was even conscious that constant practice is necessary, he would not care to spend time and money in an effort to



as a groundsman on the Westward Ho! course, he never let slip an opportunity of pitching a ball with his favourite club, and this constant wooing of one stroke made him a master. Golfers should never miss the chance of practising. When kept back by the couple in front, don't stand making remarks anent their rate of progress, but take your iron or your mashie out of the big, and remove daisies or whatever happens to be near you. It will all help to make you more familiar with your clubs, and, after all, this is what you require, for every golfer knows that, when he is off with a certain club, it does not feel the same ; the balance somehow seems different, and it is then that a new club is purchased.

As a seller of golf clubs, I ought not to suppress this desperate buying, for it is only improve. Provided he can play a game with a player about his own handicap, this is all he requires. To seek to improve yourself, therefore, with each club in your bag, is the best and only method of practice. You drive badly: then go out with the driver. Should your mashie shots be poor, learn your mashie, and if, at the end of a week's practice, you are still "off," then nothing remains for you but to put yourself in the hands of a professional.

There is another phase of practice that is all-important, but quite ignored by the average golfer. I refer to the necessity for being able to judge distances. To be able to play an approach shot correctly is one thing, but to be able to place the ball on a space that is but twenty yards square calls for much practice. Here the golfer should learn to rely on his own judgment, and not appeal to the caddie regarding the correct club to use. It is this gift of being able to judge the distance between him and the flag that stands the professional in good stead when playing over a strange course. As an aid to this, we are certainly greatly assisted by some landmark in the vicinity of the green. It may be a bunker, a hill, or a tree, but whatever might be its nature, an excellent guide can be obtained. The professional, when setting out for a round, invariably sets himself the task of keeping as near "fours" as he can, and, in like manner, the 16-handicap man can also keep a watch over his play. His best score might be 94; then he should do his utmost to do a 93.

The whole idea for thus setting up a standard is to provide oneself with a test that should prevent indifferent methods. We start with a definite object in view, and this alone is sufficient to cause us to concentrate our attention on the matter in hand. The essence of practice is the capacity for taking pains, for until a player can keep his thoughts from wandering, he will never improve. Do not be misled by the apparent indifference of the leading players. Although they appear to approach the game in a flippant manner, yet are they ever conscious that to slack off is fatal. I always attribute the skill of a professional, not so much to his constant handling of clubs, but to the fact that, when a caddie, he seldom played with more than one club at a time. This sounds somewhat of an Irishism, but my meaning is this : the caddie's set of clubs was completed only at long intervals between each acquisition, and by the time that he possessed a full set, he was on good terms with each. It is through this constant practice with one club at a time that their game was gradually built up, for, though advancing slowly, it was sure. It is really impossible to explain the reason why a good player should go off occasionally. Too much golf is as bad as too little, for staleness and lack of practice have similar offects; but to explain why the morning round should be good, and the afternoon just the

reverse, is one of those things that has earned for golf its description of being a funny game.

It is at this depressing stage that a golfer makes a false step. Instead of looking upon the bad round as merely a passing lapse, he is more often inclined to the belief that something is radically wrong, and when a golfer arrives at this conclusion, he is not unprovided with possible explanations. His clubs are too heavy or too long, and the professional is at once given some work. Bv tampering with clubs that have proved themselves, the player cuts the painter, so to speak, with the result that he now has something tangible to account for bad Reformation lies with the player, play. not with his weapons, and his only plan is just to persevere on the lines that I have suggested.

I am not going to argue that anyone can reduce his handicap from twenty to ten by studying books on the game, but it is more than possible that a comparison of his own methods with those of the leading players will show him wherein he errs. Naturally, every player's faults must be judged from the standpoint of his own methods of play. One man might crouch in driving, another stand well up. Both obtain good results; but, if either go off, it would be futile to suggest that the croucher should rise, and his opposite crouch. I could not play with Vardon's style any more than Vardon could employ mine with success, and we must each tread our own paths. One man can get a lot of stop on a mashie approach by buckling up his right wrist at the moment of striking, whilst another obtains it by taking the club through across the line of flight. Enough has been said, however, to show that it is not always beneficial to try to ape the methods of others; and when practising alone, keep to your own style of play, and try, by a constant wooing, to regain that which you have lost. A couple of hours in a quiet corner of the course should reveal the fault, and this, in my opinion, is the only satisfactory method of practice.



TANTIVY CORNER

By "Q."

Illustrated by J. R. Skelton



Sir John's end of the dinner-table the Chief Constable was frankly talking "shop" with his host and the High Sheriff; excusably, too, for all three had just come through the turnoil of a General

Election, and the ladies were keen to hear how this and that had happened. The Chief Constable spoke with a certain quiet satisfaction, to which he had a right; for trouble had been feared in one or two polling districts, and, by general consent, his police had handled things well. The High Sheriff listened, and nodded from time to time with a large gravity. Sir John interrupted here and there with a question. He was young, and had succeeded to his baronetcy, with a small but growing patrimony, a short four years ago; a modest, open-air sportsman, who took himself as Magistrate, Deputy Lieutenant, and what-not very seriously, with a genuine eagerness to learn.

At the other end of the table, where sat his young wife, Lady Vepe, having the Bishop on her right, and on her left Mr. Bagshot, M.P.—that week elected for a neighbouring constituency-her friend Miss Hemerton was telling of a book she found in a parcel from Mudie's-an "Adventure," as it was entitled, of two English ladies in Paris, who, paying a visit to the Petit Trianon, had, in broad daylight and in full possession of their senses, walked straight into the past, following alleys obliterated a hundred years since, encountering persons as long ago dead, in the end coming face to face with Marie Antoinette herself. The story was well attested. The experiences of the two ladies differed-they had not seen alike-yet the separate visions confirmed rather than contradicted each other, and some of the details noted were so trivial that no historical knowledge, however dim, could have suggested

them. Miss Hemerton, full of the story, wanted to know if it were possible that a scene imprinted on the retina of a dead woman's—Marie Antoinette's—eyes could survive, and by transference impose itself upon the vision of a couple of Englishwomen more than a hundred years later : and, if so, how?

The Bishop cleared his throat. "A strange case, undeniably," said he. "In an ordinary way, one explains these visions *subjectively*—by hallucination in the person who sees. But here are two witnesses ; and, if the tale be true, the vision must have been imposed *from without.*"

He cleared his throat again and paused, considering the difficulty. "That a whole scene from the past could so reconstruct itself......"

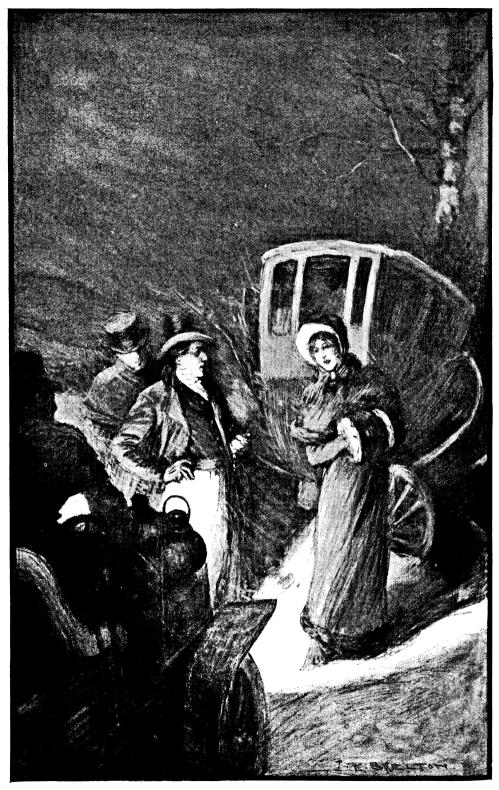
"But it can," put in Mr. Bagshot sharply, across his hostess. "I—er—beg your pardon, my lord"—for the Bishop was not used to having his sentences interrupted, and his eyebrows plainly showed this.

To make matters worse, just then, in the awkward silence, the Chief Constable's voice, at the far end of the table, was heard to say : "In fact, it's with the police as with the clergy. You catch a man young and make a parson of him, or you make a constable of him, and henceforth he's 'the man in the white choker' or 'the man in blue,' as it may be—a man separated from his fellows, anyway, and wearing a uniform to remind him of it. With all respect to Thomas Carlyle, it's wonderful how a suit of clothes will operate on the human mind."

"I—I beg your pardon," repeated Mr. Bagshot, this time addressing his hostess, "but—most extraordinary !—they're saying, down there, the very thing his lordship's remark had suggested to my mind You'll forgive me, my lord?" He inclined again towards the Bishöp, who bowed in return, but in a puzzled way, and with a dawning suspicion that Mr. Bagshot had drunk too much champagne after his electoral exertions.

"The fact is," continued Mr. Bagshot,

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""But what has happened to your horses? Have you broken down, too?"

"this isn't my first visit to Cornwall, and the last time—some eight or nine years ago —a mighty curious thing happened to me curious, almost, as what happened to Miss Hemerton's two ladies at Versailles. The place, if I mistake not, lies less than two miles from where we are sitting—a turning off the Truro road, called Tantivy Corner."

"Eh? What's that?" Sir John, catching the name, spoke up from his end. "Tantivy Corner? Hullo, Bagshot, what the deuce do *you* know of Tantivy Corner, that you speak of it so pat? The name's almost forgotten, even in these parts."

"There's a sort of wayside barn a stone'sthrow down the cross-road," answered Mr. Bagshot. "A line of stables, it used to be."

"That's right—place where Tom Grigg's grandfather kept his relays for 'The Royal Mail' and 'Self-Defence' coaches, and harnessed-up for the last run into Truro —down Probus Hill, across Tressillian Bridge, and up past Pencalenick lodgegates at a timid average of fifteen miles an hour. Horses, men, the whole system, dead and done with, these seventy odd years ! But you and I know Tantivy Corner—hey, Pamela?"

With the laugh he fired a rallying glance at his wife. But Lady Vepe was leaning back in her chair, her eyes scanning Mr. Bagshot's profile with a sudden quick interest.

Mr. Bagshot did not observe this scrutiny. "It really is a curious yarn," said he, resting his wrists on the table, his finger-tips meeting and making an arch slantwise over his dessert plate, as he bent forward and took possession of the company. "It happened in a Christmas Vacation. A reading-party from Christ Church, four of us undergraduates, with the Junior Censor —'the grave man, nicknamed Adam,' but actually he was called Wilkins—had hit on a retired farmhouse hard by here—Goon Moor. Our host's name, as I remember, was Tremenheere."

"One of my tenants," put in Sir John, in a queer voice. He caught his wife's eye, and it held many meanings, but chiefly it warned him to be silent. So he merely added: "Go on, Bagshot. This grows interesting."

"His wife," pursued Mr. Bagshot, "was a capital cook in a plain way. I remember her for that, and also because she persisted in speaking of us as 'them young Cantabs from Oxford.' We were five, as I have said : 'the grave man Adam,' surnamed Wilkins; Merridew, a rowing man of vast bulk (dead these five years, poor fellow !); little Pitt, *alias* the Pitling, *alias* the Immortal Billy; Garrymore, who goes about nowadays as a bloated earl; and I. I never quite knew how Wilkins had happened on Goon Farm, or why he chose it, unless it were that, being ten miles from the sea, even more remote from a golf links, with no society within measurable distance—— I beg your pardon."

"You need not beg anybody's pardon," Lady Vepe assured him. "Nobody in the neighbourhood entertained in those days."

"There was no reason, of course, why they should entertain us," said Mr. Bagshot. "We were entire strangers, and, so far as I could discover, the one thing that had fetched us to this spot was a theory of Wilkins's that, in the depth of winter, it never snowed or froze in Cornwall, in which theory, by the way, he was rather grievously mistaken. Probably he thought, too, that we should read the harder for being cut off from all dissipation. If so, he made another mistake ; for the Pitling had brought a car with him—an infernal machine of the period —a Max-Prest by name, with a gearing arrangement and a thirst for petrol which had to be known to be believed."

"Right again," Sir John confirmed him. "A more rotten bag of tricks—"

"Eh?" Mr. Bagshot fumbled and felt for his eyeglass, a habit of his when startled. "Is it possible that you, too, have made acquaintance with a Max-Prest?"

"Once," answered Sir John hastily, catching his wife's eye. "Only once in my life. I—er—used to specialise in motors, after a fashion."

"I have never met with another. Indeed, we allowed, we four, after some experience of the beastly thing, that its inventor had palmed this one machine, the sole product of his invention, off on the Pitling and promptly died. The more it broke down, the more it intrigued us, for it never broke down twice in the same way. We spent hours on the most deplorable roads, ministering to its infirmities. Wilkins cursed it daily by all his gods; for three days out of four it played billy with our reading, and we straggled home late for dinner-afoot usually. The sums the Pitling paid for haulage promised, in the end, to endear us to the farmers, among whom we started by being infernally unpopular, for the Max-Prest could be relied upon to scare any horse it met.

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"About the only occasion on which it 'functioned' decently was the one of which I am going to tell you.

"Unknown as we were in the county, someone must have found us out; for, early in January, a card arrived bearing an invitation to a bachelors' ball at Truro. 'Fancy Dress' was added.

"I need hardly say we had no fancy dresses But we agreed that it would be with us. fun to attend, all but 'the grave man,' who would have no truck with such frivolities. So, after putting our heads together, we telegraphed to a man in King Street, Covent Garden, for four costumes of the Regency period, which in due course arrived at Grampound Road Station, and were delivered to us. I ask you to mark this. We had sent our measurements, size of heads, etc., and everything turned up to order-curly top-hats of beaver or long-napped silk, high-collared coats, tight-fitting pantaloons, everything en règle down to such trifles as gold-headed canes, fob-chains, ribboned eveglasses. The costumier, in a covering letter, assured us-pray mark this againthat the garments were authentic specimens of the period, refitted to our measurements and newly lined. One of the suits had descended from the wardrobe of the great Brummel. Wilkins, when we paraded before him for a dress rehearsal, hailed us as the Abstract Bucks. We had taken the precaution-since we intended to drive over to Truro in the car, which was an open one of ordering great-coats as well. Funny, tight-waisted things they were, with three or four capes apiece, and, as it turned out, we needed them.

"For, on the afternoon of the ball, it started to snow—yes, I know something of your much-advertised Cornish Riviera—and it snowed solidly for twenty-four hours. We reached Truro, however, without mishap, the car, for once in its career, behaving beautifully. Garrymore started a theory that it had been designed originally for polar exploration, and that this accounted for the rarity of the Max-Prest chassis. We dined at 'The Red Lion,' and I have a general recollection that all four of us danced afterwards with astonishing vigour and enjoyed ourselves thoroughly."

"I remember thinking it must be like heaven !" murmured Lady Vepe.

"Eh?" Mr. Bagshot turned half about. "Why, to be sure, you were there, and dancing, too, no doubt. But I'll be sworn," he added gallantly, "I had not the honour of an introduction, or I should have remembered it."

"I was not there. But please go on."

Slightly puzzled, Mr. Bagshot picked up the thread of his story. "Let me see-Yes, certainly we must have enjoyed ourselves, because it was not until two in the morning that we collected our party, got out the car, and started for home. We should have stayed to the very end had not the Pitling reported that snow was still falling, and-let alone the difficulty of steering in such weather, with all the usual features of the road effaced—a very little more of it might prove too much for the always uncertain temper of Max-Prest. So. as I say, having changed our dancing shoes for stout boots, unstabled the car and lit the lamps, we bowled out of Truro, the streets of which already lay about four inches deep in snow.

"Billy, to do him justice, drove with great skill and a good deal less than his usual recklessness, while the car-as Garrymore pointed out, claiming that it confirmed his theory—really seemed to be enjoying itself. I dare say, though, that we owed as much to luck as to good management, and I have a notion that, after passing safely through Probus, Billy began to nod. \mathbf{At} any rate, as we were rolling past Trewithian, where the plantation on our right hid the moon for a while, our off-wheel narrowly escaped a snow-covered mound of road-metal piled in the water-plate. I shook Billy by the collar and charged him with falling asleep.

"'Not a bit,' he assured me. 'Humours of the road—that's all : Christmas roysterers returning in the olden time. Would-be comic Christmas card—we're doing it life size ! Highwayman at the corner— Hullo !' He put on the brake with a jerk that almost pitched us out of the car, and brought up all standing.

"'What, in the name of—of Santa Claus—__'

"Our lamps, blazing down the road, lit up, at less than a dozen paces, a picture that might have come straight from a Christmas card—a broken-down post-chaise, with a horse tethered to a gate beside it, and by the chaise a solitary human figure standing, a woman, wrapped in a long dark cloak and wearing a poke-bonnet as old as your grandmother's.

"Before we could tumble out, she approached us, still in the glare of the lamps, and, as it seemed to me, with a swimming, ghostly motion. Her face, under the eaves of the bonnet, was veiled against the weather ; but I noted that her figure was slim and youthful, and her voice corresponded with it, as she said, with a catch of the breath, treating us at the same time to a little old-fashioned curtsey---

"'Oh, sirs! But what has happened to your horses? Have you broken down, too?'

"'Horses?' began Merridew—he was never quick at the uptake, poor fellow. But 'Oh, hush, you duffer !' said I, pushing him aside from the step and pulling off my beaver, which by this time had a white top like a yachting-cap's. 'Miss or madam,' began I, with a bow, 'have no thought about us, except that we are your servants, to help in any way we can.'

"She showed not the smallest surprise at our costumes. 'I thank you, sirs, with all my heart. There has been a dr-readful mishap,' she explained. 'Our fore axle-pin has come out, as you see, and Jack—and the gentleman, I mean—has ridden back with the postboy to the cross-roads where the stables are, and a smithy, too, the postboy says, if he can wake up any smith at this hour—.'

"'Stables? Smithy?' echoed Garrymore behind me. 'There's a posting-stables at the railway station — nothing nearer in this forsaken land.'

"'I do not understand you, sir,' she answered, wringing her hands in the roadway and looking very forlorn. 'We saw the lights of the stables as we passed the crossroads, not five hundred yards back. Tantivy Corner is the name of the place, so the postboy said. He said, too, they were waiting there with the relay for the morning coach —"The Self-Defence."'

"I heard Garrymore gasp. 'Stablesrelays?' muttered Merridew. 'She can't mean that tumbledown barn at the corner. Why, it must have stood empty since the year one !'

"I could have called to them again to hush. It was evident that as yet they did not see what I saw—that we had driven a hundred years into the past and come to a halt there. The moon, overtopping the plantation, shed her rays down and across the snow-encumbered road. The Pitling had plucked out one of our head-lamps and was examining the wreck of the chaise.

"'Good Heavens!' said he, rejoining us, 'it must have come straight out of the Ark!'

"'They must have reached the corner before this,' said the young lady, moving to

the gate and hoisting herself upon its second bar. 'Look, there are the stables, beyond the angle of the hedge. You can see the lights quite plainly.' And, sure enough, we could.

"'See here, you fellows,' commanded Billy, 'suppose we put forth our best strength and hoist this contraption to one side of the road. Then we might get the car past and push on to lend a hand. Here, Merridew, you and Bagshot get a lift on.'

". But I tell you there *ain't* any stables!' Merridew protested. 'The place is a ruin, and has been for these fifty years.'

"'It doesn't greatly matter just now,' explained Billy, with great lucidity, 'which of us is drunk or which is sober. The point is, that we all do something, seeing the lady's in a hurry. What's the time, by the way?' He pulled out his fob-watch and held it to one of the lamps. 'Three-thirty and a little after,' he announced.

"The young woman—by her shape she was little more than a girl—wrung her hands afresh. 'And the coach is timed for ten minutes to four !'

"'The coach, ma'am ?' demanded Billy. 'What coach, ma'am ?'

""The Self-Defence," sir; and I greatly fear that dear papa will be on it. You see, Jack—he insists on my calling him Jack and I were posting to Falmouth when this dr-dreadful mishap occurred; and dear papa, who disapproves of Jack, is so irascible—...

"Billy let out a long, low whistle, but it was interrupted by the sound of voices up the road. Presently lanterns showed, and a minute later I had no doubt at all that we had driven into the past, as a company joined us, headed by a postillion on a harness horse and a young gentleman in travelling boots and caped overcoat, the collar of which was turned up against the snow, for the snow still fell steadily, although the wind had dropped.

"Two or three stablemen—fellows in long waistcoats and tightish corduroy kneebreeches—accompanied them, and they had brought along the smith, who promptly went down on his belly in the snow and crawled under the chaise to examine the damage. The stablemen, stooping, held their lanterns this way or that, as he directed.

"By and by, crawling forth again, he commanded us to bear a hand and tilt the machine on its side towards the hedge. We all started to help, when somebody cried out that he could hear the coach coming.

"We strained our ears, and there was no

mistake. The snow muffled all sound of wheels, but, the air by this time being windless, the pounding of the horses' gallop was faintly audible, with a distinct clink, now and again, of the swingle-bars. To remove all doubts, of a sudden a horn sounded, very musical and clear.

"'That's to warn the relay,' said a voice. 'Thirty seconds or so, and you'll hear 'em draw up at the Corner.'

"Sure enough, in something like that space of time, the galloping ceased. I turned and saw the young man slip an arm around the lady."

"Heavens, but did you, now?" interjected Sir John, who had been listening with the liveliest interest.

"I turned," repeated Mr. Bagshot, now intent on his climax, and not to be diverted, "and I saw the young man slip an arm around the lady to comfort her. Her shoulders heaved as she bent towards him and sobbed. They made a pretty silhouette against the glare of our lamps. They—the lamps and our car—were real, at any rate. I said a word in Billy's ear, and Billy walked up and touched the lady by the elbow.

"'By your leave, miss,' said Billy. ٤I can't say that I understand this at all, but if you two are after running for it-why, I'm one to help a fellow-sportsman. There's just You, Bagshot, room here to turn the car. stand by and give the word before she bumps astern. Nip in, miss, if you pleaseyou'll find a rug somewhere—and you, sir, might jump up forrad beside me-I'd be glad of a talk as we go along. But if it's racing the coach we are,' wound up Billy, running forward to start up the works again, 'I'll promise you that it shan't even smell us this side of Falmouth'-which, by the way, was a large promise, for Garrymore was wont to declare that the Max-Prest might be hunted on a day-old scent in any ordinary weather.

"But I don't understand,' pleaded the young lady, very innocently. 'For where are your horses?'

"She climbed in obediently, nevertheless, and her young man jumped for a seat in front. By this time the car was throbbing, shaking through all its length like a tramp steamer. Billy scrambled in and began to work her around. I shouted directions, all the while straining my ears to listen for the coach, if it were bearing down on us, which was ridiculous, for the noise made by the car would have drowned a brass band.

"'Straight?' queried Billy. 'What's that locking the off hind wheel?' He

jumped out in a hurry to see, when—prr-f ! with a leap forward the Max-Prest took the road and fairly skimmed out of sight—it and the two innocents—leaving us there, stuck and standing.

"Goo-oochy losh !' Billy, turning a blank face to me at close quarters, had scarcely given this expression to his feelings when a shout from somewhere up the road warned us to jump aside for the hedge, just as the coach—yes, indeed, ladies—just as the mailcoach, with horses at full gallop and the guard blowing on his horn, thundered past, splashing up the snow in our faces. It went by like a whirlwind.

"' I'll back the car, though—to the next corner !' yelled Billy above the uproar, and fell on me hysterically.

"We ran like two aimless fools down the But the noises of car and coach died road. away, and pursuit was plainly impossible. We retraced our steps, and found our companions chatting with the gang of men around the chaise. They were real enough, at all events. Having wisely decided that the axle was beyond repairing-at any rate, before daylight-they walked us back to Tantivy Corner, where—still as if we were living back a hundred years—we found the stables alight with lanterns hanging by the Six horses we found there, bedded stalls. up with a plenty of fresh straw, and rum, with hot water, going in the harness-room. The rum, again, was real enough; and when we had drunk it until our skins tingled, the stablemen-aged fellows all-put us on our road to tramp it home, which we did. And what do you suppose was the first thing we saw in the roadway before the house? Why, the Max-Prest, standing there in the snow, empty, with lamps still blazing, just as solid and as innocent as a baby !"

"Yes," said Lady Vepe softly, in her silvery voice, after a silence of some moments had rewarded the climax. "Yes, it was a heavenly drive, and I don't mind telling you -now, Jack !- that my husband proposed to me in the course of it. You see "-here she turned sweetly on the astounded Mr. Bagshot—"Jack was very poor in those days; he had scarcely a penny to bless himself, still less a penny to bless a country clergyman's daughter. We were too poor -the both of us—even to attend that ball. I had no frock less than three years old; and somehow we conceived a grudge against you rich young men, whom we were too poor even to entertain. There was no reason, you will say, why we should have nursed

any grudge against you? Perhaps not; vet you might understand if you had ever known poverty --- the sort that's called genteel. And, after all, we were not the only ones. Grigg, at the posting-stables, keeps two cars now-quite decent ones-and quite often hires them out four days a week. But in those days he loathed the very name of a motor, and conceived he had a grievance against your reading-party because you never hired from him. That is how he came into the plot. He had an old coach in his stables. with one or two broken-down chaises. Bv searching through the wardrobes at home I found most of the dresses, and Grigg hunted up a guard's horn and uniform. As for

Jack, he had been learning with a motorcar firm in London, and was home for his holiday, so that part of the business came easy to him. Also, knowing the roads, it was easy for us to bring the car around to Goon Moor before you returned. But Jack behaved so sillily by the way, and the drive in the moonlight was so heavenly, that you almost caught us. As it was, we had just time to slip out and watch your discovery from behind the escallonia hedge. Then we raced back to Tantivy Corner, to help in dismantling the stables. No doubt you visited them next day, and found them forlorn as ever?"

"We did," said Mr. Bagshot.



TO A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN DECEMBER.

D^{AUGHTER} of May, to old December bringing Youth and strange warmth and founts of sunny mirth! Deep in the woodland scanty choirs are singing Songs half forgotten of a happier earth.

Crowned not with leaves nor garlanded with flowers, Pensive thou comest, maidenly of mien; Soft is thy footfall in the winnowed bowers, Loosened thy shadow-train along the green.

Minstrels have been who, born untimely, chanted Songs of the splendour of a buried day: So thou, a *trouvère*, passing memory-haunted, Breathest in alien clime of vanished May.

Linger, oh, linger, in thy glamour steeping Earth, ere thou speedest through the cloudy gate; Soon, soon thy flight, and long shall we be reaping Sunless and songless days and desolate.

THOMAS SHARP.

CARFEW-IMPRESARIO

By EDGAR WALLACE

Author of "Sanders of the River," "Private Selby," "The Council of Justice," "Grey Timothy," "The People of the River," etc.

Illustrated by Dudley Hardy



THOUSAND pounds is a lot of money, butathousand times a thousand is an unthin k a ble sum, unless you are a financier, a Chancellor of the Exchequer, or an exceedingly dishonest person.

The easiest way to visualise a million pounds is to reduce it to hundredweights and pounds. Carfew had done that often, but he had never got any further than five figures. They were really four figures that were constantly climbing to the very lip of five, and as constantly slipping down again.

Carfew learnt a lesson which all successful men must learn, namely, that Fate fixes an iron grating across the path of fortune. It may be fixed at the thousand-pound stage, or at the ten-thousand, or even the hundredthousand-pound stage in the rock road. For many of us, alas, it is fixed away down in the foothills of the hundreds.

Try as a man may, with all the prestige and the influence and the good luck which is inseparable to success, he cannot turn that gate upon its hinges till the appointed time. Here he must sit among the ninety-nine, patiently, hopefully, uncomplainingly.

Woe to him if he shakes the gate or seeks to climb it. Down, down, down he will slip and tumble, battered and bruised and torn. The gates lower down, which bar the progress of lesser men, will obligingly open to let him slip through, and it is well if he misses the altogether miserable muddy pool on the edge of which all endeavours begin and in the cold depths of which every failure ends.

Let him sprawl into this, and hope of further exercise vanishes; he is expelled from Fortune's Alpine Club. No man climbs wholly by his own endeavour. He is hauled or pushed by fellow-climbers, and honourable members of the excelsior brigade sniff at the malodorous figure of failure, and refuse the help of their dainty hands to the grimy and undesirable scarecrow who has taken a course of financial mud-baths.

Carfew was standing in exasperated calm in the 99's; but, stretching his arm through the bars, he could, so to speak, gather the flowers of the '00's, and it was an annoying situation. He was somewhat handicapped by the delusion that he was the only man in the world who had ever been in his trying situation. Anyway, he would not have taken advice, because Carfew never sought advice —he was not poor enough.

It was a distressing position, because, to continue the imagery, there, shining ahead of him, was the golden gate of the million, and Carfew was seized with an insane desire to reach that gate before the clock struck forty.

He went to his broker—not for advice, be it understood. He wanted somebody to approve of him.

"I am making no headway, Parker," he said.

"You're making a steady income," said Parker, "and a steady income is the most progressive movement in the City."

"A steady income is stagnation," said Carfew loudly. "A steady income means too fat at forty. A steady income——"

"We'll cut out the speech," said Parker, and get to the bright, brisk business."

Carfew frowned at him suspiciously.

"That's very gay talk for a man who wears white spats," he said inconsequently. "Where did you pick it up?"

The middle-aged Parker blushed guiltily and looked out of the window.

"Oh, I don't know," he said vaguely;

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"one absorbs slang from the office boy. You were saying, laddie——"

But Carfew was looking at him very hard. "Laddie ?" he repeated wonderingly.

"I'm busy," said Parker. With a look of preoccupation, he dipped his pen in the ink and looked round for something to write upon. "You stand here," he said irritably, "gagging----"

"Gagging?" repeated Carfew in awe. He drew a long breath. "You're on the stage," he said, in a hushed voice. "Oh, Parker, where are you appearing?"

"Rot !" snapped the other.

"You can't be one of the Parker Brothers," ruminated the other, "the Thrilling Exponents of Aerial Flight. You can't be Billy Parker, the Brainy Boy, a Terpsichorean Performer on the Big Boot. You aren't Parky Parky, the World's Rare Rythmetic Ragtime Reveller. You're not Cissy Parker, the Pretty and Passable Principal Boy——" "Oh, shush!" snarled the respectable

broker. "If you want to know, I'm behind 'Calumny.'"

"That J will never believe. You don't mean the play?"

The broker nodded.

"Why, it has been running two hundred nights!" said Carfew.

"That's right," said Parker; "I financed it. I don't usually go in for that sort of thing, but I read the play——"

"Two hundred nights !" said Carfew, and there was admiration in his voice. "Why, you devil, you're making money !"

"A little," said Parker, in the complacent tone which meant "much."

"I'm not going out of this office," said Carfew, with determination, "until I find out how much you have made."

Parker raised his eyebrows offensively.

"You don't expect me to tell you my private business, do you?" he asked.

"Yes," said Carfew.

"Well, I'm jolly well not going to," said Parker. "And I'm a busy man. Get a wiggle on you!"

"Parker," cried the outraged Carfew, "restrain yourself! Tell me exactly how this sad affair came about."

Parker rang his bell ostentatiously, and his confidential stenographer came in with a notebook.

"I am going to dictate some private letters," he said pointedly.

"Don't mind me," said Carfew, settling himself in the easiest chair.

"Private letters," repeated Parker.

"I shan't tell anybody," said Carfew; "I'm awfully discreet."

"I'll ring for you in a moment, Miss Simmons," said Parker wearily. And, when the stenographer had gone: "Now, my friend, what do you want to know? There's little to tell. I happened to hear from a literary friend that the play was a good one. I knew that the usual syndicate had rejected it. I was interested, and am still interested, in that white elephant, the Minister Theatre, so I risked a couple of thousand and put it on. It was better than leaving the theatre closed. That's all."

"How much money have you made out of it?" demanded Carfew sternly.

"Oh, twenty thousand or so," said the broker airily.

"Twenty thousand—or so !"

Carfew heaved a big and significant sigh.

"That's my business," he said, with tremendous emphasis.

"I must warn you "—Parker shook his forefinger of doom in the young man's face —"I must warn you that it was only by the greatest bit of luck that I made good——"

"Cut the scene," said the theatrical Carfew tersely; "it plays too long."

And he departed, his hat tilted on one side, his stick swinging, an impresario to the life.

There was nothing slow about Carfew. He moved like a hurricane. He hailed the first taxi-cab that came into view and ordered the driver to take him to Huggins.

Everybody knows Huggins—even a cabdriver knew Huggins. Huggins has an estate agency—none of your "Flats-from-£50-to-£120" agents. He deals in real estates, thinks in shootings, and lets lakes. If you want a theatre or a park or a mountain, you go to Huggins. People who, in the innocence of their hearts, go to him for £80 Bayswater maisonnettes are never seen again, or, if they are, are so broken in spirit and humbled in mien that you may be excused if you overlook them.

Mr. Huggins, the original Mr. Huggins, is dead. The present Mr. Huggins is the fashionable Huggins, the pomaded Mr. Huggins. His trousers are creased, his hair is parted in the middle, and he lives in a boudoir into which dukes who want to sell or rent their estates are admitted one by one.

So he impressed one.

There was a queue of dukes waiting when Carfew dashed up.

"Excuse me, sir," said one of the dukes, as Carfew shamelessly demanded that he should be seen first, "I have been waiting half an hour."

"I've come on business," said Carfew.

The duke, who was an insurance duke, desirous of placing a policy, scowled horribly, and remarked audibly to an earl, who had come for a caretaker's job, that for two pins he'd kick the bounder down the stairs.

"Hello, Hug!" said Carfew, as he entered the room, circumnavigating the spindlelegged furniture. "I want to see you."

"Really, Carfew," murmured the languid Mr. Huggins protestingly, "I'm afraid I can't see you without an appointment."

He sniffed a phial of perfume daintily.

"I want a theatre," said Carfew brusquely. "Take that look off your face and come down to life."

" A theatre ? "

An unsuspected alertness came upon Mr. Adolphus Huggins. He had a theatre; he wished he hadn't. It was a legacy from his father. It had been closed for twelve years. Once upon a time playgoers did not object to turning down side-streets, threading their way through costermongers' barrows, running the gauntlet of a fried fish shop on the right and a pork butcher's on the left, to reach their objective.

This was a long time ago—probably in the days of Shakespeare. In its day, Cander Street, Tottenham Court Road, was a fashionable neighbourhood, and the tide of alien immigration had not risen, leaving on its doorsteps and beneath its corniced doorways a thin layer of all that may have been best in Poland, but which had undoubtedly deteriorated in transit.

The grimy doors of the New Time Theatre were ugly and discoloured. The iron gates which led to the entrance-court were rusted and broken, the boards affixed thereto, on which stars of the earth had been advertised, and such thrills proclaimed as "Shakespeare's Pathetic and Tragic Drama, 'Hamlet,' followed by that laughable farce, 'Did You Ever Take Your Wife to Peckham?'" which had appealed to the sensibility of the artistic, were now the happy hunting-ground of the fly poster.

"I have a theatre," said Mr. Huggins, "a good theatre, and the only theatre available in London just now"—which was true—"and I am prepared to discuss terms with you. For how long will you lease it?"

"How long will it take me to make twenty thousand or so?" asked Carfew.

Mr. Huggins looked at him long and compassionately.

"About a year," he said softly.

"I'll have a look at it," said Carfew.

Mr. Huggins hesitated.

"I'd like to have time to brush it up a bit," he said.

Carfew went down to see the theatre next day.

It was slightly soiled, it was dingy, it was without an electric installation, but, to his surprise, the seating accommodation was in good condition. The stage mechanism, too, was workable, though here, again, the absence of electric lighting was a tremendous handicap. Carfew had a quick eye for possibilities. He saw them in the New Time Theatre.

He struck a bargain with Huggins—a bargain that took away the other's breath when he came to realise how bad a bargain it was for the owner.

Carfew called in an electrical engineer.

"Get some sort of an installation in for the stage," he said. "No fancy work—County Council requirements and nothing else—a good big splash of light in the roof of the auditorium, plugs for the projectors in every part of the house. I'm going to introduce a new art into the theatre. I'm the greatest reformer that ever happened."

Later Carfew sent an identically worded note to every paper in London. It ran :----

"I have taken the New Time Theatre. I have taken it because I believe there is room in London for the stupendous art of Frac. Herr Wilhelm Emile Frac is a young Bavarian. His works are unknown; his artistry is the precious possession of the few. His extraordinary lighting schemes, unique and bizarre, have been perfected in the obscurity of his little village. Yet Herr W. E. Frac, shrinking modestly from publicity, has gained fame amongst those select connoisseurs who can best appreciate his art.

"My friends tell me I shall lose a fortune; I believe that I shall make one. I believe that the brilliancy of Frac's genius will astound, convince, and attract London."

"What is the name of the play?" asked a reporter, a little weary of the omnipotent Frac.

"The play?" said Carfew thoughtfully. "Oh, the play—well, that's rather a secret. In fact," he said, in a burst of confidence, "that is one of the secrets—the greatest secret."

"Who is the author?" demanded another inquisitive scribe.

"That I am not at liberty to say," replied Carfew solemnly; "in fact, he or she desires that the matter should be kept a dead secret. But "-he grew impressive---"if you knew " Not——" asked the reporter eagerly. "Hush !" said Carfew, finger to lips.



"'Do you know the neighbourhood, and do nice people come here?"

the author's name, you would be in possession of one of the biggest sensations that has ever been published." As a matter of fact, he had not thought of the play. He dined with Parker on the night of the interview. "I suppose I ought to get a play?" he said dubiously, in a tone which implied that it was not a matter which was really important one way or the other.

"You had better," said Parker gently; "the audience might be disappointed. Not even the sight of you in evening-dress would be regarded as sufficiently humorous to compensate——."

"I'll write one myself!"

Carfew sprang up, fired with the splendour of the idea.

"Sit down !" begged Parker. "You are dining at my club, and I am responsible for the behaviour of my guests. Besides—oh, I am on the committee."

"I will, by George !" Carfew was bubbling over with inspiration. "Parker, I'll write a play that will set London talking !"

"You've started with my fellow-members," said Parker.

"Waiter !"

He called a servant.

"Get Mr. Carfew a piece of paper and a pencil. He wants to write a play."

The waiter, with an imperturbable face, bowed and went away.

"I'll put you into it," said Carfew, speaking rapidly. "You shall be a comic old man who marries the cook, who poisoned her master's dinner because she was hypnotised by a rajah whose sacred idol had been stolen by the master when he was in India. But you see through it——"

"Through India?"

"Don't be stupid-no."

"Ah, I see," said Parker nodding, "through the idol—it's a crystal idol."

"That's an idea," said Carfew enthusiastically, "a crystal idol, stolen from a palace----"

"A crystal palace?"

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But Carfew was scribbling furiously. One piece of paper was not enough for his needs; another sheet was sent for, another and another, then—

"Bring all the paper there is in the club, Robert, if there is as much," said Parker seriously; and Robert, who knew his Mr. Parker, replied as gravely.

It may be said that never since the day when Lucullus dined with Lucullus had one man enjoyed his own company so much as Carfew enjoyed Carfew. As for Parker, he was a screen to reflect the brilliancy of his guest, a background to throw him into relief, a modern chorus to cry heartily, "Aye, aye, my lord!" or, in the sadder mood, "Oh, horror! Oh, horror!" The play, the plot, and the cast underwent startling revolutions in the course of the dinner. In describing the evening to a confidant, Parker said—

"The play began as a comic opera without music; by the time we got to the joint, it was a roaring farce . . . We had coffee in the smoking-room, and Carfew brought tears to my eyes as he described the death of little Rolando da Sforza, the natural son of the Duke of Milan, poisoned by Lucretia Borgia, who was jealous of the influence wielded by Beatrice D'Este over her husband, the Duke of Ferrara."

Parker preserved a scrap of the original dialogue.

Lucretia (entering drawing-room with a cup of poison): So at last I have you in my power !

Beatrice (looking up from her knitting): Hello, Lu! (With a weary gesture) You might ring for tea. I've got a thirst I would not sell for money. Hast thou seen Il Moro, my husband?

Lucretia (concealing poison behind piano): Nay. Dids't thou expect him? I suppose he's gallivanting about town with Lucretia Civilla, as usual. Ha ! ha ! ha ! (Sneers.)

Beatrice : Dry up, Lu ! You are always trying to make mischief.

[Enter Mary with tray.]

Put it down, Mary; don't fuss around. Get out, wench !

Mary: Yes, ma'am. The butcher's called. Will you have chop or sausages ?

Lucretia (aside): My chance! (Aloud) Methinks I would like to see those sausages, dear Beat, for are not the sausages of Milan famous all over the world? Prithee, girl, bring them. [*Exit Mary*.]

Beatrice : You take an interest in my affairs, Lu ?

Lucretia (carelessly): Oh, yes, I am considered quite a connoisseur of sausages.

[Re-enter Mary with sausages on a golden tray.]

Ah, yes ! (She empties cup of poison over them surreptitiously.)

At last ! At last !

[CURTAIN.]

Carfew sat up that night to finish the play, then, thoroughly exhausted, he went to bed. He woke up at five o'clock in the afternoon, had a bath, and settled himself down to the enjoyment of reading his work. He read it through very carefully, then he read it again, then he laid the play, sheet by sheet, on the fire and watched it melt. And somehow, with the burning of the play, a doubt as to his own wisdom arose. The papers which remarked upon his enterprise had damned it with praise so faint that one needed an ear-trumpet to distinguish it.

All Carfew's friends who knew anything about theatrical matters—and it seemed he had not a friend who wasn't an expert—told him he was mad. They said this sadly or cheerfully or offensively, according to their several temperaments, but they were equally definite.

And time went on. He had not arranged for a play; he had engaged no company.

The theatre distressed him to tears. The unsavoury approaches, the neighbourhood, the impossibility of the whole thing oppressed him.

The New Time Theatre was flanked and faced by gloomy houses which at one time had accommodated snug bourgeoisie. Chairs had waited at these doorways to carry bewigged gentlemen to Lord Mayoral receptions; linkmen had diced away the weary hours of waiting before these portals. Now twenty families occupied each home. Broken windows were patched with paper, bare rooms echoed to the shrill and unintelligible voice of the alien child. Poverty, grim and uncleanly, lurked in the deep unlighted basements, or strove vainly on top attics against the ravening wolf of hunger. Cander Street was a street of despair, a street of sin and sorrow, a stark, bleak street of hungry ugliness.

Carfew went down to the theatre one night to meet an unfortunate young scenic artist and to inspect the electric installation.

The artist was voluble and keen, in contrast to Carfew, who was gloomy and calculating. His calculations took the shape of working out the amount of money it would require to clear out of the business.

Usually he did not "clear out" of a business except with profit to himself. He had cleared out of a certain Tobbins, Limited, a fairly rich man.

An idea struck him just as he was entering the theatre with the scene-painter. This Tobbins enterprise had brought him into touch with a singular girl. She had been his co-director in the great undertaking, and had acquitted herself well—for a girl. He went into the dusty box-office and wrote a note. This he despatched by taxi-cab to Dulwich, with instructions to wait for a reply.

His inspection of the lighting arrangements

cheered him up. He switched on the footlights, darkened the gaunt stage, turned it blue and red and orange by the mere clicking of switches, and felt he was getting some of his money's worth.

He turned on all the lights of the auditorium and turned them off again; he manipulated the electric "limes" which he had had placed in the gallery, the dress circle, and the boxes. He experimented with every tint and colour he had at hand, and passed two pleasant and elevating hours in the amusement.

He came out into the vestibule, taking a tolerant view of the impetuosity which had landed him in a somewhat expensive position. He was in time to welcome a slim and pretty girl who came half running through the vestibule with outstretched hand.

"It is good of you to come," he said.

"It is," she agreed, "remembering that you have so shockingly neglected me."

"Affairs," he said. He waved his hand wearily. He was weighted at once with the destinies of humanity. He was the busiest man in Europe, the sought and the pursued, the dictator to innumerable secretaries, the shaper of industrial policies. In that wave of the hand you saw, if you were willing, the crowded ante-room where sat the princes of commerce awaiting momentous interviews; you saw the presses of London working day and night on Carfew's prospectuses; you heard the buzzing of Wheatstone instruments transmitting cipher despatches from one foreign minister to another, and heard the dried-pea rustle of wireless words waking the silence of oceans. You saw all this, if you were willing. May Tobbin was quite unwilling.

"You're a funny boy," she said. "You and your affairs! I've read about this." She nodded menacingly at the discoloured door of the dress circle. "Whatever made you do it?"

"Oh, this," said Carfew contemptuously —"this is just a—er—side-line—a little hobby."

She made no reply, but walked into the dress circle, Carfew following.

"Sit down by me," she invited, " and tell me the truth. You will be telling yourself something you haven't heard since the days of Tobbins, Limited."

Carfew began on the heroic note, continued flamboyantly, reached, under her calm and patient cross-examination, the level of cold fact.

"So you've got the worst theatre in London," she summarised the situation, "situated in the worst slum in the West End. You have no play, no players, no ideas worth tuppence"—Carfew winced— "nothing but some pretty lights and pieces of coloured glass."

"I haven't told you my great idea," protested Carfew.

"You haven't," she admitted, "and you needn't invent it on the spur of the moment."

They stood in silence, cogitating the position. In this silence they became aware of the presence of a third party, the young scenic artist.

"Oh, yes," said Carfew awkwardly, for him, "I promised you that I would give a definite order—well——"

He glanced despairingly at the girl, but she was too absorbed to assist him.

"Now, suppose," said Carfew, still keeping his eye on May Tobbin, "suppose we have a castle scene, high mountains and things, and snow."

Still he received no encouragement from the slim figure that had seated itself in the one chair which the hall boasted. Her brow was knit in a frown, and she had clasped one knee in a very frenzy of thought.

"Suppose-----"," began Carfew.

She glanced round thoughtfully. Standing by the door was an old man, whose general dinginess and dilapidation was in keeping with the character of the building, which, for a miserable twenty-five shillings per week, it was his duty to cherish.

"What is his name?" she asked, in a low voice.

"He answers to the name of George," said Carfew, "but I am not certain if that is his name."

"George," she called, and the old man started violently and came towards her, the keys of the building in his hand.

"Closin' up now, miss?" he said hopefully. "No. I want to speak to you. Do you know this neighbourhood?" she asked.

"Know it?" George smiled, as Lucifer might smile if anybody had asked him whether he used a sulphur bag for rheumatism. "Know it?"

"I gather you do," said the girl. "Tell me, do you ever have people here—nice people?"

George scratched his head.

"I've lived in this neighbourhood," he began, "for nigh on forty-three years come October 28——"

"We don't want the story of your life, George," said Carfew. "Do you know the neighbourhood, and do nice people come here?" "Slummers," said George, "only slummers. We have had princesses down here—you've heard tell of the Blanket an' Coal League ? —but, bless your heart, they don't come now; it's out of fashion, slummin' is."

"I thought so," said the girl, clapping her hands. "That is capital."

She swung round on the young painter.

"Paint a scene, a real good one, representing this street."

"Cander Street?"

She nodded vigorously.

"Cander Street," she said, "and an interior of Cander Street — the most wretched hovel you can find — and an attic of Cander Street—three strong scenes. You understand?"

She spoke rapidly, excitedly, and Carfew watched her in perplexity.

"Lock up, George," she said briskly. "Come along, Mr. Carfew; we're going to write a play."

* *

"The story of the play itself," wrote the dramatic critic of *The Daily Post Messenger*, "calls for little notice. Well acted as it is, with the extraordinary lighting effects by M. Frac, it brings home to the spectator something of the conditions of life in the foreign quarters of London—something of the conditions in which the underworld live.

"It was a bold attempt on the part of Mr. Carfew to rename the theatre 'The Slum,' bolder still to portray the life of the very street in which the theatre is situated. It gave, and gives, fashionable London an opportunity of slumming without the discomforts and risks attendant upon that one-time fashionable practice. 'The Other Way,' despite its poor dramatic quality, will continue to draw crowded houses. The scene between Pepita and Lorenzo and the waif is the best thing in the play. But undoubtedly what appeals, and will appeal, to the playgoer is the novelty of the production -the programme girls in picturesque tatters, the pallid green lights over the entrance. . . . Amongst those present were the Duke and Duchess of Wellfort-her Grace is the president of the Blanket and Coal League, which has done so much for this district the Earl of Collborough, the Penservian Ambassador, and the Countess Czectiovic. . . . The bookings are tremendous, and Her Serene Highness the Princess Pauline of Saxe-Gratz and suite will be present at to-night's performance."

THE WHITE HORSES

By HALLIWELL SUTCLIFFE

Illustrated by A. J. Gough

I. WHO RIDES FOR THE KING?



through the rich valley known now as Wensleydale, but in those days known by the lustier name of Yoredale, news had crept that there was civil war in England, that sundry skirmishes

had been fought already, and that His Majesty was needing all leal men to rally to his standard.

It was an early harvest that year, as it happened, and John Metcalfe, of Nappa Hall, stood at his garden-gate, watching the sunset glow across his ripening wheat. There were many acres of it, gold between green splashes of grass-land; and he told himself that they would put the sickle into the good crop before a fortnight's end. There was something about Squire Metcalfe-six feet four to his height, and broad in the beamthat seemed part of the wide lush country Weather and land, between round him. them, had bred him; and the night's peace, the smell of the sweet-briar in the evening dew, were pleasant foils to his strength.

He looked beyond the cornfields presently. Far down the road he saw a horsemanhorse and rider small in the middle of the landscape—and wondered what their errand was. When he had done with surmises, his glance roved again, in the slow way of the countryman, and rested on the pastures above the house. In the clear light he could see two figures standing there; one was his son Christopher, the other a trim-Squire Metcalfe frowned waisted maid. suddenly. He was so proud of his name, of his simple squiredom, that he could not bear to see his eldest-born courting defeat of this kind. This little lady was niece to his neighbour, Sir Timothy Grant, a good neighbour and a friend, but one who was

richer than himself in lands and rank, one who went often to the Court in London, and was in great favour with the King. Squire Metcalfe had seen these two together in his own house, and guessed Christopher's secret without need of much sagacity; and he was sorely troubled on the lad's account.

Christopher himself, away at the stile yonder, was not troubled at all except by a pleasant heartache. He had youth, and Joan Grant beside him, and a heart on fire for her.

"You are pleased to love me?" she was saying, facing him with maddening grace, her arms akimbo, as she dropped him a curtsey. "What is your title to love me, sir?"

"Any man has the right to love," Kit protested sturdily. "He cannot help it sometimes."

"Oh, granted; but not to tell it openly." "What else should a man do? I was never one for secrets."

Joan laughed pleasantly, as if a thrush were singing. "You speak truth. I would not trust you with a secret as far as from here to Nappa. If a child met you on the way, she would read it in your face."

"I was bred that way, by your leave. We Metcalfes do not fear the light."

"But, sir, you have every right to-to think me better than I am, but none at all to speak of-of love. I had an old Scots nurse to teach me wisdom, and she taught me-what think you?"

"To thieve and raid down Yoredale," said Kit unexpectedly. "The Scots had only that one trade, so my father tells me, till the Stuarts came to reign over both countries."

"To thieve and raid? And I—I, too, have come to raid, you say—to steal your heart?"

"You are very welcome to it."

"But do I want it?" She put aside her badinage, drew away from him with a fine

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strength and defiance. "Listen, sir. My Scots nurse taught me that a woman has only one heart to give in her lifetime ; that, for her peace, she must hide it in the branches of a tree so high that only a strong man can climb it."

"I'm good at tree - climbing," said Christopher, with blunt acceptance of the challenge.

"Then prove it."

"Now?" he asked, glancing at a tall fir behind them.

"Oh, sir, you are blunt and forthright, you men of Nappa! You do not understand the heart of a woman."

Kit Metcalfe stood to his brawny six-foot height. "I'm needing you, and cannot wait," he said, fiery and masterful. "That's the way of a man's heart."

"Then, by your leave, I shall bid you good e'en. No man will ever master me until-----"

"Until?" asked Kit, submissive now that he saw her retreating up the pasture.

She dropped him another curtsey before going up the steep face of the hills. "That is the woman's secret, sir. It lives at the top of a high tree, that 'until.' Go climbing, Master Christopher."

Kit went back to Nappa, in frank revolt against destiny and the blue face of heaven. There was nothing in the world worth capturing except this maid who eluded him at every turn, like a butterfly swift of wing. He was prepared to be sorry for himself until he came face to face with his father at the garden gate.

"I saw two young fools at the stile," said Squire Metcalfe. "I've watched you for half an hour. Best wed in your own station, Kit—no more, no less. No Metcalfe ever went dandying after great ladies yet. We've our own proper pride."

Christopher, in spite of his six feet, looked a small man as he stood beside his father; but his spirit was equal in its stubborn strength. "I love her. There's no other for me," he said sharply.

The Squire glanced shrewdly at him. "Ah, well," he said at last, "if it goes as deep as that, lad, you'll just have to go on crying out for the moon. Sir Timothy has been away in London all the summer trouble with the Parliament, and the King needing him, they say. He'd have taken Miss Joan with him if he'd guessed that a lad from Nappa thought he could ever wed into the family."

"We've lands and gear enough," protested Kit.

"We have, but not as they count such matters. They've got one foot in Yoredale, and t'other in London; and we seem very simple to them, Kit."

Shrewd common-sense is abhorrent to all lovers, and Kit fell into a stormy silence. He knew it true, that he felt rough, uncouth, in presence of his mistress; but he knew also that at the heart of him there was a love that was not uncouth at all.

The Squire left Kit to fight out his own trouble, and fell to watching the horseman who was more than a speck now on the landscape. The rider showed as a little man striding a little mare; both were weary, by the look of them, and both were heading straight for Nappa Hall. They had a mile to cover.

"Father, I need to get away from Nappa," said Kit, breaking the silence.

"Ay," said the Squire, with a tolerant laugh, "love takes all men that way, in the first flush of it. I was young myself once. You want to ride out, lad, and kill a few score men, just to show little Miss Joan what a likely man o' your hands you are. Later on, you'll be glad to be shepherding the ewes, to pay for her new gowns and what not. Love's not all mist and moonshine, Kit; the sturdier part comes later on."

Up the lane sounded the lolopping pit-a-pat of a horse that was tired out and near to drop; and the rider looked in no better case as he drew rein at the gate.

"You're the Squire of Nappa, sir?" he said, with a tired smile. "No need to ask the question. I was told to find a man as tall as an oak tree and as sturdy."

"Yet it would have been like seeking a needle in a bundle of hay, if you hadn't chanced to find me at the gate," the other answered. "There are six-score Metcalfes in this corner of Yoredale, and nobody takes notice of my height."

"The jest is pretty enough, sir, but you'll not persuade me that there's a regiment of giants in the dale."

"They're not all of my height—granted. Some are more, and a few less. This is my eldest-born," he said, touching Christopher on the shoulder. "We call him Baby Kit, because he's the smallest of us all."

The horseman saw a lad six foot high, who certainly looked dwarfed as he stood beside his father. "The King has need of you! Undoubtedly he needs all Metcalfes, if this is your baby-boy."

"As for the King, the whole six-score of us have prayed for his welfare, Sabbath in and Sabbath out, since we were breeked. It's good hearing that he needs us." "I ride on His Majesty's errand. He

"I ride on His Majesty's errand. He bids the Squire of Nappa get his men and his white horses together."

"So the King has heard of our white horses? Well, we're proud o' them, I own."

The messenger, used to the stifled atmosphere of Courts until this trouble with the Parliament arrived, was amazed by the downright, free-wind air the Squire of Nappa carried.

It tickled his humour, tired as he was, that Metcalfe should think the King himself knew every detail of his country, and every corner of it that bred white horses, or roan, or chestnut. At Skipton - in - Craven, of course, they knew the dales from end to end; and he was here because Sir John Mallory, governor of the castle there, had told him the Metcalfes of Nappa were slow to leave the beaten tracks, but that, once roused, they would not budge, or falter, or retreat.

"The King needs every Metcalfe and his white horse. He sent me with that message to you, Squire."

"About when does he need us?" asked Metcalfe guardedly.

"To-morrow, to be precise."

"Oh, away with you! There's all my corn to be gathered in. I'll come nearer the back-end o' the year, if the King can bide till then. By that token, you're looking wearied out, you and your horse. Come indoors, man, and we'll talk the matter over."

The messenger was nothing loath. At Skipton they had given an importance to the Metcalfe clan that he had not understood till now. This was the end of to-day's journey, and his sole errand was to bring the six-score men and horses into the good capital of Craven.

⁴ I ask no better cheer, sir. Can you stable the two of us for the night? My little grey mare is more in need of rest than I am."

Christopher, the six-foot baby of the clan, ran forward to the mare's bridle; and he glanced at his father, because the war in his blood was so vehement and lusty, and he feared the old check of discipline.

"Is it true, sir?" he asked the messenger. "Does the King need us? I've dreamed of it o' nights, and wakened just to go out and tend the land. I'm sick of tending land. Is it true the King needs us?"

The messenger, old to the shams and false punctilios of life, was dismayed for a moment by this clean, sturdy zest. Here, he told himself, was a cavalier in the making—a cavalier of Prince Rupert's breed, who asked only for the hazard.

"It is true that the King needs a thousand such as you," he said drily. "Be good to my little mare; I trust her to you, lad."

And in this solicitude for horseflesh, shown twice already, the messenger had won his way already into the favour of all Metcalfes. For they loved horses just a little less than they loved their King.

Within doors, as he followed the Squire of Nappa, he found a warm fire of logs, an evening meal to which the sons of the house trooped in at haphazard intervals. There were only six of them, all told, but they seemed to fill the roomy dining-room as if a crowd intruded.

The rafters of the house were low, and each stooped, from long habit, as he came in to meat. Kit, the baby of the flock, was the last to come in; and he had a queer air about him, as if he trod on air.

There was only one woman among them, a little, eager body, who welcomed the stranger with pleasant grace. She had born six sons to the Squire. He was dominant and thought little of girl-children; she, who had gone through pain and turmoil, would have liked to find one girl among the brood —a girl who knew the way of household worries and the way of woman's tears.

The messenger, as he ate and drank with extreme greediness, because need asked, glanced constantly at the hostess who was like a garden flower, growing here under the shade of big-boled trees. It seemed impossible that so small a person was responsible for the six men who made the rafters seem even lower than they were.

When the meal was ended, Squire Metcalfe put his guest into the great hooded chair beside the fire of peat and wood.

"Now, sir, we'll talk of the King, by your leave, and these lusty rogues of mine shall stand about and listen. What is it his Majesty asks of us?"

The messenger, now food and liquor had given him strength again, felt at home in this house of Nappa as he had never done among the intrigues of Court life. He had honest zeal, and he was among honest men, and his tongue was fiery and persuasive.

"The King needs good horsemen and free riders to sweep the land clear of Roundheads. He needs gentlemen with the strong arm and the simple heart to fight his battles. The King—God bless himneeds six-score Metcalfes, on horses as mettled as their riders, to help put out this cursed fire of insurrection."

"Well, as for that," said the Squire, lighting his pipe with a live peat from the hearth, "I reckon we're here for that purpose. I bred my sons for the King, when he was pleased to need them. But I'd rather he could bide—say, for a month till we get our corn in. Take our six-score men from the land just now, and there'll be no bread for the house next year, let alone straw for the beasts."

The messenger grew more and more aware that he had been entrusted with a fine mission. This plain, unvarnished honesty of the Squire's was worth fifty protestations of hot loyalty. The dogged love he had of his lands and crops—the forethought of them in the midst of civil war—would make him a cavalry leader after Rupert's own heart.

"The King says you are to ride out to-morrow, Squire. What use to pray for him on Sabbaths if you fail him at the pinch?"

Metcalfe was roused at last ; but he glanced at the little wife who sat quietly in her corner, saying little and feeling much. "I've more than harvesting to leave. She's small, that wife of mine, but God knows the big love I have for her !"

The little woman got up suddenly and stepped forward through the press of big sons she had reared. Her man said openly that he loved her better than his lands, and she had doubted it till now. She came and stood before the messenger and dropped him a curtsey.

"You are very welcome, sir, to take all my men on the King's service. What else? I, too, have prayed on Sabbaths."

The messenger rose, a great pity and chivalry stirring through his hard-ridden, tired body. "And you, madam?" he asked gently.

"Oh, I shall play the woman's part, I hope—to wait, and be silent, and shed tears when there are no onlookers."

"By God's grace," said Blake, the messenger, a mist about his eyes, "I have come to a brave house !"

The next morning, an hour after daybreak, Blake awoke, stirred drowsily, then sprang out of bed. Sleep was a luxury to him these days, and he blamed himself for indolence.

Downstairs he found only a serving-maid, who was spreading the breakfast table with cold meats enough to feed twenty men of usual size and appetite. The mistress was in the herb garden, she said, and the men folk all abroad.

For a moment the messenger doubted his welcome last night. Had he dreamed of six score men ready to ride out on the King's service, or was the Squire's honesty, his frank promise to ride out, a pledge repented of already?

He found the Squire's wife walking in the herb garden, and the face she lifted was tear-stained. "I give you good day," she said, "though you've not dealt very well with me and mine."

"Is there a finer errand than the King's?" he asked brusquely.

"My heart, sir, is not concerned with glory and fine errands. It is very near to breaking. Without discourtesy, I ask you to leave me here in peace—for a little while —until my wounds are healing."

The Squire and his sons had been abroad before daybreak, riding out across the wide lands of Nappa. Of the hundred odd grown men on their acres, there was not one —yeoman, or small farmer, or hind—but was a Metcalfe by name and by tradition. They were a clan of the old, tough Border sort, welded together by a loyalty inbred through many generations; and the law that each man's horse must be of the true Metcalfe white was not of yesterday.

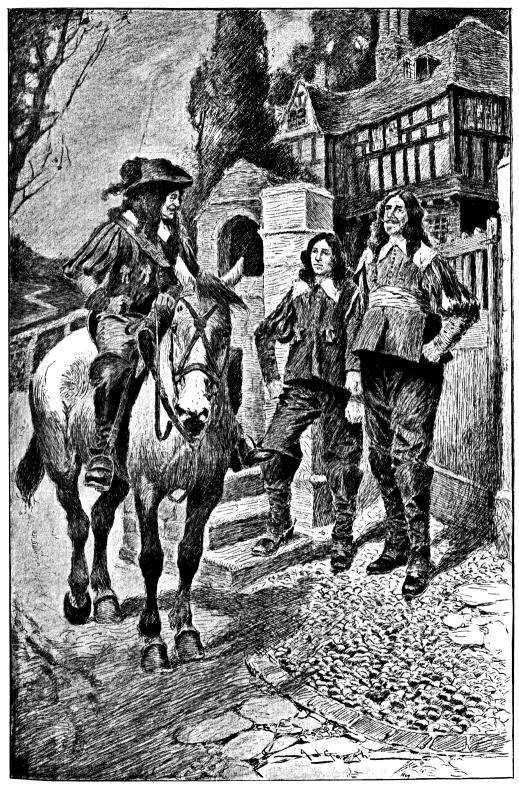
Christopher's ride to call his kinsfolk in had taken him wide to the boundary of Sir Timothy Grant's lands; and, as he trotted at the head of his growing company, he was bewildered to see Joan step from a little coppice on the right of the track. She had been thinking of him, as it happened, till sleep would not come; and, like himself, she needed to get out into the open. Very fresh she looked, as she stepped into the misty sunlight-alert, free-moving, bred by wind To Kit she seemed and rain and sun. something not of this world; and it is as well, maybe, that a boy's love takes this shape, because in saner manhood the glamour of the old day-dreams returns, to keep life wholesome.

Kit halted his company, heedless of their smiles and muttered jests, as he rode to her side.

"You look very big, Christopher. You Nappa men—and your horses—are you riding to some hunt?" She was cold, provocative, dismaying.

"Yes, to hunt the Roundheads over Skipton way. The King has sent for us."

"But-the call is so sudden, and-I should not like to hear that you were dead, Kit."



"'You're the Squire of Nappa, sir? . . . I was told to find a man as tall as an oak tree and as sturdy." H

Her eyes were tender with him, and then again were mocking. He could make nothing of her, as how should he, when older men than he had failed to understand the world's prime mystery—woman.

"Joan, what did you mean by 'until,' last night at the stile? You said none should master you until-----"

"Why, yes, *until*—____ Go out and find the answer to that riddle."

Again she resented the young, hot mastery of him, peeping out through the bondage she had woven round him. "To wear at your heart? But, Kit, you have not proved your right to wear it. Come back from slaying Roundheads, and ask for it again."

Blake, the messenger, meanwhile, had been fidgeting about the Nappa garden, wondering what was meant by the absence of all men from house and fields. His appetite, too, was sharpened by a sound night's sleep. Remembering the well-filled table indoors, he turned about, then checked himself with a laugh. Even rough-riding gentry could not break fast until the host arrived.

Presently, far down the road, he heard the lilt of horse-hoofs moving swiftly and in tune. The uproar grew, till round the bend of the way he saw what the meaning of it was.

Big men on big white horses came following the Squire of Nappa up the rise. All who could muster in the courtyard reined up; the rest of the hundred and twenty halted in the lane. They had rallied to the muster with surprising speed, these men of Yoredale.

All that the messenger had suffered already for the cause, all that he was willing to suffer later on, were forgotten. Here were volunteers for the King—and, faith, what cavaliers they were ! And the big men, striding big white horses, liked him the better because his heart showed plainly in his face.

The messenger laughed suddenly, standing to the height of five-foot-six that was all Providence had given him. "Gentlemen," he said, with the music of galloping horses in his voice, "gentlemen, the King !"

He was answered by a thrifty roar of men liking him and willing to follow where he cared to show the road.

The Squire and he, after they had breakfasted, and the mistress had carried the stirrup-cup from one horseman to another, rode forward together on the track that led to Skipton. For a mile they went in silence. The Squire of Nappa was thinking of his wife, and youngsters of the Metcalfe clan were thinking of maids who had lately glamoured them in country lanes. Then the lilt of hoof-beats, the call of the open hazard, got into their blood. A lad passed some good jest, till it ran along the company like fire through stubble; and after that each man rode blithely, as if it were his wedding-day.

A mile further on they saw a little lady gathering autumn flowers from the high bank bordering the road. She had spent a restless night on Kit's account, had he known it, and was early abroad struggling with many warring impulses. The Squire, who loved Christopher, knew what the lad most needed now. He drew rein sharply.

"Men of Nappa, salute !" he cried, his voice big and hearty as his body.

Joan Grant, surprised in the middle of a love-dream, saw a hundred and twenty men lifting six-foot pikes to salute her. The stress of it was so quick and overwhelming that it braced her for the moment. She took the salute with grace and a smile that captured these rough-riding gentry. Then, with odd precision, she dropped her kerchief under the nose of Kit's horse.

He stooped sharply, picked it up at the end of his pike. "A good omen, lads!" he cried. "White horses — and the white kerchief for the King."

Then it was forward again ; and Joan, looking after them, was aware that already her knight was in the making. And then she fell into a flood of tears, because women are made up of storm and sun, like the queer northern weather.

"It's a pity about that corn o' mine, all the same," said the Squire, with a last backward thought. "There never was such a harvest year, since back into the 'twenties."

"There'll be such a harvest year, I trust," laughed Blake, "as will bring more like you to the King. I would that every dale of the north gave us a company like yours—men and horses riding as if they'd been reared together from the cradle. I tell you sir, Prince Rupert would enroll you all at sight, if there were not more urgent need for you at Skipton."

"As a plain man to a plain man, what does the King ask of us?" asked the Squire of Nappa. "Mr. Lambert, you say, is laying siege to Skipton. He should know better. I knew him as a lad, when he lived out yonder at Calton-in-Craven, and he had naught in common with these thick-headed rogues who're out against the King. He's of the gentry, and always will be." "He has lost his way in the dark, then," said the other drily. "He's training his cannon on Skipton Castle as if he liked the enterprise."

"So you want us to ride through Lambert's men and into the castle to help garrison it?" asked Squire Metcalfe, with his big simplicity, his assurance that the men he led would charge through any weight of odds.

"Heaven save us, no! The governor has enough men to feed already, men of usual size; your little company would eat up the larder in a week."

"We have fairish appetites," the Squire admitted. "Big sacks need a lot of filling, as the saying goes. Still, you said the King wanted us, and we've left a fine harvest to rot where it stands."

The messenger, whose business was to know men at sight, captured a happiness he had not known for many days. This Squire's honesty was big as his fine body. There were no shams about him. In all sincerity he believed that King Charles had personal and urgent need of him; he asked simply what it was the King commanded. It was so remote, this honesty, from the dust and fury of those who fought for places in the Court, and named it loyalty, that the messenger was daunted for a moment.

"Listen, sir," he said, turning briskly round in saddle. "There's a big company loyal to the old traditions of your house. Strike one Metcalfe, or do him a kindness, and six-score men will repay in kind. You have the gipsy creed, my friends."

"Ay, we're close and trusty. It seems you know the way of us Nappa folk, though I never set eyes on you till yesterday."

"It is my business to know men. The King's riders must make no mistakes these days, Squire." He glanced back along the chattering group of horse, with quick pride in the recruits he had won from Yoredale. "You're all well horsed, well-armed."

"Why, yes. We heard trouble was brewing up 'twixt King and Parliament, and we got our arms in order. What else ? Folk sharpen sickles when the corn is ripening."

"And you have these lusty rascals at command—sharp to the word?"

Squire Metcalfe smiled, a big, capacious smile. "They've felt the weight o' my hand lang syne, and know it. My father before me trained me that way—as you train a dog, no more, no less."

He drew rein and whistled sharply. The horsemen, fifty yards behind, pressed forward, and the heir of Nappa galloped at their head, drew rein, saluted his father with sharp precision, and waited for commands.

" "Oh, naught at all, Christopher," said the Squire. "This guest of ours doubted whether I could whistle my lads to heel, and now he knows I can."

The messenger said nothing. The quiet, hard-bitten humour of these Northerners appealed to him; and Mallory, the governor of Skipton, had been right when he sent him out to Nappa, sure that the Metcalfe clan would be worth many times their actual number to the Royalists in Yorkshire.

They came to the rise of the road where Bishopdale, with its hedges of fast-ripening hazel nuts, strode up into the harsher lands that overlooked Wharfedale. They rode down the crumbly steep of road, past Cray hamlet, set high above its racing stream; and at Buckden, a mile lower down, they encountered a hunting-party come out to slay the deer. They were too busy to join either party, King's or Parliament's, and offered a cheery welcome to the Metcalfe men to join them in the chase.

"We're after bigger deer," laughed the Squire of Nappa. "Who rides for the King?"

Hats were lifted, and a great cheer went up. "All of us," said a grey, weather-beaten horseman.

"Ay, it seems like it," growled the Squire. "Much good you're doing Skipton-in-Craven by hunting deer instead of Roundheads."

"Skipton can stand a twelve months' siege. She can whistle when she needs us, like any other likely lass. There's no need to lose a hunting-day till Sir John Mallory needs us."

The Squire found his first disillusionment along this road of glamour. He had thought that a company of picked horsemen, armed for the King and riding with a single purpose, would have swept these huntsmen into line. Some few of them, indeed, had ridden forward a little, as if they liked his message; but the grey-headed horseman, who distrusted all enthusiasm because long since he had lost his faith in life, brought them sharply back.

"It will be all over in a week or two, and the cropheads back in their kennels. No need to lose a hunting day, my lads."

The white horses, carrying big men, trotted forward, through Starboton and Kettlewell, where the Danes had raided, wooed, and settled long before a Stuart came to reign over gentler times. It was not till they reached Linton, quiet and grey about its clean, trout-haunted stream, that the Squire of Nappa broke silence.

"I told those hunting gentry that the King needed them, and they wouldn't hearken. It seems Royalists are deaf these days to the plain road of honesty."

"They are," said the messenger, with the surprising calm that he had learned from lonely errands, ridden oftener by night than daytime. "So are most men and most women. My heart's singing, by that token. I'm bringing in six-score Metcalfes to the King, all as honest as God's sunlight. My luck is in, Squire."

The Squire would have none of blandishment. He could ride a good horse or a grievance hard. "They doffed their hats when I named the King," he growled.

"They did, but not their heart-coverings. If they'd been keen to ride—why, they'd have ridden, and no child's game of deer slaying would have stopped them. Skipton is better off without such laggard arms to help her."

"But the King needs them," said Metcalfe stubbornly, "and we showed them the plain road."

They rode on through Cracoe, where the trees were red-gold in their pride of autumn, and the Squire of Nappa broke the silence. "What does the King ask of us?" he asked again. "If it is not to garrison the town——"

"It is a pleasanter occupation. The Governor would change places with you willingly, Squire. He told me so when mapping out the work for you men of Nappa. You're well horsed and drilled. You are too strong to be attacked except in force, and they can spare few men from the assault. Your business is to patrol the open country, to intercept and harry Lambert's reinforcements — to come like the wind out of nowhere, and vanish as suddenly, till the Roundheads learn that Skipton is attacking and besieged, both at the same time."

"There's one big load off my mind," said Metcalfe soberly. "We shall have the sky over our heads and room for a gallop. I was in mortal fear of being shut up in Skipton Castle, I own, day in, day out, and never a wind from the pastures. We were not bred for indoors, we Nappa folk, and I doubt a month of it would have killed us outright."

The Squire did not understand the fine breadth of strategy that underlay this plan mapped out for him. But the messenger was well aware of it, for Sir John Mallory

had a soldier's instinct for the detail of campaign, and he had explained this venture vesterday with what had seemed a mixture of sagacity and sheer unpractical romance. Since spending the night at Nappa, and journeying with the Metcalfes for half a day, Blake realised the Governor's sagacity more As for romance — that, too, was fully. vivid enough, but entirely practical. Six score men on big white horses were enough to feed the most exacting poet's fancy; they were sufficient, too, to disturb the thickheaded, workaday routine of Lambert's soldiery.

They came to Rylstone, fair and modest as a maid who hides from men's intrusion. Rylstone, the village beyond praise, bordered by grey houses and the call of ancient peace—Rylstone, that dalesmen dream of when their strength has left them for a while, and their hearts are tender.

"She's bonnie," said the Squire of Nappa, checking his horse from old instinct.

"Yes, she's bonnie," Blake agreed. "Rylstone bred me, and a man should know the debt he owes his mother."

Then it was forward up the hill again. Blake was thinking of life's surprises—was picturing the long impatience of his manhood, because he stood only five-foot-six to his height in a country that reared tall men. Since then he had learned to pit strength of soul against body height, and now he was bringing in the finest troop of cavalry that ever rode the dales. He was content.

As they drew near to the house known as None-go-by, Blake was full of the enterprise planned out for these jolly Metcalfe men. He did not propose to take them into Skipton, but left-handed into the bridletrack that led to Embsay. There was news that a company of Fairfax's men was coming round that way from Otley, to help the Roundhead siege; and he would have fought a battle worth the while—for a small man, not too strong of body—if he ambushed the dour rogues with his cavalry brought out from Nappa.

Yet his well-laid plan was interrupted. All the quiet ways of the countryside had been thrown into surprising muddle and disorder by this civil war that had come to range friends of yesterday on opposite sides of the quarrel.

It should have been market-day, and the road full of sheep and cattle, sleepy drovers, yeomen trotting on sleek horses. Instead, there was silence, and the Nappa folk had all the highway to themselves until they neared the rutty track that joined their own from Thorlby and the Gargrave country.

A stream of horsemen was pouring down this track—Parliament men riding from the west to help Lambert with the siege. They rode slowly, and the Nappa men, as they drew rein and looked down the hill, counted two hundred of them. Then came three lumbering waggons, each with a cannon lashed to it by hay-ropes plaited fourfold, and each drawn by a team of plough-horses that roused Squire Metcalfe's envy. Behind . the waggons, more horsemen rode at a foot-pace, till it seemed the stream would never end.

"Mr. Lambert is needing more artillery, it seems," said Blake drily. "His anxiety must be great, if three cannon need such a heavy escort."

The Squire of Nappa did not hear him. For a moment he sat quietly in saddle, his face the mirror of many crowded thoughts. Then suddenly he raised a shout—one that was to sound often through the Yorkshire uplands, like the cock grouse's note.

"A Mecca for the King!" he roared, lifting the pike that was light as a hazel wand to his great strength of arm.

Blake was at his right hand as they charged. He had only his sword, but the 'speed and fury of the battle made him forget that not long since he had longed for the strength to wield a pike instead, as all the men of Nappa did.

It was all confusion—speed of white horses galloping down-hill to the shock, thud of the onset. The Roundhead guard had faced about to meet this swirling, quick assault. They saw a company of giants, carrying pikes as long as their own bodies, and they met them with the stolid Roundhead obstinacy. It was a grim fight, and ever across it rang the Squire of Nappa's lusty voice.

Between the two companies of Roundhead horsemen were the three farm-waggons carrying the guns. Those on the Skipton side were trying to ride uphill to help their comrades; but the din of it had sent the plough horses wild. They were big and wilful brutes, and their screams rose high above the babel of men fighting for their lives. Then they bolted, swerved across the road, and brought themselves and all they carried into the ditches on either side. The cannon, as they fell, ripped the waggons into splintered wreckage.

Between the fallen horses, through the litter of broken waggons, the men of Nappa drove what had been the rearguard of the convoy. They picked their way through the fifty yards of broken ground, lifted their white horses to the next attack, and charged the second company of Roundheads. Those of the shattered rearguard who could not draw aside were driven down pell-mell into their upcoming friends, bringing confusion with them. And through it all there rang the Squire's voice, with its keen, insistent cry of "A Mecca for the King !" In that hour the Parliament men learned that the Stuart, too, had downright servants at command, who were not made up of dalliance and lovelocks.

The men of Nappa would not be denied. They asked no quarter and gave none; and they drove the Roundheads—who contested every step with stubborn pluck—down the hill and up the gentle rise past Skipton Church, and into the broad High Street that was the comeliest in Yorkshire. The Castle, with its motto of "Désormais" carved in stone against the blue autumn sky, looked down on this sudden uproar in the street; men's faces showed above the battlements, eager with question and surprise.

The tumult reached Lambert's ears, too, as he stood beside the cannon on Cock Hill. Knowing that reinforcements were coming over the Lancashire border, he thought the garrison had made a sortie ; and he gave a sharp command to fire on the Castle as fast as they could load their clumsy cannon, to bring the sortie party back to the defence. The Roundhead luck was out altogether, for the first cannon-ball flew high above the carved motto of "Désormais," and the second, falling short, killed three of the horsemen who were retreating, step by step, before the Nappa men.

Sir John Mallory, the Governor, was one of the men who looked down from the battlements. He had a zealous heart, and his thirty years of life had taught him that it was good to live or die for the King. Below he saw a swarm of giants striding white horses; saw the little messenger he had sent to Nappa fighting as merrily as any Metcalfe of them all; saw the Roundheads retreating stubbornly. As he watched, a cannon-ball whistled by, a foot or two above his head, and ruffled his hair in passing as a sharp wind might do.

passing as a sharp wind might do. "My thanks, Lambert," he said impassively. "One needs a breeze after long confinement."

Then he went down the slippery stair;

and a little later the drawbridge rattled down, and he rode out with twenty others who were sick from lack of exercise.

It was a stubborn business. The Roundheads left behind with the overturned guns, up the Rylstone road, recaptured the courage that no man doubted, and came driving in at the rear of this pitched battle. Lambert himself got thirty of the besiegers together. They had ridden in at dawn, and their horses were picketed close at hand. they galloped up the High Street, they were met by the weight of their own retreating friends from Lancashire; and it was now that Lambert showed that power of glamouring his men, which none among the Roundheads had since Hampden died.

"Friends," he said - the Quaker instinct in him suggesting that odd form of address when battle was in progress-"friends, I trust you."

He had found the one word Just that. that is magical to strong men. They answered him with a rousing shout, and drove up against the King's men. For a moment even the Nappa riders gave back; but the recoil seemed only to help them to They had both Cavalier a fiercer onset. speed and Roundhead weight, these Metcalfe men and horses; and Sir John Mallory, fighting beside them for mastery of the High Street, was aware that Yoredale had given the King a finer troop of horse than even Rupert could command.

Across the thick of it Mallory caught Lambert's glance, and an odd smile played about their lips. The same thought came to both between the hurry of the fight. Not long ago they had dined together, had talked of the winter's hunting soon to come, had smoked a pipe in great amity. Now each was thanking God that the shifting issues of the battle did not bring them sword to sword; for civil war is always a muddling enterprise.

The glance, and the memories that went to its making, were over in a second. _____t was a forward plunge again of King's men meeting Roundheads, hard to drive. And suddenly there rose a cry keen as winter in the uplands and strong as sun at midsummer. "Now, Metcalfes," roared the Squire of

Nappa, "into the standing corn-and God for the King, say I!"

Into the standing corn they went, and it was open flight now down the length of Skipton Street. Time after time Lambert strove to rally his men, using oaths that had not been taught him by the Quakers, but the retreat swept him down, carrying him with A great gentleman, whichever side he took in this fierce quarrel, was learning for the first time the sickness of defeat.

The Nappa men were only turned from pursuing the enemy into the teeth of the guns on Cock Hill by Mallory, who rode forward sharply, reined about and fronted them.

"Gentlemen of Yoredale," he said, quiet and persuasive, "the King does not command you to be blown to bits up yonder. He has other need of you."

"I like to sickle the whole field, once I make a start," said Squire Metcalfe.

"Ay, but there's a biggish field in front of you. You'll need to sleep between-whiles."

When they turned to ride up the High Street again, the Squire, among all this muddle of wounded Metcalfes, horses that were white and crimson now, saw only a little man slipping from the saddle of a little mare. He rode up in time to ease his fall, and got heavily to the ground, and felt the man's wounds gently, as a woman might. And the tears were in his eyes.

"It's Blake, the messenger, and God knows I'm sorry. He fought like the biggest rogue that ever was breeked at Nappa."

"His soul's too big for his strength," said Mallory, with his unalterable common-sense. "He'll just have to lie by for a while."

"There's naught much amiss, save loss o' blood. We'll get him to the Castle gate, and then—why, we'll just ride up the Raikes and spike those cannon lying in the ditch."

"You're thorough, you men of Nappa," said Mallory, with a sudden laugh.

"Men have to be, these days," the Squire answered soberly. "If a body rides for the King-well, he rides for the King, and no two ways about it."

Kit drew apart from the turmoil, felt for the kerchief Joan Grant had dropped in front of his horse, away in Yoredale yonder. It was white no longer, but reddened by a wound that he had taken. And quietly, in the stillness that comes after battle, he knew that he was to follow a long road and a hard road till he was home again. It was better -in his heart he knew it—than dallying at country stiles, sick with calf-love for a maid too high above him.

"You look happy, lad," said the Squire, as he drew rein beside him.

"I'm climbing a tree, sir, a big tree.

There's somebody's heart at the top of it." "Ay, Miss Joan's," growled Squi Squire Metcalfe. "Well, go on climbing, lad. You might have chosen worse."

A SUMMER SANTA CLAUS

By OWEN OLIVER

Illustrated by Steven Spurrier



T was Christmas Eve at Equatoria. The day had sweated out, but the breeze that lazed in from the sea lay hot and heavy upon the land and those who had the misfortune to dwell therein. The stars

blinked as if they were sleepy and too warm to sleep. Ralph Carr sat upon the verandah of his little bungalow-a long, lean man, clad in white duck, and the minimum of that — and blinked at the stars. The verandah was netted, and the mosquitoes hummed outside, attracted by the table lamp in the drawing-room, where Mrs. Carr sat reading. She, too, was tall and thin. She had been very pretty when they came to Equatoria. A year in the tropics had stolen the bloom from her face, but failed to steal the charm. She kept sighing over her book; and presently she walked slowly through the French window and leaned on the back of her husband's chair, fanning herself. She directed the fan with evident intention that the air should also catch his head, and he gave a little grunt of satisfaction.

"No stockings to fill," she said presently, with a quick twist of her mouth.

Carr withdrew his long legs from the rests and pulled her down on an arm of the chair. She loosened his grip upon her waist, but retained his arm with both hands, as if to show that she objected to the heat and not to the embrace. It was notorious in Equatoria that the Carrs were attached to each other.

"No stockings to fill, Grace," he agreed. "Well, we've sent home the wherewithal to fill them."

"Yes," she said. "It isn't the same, dear —especially to us."

"Especially to us," he echoed. "It's a consolation that *they* won't miss much with

Granny to mother them. Nobody else is quite 'mummy,' of course, but-----"

"Or daddy," she added quickly.

"Daddy has to stay where the halfpence grow. It's what daddies are for. I think that, this summer, mummy might take a holiday and——"

She put her hand over his mouth.

"Ralph, I'll choke you! Of course, I know that you'd like to get rid of me." She paused for contradiction, but he grinned provokingly.

" Out fishing ?" he inquired.

"No, you nasty wretch! It wouldn't be a compliment. Out here, even a wife is better than nobody!"

"Especially when nobody is better than your wife !"

"Isn't she? Oh, don't squeeze, old man! It's so hot. I was thinking."

"I knew that by the way you were fidgeting, young lady. Out with it."

"I wonder if you'll laugh ?"

"In this heat? Well?"

"I want to hang up their stockings and fill them. I want you to play, too, Ralph."

He drew her a little closer. "I thought," she said presently, "that

you would understand." "I understand," he agreed.

"They aren't their stockings really," she confessed. "I bought them at the store to-day, and I bought things to put in. I paid out of the housekeeping; but, if you want to play, you must give me exactly half."

"Exactly half," he assented. "Yes, young lady?"

"When we go home, we can take the silly things. It's only seven months to wait, and we will buy some nice toys, and they can hang up their stockings and have a summer Santa Claus. I'm glad you haven't laughed."

"There's nothing to laugh at, Beauty !"

"No, but there will be. You see" she drew his arm a little tighter—"we do put *some* things in the stockings—the real ones—just as if they were here."

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"The things we sent the money for, you mean ?"

"No, no ! Now you are being stupid, as usual. Guess again."

"I have long since given you up as unguessable. Do you mean good wishes, and that sort of thing?"

"That's part of it. It's more than wishes; the sacrifices that we make. You make a lot, Ralph, all the year, for them. We used not to save. Now we do, for the summer Santa Clauses, when we go home; to give the precious kiddies a good time. That's why we are careful, isn't it?"

"I think," Carr said, "I have also some idea of giving 'mummy' a good time in the holidays, Beauty."

"She has a very good time here with you, except for the—the little empty stockings. Do you know, you've been very good to me since we came here without them."

"Since you were so nice as to come. Some wives don't."

"Poof! Don't mention me in a breath with *them*, sir! I'm a real wife, whatever I'm not. Now come and play, Ralph."

He turned her face toward him with his hand.

"It's a painful little play, Grace," he said rather gravely.

"It's painful whether we play or not," she told him. "We'd play it in our separate minds if we didn't do it together; and I'd rather be painful together, you see. We'll be merry to-morrow. Ko-Lo will make a stew of the pudding—you see if he doesn't or bring it in before the meat, like he did last year ! Now come and hang up the stockings."

They walked in arm-in-arm, put out the table lamp, and went through to the bedroom. Carr gave a gasp when he saw two little beds there, with a photograph on each.

"I made To-To put them up," his wife explained. "You can't hang stockings on the wall. He said, 'Joss of bab boya and bab gelly.'... Wee Ralphie would be in this one, and wee Sis in this, if they were here. Clothes all kicked off, and hot little faces to wipe. They're better home in England, of course—"

"I knew you'd cry," Carr said almost fiercely. He was blinking himself.

"I'm going to feel better afterwards. I want to look at you and their photos together. Wee Ralphie is just like you, Ralph—the same way of setting his mouth when he isn't pleased with me. 'Naughty ole Dace!' When I say, 'You're not to call me Grace, sir,' he says, 'Daddy do!' and laughs as if he'd scored. What daddy does must be right, of course!"

"Sis has her mother's wiles," Carr said, staring at the photo. "'Sink you's corse wif me, don't you?" He laughed unsteadily. "Do you remember we used to think we'd be jealous of kiddies, if we had any. People who haven't children don't know! They bring you together."

"And, when you are parted from them, that brings you together too, Ralph. I shall never, never forget how you have tried to make up to me for them. Never!"

"Oh," he said quickly, "I know who has tried! Of course, we were always pals, and I always admired you; and everybody said we got on well together, and we did. But I never realised fully what an interesting creature you were till we were thrown upon each other here. So, of course, I tried to be interesting, too . . . Made a fight against Nature! Do you know, I think we've improved each other, lady wife!"

"That's one of the things to put in the dear little stockings, Ralph—a nicer father and mother. Let's put it in ! Oh, but I haven't hung up the stockings. Here they are, and here's some string. I'll put up wee Ralphie's, and you shall put up wee, wee Sis's."

They secured the little stockings to the end of the little cribs.

"First," Mrs. Carr said briskly, "we'll put in the rubbish I've bought—native bracelets—those bead things—and dollies, and charms, and things like that. They can keep them for curios when they grow up. Now the good wishes. We'll put them in . . Please God, grow up our boy and girl a good man and woman, kind and unselfish, and good comrades. And make their father and mother an example that they may follow."

"Amen !" Carr said.

"Then there are the things that we've been putting in all the year—the little savings, and the little prayers we've prayed for them every day—even the parting from them for their good."

"We were bound to do that, Grace. Nobody brings children here. We won't take credit for that."

"You needn't have come here. If there had been only you and I, we'd have stayed home and picked up fewer halfpence, I expect."

"Humph! I rather wanted to pick up halfpence for you, too, you know, young lady.

It's *your* coming that has been the real economy. I believe we live more cheaply than I should have lived as a grass-widower, besides saving what you'd cost at home."

"You'd have had more little amusements if I hadn't

come." ''Now I have a big one.'' He pinched her cheek.

"I wish I were more amusing. It's so hard to keep bright out here." She sighed. "I try, you know."

"Oh, I know. I'm not a very eloquentchap, Grace, but I think a lot think a lot of you !"

"Do you? That's something to put in the stockings -a daddy and mummy who think a lot of each other, and of two precious angel babies, and who manage to amuse⁻each other, and take care of each other. so that they shan't go home cross and yellow old things. I

seemed gone for the moment, and her husband watched her admiringly. He slipped his arm through hers, and they stood looking at the little stockings—at the place where the little stockings were, before a mist dimmed their

> wife said "Amen !" "Now you can hang up your stocking, miss," he told her. "I sent home for a little something. No. it's no use looking in-quisitive, and Í shan't tell vou. It isn't here. I knew, if it came beforehand, I couldn't hide it from you. It's in the mail that ought to have come to-lay. They say at the wireless station that it will be in very early in the morning. I'll get your ' Santa Claus ' before you wake, I expect, you old sleepyhead, when I go for my dip."

``Oh-h-h !

I wasn't going to tell you,

"'Please God, grow up our boy and girl a good man and woman.""

know we're a pair of pale skeletons, but we're skeletons who'll soon fill out and be a jolly young daddy and mummy, able to make their little ones happy, and each other; but we've done that. *I* am eloquent, Ralph, don't you think? Now we'll fill up the stockings with love—love!"

Mrs. Carr's eyes sparkled. Her lassitude

but you can hang up your stocking—I know it's only a sock—too! There will be a parcel addressed to me in the mail. It's about as big as this." She illustrated with her hands. "You're not to open it, but you can put it under your 'hang-up,' and then you can wake sleepy me. Then we can look at our Santa Clauses, and the wee ones'

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"God bless

them !" Carr said ; and his

eves.

summer Santa Clauses, while they are looking at their winter ones. I should think mother would remember to put them dressinggowns. She always did for me when I was little."

"I suspect she'll even remember to go in and see that they put them on ! You old worry ! I know what I'd like to put in your stocking—a letter offering to promote me to a better appointment in a healthy colony, where we could have the kiddies with us."

"They won't yet, will they?"

"No, old girl. I'll have to do two years more here, at least. I think you ought to have one summer home."

"Well, I won't. I have to keep you a nice, agreeable young daddy. You'd soon be grumpy and frizzled up without your amusing wife. Besides, I get the holidays home the same as you do. If the letter did come Of course, I know it won't, only it's nice to talk. That's where a woman's different to a man. She loves talking just More eloquent, you see !" for talking ! She laughed gaily. "If it did come, you'd have to put it in my stocking, and not say a word and not show a sign on your wooden old face ! And I'd get out of bed-or you'd pull me out and call me sleepy-head !--and rub my eyes and say, 'Oh, dear!' And you'd say, ' Look in your stocking.' And I'd dump down on the bed and say, 'Oh, Ralph, I'm so sleepy ! Bring it to me.' And you'd bring it; and I'd scream and say, 'Oh, Ralph !' And---"

She flung her arms round her husband and kissed him.

"I really didn't mean to," she apologised, "but you can take it for a summer Santa Claus!"

"Well, chatterbox," he said, "I am inclined to think that you *are* my summer Santa Claus! A merry Christmas, dear; and a merry summer Christmas when we take our three months home next year."

"With our little summer Santa Clauses," she said. "Oh, the dears—the dears ! The *dears !*"

They stood looking at the empty cribs for a long, long time. They were so silent that they could hear the sea hiss in the sandy port of Equatoria; and perhaps they seemed to hear some childish voices that were apt to mutter in their sleep.

Carr rose early the next morning, put a glass of water in some ice beside his sleeping wife—he always did that, because she generally woke thirsty, and too sleepy to rise at once—and went out clad in pyjamas and shoes, with a towel over his arm. It was a recognised morning costume at Equatoria. He saw the long liner lying in the bay, and knew that she had only just arrived, because the boat of the port officer was going out to her. Walking down the hill, he met another man in pyjamas—the Colonial Secretary. They wished each other a merry Christmas.

"Force of habit," the Colonial Secretary apologised. "There's no Christmas out here. It isn't the confounded place, though that's next door to Hades! It's having the kiddies away.... I never watch the mail come in without thinking we're at the mercy of what it brings, and what it will take home ... Duncan's down!"

" Fever ?"

"Yes. There's one good thing about the fever. If you pull through, you may get invalided home. What funks me about the fever is that our missises will take spells at the nursing, and they aren't equal to the strain."

"No. We wouldn't like them to be like those lazy hussies who own they aren't up to it, and let a poor devil go under."

"Or cut off home and leave us poor devils to stew it out alone . . . Mrs. Carr looks a bit fine-drawn."

"Yes. I wish she'd take a spell home . . . And I don't . . . Mrs. Drayson all right?"

"So, so ! You see, her sister wrote last mail that Roy had a cough. Women are such—women ! God bless them ! Now for the dip !"

They threw off their pyjamas and plunged into the water, floating mostly because it was too hot to swim. They came out without consultation at the same moment, timed so that they would reach the boat-stage at the very moment when the boat brought the Carr had three letters and a packet mails. addressed to his wife. He opened her letter first, because it was from her mother, and would contain news of the children. . . "Very well and good and happy," it said. There were little notes for mamma and daddy. Ralphie's were in printing letters, and curious spelling, and illustrated with drawings of dogs and cats and soldiers. Sis's were in a guided hand, but the straggly kisses were her own. He touched his cheek with the little missives.

"Mine are all right," he announced. "And yours, Drayson?"

"A 1," the Colonial Secretary said briskly. He seemed to have become a younger man, "Roy's cough has gone, and Maisie is fit. Funny little letters kids write!" He laughed, and laughter is reserved for special occasions at Equatoria.

The two men stood side by side—they had not left the boat-stage—reading. Presently the Colonial Secretary gave a shout. "They've offered me Bermuda!" he cried. "We can take the kiddies there!" He danced a few steps, waving the letter, and he was a stout man.

"You lucky old beggar!" Carr cried. "You lucky old beggar! Heavens, I'm glad, though! Shan't we miss you—both of you! We've got about two years more, unless—— Heavens, they want me home!"

He seized the fat Colonial Secretary and jigged him round. There is a belief among the natives of Equatoria that those excellent massas, "Drayser" and "Carra," were sent home because they went mad. The rumour appears to have originated from the boatmen at the stage.

Carr hurried up the hill at an extraordinary pace, considering the growing heat, and rushed into the bungalow. He paused with his hand on the bedroom door, mopped his face, and waited a minute to cool. Then he went in slowly and quietly.

Mrs. Carr was fast asleep, though the iced water had gone. Carr stood looking down at her. How thin she had grown ! And she was such a fine figure of a woman when they first came to Equatoria. Her loose hair made her look very young, and the heat-flush on her face made her prettier. "She'll be quite a young thing in England !" he told himself. Then he shook her by the shoulder.

"Letters!" he called in her ear. "Letters!

2

They're all right, both of them. Such funny little letters ! Ralphie has done his by himself. He's 'y-u-r-e l-u-v-i-n s-u-n.'"

Mrs. Carr nodded her head several times drowsily. Her face smiled, though her eyes did not open.

"Sunny little son !" she muttered. Her voice was a trifle hoarse with heat and drowsiness.

"Sis has done some kisses. Fine old smudges!"

"Little wee Sis!" Mrs. Carr murmured, rubbing her eyes. "I wish I woke right up at once, like you do, Ralph."

He sat her up, propped with a pillow, and gave her some water.

" Read the kiddies' letters," he suggested. " They'll wake you, old sleepy-head."

"But my eyes won't read yet, Ralph. Let me have them to hold."

She hugged the precious smudgy missives for a time. Then she woke sufficiently to remember to wish her husband "A Merry Christmas — when we go home in the summer!" Then she asked for her "Santa Claus," and he handed her the stocking. A letter came out first, and the sight of it woke her completely.

"From the Company !" she cried. "You don't mean— You wouldn't put it here unless— Ralph, we're going home !... Now we can enjoy our summer Christmas Day here !"

She laughed a little, cried a little, held up the letters.

"My summer Santa Claus !" she said.

Carr bent down and kissed her.

"Mine!" he told her.

He calls her Santa Claus to this day, but they will not tell anybody why.

RONDEAU.

A SONG I wove, the shuttle flew, The warp and woof were all of you; In thread of gold my love I wrought, Fugitive gleams of joy I caught, That dyed my web with many a hue.

I wonder if you ever knew

From out what store the pattern grew, What master hand to me had taught The song I wove?

As gossamer some soft breeze blew, As shining drop of morning dew,

So frail, so fleet, a thing of naught; And yet, perchance, for you 'twas fraught With message from a heart most true, The song I wove! J. M. I

THE KID

By H. B. MARRIOTT WATSON

Illustrated by Fred Pegram



Y the time the returning hounds reached Fallow's Copse, dusk was spreading across the country and snow was falling. The day had been grey, livid even, and several of the Saxton Hunt had glanced

up to the sky and foretold the fall. It held snow and darkness, as at other times it held light and sweetness. The winter lay sour upon the world, and at Fallow's Copse declared itself visibly, tangibly. The flakes descended fast, in a regular patter, soft as moths at first, and then plashing, as they felt their way, on face and hand. The runs had been long, difficult, and ardent, and the Master rode in silence, as did most of the party. Occasionally the voice of the huntsman or whip was heard calling on individual hounds, who themselves limped along bedraggled and tired. In the copse the winter gloaming had settled drearily, and the brushwood mingled gloomily with the darkness. Aslant fell the snow, and Captain Sievwright, the Master, jerked up the collar of his coat to protect his neck. He was a big man of five-and-forty, cleanshaved and rather dark of complexion, with an emphasised jowl. He pulled up his horse as he heard his name. It was a woman's voice that came to him from behind.

"Shan't we go this way, Master? It's shorter."

"That Mrs. Bledsoe?" he asked. "Can't see anything in this blessed gloom. What way's that?"

"It's the off track by Sharp's Farm," answered Mrs. Bledsoe, as she joined him, her horse reeking and steaming.

"By George, I missed it ! How the deuce was that, I wonder?" asked Sievwright.

"It's as murky as—as a fog," said Stacey

Meadows, amending what he had designed to say out of consideration for the ladies.

There were five in the party outside the whip and huntsman, and they were all staying at Elhurst Grange, which was Sievwright's ancestral house.

"I ought to know every foot of this way blindfold," said Sievwright, "but I'll be hanged if I am sure now. Are you certain that's the way down by the farm, 'Mrs. Bledsoe?"

"Yes," said the lady.

The Master wheeled. "Never saw such weather," he muttered. "Never lost my bearings before."

"It's only three miles from Sharp's, anyway," said one of the company.

The snow was now driving thick and fast, and they moved almost blindly in an envelopment of grey darkness. No trees were visible three feet away, and the horses picked the path out merely by instinct.

"Anyone got a dry match ?" called out a voice.

"A match?" another replied. "What the deuce! Who the dickens wants to smoke in this?"

"All right, old chap. Have one. You want cheering up." The speaker had come abreast of the second man as he spoke, and a light flashed for a moment.

"No, thank you-not me."

"Is that Frank back there?" called a woman's voice from the front of the darkness.

"By your leave, mistress!" shouted the smoker, in a gay voice.

"I thought you were with Jenkins. Come here !"

He obeyed, and found a party of three at a stand on the verge of a descent.

"At your service, Mrs. Bledsoe," he said cheerfully.

"Frank, do you know which is the way from here?"

"Straight down !" said the cheery voice.

"Don't be absurd !" said the lady

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petulantly. "Don't you see we don't know? We've lost the track, and it's all open moorland here."

"I thought you said Sharp's Farm——" He was snapped up.

"Oh, I've heard enough of that from the Master."

"Oh, come, Mrs. Bledsoe. I didn't reproach you," remonstrated Sievwright. "I lost my bearings myself. We're all in the same quandary. If you don't know, we'd better chance it. Anyhow, the direction can't be far out."

The party resumed its way, but the snow came thicker, blinding the eyes and making the murk a deeper riddle. Soaked and dispirited, they got down to the flat land and entered a lane.

"I say, this ain't the bridge !" shouted a voice which reached Sievwright.

"Well, I didn't say it was," he said, adding grimly : "We can't bother about bridges now."

"We must have missed it by some miles," observed Frank, reining in.

The Master stared into the gloom. "That's the oast house by Shotting. We'd better get across there. I want a change badly."

The flakes were not falling so thickly now, and a sort of shimmer lay on the landscape. They could discern each other as rude blurred outlines, and behind, a confused moving, changing mass of shadow witnessed to the presence of the hounds under their escort. The lane ran out upon an open piece of ground.

"Shotting Ford," pronounced Sievwright. "Now we shan't be long !" ejaculated

Frank, and begun to hum a music-hall tune. "Hulloa ! What's that?" said the third man.

"Where? What?" Mrs. Bledsoe asked, staring.

"By Jove, it's a kid," said Frank, staring with her. "What's an unfortunate kid doing here in this weather?"

He moved his horse forward and swung off it, and the others also drew nearer. It was a child, bare-headed, meagrely clad, a child of four, it seemed to Mrs. Bledsoe. "What's your name?" inquired Frank.

But there was no answer. The cold was biting. Frank drew his scarf from his neck and placed it round the child. "Here, youngster, put your hands in my pockets. They're frozen," he said. "Where do you come from ?"

"Want father." The words came slowly and as if with an effort. "Looking for his father, poor little chap," explained Frank.

"Ask him where he lives," suggested Mrs. Bledsoe. Frank repeated the question, but there was no answer, merely the reiterated statement : "Want father."

"He's strayed from one of the gipsy camps," said the third man, Elliott.

"Perhaps he's out of the village somewhere," said Mrs. Bledsoe. "Do you recognise him, Captain Sievwright?"

"Can't see for nuts," said the Master. "Here, Jenkins, come and see if you can make out whose this kid is."

The huntsman approached, marshalling his hounds, and peered into the gloom. "Don't think he belongs to the village, sir," he said at last. "He may do. There are so many children. But I don't remember seeing him."

"All I know is that I'm perishing," said the second lady, Lady Lataine, peevishly. "Let's get on."

"We can't leave him here," said Frank, and, suddenly stooping, seized the child in his strong arms and so mounted to the saddle.

"All right—straight away, then," said the Master, turning his horse for the river.

The huntsman disappeared with his pack into the night, and there was a sound of The Master's splashing wafted to them. horse paused, backed, and then, resolving that the water was all right, plunged into the stream. The others followed. The water was not deep here at the ford, for the river spread out rather shallowly, and barely reached the girths. Frank did not trouble to gather up his knees, but let the water roll up to his calves as he held the child before him on the saddle. The child was silent, neither called for his father now, nor made any protest, nor showed any fear. Frank thought he was staring at the water as if fascinated. The cavalcade attained the further bank and proceeded on the way to Elhurst. At the Grange the hounds turned off to their kennels, and the tired party dismounted and, handing over their horses to various grooms, entered the house.

The house-party was not large. It included, besides the host and Mrs. Sievwright and her sister, those of the hunting contingent, Miss Mitchell-Dene and Charles Forrester. It was the latter who crossed the big hall as they entered, Lady Lataine cross and wet and very sorry for herself.

Forrester had a book in his hand, and was a slight, lean, rather dark figure in the leaping firelight. "Safe back ?" he said smilingly, and then : "Who's this, if you please ?"

Frank held the child in his arms, and now set him down.

"Waif and stray," he said, his pleasant face beaming. "What's to be done with this pretty thing, Sievwright?"

It was probable that Sievwright had forgotten the child. "Oh, give him to the servants," he said; and, as he did so, Miss Mitchell-Dene came on the scene. "What a pretty child !" she exclaimed. "Whose is he?"

"This deponent knoweth not," said Frank, smiling. The man and the girl exchanged glances; they were fond of each other in the way in which modern Society allows people to be, with unadmitted intimacy, so to speak. Sievwright rang a bell.

"This must be one of the villagers' children," he said to the respectful housekeeper. "The poor kid's wet and tired. Better dry him and feed him, and so on. Let them make inquiries."

"Good-bye, little kid, good-bye, good-bye!" sang Frank. "We'll find father. Goodness, I feel I could eat an ox, or part of it, nicely prepared."

"I have no doubt you will, in due time," said Miss Mitchell-Dene. "What are you reading?" She seized the arm of Charles Forrester and peered at the back of the book.

"Lives of the Saints," he replied, laughing. "Funny book to read in this house, isn't it? I wonder where Dick got hold of it?"

He was a cousin of Sievwright, and considered "clever," "rather satirical, don't you know."

"Do you suppose we're all sinners here ?" asked Frank cheerily.

"I never gave you a thought," said Forrester lightly, "though, come to think of it, I have been reading about a sort of ancestor of yours."

The party in the hall dispersed, the hunters to their respective rooms. Miss Mitchell-Dene stood looking at the huge wood fire. "What's the exact difference between saints and sinners?" she asked.

"The precise difference," said Forrester, "between any two colours that grade into each other. If there's blue and green, what's yellow?"

"The happy medium ?" said she.

"Humph! It might be very bilious, according as you used too many sheep or goats."

"I don't think I understand all that,"

said the girl, still staring at the fire, before which she spread out her hands. "Am I a goat because I like a good time?"

"No," he said promptly. "But what is a good time?"

She laughed. "Theatres, balls, bridge—ask me another."

"Why should I ask you anything? I don't know myself," he said. "But I'm pretty sure all our definitions need revision."

"Don't say that thing about life being tolerable but for its pleasures," she begged.

"No, I won't," he promised. "It's not true. And, in any case, we've got to define pleasures."

"Which," said Miss Mitchell-Dene, as she moved off, "brings us exactly back to where we were."

He stood watching her till she disappeared, and gave ever so slight a lift of his shoulders.

"Which means," he said to himself, "that the average sensual man is good enough, but somehow doesn't manifest." He sighed, for Miss Mitchell-Dene had an effect on him. He was sensitive to many influences, and beauty among them. He was by way of being an authority, a refuge in that cousin's house, for Mrs. Sievwright was linnet-headed; and the housekeeper, meeting him on the staircase, consulted him.

"The child won't eat, sir, so I've had him put to bed. The poor thing's over-tired and cold."

Charles Forrester recognised the feminine wisdom, and offered courteous praise, as was his wont. It was a trait which had made him liked in life.

When, some time later, he entered the billiard-room, he found Frank and Elliott, not, however, engaged in a game, but lolling contentedly near the fire, and there he learned of the day's run. He was no sportsman himself, and found a difficulty in balancing himself on the edge of that grave seriousness which belongs to the class. He simulated sympathy, and opened his book. An interval of peace had fallen. Frank, immaculately groomed and dressed, smoked a cigarette luxuriously. Elliott puffed at a ·cigar. To them enter Mrs. Sievwright, pretty, fitful and flighty, and with neither human blood nor harm in her-only vanity and obedience.

"Tell me all about it," she said graciously. "Dick's dour and grumpy and silent."

"Tired," suggested Elliott.

It was Frank who told the story, with a young enthusiasm only faintly dimmed by his physical weariness. "What became of the kid, by the way?" he asked, as he finished.

"Kid? Oh, yes, Johnson told me something about a child," said Mrs. Sievwright. "You found it wandering somewhere." She rose languidly. "Oh, Ella"—this was to Lady Lataine, who entered—"not too tired, I hope?"

"If I make any mistakes—revokes at bridge to-night, the Recording Angel must blot them out," said Lady Lataine languorously.

"What the Recording Angel will probably have to blot out," said Charles Forrester mildly, " is the remarks of your partner."

"No one coming over, I suppose, this blessed night?" said Lady Lataine.

"Unless the Sothebys no one. I asked them to dine, but they had a doubt of some sort. I don't think they'll come, because they're mortally afraid of their new 'shuvver.'"

"The 'shuvver' is the modern cook, a tyrant," said Forrester, putting his finger in his book.

"All servants are the same," said Mrs. Sievwright. "They were bothering me about some child—oh, yes, you spoke of it, Charles—a gipsy brat."

"It wasn't a gipsy," said Frank suddenly. "It was a pretty fair kid. I don't much take to those dark things—overseas alien business. This was a blue-eyed kid—a village child, I should say—regular Saxon."

"There are a great many," murmured Mrs. Sievwright.

Upstairs her husband had taken his bath, shaved, and dressed for dinner. He vawned without restraint as he came out of his room, and was going along the broad landing with the Stuart pictures when he noticed a light in a room which seemed to him out of the He pushed the door open wider and usual. entered. There was a night-light burning on the table, and the room was in the faint, misty illumination of this. He wondered why he had come there, and also why the light was burning. The blinds of the windows were drawn; the light fell softly, quite unobtrusively, upon the bed. . . . Quite suddenly there came to him a memory. This had been Geordie's room, Geordie who was dead—was it ten years or eleven? There was a room opening out of it in which the nurse had slept. He remembered that quite well. Geordie ! Geordie had died of-As the thought passed through his mind, he faced the bed. Was it Geordie who stirred on the pillow in the faint light, rubbing his

cheeks? Could it be Geordie who stirred and sighed?

He remembered the child by the river. Some indiscriminating ape had put it here.

"Well?" he said mildly, staring at it as it lifted its head from the pillow in fright. He thought he saw the child's face move with fear, and it seemed to him that the lips framed one word "Father," but he didn't know. As a matter of fact, he felt that, for him, a typical and hardened fox-hunter, he was rather overwrought, and he wondered why, and was angry.

"Why the devil did they put the kid here?" he asked of himself, as he made his way downstairs.

He threw off his thoughts as he entered the dining-room, where the lights and the blaze of fire made a cheerful glow. The house-party was already assembled, save for Lady Lataine, who came in with a bustle a little later, and was querulous. The exhaustion of the hunt bore down the gaiety of the table, only Frank discovering any elasticity. He, with Miss Mitchell-Dene and Forrester, bore the brunt of the talk, though Mrs. Sievwright intervened occasionally. The rest was—hunting.

"If you hadn't followed that blessed Ringwood," proclaimed Elliott, "we'd have had a better run by Frostman's."

"That was Carter's fault," said Sievwright. "He's getting too old, I believe. He swears by Ringwood."

"It was a nice spin along the flat lands," said Mrs. Bledsoe.

Frank was not concerned with the run. He was between Mrs. Bledsoe and Miss Mitchell-Dene, and Forrester talked across the table to him, gently ironic.

"Of course, the main thing in hunting, shooting, fishing, and all the rest of it, is the scenery," he said, gingerly handling the savoury on his plate.

"You're sneering," said Frank, flashing up to the encounter. "But, upon my soul, I do enjoy it. When I fish, there's the feeling of the stream, the play of the shadows, the long lush meadows——"

"What a rhapsodist is here !" interjected Forrester.

"It's a fact. I'm not so keen on the sport as you think."

"Miss Mitchell-Dene?" Forrester appealed for support.

"I'm no sportswoman," she said. "I don't like worms."

Frank went off into laughter; it tickled him to think that anyone imagined that you fished with worms. He would as soon have cut off his hand or shot a fox.

"What's this?" said Sievwright suddenly. as the servant deposited a plate in front of him. "Good Heavens!"

"Oh, don't spoil my little fun !" pleaded his wife from the further end of the table. "You know it's Christmas Eve. They're only crackers."

"Help us !" said Elliott.

"No, help me," said Miss Mitchell-Dene. "Give me one, please."

"Do you know, I'd clean forgotten about Christmas," said Frank, as he pulled one with her.

Lady Lataine peevishly pushed Forrester's proffered cracker aside, and demanded dessert. Someone was asking Sievwright a question.

"Just one cigar, and then bridge," the host announced. "We must remember the season, and go slow," he added, smiling, as if he had made an excellent joke.

"Hulloa!" said Frank suddenly, staring towards the door, which was ajar. "What the—why, it's the kid !"

The whole table turned eyes, and there, for certain, was the child. Clad in nightrobes, with soft curly hair and wide, inquiring eyes which showed no fear, only wonder, he surveyed the company. The uncomfortable feeling he had experienced upstairs returned to trouble Sievwright. Who had brought the kid down? But it was Frank who solved the mystery.

"He's looking for father still," he said, d beckoned. "Come here, youngster. and beckoned. Poor little chap ! "

The child approached him without hesitation and put out a small hand, which the man took in his big one. He lifted the child to his knee and reached out for some grapes. Mrs. Bledsoe, a good-natured woman of outdoor tastes, pushed a cracker towards him. The child seemed to shrink from this proffered gift, but accepted the grapes.

"Bolted out of his bed," said Elliott, as if the solution of a great problem had just come to him.

"We'd better send to see if any child's missing from the village," said Mrs. Sievwright. "Parkyns," she added to the servant behind her chair, "just see that someone goes down to find out."

The ladies departed on the top of this instruction, and the men sipped coffee and smoked the allotted cigar. Miss Mitchell-Dene had carried off the waif into the drawing-room, where he sat solemnly on the sofa close to her, with eyes wide open on his strange surroundings. He slipped off the sofa and shyly sought Frank when the men entered, sitting by his new friend when the card sets were made. Ever and anon Frank put out a hand, carelessly tender, and patted the child's head.

"I make it hearts. Well, younker, what do you think of it all? Having none, partner? Bless his little head ! The other way, if you please."

At another table Lady Lataine plaintively bewailed her luck.

"I want a mascot," she said. "Captain Sievwright, send me the boy. I must have a mascot."

"Go to the pretty lady," said Frank ingratiatingly, and indicated the destination.

The child shrank in obvious reluctance, but finally obeyed the gentle pressure. Lady Lataine had pulled a chair up to her, and now seated the child upon it. "There," she said, "wish me good luck. Say, 'Lucky lady!',

"He's no gipsy," said Frank from across the room.

"He'll do as well. I always must have a mascot, and I left my china pig behind," said Lady Lataine querulously.

The games went on, and presently Sievwright, who was dummy, got up.

" Isn't it appallingly warm?" he asked. "It's these new registers, Kitty. Look here, we'd better — Oh, I'll open this window down there. It will let in a breath."

The room was long and spacious, but the hot-air apparatus had raised the temperature to an uncomfortable height. Sievwright walked down to the furthest window and threw it open. It was a French window, and opened on a covered way. Beyond was the night and darkness. Sievwright came back.

"It's a lot better outside now," he said. "Snow's stopped, and the fog's taken off. How many tricks? Four? That makes " He sat down and registered on his card.

Half an hour later Forrester entered the room, a book under his arm, and smilingly surveyed the players. At Lady Lataine's table they were reckoning the gains and losses.

"Fortunate ?" he asked idly. She beamed. "Yes, my mascot—" She looked round. "Where is he? He brought me luck. I was losing till then."

"Where is who?" asked Forrester.

"The gipsy."

"He's no gipsy," called out Frank. "Send him over here. Come along, kid."

"He's not here," said Lady Lataine.

"He's gone to bed. Did you tell the servants to take him ?" asked Sievwright.

"No," said his wife, who was trying to add up distractedly.

"Where is he? Where are you, boy?" Frank rose and stalked, a big fresh figure in the room.

Lady Lataine was counting her gains; Mrs. Sievwright was yawning. Miss Mitchell-Dene rose and joined him.

"Did anyone see him go?" inquired Frank. "Lady Lataine, you had him."

"I-no, I don't know what became of him," said that lady indifferently. "I suppose one of the maids took him."

"He was sitting by you. You asked for him," persisted the young man.

"Is the child missing?" asked Mrs. Bledsoe, who had been talking of something else with her host.

"Gone! Yes." Frank looked about him with a vague sense of discomfort.

Forrester went to the open French window at the further end of the room.

"There are footmarks here," he said quickly. "Bring a light, someone."

Several of the party drew to the window, and Frank flared a petrol match-box. The light fell on the residue of unmelted snow on the verandah, and there were the marks of small unslippered feet.

"He's gone out," said Miss Mitchell-Dene, in bewilderment.

"You picked him up over the river?" said Charles Forrester interrogatively. "It was Christopherson, wasn't it?"

"Yes," said Frank. "I carried him over. I wonder where the poor kid——"

"He's gone to look for his father," put in Mrs. Bledsoe. "That would explain it. It was the only thing he said."

Charles Forrester stepped back into the room suddenly and took up his book. "Didn't I say I had been reading about an ancestor, Frank?" he asked, in a curious voice.

"What's that, old chap?"

"Christopher. This is the 'Lives of the Saints.' You remember the story of Christopheros?"

Frank stared. "You mean the man who—— Oh, what rot !" He turned away almost irritably.

"It's Christmas Eve," murmured Miss Mitchell-Dene.

Mrs. Bledsoe looked at her in a puzzled way.

"We must find the kid," she heard Frank say. "Sievwright, get some of your servants out."

He had gone out into the verandah as he was, without hat or overcoat, but the others hurriedly made preparations for the search. The snow was mostly gone beyond the precincts of the verandah, and all traces of the small feet vanished. A lantern in the hands of someone at the French window drew Frank's voice from the distance.

"Try the path along by the bowling-green, some of you. I'm going the orchard way."

The party moved forward and split into two sections, beating the bounds of the garden on that side of the house. Meanwhile, some of the servants were exploring other parts. Forrester, holding a lantern, found himself with Miss Mitchell-Dene and Elliott; Sievwright and others, with another lantern, had gone in another direction. The snow had disappeared, but the fog was settling down again fast.

At the wicket-gate which gave access to the park Forrester hesitated. Was it possible the child had come all that way? Yet he did not know what to do save to go on.

"Wasn't there something over there?" Miss Mitchell-Dene asked.

"Where?" he asked in his turn, but the vague question sufficed to decide him. The three emerged into the foggy park, the lantern with its halo of luminous mist swinging in the leader's hand. They wandered in the open spaces of the park fruitlessly.

"I don't see what the mischief we can do," said Elliott hopelessly. "It's like looking for a needle in a haystack." Forrester hesitated. Miss Mitchell-Dene was clad lightly, though she had put a warm wrap about her.

"We must go on," she said firmly, and added in a tremulous voice : "There's the river."

The fret of the water was audible now, and they knew where they must be. The river ran for some distance through the grounds of Elhurst. They followed the bank now for two or three hundred yards, and then came out on a drive which crossed the stream by a bridge to the main gates of the park.

"He might have wandered down the drive," suggested Miss Mitchell-Dene.

"We may as well try there as any other way. They would know at the lodge if he'd been," said Forrester.

But the lodge-keeper had no news, had seen no one, and the gates were shut.

"He's in the grounds somewhere," said

"That's clear. Let's try back Forrester. and follow the river down farther."

They retraced their steps and struck off down the stream again, having added the gatekeeper as a recruit to their strength.

Here the river ran in open country, not wide, but swift, and here and there with rising ground covered with trees. At the top of one of these ascents Forrester paused.

"Didn't you hear something?" he asked. "I thought I heard a sort of cry," said Elliott. They all listened.

"It's voices," said Miss Mitchell-Dene.

"It must be the other party. They appear to be down yonder," said Forrester.

They began to descend, and the lodgekeeper murmured something in Forrester's "Look out here," said the latter. ears. "We've got to be careful. There's a steep bit of bank, and the river swirls under it."

The parties, if they could judge by sounds, seemed to be converging.

"I know the track they're following," said Forrester. "It goes down by the river to the boat-house."

Unconsciously they hastened their steps. "Back, please, sir !" called out the lodgekeeper suddenly.

Forrester came to a pause and swung his lantern. They could see below a grey swirl of water.

"Ugly !" commented Elliott. " Good Heavens, supposing-"

It was Miss Mitchell-Dene who interrupted with a cry. "There's a footmark ! Look !"

Forrester lowered the lantern. "It is," he said---" on the verge !"

There was a momentary silence, and then Forrester moved.

"It may not have gone over," he said rather brokenly.

"It might be any footmark," said Elliott. "So it might—of course." The remark of the plain, unimaginative man seemed to They went on, restore their confidence. and now the lights of the other party were flashing ahead. Forrester hailed them, and was answered.

" Found him ?"

"No. Any sign?"

"No !"

The river broadened towards the weir, over which the waste water poured with a roar, a roar that drowned now all sounds save that of a great shout which rose from the advanced party. Forrester's party quickened their pace, and the two commingled on the bank.

"There ! There !" Meadows was crying. "Don't you see?"

One of the servants stirred the rough, lashing water with a pole aimlessly.

"What is it? Oh, what is it?" asked Miss Mitchell-Dene.

"He sees something," answered back Forrester.

"What is it? What is it?" she repeated. She was standing on the marge of the water distracted.

"It's a body-a man's," said one of the servants.

"Nonsense!" said Sievwright. "It's rubbish brought down by the river and caught there. What man ?"

Suddenly Miss Mitchell-Dene's voice was heard demanding : "Where's Mr. Christopherson ? Where's Mr. Christopherson ? '

"Is Frank here?" asked Forrester.

Sievwright answered in the negative. "We haven't seen him. He's probably searching at the back of the park."

"He's there ! He's there !" cried the girl, pointing. "Oh, bring him out ! He's there ! "

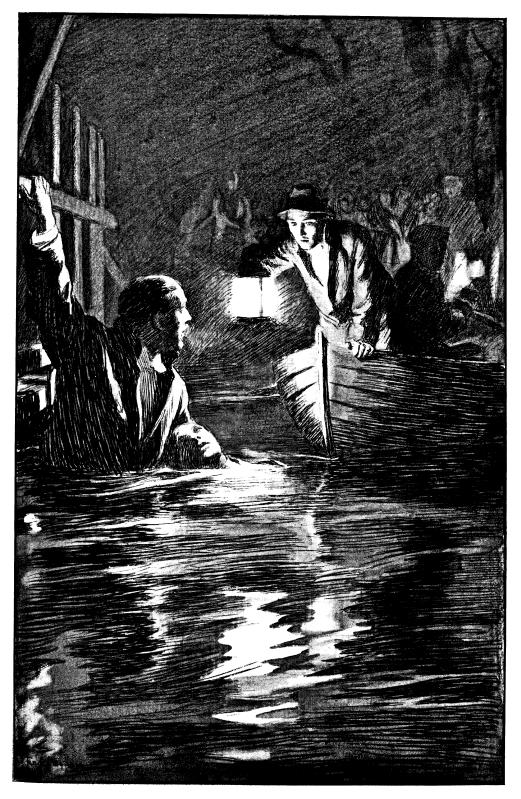
"It's only some rubbish caught-----" began Sievwright, and broke off. It seemed to him as if the rubbish moved.

Captain Sievwright, M.F.H., was a dull person, of no parts to speak of, but he was a soldier and a man accustomed to decisive action. Item : he did not know fear.

"Give me that," he said, and snatched the pole from the servant's hands. Hestepped without haste upon the masonry which projected into the water, and here opened in a sluice to allow the held water to collect for the navigation of boats, crossed it, and, seizing the wooden rail which ran across the weir, supported himself on the submerged structure which made the water fall. He was swallowed breast-high, but by means of the pole kept his balance, until he reached the breach which the torrent of waters had made in the bed of the structure. A body held up by the railings bobbed and moved in the rush.

He shouted back orders which the roar of the water seemed to overpower. Then, holding tight to his support, he pulled at an arm of the body. To his amazement, something came away, something that had been resting on the body above the water. It was a child !

He turned and shouted again, but already the lodge-keeper, who also kept the waters, was half-way to him When the latter had arrived, he handed over the child.



"A light was flashed on the body from a lantern."

"Get to shore and let the boat down on us. There's more here."

He pulled again at the body against the weir, and managed to hold the head out of the torrent, but it was only when his arms were aching past endurance that the boat reached him. A light was flashed on the body from a lantern.

"It is Frank," said Sievwright. "Is he gone?" asked Forrester, horrorstruck, but Sievwright had set to work like a man of action.

Christopherson was laid upon the turf pending the arrival of the motor-car which had been sent for. Sievwright was still at work, though he was himself dripping from his waist downwards. Elliott had the rescued child, wrapped in an overcoat; Miss Mitchell-Dene knelt on the wet grass, unconscious of everything save of the life that flickered on the pallid face, as if reluctant to return.

"They must have gone over where we saw," Elliott was saying, in a low voice.

"The child must have gone over, and Frank followed," said Forrester, in the same tone.

"He seems to have kept the child above water somehow, even after he succumbed himself," said Elliott.

"Thank God !" said Sievwright suddenly, with a sigh, and ceased his work.

"He's come round "! cried Forrester.

"I wish someone had some brandy." said Sievwright. "I could do with some myself."

Forrester almost hysterically clapped him on the back. The hum of the motor was andible.

Miss Mitchell-Dene, still on her knees, was now nearer to the prostrate figure. The lips twitched; she had one of the hands in hers, chafing it softly, and she stared at the awakening face. She did not hear the motor stop, nor the voices talking. Someone leant down on the other side and applied a flask to Christopherson's mouth, then rose. Dimly she heard the words from somewhere-

"The kid's all right. Father missed him -drove over from Saxton distracted. We must get them into the car."

Frank's eyes opened, and a woman's face was close above him.

"Sylvia!" he said weakly. the kid?" And then : "Is "Where's And then: "Is that you, dearest?"

Miss Mitchell-Dene sobbed aloud, but it was a sob of joy and something more incommunicable.



OLD ROAD. THE

By LADY MARGARET SACKVILLE.

P and down and back again and round about I've gone, All the ways of all the earth, and all the way alone ! A long road in winter, a short road in spring,

No shoes on my feet, but a new song to sing,

And the hawthorn new-budded at the turning of the lane, So now I'll tread the old road, my own road, again!

I thought upon the old road, as I walked through the town: "My dear," I said, "you're standing there all in your violet gown.

My dear," I said, "my dear," I said, "you've waited over=long,

Waited by the white gate, a-listening for my song.

Oh, the song I used to sing! Oh, you'll hear it soon again! As I come round the corner at the turning of the lane!"

FAMOUS BROTHERS.

BY GEORGE A. WADE.

THAT is a fine saying of Legouvé's, "Un frère est un ami donné par la nature—A brother is a friend given by Nature." It does not affect the beauty and truth of the thought that Legouvé places it in the mouth of Cain in his tragedy "The suggested and implied a peculiarly devoted and disinterested affection, uniting men of sometimes curiously different natures, pursuits, and dispositions.

With the great mass of humanity, brothers and sisters are pretty much alike in their



Photo by]

JEAN AND EDOUARD DE RESZKE.

[Dupont, New York.

Death of Abel," nor that the line is famous in French literature for the comic variations with which it has been burlesqued, such as, "A father is a banker given by Nature"! But it is to the credit of humanity that the fraternal relation has, all through the ages, characters and tastes ; but when one considers the classes which have risen to even a comparatively slight level of intellectual development, the differences between brothers and sisters are sometimes extraordinary. They are, indeed, explained by scientists as examples

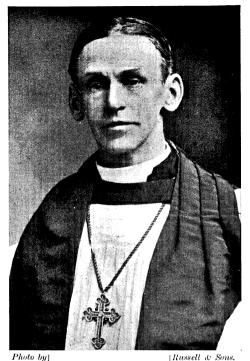
of "atavism," or, in other words, a sort of "throw-back" to some remote and forgotten ancestor. In this way the artistic temperament will suddenly show itself in one member of a family devoted to, for instance, commercial pursuits; or you will find a very good man or woman of business suddenly cropping up, so to speak, in a family of genius. But while musical or artistic heredity is established from generation to generation in individuals, it is also interesting to note that sometimes this law is prodigal of her gifts. Not content with reproducing talent in a single member of a family, Nature occasionally surprises and delights us with the spectacle of several sons or daughters who possess the ancestral capability in an equal degree. The manifestation must, of course, vary, in direction and in intensity, but it is curious how often there is a strong similarity of taste and inclination, leading brothers to follow careers that closely resemble each other, sometimes all with, it would seem, about equal success, or, in other cases, with varying degrees of achievement.



Photo by]

[Elliott & Fry.

THE RT. HON. SIR J. WEST RIDGEWAY, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., ETC.



THE RT. REV. FREDERIC EDWARD RIDGEWAY, BISHOP OF SALISBURY.

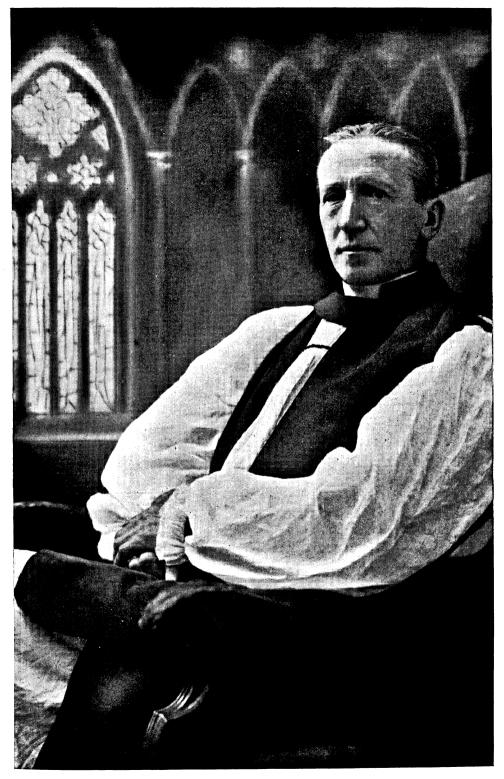
In the political arena there have been, in our own time, some remarkable examples of brothers with parallel talents and temperaments. In the case of Mr. Arthur Balfour and his brother, Mr. Gerald Balfour, for instance, it is most interesting to consider the similarities and also the differences between two fine and subtle intellects.

Mr. Arthur Balfour's whole bent of mind is metaphysical, and to this tendency he has added a keen interest in, and a considerable knowledge of, natural science. It is not so much the detailed experiments of the laboratory in which he is interested, as his uncle, the late Lord Salisbury, was, but rather in the wider and more daring speculations of the greatest *savants*.

On the other hand, Mr. Gerald Balfour is steeped in the old learning—what our forefathers called "the humanities." He obtained a first-class in the Classical Tripos, and the distinction of a Fellowship of Trinity College, Cambridge. And, unlike many men who have obtained similar honours at the University, he has always kept up his love of classical literature.

The elder brother began his political career as private secretary to his uncle, the younger

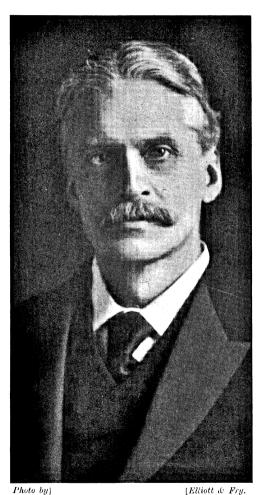
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THE RT. REV. CHARLES JOHN RIDGEWAY, BISHOP OF CHICHESTER. Photograph by Vandyk, Buckingham Palacs Road, one began his service as private secretary to his brother when the latter was Irish Secretary. Each of them, in his turn, has been Chief Secretary for Ireland. Both brothers are fond of cycling, and both are great golfers. It is well known amongst his friends that, keen and active as Mr. Arthur Balfour is, he is occasionally absent-minded, especially if some striking subject is engaging his thoughts

at the time. In this his younger brother again closely resembles him. And more noticeable я mutual / peculiarity has often been remarked `as shared by the two brothers. Those who have seen Mr. Arthur Balfour rise to address a mass meeting of thousands cannot but have noticed the thrill of nervousness which seems fairly to go through him to his very finger-ends, till he has once got the meeting "with him"; and this same nervous feeling is evidently the lot of Mr. Gerald Balfour, as his face plainly shows, on similar occasions, till he, too, has got fairly " under way."

A remarkable example of brothers distinguished in Church and State is furnished by the Ridgeways. It is sometimes said that parsons' sons come to no good; but when we think of how many famous men, including Nelson, Bishop Suffragan of Kensington in 1901. His elder brother, Dr. C. J. Ridgeway, now Bishop of Chichester, held for many years the important vicarage of Christ Church, Lancaster Gate, where he attracted and retained an enormous congregation, partly by his eloquent preaching, partly by his remarkable personality. One of the last acts of Mr. Balfour, as Prime Minister, was



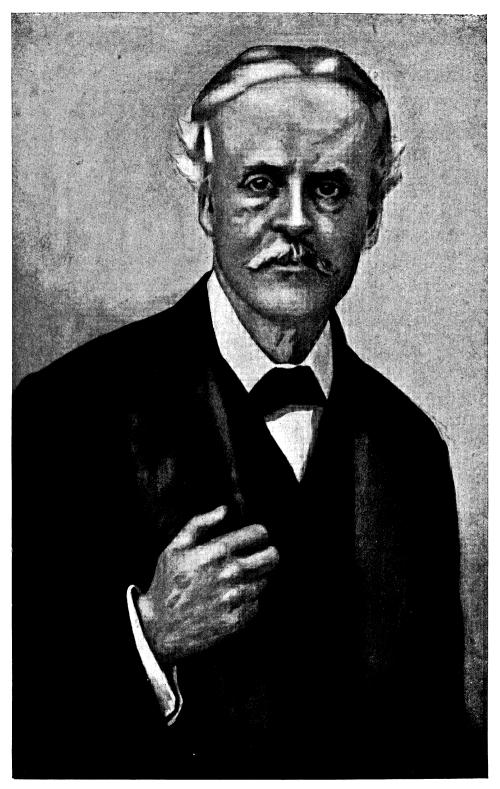
THE RT. HON. GERALD WILLIAM BALFOUR.

have been "sons of the manse," the absurdity of such a generalisation becomes apparent. One wonders whether the late Rev. Joseph Ridgeway had any foresight of the distinctions in store for his three sons. At any rate, he sent them to the same school— St. Paul's. Curiously enough, the younger brother, the Rev. F. E. Ridgeway, was the first to become a bishop, being consecrated rather overshadowed the other. Of the many and varied gallant exploits of the late Field-Marshal Viscount Wolseley, one needs to say little. His career is nearly as well remembered as his name. An Irishnan as so many brave soldiers have been— Garnet Wolseley rose by sheer merit from a subaltern to the highest rank. The man who was left two or three times

Prime Amister, was to nominate him to the deanery of Carlisle, and one of the last acts of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman before his death was to bring Dr. Ridgeway south again, to the important bishopric of Chichester.

In Sir Joseph West Ridgeway the two bishops have a brother who has served the Crown in many different lands. Over forty years ago he "smelt powder" in Afghan war; the then we find him in the Indian Foreign Office, and then he helped to mark out the frontier between Russia and Afghanistan. He has served as Under - Secretary for Ireland, as Governor of the Isle of Man and of Ceylon, and as Envoy to the Sultan of Morocco.

Two cases may be mentioned of brothers who have become famous in military history in our time. And, singularly enough, in each case one brother has



THE RT. HON. ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR. From a drawing by A. C. Michael. for dead on the battlefield; whose life was given up by the hospital doctors more than once; but who, when he heard the searchers, as he lay on the Russian soil, wounded and almost done for, say, of a great career which closed last spring amid universal sorrow.

General Sir George B. Wolseley, who is now on the retired list, is only less famous than he deserves to be because the great



Photo by]

SIR RIDER HAGGARD.

[Hoppé.

"He's past all hope," got up a little on his elbow and replied, "Aye, but I'm not dead yet!"—this is the sort of fellow capable of coming to great things. The Red River, Ashanti, and Egypt were the great landmarks

fame of the other Wolseley overshadowed him. But he has acquired a great name and reputation for his military qualities and bravery, as is shown by the many decorations and other honours bestowed upon him.



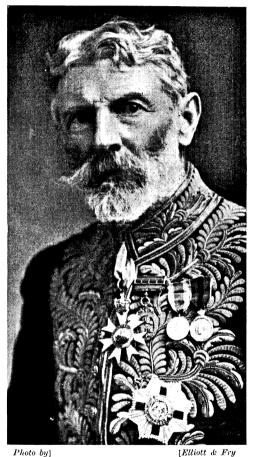
LIEUT.-COL. ANDREW HAGGARD, D.S.O.

Curiously similar is the case of the two Kitcheners. Another Irishman—in birthplace, at any rate—Lord Kitchener of



Photo by] [Elliott & Fry. MAJOR EDWARD ARTHUR HAGGARD.

Khartum has won world-wide fame for his great successes as the organiser of victory first in Egypt and then in South Africa. But he had done much before his name became shouted by enthusiastic Londoners. He had done a great work in the Palestine Survey in 1874-8, and in that of Cyprus, 1878-9. He had won much fame as an authority on all questions of Egyptian and Oriental antiquities, and it may be said



SIR WILLIAM H. HAGGARD, K.C.M.G., C.B.

that, if he had not become a famous general, he would have been a famous antiquary.

His brother, junior by eight years, was the late Lieutenant-General F. W. Kitchener, formerly commanding the Lahore District. General Kitchener, who died in 1912, gained much distinction under General Lowe in the last Egyptian war, and took an important part in the Dongola expedition. He had charge of the Transport Department at Atbara and Omdurman, and some amount of the great success of that war must be set down to the way in which he carried out his important duties in that department. His zeal, cagerness for work, calm thoughtfulness, and exact mathematical precision in duty almost rivalled those of his more celebrated brother. Later on he did admirable work in South Africa, demonstrating his fitness for high command in the field.

Α remarkable, group of brothers is that of the four Haggards, of whom the sixth, Sir Rider Haggard, is the bestknown. They are the sons of the late William Meybohm Haggard, of Bradenham Hall, Norfolk. The eldest, Sir William Henry Doveton Haggard, K.C.M.G., C.B., has been our Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Brazil since 1906. He is joint author of a standard book for the study of modern Persian. The fifth son of the family is Lieut.-Col. Andrew Charles Parker Haggard, D.S.O., who is author, novelist, historian, and poet. He entered the Army and distinguished himself in Egypt, for which services he was decorated. He writes on sport, travel, and French history and historical biography. The greatest gifts of fame have, however, been reserved for Sir Henry Rider Haggard, the author of "She," "Ayesha: The Return of She," "King Solomon's Mines," and



Photo by] [Ellis & MR. W. A. S. BENSON.



numberless other powerfully successful books. In another part of this number will be found the opening instalment of his new romance, "The Holy Flower," in which he returns to the strange, eventful history of wildest Africa, of which great continent he has ever held, and successfully proved, the saying of Pliny, the Roman historian, "Ex Africâ semper aliquid novi"—there is always something new to be learned from Africa.

Sir Rider Haggard, as a young man, served as a public official in South Africa for many years, and in 1877, with Colonel Brooke, he hoisted the British flag over the South African Republic at Pretoria. He is a barrister of Lincoln's Inn. Of late years he has taken a deep interest in social affairs, such as the condition of the poor, the land question, and kindred subjects. His book on "Rural England" will have an enduring value for future historians and students.

The youngest of the brothers is Major Edward Arthur Haggard, who writes under the pseudonym of "Arthur Amyand." He served with distinction in Egypt and South Africa. His books include "Only a Drummer Boy," "The Kiss of Isis," and he has written on the social status of the soldier in connection with recruiting. Of late he has done much good work for the development of the Union Jack Club, the Veterans' Club, and the Veterans' Corps.



MR. F. R. BENSON AS HENRY V. Photograph by Chancellor, Dublin.

Music gives us a famous case of cclebrated brothers in the two De Reszkes. There are three years between the ages of these brothers, the elder one, Jean, having been born in 1853, and the younger one, Edouard, in 1856. They come of a Polish family, and are natives of Warsaw. Their parents were musical, especially on the vocal side, and the two sons have fully inherited this talent, to the great admiration of opera audiences.

Though Jean de Reszke visited London in 1875, he did not make a great sensation,



Photo by] [Elliott & Fry. MONSIGNOR ROBERT HUGH BENSON,

having then a baritone voice. But a few months later, at Paris, in "I Puritani," he fairly took the audience by storm, and his reputation was made. His voice now became a most delightful tenor; and when he sang as Romeo, with Patti as Juliet, in 1884, it was said, as the highest possible praise to him, that Romeo sang as finely as Juliet. He now devotes himself to teaching singing in Paris.

Very similar is the record of Edouard. He "came out" in 1876, and it was with Jean that he first took great honours at the



Photo by] [Russell & Sons. MR. ARTHUR CHRISTOPHER BENSON.

Theâtre Italien, Paris. Edouard de Reszke has a deep bass voice of fine power and quality, and was an immediate success on his first visit to London in 1880, at Covent



Photo by]

[Elliott & Fry.

MR. E. F. BENSON.



SIR HERBERT TREE AS JACOB IN "JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN." Photograph by the "Daily Mirror" Studios Garden. His favourite characters were those of Ruy Gomez, Mephistopheles, Fernando, and Friar Lawrence.

Two groups of brothers of notable talents have been contributed to the public life and artistry of our generation by two separate families of the name of Benson. Lord Charnwood, Mr. W. A. S. Benson, and Mr. F. R. Benson, are the sons of Mr. William Benson, of Alresford, Hants, who married Miss Elizabeth Smith, of Colebrooke Park, near Tonbridge. The three brothers were all educated at Winchester, and all subsequently won varied distinctions at Oxford. The eldest of the three, Mr. William Arthur Smith Benson, after a course of study under Mr. Basil Champneys, evolved a career for himself in metal designing and architecture, and the history of the well-known firm which he founded in New Bond Street bears eloquent testimony to the practical success of his artistic ideas. He is the author of a discriminating book on "The Elements of Handicraft and Design," and took an active part in the formation of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. The cause of home industries is also indebted to his work.

The name of Frank Robert Benson is inseparably identified with the cause of the Shakespearian drama, and the record of the repertoire company which he famous founded forms one of the most important





MR. MAX BEERBOHM.



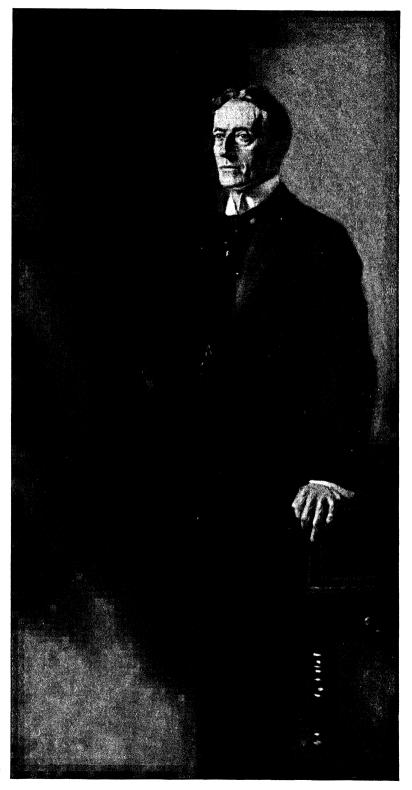
THE LATE GENERAL KITCHENER.

chapters in the history of the English Stage. As a manager, he has always maintained a lofty ideal, and as the first "producer" in our time of many plays from the Shakespearian drama, of which all earlier acting traditions had perished, he has shown an instinct both scholarly and artistic, which has in many cases given a new vitality to plays all too long banished from the theatre. He has, indeed, "done the State some service," for no finer incentive towards an intelligent patriotism could be found than the Benson Company's frequent performances of Shakespeare's plays from English history. As individual player, Mr. Benson is himself extremely versatile-witness the wide divergence between his Hamlet and his Doctor Caius, his Richard II. and his Charles Surface-and his best work is of very fine quality. Unlike most actors, "the more difficult the part, the better he is," as Miss Ellen Terry says of him in her memoirs, illustrating her point from his remarkably subtle impersonation of so complex a rôle as that of King Lear.

The third of this group of brothers, Godfrey Rathbone Benson, now Lord Charnwood, after a distinguished career at Oxford, firstly as an undergraduate and later as a tutor at Balliol, won the Woodstock Division of Oxfordshire for the Liberal Party when he was only twenty-eight. He



VISCOUNT KITCHENER OF KHARTUM. BY A. S. COPE, R.A. Reproduced from the original now hung in the Royal Engineers Officers' Mess at Chatham, by permission of the Artist and of the R.E. Corps Committee.



SIR JOHNSTON FORBES-ROBERTSON. BY GEORGE HARCOURT. From the original exhibited at the Royal Academy, reproduced by permission of the Artist.

was raised to the peerage under the new title of Baron Charnwood in 1911.

Still under the name of Benson, another family furnishes a group of brothers, all distinguished in literature, in the three bachelor sons of the late Archbishop Benson. The eldest, Mr. Arthur Christopher Benson. was educated at Eton and King's College. Cambridge, and was for nearly twenty years a master at his old school; and among the boys who passed through his house was the young Duke of Albany, now Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. Mr. A. C. Benson is a man of enormous literary industry. In addition to some volumes of thoughtful and often charming poetry, he has produced a life of his father, together with a number of studies of great writers of the past. Of recent years Mr. Benson has established a considerable reputation for volumes of thoughtful and cultivated but somewhat discursive essays, and within the last few months he has published his first novel, thus more closely approaching the domain of his two brothers.

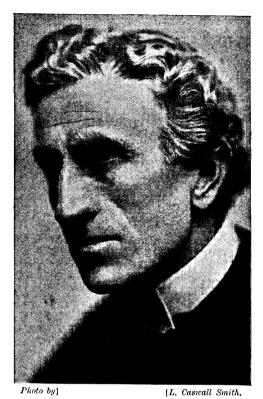
Mr. Edward Frederic Benson is famous



MR. NORMAN FORBES.



[Langfier.



MR. IAN ROBERTSON

as a novelist. He, too, is a distinguished alumnus of King's College, Cambridge, and before he wrote "Dodo," which made an extraordinary hit, he did very good work in archæological research, investigating the relics of bygone civilisations. Since his first success with "Dodo" he has written a number of very clever novels, notable for much good character-drawing and wise and witty epigram. Mr. E. F. Benson, like his elder brother, is very fond of the Alps; but whereas "A. C." prefers climbing, "E. F." is devoted to the various winter sports at St. Moritz, as well as to golf and tennis.

Lastly, the Very Rev. Monsignor Robert Hugh Benson has made a reputation partly for historical novels, and partly for stories of modern life which show a very rare and subtle power of imagination. Educated at Eton and Trinity, Cambridge, he took Orders in the Church of England, but was received into the Church of Rome some years ago, and is now a priest in the archdiocese of Westminster, with a considerable reputation as a preacher.

Talent outstanding, yet diverse, appears in Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree and his brother, Max Beerbohm. The common link is a sardonic humour, which shows itself in the actor's *obiter dicta*, or in his stage impersonations when an appropriate part gives him a chance; in Mr. Beerbohm, it appears in a literary and artistic form. He is a brilliant satirist of contemporary manners. He writes delightfully, but it is his pencil that is his most telling weapon. It is an out-of-the-way talent, his peculiar vein of caricature, grotesque and oblique, but it "gets there."

Of Sir Herbert Tree's brilliant managerial record, and of the almost unique versatility and diversity of his own talents in impersonation, one might say, with Shakespeare's courtier, "Oh, sir, a whole history !" For, indeed, the chronicle of his fine theatre, with its long pageant of sumptuous productions, is part of the history of latter-day London.

Here we have been speaking of divergent talents—that of the actor and maker of *bons-mots*, and of the author and caricaturist, but there are cases where histrionic ability declares itself in several members of a family. There are the three Robertsons—Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson, Mr. Ian Forbes-Robertson, and Mr. Norman Forbes (Robertson). These three sons of the eminent Aberdonian art critic inherit their father's elocutionary, critical, and artistic gifts, developed in varying ways. Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson, one of the best-graced actors of our time, has lately taken leave of his admirers in London, to their sincere regret. But playgoers further afield have yet opportunities of enjoying his performances before the completion of the farewell tour upon which he is now engaged.

Sir Johnston was educated at Charterhouse, and studied acting under Phelps. He was a leading actor with Bancroft and Hare for many years, and in 1896 went into management for himself. The other two brothers are actors of notable accomplishment, and, like Sir Johnston, they are painters, one of them of professional eminence, the other an excellent amateur. Mr. Norman Forbes is also well known as a connoisseur of old furniture.

The art of the theatre, even more than the other arts, has drawn unto itself several members of the same generation in sundry families. A further series of reproductions in an ensuing number will include portraits of those two distinguished sons of a famous father, Mr. H. B. Irving and Mr. Laurence Irving, as well as members of other families, not represented in this first group, which have contributed two or more brothers to various contemporary public life in professions and careers.



ASH TREES AT DAWN.

VAGRANT and sweet, the breeze of dawn Thrills at the fading out of night, And silent, as in dream withdrawn, Mine ash trees loom against the light.

In meditation wrapt, apart,

The trees stand crowned with mystic sleep · Long after the world's wakeful smart

Has shattered night's oblivion deep.

Thus every morn they play at being Poets whom nothing can awake To common hearing, mundane seeing, And all that man's poor heart doth break.

IN A BAVARIAN FIDDLE VILLAGE

By BEATRICE HARRADEN

Illustrated by Cyrus Cuneo



ERR RUDOLPH RIEMER had a tragic accident with his Stradivari fiddle one evening at the Tonhalle in Munich. In some unaccountable way it slipped from his hand and fell to the ground. It

the ground. It burst open, making a sound like that of an exploding pistol. It lay there wrecked, a ruined temple. Riemer stood gazing at it, motionless, stunned by the terrible shock. The conductor himself and a score or so of the players in the orchestra rushed forward instinctively to pick it up, but suddenly a queer, strange - looking man amongst the audience gave utterance to a wild yell of rage.

"Don't touch it—don't dare to touch it ! I'll kill anyone who dares to touch it !" he cried, waving his arms in the air.

The next moment he was on the platform, keeping everyone at bay.

"He's a madman'!" someone cried. "Catch hold of him and don't let him escape. He's evidently dangerous."

"I may be mad, and I may be dangerous," he shouted wildly, "but no one shall touch that fiddle except me—not even Riemer himself."

Then it was that Riemer awoke from his stupor and turned round.

"Why, it's Paul Stilling !" he cried, in a voice which had a ring of hope in it. "Paul Stilling, the clever fiddle-mender ! Keep back, all of you. He's right. This is his work, not ours. What sends you here, Paul, in my hour of need ?"

Paul Stilling took not the slightest notice of him. Now that no one was opposing him, his fierceness and excitement had died The audience, the orchestra, the away. conductor, the great and famous violinist, ceased to exist for him. The world was blotted out from his consciousness. He took off his coat and doubled it up on the ground. He knelt down, a smile of loving concern on his face, and, with all the tenderness of a mother and the skill of a surgeon, lifted the stricken fiddle into his coat and bore his burden swiftly and triumphantly away. Riemer followed him. There was a moment of silence, in which the audience and the orchestra recovered from the amazing episode. The conductor tapped with his baton on his desk, and proceeded with Schubert's Unfinished Symphony as though nothing had happened to disturb the continuity of the programme.

But in the artists' room Paul Stilling sat at a table examining Riemer's Stradivari. Riemer bent over him and made one or two remarks, to which Paul paid no attention at first, though he frowned and looked irritated.

But at last he said glumly : "I wish you would go away. I don't want you."

Riemer bit his lip. He knew well that he must put up with any of this queer fellow's vagaries, for the sake of his marvellous skill. He also knew from hearsay that when an accident befell a famous fiddle, and Paul Stilling was called in to "attend the case," he took absolute possession of the instrument, something in his strange, wayward brain claiming an ownership which no one dared dispute.

So poor Riemer answered humbly: "All right, Paul; I'll go. I know that my treasure has become your treasure. That's as it should be, and I am grateful."

He had taken up his hat and coat and was going away, when Paul signed to him to stop.

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"You can stay if you like," he said sullenly. "Look here, there's a fearful crack in the belly, just under the sound post — the worst I've ever seen. And this one—well, it's horrible! It makes one shudder."

He shuddered as he spoke. Riemer shuddered, too, and the tears coursed down his cheeks. Finally he covered his face with his hands and sobbed like a child. Paul looked at him, looked at the fiddle, looked into open space, murmured something to himself, shook his head impatiently as if contradicting himself, and, after some secret mental struggle, emerged from the conflict and smiled one of those radiant smiles which seemed in very truth the outward sign of an inner visioning.

"You shall come and be with me whilst I work on it," he said mysteriously. "I'm going back to Mittenwald to-morrow. You shall come with me and sit in my workshop. Perhaps I'll even—..."

He broke off, his fitful mind returning to its task of pondering over the injuries of the fiddle, which were of far greater moment to him than the mere grief of the violinist. Still, Riemer, who understood a little about him, realised that he had made a distinct effort in a human direction, and was comforted in the midst of his distress.

"It is good of you, Paul," he said gratefully. "I will come to Mittenwald."

Paul made no answer, but remained immersed in thought, until the sound of loud clapping in the hall disturbed and annoyed him. He rose, with a curious furtive expression on his countenance. He might have been a burglar suddenly warned by ominous noises of an awakened household. He beckoned slyly with a finger to Riemer.

"They'll ask questions, they'll want to see," he whispered. "A-ha, they shan't see! We'll be off before they come."

So, laughing softly to himself, he fled, carrying the fiddle, which still rested on his folded coat. Riemer fled, too, in charge of the empty case.

II.

THE next morning Paul Stilling and Riemer were on their way to Mittenwald, the fiddle village in the mountains of Bavaria. They took the train to Partenkirchen, and from the Hotel zur Post hired a carriage for themselves. Riemer loved the mountains passionately, and if anything could have consoled him for the great disaster which had befallen his Stradivari, it would have been the unspeakable joy of seeing them thus unexpectedly face to face.

His professional plans would have taken him at once from Bavaria to England; but he cancelled them ruthlessly, so as to be free to remain in Paul's company and watch over the fate of his fiddle, with a pose of aloofness and indifference assumed for diplomacy's sake. He smiled now as he recalled the experience of the night. Directly they left the Tonhalle, he had managed to manœuvre Paul into a taximeter, and thence safely into the bedroom of his hotel. Paul sat up half the night staring at the Stradivari, and when at last he succumbed to fatigue, it was with his hand clasping firmly the neck of the fiddle, even as a tired child might fall asleep holding a favourite toy from which it was impossible to part. Poor Riemer hungered to touch his instrument and to examine its appalling injuries for himself, but he remembered that any undue display of interest or exercise of interference, however natural and friendly, might produce dangerous results-at any rate to the instrument. There was a tradition, dating some time back, it is true, that Paul had once, in a fit of rage at being interfered with, dashed against the wall a fiddle on which he had bestowed more than three months of loving labour of restoration. But that was before people had learnt how to deal with the queer, singular fellow whose unerring skill claimed, justly enough, too, the indulgence and understanding necessary for free expression on his own lines : not impossible lines, either, since Paul's natural disposition was mild and his instincts were all kindly. He was well known in the fiddle world, and there were few violinists coming from all parts of the Continent who did not, whilst they were in London, seek him out and bring him their sick instruments. Sometimes, if he were in a sulky mood, he would shut the door in the face of the most distinguished artists. But if they returned at a more propitious moment, they invariably found that they had not in vain reckoned on his amazing cleverness and his anxious, and indeed passionate concern.

So Riemer now reckoned on it. As they drove along, he glanced at Paul from time to time, and noted that the fiddle-mender's eyes were riveted on the Stradivari case and saw nothing else, no wonders nor mysteries of the mountains, no glimpses of the snowpeaks, no glories of the autumn tints: nothing except that wooden box in which the wrecked violin lay in all its helplessness, awaiting the healing touch of his deft hands. Once or twice he spoke, half to himself.

"A fearful crack in the belly," he said, shaking his head. "The worst I have ever seen.

"Yes," said poor Riemer, his thoughts leaping instantly back from the beauty of the scenery to the memory of his misfortune. Paul frowned.

"No, it isn't the worst," he added sulkily. "You don't know."

Riemer made no comment, but sought refuge once more in the moving clouds and changing visions around him.

"All the same," Paul said, after a long period of silence, "I believe the tone can be The crack does not actually reach saved. the sound post."

"No, I don't think it does," Riemer said eagerly.

Paul frowned.

"Yes, it does," he said still more sullenly. "You don't know."

After this second rebuff Riemer resisted all impulses either to agree with or contradict Paul's intermittent remarks. But his crisis of passive heroism occurred when Paul suddenly leaned forward and proceeded to open the violin case.

"I can't be sure about that crack," he muttered.

Riemer longed to help him, longed to take the Stradivari in his own hands, longed to see for himself whether or not that terrible crack did actually reach the region of the sound post. But he did not move a muscle. He sat patiently, pretending to be a detached person who had no connection whatsoever with the tyrant by his side, nor with that loved companion of many years lying on the seat opposite. He looked steadfastly at the mist, which was fading away and revealing yet another glistening snow-peak, and he was more than rewarded for his self-control by Paul's next remark made after he had shut the case.

"I have never disliked your playing," he said vaguely. "I have never minded hearing vou."

Riemer smiled. He knew that this, from Paul Stilling, was the height of praise, and meant that he was undoubtedly in great favour, and that Paul was pleased to help him.

"Thank you, Paul," he said gravely.

Paul nodded and relapsed into himself again.

"The crack stops short of the sound post," he said, after a long pause. "Ah!" remarked Riemer indifferently.

And he added—

"Do you know, I have never seen such beautiful colouring in the mountains anywhere. These wonderful tints of autumn fill my heart with rapture."

"I don't believe the tone will be ruined," Paul said, with one of his radiant smiles. " T____"

He broke off and whistled softly to himself.

A light came into Riemer's eyes. What did he hear? His Stradivari was not to lose its splendid tone. If Paul believed this, it was probably true. The heaviness of the violin-player's heart was dispelled, and he would have liked to make the mountains echo with a shout of gladness. He became indiscreet, and resolved to ask Paul how long he would take to restore the Stradivari.

"Paul," he said eagerly, "how long do u think it will be before——" you think it will be before-

He stopped suddenly, for Paul had ceased whistling, and his face had darkened ominously with the suspicion that Riemer was intruding on private preserves.

"Before we reach Mittenwald," Riemer finished, with sudden inspiration.

The shade on the violin - mender's countenance passed away as though by magic, and he just shook his head goodnaturedly.

"As if it mattered !" he said cheerfully.

"What a stupid question !" "Yes, you are right." Riemer laughed, thankful to have escaped from dangerous rocks. "Of course it doesn't matter. The longer the better, so far as I am concerned."

But after this lesson of warning, he He ventured on no more probings. watched the superb Karwendel group of mountains disclosing themselves in all their glory: took note of the flame-red colour of the mountain ash berries, seen here in great profusion : revelled in the rich russet carpet of the woods nestling against the lower hill slopes: felt the invigorating air touch his nerves with buoyant renewal: saw shadows and reflections of trees and peaks in the lovely little marshy lake on the left-hand side of the road; and thus full of the comfort and strength which Nature alone can give to those who love her, arrived with his strange comrade at the fiddle village of Mittenwald.

They drew up at the Hotel zur Post. Before Riemer had time to get out of the carriage and ring the bell, Paul, whose face had become crafty and whose manner furtive, seized his treasure and vanished from sight.

PAUL'S Mittenwald home was not in one of the grander houses decorated on the front with brightly-coloured pictures of saints, apostles, and angels, or with paintings of scenes and subjects both sacred and secular. Years ago, when he was first brought to Mittenwald, so as to live in the atmosphere of fiddle-making and perfect himself in the craft which was the one absorbing passion of his whole being, he had been placed in the care of old Mathias Hoffmann and his widowed daughter Justina. They had been Paul's own choice. He had seen Mathias working at a scroll, had sat down by his side in the humble little cottage, and had never left him for hours, so enraptured was he with the masterly and bold touch of the old workman. Justina had put aside her task of varnishing fiddles, and had made some fragrant coffee for them all, on the green china stove in the corner. Then she had produced some delicious Zwieback, at which Paul munched delightedly, now nodding at her in approval, now following with lynx eyes every movement of the old scroll-maker's clever hand, and now darting up and examining the condition of one of the fiddles which had just received from her practised brush its fourth coat of varnish.

"Good, good, amazingly even—good, good, amazingly even!" he said, laughing with pleasure. "Clever people! Splendid coffee, too! And that scroll—I must make a scroll like that. And such biscuits! A very fine varnish; not too quick at soaking in, either. And that scroll! Yes, I must make a scroll like that. I must begin now—this moment."

Just then Paul's people—Robert, his stepbrother, and Harriet Blackburn—found him in this cottage. They had been searching for him everywhere, for he had slipped away from the Hotel zur Post, where they had taken up their quarters.

"Ah, Paul, here you are," Robert said gently, and without any sign of anxiety or annoyance. "Now we must all go together and find a home for you, mustn't we?"

Paul looked up.

"A home?" he asked simply. "But this is going to be my home, isn't it?"

" Is this where you would like to be, Paul?" Harriet said.

"Why, of course," Paul answered, glancing in happy confidence first at the old man and then at his daughter. "Any person in his right senses knows at once where he wants to be, doesn't he?"

"Quite right, Paul," his brother said, concealing the smile, half of amusement and half of respect, always called forth by Paul's simple way of settling everything by a leading idea divorced from detail. "Quite right. We'll arrange it somehow."

So, in this wise, Paul had settled down in the scroll-maker's cottage, and when he was in Mittenwald, nothing would have induced him to live anywhere else except with these friends, whom a true instinct told him he could safely trust. That was many years ago now, but they had never failed him; and when he was away from them, with his own people in London, they counted the days until they should once more see him bending happily and contentedly over his own bench near the green china stove. Justina had learnt to know his queer ways almost as well as she knew the mysteries of the art of varnishing; and if he were in one of his sullen, black moods, she waited patiently, and with watchful care chose the right moment for enlisting his help and interest, and the right method.

"Paulchen," she would say, "this stubborn fiddle won't take the varnish. I'm in despair about it."

"You're stupid, that's what you are," Paul would answer. "Here, give it to me; I'll see to it."

"Yes," she said humbly, "I'm getting old—old and stupid."

"Yes," he answered severely, "that's what's the matter with you, Justina. There is nothing the matter with the wood."

But he generally took over her task with which she pretended to have failed, and when she heard him whistling softly to himself, she was satisfied that his dark hour had passed.

This, then, was the home where Paul worked at Riemer's Stradivari, whilst Riemer, like a wandering spirit for which there is no rest, haunted the precincts of the cottage, visited the violin factory, climbed the mountain paths, strolled through the lovely woods. When he dared, and good understanding Justina, who was exceedingly sorry for him, signed to him that all was well, he stole into the living-room and sat by Paul's side, grateful even for the concession of proximity.

"Come in," she said one morning. "Paulchen is very kind to-day. And he even saved half of his coffee for you. What do you think of that? Doesn't that show he is sorry for you? And old father says it is wonderful what he is doing. I, too, think it is wonderful. Now, come in without fear, and drink your coffee."

Paul looked up when Riemer entered, and nodded to him. The old scroll-maker, who, although more than eighty years old, still worked at his little bench, carving out the scrolls for which he was famous in Mittenwald, also looked up and greeted Riemer.

"Ah, you've come to see my new scroll, haven't you?" Mathias said, his handsome old face beaming with pride and pleasure.

"No, he hasn't come to see your scroll, Mathias," Paul said sharply. "He has come to see my Stradivari. That is what he has come to see. What else could he want to see?"

The old man shook his head.

"It's my scroll," he said quite firmly.

"Ah, you're both wrong," Justina remarked soothingly. "He has come to help me with my varnishing. I need a little help this morning, for I want to do some washing — yes, and to make more *Zwieback*. Paulchen was greedy and ate it all up in the night, except one bit."

"For Riemer," Paul said, recovering his good temper at once. "And the coffee, Justina, for him, too. Then he can do some of your varnishing."

It amused him vastly to think of Riemer varnishing, and he laughed happily and waved his tool in the air.

"What a good thing if more people did the varnishing and fewer people the playing !" he said merrily. "But I've never disliked Riemer's playing – never."

They all laughed, and settled down together, making a picturesque group, which no one having once seen could ever forget.

Thus, helped by Justina's tactful management of her strange charge, Riemer was able, more or less, to follow Paul's work of restoration; and there were even times when Paul, if he were in a good-natured mood, explained what he thought of doing to the instrument, and prophesied that it would, without any doubt, be finer than ever. On other days, if he were sullen, he would cover it up with his apron and refuse to let any human eye see it; and if he were depressed, he would keep on murmuring to himself: "Never will it sing again-never!" This phase usually heralded a temporary collapse. Paul took to his bed and slept for a couple of days, awoke fresh as a flower, happy, good-humoured, and ready to work again on the fiddle, which they had not dared to take away from his side.

"Ah," he said gaily, on the occasion of one of his recoveries, as he munched an apple and returned to his bench, "this fiddle, Mathias, is going to have a finer tone than ever. I dreamt I heard it. Such a tone, Justina ! I wish Riemer could have heard it. But he could never make it sound like that. Quite impossible. No one could."

"No one could if Herr Riemer couldn't, that's quite certain," Justina said. "Ach, he has been playing to us so beautifully, Paulchen. So kind he has been to us and to the children. You would have laughed to see them running after him. The children have danced to his music, and the old people have wept to it."

"I have wept to it," the old scroll-maker said. "Never has such music been heard in Mittenwald."

"You ought to go and hear him this afternoon," Justina urged, half to tease him, for she knew, really, that he would not stir from his bench to listen to anyone's fiddling. "Herr Riemer has promised to play in the school-house again, and everyone is going from the factory. They told me so yesterday. I, too, shall put away my work. Won't you? Won't you come with me?"

Paul frowned and shook his head. "I can't waste my time," he said severely. "Much more important things to do than that in my life, Justina. Concerts are all very well for idle people who have nothing to do."

"What's that about concerts and idle people?" Riemer asked, coming in at that moment.

"Paulchen says that concerts are all very well for idle people," Justina explained, with a smile on her face.

"Well, let us hope that the idle people will always be on the increase," Riemer said, laughing. "No idle people, no audiences, no musicians, no instruments. No need in the world for you or me, Paulchen. What a prospect before us ! What a problem !"

Paul looked worried. Then his face lit up. He had solved the difficulty to his own satisfaction.

"There will always be idle people," he said, returning to his work, and after that no one could get a word out of him. Riemer saw it was useless to linger in the hopes of receiving any attention of any description from the fiddle-maker, and had to be satisfied that Paulchen's long spell of sleep was over, and that he was once more at work on the Stradivari.

It was a trying time for Riemer, especially

after the first novelty of his life in Mittenwald had worn off, but he made the best of circumstances, and was determined not to leave the village until the violin was rehabilitated and once more in his possession. It was torture to him not to possess it. had been his daily and intimate companion for more than fifteen years, and though he had other beautiful instruments, a lovely Bergonzi and a superb Joseph Guarneri, it was the wrecked Stradivari which was knitted to his soul and interlaced with all those longings and aspirations, those failures, those fulfilments of expression which are the artist's true heritage. There were days when he felt that he could have killed Paul, and carried off the violin in murderous triumph, no matter what its impaired But when these fierce and condition. primitive moods were past, he resigned himself afresh to the bitter sacrifice of ownership for the sake of his love's welfare; and no one seeing him roaming quietly around the village would have believed him to be capable of the wild outbreaks of impatience and anger to which he gave vent in secret. The children certainly would not have believed it. He loved children, and they knew it, and followed him fearlessly in his wanderings, until he began to look upon himself as the Pied Piper of Hamelin; and one day, for fun's sake, he played his fiddle out of doors, down this street, and in front of the statue of Mathias Klotz, who had first started the fiddle-making industry in Mittenwald, and then up this turning, and down that, and so out of the village in the direction of the mountains, with all the little ones after him. A new audience for him, and the most flatteringly exacting he had ever had. Encores numberless, and no refusals taken! No chance for bowing here and going away into a safe retreat. There was no retreat. For that day he was the children's captive.

Thus he won their hearts and eased his own spirit a little. But in spite of his good fellowship with everyone in the village, he would have come off very badly if he had not, at the onset, been inspired with a fine theme for a violin concerto which he set himself to write as an offering to his Stradivari. It was a labour of love as well as a real consolation to him, and he worked at it hour after hour, and lived with it and in it. He wove into it the whole history of the tragedy—his despair, his relief, his hopes, his wonder over Paul's skill, his gratitude, then his longing and loneliness, his anger, his impatience, his jealousy, his remorse, his joy in the children, and "the sleep that is in the starry skies, the rest that is among the hills."

He called it "The Mittenwald Concerto," and he had made up his mind to play some of it to his little mountain audience that afternoon in the school-house. When he arrived there, he looked round and saw to his pleasure that the whole village apparently had assembled to support him—varnishers and fitters, scroll-makers, back- and bellymakers, packers, bow-makers, old and young, men and women, the priest, the mayor, the manager of the factory, everyone—except Paul.

He saw, with his mind's eye, that strange, fitful worker bending over his bench, dead to every outside influence, with brain, body, and spirit concentrated on the Stradivari, and Riemer said to himself—

"Even although he is not here, I shall play to him. Something may reach him. My gratitude, for instance — my real and deep gratitude, and not my impatience."

Something did reach Paulchen after a time. Was it, perhaps, that beautiful passage in the *Andante* which embodied praise and gratitude? Anyway, he ceased work and leaned back in his chair a minute. He seemed pleased and smiled radiantly. Then he frowned and shook his head rather crossly, and returned to his task for a few moments. He left off again, and glanced towards the door, a little longingly, a little shamefacedly, perhaps. He half rose. He stared sullenly at the green china stove.

"Why not?" he murmured. "I have never disliked....."

He broke off and stole into the streets. He stood and gazed around him. Everyone seemed to have vanished off the face of the No children even were playing near earth. the statue of Mathias Klotz outside the church. No women were fetching water Through the windows from the fountain. of the cottages no figures of workmen were seen bending over their benches. The fiddles themselves were there, of course—the backs, the bellies, the scrolls, the pegs, the tailpieces, all of them integral parts of the life and atmosphere, as permanent and characteristic as the great Karwendel mountains dominating the village. But this marked absence of the human element struck a chill at Paul's heart. The realisation swept as an avalanche over him that he was alone, aloof, cut off by invisible barriers from that world where people walked together, did things together, were happy together. Why could he not be of their number? What was it that prevented him, Paul, from sharing in the everyday affairs and interests which knitted human beings together for better or for worse? The question died in his brain at the moment of its birth. The consciousness of the suffering passed even as it made itself felt. But the tense expression on Paulchen's face showed that, within that narrow boundary of time, there had been space enough for a vision of eternity. The last lingering trace of mental strain faded. Paul, dead once more to the inner call of Riemer's music and the secret cry of his own solitary spirit, returned to his work. Old father, Justina, and Riemer found him there, as they had left him, and never knew that he had made the attempt to reach them—and failed.

IV.

ONE night, in the middle of the night, when everyone was sleeping, Paul put the last touches to his work of restoring the Stradivari, and gave vent to his joyfulness and satisfaction in his own peculiar way. He left it on the bench at first, surveyed it from a distance, then gradually approached nearer to it, keeping his eye fixed on it as though he were trying to mesmerise it. After a time he nodded, and his face was wreathed in smiles. Very tender grew the expression round his lips. A light came into his eyes.

"Mine!" he murmured. "My own! No one else's!"

He took it in his hands, tenderly, proudly, and turned it over, whistling happily whilst he examined it. He raised it into position under his chin, and with his bow arm drew an imaginary bow over its strings. He tapped the ground with his left foot, marking time to some imaginary music.

"Yes, yes, I knew it would be better than ever," he said to himself. "Better than ever."

He clasped it to his breast.

"Mine !" he murmured again. "Mine !" Suddenly he became fierce.

"No one else's," he said angrily. "Let there be no mistake about that. Mine and mine only !"

He stood thinking, and the fierceness of his mood faded into furtiveness. He laughed softly.

"Ah," he said, "if they think they are going to find it——"

He broke off, glanced stealthily round the room, listening to make sure that no one was stirring, opened **a** drawer where Justina kept his clothes, took out a flannel shirt and wrapped the Stradivari in it, listened once more, with his finger on his lips and a curious smile on his face, stole on tiptoe to the door, unlatched it with an almost unbelievable noiselessness, and fled from the village.

It was a lovely moonlight night, and the stars were jewelling the heavens with unwonted resplendency. But Paul had no eyes for the wonder of the scene spread before him. His one dominating idea at the moment was to hide his treasure in some safe and secret spot at which no one could possibly guess; and he made his way in the direction of the Hussel Mühle, hurrying always as if he were being pursued, yet careful of every step he took lest he might trip and wreck the precious instrument so lovingly re-created by his hands.

"No one shall rob me of it," he said from time to time. "The robbers will never find it—never!"

He crossed the Isar and began to ascend the path which led to the Seinsgraben. The goal which he had in his mind was an old dark brown cow-house next to a disused forester's hut, about half an hour's stretch between the Seinsgraben and the Vereins He went forward through woods Alpe. and over rough and rugged tracks, now disappearing amongst the trees, now emerging into the moonlit vastness, a solitary figure impelled by one thought, symbolic, in his aloofness, of all those driven forward by an overwhelming idea. He did not pause for a moment to rest and recover, and he did not cast so much as a fleeting glance at the wild ravines and the peaks of the Wörner and Wetterstein flooded with the silver splendour of the moon. He did not hear the sound of the mountain torrent, nor heed the cry of a startled bird speeding on a sudden flight. All he knew was that here, in this solitary place, where he had the whole world to himself, his Stradivari would be safe from prying eyes and robbing hands.

At last he reached the hut where he used to come so often and have his bowl of milk and his bit of cheese and black bread with the forester and his wife. Frunde, the cow, and Gemse, the sprightly young goat, had been on excellent terms with him, and he was often able to coax them back into the cowshed when every other power on earth seemed to have failed. He made his way at once to the cowshed, and laughed softly as he opened the door. "Frunde's manger," he said. "It will be quite safe in Frunde's manger. No one would dream of looking there. Quite safe."

With smiling face he laid the fiddle, still carefully wrapped in the flannel shirt, in the empty manger which had once been Frunde's. After reflection, he added his own coat. He rubbed his hands gleefully and appeared intensely amused and pleased.

"I've cheated them ! " he said. "Frunde and I have tricked them ! No doubt about that ! "

He laughed until the tears coursed down his cheeks.

"A good thing Frunde isn't here to munch it up," he said. "She would have made short work of it."

Suddenly he became grave again. He was not quite satisfied that all *was* well with the Stradivari, and he took it out of the manger, turned it over, swathed it once more, first in the shirt and then in the coat, and replaced it tenderly in its appointed resting-place. He stood contemplating it, as if in some doubt.

"It will be all right," he said slowly. "But it was stupid of me not to have brought the case. Much better to have the case. I must go down at once and fetch it. Then it will be all right."

He closed the door after him and, without further lingering, sped at a furious rate on his homeward journey, fully intending to return at once with the violin case. But when he arrived back, he suddenly became conscious of great fatigue. He threw himself on his bed, and was soon held in a deep sleep of entire exhaustion, with his secret hidden in his heart. But he had been seen by Jakob Erckmann, the woodcutter, coming down the lower path on the other side of the Isar, opposite the Hussel Mühle, and it was this clue which led to the discovery of the Stradivari.

It was, of course, nothing new to those who had the care of him, that his moods of extreme activity and tenseness should be succeeded by prolonged sleep lasting often thirty-six hours or more. Justina, therefore, was not in the least troubled by the continuation of his sleep. She knew that he would awake refreshed and restored, ready to take up his life and work with all his purposeful eagerness. But what did worry her was that she could not find the Stradivari. She searched the cottage in vain. She crept into Paulchen's bedroom and found no signs of it there. She came to the conclusion that he had finished it and hidden it. But where

to look for it she knew not. She did not tell Riemer at first, but made inquiries amongst the neighbours, and went to the violin factory, hoping that Paulchen might have stolen in there without observation and secreted his treasure in some safe and secluded There was plenty of "cover" to corner. choose from-room after room of violins and guitars in all stages, piles of carefully chosen wood for the making of the instruments, and endless packing-cases. The watchman said he was sure that no one could have entered the factory that night without his knowing; but the manager. although he agreed, had the whole place ransacked, and with no happy results.

Old father shook his head when he heard where Justina had been.

"Of course, he would not hide it there, Justina," he said. "You might have known that. Of course, he'd know you would be stupid enough to go there. Paulchen is too clever for that. No, he has thought of something much more safe than the factory."

So Riemer had to be told at last, and Justina broke the bad news to him, the tears streaming down her cheeks from despair and mortification; for she was dreadfully concerned for poor Riemer's sake, and dreadfully ashamed of Paulchen, and angry with herself for not having kept a more vigilant eye on the Stradivari in its final stage of restoration. She ended by collapsing into her chair and sobbing her soul out amongst her varnish pots and brushes.

Riemer stood looking at her, stunned by this fresh tragedy in connection with his fiddle. His face became ashen, and something clutched at his heart. He had been looking forward with passionate anticipation to the moment when the work of restoration would be successfully ended. And now all he had got was this appalling news. He could not speak at first, but continued to stare at Justina, and it was only when he turned away and met old father's sorrowful eye of sympathy that he was released from the bonds which held him in silence and stupor. When he at last spoke, his voice sounded as if it came from limitless distance.

"Don't fret like that, Justina," he said. "You've done your best all along. I know you've watched it with lynx eyes all the time."

For answer she went on sobbing, and again there was a pause, during which speech seemed to fail him.

"One thing only I want to know quite honestly," he said, with painful effort---"quite honestly. Do you think he will have destroyed it ?" "No, no!" Justina cried through her

sobs. "No, no ! I'm sure of that."

this autumn," Justina said, drying her eyes and trying to gather herself together.

"He has not destroyed it," the old scrollmaker said. "He has hidden it because he



"No, no," said the old scroll - maker. "He would not do that."

"But I heard he did once," Riemer said, shuddering at the thought.

"Not since we've known him, fifteen years

did not want to give it up. He has loved it too much to destroy it. I, too, love what I make, even now, old as I am. This scroll I'm making now-well, I love it. No, no, take comfort. Our Paulchen has not destroyed it. He has hidden it. That's all."

"If you believe that, then I must try and believe it, old father," Riemer said gently, touched always by this old man whom everyone loved.

"We'll never rest until we have found it," Justina said determinedly. She had recovered herself, and was now prepared to do anything and everything to run the Stradivari to earth. And just as she was trying to recall some of Paulchen's favourite haunts, the woodcutter Jakob Erckmann, who had been away at Garmisch, came in to say that he had seen Paul in the early morning, hurrying down from the opposite side of the Isar, evidently in a state of great excitement, and without his coat.

Riemer's half-paralysed brain leapt once more to thought and action.

"I'm off in that direction," he said, dashing to the door. "You'll come with me, Justina, won't you?"

"The best plan would be to wait till Paulchen wakes, follow him at a distance in that direction, so as to be sure where he is going, and find out where he has hidden it," she said. "Then we must return when he is not there and steal it. It is the only way."

Old father nodded his head in approval; but Riemer was too overwrought and distressed to listen to any advice or to wait for the hour of Paul's awakening.

"I can't wait," he said, flinging his arms about wildly. "I can't wait. It's impossible."

And he rushed out like a madman, knocking over two or three of Justina's white fiddles which lay in the corner ready for varnishing. She cast one motherly, anxious glance at them—one only—and fled precipitately after Riemer, resolved to go with him and share in the immediate search, however futile it might be. Jakob Erckmann picked up the fiddles.

"Why, neighbour," he said, "it seems to me thou hast three mad people now in thy house, instead of one."

"And there would be a fourth, if I weren't so old, Jakob Erckmann," the scroll-maker said, with a smile. "But when one's old, Jakob Erckmann, one must sit quietly and wait. Old people have to wait, Jakob Erckmann."

"And make splendid scrolls, Mathias Hoffmann," the woodcutter said, taking up a fiddle neck admiringly.

The old man's face lit up.

"Ah, well, there is always that," he said, with gentle pride. But his face clouded over, for he, too, was greatly harassed about the Stradivari, and he waited anxiously for the return of Justina and Riemer, not caring to work or smoke or take his simple meal. Once he got up and went into Paulchen's room.

"Paulchen, Paulchen!" he murmured, shaking his head reproachfully at the sleeper.

Meanwhile, Riemer and Justina were spending fruitless hours in a wild-goose chase which no one in his senses would have undertaken. Even Riemer saw the futility at last, and gave it up of his own accord.

"You see, I couldn't rest, Justina," he explained pathetically. "I had to be doing something. But, of course, yours is the wiser plan—to wait until he wakes, and follow him when he goes to the hiding-place. That is to say, if he does go. Perhaps he won't go. How do you know he will?"

"Of course he'll go," Justina said. "It's the first thing he'll do when he wakes up and thinks he has got us out of the way. I can see him gloating over his hidden treasure. Oh, he'll be very sly and suspicious ! I know him. I know his sly smile when he has a great secret."

"I can't get it out of my head that he may have destroyed it," Riemer exclaimed, working himself up to another outbreak of anger and despair.

"There's no real danger of that yet, I'm sure," she said. "Don't give way like that, Herr Riemer. The danger would only be if he found us trying to steal it from him. I don't know what might happen then. He might get into a great passion and smash the fiddle in his rage. But we must not let him find us. We must be careful. That's all."

Riemer paused outside the scroll-maker's cottage.

"What a fool, what an unutterable fool I've been to give it into the care of that madman !" he cried passionately. "I deserve all I've got."

"Come, come," she said half angrily, half soothingly, "you mustn't think that, and you mustn't say that of Paulchen. You know there's no one as clever as Paulchen at his work. And when you hear the Stradivari—ach, it will sound beautiful. You will forget all this trouble, and you will only praise our good Paulchen then."

He smiled, in spite of himself, at her championship of the fiddle-maker, and let her urge him into the cottage, where she made him drink a large glass of dunkles and eat some bread and sausage, and smoke a pipe with old father, who badly needed good cheer and companionship. She treated the great artist very much as she treated Paulchen-as a wayward child, to be coaxed and managed with a large indulgence; and she refused rigidly to allow him to return to his hotel lest he should mope and be miserable, or start off suddenly on another aimless expedition. She did all she possibly could to cheer and encourage him, and finally took him into Paulchen's bedroom, where the fiddle-maker still lay fast asleep on his bed, with that sly smile on his face which she knew so well spoke unmistakably of some crafty joyfulness.

"There," she said triumphantly afterwards, "didn't I tell you he would look like that if he had a secret? He is pleased with himself, is Paulchen. He'll be very sly when he wakes up, and very suspicious, but we'll manage somehow. What was the word he was muttering? Frunde, wasn't it? Yes, it was Frunde. Now, what could he mean by that? Well, well! Suppose you just settle down quietly and do some varnishing for me. Those four violins in the corner must have their first coat of varnish on by to-morrow. There's plenty for you to do to keep your mind quiet, and the time will pass."

"Yes, yes, the time will pass," murmured the scroll-maker.

And at intervals he turned to Riemer and, as if to reassure him, nodded his beautiful old head and said—

"He has loved it too much to destroy it. I know. I, too, love what I make."

V.

PAUL awoke late the next evening and, according to his wont after a long spell of sleep, exceedingly hungry. Bread, apples, raisins, and a banana or two, together with an unlimited supply of coffee, formed his meal, which he took at his bench. He did not enter into conversation either with the scroll-maker or Justina, but seemed engrossed in his own thoughts, and showed every sign of being in one of his mysterious and suspicious moods. The only remark that he did at length make pointed to his anxiety to get rid of his companions.

"It's your bed-time soon, isn't it?" he asked vaguely, in that innocent and detached manner which invariably implied some secret scheming. "Not yet for a long time," Justina answered, to put him off his guard. She knew well that if she fell in with his plan to get rid of her, she would at once increase his suspiciousness.

He took no more notice of them, and pretended to occupy himself with the fiddle at which he had been working before he began repairing Riemer's Stradivari. But he only played with his tools, and kept looking round slyly to see whether they were making any preparations for going off to bed. At last old father, who had finished smoking his long pipe, nodded and retired, but Justina lit another lamp and began to mend a shirt. She yawned several times. Paul watched her.

"Why don't you go to bed, Justina?" he asked severely. "People are so stupid to sit up when they're tired. Bed is the proper place when one is tired."

"Yes, Paulchen, but the shirts have to be mended, all the same," she replied cheerfully.

"Will that one take long?" he asked innocently.

"A quarter of an hour," she said, turning away to hide a smile.

"Ah !" he said. And he fidgeted with one of his aluminium planes, and finally began to shave off tiny shreds from a fiddle back.

Eventually she rose.

"There, that's done," she said, with another yawn. "How tired I am! Well, good night, Paulchen. You'll find some fresh Zwieback in the oven."

"I don't want any Zwieback," he said sulkily.

But, when he was alone, he sprang from his seat with a joyful alertness.

"Ah," he said, "at last ! But I'll wait a few minutes to be sure they are safely out of the way. Then I'll be off."

He smiled, rubbed his hands gleefully, crept about the room on tiptoe, and took a case from the corner. He sat down at his bench and drummed on it with one of his tools. He rose again and listened for There were no sounds. ominous sounds. He nodded his head as though satisfied that the little household were hushed to permanent rest, and, without further attempt to curb his impatience, stole from the cottage armed with the violin case. But Justina, whose nerves were on the alert, heard his soft departure, and from her tiny window saw that he went in the direction of the Hussel She followed closely after, and Mühle. signalled to Riemer, who by arrangement was keeping guard in his room at the Hotel zur Post.

In a few minutes the two confederates were in swift but judicious pursuit of poor Paulchen, whose suspicions had been forgotten in an overwhelming eagerness to reach Frunde's manger. Once or twice, it is true, he stopped short and stood listening. They had hidden themselves behind a great rock, and, if he had retraced his steps, he would not have discovered them easily. Moreover, the moon was in one of her coy moods that night, and retired at intervals behind a veil of passing clouds, so that she was a useful ally to Paul's pursuers, both in lighting them on their way and in obscuring them at critical moments. She failed them altogether at the ravine, and if Paul, when he turned round, had looked to the right instead of the left, he would have seen them without fail. But again they were lucky; all the more so since he was actually thinking of them at the time.

"They are all fast asleep," he chuckled. "I've tricked them. Frunde and I have tricked them. They will never know."

Then, with a gay laugh, he passed on his way with ever-increasing speed, for his excitement and concentration of effort and purpose grew greater as he neared the end of his journey. And at last he reached the cowhouse. He dashed in, rushed to Frunde's manger, gave an exclamation of joy when he saw the bundle lying there sound and safe, took it out, unwrapped the Stradivari, stared at it a long time by the light of the moon, gloated over it, revelled in the possession of it, touched the strings, caressed the scroll, laid it in the case, placed the case in the manger, and covered it up with his shirt and coat.

But suddenly an expression of great anxiety broke over his face. A devastating doubt assailed him. Was the tone going to be as fine as ever? Was it—was it? After all, he had not tested it. He had only heard it with his mind's ear. All traces of craft and suspicion vanished from his countenance, which now spoke only of grave concern.

"I must hear it, in order to be quite sure," he said aloud. "Yes, I must hear it. I must——."

He broke off. He was evidently deeply troubled and puzzled. His right hand sought his forehead, his invariable action when he was trying to think. His passionate wish to keep the Stradivari to himself was assailed by the promptings of his artist's nature to make all and any sacrifice for the sake of his work. Should he go and fetch Riemer? Should he take it to Riemer? Ah, that would be better. But. then. Riemer would want it. Riemer would want to rob him of it. And that was not to be borne. No, he could not give it up. He would leave it in the manger and come up again secretly with a bow and try it himself. That would do equally well. But would it do? No, he knew it would not. Someone like Riemer would have to play on it, to sweep the strings and test its singing powers in every detail. Yes, yes, he must take it down to Riemer and He shuddered. He passed through an intense mental agony. He could not bear to part from it. But he was impelled against his will to submit to the dictates of faithful workmanship; and with reluctant hands he took it from its resting-place, put it under his arm, and went slowly towards the door. He stepped over the threshold and advanced two or three steps—not more. There he stopped, and a stubborn, determined look settled on his face.

"No," he muttered, shaking his head, "no."

And without another instant's hesitation he made for the manger again, replaced his treasure there, and, to prevent any recurrence of the severe conflict which had torn his mind and spirit, fled precipitately from the scene, leaving, in his hasty retreat, the case uncovered and the door flung back for anyone to enter.

Meantime, Justina and Riemer, who had followed close upon him, were lying in wait near at hand, and saw him pass down. It had not dawned on Justina at first, in their pursuit of him, that he had perhaps chosen the forester's hut for the hiding-place of the Stradivari. It was only when they were approaching the spot itself that she remembered how often, in the old days, he used to wander off there. And at the moment when these memories revived, the significance of the word Frunde broke on her. Then she knew. Tired as she was, and out of breath, too—for Justina was no longer young, and not given to climbing steep places-she laughed, and Riemer, who was tired too, asked her rather crossly the reason of her sudden merriment.

"Frunde, the cow—Frunde, the cow!" was all she could say, and she laughed again.

But when Paulchen had been gone for ten minutes or so, she led Riemer direct to the forester's hut, and hard by they found the dark brown cowhouse, with its door inviting them to enter. They saw Paulchen's shirt and coat on the floor. "Frunde's manger!" Justina cried, pointing to it excitedly.

Riemer literally leapt towards it and found his violin. He lifted it with trembling hands—and stood speechless, overcome by emotion. He held it to his heart.

"Mine again !" he whispered.

It was Justina who roused him.

"Didn't I tell you our Paulchen would not hurt it ?" she said proudly.

But Riemer did not heed her. He whipped out a bow which he had brought with him, drew it across the strings, and began tuning the violin. His face was tense with excitement. Justina tried to stop him.

"No, no, don't do that," she said, in alarm. "It isn't safe. He may not have gone far. He may return. He'll be angry. There is no knowing what......"

But Riemer had come into his own, and the crack of doom itself would not have prevented him from playing on his Stradivari and testing for himself the capabilities of its tone and volume, its power and quality of singing.

He tuned it, raised his bow defiantly, triumphantly, and, regardless of all outer circumstances and dangerous possibilities, began to put it mercilessly through its ordeal of sound. But in a few minutes he had lost all consciousness of a critical purpose. He only remembered that he was once more united to the instrument which had been his intimate companion for years, and he poured out his passion on it and wooed it with noble music loved by and familiar to them both, and then gradually, unconsciously, drifted into the Mittenwald Concerto, his own tribute to it in his hours of distress and separation. On, on he sang, as a poet invoking his muse. Justina, in spite of apprehension, was held by the spell which he wove around himself and her. And neither of them knew that the danger she had dreaded had come to fulfilment, and that Paul had returned.

At last Riemer's bow fell to his side.

"My wonderful Stradivari," he cried, his face aglow with joy. "Yes, and that wonderful Paul. There's no one like him a prince in his art, that's what he is. I must make him hear me play, whether he likes it or not. He must. He shall hear for himself that the tone is more beautiful than ever."

Then Justina looked round, and saw Paul standing in the doorway, his body slightly bent forward as if ready for action, and with an expression on his face which was an alarming mixture of fury, craft, interest, pride, delight, hate, and sullen jealousy. Her heart stood still, not from fear for herself, but for Riemer. Riemer was in danger, and she must protect him. She tried to speak to Paulchen, but no sound came from her lips. She tried to move towards him, but she had no power to lift her feet. But she did what she could in that moment of peril. She kept her eyes steadily fixed on his eyes, and met their steel-like glance unflinchingly. As she did this, a curious and almost imperceptible quiver passed over his face and through his frame. He lowered his eyes-Justina had overcome him. His tense nerves relaxed, and he heaved a deep sigh as if he had freed himself from bondage. And instantly a radiant smile lit up his countenance and a boyish eagerness bounded into his whole bearing.

"Yes, yes, you're right," he cried joyously. "The tone is more beautiful than ever. It's richer than ever. I thought it would be. Once or twice I wasn't quite sure. But only once or twice. More mellow than ever. Deeper. Splendid, isn't it, Riemer? I'm glad for my sake—oh, yes, yes, and for yours, too. I have never disliked your playing. Never. Almost as good as I heard it in my dream—almost, but not quite."

He was flinging his arms about in delight, when his face suddenly clouded over again, but not in anger this time. His hand clutched his head as always when he was trying to make some great mental effort.

"It is yours, not mine, yours, not mine," he said, in a strained voice which betrayed the effort of mind and the sacrifice of heart. "I know it's yours, Riemer. It must be yours if you can make it sing like that. It can be no one else's. I don't understand how I always make that mistake. I—"

He broke off, shook his head, and looked helplessly first at Riemer and then at Justina. For answer Riemer clasped his hand in a silence which was eloquent of kindness, tenderness, appreciation, and gratitude, and Justina slipped her arm through his and waited, as she had so often faithfully waited, until that brief but bitter consciousness of his mental limitation had faded into a merciful oblivion.

"Paulchen," she said, as to a child, "shall we go home? We've come a long way, and I'm frightfully tired, aren't you? I suppose it is because I am getting old. I want to go home and have a hot cup of coffee like you always make for me when I'm tired, you know. I always wonder what you put in it. Some of your favourite gum mastic, I believe! Ach, I'm tired—my legs do ache. My left one worse than my right. No, they're both equally bad. Ach, ach ! "

He had brightened up at once, and seemed immensely amused over the coffee and the gum mastic.

"Yes, let's go home," he said, laughing happily. "That is a good idea of yours. And I'll make some coffee for us all. Aha, I'm not going to tell you what I put in it. It isn't gum mastic, though ! And it isn't Venetian turpentine ! It's a secret, like the Cremona varnish—eh, Riemer ? Come along, Riemer. You and I aren't tired, are we ? But Justina is getting old. That's what is the matter with her."

It was Paulchen who led the way home, gaily and triumphantly. He had ceased to be interested in the Stradivari, and did not vouchsafe a single glance to it. But Justina whispered to Riemer that this was only a temporary indifference, and that his safest course was to leave Mittenwald as soon as possible before Paul's mood had changed again.

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So Riemer, happy beyond words, but frightfully anxious, took her advice. He only lingered long enough to drink that cup of coffee, delicious but mysterious, and to bid old father a secret farewell, and then off he stole like a thief, and first began to breathe freely when he at last landed his Stradivari safely in his home in Frankfurt am Main.

But his thoughts returned constantly to the fiddle village, and its mountains which he had learnt to love; and the first time he played the Stradivari again in public he had a curious lapse of memory, on which the newspapers in their ignorance commented ominously. The truth was, however, not that he was losing his memory nor his technical skill, but that an unforgettable scene rose before him, and he smiled as he gazed on it with his mind's eye. He saw the little room with the green china stove in the Mittenwald cottage, old father, with his beautiful old face, working at his scrolls, Justina varnishing fiddles, but glancing up now and again to see if all were well with her fitful Paulchen, whom she managed with such astonishing wisdom, and the fiddle-maker himself munching at an apple and staring intently at a fiddle back which he held before him for scrutiny and criticism.

Riemer laughed aloud, too, for he heard Paul say distinctly, in a sullen and reluctant tone of voice—

SERENADE.

D^{EAR} little maid, with the dawn in thy glances, Sweet Clementine, with spring songs in thine ears: Come with the glow of thy virginal fancies— Come to the man that is laden with tears.

Lithe as a fawn through the brushwood that rushes, Fair as a vessel new-launched on the main;

Come with thy flashing look, laughter, and blushes— Come to the man that is burdened with pain.

How he has prayed for thee, yearned for thy coming, Waited and worked for the light in thine eyes:

Swayed like a rose to the bee that is humming; Come to the man that is shaken with sighs.

What will he give to thee? Honour and duty,

Warmth of the hearth and the shelter of home; Oh, make his wilderness bud with thy beauty:

Listen! He calls to thee! Come to him! Come!

ROLAND HILL.

THE ASSAULT OF WINGS

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS

Author of "Hoof and Claw," "The Feet of the Furtive," "Neighbours Unknown," "Kings in Exile," "More Kindred of the Wild," etc.

Illustrated by Paul Bransom



N his high place in the unclouded blue, a thousand feet above the topmost pinnacle of Bald Face, the great white-headed eagle stared downward toward the far-off reek and roofs of the busy town by

the busy town by the sea. It was not often that his eyes troubled themselves to turn in that direction, for all his concern was with the inland lakes and watercourses which linked themselves tranquilly about the spreading bases of Old Bald Face, and he hated the acrid smokeclouds which rose from the chimneys of the town. But this morning his gaze—that miraculous vision which could scrutinise a rabbit or an ailing lamb at a distance when our best eyes would hardly discern an elephant —had been caught by an apparition which amazed and disconcerted him.

Flying in wide circles above a green field on the outskirts of the city was a gigantic bird, in form and stature quite unlike any other bird that the great eagle had ever seen. As it passed over a red brick cottage at one corner of the field, quite blotting it from view for an instant, he got an impression of its incredible size, and felt, with a pang of angry dread, that his own stately dimensions would have seemed little better than a sparrow's beside it. Its vast white wings were square at the tip, and of the same width from tip to base — an inexplicable innovation in wings — and he noted with apprehension that they flew without any motion at all.

He himself, soaring in the blue heights as he was, flew *almost* without motion of the wings, riding by subtle poise and balance on the thrust of the light aerial draught. But even now, the breeze failing, he had to recover his impetus by a rushing descent. He tipped his snowy head and shoulders forward, and the air hissed sharply in the tense web of the hinder edges of his wings as he swept down the viewless slopes of air, turning upwards again after a swoop of a hundred yards or so, which was as nothing at that height. A slow stroke or two restored him to his former level, with impetus to spare for his splendid effortless soaring. But, meanwhile, he had not taken his eyes for a moment from that portentous shape circling so mysteriously above the green field on the outskirts of the town, and he had not seen it either swoop or mount or once flap its flat-spread wings.

Moved from his accustomed arrogant indifference, the eagle flew over toward the town to get a better look at this disquieting phenomenon. On nearer approach he made out that the monstrous square-winged bird was ridden by one of those man-creatures whom he so hated and despised—ridden as he had seen, with wonder and scorn, that horses permitted themselves to be. The man sat in a hollow in the strange bird's back, between its wings, and seemed to master and guide it even as he would master and guide a horse.

The eagle hated man, because man was the only creature that had ever given him, hitherto, the loathed sensation of fear. He despised man because he saw the proud and cunning creature chained to earth, compelled to crawl upon earth's surface even as a sheep or a woodchuck. But now, if man were able to ride the dwellers of the air, there would be no escaping his tyranny.

The eagle had been conscious for some moments of a curious humming roar in his ears, the source of which was not at once obvious to him. Suddenly he realised that it was the noise of the blunt-winged monster's

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flight. The realisation daunted him. How was it possible that such an awful sound should come from those unmoving wings? He was inclined to turn and fly back to the shelter of Old Bald Face, but, after a moment's irresolution, his stout heart arose to the magnitude of the peril. He flew onward, till soon he was directly over the field, but so high that to the spectators around the edges of the field he was a scarcely visible speck against the blue.

At this moment the aeroplane began to mount skyward. It scaled the air swiftly in a steep spiral. The eagle was almost panic-stricken to observe that even now. when mounting so directly, it did not flap its wings, although there was no wind on which At the curious blunt beak of the to rise. monster he discerned a sort of circle of faint haze, a bluish blur, but this was something which did not seem to concern him, and he made no effort to understand it. What did concern him was the fact that the monster, with its human rider, was apparently coming up after him. His courage and his curiosity gave way together, and he fled back in a panic to his ledge in the recesses of Old Bald Face.

The extreme summit of Bald Face was a level plateau of granite some dozen of acres in extent, with a needle-like pinnacle of splintered granite at its eastern or seaward The broad south-eastern face of the end. summit was of naked granite, whitened by the storm and frost of ages, whence the name of Old Bald Face. But between this bleak. wind-harried front and the rich plain country by the sea were many lesser pinnacles and ridges, with deep ravines between, all clothed with dark spruce woods and tangled undergrowth. Around to full south and west and north lay an infertile region, thin-soiled and rocky, producing little timber but hemlock and stunted paper birch, and therefore not worth the attention of either the lumberman or the squatter. The whole of this district was interlaced with watercourses and sown with lakes having their ultimate outlet in the tidal estuary which washed the wharves of the town.

If the land in this region skirting Old Bald Face was barren, its waters were not. They swarmed with fish—lake-trout, white fish, and huge suckers, as well as the ordinary brook-trout. They supplied hunting-ground, therefore, for not only a number of fishhawks, but also for no less than three pairs of the fish-hawks' dreaded tyrants, the white-headed eagles. These three pairs of eagles had their nests in the uppermost and most inaccessible ledges of Bald Face; and the wild country below was divided among them into six ranges, each great bird having his or her own hunting-ground, upon which not even their own mates could poach with impunity.

The nests of the three royal pairs were all within a distance of perhaps half a mile of each other, but each was austerely secluded and jealously hidden from its neighbours. Each pair regarded its neighbours with a coldly tolerant aversion, and kept an aloof but vigilant watch upon them as possible poachers.

When the first eagle, smitten with fear by the vision of the swiftly-mounting aeroplane, fled back to his evrie to warn his fierce-eved mate of this portentous monster of the air, his perturbation was detected by the female of the next pair, who chanced to be homing at that moment with a fish for her hungry Fear seems to travel by some nestlings. uncomprehended but very efficient wireless, and fear in the lords of the air was a thing too unusual to be ignored. Hastily depositing her burden, the new-comer flapped upwards and around to the east, till she, too, caught sight of the mounting monoplane. It was far off, indeed, but already so high above earth that to her eyes it stood out dark and sinister against the pale expanse of sea beyond the town. She flapped over for a nearer view, flew close enough to hear the mysterious roar of the motor and to detect the man-creature riding the monster's neck, and fled back to her nestlings with rage and terror at her heart. No longer could she feel secure on the dizziest and remotest ledges of the peaks, no longer were even the soundless deeps of sky inaccessible to man ! Within an hour every eagle of Bald Face knew of this dreadful invasion of their hitherto impregnable domain. It was the time of year when their nestlings were most helpless, and that is the time of year when the white-headed eagles will face all odds with an incomparable ferocity of valour at the hint of menace to their skyey homes.

* * * * * * * The airman at the town of X was one Rob MacCreedy, who had recently been making a name for himself at the aviation grounds some hundred miles down the coast. He had come up to X primarily to turn a needed penny by exhibition flights and passenger-carrying over the spacious and level fields behind the town. But his secondary object was to experiment with the dangerous eddies and wind-holes that were likely to be met with above the profound ravines of Bald Face and its buttressing hills. His purpose was to go to Europe and win fame by some sensational flights over the Alps or the Pyrenees; and having a very practical Canadian ambition to survive for the enjoyment of the fame he planned to win, he was determined to prepare himself effectively for the perils that would confront him.

But MacCreedy had another object in view, which he did not talk about lest matter-of-fact folk should call him childish. He wanted to see what there was on top of Old Bald Face. That gaunt grey summit was regarded as practically unscalable. Tt had indeed been scaled, men said, some thirty or forty years ago, after desperate effort and altogether hair-raising adventure, by a greatly daring trapper, who had barely survived to tell of his exploit. Since then, the men of X---- not being whole-hearted skilled mountain - climbers, all such or attempts had ended in failure. Among the legends which had gathered about the austere summit, there was none to suggest that gold might be found thereon, else the cloudy sanctuary had doubtless been violated without unnecessary delay. But the traditions handed down from the adventure of that old trapper were as stimulating to MacCreedy's imagination as any myth of quartz vein or nugget could have been. They told of a remarkable level plateau, like a table for the gods, with a little lake of black crystal set in the centre of it, ice cold and of unfathomable depth. It was, in effect, according to tradition, bottomless.

To MacCreedy's eager and boyish imagination this lofty plateau and this mysterious uninvestigated lake were irresistible. He was determined to know more about them both; and as the top of Bald Face, for all its inaccessibility, was less than five thousand feet above sea-level, his monoplane seemed to offer him an easy way to it.

The third day after MacCreedy's arrival at X was windless and without a cloud in the blue. The air almost sparkled with its clarity, and there was an unspringlike tang in it which made MacCreedy's nerves tingle for adventure. After he had given the crowd their money's worth in swift mountings and breath-taking vols-planes, he started off, at a height of some two thousand feet, toward the mountain, standing pallid and grim against the intense blue. He mounted swiftly as he went, and the spectators stared after him doubtfully, till they grasped his purpose.

"He's going to visit the top of Old Bald Face !" went the murmur round the crowded edges of the field. And a feeling that he might bring back some interesting information made them content to wait, without grunbling, for his return.

Since their first sight of the giant-winged monster soaring and humming over X the eagles of Bald Face had not dared to venture far from home in their foragings. Their nerves were raw with angry anxiety for their nests. MacCreedy, as he came within a mile or two of the mountain, took note of an eagle not far ahead, circling at a higher level than himself.

"The old bird thinks he can fly some," mused MacCreedy, "but I bet I'm going to give him the surprise of his life !"

A few moments more, and he was himself surprised, as the solitary sentinel was joined by another, and another, and another, till presently there were six of the great birds flapping and whirling between him and Bald Face, about at the level of the edge of the plateau.

"Seem to be as interested in aeroplanes as any of us humans," thought MacCreedy, and gave his planes a lift that should carry him over the plateau at a height of not much over a hundred feet. He would make a hasty observation first, then circle around and effect a landing, if the surface looked smooth enough for him to attempt it without too much risk. He was surprised somewhat by the attitude of the eagles, who were now circling nearer, and seemed to be more angry than curious or terrified at his approach. Then his attention was abruptly withdrawn from their threatening evolutions. It was all required, and that urgently, by the aeroplane.

Having arrived over the deeply-cleft and ridged outworks of Bald Face, the aeroplane had plunged into a viewless turmoil of air-It dropped with currents and vortices. startling suddenness into a "pocket," and fell as if a vacuum had opened beneath it. MacCreedy saw a vicious granite ridge, whiskered with fir trees, lurch up at him insanely from a thousand feet below. He was almost upon it before his planes bit upon solid air again and glided off from the peril, slanting upwards rockingly over a gaping abyss. Yelping with triumph, the eagles had swooped down after him; but he could not hear their cries, of course, through the roar of the Gnome, and of

eagles, at that moment, he was thinking not at all.

Realising the imminence of his danger from these vortices, MacCreedy changed his course and swept back again as fast as he could toward the open, his machine careering wickedly in the eddies and upthrusts of air. He decided that he must get far above this area of disturbance, and then spiral down directly over the plateau, where, as he calculated, the currents would be less tumultuous.

The eagles, imagining that the loud monster had been put to flight by their threats, came following in its wake, determined to see it safely off their premises and give it no time to recover from what they conceived to be its panic. But they were far too sagacious to attack and force a more than doubtful conflict. They were filled with awe of this gigantic being which flew with rigid wings and such appalling roar, yet allowed itself to be ridden by the man between its shoulders. They were perplexed, too, by the fierce wind which streamed out behind its level wings. Their amazement was heightened by the fact that their own long and powerful wings, which were able to overtake so easily the flight of the agile fish-hawk, were forced to beat furiously in order to keep up with this incomprehensible stranger, who was apparently making no effort at all.

A swift motor-car, which had followed MacCreedy's flight at top speed across the plain, had halted at the point where the highway passed nearest to the broken and impassable region surrounding the mountain. Its occupants, watching MacCreedy's movements through their field-glasses, and noting the great birds crowding behind him, thought at first that the eagles had put him to flight and forced him to give up his venture. They were undeceived, however. Then they saw him turn—at such a height that, even to their powerful glasses, the pursuing eagles were no more than specks—and soar back till he was directly over the summit.

At the height which he had now gained the air was icy cold, but still as a dream. The world below looked like a vast, shallow bowl, the sides concaving upwards around him to the horizon. Two-thirds of this horizon rim were of dark green woods, threaded with the gleaming silver of watercourses. The remaining third was of sea, which looked as if it overhung the town of X—, and were withheld only by a miracle from flowing in and filling the bowl. Directly beneath him, two to three thousand feet down, the mighty summit of Old Bald Face looked insignificant. It lay outspread quite flat and shelterless in the sun, its secrets clean revealed, and there, sure enough, at its centre, was the pool of tradition, gleaming upwards, glassy still. At the same time he saw, though without much interest, the eagles. They were very far below him now, hardly above the level of the plateau, flying in occasionally over its edges, but for the most part circling out above the In a casual way surrounding gulfs. MacCreedy inferred that they must have nests in the ledges of the precipices.

In a somewhat narrow spiral he now began his descent, gradually and under power, that he might be in full readiness to grapple with the treacherous gusts which came leaping up at him from under the brink of the plateau. He was surprised to see that, as he descended, the eagles rose hurriedly to meet him; but at first he paid no attention to them, being intent upon the search for a good landing-place, and upon the mystery of that sky-inhabiting pool. A minute or two more, however, and it was no longer possible for him to ignore the approaching birds, who were rising at him with unmistakable manifestations of rage. For the first time it occurred to him that they might be thinking he had come to rob their nests. "Plucky beggars," he said to himself admiringly, "to think of showing fight to a grown-up aeroplane !"

The next moment, as he noted the spread of those flapping wings, the shining, snowy, outstretched heads and necks, the firm and formidable half-opened beaks, a sweat of apprehension broke out all over him. What if one of the misguided birds should foul his propeller or come blundering aboard and snap a stay or a control wire? The idea of being dashed to pieces in that skyey solitude was somehow more daunting to his spirit than the prospect which he faced indifferently every day—that of being hurled down upon familiar earth.

For a few seconds MacCreedy was tempted to drive his planes heavenward again and withdraw from the situation, to return another day with a passenger and a shot-gun for his defence. Then he grew angry and obstinate. He had come to explore the summit of Bald Face, and he was not going to be baulked by a flock of birds. He was low enough now to satisfy himself that the plateau afforded a good landing, so he dipped his descent to a steeper angle, making haste to get through the suspense.

Immediately the eagles were all about him. To his relief, they seemed afraid to fly directly in front of him, as if apprehending that this monstrous bird of his might carry some terrible weapon in its blunt-faced beak. Mounting swiftly, they passed the descending aeroplane on either side, and then gathered in above it, swooping and yelping. Through the roar of his motor MacCreedy caught the strident shrillness of their cries. He felt that at any moment one might pluck up courage to pounce upon the plane or upon his head. He wondered if his leather cap would be stout enough to resist the clutch of those edged talons which he saw opening and shutting viciously above him. He wished himself safely landed.

He was low enough now to choose his landing-place. He was just about to shut off the engine for the final glide, when one of the female eagles, growing desperate, swooped and struck the right wing of the plane not far from its tip. The extended talons went right through the cloth, tearing a long gash, and, before the bird could recover herself, she was caught by one of the strong wires that braced the wing. The aeroplane rocked under her struggles, but in the next moment she was thrown clear, so badly crumpled that she fell topsy-turvy through the air for some little distance before she could pull her wits together and right herself. Then, dishevelled and cowed, she flew off to one side, with no more stomach left for another assault.

MacCreedy had brought his plane to a level keel, the better to withstand the attack. Now he laughed grimly and resumed his descent. Almost in the same instant he realised that an immense eagle was swooping straight at his head. He ducked-the only way to save his face. The grasping claws sunk deep into his shoulders. With a yell he straightened himself backwards violently. His assailant, unable for a moment to free his claws from the tough tweed of the jacket, and swept backwards by the rush of the plane, plunged down among the supporting stays, where he struggled and flapped wildly to extricate himself.

Smarting with pain and wrath, and with his heart in his mouth lest the stays should snap and the planes collapse, MacCreedy cut off the power and slid sharply downward. The eagle behind him got free, and flapped off, much daunted by the encounter. The remaining four birds hung immediately over the swiftly-dropping plane, but hesitated to attack after the rough experience of their fellows.

MacCreedy touched ground at somewhat higher speed than he had calculated upon. and found the level stone, swept by the storm of ages, so smooth that his wheels ran along it much too easily. Thus he found himself confronted by a new peril. Could he check himself before reaching the brink? He steered a long curve around the edge of the shining pool, gathered his legs under him so that he might jump clear, if necessary, and came to a stop with his vacillating propeller almost peering over the abyss. Just before him was a drop of a cool thousand feet. He sprang out, hauled the machine back a dozen yards or so, and drew the longest breath of relief that had been forced from his lungs since his first ventures in aeroplaning.

Then he snatched the heaviest wrench from his tool kit and turned in a rage to settle accounts with his tormentors. But the eagles were now in a less militant frame of mind. Two of their number had had more than enough, and were already flapping back dejectedly towards their nests. The others seemed to realise that the monster, now that its rider had dismounted, was merely another of the man-creature's tools, such as a boat or a canoe, inanimate and harmless except when its dreaded master chose to animate it. Moreover, now that MacCreedy was out of the machine, erect upon his feet, glaring up at them with master ul eyes, and shouting at them in those human tones which all the wild kindreds find so disconcerting, they were much more afraid of him than before. Their anger began to die away into a mere nervous dread and aversion. It seemed to occur to them that perhaps, after all, the man was not after their nests. He was nowhere near them. They yelped indignantly at him, and flew off to perch on their eyries and brood over the problem.

MacCreedy watched them go, and dropped his weapon back into the kit. Then he went over his precious machine minutely, to assure himself that it had sustained no damage except that slit in one wing, which was not enough to give serious trouble. Then, with a rush of exultation, he ran over to examine the mysterious pool. He found it beautiful enough, in its crystal-clear austerity; but, alas, its utter clearness was all that was needed to shatter its chief mystery. It was deep, indeed, but it was certainly not bottomless, for he could discern its bottom, from one shore or the other, in every part. He contented himself, however, with the thought that there was mystery enough for the most exacting in the mere existence of this deep and brimming tarn on the crest of a granite peak. As far as he could judge from his reading, which was extensive, this smooth flat granite top of Bald Face, with its little pinnacle at one end and its deep transparent tarn in the centre, was unlike any other known summit in the world. He was contented, with his explorations, and ready now to return and tell about them.

But if content with his explorations, he was far from content on the score of his adventure with the eagles. He felt that it had been rather more of a close call than it appeared; and there was nothing he desired less than an immediate repetition of it. What he dreaded was that the starting of the motor might revive the fears of the great birds in regard to their nests, and bring them once more swooping upon him. He traversed the circuit of the plateau, peering downward anxiously, and at last managed roughly to locate the three nests. They were all on the south and south-east faces of the summit. He decided that he would get off as directly and swiftly as possible, and by way of the north-west front, and by this self-effacing attitude he trusted to convince the touchy birds that he had no wish to trespass upon their domesticity.

He allowed himself all too brief a run, and the plane got into the air but a few feet before reaching the brink. So narrow a margin was it, indeed, that he caught his breath with a gasp before she lifted. It looked as if he were going to dive into space. But he rose instead, and as he sailed out triumphantly across the abyss, the eagles came flapping up over the rim of the plateau behind. They saw that he was departing. so they sank again to their eyries, and congratulated themselves on having driven A few minutes later, at an him away. unprovocative height, he swept around and headed for home. As he came into view once more to the anxious watchers in the automobile, who had been worried over his long disappearance, the car turned and raced back over the plain to X—, ambitious to arrive before him and herald his triumph. But the fact that that triumph was not altogether an unqualified one remained a secret between MacCreedy and the eagles.

BRENDONHOE.

THERE'S a place 'way down in Devon, That was like a little heaven, Say, some twenty years ago; Tucked among the larch and beeches, Smothered round with grassy reaches, And a murmuring sea below—

Brendonhoe 1

I remember when I found it, With the harebells growing round it, And the roses all aglow; Then the vandal came and spoiled it, And the jerry-builder moiled it— Yes, he brought your glory low,

Brendonhoe!

So I deem it far more pleasant To forget the dismal present;

Yet when west winds come and go, I can smell the peat-smoke blowing, See the yellow gorse a-growing,

And can hear the sea below,

Brendonhoe!



"His courage and his curiosity gave way together, and he fled back in a ranic to his ledge."

M.O.M.

By E. F. BENSON

Illustrated by G. L. Stampa



ENRY ATTWOOD at the age of twenty was left an orphan, and cursed with a competence. Some natures are so strong that this blighting influence of a competence has no effect on them, and, like good citizens, they

continue to work like galley-slaves in order to turn their competence into affluence, and pay taxes on the higher scale obligingly provided by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in order to penalise industry. But Henry Attwood was not one of these strong natures. He found the world so amazingly pleasant and interesting that, being without expensive tastes of any kind, he contrived to spend delightful and strenuous days on four hundred and fifty pounds a year until the fatal and almost universal experience of falling in love drove him to acquire the vast fortune that he is quite incapable of spending. It is true that his charming wife does all that can be expected of a mere woman in this direction, but the wealth that flows in a continual Pactolus into his bank balance seems to defy her most earnest endeavours.

So, at the age of twenty, Henry Attwood, in the year 1890, was left with an income of four hundred and fifty pounds a year, and instantly abandoned the routine of medical studies which he was following at a London hospital, with the idea of being a doctor. It was not that they did not interest himfor they interested him enormously-but, unfortunately, other things interested him enormously, too, and he wanted just now to win the amateur championship at golf more than he wanted anything else. He talked this over with his friend Hugh Ingleton-with whom he shared lodgings in Westminster Bridge Road-in his usual extravagant and vivid manner.

"I don't give up my profession, Hughie," he said ; "and really, if you come to think of it, winning the championship will bring me in a far larger practice than seeing more arms and legs cut off. It amazes me that you don't see why! You are bound by materialistic views. You don't know how a little excitement and interest pulls a patient round. You and I, for instance, if we were called in to prescribe for a case of influenza, would certainly do exactly the same thing from a medical point of view. But if the man was a golfer at all-and most men think they are—he would be far more stimulated by an amateur champion than by you. We all know perfectly well that no medicine ever cured anybody. What cures is the stimulus you give. Then I shall learn a lot about art. I shall learn to play the piano. I shall learn about gardening. All for the same reason. Hypnotism, too-suggestion. I shall go to Paris and study there. It is suggestion really that cures, and here in England, at present, you are thought a quack if you dream of such a thing."

"All this will take time," remarked Hugh. "Yes, dear child. Ars longa, vita brevis. Very likely I shan't ever be a doctor at all. You were going to say that, so I save you the trouble. I may become a professional golfer, I may become a gardener, or a mesmerist, or a musician, with long elfin locks. Really, at the age of twenty, no fellow ought to know what he is going to become, unless indigence drives him to become something. It's too early to choose. One should not choose until one has seen Everyone more what choices there are. ought to be supported by the State till he Then he is probably past work, is forty. you will say, and ought to be painlessly put out of the way.... Again, I've often thought of becoming a clergyman, not a country parsonage kind of buffer, with a glass of port wine after lunch, but a real parson down in the slums. But whenever I think of becoming anything, I feel that I've got a vocation for it."

Hugh Ingleton, with grim, serious face, rose and tossed him a pair of boxing-gloves. Copyright, 1913, by E. F. Benson, in the United States of America.

"Then I'll prove you haven't got much of a vocation for a boxer," he said.

"Right O! Give me two minutes to change. If there's one thing I can do, it's to box."

"I'll knock the nonsense out of you," said Hugh.

An hour afterwards, when the two friends were dining at a small Italian restaurant over the way, it appeared that this result had not been attained, for Attwood expanded with fresh extravagances over Chianti.

"Wine !" he said. "Could one be an Omar Khayyám on four-fifty a year, do you think? I really don't ask any more than to play golf all day, have twenty minutes with the gloves-Jove, I could do without the gloves, for I believe you've broken a rib for me!—and then drink enormous quantities of rough, strong wine. One would get gouty, of course, but by that time I should be a Christian Scientist, and so get rid of that. And then—oh, Hughie !—then some poor white-faced devil, like that man there, comes in-he's half-blind, too, and I diagnose lead-poisoning—and one feels that it is only the brutes that perish who don't give their whole lives to trying to help a few of such sufferers out of the myriads. I wonder if suggestion would have any effect in definite organic disease ? I don't see why not. Definite organic disease can assuredly be set up by nerves and worry, so why should it not be cured through the nerves also? want to test that. But, first of all, I shall win the amateur championship."

"Marriage?" asked the laconic Ingleton.

"With regard to me? No, I'm too busy for the present to think about it. It is necessary to have a good deal of leisure to think about marrying, while, as far as one can judge, there's not much leisure afterwards. Now, will you please finish that Chianti, or shall I? No, I think neither of us will. We'll send it over to that poor, white - faced fellow with our compliments."

So for the next seven years Henry Attwood lived, with all his heart, mind, and soul, the delectable life so proper to the years between twenty and thirty, when the powers both of enjoyment and of learning are so keen, doing with all his might the things that seemed to him most worth while. With him these pursuits were always innocuous he did not. for instance, take up the career of an Omar Khayyám—and generally laudable. A year and a half of incessant golf-playing secured for him the amateur championship, while a year of strenuous piano-playing proved to him that he would never make a pianist. Then followed a couple of years in Paris, where he studied medicine at the Sorbonne, and mesmerism in the Charcot School, and then it suddenly struck him, with a force that was inevitable and overwhelming, that he was living a life as selfish and self-centred as that of the merest sensualist. He had acquired quantities of delightful knowledge, but he had done it all to please himself, and was conferring by his superb physical fitness and mental equipment no shadow of benefit on any outside himself, while the "white-faced man," so to speak, had earned from him nothing more than vague pity and the dregs of a bottle of Chianti. Nor had he even come near the less culpable selfishness of falling in love; he had lived as completely for himself as the drunkard or the drug-drinker.

So within a month he was attached in a lay, not a clerical, capacity to an East End mission, and had become a "real person down in the slums." His reality, indeed, was something amazing, if by reality we mean the "touch" he had with life. Nothing came amiss to him, and he poured into his work all that he had previously pent up in himself. He superintended soupkitchens, he taught in schools, he organised and performed in penny readings and other entertainments, and presented himself every evening as a target at which the youth of Hackney aimed blows with boxing-gloves. But all these energetic affairs were to him no more than pastime; his real work, as his head acknowledged, lay with the sick and the dying. Assuming, as was indeed the case, that their spiritual requirements had been attended to by his clerical brethren, he coaxed or scolded the sick into a revival of their nervous energies which might combat their real or imaginary diseases, while if they could combat no more, he brightened the way into the dark valley with a lamp compounded, so to speak, of foolish nonsense and those little pleasant trivialities of this world of ours, which retain their interest even when the darkness is immediately and inevitably going to close round us. He dispersed shadows, and was the dispenser of pleasure and encouragement, and by his very presence seemed to relieve pain. He moved like some fresh wind through wards and miserable dwellings.

All the time his conviction that at least three-quarters, if not four, of the illness and malaise of the world is due to the imagination, and can be cured through the imagination, grew to a gospel certainty within him. On this he descanted to Hugh Ingleton, who had come down to see him one Saturday evening.

"I'm always at leisure on Saturday evening, Hughie," he had said, "because I let all the fellows in the boys' club do exactly what they choose that night."

"I should have thought that was the very night you would look after them more," said Hugh.

"Well, that's not my plan. If they are going to lead decent lives, and most of them are, they must lead them in spite of temptations. Now, when the boys' club is open, they really find it far more attractive than the streets—they don't want to go into the pubs. and get into beastly messes. So once a week I turn them all loose, and they've got to protect themselves against filth and boozing. It answers all right. Of course, some of them get into scrapes or drink too much; but usually, on reflection, they find they didn't enjoy it so tremendously. Men have got far more imagination than you think; they think of themselves as being strong and hard-working and clear-eyed, and that has a great effect on their lives. Imagination! Heavens, if one could only use imagination up to its true value! There's no other force in the world to compare to it."

"Charcot?" asked Hugh.

"Oh, it's beyond what Charcot dreamed of. There's no limit to the power of the imagination over the body and the mind. But we all want 'an outward and visible sign,' as the Catechism says. If you tell a dyspeptic man that there is nothing wrong with him sufficiently powerfully, he will perhaps improve, but only a little. But give him a pill to take after dinner, and tell him that it is bound to put him all right, he will improve a great deal."

"It depends what the pill is made of," said Hugh.

"Not very much, though, of course, you can do a little by drugs. But the main work of the pill will be done by the man's belief in its efficacy. I'm thinking out a medicine now which I expect will cure almost everything. It will cure, in any case, all the ailments that lead to organic disease."

"I shall expose it in 'Secret Romedies,'" said Hugh.

"No, you won't, because I'm going to tell you all about it now, this minute, in confidence, and you will certainly agree that, taken as I prescribe it, it is admirable. Besides, it won't be for sale, nor will it be advertised. I shall have it on tap at our sick-clubs, and shall direct the use of it myself. I'm going to call it 'My Own Mixture.' They'll remember that, and it will spread like mad. M.O.M., you know. You can't forget it. Bottle of Mom."

"I think I should prefer Mumm," said Hugh. "But let's hear all about it."

Henry Attwood deposited his long, big limbs in a chair that only just held him. His ruddy boyish face, with its blue eyes and crisp curling hair, showed like a sort of sun through the clouds of tobacco smoke which he puffed from a briar-wood pipe. Outside, a sudden flood of wind-vexed rain beat on the window, and he jerked his thumb over his shoulder.

"I hate a wet Saturday night," he said, "because it drives my lambs into the pubs. But they've got to learn to stand on their own feet, bless them ! Well, about My Own Mixture. It's going to be made chiefly of camomile and salt. Have you ever tasted camomile and salt? You would remember it, if you had, for it is impossible to conceive a more loathsome and nauseating flavour."

"Then why prescribe it ?" asked Ingleton.

"Chiefly because it tastes so utterly abominable. It tastes strong and awful, and consequently people will think—my sort of people, I mean—that it must be doing them good. They like medicine to be beastly; it is part of the outward and visible sign. I thought of adding a little quinine, but it's too expensive. But that's not the whole point. Here's a dried camomile flower for you. I ask you to chew it for a minute. You will then be able to understand what follows."

"Anything in the cause of science," said Hugh.

Attwood waited a couple of minutes.

"That's enough," he said. "Now have a cigarette."

"Part of the plan?" asked Hugh.

" Yes."

Hugh lit his cigarette, took one whiff of it, and instantly threw it into the fireplace.

"Good Heavens, what foul tobacco!" he said.

Attwood chuckled.

"Not at all. It's what you've been smoking all the evening. But you won't want to smoke again for another hour. Now have some whisky and soda to console you."

"Still science?" asked Hugh.

"Still soience."

Hugh mixed himself a glassful, took a sip, and strongly shuddered.

"But it's poison !" he said.

"Not at all. It's a good whisky. But are you beginning to see something of the inwardness of M.O.M.? After a dose of it, as I shall pre-

scribe it, you wouldn't be able to smoke or drink alcohol for three hours at least. Now, as I said, there's not only camomile but salt in M. O. M. That'll make them thirsty, and they'll be driven t drink water Well, a lot of my fellows are constantly rheumatic. and if there is one thing more likely than another to help your rheumatism, it is drinking quantities of fluid. You know that. So incidentally --- only incidentally, mind-M.O.M. is in future to be given to the rheumatic and gouty and acid, and, instead of smoking and



drinking whisky and beer, they will drink water. I shan't tell them to do that—they would utterly despise water if recommended them—but they'll be thirsty."

Hugh sniffed at his whisky again, and again postponed it.

"Go on," he said.

"Well, three-quarters of my flock—not the young 'uns, of course, but the working-men drink spirits because they are tired. But most of them love medicine, and they will give M.O.M. a trial, if it's only because I tell them to."

Attwood, not having partaken of camomile, lit another pipe.

"Even all this is only incidental," he said. "It certainly will do them good, but the real good it will do them will be their

and the slaving women, suffer most of all from fatigue, which they patch up with stimulants. Now, what's my prescription for them? Three tablespoonfuls of M.O.M. mixture in a pint of hot water, to be drunk with a teaspoon directly after supper. That

will take them

the best part

of half an

hour. I shall

tell them to

take it sitting

down, not

standing up.

and with

their eyes

closed, I

think. They

won't want to

go round to

the pub. after

that, and,

being tired,

they will, I

hope, go to bed. Have

you ever

drunk hot

camomile

tea? It

makes you

sleep like a top. And in

the middle of

the night they

will awake

drowsilv

and drink

some water.

feel far

brisker next

morning than

if they had

spent half the

night in the

want to be

brisk and not

tired; they

they'll

They

And

pub.

belief it's doing them good. That is far more important. That you don't believe, I expect, because you are blinded by your English ignorance. But if you had been through the Charcot School, you would recognise the illimitable power of suggestion. For dyspeptics, too ! There's a lot of dyspepsia here, not among the very poorest, but chiefly among those who, when they feel rather unwell, set themselves down to get through a piece of beefsteak, which they think will 'strengthen' them. For such I shall prescribe them M.O.M. half an hour before dinner. Have another try at the whisky, Hugh."

Such was the inception of M.O.M., and marvellous was the growth of its use and success. With the cachet of Attwood's name and recommendation, its success was unrivalled. Somehow drunkards, fatigued, dyspeptic, with the image of that cheerful and vital young giant in their mind, sat themselves meekly and hopefully down with bowls of the nauseous mixture and a teaspoon, and sipped and shuddered, and shuddered and sipped. Greater yet was the army of those who had nothing the matter with them, but who, in the damp and sunless autumn, needed their vital force not increased. but aroused. Of this class were wives and daughters of tradesmen in comfortable but stuffy circumstances, and from them the marvellous healing and invigorating powers of the abominable mixture spread far and wide beyond the confines of Hackney, and a serious situation began to develop. For M.O.M. was not a patent medicine to be obtained "at every chemist's "---it was the brew of one man, prepared by himself on a secret recipe, to make which public, as he saw gnite well, would be to rob his invention

of its efficacy. He gave it to members of his flock, but with the growing and imperious. demand for it, it was certainly ascertained that his flock sold it to other inquirers for it on advantageous terms, and applied for more. It was impossible that Mrs. East, for instance. had consumed a whole bottleful of the essence between Tuesday and Friday-she would have been no more than a brine-pickle if that was the case. It was impossible not to connect Bob Flash's new coat with the three bottles he had emptied in little less than a week. even accepting the incredible statement that his children preferred it to their bread and milk for supper! Already a large local chemist had offered to prepare the stuff in cauldrons, if only Henry Attwood would give him the recipe, supply it at a reasonable figure, and share the profits with its inventor. His conscience would not allow him to make a profit out of so fraudulent a decoction, even though the decoction-or, rather, the spirit in which the decoction was imbibed produced such successful results. And all the time the demand grew unbridled, and Attwood lived in a briny atmosphere of camomile.

Then came the final and determining factor. On his holiday he saw Her for Whom he and the world were made, daughter of a small country squire, with eyes of night set in a flower-like face, and the inexorable need for human personal love shot up in him sudden and strong, like the flowering of an aloe. Marriage on four hundred and fifty pounds a year, with two rooms in a celibate mission in the East End, did not appear to a shrewd and impoverished father a practical scheme.

That is why we can all get M.O.M. at twoand-ninepence a bottle, and the larger size, containing twice the quantity, at four-andsixpence.



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THE GOODNESS OF DAVIE-DEAR BEFORE CHRISTMAS AND AFTER

Bv AGNES GROZIER HERBERTSON

Illustrated by Charles Pears



ES, I've been a very naughty boy," Davie - Dear conceded, with a kind of chastened cheerfulness. He slid a hot hand into mine. "That's all over. Now, what about the-

I have always

admired in Davie-Dear that faculty for turning awkward corners promptly and then forgetting them; but this time the awkwardness had to be prolonged. His new pyjamas lining the rabbit-hutch-really, it was too much ! I said : "Not so fast, Davie-Dear."

Davie-Dear gazed into my face with the expectation of a twinkle written all over him. When the expectation met with cold disappointment, he looked embarrassed. "I've said I'm sorry," he reminded me.

I knew he had ; but Davie-Dear says these words with such ease. He reiterated, wriggling from one foot to the other, impatient to be off: "I've been a very naughty boy."

"Yes, Davie-Dear, you have," I said severely. I added : "You can't keep on being a naughty boy like this, you know. Something must be done."

"Yes, Uncle Edward," said Davie-Dear. He drew his hand from mine. I knew that no resentment moved him; Davie-Dear felt that he must play the game, that he must not wheedle the judge. I have no doubt that he felt sorry for me that I was put to the bother of considering his case.

And it was a hard enough case to consider. "You'll have to be punished, Davie-Dear," I said.

"Yes, I s'pose so," said Davie-Dear manfully. He clasped his hands firmly behind his back.

I racked my brains. Davie-Dear's resigned

face, and the fact that his loving parents were miles away, combined to produce in me a sense of acute discomfort.

"Oh, Davie-Dear, why did you do it at Christmas-time?" I ask d.

"Rabbits is cold at Chrismis-time," said Davie-Dear.

"I can't dock you of any of your presents," I said ; "I simply haven't the heart."

"No, Uncle Edward," said Davie-Dear. I saw, for the first time, his lip quiver. It had not occurred to him that his presents might be in danger.

"No," I hastened to repeat, "I shan't dock you of any of your presents. Of course, we can't say what Santa Claus will do. He might stay away."

Davie-Dear reassured me. "Nurse says that Santa Claus always comes to little boys."

I wished Nurse would not ease Davie-Dear's tender little heart by such very sweeping statements. "Good little boys," I suggested.

"All little boys is good at Chrismis," said Davie-Dear. He looked at me in a surprised "Santa Claus counts them all good way. if they's said they're sorry."

"I dare say he does," I said weakly. "But there are limits. I mean, Davie-Dear, that there are some things you have to be punished for first."

I knew that I really ought-Davie-Dear had, indeed, been going his length-but I felt myself to be a brute.

Davie-Dear tried to smile. "All right, Uncle Edward."

I considered again, and again I groaned.

"Oh, Davie-Dear, why did you-"" "Rabbits is cold at Chrismis-time," Davie-Dear said patiently. He added : "You could take away my soldiers-the newest ones -for two, three days. Mummy did once."

"But you haven't been playing with them much lately, have you ?" said I. "No, I haven't," said Davie-Dear honestly. He wrinkled his brows. "I wonder what new kinds I'll get at Chris----"

"Ah, we aren't there yet," said I. "I think I'll send you to bed early."

Davie-Dear smiled. "I'm late already. Didn't you hear the clock strike? Uncle Edward, do you think granny might send me____"

I frowned.

Davie-Dear straightened himself. "I'm sorry; I forgot. When am I going to be punished, Uncle Edward ?"

"As soon," I said, in a worried tone, "as I can think of some way of punishing you."

Davie-Dear's face, too, became thoughtful. He said at last: "Cook said one day that she'd put me in the wood-closet, but she never did."

"You must have been leading her a life, you young rip," said I. The wood-closet did not commend itself, but it was suggestive. I looked round the room. "You could retire into that cupboard there for half an hourthat wouldn't hurt you. I shall be in this room, writing letters, so you won't be lone-I mean, I shall be able to see that you don't come out. There's lots of room."

Davie-Dear smiled radiantly. "I've hid in that cupboard lots of times. There's a box with lovely, teeny wee eggs on the shelf."

"You're not to open that box, Davie-Dear. You're being punished, you know. And you mustn't talk. But you can leave the door open."

Davie-Dear retired.

" Uncle Edward !"

I was seating myself at my desk. "Well, what is it?"

"Shall I shut the door a wee bit?"

"What for?"

There was a suppressed giggle. "'Tisn't bein' punished, else."

"Oh, then, shut it," I said.

I wrote a line and smudged it.

"Uncle Edward !"

"You mustn't talk, Davie-Dear."

"I'm not really talkin'; I'm on'y thinkin' with my tongue. That box is gone somewhere—the one with the teeny wee eggs and there's a whole heap of passils and things----"

"These are my parcels. I'm going to send them away. Don't upset them."

"They kind of poke themselves 'gainst my elbow-the elbow that's my right elbow," complained Davie-Dear.

"Well, never mind if they do; you're not sent in there to make yourself comfortable, you know."

"I believe that box with the teeny wee eggs in it has got shoved away."

"Never mind if it has. Don't talk. Davie-Dear."

I wrote a couple of lines, then paused to rack my brains. Why does one go in for this letter-writing business at Christmas-time? Let's see, had I told her that John Ivory-----

"Uncle Edward !"

"Davie-Dear," I said in exasperation, "you really must not talk. You're put into that closet as a punishment, not as a joke; and how am I to get any letters written if you keep on interrupting ?"

Davie-Dear gurgled. "I know vou're writing letters; I can see you through this little kind of hole at the back of the door. Uncle Edward, why does all doors have-Oh ! "

"What's the matter now?" I asked.

"Nuthin'. This is a very cornery cupboard," said Davie-Dear ; " it's hit me two or five times. May I sit on the basket with letters on it, Uncle Edward ?"

"Yes, sit down and be quiet," said I.

After that, for a time, there was silence. Nervous exhaustion or the dulness of my correspondence sent me to sleep. When I awakened, it was to hear a small voice saying plaintively : "May I come out now, Uncle Edward ?"

"Good Heavens, Davie-Dear, are you still-

I started up.

Davie-Dear emerged. "I b'lieved you were sleepin', but you're not." "No, I'm not," I said guiltily.

"I haven't been sleepin', neither," said Davie-Dear.

My heart smote me. How long had I kept the poor little beggar in there? I restrained a desire to glance at the clock.

But Davie-Dear guessed at it. " It's done three strikes," he volunteered. He yawned.

"Am I punished now, Uncle Edward?"

"Yes, I think so, Davie-Dear."

"Then I'm good good enough for Chrismis?"

" I should think so."

" T Davie-Dear sighed with satisfaction. should think now we might----"

"You're going to bed I interrupted. now, Davie-Dear."

Jane entered opportunely at that juncture.

"I've been in the cupboard, Jane; I'm punished !" Davie - Dear told her triumphantly.

"I'm glad to hear it, Master Davie-Dear," said Jane. She closed the cupboard door.

"You might post the parcels on the shelf in there some time to-morrow, Jane," said I.

"I'll give you the money now, in case I forget."

"I found the box with the teeny wee eggs, but I never opened it. Uncle Edward, on to-morrow may I look an' see if the eggs is broke?"

"Yes, to-morrow," I said. "Say 'Good

though I thought the passil *looked* like one when I sawed it in the hall."

"Parcel, not 'passil,' Davie-Dear," I corrected.

"Pawcel, I mean," said Davie - Dear. He sighed. After a moment he said with recovered cheerfulness: "Santa Claus



"Davie-Dear gulped. 'You never said 'bout not touching the paucils.'"

night' now, Davie-Dear. Now, Jane, you may take him away."

Davie-Dear went, pressing an affectionate and sleepy face against Jane's hand.

Christmas passed, laden with satisfaction for Davie-Dear. He told me : "I didn't *know* that you was going to give me a big engine, came — he rather did ! He knew I was good."

"No doubt he did," I agreed.

But a few days later I had reason to change my mind. Several letters reached me simultaneously, of the order of "thanksgiving letters," as I call them, since they come in response to "benefits received."

"Thanks so much for the contents of the parcel," wrote my sister Alice. "The children are delighted with their presents. May and Eric play 'trains' all day long, and Dolly cannot be parted from her necklace. You said you were sending Enid a bangle, but it wasn't in the parcel; neither was the teddy bear for baby, or the new photograph of yourself for me. Did you forget to enclose them, or is the post to blame? The parcel was rather insecurely tied, I thought."

The post *was* to blame, for I had certainly enclosed the articles mentioned. What a beastly nuisance ! No use bothering the post-office about things lost in the Christmas post.

Sighing, I opened another letter.

"Thanks, my dear Edward, for the bookrest," wrote my Uncle Timothy—" a most useful and acceptable gift. But why—oh, why the teddy bear? Are signs of my second childhood so apparent?"

"Good Heavens !" I exclaimed. I paused for a chaotic moment. What had I done? Had I really been such a concentrated ass?

Ida Leighton's letter came next. I opened it mechanically, ran my eye down the page.

"... the sweet bangle... your photograph ... so like you... is before me as I write."

My head reeled. A cold shiver ran through me; it was succeeded by a rich glow.

I had sent the bangle and the photograph to her—to Ida Leighton! She had been a pretty child when I knew her first; she was now a pretty heiress. What a presumptuous fool she must have thought me! Good Heavens, what a fool I was? What possessed me—

But no—I clutched desperately at my shifting thoughts. Foolish as I was, I had not committed the colossal folly of sending those articles to Miss Leighton. I remembered my Christmas token to the girl—a volume of Christmas poems, little more in significance or in worth than a Christmas card.

A cheerful whoop rang out. "B-r-r! Look out, Jane; I'm — I'm savages!" Davie - Dear dashed down the passage, banging against the wall as he went.

A thought struck me. I went to the door and called him in.

Davie-Dear's face was red with blood-thirstiness and excitement.

"I'm savages, Uncle Edward ! Hear me yell. Oh !"

"Yes, I'm angry, Davie-Dear, very angry," I said.

Davie-Dear's face clouded. "Savages do make *some* noise, Uncle Edward. Nobody isn't sick next door."

"It's not that," I said, "though, goodness knows, you are making row enough to waken the dead. Davie-Dear, *what did you do* when I shut you up in that cupboard before Christmas?"

Davie-Dear looked blank.

"You remember—when you were being punished, you know."

After reflection : "The door wasn't shut up, on'y a bit," said Davie-Dear, who can be punctilious over detail at exasperating moments.

"Never mind that," I said impatiently. "What mischief did you get up to when you were in that cupboard? What about those parcels? Didn't I tell you not to touch?"

"I never touched the teeny wee box; I on'y saw the corner—"

"Never mind the teeny wee box. What did you do to the parcels. Davie-Dear ?"

did you do to the parcels, Davie-Dear ? " Davie-Dear gulped. "You never said 'bout not touching the *pawcils*."

I gazed at him. Of course, Davie-Dear was right. Davie-Dear always is in the right in his interpretation of the *letter* of a command.

"Some paweils had a lot in them," explained Davie-Dear carefully, "lots and lots, an' some had on'y *one* wee present." He opened wide blue eyes and gazed at me innocently. "I never looked in them *much*, Uncle Edward, just a teeny wee bit."

"You-you shouldn't have looked at all," I muttered. But Davie-Dear's pure innocence disconcerted me.

"I didn't touch—much." Then Davie-Dear sighed. "I—I on'y made them *fair*, Uncle Edward."

"Davie-Dear," I said, "you really are the most—"

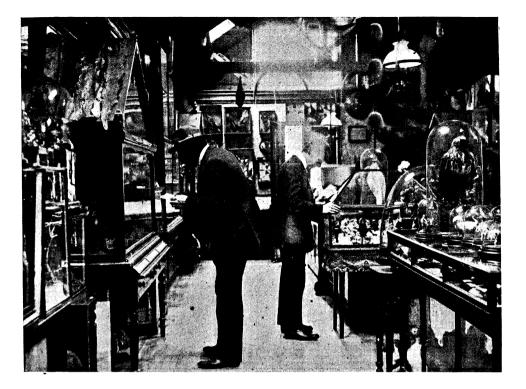
"Santa Claus *knew* I was good ; he gived me ten pres——"

"Yes, he did." I sighed in my turn. (If Santa Claus had but known !) "We'll talk of this later on. Oh, run away and play, Davie-Dear."

¹ Davie-Dear ran away. I heard him beat his tomahawk against the kitchen door. "Cook, I'm sav—"

I re-perused Ida Leighton's let⁺er. After all, she had not been angry. I had always liked her. Had Davie-Dear done for me what I should never have dared to do for myself?

Perhaps !



AN UNIQUE MUSEUM. Mr. Potter's collection at bramber.

DESCRIBED AND ILLUSTRATED BY

CHARLES J. L. CLARKE.

A S we grow older, many of the memories of childhood die away. Things which made the sum total of our happiness in our young days are forgotten, or remembered only in an indulgent way as little weaknesses of those days when we could shelter under the excuse of babyhood; but some things remain with us for our lifetime, and never cease to stimulate our feelings with a sensation of real pleasure.

Whatever else we forget, there are few, however old, who could not give a passable catalogue of the tragic events of "The Burial of Cock Robin," or who would feel ashamed to chant, however imperfectly, the famous history of the mythical "House That Jack Built." There are other items, such as the extraordinary doings of Punch and his sorely-tried wife Judy, which, as one old showman said, draw more pennies from the pockets of grown men and women than they do from the rising generation. Although we all know the well-worn nursery rhymes, only those who have visited Bramber Museum have seen the drama of some of them in actual representation.

A chance visitor to Bramber, that charming little Sussex village near Brighton, might well pass the flinted house in the tiny main street, and little know that therein was staged, in absolute perfection, "The Burial of Cock Robin," with other tales which are never to be forgotten, or might fail to recognise, in the old gentleman who is often to be seen seated near the door, a genius who has created a fairyland of nursery rhymes, and who, notwithstanding his seventy-eight years, is as much wrapt up in the tale of Nature as he was some sixty years ago, when he started his life's work.

Everything has a beginning, and there is a reason for all things, and perhaps it would not be uninteresting to know just exactly how this original and unique museum has grown during the last half a century. When quite a boy, Mr. William Potter, him on the subject. Be that as it may, he started with a steady determination to collect specimens to show the real story of Cock Robin's death.



Some early collections were staged in an ordinary box, and this first effort in stuffing. skinning, and mountingarts in which young Potter had received no help or instruction-began to draw people to the old "White Lion" in such numbers that a bower was built for the scene in the garden, and in 1861 it was promoted to the dignity of a proper show-case.

The real history of Cock Robin acted like a magnet, and visitors from Brighton and all

"THIS IS THE DOG THAT WORRIED THE CAT THAT KILLED THE RAT THAT ATE THE MALT."

the creator of the Bramber Museum, had, like many other boys then since, a a n d weakness for collecting butterflies, and, during his rambles with Nature, he was seized with a desire to show the history of poor Cock Řobin with butterflies, or even with stuffed examples of the real actors in the sad scene.

At the time his father was the landlord of the



"THIS IS THE MALT THAT LAY IN THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT."

old White Lion Hotel — now renamed The Castle Hotel—at Bramber, and young Potter's dream might never have got beyond a dream if some companions had not taunted parts around began to flock to Bramber and feast their eyes on young Potter's work in such numbers that the value of the hotel grew surprisingly. Once the owner put the rent up on account of the increasing trade, and when a second effort was made to take toll from the success of the little museum of nursery rhymes, Mr. Potter, who had lost his father, built for himself a home more worthy of his work, which building is to-day filled with as remarkable a collection as it has ever been the lot of one man toassemble.

Now it stands, a remarkable example of a life's work, visited by an ever-increasing number of people, which is only limited by the fact that practically no effort is made to proclaim the hiding-place of this unique museum. is not finished; but, to all but his ultracritical eye, there is nothing lacking, and nothing which could be added to make it more perfect.

It would be a matter of no small time and labour to get together the actual specimens for the Cock Robin drama alone, even if one made a tour of many naturalists' establishments; but Mr. Potter has collected his specimens himself, and has travelled many miles before he found some of the birds which exactly came up to his idea of the part which they were intended to play.

All the countryside knows Bramber



THE COMPLETE TABLEAU OF "THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT."

The ancient book of nursery rhymes, certainly over a hundred years old, which first inspired Mr. Potter in his youth, is treasured in the museum itself, and on its cover is the wicked sparrow with his bow, from which he has launched the deadly shaft which transfixes the red breast of Cock Robin.

Each year, and all the year, the man who loves the ancient rhymes spends his time in adding a bit here, improving a little there, and completing, as he calls it, his wonderful scenes of Nature. He even thinks that his very first effort, "The Death of Cock Robin," Museum, and many a gamekeeper, farmer, and local resident has helped Mr. Potter in his search to secure the very bird or animal he required, and many people have joined the creator of the museum in finding specimens to make up the original scenes.

The sparrow, with his bow and arrow, had to be just the ideal before he was included, and the admirably realistic expression on the bird's face was not secured in the first sparrow set. This is one of the points on which Mr. Potter is extremely exacting. His scenes must be no dummy staging of mere examples, but must each be



THE ENTRANCE TO BRAMBER'S INTERESTING MUSEUM.

possessed of the proper expression, size, and colour which has done so much to make his scenes like captured pages out of Nature's living book.

The tiny bow is of real yew, a miniature bow in every way. No mere representation in card, bone, or any other material than that of which actual bows are made would suit the ideas of this ingenious man.

"'Who saw him die?''I,' said the Fly; 'with my little eve I saw him die.'" In the great case which contains the many scenes in the tragedy, the Fly is so small that this sole witness of \mathbf{the} dastardly deed might be overlooked, were it not labelled with a little ticket, as is the Beetle, which is shown busy at work the greensward, on

represents the life's blood of the murdered Robin. At the graveside Mr. Potter has arranged the Owl, with his spade and



"'Who killed Cock Robin?' 'I,' said the Sparrow. 'With my bow and arrow, I killed Cock Robin.'"

with his thread and needle, making the shroud for the poor victim.

Then there is the Fish, with his little dish, with the awful red stain which with his spade and trowel, who dug the grave, and the Parson Rook, with his little book, ready to read the service.

Then there is the sad little cortège, preceded by the Linnet with the link, closely followed by the coffin wherein the mortal remains of poor Cock Robin are enclosed, while behind, with grief - stricken mien, walks the Dove, the gentle bird which was selected in the old story to "mourn for my love."

There is the Thrush, who volunteers to sing the dirge, and the Lark, who consents to act as clerk, provided the solemn burial was in the dark.

The Bull, who agreed to ring the bell, because he could pull, may not be life-sized—he could scarcely be accommodated in the case if he was—but he is a miniature model clothed with actual

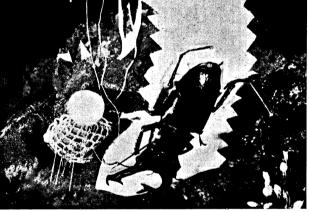


attitudes, in keeping with their sorrow-stricken condition. Altogether, there are over a hundred specimens of British birds in this simple case alone, to say nothing of many beautiful native butterflies. which Mr. Potter almost apologises for using, in a little book he has written describing

"'Who saw him die?' 'I,' said the Fly, 'With my little eye.'"

bull's skin, and is so perfectly modelled that one is helped to the delusion that some miniature specimen has been secured to do the office of bell-ringer in the wonderful pageant.

The supers, as it were—the birds of the air, which "fell a-sighing and a-sobbing when they heard of the death of poor Cock Robin"—are represented by scores of different species, all in mournful and dejected



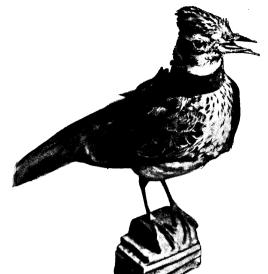


"'Who caught his blood?' 'I,' said the Fish, 'With my little dish.'"

""Who'll make his shroud?' 'I,' said the Beetle, 'With my thread and needle.'"

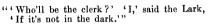
the museum, as being somewhat out of order; but they make a fit addition to the scene, and are allowed by the creator of the scenes because they were connected with his earliest efforts in a lifetime of Nature study.

This is only one of the nursery rhymes. There is the familiar story



inanimate, and several human characters which could only be shown by the making of miniature reproductions of the people.

There is the actual house, complete and perfect in every detail, and outside, in the yard, a selected cat is fighting a duel over a rat with a black-and-white dog. Cat, rat, and dog, all have been set with the truest expression in harmony with their occupations. Near the house is the "maiden all forlorn," and "the cow with the crumpled horn, that tossed the dog that worried the cat that killed the rat that ate the malt that lay in



of "The House That Jack Built." ^tThis gives Mr. Potter a fuller scope for the display of his skill as a modeller, because there are many things which are



"'Who'll sing the psalm?' 'I,' said the Thrush, As he sat on a bush."



"'' Who'll be chief mourner?' 'I,' said the Dove; 'I'll mourn for my love.'"

the house that Jack built." Beside an outhouse the "man all tattered and torn" can be seen, and the "priest all shaven and shorn" is only a little way off, while on the fence perches the "cock that crow'd in the morn." In the scene there are miniature bundles of hay, tiny buckets and milkingstool, wicker hen-coops and trees on which real birds-at least, as real as stuffed ones can be—perch quite naturally. The cow with the crumpled horn was modelled by Mr. Potter, and he is justly proud of this very small cow, which incidentally, to satisfy his passion for realism and perfection, he has covered with actual cow's skin taken from the front of the head of a cow which he selected as having just the right patch of vari-coloured hair between the eyes to make his model according to the tiny cow he had in his mind's eve.

"The Babes in the Wood" is another theme taken by the creator of Bramber Museum, and the case which shows the birds covering the children with leaves gives him an excellent opportunity to display his skill



look of combined ferocity and deceit, but at this quaint Sussex museum there is that old, old saying, "A friend in need is a friend indeed," illustrated by rats with such natural expressions that one could almost decide the part each individual animal is taking in rescuing a fellow from a trap, even if they were parted from the general scene.

In one case there are nearly twenty squirrels in a club life scene which is called "The Upper Ten," and, as a contrast, a tap-house scene with nine or ten rats in most natural attitudes, with a policeman rat peering in around the door.

"The Rabbits' School," in which white rabbits predominate, is a very quaint scene. Every rabbit has just the right expression to make the part it is playing so natural that, as one looks into the collection, one cannot but laugh, so quaintly and intelligently realistic do the little animals look.

Probably it is not possible



"'Who'll dig his grave?' 'I,' said the Owl." "'Who'll be the Parson?' 'I,' said the Rook."

"' Who'll toll the bell?' 'I,' said the Bull, 'Because I can pull.'"

in bird setting, although it is not by any means such a difficult scene as many of the others.

Mr. Potter was not content to follow established quotations and nursery rhymes in all instances, and he has evolved many entirely original scenes, in which he has set and assembled numerous specimens in association with models of furniture, table service, and other necessary articles in miniature.

In this museum, where the bulk of the birds and animals are set to tell a story, there are many quaint little scenes which show the originality and cleverness of the designer. Rats are extremely difficult subjects with which to secure any expression, except their beady-eyed



THE KITTENS' TEA-PARTY.

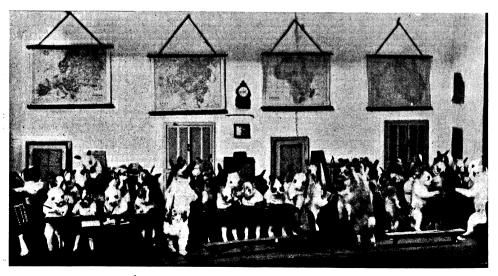
anywhere else to find such varied kitten scenes as there are at Bramber. "The Kittens' Wedding" and "The Kittens' Banquet" are both such a collection of manifold expressions that our cat artists might well study these collections for inspiration in the vast variety of expressions which a kitten's face can assume under the hands of an expert.

Another set entitled "The Guinea-pigs' Band" gave Mr. Potter some chance to exercise his patience, the minute and perfect instruments alone taking over six months to make.

Since it takes over two hours even to glance over this remarkable village museum, a full description of the exhibits, which range from ancient weapons to a twopenny banknote and hundreds of curios, in addition to natural history subjects, would become tiring and would be still quite ineffective in conveying a full idea of its variety and scope.

Visitors come to it from every part of the world, and many extraordinary articles which find a place within its walls have been sent by interested visitors when they have returned to their homes beyond the sea.

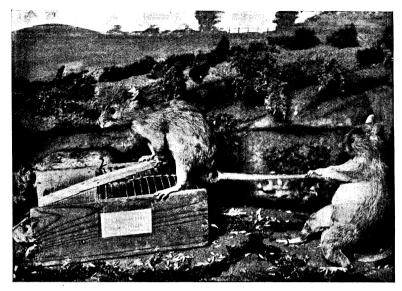
In the evening of his life, Mr. Potter is quietly completing, as far as he will ever admit it is possible to complete it, the labour of love which has been the dominating feature of his life's work, and with affectionate solicitude he raises and lowers the blinds at



THE RABBITS' SCHOOL: A SET CONTAINING FORTY-EIGHT YOUNG RABBITS.

frequent intervals, to guard his precious collection from hurt or harm by too brilliant sunshine.

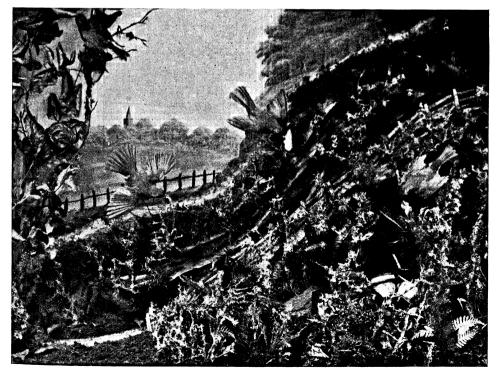
A halfpenny for child ren and a penny for adults is the only minimum set by the proprietor for admission; but many — in fact, the greater number of visitors accept the invitation to subscribe more liberally, if they care to do so, as the ridiculously low price stated is only fixed out of the



"A FRIEND IN NEED IS A FRIEND INDEED."

low price stated is only fixed "A FRIE out of the proprietor's good-will and pride in his work, in order that no humble passer-by or impecunious child may be debarred

from seeing the collection which represents his life-work for the want of the necessary coin.



THE BABES IN THE WOOD : BIRDS COVERING THE LOST CHILDREN WITH LEAVES,

PISTOLS FOR TWO

By TOM GALLON

Illustrated by G. C. Wilmshurst



ANKIN was probably the most envied man who sat at dinner that summer night at the Warringtons'. Millionaires were scarce in that company, and here was a man who, at about thirty-five years of

age, was already in that fortunate position. Good-looking, if a trifle heavy as to his build, with perfect health, and with the air of a man who had already grasped the world by its throat and shaken out of it what he wanted for himself.

And yet, had anyone there known all the true circumstances, or had been able, in some mysterious fashion, to delve deep into the heart of the man, they might have known him for one utterly miserable, for all his smiling appearance, and with a secret heartache that took the joy out of his life. Brian Rankin was in love. This ma

This man, who had told himself that women were nothing to him, and never would be anything, had been knocked over by a glance from a pair of haughty grey eyes, and was as wax in the whitest fingers in the world. And he was in love hopelessly, too, which, in a cynical world, seeing that he was a millionaire, seems rather absurd.

There she was, just across the table, looking at him now languidly out of the grey eyes that had originally bewitched him, Lady Marion Coverdale-Sinclair, with a long line of Coverdale-Sinclairs stretching away behind her into goodness knows how many generations, long before the time when Brian Rankin's ancestors had been penniless small farmers in Ireland, struggling for the living they never seemed to get.

"You wouldn't look at me nor think about me twice," Rankin thought to himself, looking at the proud young head steadily,

the while he listened to the chatter of the woman on his left. "Money doesn't mean anything to you, and I'm only a common fellow who has made his pile, and, according to your ideas, doesn't think anything save in a language represented by coins. And yet I'd give everything I have, and start again to-morrow, if you would just-----

He contrived to get near to her when, a little later, the men had gone into the drawing-room. With a little leaping of the heart, he noticed that she drew aside her skirts to make way for him on a settee. He sat down beside her and locked his fine, strong hands together between his knees, and began to speak of casual things. Presently, somewhat to his surprise, he found himself answering definite questions put by lips that almost smiled at him.

"Yes, I do find it somewhat lonely in London, save for business acquaintances. Oh, yes, I live quite alone, except for a man-servant. No, not a fashionable guarter, by any means, but it suits me, and the rooms are big. As a matter of fact, I'm afraid I do stay rather late at the club, sometimes till two or three o'clock in the morning. One finds company there."

He remembered afterwards that he had said all that in direct answer to smiling and interested questions put by the girl. When, a little later, he was taking his departure, it happened that Lady Marion was standing near the door of the room. As Rankin touched the hand of his hostess, Lady Marion smiled across at him and, as if casually continuing their conversation, asked, with a raising of her eyebrows-

"To the club, I suppose ?" "Yes, to the club," he replied, and smiled in return and went out.

At the club he was unlucky. He had counted on meeting one or two men to whom he could chat, and the one or two men were not there.

To make matters worse, there came into Copyright, 1913, by Tom Gallon, in the United States of America.

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the club young Dallas Holly. It is certainly annoying, when you have had a desperate row with a man, that that man should enter a room in which you are, and should remain in it by right. Rankin had had a desperate row with young Dallas Holly only that morning, and the row had culminated in Rankin bundling the younger man out of his flat, and telling him that he was not to come back again, which is a pretty conclusive way of dealing with your secretary, especially if you pay him, as Rankin had done, all that is due to him in the way of salary and a little over.

Half an hour of it was sufficient for Brian Rankin. He three aside the paper he had been pretending to read, and got up and went out of the club.

A taxi took him home in the matter of a few minutes, and by the time he had climbed the stairs to his flat, his good temper was restored. Dallas Holly had faded into the background, and Rankin was able to remember only that Lady Marion Coverdale-Sinclair had smiled upon him that night, and had seemed interested in his mode of life. He was whistling cheerfully when he put his key into the lock and let himself into the hall of the place.

"Are you there, Jennings?" he called, as he slipped off his overcoat.

A door at the end of the hall opened slowly, and an elderly man came out. Jennings must have come of a long line of men-servants—he was such a perfect type. His movements never seemed to be natural; it was as though he swung himself round stiffly on a pivot. He stood now looking at his brisker master, who, if the truth be told, always regarded him with almost a feeling of awe.

"I am here, sir," said the man. "Anything you require, sir?"

"No, nothing. You can go to bed." And then, as the man, with a stiff inclination of the head, was moving away, Rankin spoke again : "Has anyone called ?"

"No one, sir," answered the man. And then, as he once again turned away, he revolved on his pivot and spoke hesitatingly : "At least, sir, someone did call—a lady, sir. I'd quite forgotten."

Rankin paused, with his hand on the door of the room he used as an office and general sitting-room. He looked frowningly at the servant. "A lady? What lady?"

"A young lady, sir, of the name of Jones. A Miss Jones, sir. I could make nothing of her, sir, and she"—the man waved his arm in a wooden fashion and slowly shook his head—"she went away."

"Jones?" muttered Rankin to himself. "I never heard the name in my life—at least, no one I know. Did she give no message?"

"No, sir. You see, sir, it was this way. You come hin sometimes so quietly that I don't know whether you are hin, sir, or whether you are hout, sir."

"I see," said Rankin, hiding a smile. "But I interrupt you. Pray go on, and, above all things, don't hurry."

"I told the young lady, who seemed in a great hurry, sir, that I would inquire if you was hin. I left her for a moment while I went to look. Then I heard the door bang, sir, and lo and be'old—as you might say, sir —she was gone."

Rankin nodded. "I see—wouldn't wait. It can't have been anything very important. Oh, by the way"—this as he opened the door of the room and stood for a moment looking back at Jennings—" was she pretty?"

Rankin delighted in shocking the worthy Jennings, or, at all events, in attempting to shock him. He very rarely succeeded. In this case the imperturbable servant turned an expressionless face towards his master as he replied—

"Not to my mind, sir. Fairish, maybe, but not quite to my taste, sir."

"And it's excellent taste you have, isn't it?" said Rankin, with a laugh and with that faint suspicion of the brogue that came to his tongue sometimes when he was amused. "There—go to bed."

The room into which Rankin stepped was in darkness. He switched on the light by the door, and closed the door quickly and stepped across the room. He thought he had never hated a room quite so much as he hated this one to-night. Other men seemed to find cheerful places in which to live, cosy dens where one felt at home at once. But the furniture even of this place was not of Rankin's choosing; he had taken it as it stood from the last tenant. There was a great desk at one side of the room, and an easy-chair that belied its name set against it. Against one wall was a great ugly cupboard, in which sometimes Rankin hung a coat, or into which he pitched something he did not want at the moment, in true bachelor fashion.

There was a tray on the desk, with a decanter and glasses and a syphon; there was a box of cigars set out also. Rankin

mixed a drink for himself and lighted a cigar. He stood for a moment beside the litter of papers on the desk, turning one or two of them over idly in his fingers. After a moment or two he turned slowly and seated himself on the side of the desk, and so leaned, glancing about the room.

It is a well-known fact that something quite remarkable in a room may remain unnoticed for a long time, even though one is staring directly at it, and even though it is so apparent that one wonders afterwards how it could possibly have been overlooked. That was precisely the case with Rankin. He remembered afterwards that he must have stood for nearly half a minute before observing the extraordinary appearance that was showing glaringly in the crack between the big doors of the tall cupboard.

It was the end of a white lace scarf of dainty material.

Rankin straightened himself and stood In a dazed sort of fashion he upright. strove to think, stupidly enough, whether it was possible that there was anything in that cupboard belonging to himself which could produce the appearance; and while he thought that, he kept his eyes glued on the end of the lace scarf. Finally, pulling himself together with a jerk, he stepped softly across the room and bent down and touched the thing; walked round the room, warily watching it; came back to it and touched it again. At last, with the cigar gripped firmly between his teeth, he suddenly seized the handles of the doors and flung them open.

Drawn up inside the cupboard, looking at him with wide eyes, was Lady Marion Coverdale-Sinclair.

Had Rankin even suspected that a woman could hide herself in his rooms, this was absolutely the last woman he would have named for the part. It was almost like a continuance of the dream he had had of her that evening, only, for the moment, he could not understand why the dream should be carried on here. The girl stood drawn up flat against the back of the cupboard; and, after a moment, Rankin stepped back and made a courteous movement to her.

"Won't—won't you come in?" And then, as she did not move, he added whimsically: "Or, won't you come out?"

She gathered her skirts about her and made a rapid movement out of the cupboard and towards the door of the room. In an instant Rankin had stepped between her and the door, so that for a moment they stood within a foot of each other, eye to eye, the girl rebellious and defiant, Rankin keenly watchful. Then the tension of the thing was relieved, and, with a shrug of the shoulders, she stepped back.

"Well, what do you want with me?" she asked quickly.

"I think we'd better turn that question about," said Rankin. "What do you want with me?"

"I don't want anything," she answered. "I just want to---to go away."

It distressed him horribly to notice that she was breathing quickly and painfully, and that, despite the bravery with which she faced him, she was really terribly afraid. While he had not the least notion what it all meant, he yet felt in a vague fashion that he wanted to comfort and help her.

"I think you'd better sit down, Lady Marion," he said, waving his hand towards the chair that was not an easy one.

"I don't want to sit down; I don't intend to sit down," she said. "I'm quite sure, Mr. Rankin, that you will not stand between me and the door when I tell you that I want to get away. You won't dare to prevent me."

He laughed in spite of himself. "I don't think I can let you go quite like that," he said. "Of course, if it's a habit of yours to be running into gentlemen's rooms and hiding yourself in handy cupboards, that's a different matter; but to one who doesn't understand the habit, it's just a little bit surprising, as I think you'll admit. Doesn't it seem to you that you owe me some little explanation?"

"I've no explanation to offer," she said. "I know it all seems horrible, and I must leave you to think what you like about it. Of course, I never expected to be caught like this."

"Obviously not. So you are the Miss Jones who slammed the front door and then slipped back here when that bat-eyed servant of mine wasn't looking—eh?"

She nodded quickly, without looking at him. She was glancing round the place as if seeking a means of escape. He felt strangely humiliated, for the simple reason that she herself was humiliated.

"Now, I'm wondering why you came here?" he said slowly, after a pause. "It can't have been to see me, or you wouldn't have hidden yourself; and Heaven knows there's nothing very attractive in this place —at least, to a woman. What was it brought you here?"

She stood silent, swaying herself a little

on her feet and still breathing quickly. Rankin looked at her in a puzzled way, as with his alert mind he began to work out some reason for her being there at all.

"I want to get the hang of this thing, Lady Marion," he said. "We met not an hour since at the Warringtons', and you, who scarcely ever deign to notice me, was anxious to know something about my movements this evening—as to whether I was going to my club. Do you remember?" Despite himself, his voice was sharpening and hardening with a growing suspicion.

"Won't you please let me go?" she said again, in almost a whisper.

"No!" The answer was prompt and decisive. Rankin, moving quickly on his feet, as he always did, got to the door and turned the key and dropped it into his pocket. As he turned quickly, he saw that Lady Marion was holding, though shakily, a small and elegant revolver, a mere pretty toy, silver-mounted and with a mother-ofpearl handle, and that revolver was pointed at him.

"Unlock that door!" said Lady Marion, in a voice that shook even as her hand did. "I—I'm desperate! Unlock the door!"

Rankin looked at her with a new admiration in his eyes. Incidentally, he had never been so tremendously interested in any person or in any situation in all his life. "Is that loaded?" he asked quietly.

"Fully loaded," she replied, "and I shan't hesitate to use it."

Whistling softly, Rankin crossed the room to the big desk, conscious that the toy weapon was nervously following him. Still whistling, he drew a bunch of keys from his pocket and unlocked a drawer in the desk.

"Put up your hands!" exclaimed Lady Marion. And then, as he took not the faintest notice of her, she stamped a foot imperiously. "Do you hear what I say? If you don't throw up your hands at once, I shall fire!"

He had got the drawer open by this time, and from it he took out a heavy Army revolver. Lady Marion gave a little shriek and backed away from him; then she dropped her own weapon with a thud on the carpet and covered her face with her hands.

Rankin reversed his own weapon and stepped across to where the girl stood, and with a bow held the butt of it towards her.

"Oh, don't be afraid; I'm not going to use it. But you'll find this a much better weapon than that little thing"—he kicked it contemptuously with his foot—"and it has in its time killed a man. Catch hold of it."

"Take it away!" she exclaimed, with a shudder. "You brute!"

"Well, upon my word, there's no satisfying some people at all," said Rankin, with a laugh. "Are you quite sure that you won't change your mind and take it? You could kill me with that, always supposing, of course, that you contrived to hit me!"

"Will you take the horrible thing away?" exclaimed Lady Marion, crouching away from him against the wall.

Rankin tossed the revolver on to the desk and laughed. He was no nearer to a solution of the mystery, but, as a matter of fact, he had begun rather to enjoy the situation. When at last she looked timidly at him, she saw that he was leaning against the edge of the desk, placidly smoking and watching her. With her eyes upon him, she stooped and picked up the tiny revolver and put it in her dress.

"I'm not going to hurt you, Mr. Rankin," she said—" indeed I'm not."

"I'm deeply relieved to hear it," said he. "In fact, I may say that I breathe freely again."

She gave him a half smile and glanced at the door of the room. "Won't you please unlock the door?"

"There's plenty of time. I'm tremendously interested in you. Now that any possible unpleasantness which might have arisen is all over"—he jerked his head towards the revolver that lay on the desk beside him— "we can discuss the affair in quite a friendly spirit. After the storm—the calm. I really wish you'd sit down—Miss Jones."

"I'm not Miss Jones; you know I'm not Miss Jones," she flashed out at him.

"You told my man that you were Miss Jones—that's why I use the name. I don't quite like to think of Lady Marion being in this position. What was it you came here to get?"

It was a shot at a venture, but it went home. She coloured quickly and then as quickly went white. "How do you know I came to get anything?" she asked incautiously.

"I wonder what it was?" said the man slowly, as he moved round the desk and began searching on it. "My late secretary has left things in such confusion, confound him, that it'll take me some time to get them straight again."

"That wasn't his fault; you never gave him a chance," she broke out amazingly. He stopped in his task of searching and looked up at her. "Why, how do you know that?" he asked quietly.

"I-I don't know it; I-I don't know anything. I didn't say I knew anything."

"How did you know that I had fired Dallas Holly this morning?" There was no answer, and he supplemented that with another question. "What is Dallas Holly to you?"

"Nothing. Nothing at all. I scarcely scarcely know him."

Rankin had gone back to his old attitude against the desk; he was looking at her now more keenly even than before. "I fired young Dallas Holly—turned him away, if you understand that better—because he was lazy and incompetent, and because I didn't altogether trust him. I fired him so mighty quick that he hadn't got a chance to settle things up. Is that why you're here?"

She did not answer. With a hunted, desperate look in her eyes, she was watching the door. A sudden thought in his mind made Rankin swing round and search again amongst the confused mass of papers. He looked up sharply and spoke.

"There's a small account book missing, Lady Marion, to say nothing of a letter. They were both here this afternoon—in fact, when I went out this evening. I suppose you don't by any chance happen to know where they are—eh?"

There was a long silence. Rankin saw that her lips were quivering; the proud young head, held upright, was still turned a little towards that barred way of escapethe door. Moving quietly, he went across to where she stood and held out his hand. She looked at that and at him in a dull fashion for a moment or two, and then slowly raised the cloak she wore and felt in the pocket of it. From that inside pocket she took out a slim, black account book and put it quietly into his hand. Fingering that and still looking at her, he turned away with a shrug of his shoulders.

"I'm beginning to understand," he said quietly. "It's quite a pretty, melodramatic business, isn't it? You come here, armed to your pretty teeth, for the sake of young Dallas Holly. Something he hadn't cleared up—eh?" He tapped the book with a finger-nail as he spoke. "Stout fellow—to get a woman to steal for him!"

"He did not !" she flashed out. "I—I was willing—I offered !"

"To do what?"

"There was something he hadn't cleared

up—something you might have misunderstood. Oh, Mr. Rankin, there's nothing wrong—indeed, believe me, there's nothing wrong ! Dallas is straight—I'd stake my life on that !" The proud young voice rang out passionately. "He's careless, reckless, I know, but he's the best-hearted and the finest fellow in the world—my Dallas !"

Rankin looked round at her quickly. "So that's the way the cat jumps, is it?"

She nodded quickly, looking at him with steady eyes. "Yes. We're going to be married. No one knows yet, but it's all settled between us. Now you understand, don't you?"

He was weighing the little book in his hands; he looked at her with a half smile. "Awfully fond of him, Lady Marion, I suppose?" he suggested wistfully.

"I love him," she answered, and then, as an after-thought—" very dearly."

With a strange, jerky bow, he held out the book to her. "Here's your book, Lady Marion," he said. "I don't think I want to look at it. I'll unlock the door."

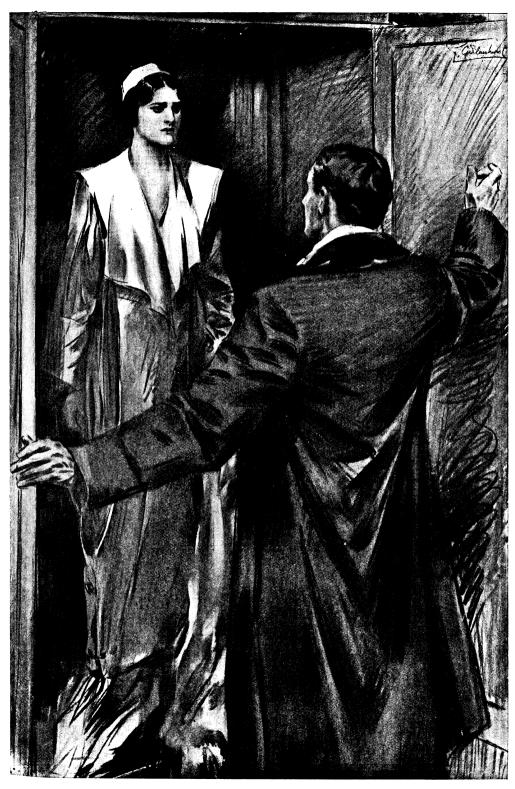
He had crossed the room, and had taken out the key and had unlocked the door, and was holding it open, before she seemed to realise what he meant. And then, gripping the book in her hand, she looked at him incredulously. "But what are you doing?" she asked.

"Lady Marion, I don't make war on women," he said, with something of the grand manner that perhaps no one else had ever seen in him. "Take the book to your Dallas, by all means; the incident is closed. Shall my man get a taxi for you—or I would do it myself?"

"I'm not going to let you turn me out like this," she exclaimed, inconsistently enough. "The incident is not closed, by any means. If you think you're going to turn me out of the place like this, leaving behind me an entirely false impression concerning Mr. Dallas Holly......."

"My dear Lady Marion, I have never in all my life had a false impression concerning any man," broke in Rankin quickly. "I reckoned up Mr. Dallas Holly about ten minutes after he had first entered my employment. I was a rough and tough sort of fellow, and it seemed to me that I wanted a gentleman to teach me the ropes a bit. I met young Dallas Holly—."

"And you liked him at once, didn't you?" The eyes that looked so eagerly into his were disconcerting; he answered vaguely. "Naturally, or I should not have employed



"Drawn up inside the cupboard, looking at him with wide eyes."

him. Holly told me that he was looking for some real work to do in the world, and I gave him his chance to do the real work. I made him my private secretary. You see, he'd been well brought up, and I hadn't. I'd fought my fight in my own rough way, and I had made my pile, and, in spite of what men said, I had made it cleanly."

"You're not suggesting——" she began indignantly.

"I'm suggesting nothing. Under all the circumstances, I think it will be wiser and better if you take that book away and hand it over to Mr. Holly. He can return it to me at his leisure, when the accounts are straight."

"I'm going to look at it now," she said. "You shan't suggest things like this against him when he's not here to defend himself. I'm going to look at it now."

She was fumbling with the leaves, and, as she did so, a letter fell from between them. She stooped quickly and picked it up, with a glance at Rankin. He felt that he was beginning to be desperately sorry for her.

"I don't think I'd look at it," he said. "Much better to let it alone. After all, you've gained your end, Lady Marion; you can take the book away and let him have it. I shall never know anything about it when he returns it in due course."

Almost scornfully she held out the book, and the letter with it, towards him. "I challenge you to tell me what is wrong, and to tell me truthfully," she said.

He took the book and opened it. After a glance at the folded letter, he passed it across to her. She opened it with a puzzled frown and looked at it.

"In a small way, Lady Marion, I give a certain amount away in charity from time to time, perhaps as a sort of thank-offering to a Providence that has been very good to me. Lately, since Mr. Holly has been here, I have been handing him over considerable sums, with instructions as to how the sums should be divided. A day or two back I directed Mr. Holly to send a cheque for five hundred pounds to the Poor Children's Hospital. You see" — Rankin smiled apologetically--"I had been a poor child myself, and I liked to think that perhaps I was helping a few of the same sort. Five hundred pounds was the amount, and you hold the receipt for it in your hands."

She opened the folded paper and read it half aloud. "'Many thanks for your generous contribution of one hundred pounds.' But surely there is some mistake, Mr. Rankin?" "Sounds like it, doesn't it," he answered bitterly. "Do you know the writing in this book?" He handed the book to her again.

She bent over the page and answered quickly : "Of course—Dallas."

"You will please note that he's been careful to enter the five hundred pounds as being contributed to the hospital."

It took her a moment or two to get the full sense of the thing, the full horror of it, and then she flared out at him indignantly: "I don't believe it—I won't believe it! He wouldn't do a thing like that!"

"Of course he wouldn't," answered Rankin, with a laugh, "And yet he was mighty anxious to get hold of the book and the letter, wasn't he? There—why trouble about it? Let us say that he borrowed the four hundred; it's a prettier word, Lady Marion." He took the book and the folded paper, and tossed them on to the desk. "As I said just now, the incident is closed. I've done some queer things in my time, but I've drawn the line at robbing hospitals."

"I tell you there is some mistake," said the girl again. "Why don't you give him his chance? Why will you judge him when he's not here to answer for himself? The people at the hospital may have made a mistake as to the amount. Give him his chance to explain."

"How is any explanation possible, with you in this room at this hour, and he with the knowledge of why you came?" asked Rankin. "However, I like to play the square game, if I can, and he shall have his chance. It's been my way to judge men quickly, and perhaps to judge them hardly."

While she watched him, he dropped into the big chair behind the desk and took up the telephone. After a moment he asked for a number and got it.

"What are you going to do?" she asked.

" I shall get him at the club; I left him there half an hour ago," he answered her brusquely. And then, speaking into the instrument: "I wish you'd tell me if Mr. Dallas Holly is there. He is ? Ask him to come to the 'phone for a moment—Brian Rankin speaking."

"What will you say to him?" asked Lady Marion, in the inevitable pause that followed.

"Nothing. I'll leave him to do the talking. Hullo, Holly, is that you? Sorry to worry you at this hour of the night. Could you come round for five minutes to see me? Matter? No, what should be the matter? You'll come? I'm greatly obliged to you. Good-bye." Rankin hung up the receiver and got to his feet. "He'll be here in five minutes," he said to the girl. "In other words, in five minutes he'll come into this room, and he'll find you, and he'll know that you've failed in what you set out to do. It doesn't give him a dog's chance—that, does it?"

She was white to the lips, but she spoke as bravely and as proudly as ever. "I know that he can explain; he had a perfectly good reason for asking me to get that book and the letter. He couldn't come himself; you had told him never to enter the place again."

"I'm not doubting for a moment, Lady Marion, that he's a fine fellow, and all that you judge him to be, and I'd like to give him his chance. It's you who have been put to the test to-night-a bitter test for any woman. It might have happened that I was a blackguard; that does not seem to have occurred to him. Suppose I had found you here stealing an important paper-for that is exactly what it amounted to-and had refused to recognise the fact that I knew you, and had handed you over to the police. Suppose that I had realised that you'd put yourself utterly in my power-oh, suppose anything ! Have you thought about that side of the question ? You've had your test and come through it. How would you like to test him?"

"I'm not afraid; you can do as you like," she answered, looking at him curiously. "Good!" His tone was decisive. "Then

"Good !" His tone was decisive. "Then I propose to arrange a little scene for Mr. Dallas Holly—something that shall strike him at once, in a dramatic sense, when he enters the room. We've got to be quick, because I expect his taxi is already well on the way."

She watched him as he moved quickly across to the big cupboard and threw open the doors. A heavy silk dressing-gown hung in one corner of it, and out of this he pulled the waist-cord. He closed the doors again and, carrying the cord, came to where she stood. "Please turn your back to me and put your hands behind you," he said.

Dominated by his stronger will, she did as she was told; and while he pinioned her wrists—and he was in a mood to kiss the little delicate palms upturned under his eyes —he explained quickly what was in his mind.

"I have discovered you in my rooms, Lady Marion, and I have very brutally overpowered you, despite frantic struggles on your part, and I have forced from you a confession as to why you are here. I sincerely hope I am not hurting your wrists at all? Then, before I confront Mr. Holly with you, I purpose to put you behind that curtain which stretches across the window, so that I can disclose you at the real dramatic moment. I hear the sound of a taxi; he will be up the stairs in a moment now, and I must let him in."

"May I suggest that you should put away that revolver?" said the girl, nodding her head towards it where it lay upon the desk.

head towards it where it lay upon the desk. "I don't intend to do that," answered Rankin coolly. "I think it only right, Lady Marion, in this crisis of our lives, to tell you quite seriously that I love you with all my heart and soul, and that I have loved you since first I saw you. There, again, comes in the bully and the brute, because I am taking an unfair advantage of you. Come along !"

She was behind the curtains, and the bell of the outer door of the flat was actually ringing, when she thrust out a lovely flushed face and spoke in a quick whisper. "I knew you loved me—a woman always knows," she said, and then was gone again before he could reply.

Dallas Holly followed the other man into the flat nervously enough, and looked about him quickly as if in search of someone. He was a particularly well-dressed young man, with a cultivated air of boredom that had become almost natural. "Thought I might as well come round, as you made a point of it," he drawled. "As a matter of fact, I had not intended to come here again after the way in which you treated me. What is it you want?" He yawned expansively and stared insolently at Rankin. And while he stared at the other man, his mind was working to know what could have happened.

"I've had a visitor, Mr. Holly, a friend of yours," began Rankin.

"I don't think I'm concerned to know anything about your visitors," retorted the other.

"But this happens to be a friend of yours --Lady Marion Coverdale-Sinclair," said Rankin slowly. "Don't you wonder what has become of her?"

"My dear Rankin, I haven't the ghost of a notion what you're driving at," said Holly. "If you've fetched me round here on some cock-and-bull story told by a woman, I simply won't listen to it."

"Then you're quite expecting that some cock-and-bull story, as you phrase it, has been told by some woman about you?" exclaimed Rankin quickly. "Perhaps that woman you sent round here to play a game you were afraid to play yourself, that woman who had more courage in her little finger than you have in your lazy body."

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"Let me know precisely what it is you're talking about," said the other man, speaking in a strained voice.

"About a little matter of four hundred pounds, taken from a hospital that badly needed the money. Lady Marion did not get the book nor the receipt, after all, but she innocently helped me to discover the fraud."

"Once again I tell you I don't know what you're talking about. And if any woman says that I got her to help me in--in any matter"—the man was floundering badly, but he still carried the thing off with something of an air—"she lies!"

The curtains parted and Lady Marion stepped out into the room. For a moment Dallas Holly caught his breath and drew himself up tensely. There was a strange silence in the room. Perhaps the younger man realised that the game was up. In all probability he was reckless of what he did.

"I would have forgiven you, Dallas, for anything but this," said the girl at last, in a low voice that yet seemed to echo in every corner of the room. "Many a man is tempted, especially where big sums are put in his way, and you and I together might have put that right. But you've done worse than that-you've gone back on a friend. I thought once that I loved you; I know now that in my heart I've never loved you at all. For all that you knew, you left me to the mercy of this man. He caught me here and bound me as he would have bound any other common thief"-she twisted about so that she might show her bonds, and at the same moment threw a glance in the direction of Rankin that set his heart thumping madly"and he must do with me as he will. The blame is mine, and I must take the punishment."

Dallas Holly stood glancing from one to the other, with his face working, and then suddenly he made a dash for the big desk and caught up the revolver. Rankin did not move; perhaps he knew his man. For the matter of that, Lady Marion did not scream or move; perhaps she knew the man, too. Holly stood for a moment with the thing gripped in his hand; he held it shakingly towards his head, and then, with a shudder, he let it fall on the desk. He twisted about as though to say something, and finally, with a sound in his throat that was half a laugh and half a sob, he walked quickly from the room. They heard the door of the flat bang in the distance.

"There's no one loves me in all the world !" she said, with her head up and her lips quivering.

" "That's not true," he answered steadily. "You didn't say that just now."

"Life isn't worth anything to me," she went on inconsequently. "If you're the man I think you are, kill me!"

He started and looked queerly at her, but he had a notion that he must answer her in her own coin. "Very well," he said, and he stooped and picked up the weapon from the desk. "If you have the courage, so have I. Shut your eyes."

She shut her eyes and stood there without a tremble. "Please bequick!" she murmured.

With a little laugh, he stepped up to her and kissed her on the lips. She opened her lovely grey eyes then full upon him, and the smile came before the blush that suffused her face. She seemed for a moment, pinioned as she was, to sway towards him, and then came her whisper—

"Oh, you coward !"

SONG.

THE golden goblet of my soul God silvered o'er with song. Sweet Love, for love take lover's toll, The way of life along.

The jewelled goblet of my soul, God gemmed it o'er with song. Sweet Love, take kisses, lover's toll, The way of life along.

LESLIE PEVERILL.

THE RENAISSANCE OF BRITISH MUSIC

By S. L. BENSUSAN



N a page of Robert and Clara Schumann's diary, written just seventy years ago, Robert Schumann exclaims, in one of his enthusiastic moments: "How glad I am that I belong to the

glorious productive time which is now going on ! On all sides interest in good music is awakening; the public sympathy is extraordinary." The Schumanns were living in Leipsic then, the star of Mendelssohn was in the ascendant, and that gifted composer, player, and judge was exercising a splendid influence throughout Germany. Modern music was entering into the lives of German people. Schumann found all the boundaries of appreciation widening.

We have not, in this country, composers whose appeal is as great as Mendelssohn's was then or Schumann's is now, but we have the "glorious productive time," we see the "interest in good music awakening on all sides," and if the public sympathy is not yet "extraordinary," it is at least remarkable when we remember that, considered as a modern product, it is not yet in its teens.

Only a dozen years ago the production in any leading concert hall of a new work by the British composer who lacked a position and influence evoked something akin to a mild surprise, not unmixed with pity and, perhaps, annoyance. It was a little difficult for the most optimistic observer to see any future before the British composer; the British public did not want him-they even resented his appearance. If he wished to earn a living, his best chance lay in disguising his name and endeavouring, on the strength of its German, French, or Italian equivalent, to gather pupils round him, and, for his spare time, to find a modest place In some orchestra, where he was safe to be

overworked and underpaid. There was no deliberate boycott of British composers by directors and conductors of orchestras; there was no more than the simple business fact that orchestral work demanded rehearsal, that rehearsal, then as now, was an expensive item, and that the public interest in the work of native composers could not by any stretch of imagination be held to justify Perhaps some of the the expenditure. British composers who had fought their way to high places were in part responsible. One has an uneasy memory of many dull and turgid compositions that smelt of the lamp and were supposed to stand for what was best in the musical thought and expression of these islands. The directors of provincial musical festivals, too, had a most unholy love for much that sounded, to some of us, at least, rhetorical, pompous, and insincere. This was the only form of novelty to which the authorities were prepared to give a hearing. The British public may have been difficult, but it was not without excuse, and the young men who had something to say were bound to suffer if they had a soul above drawing-room ballads and similar concessions to what we are accustomed to call "the public taste." Many were forced by the needs of daily life to write music that was unworthy of their talent.

In all probability the earliest change in the general attitude towards the work of young British composers was brought about by the late August Manus at the Crystal Palace. He gave them a chance when he could, and would have done even more had circumstances permitted. Arthur Sullivan was the better for this help in the early years, and among others to whom Manns gave a hearing was Josef Holbrooke, who at the age of twenty-one had his tone-poem "The Raven" produced at Sydenham. This was in 1900. Many another young man obtained sympathetic assistance from August Manns, who was in a very fortunate position with regard to rehearsals, for his orchestra being a permanent one, he could study new

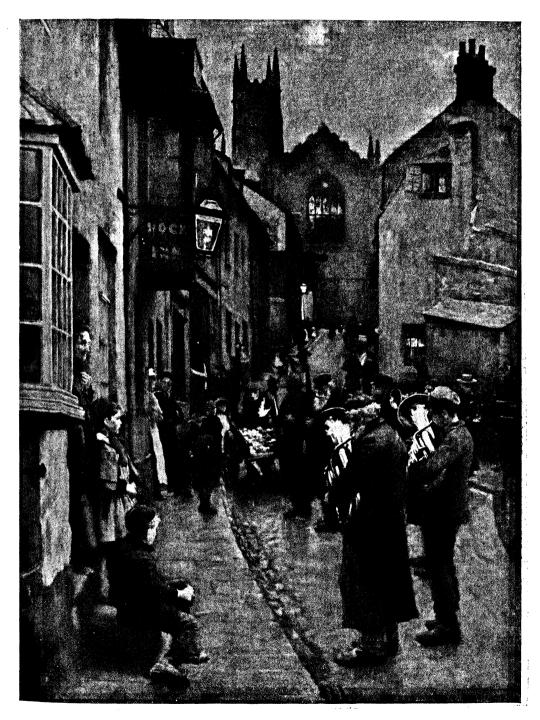
work with it any day and every day without extra expense.

When the long-lived prosperity of the Crystal Palace was drawing to a close, to the great loss of all who love music, and the music-lovers of the metropolis were being attracted to the Queen's Hall, Sir Henry Wood took the British composer in charge and gave him a hearing, chiefly at the Promenade Concerts, which still afford the amateur his best training-ground. Those who go to Promenade Concerts to-day. prepared to listen with delight to Richard Strauss, Debussy, Tchaikovski, and Brahms, might find it hard to realise the change that the years have brought. About the time when Robert Schumann was commenting upon the growth of German musical taste, the London Promenade Concert programmes were made up of quadrilles, of waltzes by Josef Lanner and Johann Strauss, and a solo or two for some virtuoso. Symphonies had been tried and found wanting. Under MM. Hervé, Arditi, Rivière, and Sir Arthur Sullivan. the "Proms" improved considerably, but popularity of the lower order was still the keynote of the mass of the music when Sir Henry Wood and Mr. Newman were first associated at the Queen's Hall; the public required a deal of coaxing before it would refrain from the worship of false gods. Rehearsals were, and are, the stumbling-block. To give adequate study to new work written in the ultra-modern idiom is expensive, and to give a performance that has not been carefully prepared is to deprive the composer of his proper chance of appealing on his merits to the public.

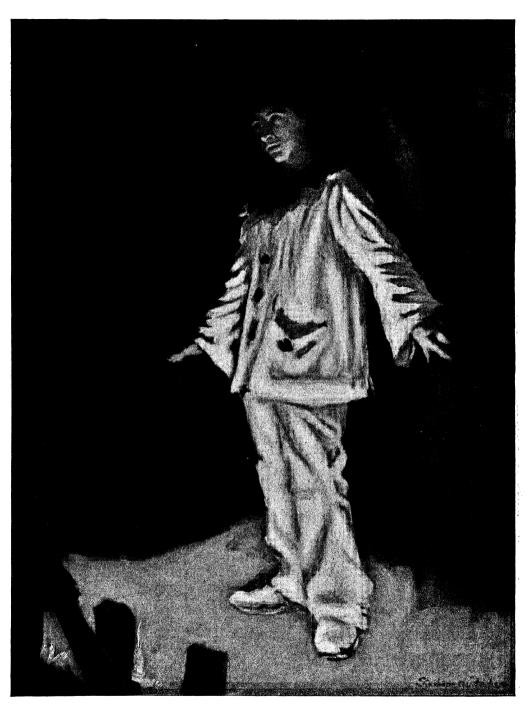
The time came, only a few years ago, when modern British composition had reached the stage at which it required a measure of nursing by a wealthy nurse, when the young men who have a message to deliver needed a patron who had the means, the will, and the enthusiasm to do them justice. Happily the hour brought the Mæcenas. It is impossible to deny that, in the past five years, Mr. Thomas Beecham has done more for the young British composer than any living man. He has taken what he regards as the best work of the day, and has given it a hearing without troubling about the cost. His orchestra has delivered the message of our time to all who have the will to listen. and there has been not only a direct but a reflex action resulting. The other orchestras have been more anxious to give British composers a chance, and composers like Mr. Josef Holbrooke, Mr. Balfour Gardiner, and

Mr. Dunhill, have put forward on their own responsibility programmes of British music, and have contrived to interest a growing section of the general public in their own and contemporary compositions.

The question arises whether the encouragement that has been given to the British composer is justified by the quality of the music that has been put forward, and a direct answer can hardly be forthcoming. Encouragement has not produced a composer of genius, nor need it be expected to do so, for genius declares itself in spite of obstacles and not by reason of their removal. At the same time it would be fair to say that a growing interest has enabled many men of talent to find an audience, and has even brought before an ever-growing public British-born composers who had been forced by the indifference of their countrymen to seek abroad-generally in Germany-the recognition denied to them at home. Not only composers, but eminent soloists had been forced, by the indifference of England, to live on the Continent. The names of Dr. Ethel Smyth and Mr. Frederick Delius occur in the first-named connection. Dr. Smyth found her chance through the late August Manns, for it was at the Crystal Palace that a serenade and an overture-" Antony and Cleopatra "-were given in 1890; but though she was heard at long intervals in London, Germany acknowledged her talent far more generously than this country did, and her masterpiece, "The Wreckers," with its Cornish story and atmosphere, was actually produced for the first time in Leipsic under the title of "Strandrecht." The opera had travelled to Austria before it reached London, and it is largely due to Mr. Thomas Beecham we have to-day a fairly intimate that acquaintance with some of the music, which is essentially fitted for concert-room perform-Frederick Delius is another composer ance. whose gifts Mr. Beecham has enabled us to share with Germany, where they speak of "Fritz" Delius as a countryman, and have certainly justified their claim upon him. Some will remember with a certain interest his "Village Romeo and Juliet," but it is unnecessary to refer to anything more than the monumental "Mass of Life," to show that in Delius we have a musician of more than ordinary talent, one for whom his country should have an intelligent appreciation and a warm welcome. The fact that it has failed to show either is not to the national credit; but Mr. Beecham is to be thanked for having given us ample opportunity of hearing some



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"I PAGLIACCI." BY STANHOPE FORBES, R.A. The scene of the prologue to Leoncavallo's opera. Reproduced by permission of the Artist.

of the most characteristic Delius music. Tt. may be remarked, in passing, that the Beecham Symphony Orchestra is composed of British musicians; and though this would have been regarded as a sign of weakness only a few vears ago, the orchestra has won praise in the most critical cities of the Continent. Mr. Beecham says that he has the greatest confidence in the capacity of the English player and in the tone of some of the English-made instruments. Apparently he holds that the only advantage of an orchestra made up largely of foreigners is that it costs less. There are few orchestras outside these islands capable of producing the quality of tone we associate with our best. The writer has heard two in Paris and one in Boston that can be compared with our leading English orchestras; there may be others elsewhere.

Perhaps the most hopeful sign of the times is that the young British composers are not endeavouring to create a school. There is no unity of purpose in their work; each appears to be striving independently of his contemporaries. Some have vast ambitions. are modest. Josef Holbrooke others towers head and shoulders above them all in point of sheer daring, ambition, and the measure, if not the actual quality, of accomplishment. Wagner himself did not seek to cover a larger canvas; and if everything that Mr. Holbrooke wrote were on the level with his best writing, Richard Strauss might hide a diminished head. Down to the present, however, the danger has not become acute. At the other end of the scale of endeavour comes Mr. Percy Grainger, who has devoted his talents to the preservation and setting of folk song, work of enduring interest and importance, but capable of no more than a limited appeal. Between the two are many men who are writing good music, most of it programme music, some with distinct literary inspiration behind it. Mr. Van Holst has written some clever choral work, and settings of old and modern poetry. Mr. Arnold Bax has given us an attractive symphonic poem. Mr. Vaughan Williams's Sea Symphony is a choral work in which the accomplishment can afford to fall a little behind the aim and yet retain an agreeable significance. Mr. Frederic Austin has written, inter alia, a symphony in which there is skill and order. Mr. Balfour Gardiner's "News from Whydah" has deserved and achieved popularity. Mr. Hamilton Harty, whose gift as an accompanist and a conductor has given him a place rather removed from those who

strive unaided for a hearing, has written several works of distinct charm for the large orchestra, including a symphony of which he has every reason to feel proud.

Chamber music has its devotees in everincreasing numbers. Mr. Dunhill, to whom, as one of the plucky concert-givers, reference has been made already, has shown merit as a composer in this sphere. So, too, have Mr. Vaughan Williams, Mr. Nicholas Gatty, and, of course, Mr. Holbrooke, while there are plenty of other men whose names are beginning to be recognised outside the immediate circle of their friends and acquaintances in London, Manchester, and other musical centres.

In the case of a great majority of the names above-mentioned, the music appeals as something with a certain quality of inspiration. It is not always a high quality. At the concerts given by the younger men or their friends, there is no lack of that which one could forego without loss or regret, but the redeeming features of enthusiasm and devotion are associated with nearly everything presented, even when the achievement bears no proper relation to the brave ambition that give it birth; and we have to remember that the chance of obtaining a hearing is certain to stimulate many who are only now at the beginning of a musical career. The musician who did not love his art would certainly find no temptation to follow it. Even a hearing means little or nothing in the way of material gain. Until a composer has scored more than one popular success with serious music, his return is never far removed from a bare living wage, and this wage will probably come from the unremitting and often tedious toil of the studio or the orchestra. The case of Coleridge Taylor is too near to the public memory to need detailed mention here, but it threw an unpleasant light upon existing conditions for those who imagined the rewards of composition to be other than what they are. It follows that the men who give their lives to composing symphonies, symphonic poems, oratorios, and chamber music, are responding to the creative instinct and are giving their The Renaissance of British music does best. not mean that the British composer may hope to obtain in return for the serious work of a lifetime half the wealth that rewards the composer of one really successful musical comedy. But the fact worth remembering is that, down to a few years ago, the young British composer could not even look for a hearing unless he wrote for the gallery.

He was a person of no account, upon whose best efforts few orchestras would go to the expense of a rehearsal. To have changed this is to have taken a step towards the time when men, if they can write serious music that is worth the hearing, may hope to get a living from their royalties, without being condemned to devote to teaching or playing the time that should go in creative work. Even the poet is better off than the musician. If he has written good poetry, he can sell the serial use of a part of it to a high-class magazine or review-he can secure a hearing. But the composer may be compelled for years on end to give the whole copyright in his works to a publisher in exchange for the resultant publicity. In some cases he has been known to subscribe the money for rehearsal of his music; but this is only possible where he is rich or has wealthy friends.

The whole question is decided by the public. Music publisher and concert director alike know the difference between good work and bad, and they may have a personal predilection for the music they reject. Like the actor, they live to please, and must They cannot lead the public please to live. The most prefer to follow and earn taste. its rewards; a few of the valiant will dare to walk side by side. The encouraging fact is that the academies and musical institutions of the wholesale manufacturing type, despite their colossal failure in most regards, have raised the standard of appreciation, and, while endowing thousands of men and women with ambitions, have given to a few the capacity to realise a . The new spirit that the part of them. teaching institutions have aided has been reinforced by the playing of the new music by the new orchestras. The elderly-minded. who felt that music began with Bach. continued with Beethoven, and ended with Brahms, have served their time and done their work. Their conservatism had many redeeming features, and none can quarrel with their taste, save on the ground that it was not sufficiently catholic, and refused to support much that deserved encouragement.

One can say with truth that much music, fantastic, ugly, or incomprehensible, is accepted to-day because people fear to reject what they cannot understand. So many times the public verdict has been reversed by the years that the public hesitates, when in doubt, to express a decided opinion. It is all the more pleasing to remember that so much of the younger men's music has been received with hearty and spontaneous applause; the message has been grasped and appreciated. The music, for the most part, may lack the qualities that make for very long life, but it has sincerity, it expresses some phase of life or thought, it is the contribution of men who have something to say, know how to say it, and are offering their best.

MYSTERY.

WHO knows the secret of the rose, Or of the wind that wayward blows, Now east, now west; or of yon ship, Whose white wings spread and dance and dip Where sunset's secret gleams and glows;

How a tide ebbs, and sleeps, and flows; How, eve and morn, a baby grows, Cherub in all save the wing-tip: Who knows?

One secret, one, of all of those, May calm the welter of my woes, By whisp'ring me how this green slip Of seventeen in Love's great grip Hath caught me sure and fast! Who knows,

Who knows?

W. A. MACKENZIE

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THE BLOSSOMING FORTH OF OLD OILY By LAURENCE NORTH

Illustrated by Charles Pears



HE time was, only a year or two ago, when an Arcadian simplicity still gave the keynote to the general shop in the village. "Old Oily," as the children called the merchant himself, was content at

Christmas-time to furbish up his windows a little, to rub away a small portion of the summer's dust, and set out a few quiet and almost antediluvian toys among farming implements, joiner's tools, and groceries. But prosperity laid hold of the merchantman, and with it came an invasion of modernity with a rather big " M."

The first serious sign of this appeared last Yule-tide. Old Oily grew, by subtle degrees, more flowery in his talk, and he set apart a small room at the back of the shop for toys alone. It was dignified with the title of "Christmas Bazaar" or the "Grand Emporium."

As Margaret and her father entered on some errand not connected directly with Christmas shopping, Old Oily invited them to step through to the back.

"You goes up three steps," he said, "threads your way carefully between the packin'-caises, avoids the two coils of wire on your left, and enters the Grand Hemporium."

It was not very magnificent, but it had an extraordinary success, and almost discounted the annual State visit to Town, with its whirling kaleidoscope of crowded hours, its parcel-laden return home by an unconscionably late train, somewhere at the witching hour of half-past eight o'clock. Oh, sin and scandal in a well-regulated household ! But fathers, left to themselves, do these unheard-of things, and hear of them later, when their own bed-time comes.

To return, however, to Old Oily. During the summer the smile of prosperity broadened upon his face and on his shop front. Alas, for Arcadia! Oily announced "Structural Alterations," and blossomed out into plateglass. The children's father groaned for a lost ideal, and called Modernity hard names. His eldest daughter refused to sympathise. She thought Old Oily's was just lovely now. There was so much more in the windows, and you could see through the new glass quite plainly. The old was cobwebby.

Old Oily went on from strength to strength. Next he took out all the front of his upper floor, and filled it with a dazzling sheet of glass, behind which he heaped household wares. Beyond doubt, Tottenham Court Road was his inspiration. The judicious grieved, but three Philistine children would admit no error. All was for the best in the best of all possible worlds.

And so the time drew on to Christmas again.

In Oily's back premises there had been mysterious comings and goings, but these did not interfere with the ordinary course of business. No announcement was made, and so cunningly did the builders work, that nobody suspected that anything epochmaking was toward. But suddenly, not long before Advent, the shop seemed to have acquired a miraculous spaciousness. The redundant stock, that darkened the light of day and cumbered the floor-space, had opened out, and lo! there grew up, like Jonah's gourd, a cash desk, with a real live young lady in it. In a night, as it seemed, the ceiling of the back shop had been cut away in the centre, revealing a handsome balustrade, and, above, one caught a glimpse of things that suggested Holborn, Brompton, or Westbourne Grove at the merriest season of the year.

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Nor was Oily's jauntiness confined to his Emporium alone. The renewal extended to the man himself. Hitherto the children had believed him to be very old indeed, and he had, it is true, a cobwebby look, like his windows in the old days. But one morning, the Engineer, who had been visiting the village tailor—an artist who brought the atmosphere and elegance of Bond Street into a rustic neighbourhood, and who had been found, on experiment, to turn out sons, and even fathers, in excellent style and on moderate terms—came back bursting with news.

"I saw something at Snipson's," said the Engineer.

"There are many things to be seen at Snipson's," the Parent agreed. "His ties are irreproachable, his shirts of the finest polish, his socks a dream, his yard measure is a magician's wand, his scissors the chisel of a Praxiteles, his goose a swan, it would be an honour to be hanged with his tape____."

"Silly old Daddy !" the Engineer interrupted, with a patronising grin. "I wasn't meaning Snipson's *stock*. I saw somebody being measured—who do you think?"

"The Squire, possibly, or perhaps the Vicar. Snipson's riding - breeches are moulded like wax to the legs of any Nimrod, his cassocks are bodies of divinity-----"

"Tosh !" said the son severely. "I'm serious. Do you know, I've found out Old Oily's dimensions. He's six inches wider lower down than he is round the chest. He should do dumb-bells. I advised him to. He's got some in the shop."

"Oh, my too frank son! And what did Oily say?"

"He said it was an idea, and he'd consider of it Sunday mornings. You should have seen Snipson coughing politely behind his hand and pretending he had a bad cold ! My word, Oily's gone in for regular slap-up togs ! I saw the cloth. Thought he'd never be done choosing. Snippy had down nearly everything in the shop. And Oily's laid in the latest collars and some rainbow ties. I asked him whether he was going to be married."

"My dear son, you certainly will not stick for information, if asking will help you."

"Why should I? Oily wasn't a bit put out. He blushed rather and grinned, so I said: 'Perhaps you're too old to marry now.' And he said he reckoned Mr. Snipson would make him young, if anybody could."

"Your conversational powers, Boy, are amazing. And then?"

"Oh, then I asked him how old he was."

"Your cheek is sublime! And Oily replied----?"

"That he was of years of discretion, or something, and that perhaps some nice young lady mightn't think him such a Methusalem as I seemed to do. Snipson had another fit of coughing. Then I saw daylight, and I said : 'I suppose it will be that young lady you've got in to look after the cash ?' And he said : 'They all look after the cash, sir.' But he got pretty red again, so I fancy I've about hit it. To Snipson he whispered : 'E's a cure, 'e is, that one.' And then Snipson laughed outright and seemed to be relieved. I thought he would have burst, if he hadn't got the chance to roar."

"You have evidently had a morning, dear Boy."

"Rayther ! Old Oily's no end of a good sort. I said: 'I suppose you've lots of cash to look after, Mr. Tombs ?' And he said he wasn't exactly a millionaire, but business might be worse. Room for improvement, of course—still, all things considered, he had no call to complain, and he 'oped, by strict attention, and mindful of past favours, to merit an increasing share of distinguished patronage. Just on Christmas he would have a great surprise for the nobility, clergy, and gentry of the surrounding neighbourhood, including, particularly, their hoffspring."

"To which dark sayings you remarked -----"

"That I fancied he'd been writing out a circular. He winked at Snipson and said : 'We'll see, Master Hugh, we'll see. Time will show.' Then he said something to Snippy about the need for supporting home industries, and what a rotten shame it was for the big shops in town to send motor-vans careerin' over the countryside, takin' the bread out of the poor man's mouth. But he thought enterprise might do something. He praised Snippy for his courage in opening shop down here, and for keeping a high class of goods. There was no doubt that a good line always told. He himself had some first-rate lines coming in. 'In your circular, you mean ?' I asked, and he winked again. 'Certainly, sir. In the circular, but in the Hemporium as well. A line in the circular is no good unless it's on your shelves.' I didn't quite see what he meant, and I asked if it was clothes-lines. That gave him and Snipson more fits. Then they got to talking about their bad debts, and how slow people are to remember the poor tradesman, who on a really big thing, and cared to advertise on a swagger scale, I'd bring out a new number of the Darley Wood Gazette, and give him the front page and also a big descriptive leading article all to himself. We haven't had a Gazette for ages, Daddy ; you remember it went broke for want of ads. He asked what my circulation was, and said he'd think seriously over it. I mentioned, as I was going out, that we did Births, Deaths, and Marriages at special rates to big advertisers."

"Old Oily's not the only man of business in these parts, I see."

quite



has really no margin. Snippy said, too, that some as *paid* right enough was slow to order, and surprisingly fond of old clothes, which was a disgrace to be seen. I believe he meant you, Daddy. After that it was dull, and I left. But I told him, if he was innocently. "Of course, there's Snipson. They're live wires, both of them."

"Your modern metaphors leave my rusty wits paralysed."

"Oh, go on, Daddy ! How you do rot a chap! Anyhow, you keep your eye peeled



for Oily. He's got something up his sleeve."

With that the Boy retired to aeroplane construction.

• A few days later the murder was out.

The news came to the door in a big handbill, wherein Old Oily had surpassed himself. His preamble set forth the large measure of previous success-gratefully acknowledgedwhich had necessitated the enlargement of The Grand Christmas Bazaar floor-space. was now open. "Come and spend the day with us," said our, rural Gamage, cunningly suggesting halls of enchantment innumerable and interminable. He dwelt feelingly on the exquisite arrangements for light and Why he did not condescend to heat. acoustics is a mystery. But acoustics figured in the scheme. Perpend !

In the Little World excitement reigned. Oily had got a toy-gallery ; Oily had untold treasure upstairs. Downstairs it was now just a shop of inconsiderable, foolish, useful things of no account, but above ! Oily had invited them to step upstairs. They had stepped upstairs accordingly. He had not quite got all the things out yet, but scrumptious ! A sceptical Parent received hints of a telephone and a ghost. He failed to connect the two incompatibles, with curious consequences, as the sequel shows.

At length he consented to see for himself. He went, needless to say, under full escort. Oily, gorgeously arrayed in Snipson's handiwork, met the party with nods and becks and wreathed smiles, and led the way to the celestial regions, eloquently discoursing on the latest developments of enterprise.

It must be confessed that genius had been at work. The gallery was a triumph. Nobody would have dreamed that such spaciousness had lurked aloft. The balustrade gave the place distinction. It was noble to look from there into the shop below. The decorations were of the right Christmas kind, the lights were warm and soft, and—chief point—the display of toys was simply ravishing.

Oily continued his harangue. "The little hot-air engine, very complete and absolootly no danger whatever to the hoperator, amusin' and instructive alike to parents as to juveniles; the dolls of all kinds, the caterpillar, quite the funniest and most nateral toy of the season; last, and by no means least, the beadle that will not run off the taible—altogether a most entertainin' inseck, if somewhat larger than beadles usually is, but you don't want to meet that size in the kitchen o' nights—eh?

"And now, Missy, we comes to the Public Telephone! Ask your papa kindly to touch the bell."

It was a neat, practicable-looking little instrument, utterly without guile to the naked eye. A wary Parent might have suspected a put-up job, from the quivering eagerness of his flock. But even the confidence that seemed to exist between the children and Old Oily was not in itself a thing suspicious.

The Parent touched the bell.

No ring answered to his finger. Instead, that hypocritical, painfully neat little box declared its true character. Off flew a lid where no movable lid should have been, and up into the victim's face a long white spook sprang, wriggling, twisting, interminable.

And then among the deathless gods arose laughter inextinguishable.

"Zat was the tellyphone and the ghostie !" gurgled the Infant Margaret. "What a flight my Daddy got !"

"From ghaisties, ghoulies, and things that go bump in the daytime," the victim misquoted piously, "good Father Christmas, deliver us !"

After this the Parent's part was purely fiscal.

It was a shameful antedating of the season's shopping. The Parent's problem now is, will the usual pilgrimage to Town be demanded, or has Old Oily vindicated local industries? It is a nice point of political and domestic economy.

Oily evidently has found reason to take courage in affairs not wholly of the Hemporium. Rumour has it that the cash desk will soon be occupied by another damsel, and that the former fair incumbent will at an early date become Mrs. Tombs. The Boy was right. Oily's "first-class lines" included those of marriage.





SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

"HAS Master Reggie come home from school yet, Mary?" "I think so, mum; the cat's a-hidin' in the coal-'ouse."

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

A CHRISTMAS ROUNDEL.

At Christmas-time the snowy countryside (See Dickens) echoes to the joyous chime; And I, alas, am puddinged and mince-pled At Christmas-time.

The beef your butcher designated "prime Gives ample evidence the fellow lied; To sell such meat I hold to be a crime.

But customs should be kept at Christmas-tide, That peaceful season, joyous and sublime; ^{Old} friends foregather, though the world is wide,

At Christmas-time!

Leslie Mary Oyler.



FINDING a patient reading "Twelfth Night," a facetious doctor asked: "When Shakespeare wrote about 'Patience on a monument,' did he mean doctors' patients?"

"No," was the reply, "you find them *under* monuments, not on them."

"DID your watch stop when you dropped it on the floor?" asked a small boy of his friend. "Of course," was the answer. "Did you think it would go through?"



A CERTAIN railway company has a regular form for reporting accidents to animals on its line. Recently a cow was killed, and the local inspector drew up the report. In answer to the question, "Disposition of carcase?" he wrote: "Kind and gentle."



THERE was an exciting scene in a provincial theatre. Some fellow had made a disturbance in the gallery, and the cry was raised: "Throw him over! Throw him over!" Thereupon a solemn-looking man rose from his seat and impressively shouted: "Hold on, don't waste him—kill a fiddler with him!"



A MODEST REQUEST.

"LIDY, would yer be so kind as ter lend me an 'airpin ter clean me pipe wiv? I'll give it yer back agin lidy!"

CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

She needed pots and a new floor broom. And window-blinds for the children's room: Her sheets were down to a threadbare three. And her tablecloths were a sight to see. She wanted cloths and a towel-rack, And a good, plain, useful laundry sack, Some kitchen spoons and a box for bread, A pair of scissors and sewing thread. She hoped some practical friend would stop And happen to think that she'd like a mop, Or a bathroom rug, or a lacquered tray, Or a few plain plates for every day. She hoped and hoped and she wished a lot, But these, of course, were the things she got; A cut-glass vase and a bonbonniere, A china thing for receiving hair. Some oyster forks, a manicure set, A chafing-dish and a cellaret, A letter-clip and a drawn-work mat, And a sterling this and a sterling that: A gilt-edged book on a lofty theme, And fancy bags till she longed to scream; Some curling tongs and a powder puff, And a bunch of other useless stuff. But though she inwardly raged she wrote To all of her friends the self-same note. And said to each of the lavish host: "How did you guess what I needed most?"

NEIGHBOURLY POLITENESS.

SIR GODFREY KNELLER, the great artist, and Dr. Ratcliffe lived next door to each other, and were extremely intimate. Kneller had a very fine garden, and, as the doctor was fond of flowers, he permitted him to have a door into it. Ratcliffe's servants gathering and destroying the flowers, Kneller sent to inform him that he should nail up the door, to which Ratcliffe, in his rough manner, replied: "Tell him he may do anything but *paint* it."

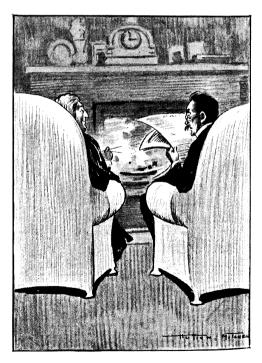
"Well," replied Kneller, "he may say what he will, for tell him I will take anything from him *except* physic."

A TALL man, with beads of perspiration streaming down his face, was noticed darting in and out among the aisles of a certain great shop the other day.

His excited actions attracted the attention of all the staff, and they hardly knew what to make of it. Finally a young man of the clothing department walked up to him and asked—

⁷ Are you looking for something in men's clothing? "

"No," he roared, "not men's clothing--women's! I can't find my wife anywhere!"



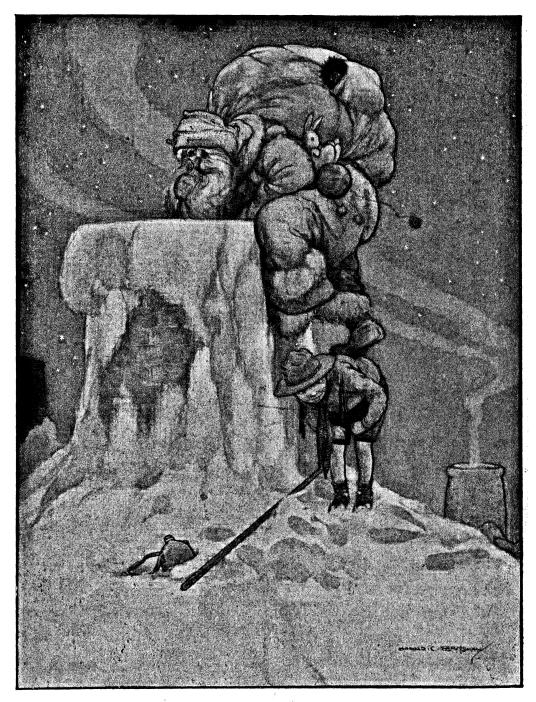
UNREASONABLE.

"GRORGE, dear, if we were both young and single again, would you still want me to be your wife?"

"Now, my dear, what is the use of trying to pick a quarrel just as we have settled down to enjoy a quiet evening?"



"THE TURKEY TROT." BY TONY SARG.



[&]quot;A LEG UP." BY HAROLD EARNSHAW,

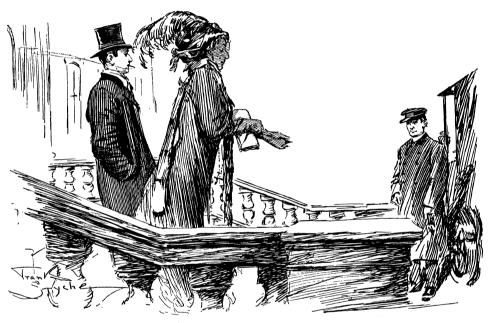
"You admit, then," inquired the magistrate severely, "that you stole the pig?" "Yes," said the defendant.

"Very well," returned the magistrate, with decision. "There has been a lot of pig-stealing going on around here lately, and I am going to make an example of you, or none of us will be safe.'

"Do you want well-cured bacon?" asked the grocer of the young housekeeper.

"Well, no," she answered; "I'd rather have some that has never been ill."

SMITH is a young lawyer, clever in many ways, but very forgetful. He was recently sent on a journey to interview an important witness in regard to a case then pending in the Law Courts. Later the head of his firm received this telegram: "Have forgotten name. Please wire at once." The reply sent was: "Witness's name Jenkins. Your name Smith."



THE ART OF SHOPPING.

MERE MAN (accompanying his wife to match a piece of material): We go to Barkridge's first, I suppose? WOMAN OUT FOR ENJOYMENT: We certainly do not. They're sure to have it there.

THE bishop was to perform the ceremony at a very smart wedding. As usual, a great crowd of people stood about the doors and lined up on each side of the strip of red carpet. Magnificent carriages and motor-cars rolled up and disgorged the splendidly-dressed guests, but at the end of a long string of fine equipages came a deplorable, ramshackle old four-wheeler. It drew up gloomily opposite the strip of red carpet.

A couple of policemen dashed at the cabby. "Here, hi!" they shouted. "You can't stop here! The bishop's just coming!" The bishop's just coming!"

The old cabman regarded them with a scornful eve.

"Keep yer 'air on! I've got the hold buffer inside !

And the bishop opened the door and stepped out.

THE charming wife of a French diplomat had never thoroughly mastered the English language. She was urging a naval officer to attend a dinner, the invitation to which he had The lady insisted that he already declined. must go, but the young officer said he could not possibly do so, as he had "burned his bridges behind him."

"That will be all right," she exclaimed; "I will lend you a pair of my husband's."



"MAMMA, has a fat man got a soul?"

"Why, of course, Tommy. What makes you ask such a question?"

"I heard papa say that corporations had no souls."

THE PROFESSOR'S SERMON.

THE poor country viear wanted a holiday badly, but he could not afford to pay for someone to do duty for him on the Sunday. He had just had an invitation to spend the week-end with some friends, which he would have liked to be able to accept. He went through the list of his clerical friends, to see if there was any of them who could help him over his difficulty and kindly take his services The kind-hearted professor consented to do what was required of him, but as the time drew near, he was much troubled about his sermons. He could think of nothing to preach about, and in despair he fell back upon a learned lecture on optics, which he had by him, and adapted it for the occasion into two parts, for his morning and evening sermons.

The vicar enjoyed his well-earned holiday, and the services in his church were taken by his friend

for him. The only man he could think of was now a learned professor of physics at a university, who was a great authority on that branch of physical sciencewhich treats of light and vision. Years ago the professor and he were chums at college. The vicar wrote to his old friend. He explained the circumstances of the case to him. and asked the professor to come and take his Sunday ser-vices and preach two sermons in his church.

The professor's reply came in due time: 'I shall be glad to help you, and take your Sunday services, but I am quite unable to



MIXED METAPHOR.

HOUSEMAID (showing photo of *fiancé*): Yes, that's 'im, cook. What d'ye think of 'im?

Cook (critically but decidedly): Well, if ever I see a shark in lumb's clothing, e's one !

preach a sermon. I have not preached for the last twenty years, and have spent all my energies in giving science lectures."

The vicar was very much pleased to hear his old friend was inclined to come and help him, and wrote again, urging him to come, and explaining that the people in his parish would expect sermons on Sunday, but that, as it was only a country congregation, he need not be afraid that his sermons would be criticised. t i o n a l l y voluble golfer was vainly endeavouring to move a ball from the tee with his driver. Pausing in his efforts, he espied, watching him, a small girl holding by the hand a still smaller boy.

Immediately visions of flying golf balls flashed across his mind.

"You ought not to bring your little brother here," he cautioned the girl.

"Oh, it's all right, sir," came the reply. "He's stone deaf!"

the professor, who gave two learned discourses on optics to his country congregation.

When the vicar returned, he asked his old verger about the Sunday services in his absence, and how the people liked the sermons they heard that day. "'E was a

fine preacher, and we all liked 'is sermons. They were about 'op-planting, which the people in these 'ere parts are all hinterested in. But I think 'e must be a stranger to these 'ere parts, because 'e talked of 'ovsticks, and we halways calls them op-poles.



THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE.



A Wholesome and Nourishing Food for Family Use, delicious to eat—and ALWAYS FRESH. FROM ALL FIRST-CLASS BAKERS.

A NEW USE FOR DOCTORS.

A FARMER rushed up to the home of a country doctor in the village late one night, and besought him to come at once to a distant farmhouse.

The medicine man hitched up his horse, and they drove furiously to the farmer's home. Upon their arrival, the farmer said-

"How much is your fee, doctor?"

"Half a guinea," said the physician, in surprise.

"Here y'are," said the farmer, handing over the money. "The cabman at the station wanted fifteen shillings to drive me home."

A FARMER, buying some tools in a shop, was asked by the proprietor if he did not want to buy a bicycle.

"A bicycle won't eat its head off," said the salesman, "and you can ride it around your farm. They're cheap now, and I can let you have one for six pounds ten."

"I think I'd ruther put the money into a cow," said the farmer reflectively.

"Ha, ha!" laughed the shopman. "You'd look foolish riding round your farm on a cow, now, wouldn't you ? "

"Well, I dunno," said the farmer; "no more foolish than I would milking a bicycle."



No apparent motive can be found." "VERY strange thing, constable, that suicide last night. No "Was the poor man married, sir?" "Didu't I just tell you that there was no apparent motive?"

WHILE travelling in Scotland, an American saw a very fine shepherd dog, and tried to induce his owner to sell him.

"Wad ye be takin' him to America?" inquired the Scot.

"Yes, indeed," replied the American. "I thought as muckle," said the old man. "I couldna pairt wi' Nero."

While they were talking, an English tourist came along, and the owner sold the dog to him for less than the American had offered.

"You told me you wouldn't sell that dog," said the latter, after the purchaser had departed with the collie.

"Na, na," said the Scot; "I said I couldna pairt wi' him. Nero'll be back in a day or two, but he couldna swim the Atlantic."

"You don't make very good music with that instrument," said a bystander to the man with the bass drum, as the band ceased to play.

"No," admitted the pounder of the drum, "I know I don't; but I drown a heap of bad music."



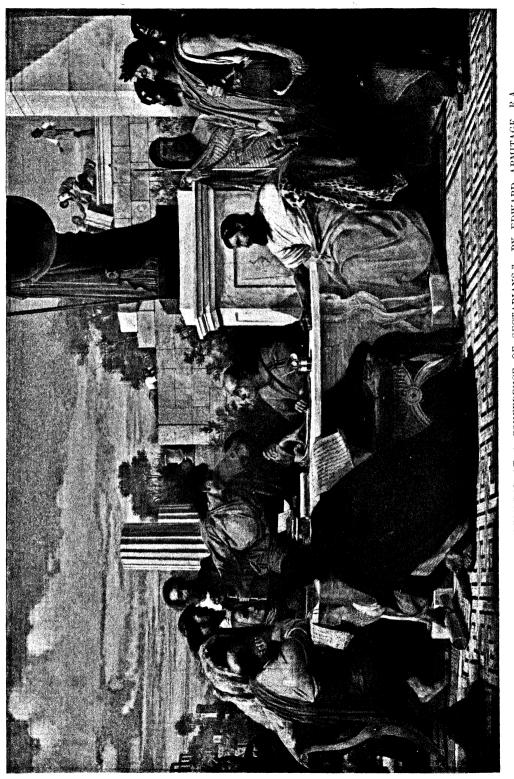
"This boy," said the proud mother to a neighbour, "certainly grows more like his father every day.'

And the neighbour, knowing the father, inquired anxiously-

"Does he, now? And have you tried every thing?"







"JULIAN THE APOSTATE PRESIDING AT A CONFERENCE OF SECTARIANS." BY EDWARD ARMITAGE, R.A. From the original in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, by permission of the Corporation.



FAIR EXCHANGE.

BY DORNFORD YATES.

ILLUSTRATED BY G. C. WILMSHURST.

JONAH rose, walked to the window, pulled the curtains aside, and peered out into the darkness.

"What of the night ?" said I.

"Doth the blizzard yet blizz ?" said Berry.

"Good," said Berry. Then he turned to Daphne. "Darling, you have my warmest Yuletide greetings and heartiest good wishes for a bright New Year. Remember the old saying—

You may have more pretentious wishes, But more sincere you can't than this is." 1914. No. 229. "Do you believe it's going on like this ?" said his wife.

"Dear heart—two words—my love for you is imperishable. If it were left at the goods station for a month during a tram strike, it would, unlike the sausages, emerge fresh and sweet as of yore. I mean it."

"Fool," said Daphne. "I meant the weather, as you know."

"A rebuff," said her husband. "Do I care? Never. Strike me in the wind, and I will offer you my second wind for another blow. I did not forget everything when I

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[&]quot;It doth," said Jonah.

married you. But to the weather. This berlizzard—German—has its disadvantages. A little more, and we shan't be able to bathe to-morrow. Never mind. Think of the Yule log. Noel." Here he regarded his empty glass for a moment. "Woman, lo, your lord's beaker requires replenishing. I ought not to have to tell you, really. However—..."

Daphne selected one of the harder chocolates, took careful aim, and discharged it in the direction of her husband's face. It struck him on the nose.

"Good shot," said I. "That entitles you to a vase. If you like, you can have another two shots instead."

"I'll take the vase," said my sister. "For all the area of the target, I mightn't hit it again."

"A few years ago," said Berry, "you would probably have been pressed to death for this impious display. In consideration of your age, you might instead have been sent to a turret."

"What's a turret?" said Jill.

"Old English for bathroom, dear, and kept there till you had worked the murder of Becket in tapestry and four acts. I shall be more merciful. When you can show me a representation of the man who drew Slipaway in the Calcutta Sweep trying to believe that it wouldn't have won, even if it hadn't been knocked down when it was leading by nineteen lengths—...."

"Very brilliant," said Daphne, "but the point is, what are we going to do about to-morrow night?"

"If it goes on like this, we can't go."

"Oh, but we must," said Jill.

"My dear, I'm not going out in this sort of weather without Amundsen, and he may be too busy to leave Town. Besides, the blubber hasn't come yet."

"Couldn't we get hold of Wenceslas?" said I.

"He's getting five million a week at the Palliseum. Makes footprints there twice daily in real snow. The audience are invited to come and tread in them. They do, too, like anything. Happily Wenceslas is famed for the size of his feet. But you can't expect a man to leave—"

"But it can't go on like this," said Daphne.

"My dear, English weather is like your dear self—capable of anything. Be thankful that we have only snow. If it occurred to it to rain icebergs, so that we were compelled willy or even nilly to give up sleeping out of doors, it would do so. Well, I'm tired. What about turning out, eh? Light the

lanthorn, Jonah, and give me my dressinggown."

"If you want to make me really ill," said Daphne, "you'll go on talking about bathing and sleeping out of doors."

Berry laughed a fat laugh.

"My dear," he explained, "I was only joking."

We were all housed together in an old, old country inn, the inn of Fallow, which village lies sleeping at the foot of the Cotswold Hills. We knew the place well. Few stones of it had been set one upon the other less than three hundred years ago, and, summer and winter alike, it was a spot of great beauty comparatively little known, too, and far enough from London to escape most tourists. The inn itself had sheltered Cromwell, and before his time better men than he had warmed themselves at the great hearth round which we sat. For all that, he had given his name to the panelled room. Our bedrooms were as old, low-pitched and full of beams. The stairs also were a great glory. In fact, the house was in its way unique. A discreet decorator, too, had made it comfortable. Save in the Cromwell room, electric light was everywhere. And in the morning chambermaids led you by crooked passages over uneven floors to white bathrooms. It was all right.

Hither we had come to spend Christmas and the New Year. By day we walked for miles over the Cotswolds, or took the car and looked up friends who were keeping Christmas in the country, not too many miles away. The Dales of Stoy had been kind, and before the frost came I had had two days' hunting with the Heythrop. And to-morrow was New Year's Eve.

Four miles the other side of the old market town of Steeple Abbas, and twenty-one miles from Fallow, stood Bill Manor, where the Hathaways lived. This good man and his wife Milly were among our greatest friends, and they had wanted us to spend Christmas with them. Though we had not done so, we had motored over several times, and they had lunched with us at Fallow only the day before. And for New Year's Eve the Hathaways had arranged a small but very special ball, to which, of course, we were bidden. Indeed, I think the ball was more for us than for anyone else. Anyway, Jim and Milly said so. The idea was that we should come over in the car in time for dinner with the houseparty, the ball would begin about ten, and, when it was over, we should return to Fallow in the ordinary way. Nobody had anticipated such heavy weather

And now it was a question whether we should be able to go. Also, if we went, whether we should be able to get back.

The dispute waxed. Daphne and Jill insisted that go we must, could, and should. I rather supported them. Berry and Jonah opposed us; the latter quietly, as is his wont, the former with a simple stream of provoking irony. At length-

"Very well, ghouls," said Berry, "have your most wicked way. Doubtless the good monks of the hospice will find my corpse. I wish the drinking-trough, which will be erected to my memory, to stand half-way up St. James's Street. How strange it will sound in future !"

"What'll sound ?" said Jill.

"The new Saint's Day, dear-Berrymas." When order had been restored, Jonah suggested that we should adjourn the debate till the next morning, in case it stopped snowing during the night. As it was nearly one, the idea seemed a good one, and we went to bed.

The morning was bright and cloudless.

The cold was intense, but the sun glorious, while the clear blue sky looked as if it had never heard of snow. In a word, the weather was now magnificent, and, but for the real evidence upon the countryside, no one would ever have believed such a cheery, good-natured fellow guilty of a raging blizzard. But the snow lay thick upon the ground, and it was freezing hard.

"We can get there all right," said Jonah, "but I don't see the car coming back at four o'clock in the morning. No, thanks, I'll have marmalade."

"There's almost a full moon," said I.

"I know," said Berry, "but the banjo's being painted."

"We'd better stop at the inn at Steeple Abbas," said Jonah.

" If we can get as far as Steeple, we can make Fallow," said I. "Remember, I'm driving."

"We are not likely to forget it, brother," said Berry.

"If you knew the difference between the petrol-tank and the gear-box-"

"But I do. Petrol in one, tools in the other. However-

"Jonah's right," said Daphne. "We'd better stop at Steeple."

"Not I," said I.

"Nor me," said Jill. "Boy and I'll come back to our dear Fallow and our nice big grate and our own beds."

"Good little girl," said I.

Berry emptied his mouth and began to recite "Excelsior."

At twenty minutes past three the next morning I drove out of the courtyard of "The Three Bulls," Steeple Abbas. Alone, too, for it had begun to snow again, and although I was determined to sleep that night, or what remained of it, at Fallow, I would not take Jill with me for such an ugly run. As a matter of fact, I had started once with her in the car, but before we had got clear of the town, I had turned about and driven her back to the inn. The people had evidently half expected her back, for, as we stopped at the door, it was flung open and the landlord stood ready to welcome her in. The next moment I was once more on my way.

In spite of the weather, the car went well, and I had soon covered more than half the distance.

I was just about to emerge from a sideroad on to the main highway, when a dark mass right on the opposite corner against the hedgerow attracted my attention. The next second my head-lights showed what it was, and I slowed down. A great limousine, if you please, standing at an angle of twenty degrees, its near front wheel obviously well up the bank, and the whole car sunk in a drift of snow some four or five feet deep. All its lights were out, and fresh snow was beginning to gather on the top against the luggage rail.

I stopped, took out one of my side oil lamps, and, getting out of the car, advanced to the edge of the drift, holding the light above my head. The limousine was evidently a derelict.

"You look just like a picture I've seen somewhere," said a gentle voice.

"And you've got a voice just like a dream I've dreamed some time or other. Isn't that strange? And now, who, what, where, why, and how are you? Are you the goddess in the car, or the woman in the case? And may I wish you a very happy New Year ? I said it first."

"Try the woman in the car."

"One moment," said I. "I know."

" What ? "

"I know who you are. Just fancy !"

"Who am I?"

"Why, you're New Year's Eve."

A little laugh answered me.

"I know I've dreamed that laugh," said

I. "However, where were we? Oh, I know. And your father, Christmas, has gone for help. If I know anything, he won't be back again for ages. Seriously, how did what happen?"

"Chauffeur took the turn rather late, and next moment we were up the bank and in this wretched drift. It wasn't altogether the man's fault. One of our head-lights wouldn't burn, and you couldn't see the drift till we were in it."

"He might have known better than to run so close to the hedge these days."

"He's paying for it, anyway, poor man. He's got to walk till he finds a farm where they'll lend him horses to get the car out."

"Considering the hour and the climatic conditions, I don't suppose the farmers will come running. I mean they'll wait to put some clothes on."

"Probably. Besides, he doesn't know the district, so he's up against something this little night."

"Of all nights, too, Eve. But what about her, poor lass?"

"Ôh, I'm all right."

"You must be. But don't you find it rather hot in there? Can I turn on the electric fan?"

"I've been making good resolutions to pass the time."

"Hurray! So've I. I'm going to give up ferns. And you can tell me yours as we go along."

"Go along?"

"Yes, my dear. Didn't I tell you I was a highwayman? I only left York two hours ago."

"Quick going."

"Yes, I came by the boat train, with Black Bess in a horse-box. And now I'm going to abduct you, Eve. Your soul's not your own when you're up against High Toby. I have a pistol in my holster, a cloak on my back, and a price on my head. My enemies call me Red Nat, me friends——"

I paused.

"What do your friends call you?"

"Adam," said I. "Let's see. You'll have to get out on the near side, won't you? Wait a moment."

I plunged round the back of the car and opened the door. Certainly it was terribly cold.

While we had been talking, she had been leaning against the side of the tilted car, with her face close to the inch and a half of open window. Except for an occasional flash, which had showed where her eyes were, I had not seen her at all. Expectantly I raised the lamp and peered into the limousine. Out of a huge fur rug a solitary eye regarded me steadily.

"Only one eye?" I said. "How sad! How did it happen?"

The solitary eye went out, and then reappeared with a fellow.

"You remind me of the North Foreland," said I. "That's an intermittent light, isn't it? Two winks and a blink every ten seconds."

"I didn't wink." This in a plainly indignant, if muffled, tone—too muffled for me. So—

"I beg your pardon," said I.

A little hand appeared and pulled the rug away from a small white nose and a mouth whose lips were paler than they should be. But it was a dear mouth.

"I said I didn't wink."

"So you did. I don't mean you did, you know. I mean, I know you said you didn't. I'm not sure I've got it right now."

"Never mind. I've only one brain, and at this hour of night-""

"The vitality of the human frame is at its lowest ebb. Exactly. That's why you must let me get you out of this as quick as possible."

"Oh, but I don't think-I mean-"

"My dear Eve, I know you come of an old-fashioned family—look at your father but convention's going by the board to-night. I'm staying at an inn about nine miles away. We'll be there under the half-hour. There's supper and a fire waiting for us. Why, yes, and you can have Jill's room. Of course, there'll be a fire there, too, and everything ready. You see—"

Hurriedly I explained the situation. When I had finished—

"But what'll the inn people think ?" she said, with big eyes.

"Oh, hang the inn people !"

"And supposing it got out ?"

"I think the proceedings at the inquest would read worse, my dear. Get up and come along at once."

"Oh, but you know I can't."

"You must. I'm serious, You'll die if you stop here much longer, my dear child. Do you realise how cold it really is ?"

A faint smile came over the gentle face, set in its frame of fur.

"Poor lass," I cried. "What a fool I am ! Give me her hand, and I'll help her up."

"But what about Falcon?"

"The chauffeur?"

She nodded. I thought for a moment,

then I looked for the companion. There, happily, were tablets and a pencil.

"We'll write him a note," said I. "Wait a minute."

With difficulty I scrawled a few words. Then—

"How will this do? Falcon, I have been found and taken to shelter. If possible, bring the car to 'The Three Bulls,' Steeple Abbas, by noon to-morrow. Will you sign it?"

I put the pencil into her hand and held the lamp for her to see. She wrote quickly. When she had finished, I laid the tablets on the seat, where they must be seen at once. When I looked at her again, I saw she was smiling.

"So there's something in the nickname, after all."

"What nickname?" said I. "Red Nat?"

"No. 'Gentlemen of the road,' Adam."

"Thank you, Eve. If I could feel my mouth, I'd kiss your hand for that. As it is_____"

I helped her to her feet and set the lamp on the front seat. Then I bade her stand in the doorway while I wrapped the rug about her.

"I'm afraid I can't dig you a pathway, so I'm going to carry you to my car. I used to be able to delve once—___"

"When Who was a gentleman?"

"Exactly. And you span. But I'm out of practice now. Besides, I left my niblick in London. Come along. Don't be frightened if I slip. I shan't go down. Yes, I'll come back for your dressing-case."

The next moment she was in my arms, and three minutes later we were making for Fallow at nearer thirty than twenty miles an hour.

*

As we ran into the village, I heard the church clock chime the half-hour. Halfpast four. We had come well. A moment later I had stopped at the old inn's door. Except for a flickering light, visible between the curtains of the Cromwell room, the place was in darkness. I clambered stiffly out and felt for the key I had asked for. A Yale lock in the studded door! Never mind. This door is only a reproduction. The original probably shuts off some pantry from some servants' hall in New York City. However. When I had switched on a couple of lights, I went back to the car and opened the door. Have I said that it was a cabriolet ?

"Eve," said I.

No answer.

I took the lamp once more and flooded the car with light. In the far corner, still wrapped in the rugs, my lady lay fast asleep. With some difficulty I got her into my arms. On the threshold I met Thomas, our waiter. He had little on but a coat and trousers, and there was slumber in his eyes.

"I didn't wait up, sir," he explained, "but, hearing the car, I just come down to see you'd got everything. Miss Mansel asleep, sir?"

I stared at him for a moment and then looked down at the charge in my arms. A corner of the rug had fallen over her face. Thomas, naturally enough, thought it was Jill.

"Er—yes," said I. "She's tired, you know. And you'd better not let her see you. She'll be awfully angry to think you got up for us. You know what she said."

Thomas laughed respectfully.

I passed up the stairs, and he followed.

" I'll only open the door and see that the fire's all right, sir," he said.

I placed my burden gently on the sofa, away from the light of the fire.

"You'll let me light the candles, sir?"

"Not a farthing dip, Thomas. Miss Mansel may wake any moment. You can come and open the coach-house door, if you like."

"Very good, sir."

"You can get to it from the inside, can't you? Because you're not to go out of doors."

"Oh, yes, thank you, sir."

Two minutes later the car was in the garage, and Thomas and I were making our way back past the kitchens. Outside the Cromwell room I stopped.

"You may take Miss Mansel's dressingcase to her room and see to her fire. Then you are to go back to bed."

"It won't take a minute to serve you, sir."

"Thomas, you are to do as I say. It was very good of you to come down. I'm much obliged. Good night."

"Good night, sir. Oh----"

"Yes?"

"I forgot to tell you, sir, there's a temporary maid will wait on Miss Mansel in the morning, sir. Susan's had to go away sudden. I think her father's ill, sir."

"I'm sorry for that. All right. I'll tell Miss Mansel. Good night."

"Good night, sir."

As I closed the door of the Cromwell room—

"So I'm Miss Mansel," said Eve. "Quite right, my dear," said I. "One of our party-my cousin, in fact. When did you wake ? "

"Just as you were lifting me out of the car."

I took off my cap and shook its snow into the fire.

"I uncover," said I. "In other words, I take my hat off to you. Eve, you are an artist. I only wish I were."

"Why?"

"I'd paint you-here, now, just as you are."

"I know I look awful."

"You look perfectly sweet."

"I can't help it."

"I shouldn't try."

She did look wonderful. I had put her upon the sofa, but she had moved from there, and was sitting on the hearth in front of the great fire. Plainly she had kept her long grey fur coat on, when she had first sat down, but now she had slipped out of it, and it lay all tumbled about her on the rug. She was in evening-dress, and might have returned, as I had, from a ball. All blue, it was, blue of a wonderful shade-periwinkle, I think they call it. Her stockings were of the same colour, and her shoes, too: these she had taken off, the better to warm her little shining feet. White arms propped her towards the fire, and she sat sideways, with one leg straight by the warm kerb, the other drawn up and bringing her dress a little away from a blue ankle. Her dark hair had worked loose under the weight of the rug, and was lying thick about her smooth shoulders. Save in her face, she wore no jewels, but two great brown stars smiled at me from either side of a straight nose. The lips were red now, and her throat soft and white as her shoulders. I gazed down at her.

"No jewels, you see, Adam," she said suddenly. "I'm afraid you've struck a loser this time. You'll have to stick to the Great North Road in future."

"No jewels?" said I. "You have a wealth of hair, and what about the pearls behind your lips? They're worth a king's ransom.

"They're not made to take out, though, and there's no gold with them." She put up the red mouth and showed two rows of teeth, white and even.

"Tempt me no more," said I. "Oh, Eve, you're just as bad as ever. After all this time, too, However, I hesitate to mention

supper, because you look so lovely sitting there, but----"

She stretched out a warm hand, and I lifted her to her feet. For a second I held the slight fingers.

"Tell me one thing," said I. "Is there anyone who doesn't love you ? "

The fingers slipped away.

"Yes, stacks of people. You wouldn't like me a bit, only I'm not myself to-night. I'm just-just Eve. See ? New Year's Eve." "Thomas think's you're Jill - Miss Mansel."

"To him I am. To the temporary maid in the morning, too. As for breakfast-oh, you and a thick veil must get me through breakfast and out of here and over to Steeple Abbas somehow. Funny, your telling Falcon to go to 'The Three Bulls.' It's where we were making for. I'd taken a room there."

"By Jove !" said I. "Then, when I went back with Jill, they thought it was you arriving." And I related what had occurred. When I had finished, she threw back her head and laughed.

"Then you're not a robber, after all, Adam ? "

"Certainly not. But why?"

"I mean, assuming the exchange is a fair one."

"Fair?" said I. "It's exquisite. Why, just to look at you's as good as a feast, and----

"Which reminds me I'm awfully hungry. Oh, no, no, I didn't mean that, Adam, dear, I didn't really." And my companion leaned against the chimney-piece, laughing helplessly.

"That's done it," said I, laughing too.

"And now," said Eve, recovering, "take off your coat. You must be so tired."

I drew my pumps out of the great pockets, and threw the coat off me and across the back of a chair. Then I kicked off my great high rubber boots, stepped into my pumps, and looked ruefully at my dress trousers.

"They're only a little creased," said the girl.

"You must forgive them," said I.

"Jill wouldn't have minded, would she?"

"Jill wouldn't have mattered."

"Nor does Eve. Remember my hair."

"I shall never forget it," said I.

Then I picked up her little shoes and stooped to fit them on to their feet.

"You are looking after me nicely, Adam," she said, laying a hand on my shoulder to keep her balance.

I straightened my back and looked at her.



"'I shan't try to thank you, Adam,' she said quietly. 'Good night.'"

"My dear," I said, "I—oh, Heavens, let's see what we've got for supper." And I turned hurriedly to the dishes in front of the fire.

When I looked round, she was lighting the candles.

*

* *

"You mustn't go to bed at once," I said, pushing back my chair. "It's bad for the digestion. Sit by the fire a little, as you did before. Wait a moment. I'll give you a cigarette."

I settled her amid cushions, put out the candles, and struck the red fire into flames.

"But where will you sit, Adam?"

"I shall lean elegantly against the chimney-piece and tell you a fairy story."

"I'm all for the story, but I think you'd better be a child and sit on the hearthrug, too. There's plenty of room."

"A child?" said I, sitting down by her side. "My dear, do you realise that I'm as old as the Cotswold Hills?"

"There now, Adam. And so am I."

"No," I said firmly, "certainly not."

" But—"

"I don't care. You're not. Goddesses are immortal and their youth dies not."

"I suppose I ought to get up and curtsey."

"If you do, I shall have to rise and make you a leg, so please don't."

For a moment she smiled into the fire.

"I wonder if two people have ever sat here before, as we're sitting now?"

"Many a time," said I. "Runaway couples, you know. I expect the old wood walls think we're another pair."

"They can't see, though."

"No. Born blind. That's why they hear so well. And they never forget. These four "—with a sweep of my cigarette —"have long memories of things, some sweet, some stern, some full of tears, and some again so mirthful that they split their panelled sides with merriment whenever they call them to mind."

"And here's another to make them smile."

"Smile? Yes. Wise, whimsical, fatherly smiles, especially wise. They think we're lovers, remember."

"I forgot. Well, the sooner they find out their mis-""

"Hush !" said I. "Walls love lovers. Have pity and don't undeceive them. It'd break the poor old fellows' hearts. That one's looking rather black already."

She laughed in spite of herself. Then-

"But they haven't got any hearts to break."

"Of course they have. The best in the world, too. Hearts of oak. Now you must make up for it. Come along." I altered my tone. "Chaste and beautiful one, dost thou realise that at this rate we shall reach Gretna next Tuesday week?"

"So soon, Jack ?"-languishingly.

"Glorious," said I—" that is, aye, mistress. Remember, I have six spare axles disguised as golf clubs."

"But what of my father? His grey hairs——"

"When I last saw thine aged sire, pipkin, three post-boys were engaged in sawing him out of a window through which he should never have attempted to climb. The angle of his chaise suggested that one of the hind wheels was, to put it mildly, somewhat out of the true. The fact that, before we started, I myself withdrew its linchpin goes to support this theory."

"My poor father! Master Adam, I almost find it in my heart to hate you."

"Believe me, fair but haughty, the old fool has taken no hurt. Distant as we were, I could hear his oaths of encouragement, while the post-boys sawed as they had never sawed before. From the way they were doing it, I shouldn't think they ever had."

"But they will soon procure a new linchpin. Is that right? And, oh, Adam, they may be here any moment."

"Not so, my poppet. To get a linchpin, they must find a smith. All the smiths within a radius of thirty miles are drunk. Yes, me again. A man has to think of all these little things. I say, we're giving the walls the time of their life, aren't we ? Have another cigarette."

"After which I must go to bed."

"As you please, Mistress Eve," said I, reaching for a live coal to give her a light.

For a little space we sat silent, watching the play of the flames. Then she spoke slowly, half her thoughts elsewhere—

"You never told me your fairy tale, Adam."

" I expect you know it," said I. " It's all about the princess a fellow found in the snow, and how he took her to his home for shelter, and set her on her way in the morning, and then spent his poor life trying to find her again. Anyway, one doesn't tell fairy tales to fairies, and—and I'd rather you watched the fire. He'll tell you a finer story than ever I could. At least—"

"Yes?"

"Well, he's a bold fellow, the fire. He'll say things that I can't, Eve. He'll praise, thank, bless you all in a flash. See what he says for a moment. Remember he's speaking for me."

"Praise, thank, bless," she repeated dreamily. "Does he ever ask anything in return?"

"Never," said I.

"Not even a name or an address?"

"He does not ask even that."

For a full minute she sat gazing into the flames. Then she flung her cigarette into the grate and jumped to her feet before I had time to help her.

"Bed-time," she cried. "Mine, at any rate."

"I'll show you the way to your room," said I, lighting one of the candles. I picked up her grey fur coat and laid it over my arm. As I did so, I noticed its faint perfume.

"Chaminade," I murmured.

The girl did not answer.

I looked up and across at her, standing straight by the other side of the hearth, the leaping flames lighting her tumbled hair. One foot was on the kerb, and her left hand hitching her dress in the front a little, as women do. The other she held, palm downwards to the blaze, warming it. I marked the red glow between its slight fingers, making them rosy. Her eyes still gazed into the fire. Then—

"And a highwayman, too," she said softly, turning towards the door.

I lighted her to the foot of the stairs. Then—

"There's a switch at the top on your right. Your room's the first on the left—number seven."

Half-way up she turned.

"I shan't try to thank you, Adam," she said quietly. "Good night."

A white arm drooped over the balustrade. "Sleep well, lass," said I, kissing the dainty fingers.

A moment later I heard her door close.

I returned to the Cromwell room, lighted a cigarette, and drew a chair to the broad hearth. One of its castors caught against something—a little fawn-coloured glove. For a moment I stood stroking it. Suddenly the room seemed empty, the fire less warm. It occurred to me that I was very tired.

Ten minutes later I was asleep.

The next morning, with the help of the thick veil and a little strategy, my companion's

incognita was preserved, and by half-past eleven we had breakfasted and were once more in the car.

It was another brilliant day, and at five minutes past twelve we ran into Steeple Abbas. Eve was sitting in front by my side this time. As we turned into the main street, I slowed down. Outside "The Three Bulls" stood the limousine, weather-beaten a little and its brasswork dull, but seemingly all right. In the middle of the road stood a chauffeur, his cap pushed back and a hand to his head. As we approached, he looked away from the little writing-block and stared up at the signboard of the inn. When he heard the car approaching, he made for the pavement, turning a puzzled face in our direction.

At that moment I heard Jill's voice.

"Berry, Berry, I can hear a car coming. I expect it's Boy."

There was not a moment to lose. Quick as a flash, I drew alongside of the limousine, which stood on our left between us and the hotel. Then I stopped, stood up, leaned across my companion and opened the big car's door.

"Good-bye, dear," I said.

The next moment she had changed cars. To thrust her rug and dressing-case after her was the work of a second. For a moment I held her hand to my lips. Then I shut the door, slipped back into my seat, and drove on and in to the kerb.

As I pulled up, Jill came running down the steps of the inn.

"Then you got home all right, Boy?"

Before I had time to answer, Berry appeared in the doorway.

"Aha," said he, "the bravo's return ! Skaul ! You are late, but never mind. Skaul again, my pathfinder. I thought of you when I was going to bed. Was the snow-hut comfortable? I hope you didn't find that coat too much? It isn't really cold, you know. Now, when I was in Patagonia——"

"Åre you all ready?" said I. "I'm just coming in to warm my hands."

I followed Jill up the steps. In the doorway I turned and took off my hat. The chauffeur was starting up the limousine. And Eve was leaning forward, looking out of the open window. As I smiled, she kissed her hand to me.

Ten minutes later we left "The Three Bulls."

I had thrown my gauntlets on to the

front seat before I entered the inn. As I drew on the right one, I felt a sheet of paper in its cuff. I plucked it out, wondering. It had been torn from the writing-block, and bore the message I had written for Falcon the night before. The signature was *Evelyn Fairie*, and underneath had been added, "*Castle Charing, Somerset. With my love.*"

I slipped it into my pocket and started the car.

"And how did Jilly get on?" I said abstractedly, as we rolled down the street.

"Oh, Boy," she cried, "it was so funny. I'm sure they took me for somebody else. There was a lovely big room all ready, and everybody kept bowing and calling me 'my lady.' They couldn't understand my connection with the others at first, and when they asked about the car, and I said it had gone back to Fallow, they nearly fainted. They were going to make out my bill separately, too, only Berry——"

" And you didn't enlighten them ?"

"I couldn't make out what was wrong till I was undressing."

"And the real one never turned up?"

"I don't think she can have. The landlord stammered something about 'your ladyship,' as I said 'Good-bye.'

"How strange !" said I.

Jill chattered on all the way to Fallow. Fortunately I remembered to tell her about the new chambermaid. I was rather uneasy about the girl, as a matter of fact. She must have seen Eve properly. But my luck was holding, for on our arrival we found that Susan had returned.

* * *

The following day—January 2nd—after breakfast, a wire for Jonah arrived. When he had read it—

"That's curious," he said. "I wonder how he knew we were here?"

"Who's it from ?" said Jill.

"Harry Fairie, the man I met at Pau last Easter. Wants us to go over to his place in Somerset before we go back to town."

"All of us?"

"Apparently. 'You and party,' the wire says."

"I believe I met his sister once," said I.

"You wouldn't forget her if you had," said Jonah. "She's a wonderful creature. Eyes like stars."

"Where did you meet her?" said Daphne.

"I seem to associate her with winter sports."

"Switzerland?" said my sister. "What year? Nineteen-twelve?"

I walked to the door and opened it.

"If I told you," I said, " you wouldn't believe me."

Then I went out.

CONSTANCY.

NOT as the needle to the Pole; and not

As servile Ocean to the regnant Moon;

Nor as the spicèd rose to fervid June, Assuring punctual perfume, strong and hot (For these great wonders to the flagrant lot

Of change are subject, and alas! too soon

The dark curse lowers where gleamed the silver boon, And all sure stars are sure of death and rot); But like the Miser do I turn to thee

Whose stripling dream was gold, and much red gold

The pharos of his prime, whose fingers clutch

The bright hoard closeliest at the grave's chill touch, Hiding it in his cereclothes' inmost fold,

Last prideful, pitiful proof of constancy.

W. A. MACKENZIE.

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THE PILGRIMS' WAY

WITH THE BEDOUINS TO WÂDY ABU SALÂMA.

Described and Illustrated by

N. HADDEN, F.Z.S.

OR years it had been in the mind of the Artist some day to join in the great annual pilgrimage to Abu Sari'a, and now at last

the plan could be put into execution.

It is difficult to find out with any certainty why these desert tombs, about forty miles from Helwan, on the old road to Mecca, are held in such repute. According to one legend, a great messenger of some prince died here, on his return from carrying out a special behest, and his grateful master erected the tomb to his memory.

The name Abu Sari'a or Sar'a ("Father of Speed"), seems to lend colour to this story; but there are other traditions in regard to these tombs, and probably one



miraculous cures of all kinds of ills, and, before all things, to pray for the gift of a son. The place seems to be a kind of Lourdes, and

> belief in its power must be very widespread, as the Bedouins, and also hundreds of the Fellâhîn, gather from far and wide to visit it.

In endless procession they come, theformer mounted, the latter on foot, bringing with them their wivesand their little ones, on donkeys and on stately camels, and with them numerous bleating sheep and goats, trotting under the feet of the larger animals, or loaded on to their backs with the waterskins, the coffee - pots, and all the other household gods. For the flocks there is no return; they are sacrificed

SHEIKH HASSEM SALEM.

would have to go back much further to find the real origin, in some pagan ceremony, as is the case with many of the present feast days in Egypt.

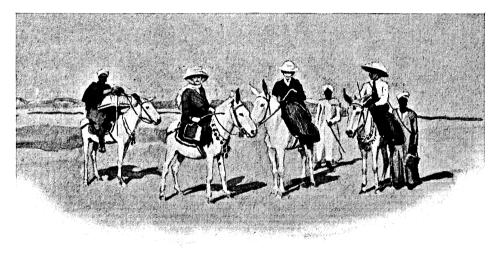
From what we could gather, the modern pilgrimage is undertaken with the idea of and eaten at the tomb. A rich man frequently gives a cow to be roasted whole amid great rejoicings.

With what excitement we awaited the approach of the March full moon and the arrival of the first pilgrims ! As soon as we knew that word was being sent round to the various villages, and that the Fellâhîn, who travel slowly, were making a start, the faithful Seyid was hastily despatched to Cairo to order our camels, tents, and, most important of all, the water fanatîs, in which to carry drinking water for the party, as our proposed camping-ground is in the heart of the desert.

About twenty miles south of Helwan, and half-way to the tombs, is the valley of Abu Salâma ("Father of Greeting"), and here the pilgrims gather, both going and returning, and here much of the feasting and the fantasîa takes place. This valley was to be our destination, and great was the thought and preparation necessary to equip ourselves and think out our requirements for our three soup, mince-pies, and a plum-pudding being items of the menu she provided in our desert camp. Cook turned out also to be invaluable as an interpreter, helping out our Artist's very halting Arabic with a ready and most persuasive tongue. Last, but not least, came the Tweeny, between Cook and Artist. She laid the table, waited, packed and unpacked, etc., besides using the camera with great skill, sketching and enjoying everything with true artist relish.

After days of cold, boisterous winds, a calm, still morning gave promise of good weather for our outing, and on Tuesday in Holy Week we started off in high spirits.

We were all mounted on our own good donkeys, whose coats had been allowed to grow in preparation for spending their

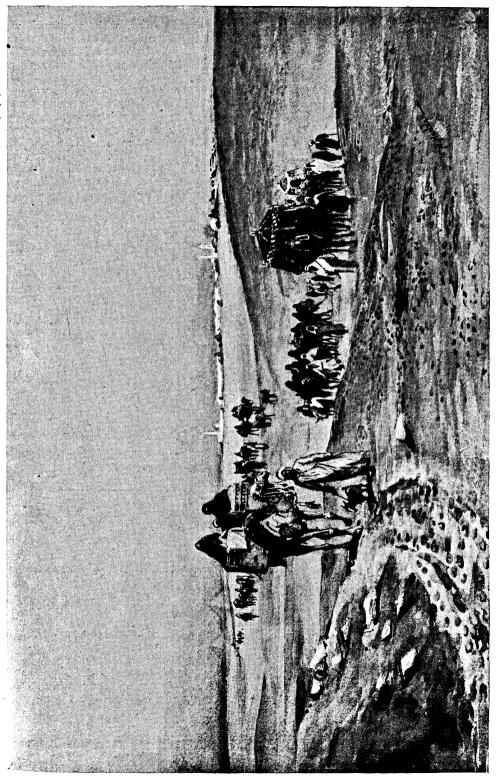


PREPARED TO START.

or four days' sojourn in the wilderness. Our party—three friends—all animated with a spirit of enthusiasm and enterprise, entered into the preparations with great good-will.

The Artist, on account of long residence in Egypt, and the fact that she had had some experience of the kind—she had once joined in a pilgrimage to the heights of Montmartre, when staying with a French family in Paris—was put in charge of the expedition. Her bold exterior, which earns her the title of Khawaga ("Mister") among her retainers, is also an asset, and only her most intimate friends know what a timid heart beats beneath that firm outward presence. The Cook catered for the expedition, and right well she did it. We fared sumptuously every day, home-made bread, nights in the open, and each donkey was accompanied by a donkey-boy, Seyid himself bringing up the rear on the extra donkey, and carrying our luncheon basket. Our three baggage camels, sent on in advance, had been only got under way after endless delays in adjusting the strange miscellany of things they had to carry. Three times each camel had been loaded and unloaded in the yard of the hotel, the Artist hovering round in a frenzy of impatience, Tweeny meanwhile calmly taking snapshots of the proceedings, for, as she said, her unsophisticated hold-all might never figure so amusingly again.

We were seen off by most of Helwan, all agog with excitement, and from eleven o'clock on Tuesday till five-thirty on Friday, the desert swallowed us up—three Europeans



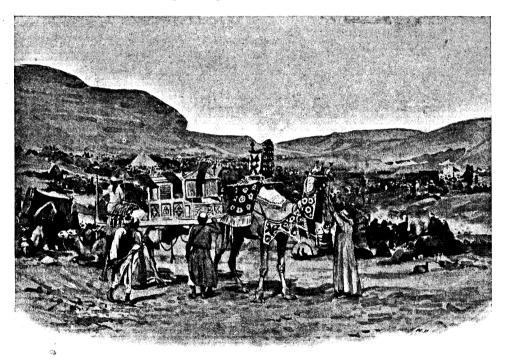
PILGRUMS LEAVING THEIR CAMPING-GROUND AT HELWAN.

amid that vast assembly of natives, from whom we received nothing but kindness and encouragement.

We travelled swiftly, and were soon part of a continuous stream of pilgrims converging from many desert tracks towards one common centre — the valley of Abu Salâma.

Sometimes a large body, moving together, spread themselves on the desert like a gay bed of flowers; then, again, the path wound through a narrow defile, where only one stately_camel could pass at a time, and where the effect was even more picturesque. and minor singing, with occasional wild outbursts of native music, the women clapping their hands and making their strange, wild, ululating cries known as the zugharît.

After riding for three hours, we were glad to call a halt and eat our lunch under the shade of an overhanging rock. Here we rested for a while. A ride of two hours more brought us to a wide, stony plain, and, after crossing this, we suddenly found ourselves on the edge of an abrupt descent; and before us lay a huge valley, in which the hundreds of pilgrims already gathered



AN OLD-FASHIONED LITTER IN THE VALLEY OF ABU SARI'A.

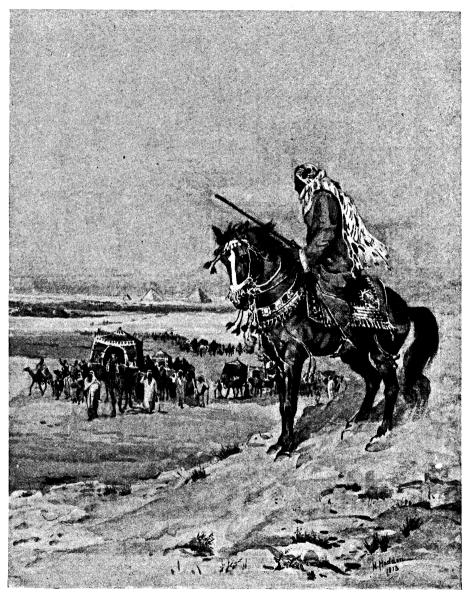
Some of the caravans consisted of twenty or thirty camels, whole families on each, the female relations of the richer Bedouins travelling in brilliant - coloured howdags, or in green boxes carried between two camels gay with trappings of scarlet and shells, the young men, on swift dromedaries or beautiful Arab horses, circling round, firing off guns, and making their animals perform wonderful feats. In fact, the whole ride was one continuous delight, every moment bringing some more fascinating combination of colour or grouping of figures into view—an endless pageant, with its accompaniment of tinkling camel bells looked only the size of ants, and the heaps of berseen (clover) collected on the opposite slopes like ant-hills.

This was the great Wâdy of Abu Salâma. And after a breathless pause to take in the wonder and beauty of the scene, and to photograph some of our fellowpilgrims, winding down the steep zigzag path which led into the valley, we hastened down ourselves to select a good campingground before the arrival of our baggage camels.

We chose a most delectable spot, a sort of tributary to the main wâdy, from which we had an uninterrupted view of the whole valley and of the continuous stream of camels and donkeys descending from the heights above.

All that evening and all through the night the people kept pouring in, each

waiting for the men to put up our two tents. These were soon erected, and most cosy and inviting they looked, carpeted and lined with brilliant tent-work, with camp-beds, tables, and chairs, all complete. The Artist



POWDER PLAY.

party firing off a fusillade on arrival, and many and loud were the praises to Allah as the camp was reached at last.

Cook at once set about boiling the kettle, and I do not think any cup of tea ever tasted so nice as that we drank while had even brought a small oil-stove, which gave out a most comfortable warmth and, with the help of candles, lighted up our spacious bedroom.

Our servants, with the camels and four donkeys, bivouacked around our tents.



FATHER AND SON ON THE WAY TO ABU SARI'A.

and when the time came for the evening meal, each little company of people lit its own camp-fire; and picturesque groups, the gaunt heads of the camels thrust forward over the very shoulders of their owners, were silhouetted against the flame, and hundreds of lights twinkled down the valley, a most enchanting scene.

Just below us, at the foot of the zigzag path, were two huge tanks supplied with rain-water, placed there by some generous benefactor for the benefit of the pilgrims a tremendous boon to the many thirsty souls and their animals. Owing to frequent showers, there was plenty of water in the tanks this year, and so there was none of the fierce fighting which we had heard takes place around the water-troughs when this is not the case.

After some hot soup, we were glad to turn in, tired out with all the fatigue and excitement of the day. Cook and Tweeny were soon sound asleep. Not so the Artist; for her, sleep was out of the question.

There was a nip in the desert air, and, in spite of their warm blankets, perhaps our steeds were cold. At any rate, they brayed was there ever such braying?

Occasionally one would pull up his picket peg and stray among the tent-ropes, or try to settle an old score with his neighbour; and we slept with a kind of running accompaniment of admonitions, addressed to "The White Prophet," or cries to Ali, to rouse himself and see to his charges. The whole valley seemed to hum with sound. The shrill neighing of horses mingled with the braying of hundreds of donkeys and gurglings of camels, the shouting and chattering of the people, and through it all the incessant throbbing of the darabuka rising and falling on the desert air, and stirring the blood with its strange, indescribable charm.

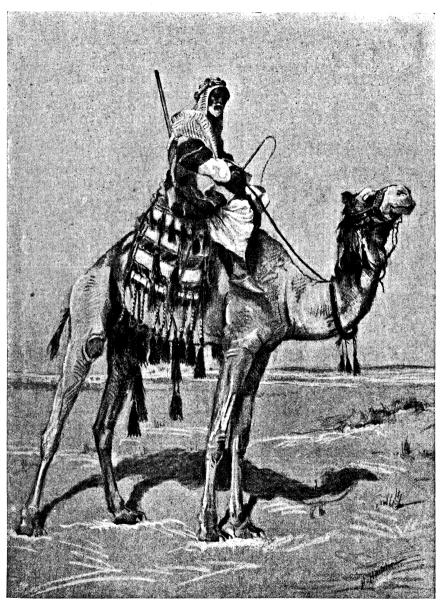
We rose at dawn, and found everyone preparing for the further ride of twenty miles to the actual tombs—in fact, many had already quietly resumed their journey.

Sevid was most anxious for us to go on and perform the whole pilgrimage, and we felt very tempted to do so; but, having made our arrangements for stopping in the valley, we decided not to break up our comfortable camp.

We, however, rode with the pilgrims for about ten miles, and, after resting a little, returned to our tents in time for luncheon, to find the valley almost deserted and wrapped in brooding silence, a most agreeable change after the ceaseless noise and clamour



of the preceding night. Then followed a calm and peaceful afternoon, spent by the whole party in much-needed repose, and later on we climbed to the Then the moon rose, and we returned to our camp, which had begun to feel quite home-like, and where Cook was busily engaged preparing our evening meal.



A BEDOUIN PATRIARCH.

heights above, and were rewarded by the most gorgeous sunset. The desert, bathed in rosy light, stretched away into the distance till it melted into the flaming sky, and at our feet lay the valley, already mysterious with velvet shadows. The servants were gathered round their fire listening to the watchman, who was holding forth with many gesticulations; the donkeys were munching contentedly at their fresh supply of berseen, and our little lantern, slung up to the tent-ropes,

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seemed to welcome us with its friendly beam.

Early the next morning the pilgrims began to return, and continued to pour in all day, until there seemed to be hardly room for one more caravan in that vast wâdy; there must have been thousands and thousands of people and animals.

À regular street was formed down the centre, and on either side squatted the vendors of every variety of commodity, doing a brisk trade among the Bedouins, and bargaining, attended with the usual loud discussion, was going on on all sides. We also were purchasers, Seyid and Ali in attendance to see the Sittât ("ladies") were not too much cheated in the transactions relating to gaudy silk handkerchiefs, little caps worn by the native children, and tiny china coffee cups without handles.

Making our way with difficulty among the little stalls, we recognised and received salams from many of our friends from the market at Helwan.

The white snail shells found in the valley are picked up as trophies, and every animal is hung with festoons of shells on the return journey. Of course, Ali made it his business to see that each of our donkeys was properly decorated in like manner.

As evening approached, the fun became fast and furious. Under the brilliant white light of the full moon, the crowded valley assumed a most fantastic appearance, and the pilgrims gave themselves up to fantasîa of every description.

The centre of a closely-packed circle of attentive listeners, the story-teller recites his oft-told tale of Arabian Nights. Play-acting occupies another group, and processions move round the camp, with quaint figures got up in most grotesque costumes, and accompanied by the shrill music of pipes and drum. In another part the zikr is being danced by a ring of men, who keep up a continual invocation of "Allah!" with clapping of the hands and strange gestures, till, one by one, they drop out from sheer exhaustion. So it goes on, singing, dancing, playacting, and the rest, until the early hours of dawn, when for a short time silence settles down on the camp, and the palpitating stillness of the desert makes itself once more felt.

We had a most amusing experience that evening ourselves. Quite late, when we were preparing for such rest as we were likely to enjoy, there was a great commotion round our tents, and, peeping out, we saw loaded camels towering threateningly above us, and still more advancing. Finally an imposing red howdag was halted close to us, and a harêm tent hastily erected, and we had a vision of veiled forms descending from the kneeling camel and vanishing under the flaps of the tent.

Another huge tent was put up in our immediate vicinity, and we found a rich pasha—a cousin of the Khedive, so we were told—was to be our neighbour, and our little camp seemed quite swallowed up by his belongings, as his whole village had accompanied him on his pilgrimage to Abu Sari'a.

The Artist was much alarmed by the close proximity of so large and unmanageable a party, and appealed to the pasha, who was himself overlooking the erecting of the tents. He was very polite, and, perhaps partly to allay her fears, invited us to visit him and assist at a fantasîa, with its accompaniment of native music, coffee, cigarettes, etc.

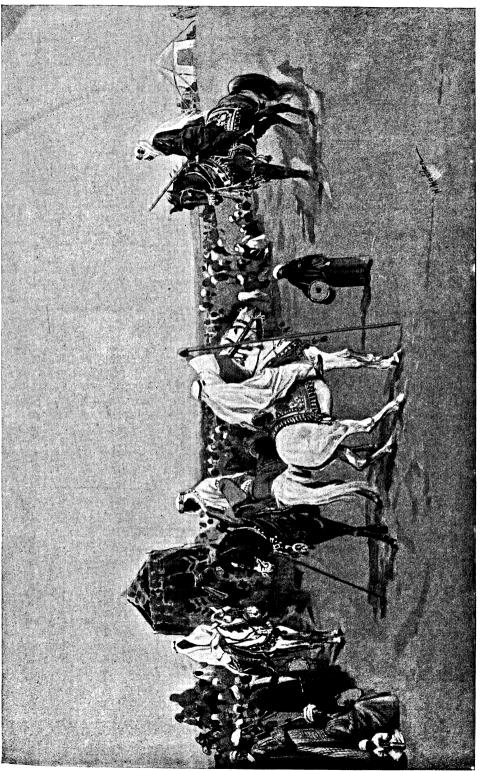
We were amused to find ourselves the guests of honour, seated on cushions spread on beautiful Persian carpets, our costumes being more suited for the exigencies of camp-life at night than for attending an evening party. It was like a wild dream, impossible to describe.

A small electric torch we had with us caused quite a sensation. The Artist, feeling there must be some relief from the rather deafening sound of pipes and darabuka, and the steady, silent stare of our hosts, suddenly flashed the light round the assembled company. The diversion was most effective. They all rose and gathered round, and the torch was passed from hand to hand, each greatly delighted at being able to turn the spark on and off at will, and loud was the laughter when one old sheikh tried to blow out the light. After this, with mutual pretty speeches, we were able to retire, pleading the lateness of the hour.

Next morning we had to be up betimes to pack all our belongings and to strike our tents, as our baggage camels had to leave early on the return journey to Helwan.

By eight o'clock we were homeless, sitting desolate upon the hampers containing the remains of our food, and watching our cherished camp depart piecemeal.

The pasha most kindly invited us to feast with him; but we had seen his cook busy since sunrise, when they killed a young gamûs (buffalo), preparing savoury dishes; and to us the large joints of meat, dripping with gravy, did not appear very appetising,



A DISPLAY OF HORSEMANSHIP GIVEN IN OUR HONOUR.

so we excused ourselves, accepting, however, an offer of coffee and asking if we might visit the ladies of the harêm.

The pasha, greatly pleased, himself escorted us to the other tent, where we found his wife and her small, fat daughter of nine, and their black slave. It was here that Cook proved herself an able interpreter, and, thanks to her, the visit passed off well, and we left, promising to ride back to Helwan together. This, however, we did not carry out, as, when the feasting once began, it seemed likely to go on for hours, and we thought it was better to leave quietly without disturbing our neighbours.

After our visit to the harêm, we assisted at a wonderful fantasîa given in our honour. The sheikhs, mounted on their beautiful Arab horses, gay with coloured trappings, silver necklaces, and handsomely embossed bridles, entered the ring in turn and performed wonderful feats of horsemanship, the animals, with proudly arching necks and long tails flying, pawing the ground, neighing and snorting as they trod a stately measure to the sound of pipes and darabuka.

A pure white horse, with saddle-cloth and trappings all in gold, shining in the sun, his rider, robed in white, whirling a spear as he dashed full tilt at an imaginary foe, or galloped round the ring firing his gun, held high in air, set the Artist tingling with desire to reproduce the fascinating scene, and Tweeny had been busy all morning with her camera; and all of us were taking mental pictures that will last as long as memory lasts.

This barbaric display, in its desert setting,

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surrounded by the Moslem crowds, seemed to belong to another world, and was a fitting end to our dream-like adventures.

After this we mounted our white asses and sadly climbed the zigzag path, casting back many regretful glances to the valley of our desire, where the crowds were now rapidly diminishing.

Once at the top, we bade "Good-bye" to Wâdy Abu Salâma, and set our faces steadily in the direction of home.

The donkeys seemed to know they were returning to their stables, and it was all we could do to restrain their eagerness and to keep them to the smooth amble which is the correct pace for a well-bred Egyptian donkey.

We halted for tea about four o'clock, and were entertained by the passing pilgrims, many of them coming over to race their camels on the flat sand below where we sat, and to be sent on their way rejoicing by the present of cigarettes.

Arrived within three miles of Helwan, we were met by two of our friends, who had ridden out on the chance of falling in with us, and a quarter of an hour later we dashed up to the porch of the hotel, sunburnt and much pleased with ourselves, to be greeted with hearty congratulations by our friends and saluted with salâms and hand-kissing by such of the devout as realised where we had been.

So ended our first experience of camping in the desert. Everything "went like a dream," as an old gipsy woman used to say, and next year we hope to accomplish the whole pilgrimage and to reach the actual tombs of Abu Sari'a.

THE SECRET OF THE HILLS.

 \mathbf{K}^{EEN} is the air and calm: a black frost chills Earth to the bone, and winter twilight dies

Slow in a west of smouldering pageantries, The heaven in tense, still expectation thrills. Aloof and silent brood the ancient hills;

Their age-long taciturnity defies

The fruitless questioning of curious eyes, But our unsated craving never stills.

Man's sense is clouded; vainly he aspires Their unresolved silence to unseal:

Not till his eager spirit he can mould

To their unquestioning stillness, shall he feel Their broad tranguillity his soul enfold.

Their whisper soothe his restless heart's desires.

ERNEST BLAKE.

THE-HOLY-FLOWER BY-H-RIDER-HAGGARD.

ILLUSTRATED · BY MAURICE · GREIFFENHAGEN

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.—This is the record of the strange adventure of the famous hunter and explorer, Allan Quatermain, on his perilous mission into an unknown region of Africa in the days before his remarkable experiences which are now historical in that modern classic "King Solomon's Mines," and before his remarkable experiences which are now historical in that modern classic "King Solomon's Mines," and still further before the subsequent adventures chronicled in his later stories. At the opening of the present narrative, Hunter Quatermain, while shooting big game in South Africa, met one of the strangest characters then known in all South Africa, an American gentleman, who was a doctor by profession, but for some years past had wandered about South and Eastern Africa collecting butterflies and flowers, his safety being established by his reputation for madness, which, coupled with his medical skill, enabled him to travel alone unmolested. To the natives he was known as "Dogeetah," but white people usually called him "Brother John." From him Allan Quatermain first heard of a wonderful plant with blooms of extraordinary size and marvellous beauty, with a monkey's head outlined on every bloom, which he proclaimed to be the most marvellous cypripedium on the whole earth. A healthy root of this plant, he maintained, would be worth at least twenty thousand pounds; but all he could show was a single bloom, without any root. This had come into his possession in the country of the Mazitu, a warlike race whom no white man had ever visited, beyond the western boundary of whose territory was a large and fertile land, supposed to be an island in the midst of a great lake, with a montain in the centre Mazitu, a warinke race whom no white man had ever visited, beyond the western boundary of whose territory was a large and fertile land, supposed to be an island in the midst of a great lake, with a mountain in the centre. The name of both this territory and its inhabitants was Pongo, which was also the native name for a gorilla, and the god of the Pongo people was said to be a gorilla, whose worship was combined with that of the wonderful orchid. One night, while camping near the Pongo bordei, the Doctor was awakened by a solitary visitor, who declared himself to be Kalubi, the Chief of the Pongo, and announced that he had come to the famous master of medicine to have his hand cured of a wound made by the bite of a terrible monkey, of which he declared they all went in fear in his native land. He suggested that he would help the white monkey, of which he declared they and the monstrous gorilla with his magic weapons. The Doctor asked for a piece of the holy flower instead of any fee for his medical help, but was disappointed when he found by his tent, a week later, only a single bloom, the native not having understood that he wanted a root, or else not having dared to send one. In a later conversation with Brether later the cardiorary automation for the dare of the holy flower in the context of the sender of the native not having understood that he wanted a root, or else not having dared to send one. In a later conversation with Brother John, the explorer's curiosity was further kindled by the American's addition to his earlier narrative of the report that "a white goddess" was said to preside over the holy flower. Brother John's exact reason for attaching importance to this rumour was not explained, and the touch of mystery yet further increased Allan Quatermain's interest. Here was just the story to appeal to the daring spirit of Allan Quatermain, not only for the sake of adventure into the unknown, but also for the possible riches to be gained by the discovery and subsequent sale of so wonderful an orchid; and the famous hunter therefore prepared to accompany his friend Scroope home to England for the further purpose of ascertaining whether rich orchid collectors would be willing to finance an expedition in search of the unique flower. At a sale of orchids by auction in London, he made friends with a young man named Somers, who, at the conclusion of the sale, realised that his gardener, mistaking pounds for shillings, had committed him to the payment of two thousand three hundred pounds in the bidding for a fine Odontoglossum Pavo, and the next question was how the young man's father was likely to receive the news.

CHAPTER III.

SIR ALEXANDER AND STEPHEN.

IT was just at this moment that I saw standing by me a fine-looking, stout man with a square grey beard and a handsome but not very good-tempered face. He was looking about him as one does who finds himself in a place to which he is not accustomed.

"Perhaps you could tell me, sir," he said to me, "whether a gentleman called Mr. Somers is in this room? I am rather shortsighted, and there are a great many people." "Yes," I answered ; "he has just bought

the wonderful orchid called Odontoglossum

Pavo. That is what they are all talking about."

"Oh, has he? Has he, indeed? And,

pray, what did he pay for the article?" "A huge sum," I answered. "I thought it was two thousand three hundred shillings, but it appears it was two thousand three hundred pounds."

The handsome elderly gentleman grew very red in the face, so red that I thought he was going to have a fit. For a few moments he breathed heavily.

"A rival collector," I thought to myself, and went on with the story, which, it occurred to me, might interest him.

"You see, the young gentleman was called

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away to an interview with his father. I heard him instruct his gardener, a man named Woodden, to buy the plant at any price."

" "At any price ! Indeed ! Very interesting. Continue, sir."

The youthful Mr. Somers, looking a little pale and distrait, strolled up, apparently to speak to me. His hands were in his pockets, and an unlighted cigar was in his mouth. His eyes fell upon the elderly gentleman, a sight that caused him to shape his lips as though to whistle and drop the cigar.

"Hullo, father !" he said, in his pleasant voice. "I got your message, and have been looking for you, but never thought that I should find you here. Orchids aren't much in your line, are they?"

"Didn't you, indeed ?" replied his parent, in a choked voice. "No, I haven't much use for—this stinking rubbish!" And he waved his umbrella at the beautiful flowers. "But it seems that you have, Stephen. This little gentleman here tells me you have just bought a very fine specimen."

"I must apologise," I broke in, addressing Mr. Somers. "I had not the slightest idea that this—big gentleman"—here the son smiled faintly—"was your intimate relation."

"Oh, pray don't, Mr. Quatermain. Why should you not speak of what will be in all the papers? Yes, father, I have bought a very fine specimen, the finest known, or, at least, Woodden has, on my behalf, while I was hunting for you, which comes to the same thing."

"Indeed, Stephen, and what did you pay for this flower? I have heard a figure, but think that there must be some mistake."

"I don't know what you heard, father, but it seems to have been knocked down to me at two thousand three hundred pounds. It's a lot more than I can find, indeed, and I was going to ask you to lend me the money for the sake of the family credit, if not for my own. But we can talk about that afterwards."

"Yes, Stephen, we can talk of that afterwards. In fact, as there is no time like the present, we will talk of it now. Come to my office. And, sir"—this was to me—"as you seem to know something of the circumstances, I will ask you to come also; and you, too, blockhead"—this was to Woodden, who just then approached with the plant.

Now, of course, I might have refused an invitation conveyed in such a manner. But, as a matter of fact. I didn't. I wanted to see the thing out; also to put in a word for young Somers, if I got the chance. So we all departed from that room, followed by a titter of amusement from those of the company who had overheard the conversation. In the street stood a splendid carriage and pair; a powdered footman opened its door. With a ferocious bow, Sir Alexander motioned to me to enter, which I did, taking one of the back seats, as it gave more room for my tin case. Then came Mr. Stephen, then Woodden bundled in, holding the precious plant in front of him like a wand of office, and, last of all, Sir Alexander, having seen us safe, entered also.

"Where to, sir?" asked the footman.

"Office !" he snapped, and we started.

Four disappointed relatives in a funeral coach could not have been more silent. Our feelings seemed to be too deep for words. Sir Alexander, however, did make one remark and to me. It was—

"If you will remove the corner of that infernal tin box of yours from my ribs, I shall be obliged to you, sir."

"Your pardon," I exclaimed, and, in my efforts to be accommodating, dropped it on his toe. I will not repeat the remark he made, but I may explain that he was gouty. His son became suddenly afflicted with a sense of the absurdity of the situation. He kicked me on the shin, he even dared to wink, and then began to swell visibly with suppressed laughter. I was in agony, for. if he had exploded, I do not know what would have happened. Fortunately, at this moment the carriage stopped at the door of a fine Without waiting for the footman, office. Mr. Stephen bundled out and vanished into the building -I suppose to laugh in safety. Then I descended with the tin case; then, by command, followed Woodden with the flower; and lastly came Sir Alexander.

"Stop here," he said to the coachman; "I shan't be long. Be so good as to follow me, Mr. What's-your-name, and you too, gardener."

We followed, and found ourselves in a big room luxuriously furnished in a heavy kind of way. Sir Alexander Somers, I should explain, was an enormously opulent bullion-broker, whatever a bullion-broker may be. In this room Mr. Stephen was already established; indeed, he was seated on the window-sill swinging his leg.

"Now we are alone and comfortable," growled Sir Alexander, with sarcastic ferocity.

"As the boa-constrictor said to the rabbit in the cage," I remarked.

I did not mean to say it, but I had grown nervous, and the thought leapt from my lips Again Mr. Stephen began to in words. swell. He turned his face to the window as though to contemplate the wall beyond, but I could see his shoulders shaking. A dim light of intelligence shone in Woodden's pale eves. About three minutes later the joke got home. He gurgled something about boa-constrictors and rabbits, and gave a short, loud laugh. As for Sir Alexander, he merely said-

"I did not catch your remark, sir. Would you be so good as to repeat it ?"

As I appeared unwilling to accept the invitation, he went on-

"Perhaps, then, you would repeat what you told me in that sale-room ? "

"Why should I?" I asked. "I spoke quite clearly, and you seemed to understand."

"You are right," replied Sir Alexander; "to waste time is useless." He wheeled round on Woodden, who was standing near the door, still holding the paper-wrapped plant in front of him. "Now, blockhead," he shouted, "tell me why you bought that thing?"

Woodden made no answer, only rocked a Sir Alexander reiterated his comlittle. This time Woodden set the plant mand. upon a table and replied—

"If you're a-speaking to me, sir, that bain't my name, and, what's more, if you calls me so again, I'll punch your head, whoever you be !" And very deliberately he rolled up the sleeves on his brawny arms, a sight at which I, too, began to swell with inward merriment.

"Look here, father," said Mr. Stephen, stepping forward, "what's the use of all this? The thing's perfectly plain. I did tell Woodden to buy the plant at any price. What is more, I gave him a written authority which was passed up to the auctioneer. There's no getting out of it. It is true it never occurred to me that it would go for anything like two thousand three hundred pounds-the odd three hundred was more my idea-but Woodden only obeyed his orders, and ought not to be abused for doing so."

"There's what I call a master worth serving," remarked Woodden.

"Very well, young man," said Sir Alexander; "you have purchased this article. Will you be so good as to tell me how you propose it should be paid for ?"

"I propose, father, that you should pay for it," replied Mr. Stephen sweetly. "Two thousand three hundred pounds, or ten times that amount, would not make you appreciably But if, as is probable, you take a poorer. different view, then I propose to pay for it myself. As you know, a certain sum of money came to me under my mother's will. in which you have only a life-interest. T shall raise the amount upon that security or otherwise."

If Sir Alexander had been angry before, now he became like a mad bull in a china shop. He pranced round the room; he used language that should not pass the lips of any respectable merchant of bullion; in short, he did everything that a person in his position ought not to do. When he was tired, he rushed to a desk, tore a cheque from a book, and filled it in for a sum of two thousand three hundred pounds to bearer, which cheque he blotted, crumpled up, and literally threw at the head of his son.

"You worthless, idle young scoundrel!" he bellowed. "I put you in this office here that you may learn respectable and orderly habits, and in due course succeed to a very considerable business. What happens? You don't take a ha'porth of interest in bullionbroking, a subject of which I believe you to remain profoundly ignorant. You don't even spend your money, or rather my money, upon any gentleman-like vice, such as horseracing or cards or even-well, never mind. No, you take to flowers, miserable, beastly flowers, things that a cow eats and clerks grow in back gardens ! "

"An ancient and Arcadian taste. Adam is supposed to have lived in a garden," I ventured to interpolate.

"Perhaps you would ask your friend with the stubbly hair to remain quiet," snorted Sir Alexander. "I was about to addalthough, for the sake of my name, I will meet your debts-that I have had enough of this kind of thing. I disinherit you, or will do, if I live till four p.m., when the lawyer's office shuts, for, thank Heaven, there are no entailed estates, and I dismiss you from the You can go and earn your living in firm! any way you please-by orchid-hunting, if you like." He paused, gasping for breath. "Is that all, father ?" asked Mr. Stephen,

producing a cigar from his pocket.

"No, it isn't, you cold-blooded young

beggar. That house you occupy at Twickenham is mine. You will be good enough to clear out of it; I wish to take possession."

"I suppose, father, I am entitled to a week's notice, like any other tenant," said Mr. Stephen, lighting the cigar. "In fact," he added, "if you answer 'No,'I think I shall ask you to apply for an ejection order. You will understand that I have arrangements to make before taking a fresh start in life."

"Oh, curse your cheek, you — you cucumber !" raged the infuriated merchant prince. Then an inspiration came to him. "You think more of an ugly flower than of your father, do you? Well, at least, I'll put an end to that." And he made a dash at the plant on the table with the evident intention of destroying the same.

But the watching Woodden saw. With a kind of lurch, he interposed his big frame between Sir Alexander and the object of his wrath.

"Touch O. Paving, and I knocks yer down!" he drawled out.

Sir Alexander looked at O. Paving, then he looked at Woodden's leg of mutton fist, and—changed his mind.

"Curse O. Paving," he said, "and everyone who has to do with it !" and swung out of the room, banging the door behind him.

"Well, that's over," said Mr. Stephen gently, as he fanned himself with a pockethandkerchief. "Quite exciting while it lasted, wasn't it, Mr. Quatermain ? But I have been there before, so to speak. And now what do you say to some luncheon? Pym's is close by, and they have very good ovsters. Only I think we'll drive round by the bank and hand in this cheque. When he's angry, my parent is capable of anything. He might even stop it. Woodden, get off down to Twickenham with O. Pavo. Keep it warm, for it feels rather like frost. Put it in the stove for to-night and give it a little, just a little tepid water, but be careful not to touch the flower. Take a four-wheeled cab-it's slow but safe-and mind you keep the windows up, and don't I shall be home for dinner." smoke.

Woodden pulled his forelock, seized the pot in his left hand, and departed with his right fist raised—I suppose in case Sir Alexander should be waiting for him round the corner.

Then we departed also, and after stopping for a minute at the bank to pay in the cheque, which, I noted, notwithstanding its amount, was accepted without comment, ate oysters in a place too crowded to allow of conversation. "Mr. Quatermain," said my host, "it is obvious that we cannot talk here, and much less look at that orchid of yours, which I want to study at leisure. Now, for a week or so, at any rate, I have a roof over my head, and in short, will you be my guest for a night or two? I know nothing about you, and of me you only know that I am the disinherited son of a father to whom I have failed to give satisfaction. Still, it is possible that we might pass a few pleasant hours together, talking of flowers and other things—that is, if you have no previous engagement."

"I have none," I answered. "I am only a stranger from South Africa, lodging at an hotel. If you will give me time to call for my bag, I will pass the night at your house with pleasure."

By the aid of Mr. Somers's smart dog-cart, which was waiting at a City mews, we reached Twickenham while there was still half an hour of daylight. The house, which was called Verbena Lodge, was a small, square, red-brick building of the early Georgian period, but the gardens covered quite an acre of ground, and were very beautiful, or must have been so in summer. Into the greenhouses we did not enter, because it was too late to see the flowers. Also, just when we came to them, Woodden arrived in his four-wheeled cab and departed with his master to see to the housing of O. Pavo.

Then came dinner, a very pleasant meal. My host had that day been turned out upon the world, but he did not allow this circumstance to interfere with his spirits in the least. Also he was evidently determined to enjoy its good things while they lasted, for his champagne and port were excellent.

"You see, Mr. Quatermain," he said, "it's just as well we had the row, which has been boiling up for a long while. My respected father has made so much money that he thinks I should go and do likewise. Now, I don't see it. I like flowers, especially orchids, and I hate bullion-broking. To me the only decent places in London are that sale-room where we met and the Horticultural Gardens."

"Yes," I answered rather doubtfully; "but the matter seems a little serious. Your parent was very emphatic as to his intentions, and after this kind of thing "—and I pointed to the beautiful silver and the port—"how will you like roughing it in a hard world?"

"Don't think I shall mind a bit; it would be rather a pleasant change. Also, even if my father doesn't alter his mind, as he may, for he likes me at bottom, because I resemble my dear mother, things ain't so very bad.

I have got some money that she left me, six thousand pounds or seven thousand pounds, and I'll sell that Odontoglossum Pavo for what it will fetch to Sir Joshua Tredgold—he was the man with the long beard who, you tell me, ran up Woodden to over two thousand pounds-or, failing him, to someone else. I'll write about it to-night. I don't think I have any debts to speak of. for the governor has been allowing me three thousand pounds a year-at least, that is my share of the profits paid to me in return for my bullion-broking labours, and, except flowers, I have no expensive tastes. So the devil take the past ! Here's to the future and whatever it may bring !" And he polished off the glass of port he held, and laughed in his jolly fashion.

Really he was a most attractive young man, a little reckless, it is true, but then recklessness and youth mix well, like brandy and soda.

I echoed the toast and drank off my port, for I like a good glass of wine when I can get it, as would anyone who has had to live for months on rotten water, although I admit that agrees with me better than the port.

"Now, Mr. Quatermain," he went on, "if you have done, light your pipe and let's go into the other room and study that cypripedium of yours. I shan't sleep to-night unless I see it again first. Stop a bit, though; we'll get hold of that old ass Woodden before he turns in.

"Woodden," said his master, when the gardener had arrived, "this gentleman, Mr. Quatermain, is going to show you an orchid that is ten times finer than O. Pavo!"

"Beg pardon, sir," answered Woodden, "but if Mr. Quarter Man says that, he lies. It ain't in Nature ; it don't bloom nowhere."

I opened the case and revealed the golden cypripedium. Woodden stared at it and rocked. Then he stared again and felt his head, as though to make sure it was on his shoulders. Then he gasped.

"Well, if that there flower bain't made up, it's a *master one*! If I could see that there flower a-blowing on the plant, I'd die happy !"

"Woodden, stop talking and sit down," exclaimed his master. "Yes, there where you can look at the flower. Now, Mr. Quatermain, will you tell us the story of that orchid from beginning to end? Of course, omitting its habitat, if you like, for it isn't fair to ask that secret. Woodden can be trusted to hold his tongue, and so can I." I remarked that I was sure they could, and for the next half-hour talked almost without interruption, keeping nothing back, and explaining that I was anxious to find someone who would finance an expedition to search for this particular plant, as I believed, the only one of its sort that existed in the world.

"How much will it cost?" asked Mr. Somers.

"I lay it at two thousand pounds," I answered. "You see, we must have plenty of men and guns and stores, also trade goods and presents."

"I call that cheap. But supposing, Mr. Quatermain, that the expedition proves successful, and the plant is secured, what then?"

"Then I propose that Brother John, who found it, and of whom I have told you, should take one-third of whatever it might sell for, that I, as captain of the expedition, should take one-third, and that whoever finds the necessary money should take the remaining third."

"Good ! That's settled."

"What's settled ?" I asked.

"Why, that we should divide in the proportions you named, only I bargain to be allowed to take my whack in kind—I mean in plant—and to have the first option of purchasing the rest of the plant at whatever value may be agreed upon."

"But, Mr. Somers, do you mean that you wish to find two thousand pounds and make this expedition in person?"

"Of course I do. I thought you understood that. That is, if you will have me. Your old friend, the lunatic, you and I, will together seek for and find this golden flower. I say that's settled."

On the morrow accordingly it was settled, with the help of a document signed in duplicate by both of us.

Before these arrangements were finally concluded, however, I insisted that Mr. Somers should meet my late companion, Charlie Scroope, when I was not present, in order that the latter might give him a full and particular report concerning myself. Apparently the interview was satisfactory—at least, so I judged from the very cordial and even respectful manner in which young Somers met me after it was over. Also I thought it my duty to explain to him with much clearness, in the presence of Scroope as a witness, the great dangers of such an enterprise as that on which he proposed to embark. I told him straight out that he must be prepared to find his death in it from starvation, fever, wild beasts, or at the hands of savages, while success was quite problematical and very likely would not be attained.

"You are taking these risks," he said.

"Yes," I answered, "but they are incident to the rough trade I follow, which is that of a hunter and explorer. Moreover, my youth is past, and I have gone through experiences and bereavements of which you know nothing, that cause me to set a very slight value on life. I care little whether I die or continue in the world for some few added years. Lastly, the excitement of adventure has become a kind of necessity to I do not think that I could live in me. England for very long. Also I am a fatalist. I believe that, when my time comes, I must go, that this hour is foreordained, and that nothing I can do will either hasten or postpone it by one moment. Your circumstances are different. You are quite young. If you stay here and approach your father in a proper spirit, I have no doubt but that he will forget all the rough words he said to you the other day, for which, indeed, you know you gave him some provocation. \mathbf{Is} it worth while throwing up such prospects and undertaking such dangers for the chance of finding a rare flower? I say this to my own disadvantage, since I might find it hard to discover anyone else who would risk two thousand pounds upon such a venture, but I do urge you to weigh my words."

Young Somers looked at me for a little while, then he broke into one of his hearty laughs and exclaimed : "Whatever else you may be, Mr. Allan Quatermain, you are a gentleman. No bullion-broker in the City could have put a matter more fairly in the teeth of his own interests."

"Thank you," I said.

"For the rest," he went on, "I, too, am tired of England and want to see the world. It isn't the golden cypripedium that I seek, although I should like to win it well enough. That's only a symbol. What I seek are adventure and romance. Also, like you, I am a fatalist. God chose His own time to send us here, and I presume that He will choose His own time to take us away again, so I leave the matter of risks to Him."

"Yes, Mr. Somers," I replied rather solemnly. "You may find adventure and romance—there are plenty of both in Africa —or you may find a nameless grave in some fever-haunted swamp. Well, you have chosen, and I like your spirit." Still, I was so little satisfied about this business, that a week or so before we sailed, after much consideration, I took it upon myself to write a letter to Sir Alexander Somers, in which I set forth the whole matter as clearly as I could, not blinking the dangerous nature of our undertaking. In conclusion, I asked him whether he thought it wise to allow his only son to accompany such an expedition, mainly because of a not very serious quarrel with himself.

As no answer came to this letter, I went on with our preparations. There was money in plenty, since the re-sale of O. Pavo to Sir Joshua Tredgold, at some loss, had been satisfactorily carried out, which enabled me to invest in all things needful with a cheerful heart. Never before had I been provided with such an outfit as that which preceded us to the ship.

At length the day of departure came. We stood on the platform at Paddington, waiting for the Dartmouth train to start, for in those days the African mail sailed from that port. A minute or two before the train left, as we were preparing to enter our carriage, I caught sight of a face that I seemed to recognise, the owner of which was evidently searching for someone in the crowd. It was that of Briggs, Sir Alexander's clerk, whom I had met in the sale-room.

"Mr. Briggs," I said, as he passed me, "are you looking for Mr. Somers? If so, he is in there."

The clerk jumped into the compartment and handed a letter to Mr. Somers. Then he emerged again and waited. Somers read the letter and tore off the blank sheet from the end of it, on which he hastily wrote some words. He passed it to me to give to Briggs, and I could not help seeing what was written. It was: "Too late now. God bless you, my dear father. I hope we may meet again. If not, try to think kindly of your troublesome and foolish son, Stephen."

In another minute the train had started.

"By the way," he said, as we steamed out of the station, "I have heard from my father, who enclosed this for you."

I opened the envelope, which was addressed in a bold, round hand that seemed to me typical of the writer, and read as follows :----

"MY DEAR SIR,—I appreciate the motives which caused you to write to me, and I thank you very heartily for your letter, which shows me that you are a man of discretion and strict honour. As you surmise, the expedition on which my son has entered is

not one that commends itself to me as prudent. Of the differences between him and myself you are aware, for they came to a climax in your presence. Indeed, I feel that I owe you an apology for having dragged you into an unpleasant family quarrel. Your letter only reached me to-day, having been forwarded to my place in the country from my office. I should have at once come to town, but unfortunately I am laid up with an attack of gout, which makes it impossible for me to stir. Therefore the only thing I can do is to write to my son, hoping that the letter, which I send by a special messenger, will reach him in time and avail to alter his determination to undertake this journey. Here I may add that, although I have differed, and do differ from him on various points, I still have a deep affection for my son, and earnestly desire his welfare. The prospect of any harm coming to him is one upon which I cannot bear to dwell.

"Now, I am aware that any change of his plans at this eleventh hour would involve you in serious loss and inconvenience. beg to inform you formally, therefore, that in this event I will make good everything, and will, in addition, write off the two thousand pounds which I understand he has invested in your joint venture. It may be, however, that my son, who has in him a vein of my own obstinacy, will refuse to change his mind. In that event, under a Higher Power, I can only commend him to your care, and beg that you will look after him as though he were your own child. I can ask and you can do no more. Tell him to write to me as opportunity offers, as perhaps you will, too; also that, although I hate the sight of them, I will look after the flowers which he has left at the house at Twickenham.

"Your obliged servant,

"ALEXANDER SOMERS."

This letter touched me much and, indeed, made me feel very uncomfortable. Without a word I handed it to my companion, who read it through carefully.

"Nice of him about the orchids," he said. "My dad has a good heart, although he lets his temper get the better of him, having had his own way all his life."

"Well, what will you do?" I asked.

"Go on, of course. I've put my hand to the plough, and I am not going to turn back. I should be a cur if I did, and, what's more, whatever he might say, he'd think none the better of me. So please don't try to persuade me; it would be no good."

For quite a while afterwards young Somers seemed to be comparatively depressed, a state of mind that in his case was rare indeed. At least, he studied the wintry landscape through the carriage window and said nothing. By degrees, however, he recovered, and, when we reached Dartmouth, was as cheerful as ever, a mood that I could not altogether share.

Before we sailed I wrote to Sir Alexander, telling him exactly how things stood, and so, I think, did his son, though he never showed me the letter.

At Durban, just as we were about to start up country, I received an answer from him, sent by some boat that followed us very closely. In it he said that he quite understood the position, and, whatever happened, would attribute no blame to me, whom he should always regard with friendly feelings. He told me that, in the event of any difficulty or want of money, I was to draw on him for whatever might be required, and that he had advised the African Bank to that effect. Further, he added, that at least his son had shown grit in this matter, for which he respected him.

And now for a long while I must bid good-bye to Sir Alexander Somers and all that has to do with England.

CHAPTER IV.

MAVOVO AND HANS.

WE arrived safely at Durban at the beginning of March, and took up our quarters at my house on the Berea, where I expected that Brother John would be awaiting us. But no Brother John was to be found. The old lame Griqua, Jack, who looked after the place for me, and once had been one of my hunters, said that shortly after I went away in the ship, Dogeetah, as he called him, had taken his tin box and his net and walked off inland, he knew not where, leaving, as he declared, no message or letter behind him. The cases full of butterflies and dried plants were also gone, but these, I found, he had shipped to some port in America by a sailing vessel bound for the United States which chanced to put in at Durban for food and water. As to what had become of the man himself I could get no clue. He had been seen at Maritzburg and, according to some Kaffirs whom I knew, afterwards on the borders of Zululand, where, so far as I could learn, he vanished into space.

This, to say the least of it, was disconcerting, and a question arose as to what was to be done. Brother John was to have been our guide. He alone knew the Mazitu people, he alone had visited the borders of the mysterious Pongoland, and, accustomed though I was to African travel, I scarcely felt inclined to attempt to reach that country without his aid.

When a fortnight had gone by, and still there were no signs of him, Stephen and I held a solemn conference. I pointed out the difficulties and dangers of the situation to him, and suggested that, under the circumstances, it might be wise to give up this wild orchid chase and go elephant hunting instead in a certain part of Zululand where, in those days, these animals were still abundant.

He was inclined to agree with me, since the prospect of killing elephants had attractions for him.

"And yet," I said, after reflection, "it's curious, but I never remember making a successful trip after altering plans at the last moment—that is, unless one was driven to it."

"I vote we toss up," said Somers; "it gives Providence a chance. Now, then, heads for the golden cyp., and tails for the elephants."

He spun a half-crown into the air. It fell and rolled under a great yellow-wood chest full of curiosities that I had collected, which it took all our united strength to move. We dragged it aside, and not without some excitement, for really a good deal hung upon the chance, I lit a match and peered into the shadow. There in the dust lay the coin.

"What is it?" I asked of Somers, who was stretched on his stomach on the chest.

"Orchid—I mean head," he answered. "Well, that's settled, so we needn't bother any more."

The next fortnight was a busy time for me. As it happened, there was a schooner in the bay of about one hundred tons burden, which belonged to a Portuguese trader named Delgado, who dealt in goods that he carried to the various East African ports and Madagascar. He was a villainous-looking person, whom I suspected of having dealings with the slave traders — who were very numerous and a great power in those days if, indeed, he were not one himself. But as he was going to Kilwa, whence we proposed to start inland, I arranged to make use of him to carry our party and the baggage. The bargain was not altogether easy to strike, for two reasons. First, he did not appear to be anxious that we should hunt in the districts at the back of Kilwa, where he assured me there was no game, and, secondly, he said that he wanted to sail at once. However, I overcame his objections with an argument he could not resist namely, money—and in the end he agreed to postpone his departure for fourteen days.

Then I set about collecting our men, of whom I had made up my mind there must not be less than twenty. Already I had sent messengers summoning to Durban from Zululand and the upper districts of Natal various hunters who had accompanied me on other expeditions. To the number of a dozen or so, they arrived in due course. Ι have always had the good fortune to be on the best of terms with my Kaffirs, and where I went they were ready to go without asking The man whom I had any questions. selected to be their captain under me was a Zulu of the name of Mavovo. He was a short fellow, past middle age, with an enormous chest. His strength was proverbial; indeed, it was said that he could throw an ox by the horns, and myself I have seen him hold down the head of a wounded buffalo that had fallen, until I could come up and shoot it.

When I first knew Mavovo, he was a petty chief and witch-doctor in Zululand. Like myself, he had fought for the Prince Umbelazi in the great battle of the Tugela, a crime which Cetewayo never forgave him. About a year afterwards he got warning that he had been smelt out as a wizard and was going to be killed. He fled with two of his wives and a child. The slayers overtook them before he could reach the Natal border. and stabbed the elder wife and the child of the second wife. They were four men, but, made mad by the sight, Mavovo turned on them and killed them all. Then, with the remaining wife, cut to pieces as he was, he crept to the river and through it to Natal. Not long after this wife died also—it was said from grief at the loss of her child. Mavovo did not marry again, perhaps because he was now a man without means, for Cetewayo had taken all his cattle; also he was made ugly by an assegai wound which had cut off his right nostril. Shortly after the death of his second wife he sought me out and told me he was a chief without a kraal, and wished to become my hunter. \mathbf{So} I took him on, a step which I never had any cause to regret, since, although morose and at



"He took up his bundle of vultures' feathers, selected one with care, held it towards the sky, then passed it through the flame of the centre one of the three fires."

times given to the practice of uncanny arts, he was a most faithful servant and brave as a lion, or rather as a buffalo, for a lion is not always brave.

Another man whom I did not send for, but who came, was an old Hottentot named Hans, with whom I had been more or less mixed up all my life. When I was a boy, he was my father's servant in the Cape Colony, and my companion in some of those early Also he shared some very terrible wars. adventures with me, which I have detailed in the history I have written of my first wife, Marie Marais. For instance, he and I were the only persons who escaped from the massacre of Retief and his companions by the Zulu king Dingaan. In the subsequent campaigns, including the battle of the Blood River, he fought at my side and ultimately received a good share of captured cattle. After this he retired and set up a kind of native store at a place called Pinetown, about fifteen miles out of Durban. Here, I am afraid, he got into bad ways and took to drink more or less, also to gambling. Atany rate, he lost most of his property, so much of it, indeed, that he scarcely knew which way to turn. Thus it happened that one evening, when I went out of the house. where I had been making up my accounts, I saw a yellow-faced, white-haired old fellow squatted on the verandah, smoking a pipe made out of a corn-cob.

"Good day, Baas," he said. "Here am I, Hans."

"So I see," I answered rather coldly. "And what are you doing here, Hans? How can you spare time from your drinking and gambling at Pinetown to visit me here, Hans, after I have not seen you for three years?"

"Baas, the gambling is finished, because I have nothing more to stake, and the drinking is done, too, because but one bottle of Cape Smoke makes me feel quite ill next morning. So now I only take water, and as little of that as I can—water and some tobacco to cover up its taste."

"I am glad to hear it, Hans. If my father, the Predikant, who baptised you, were alive now, he would have much to say about your conduct, as, indeed, I have no doubt he will presently, when you have gone into a hole (i.e., a grave). For there in the hole he will be waiting for you, Hans."

"I know, I know, Baas. I have been thinking of that, and it troubles me. Your reverend father, the Predikant, will be very cross indeed with me when I join him in the Place of Fires, where he sits awaiting us. So I wish to make my peace with him by dying well and in your service, Baas. I hear that the Baas is going on an expedition. I have come to accompany the Baas."

"To accompany me! Why, you are old; you are not worth five shillings a month and your scoff (food). You are a shrunken old brandy cask that will not even hold water."

Hans grinned right across his ugly face.

"Oh, Baas, I am old, but I am clever. All these years I have been gathering wisdom. I am as full of it as a bees' nest is with honey when the summer is done. And, Baas, I can stop those leaks in the cask."

"Hans, it is no good; I don't want you. I am going into great danger. I must have those about me whom I can trust."

"Well, Baas, and who can be better trusted than Hans? Who warned you of the attack of the Quables on Maraisfontein, and so saved the life of _____"

"Hush !" I said.

"I understand. I will not speak the It is holy, not to be mentioned. It name. is the name of one who stands with the white angels before God, not to be mentioned by poor drunken Hans. Still, who stood at your side in that great fight? Ah, it makes me young again to think of itwhen the roof burned, when the door was broken down, when we met the Quabies on the spears, when you held the pistol to the head of the Holy One whose name must not be mentioned, the Great One who knew how to die. Oh, Baas, our lives are twisted up together like the creeper and the tree, and where you go, there I must go also. Do not turn me away. I ask no wages, only a bit of food and a handful of tobacco, and the light of your face and a word now and again of the memories that belong to both of us. I am still very strong. I can shoot well-Baas, who was it that put it into your well. mind to aim at the tails of the vultures on the Hill of Slaughter, yonder in Zululand, and so saved the lives of all the Boer people, and of her whose holy name must not be mentioned? Baas, you will not turn me away?"

"No," I answered, "you can come. But you will swear by the spirit of my father, the Predikant, to touch no liquor on this journey."

"I swear by his spirit and by that of the Holy One." And he flung himself forward on to his knees, took my hand and kissed it. Then he rose and said in a matter-of-fact tone: "If the Baas can give me two blankets, I shall thank him, also five shillings to buy some tobacco and a new knife. Where are the Baas' guns? I must go to oil them. I beg that the Baas will take with him that little rifle which is named Intombi (Maiden), the one with which he shot the vultures on the Hill of Slaughter, the one that killed the geese in the Goose Kloof when I loaded for him and he won the great match against the Boer whom Dingaan called Two-faces."

"Good !" I said. "Here are the five shillings. You shall have the blankets and a new gun, and all things needful. You will find the guns in the little back room, and with them those of the Baas, my companion, who also is your master. Go, see to them."

At length all was ready; the cases of guns, ammunition, medicines, presents, and food, were on board the Maria. So were four donkeys that I had bought in the hope that they would prove useful, either to ride or as pack beasts. The donkey, be it remembered, and man are the only animals which are said to be immune from the poisonous effects of the bite of tsetse fly, except. of course, the wild game. It was our last night at Durban, a very beautiful night of full moon at the end of March, for the Portugee Delgado had announced his intention of sailing on the following afternoon. Stephen Somers and I were seated on the stoep, smoking and talking things over.

"It is a strange thing," I said, "that Brother John should never have turned up. I know that he was set upon making this expedition, not only for the sake of the orchid, but also for some other reason of which he would not speak. I think that the old fellow must be dead."

"Very likely," answered Stephen. We had become intimate, and I called him Stephen now. "A man alone among savages might easily come to grief and never be heard of again. Hark ! What's that?" And he pointed to some gardenia bushes in the shadow of the house near by, whence came a sound of something that moved.

"A dog, I expect, or perhaps it is Hans. He curls up in all sorts of places near to where I may be. Hans, are you there?"

A figure arose from the gardenia bushes.

"Ja, I am here, Baas."

"What are you doing, Hans?"

"I am doing what the dog does, Baaswatching my master."

"Good!" I answered. Then an idea struck me. "Hans, you have heard of the white Baas with the long beard whom the Kaffirs call Dogeetah ?"

"I have heard of him and once I saw him, a few moons ago, passing through Pinetown. A Kaffir with him told me that he was going over the Drakensberg to hunt for things that crawl and fly, being quite mad, Baas."

"Well, where is he now, Hans? He should have been here to travel with us."

"Am I a spirit that I can tell the Baas whither a white man has wandered? Yet stay. Mavovo may be able to tell. He is a great doctor, he can see through distance, and even now, this very night, his Snake of divination has entered into him, and he is looking into the future, yonder behind the house. I saw him form the circle."

I translated what Hans said to Stephen, for he had been talking in Dutch, then asked him if he would like to see some Kaffir magic.

"Of course," he answered. "But it's all bosh, isn't it?"

"Óh, yes, all bosh, or so most people say," I answered evasively. "Still, sometimes these inyangas tell one strange things."

Then, led by Hans, we crept round the house to where there was a five-foot stone wall at the back of the stable. Beyond this wall, within the circle of some huts where my Kaffirs lived, was an open space with an ant-heap floor where they did their cooking. Here, facing us, sat Mavovo, while in a ring around him were all the hunters who were to accompany us, also Jack, the lame Griqua, and the two house-boys. In front of Mavovo burned a number of little wood fires. T counted them and found that there were fourteen, which, I reflected, was the exact number of our hunters, plus ourselves. One of the hunters was engaged in feeding these fires with little bits of stick and handfuls of dried grass so as to keep them burning The others sat round perfectly brightly. silent and watched with rapt attention. Mavovo himself looked like a man who is asleep. He was crouched on his haunches, with his big head resting almost upon his knees. About his middle was a snake skin, and round his neck an ornament that appeared to be made of human teeth. On his right side lay a pile of feathers from the wings of vultures, and on his left a little heap of silver money—I suppose the fees paid by the hunters for whom he was divining.

After we had watched him for some while from our shelter behind the wall, he appeared to wake out of his sleep. First he muttered, then he looked up to the moon and seemed to say a prayer of which I could not eatch the words. Next he shuddered three times convulsively and exclaimed in a clear voice—

"My Snake has come. It is within me. Now I can hear, now I can see."

Three of the little fires, those immediately in front of him, were larger than the others. He took up his bundle of vultures' feathers, selected one with care, held it towards the sky, then passed it through the flame of the centre one of the three fires, uttering, as he did so, my native name, Macumazana. Withdrawing it from the flame, he examined the charred edges of the feather very carefully, a proceeding that caused a cold shiver to go down my back, for I knew well that he was inquiring of his "Spirit" what would be my fate upon this expedition. How it answered I cannot tell, for he laid the feather down and took another, with which he went through the same process. This time, however, the name he called out was Mwamwazela, which, in its shortened form of Wazela, was the Kaffir appellation that the natives had given to Stephen Somers. It means a smile, and no doubt was selected for him because of his pleasant, smiling countenance.

Having passed it through the right-hand fire of the three, he examined it and laid it down.

So it went on. One after another he called out the names of the hunters, beginning with his own as captain, passed the feather which represented each of them through the particular fire of his destiny, examined and laid it down. After this he seemed to go to sleep again for a few minutes, then woke up as a man does from a natural slumber, yawned and stretched himself.

"Speak !" said his audience, with great anxiety. "Have you seen? Have you heard? What does your Snake tell you of me? Of me? Of me? "

"I have seen, I have heard," he answered. "My Snake tells me that this will be a very dangerous journey. Of those who go on it six will die, by the bullet, by the spear, or by sickness, and others will be hurt."

"Ow!" said one of them. "But which will die and which will come out safe? Does not your Snake tell you that, O Doctor?"

"Yes, of course my Snake tells me that. But my Snake tells me also to hold my tongue on the matter, lest some of us should be turned to cowards. It tells me, further, that the first who should ask me more will be one of those who must die. Now do you ask? Or you? Or you? Or you? Ask, if you will." Strange to say, no one accepted the invitation. Never have I seen a body of men so indifferent to the future—at least, to every appearance. One and all they seemed to come to the conclusion that, so far as they were concerned, it might be left to look after itself.

"My Snake told me something else," went on Mavovo. "It is that if among this company there is any jackal of a man who, thinking that he might be one of the six to die, dreams to avoid his fate by deserting, it will be of no use. For then my Snake will point him out and show me how to deal with him."

Now with one voice each man present there declared that desertion from the lord Macumazana was the last thing that could possibly occur to him. Indeed, I believe that those brave fellows spoke truth. No doubt they put faith in Mavovo's magic after the fashion of their race. Still, the death he promised was some way off, and each hoped he would be one of the six to escape. Moreover, the Zulu of those days was too accustomed to death to fear its terrors overmuch.

One of them did, however, venture to advance the argument—which Mavovo treated with a proper contempt—that the shillings paid for this divination should be returned by him to the next heirs of such of them as happened to decease. Why, he asked, should these pay a shilling in order to be told that they must die? It seemed unreasonable.

Čertainly the Zulu Kaffirs have a queer way of looking at things.

"Hans," I whispered, "is your fire among those that burn yonder?"

"Not so, Baas," he wheezed back into my "Does the Baas think me a fool? If ear. I must die, I must die; if I am to live, I shall live. Why, then, should I pay a shilling to learn what time will declare? Moreover, yonder Mavovo takes the shillings and frightens everybody, but tells nobody anything. I call it cheating. But, Baas, do you and the Baas Wazela have no fear. You did not pay shillings, and therefore Mavovo, though without doubt he is a great inyanga, cannot really prophesy concerning you, since his Snake will not work without a fee.'

The argument seems remarkably absurd, yet it must be common, for, now that I come to think of it, no gipsy will tell a "true fortune" unless her hand is crossed with silver.

"I say, Quatermain," said Stephen idly, since our friend Mayovo seems to know so much, ask him what has become of Brother John, as Hans suggested. Tell me what he says afterwards, for I want to see to something."

So I went through the little gate in the wall in a natural kind of way, as though I had seen nothing, and appeared to be struck by the sight of the little fires.

"What, Mavovo," I said, "are you doing doctor's work? I thought that it had brought you into enough trouble in Zululand."

"That is so, Baba," replied Mavovo, who had a habit of calling me "father," though he was older than I. "It cost me my chieftainship and my cattle and my two wives and my son. It made of me a wanderer who is glad to accompany a certain Macumazahn to strange lands, where many things may befall me—yes," he added, with meaning, "even the last of all things. And yet a gift is a gift, and must be used. You, Baba, have a gift of shooting, and do you cease to shoot? You have a gift of wandering, and can you cease to wander?"

He picked up one of the burnt feathers from the little pile by his side and looked at it attentively. ""Perhaps, Baba, you have been told-my ears are very sharp, and I thought I heard some such words floating through the air just now-that we poor Kaffir inyangas can prophesy nothing true unless we are paid, and perhaps that is a fact so far as something of the moment is concerned. And yet the Snake in the inyanga, jumping over the little rock which hides the present from it, may see the path that winds far and far away through the valleys, across the streams, up the mountains, till it is lost in the heaven above. Thus on this feather, burnt in my magic fire, I seem to see something of your future, O my father Macumazahn. Far and far your road runs." And he drew his finger along the feather. "Here is a journey."—and he flicked away a carbonised flake—"here is another, and another, and another." And he flicked off flake after flake. "Here is one that is very successful; it leaves you rich. And here is yet one more-a wonderful journey this, in which you see strange things and meet strange people. Then "---and he blew on the feather in such a fashion that all the charred filaments (Brother John says that laminæ is the right word for them) fell away from it—"then there is nothing left save such a pole as some of my people stick upright on a grave, the shaft of memory, they call it. O my father, you will die in a distant land, but you will leave a great memory behind you that will live for hundreds of years, for see how strong is this quill over which the fire has had no power. With some of these others it is quite different," he added.

"I dare say," I broke in. "But, Mavovo, be so good as to leave me out of your magic, for I don't at all want to know what is going to happen to me. To-day is enough for me, without studying next month and next year. There is a saying in our Holy Book which runs : Sufficient to the day is its evil."

"Quite so, O Macumazana. Also that is a very good saying, as some of those hunters of yours are thinking now. Yet an hour ago they were forcing their shillings on me that I might tell them of the future. And you, too, want to know something. You did not come through that gate to quote to me the wisdom of your Holy Book. What is it, Baba? Be quick, for my Snake is getting very tired. He wishes to go back to his hole in the world beneath."

"Well, then," I answered in rather a shamefaced fashion, for Mavovo had an uncanny way of seeing into one's secret motives, "I should like to know, if you can tell me, which you can't, what has become of the white man with the long beard whom you black people call Dogeetah. He should have been here to go on this journey with us—indeed, he was to be our guide—and we cannot find him. Where is he, and why is he not here?"

"Have you anything about you that belonged to Dogeetah, Macumazahn?"

"No," I answered-" that is, yes." And from my pocket I produced the stump of a pencil that Brother John had given me, which, being economical, I had saved up ever since. Mavovo took it, and after considering it carefully, as he had done in the case of the feathers, swept up a pile of ashes with his horny hand from the edge of the largest of the little fires-that, indeed, which had represented myself. These ashes he patted flat. Then he drew on them with the point of the pencil, tracing what seemed to me to be the rough image of a man, such as children scratch upon whitewashed walls. When he had finished, he sat up and contemplated his handiwork with all the satisfaction of an artist. A breeze had risen from the sea and was blowing in little gusts, so that the fine ashes were disturbed, some of the lines of the picture being filled in and others altered or enlarged.

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For a while Mavovo sat with his eyes shut. Then he opened them, studied the ashes and what remained of the picture, and, taking a blanket that lay near by, threw it over his own head and over the ashes. Withdrawing it again presently, he cast it aside and pointed to the picture which was now quite changed. Indeed, in the moonlight it looked more like a landscape than anything else.

"All is clear, my father," he said, in a matter-of-fact voice. "The white wanderer, Dogeetah, is not dead. He lives, but he is sick. Something is the matter with one of his legs, so that he cannot walk. Perhaps a bone is broken or some beast has bitten him. He lies in a hut such as Kaffirs make, only this hut has a verandah round it like your stoep, and there are drawings on the wall. The hut is a long way off—I don't know where."

" Is that all ?" I asked, for he paused.

"No, not all. Dogeetah is recovering. He will join us in that country whither we journey, at a time of trouble. That is all, and the fee is half-a-crown."

"You mean one shilling," I suggested.

"No, my father Macumazahn. One shilling for simple magic such as foretelling the fate of common black people; half-acrown for very difficult magic that has to do with white people, magic of which only great doctors, like me, Mavovo, are the masters."

I gave him the half-crown and said-

"Look here, friend Mavovo, I believe in you as a fighter and a hunter, but as a magician I think you are a humbug. Indeed, I am so sure of it that if ever Dogeetah turns up at a time of trouble in that land whither we are journeying, I will make you a present of that double-barrelled rifle of mine which you admired so much."

One of his rare smiles appeared on Mavovo's ugly face.

"Then give it to me now, Baba," he said, "for it is already earned. My Snake cannot lie, especially when the fee is half-a-crown."

I shook my head and declined, politely but with firmness.

"Ah," said Mavovo, "you white men are very clever, and think that you know everything. But it is not so, for in learning so much that is new, you have forgotten

ha Barda a h Le clastra more that is old. When the Snake that is in you, Macumazahn, dwelt in a black savage like me a thousand thousand years ago, you could have done and did what I do. But now you can only mock and say: 'Mavoyo, the brave in battle, the great hunter, the loyal man, becomes a liar when he blows the burnt feather or reads what the wind writes upon the charmed ashes.'"

"I do not say that you are a liar, Mavovo; I say that you are deceived by your own imaginings. It is not possible that man can know what is hidden from man."

"Is it indeed so, O Macumazahn, Watcher by Night? Am I, Mavovo, the pupil of Zikali, the Opener of Roads, the greatest of wizards, indeed deceived by my own imaginings? And has man no other eyes but those in his head, that he cannot see what is hidden from man? .Well, you say so, and all we black people know that you are very clever, and why should I, a poor Zulu, be able to see what you cannot see ? Yet when to-morrow one sends you a message from the ship in which we are to sail, begging you to come fast, because there is trouble on the ship, then bethink you of your words and my words, and whether or on man can see what is hidden from man in the blackness of the future. Oh, that rifle of yours is mine already, though you will not give it to me now, you who think that I am a cheat. Well, my father Macumazahn, because you think I am a cheat, never again will I blow the feather or read what the wind writes upon the ashes for you or any who eat your food."

Then he rose, saluted me with uplifted right hand, collected his little pile of money and bag of medicines, and marched off to the sleeping-hut.

On our way round the house we met my old lame caretaker, Jack.

"Inkosi," he said, "the white chief Wazela bade me say that he and the cook, Sam, have gone to sleep on board of the ship to look after the goods. Sam came up just now and fetched him away; he says he will show you why to-morrow."

I nodded and passed on, wondering to myself why Stephen had suddenly determined to stay the night on the *Maria*.

(To be continued.)

FAMOUS BROTHERS.

BY GEORGE A. WADE AND C. F. LORIMER.

SECOND ABTICLE.

M not I consanguineous?" says Sir Toby in "Twelfth Night." The remark might very well be echoed by certain groups of eminent men of to-day, who, hearing the praise of famous men,

is associated with academic distinctions of the highest kind; shared in varying degrees by brothers in two successive generations of the same family. Three sons of the Dean Butler who became Headmaster of Harrow in

was born the

year before his

mastership.and

go to Harrow,

but to Rugby,

whence he

passed to the

ĥighest

bridge. He

practised as

Counsel to the

High Court of

Chancery and

Counsel to the

Treasury.

may with truth remark, "Am not I consanguineous ?" and add, alter-ing Sir Toby a little, "Am I not of his blood?" Moreover, as our previous selection of various groups of famous brothers showed, those who might use Sir Toby's claim are in a greatnumber of cases well qualified to do so by their own records of personal achievement, whether closely parallel to those of one or more famous brothers. or widely divergent from them. The subject, indeed, being one of wide range, our former article

THE REV. HENRY M. BUTLER, D.D., MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

was able to include but a first group of families which have contributed two or more brothers to contemporary public life in various spheres of activity, and we therefore make here a further selection from other professions and careers not represented in our former series of portraits.

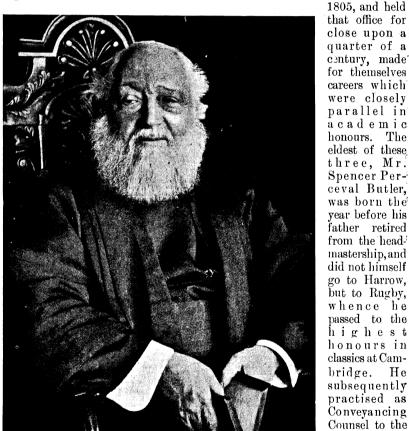
Photo by]

The family name of Butler, for instance,

His younger brother, who was eventually to follow in their father's footsteps as Headmaster of Harrow, was first a school-boy at Harrow, and then followed his elder brother in a brilliant career at Cambridge.

The name of the present Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, the Rev. Henry Montagu Butler, is, indeed, synonymous with the

[Russell.



highest academic distinction. Born in 1833, Dr. Butler passed from Harrow to Trinity College, Cambridge. He was Bell University Scholar, Battie University Scholar, won the prize for the Greek Ode, the Camden Medal, the Porson Prize, and the Latin Essay Prize. He was Senior Classic in 1855, and Vice-Chancellor in 1889–90. For a time he was private secretary to Lord Mount Temple, and from 1859 to 1885 Headmaster of Harrow. Many other honours have come to him. He has been Select Preacher at Oxford as well as at Cambridge.

The honours won at Cambridge were paralleled, in a measure, by those which fell to the lot of a third brother, the late Rev. Arthur Gray Butler. At Rugby, Mr. Arthur Butler was great as a scholar and as an athlete. "Butler's Leap" is still pointed out at Rugby to commemorate his prowess. At Oxford he won the Ireland and the Craven. He was the first Headmaster of Haileybury, and afterwards became Fellow of Oriel and Rector of St. Mary's, Oxford. A poet himself, Arthur Butler enjoyed the friendship of Tennyson. Like the Master of Trinity, Mr. Arthur Butler excelled in the composition of Greek and Latin verse.

So closely is the name of Butler allied with scholarship that, in the next generation, two of Mr. Spencer Butler's sons won Fellowships at Cambridge, and two others



Photo by] [Hills & Saunders. THE LATE REV. ARTHUR GRAY BUTLER.



MR. LOUIS ZANGWILL, "Z.Z."

took brilliant degrees, one at Oxford and one at Cambridge, while others made careers for themselves in the Army, the Navy, and other professions, one of them being now Vice-President of the Legislative Council of India. The sons of the Master of Trinity have carried all before them in the way of honours at Cambridge.

The path to learning was steeper for the two Zangwills, who had to open for themselves, by fierce effort, the doors of knowledge. The elder, Israel Zangwill, the brilliant author of "The Children of the Ghetto" and "The Master," was born in London, and had his education at a Jewish Board School, where he later became a master. For some time he was in Bristol, but eventually was back in London, where, after hard study, he took his B.A. at the London University with triple honours. Still. even in 1887 he was so poor and unknown that he had to take up canvassing for advertisements as his "baptism of literature." He, however, gave that up when he got some encouragement by having his first efforts accepted by editors, and in 1891 his papers on "The Bachelors' Club," printed in book form, had a great success, which he followed up with "The Children of the Ghetto," in 1892, and since then Israel Zangwill has been hailed as one of the living masters of both playwriting and fiction. His "Children of the Ghetto" was dramatised in 1899, and since that time he has written several plays, produced some in America, some in London, and some on both sides of the sea. Among these are "Merely Mary Ann," "The Serio-Comic Governess," and, in 1912, "The Next Religion," which aroused much discussion. Mr. Zangwill's achieved a distinct reputation with such works as "The Beautiful Miss Brooke," "Cleo the Magnificent," "The Siren from Bath," "One's Womankind," and "An Engagement of Convenience." His resemblance to his elder brother extends also to the "hobbies" and "recreations," for "Z. Z."



MR. ISRAEL ZANGWILL. BY SOLOMON J. SOLOMON, R.A.

later manner, in "Italian Fantasies," shows him as a somewhat controversial essayist. It is characteristic of the man that, when asked for his favourite relaxation, he declared it to be "hard study." Mr. Zangwill married the daughter of Professor Ayrton. Louis Zangwill—"Z. Z.," as he used to

Louis Zangwill—"Z. Z.," as he used to sign himself—was born in Bristol, and is five years younger than Israel. But he has says he likes "hard study" and "collecting old antique furniture" about as much as anything. Both the brothers are great pedestrians, and enjoy nothing so much as long and often solitary tramps into the country.

Groups of noble kinsmen inevitably suggest the Beresfords, whose name has become synonymous in the English language with

THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE.



Photo by] [Sport & General. LORD MARCUS BERESFORD.

bravery. Such phrases as "The Fighting Beresfords" or "Fighting Bill Beresford" call up the great personalities of the race at whose head stands Admiral Lord Charles Beresford. Three times has Lord Charles won the gold medal for saving life at sea. The most daring of these feats was the occasion when, off the Falkland Islands, he jumped overboard with his heavy shootingboots and clothes on and his pockets full of cartridges, to rescue a sailor. And the everfamous "Well done, *Condor*!" signalled by the Admiral at Alexandria to the brave ship commanded by Lord Charles, as she drove herself closer in towards her foes, promises to become almost as celebrated in naval annals as Nelson's great signal at Trafalgar. And that plucky journey on the little riversteamer, in 1886, up to the very walls of ill-fated Khartum—as soon as England read of it, people said : "Yes, I knew!" when they saw that the vessel was "under the command of Lord Charles Beresford."

Lord Charles, who is the second son of the fourth Marquess of Waterford, entered the Navy in 1859, when he joined the *Britannia* as a cadet. Sixteen years later he was naval A.D.C. to the Prince of Wales (King Edward VII.) during his tour in India. Lord Charles's great distinction at Alexandria, already mentioned, was won in 1882, and it fell to him to institute a regular police system in the Egyptian port when the British landed after the bombardment. For



Photo by] [Maull & Fox. THE LATE LORD WILLIAM BERESFORD.



LORD CHARLES BERESFORD. Photograph by Dinham, Torquay.

his subsequent services in the Soudan he received the thanks of both Houses of In 1886 he became a Lord Parliament. Commissioner of the Admiralty, but resigned two years later on the question of the strength of the Fleet, and since that time Lord Charles's voice has never been silent on that momentous subject. His advocacy of naval efficiency and adequate preparation by sea against national emergencies is, indeed, the complement of Lord Roberts's strenuous exertions in the cause of a strong Army. He has commanded the Channel Squadron, the Mediterranean Fleet, and the Channel In 1911 he retired, but he is still Fleet. a force, and remains in the heart of the British public the beau-ideal of a British sailor. The chief points in his Parliamentary career are: M.P. for Waterford, 1874-1880; East Division of Marylebone, 1885-1889; York, 1897-1900; Woolwich, 1902. Since 1910 he has sat for Portsmouth. Lord

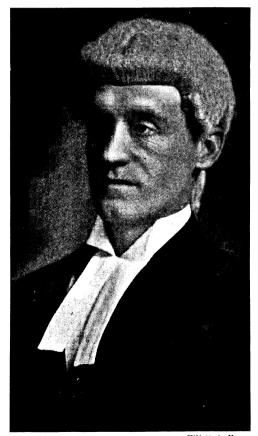
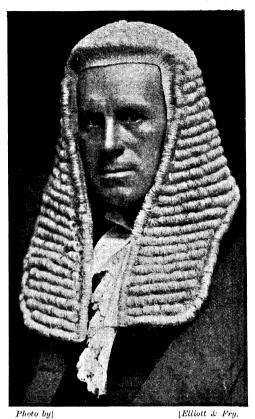


Photo by] [Elliott & Fry. THE LATE THE HON. ARTHUR RUSSELL. County Court Judge.



THE HON, FRANK RUSSELL, K.C.

Charles's energies are manifold. He amuses his leisure at the turning lathe. He is a carpenter, a cyclist, and an all-round sportsman. He even finds time to write books. His "The Break-up of China" was the outcome of a special mission which he undertook in 1898–1899 to that country, at the request of the Associated Chambers of Commerce. "The Betrayal," published in 1912, is a trumpet note of national defence. His "Nelson and His Times" remains a standard work, and his essays and articles on naval subjects are a familiar feature of the reviews.

His elder brother, Lord William Beresford, the soldier, who died in 1900, had no less the true English bravery. His magnificent deed at Ulundi will ever live in the annals of the V.C. as one of its most glorious pages. How, as his horse was galloping, pursued by the savage hordes of Zulus, he came across a fallen soldier who was wounded—how Beresford looked at the soldier, then at the foe, scarcely a hundred yards away—how he, despite the terrible danger, reined in his steed and told the man to "get up on it"— how the man pleaded with him to leave him there and save himself, but to no purpose and the final rescue of that poor fellow, the horse rushing along under the double load —who can forget it—who wishes to ?

Lord Charles's only surviving brother, Lord Marcus Beresford, has specialised on

horses, for which he has vour true Irishman's knowledge and affection. He held for five years the responsible post of official starter to the Jockey Club, and for some time past he has been manager of the King's thorough breds, with the post of Extra Equerry to His Majesty. He is also manager of the Sandringham Stud.

The legal profession affords two n o t a b l e examples of b r o t h e r s successfully engaged in the same learned calling.

One of these legal brotherhoods is that of the Russells, sons of the late Lord Russell of Killowen, one family, two of his uncles having been judges, as well as his father, a record unique in the history of any one family. The second son, the Hon. Charles Russell, did not go to the Bar, but has a very large practice as a solicitor. The Hon. Frank Russell, fourth son, is a distinguished King's Counsel practising at the



THE HON. CHARLES RUSSELL.

the famous Lord Chief Justice. Here were three brothers, but the triumvirate has been unhappily broken by the untimely death, in 1907, of the first-born of the house, the Hon. Arthur Russell, seven years after his appointment to a County Court Judgeship on an important circuit. His judgeship made the fourth in two generations of the brilliant pleading and sound law of Mr. Arthur Gill carried him to the police magistracy which his old friend and mentor, Montagu Williams, used to fill, the elder brother is notable as one of our most brilliant "silks."

It is interesting to trace the main points of resemblance and divergence between the

Chancery

Bar. Up to a few years

ago, we had

Mr. Charles Frederick Gill.

K.C., practis-

ing in the same Courts with

his brother.

Mr. Arthur

Edmund Gill, who is thir-

teen years his junior.

Although

divided in

point of years,

the brothers, who are neigh-

bours when at home, have

enjoyed

careers pre-

senting many

points of

resemblance,

albeit tending

to different

goals. Each

was Junior

Counsel to

the Treasury,

each held

a Recordership — the

distinguished

counsel still

presides over

Chichester

Quarter Ses-

whereas the

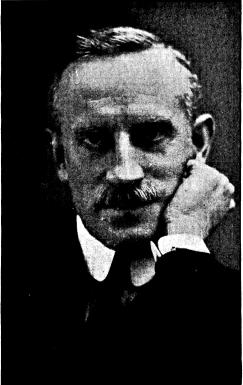
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sions.

careers of these two brotherhoods, the Gills and the Russells. Both are of Irish parentage, both are keenly interested in sport, both have certain other interests While Mr. Arthur Gill is in common. the son-in-law of Mr. A. F. Walter, of the famous Times family, the Russells are the sons of a man who, in his days as a young solicitor, did a good deal of journalism, to become, at the time of the Parnell Commission, leading counsel for The Times. The Hon. Arthur Russell, the County Court Judge, was editor for years of The Times law reports, in which Mr. Arthur Gill had a dual interest-as one of the dramatis persona in the cases, and as a son-in-law of the proprietor of the journal.

Lord Russell of Killowen loved to have his sons about him in his profession, and for six years employed his first-born as private secretary, had him with him as a junior counsel in the Parnell Commission, and took both him and his second son with him on his visit to the United States.

The Gills are stout Conservatives, but the vounger of the twain received his post as







[Ellis & Walery. THE HON. CYRIL RUSSELL.



CAPTAIN THE HON. BERTRAND RUSSELL.

Prosecuting Counsel for the Treasury, and also his magistracy, at the hands of a Liberal Home Secretary. The late Hon. Arthur Russell, on the other hand, who was, like his father and brothers, an ardent Liberal, was made a County Court Judge by a Tory Lord Chancellor.

As has been hinted, Mr. Arthur Gill sat at the feet of Montagu Williams, and was noted for the astuteness and winning appeal of his defences. His conduct on the Bench is distinguished by the same robust common-sense and kindliness which marked the decisions of the lamented "Monty."

Legal "devils" venerate Mr. Charles Gill as the paragon of lucidity; juries believe in him as they used to believe in Scarlett, of whom one of the twelve good men and true, commenting upon the success which attended the advocacy of that great lawyer, remarked : "There's nowt to boast about in his winning cases; he's allus on the right side." And that is what Mr. Gill appears to be. Juries cannot ignore the seemingly artless plainness of speech of this man who always takes them into his confidence; and judges, learned and sophisticated, find his invincible suavity and placid good humour irresistibly appealing. Yet it was this gentle, persuasive counsel who stood up in court and informed a judge that he had not rightly exercised his functions as president of the court.

The Hon. Frank Russell does not permit politics to invade the sphere of private or professional life. He married, in Miss Mary Ritchie, the daughter of the late Lord Ritchie, with whom his father had often stood face to

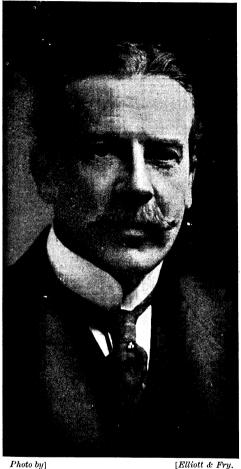


Photo by]

MR. A. E. GILL.

face in strenuous debate across the floor of the House of Commons. The oratorical gifts of his sire may be traced in the legal speeches of the son.

The Hon. Charles Russell has built up one of the most extensive practices of modern times as a solicitor, and in that capacity acted for the British Agent in the Behring Sea Arbitration. While Mr. C. F. Gill is counsel for the Jockey Club, Mr. Russell is solicitor for the stewards of that parliament of sport. Imbued with the Imperial sympathies which his father and the late Hon. Arthur Russell shared, he is solicitor for the Dominion Government of Canada.

All the Russells are keen lovers of sport. and the Hon. Charles Russell, who is himself a very keen yachtsman, has been principal adviser of Sir Thomas Lipton throughout his attempts to win back the great vachting trophy, the America Cup. He is even more enthusiastic a golfer than yachtsman. has a large measure of the family eloquence, and his speeches are vividly remembered by those who heard them when he made a very good fight, at exceptionally short notice, in two former elections, or those who followed his support of the protest aroused by Mr. Birrell's Education Bill of 1906.

Of the two sons of Lord Russell of Killowen who did not follow their father



MR. C. F. GILL, K.C.

in the Law as a profession, the elder, the Hon. Cyril Russell, when his school-days at Beaumont and on the Continent were completed, matriculated at University College, Oxford, at the somewhat unusually early age

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of seventeen, with the result that he had taken his degree and was at work in the City before he was twenty-one, and his successful career there on the Stock Exchange might well be held "to point the moral and adorn the tale" of those who urge that the University life begins too late for most boys, and therefore lasts too far into the twenties before they can pass on into any definite profession. He was for some years a partner in the well-known firm of Helbert, Wagg and Russell, but has now retired. The youngest brother of this group is Captain the Hon. Bertrand Russell, who, since his retirement from the Army, represents in London a leading American business house in which he is a partner.

Among the most picturesque incidents of the General Election of 1906 was the return of the three brothers Philipps in the Liberal interest. They are the three eldest sons of the late Canon Sir James Erasmus Philipps, twelfth Baronet of Picton, and they were also remarkable for being among the tallest group

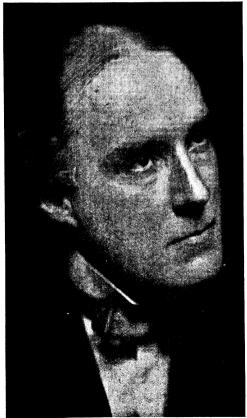


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[L. Caswall Smith. MR. LAURENCE IRVING.



Photo by] [El.is & Walery, MR. H. B. IRVING AS LESURQUES IN "THE LYONS MAIL."

of legislators on record-in fact, it is said that, if placed on end, so to speak, they would have measured nineteen feet or thereabouts. Certain it is that Mr. Punch facetiously affected to have no room for their portraits in one issue, but proceeded to publish them in instalments, from their feet upwards. The eldest brother, Mr. John Wynford Philipps, M.P. for Pembrokeshire, was in 1908 raised to the peerage as Lord St. Davids of Roch Castle. He was educated at Felsted School, like his brother, Colonel Ivor Philipps, and Keble College, Oxford, and was called to the Bar: but he has found Argentine railways more interesting than briefs.

Colonel Ivor Philipps, the second son of Canon Sir James Erasmus Philipps, has sat for Southampton in the Liberal interest since 1906. He was formerly in the Indian Army, and saw much distinguished service, his campaigns including Burma, Chin Lushai, Miranzai, Isazai, North-West Frontier, Tirah, and the China Expedition of 1900–1901. For his conduct in the last expedition he was mentioned in despatches, received the D.S.O. and the medal and clasp. Many



LORD ST. DAVIDS.

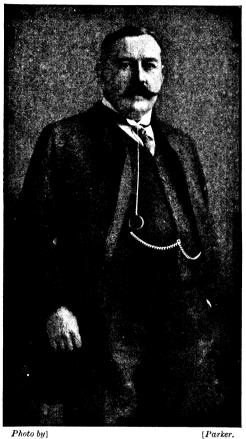
other distinctions and decorations fell to him in former campaigns. His military enthusiasm is still kept alive by his interest in the Pembrokeshire Yeomanry, which he commands. As a writer on military matters, he is known by his



SIR OWEN PHILIPPS, M.P.

treatise on "The Issue of Orders in the Field."

The third brother of this remarkable group is Sir Owen Philipps, a popular figure in Club-land and one of the best after-dinner speakers in London. Shipping claims the energies of his working days, and he is chairman of several famous lines, chief of which are the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company and the Union Castle line. He was a member of the Royal Commission



COLONEL IVOR PHILIPPS, D.S.O., M.P.

on Shipping Rings, which sat from 1906 to 1909, contributing the knowledge of a vast experience to the deliberations of that body. His activities are enormous, and his advice has been sought on numberless committees and boards. He is Vice-Chairman of the Port of London Authority, Trustee of the Aged Merchant Seamen's Institution, he sits on the executive of King Edward's Hospital Fund, and his interest in education is signalised by his Vice-Chairmanship of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, to name but a few of the engagements of one of the busiest of public men. He held his seat as M.P. for Pembroke and Haverfordwest in 1910.

The laurels of the greatly successful novelist are shared by the two brothers Mr. Silas and Mr. Joseph Hocking, whose novels enjoy a very wide popularity. They are Cornishmen, and are proud of their Celtic strain, to which they attribute in great measure their imaginative gifts. They were reared in a world of fancy, for their mother used to hold her boys spellbound as she invented for them wonderful stories of the revels of pixies and fairies. Mr. Silas Hocking is eleven years older than his brother. He entered the ministry, and has held various pastorates. He has also twice stood for Parliament. But his vocation is

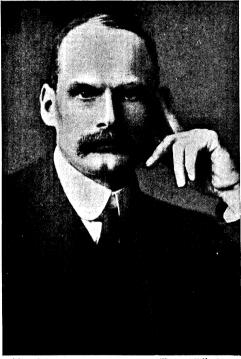


Photo by]

[Weston, Folkestone.

MR. JOSEPH HOCKING.

pre-eminently that of the novelist. When he was about seven years old, "The Arabian Nights" fell into his hands. He read it in fear and trembling, for it was not approved of at home, and the book changed everything for the boy. It beat "The Pilgrim's Progress," and set him athirst for more exciting adventure. At sixteen he competed for a prize offered for a temperance story. Of his MS. he heard no more. Since 1878, when he published "Alec Green," he has sent forth a constant succession of widelyread novels.

His brother Joseph, even as a small boy,

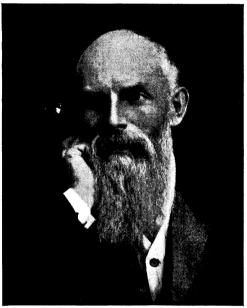


Photo by1 MR. SILAS HOCKING. [R. Haines.

dreamed of achieving fame as a novelist, but farming and surveying were his first occupations. Then he received an unmistakable call to the ministry. But the spell of the story was on him, and would not be denied. He began with "Elrad the Hic," a novel based on a tour in Palestine. Other stories followed, but his first solid success came with "All Men Are Liars," story written as a counterblast to a pessimism, which appeared in 1895. Since then Mr. Joseph Hocking, like his brother, has not missed a year, and sometimes he has published two novels within the twelvemonth. Although the work of Mr. Silas Hocking is often written "with a purpose," and that of Mr. Joseph Hocking is sometimes written upon a controversial theme, and, as such, finds a large part of its appeal, both authors can, when they choose, work with no less success along lines entirely unsectarian and rich in appeal to the general reader. Both writers are regarded with affection by a vast following.

As we saw in our previous selection of

portraits, the art of the theatre, even more than the other arts, has in sundry families drawn unto itself several members of the same generation, and in our own day none more distinguished than the two successful sons of a famous father, Mr. H. B. Irving and Mr. Laurence Irving, both of whom inherit many of the gifts and graces which found such supreme expression in their father's unique and fascinating personality. Mr. H. B. Irving's success as a romantic actor has never been in doubt from the days when he gave a remarkable tour de force as King John in Shakespeare's historical tragedy, while still an undergraduate at Oxford, and to-day he has a picturesqueness that is all his own in any part that he undertakes. The younger brother was longer in coming into his own as a leading





[E. H. Mills.

SIR EDWIN RAY LANKESTER.



Photo by] [Elliott & Fry. MR. EDWARD FORBES LANKESTER, K.C.

actor, his career being complicated by his own interest in modern plays that were not always successful in passing beyond the stage of interesting experiment; but within the last few years he has established himself as one of our most brilliant character-actors and one of excertional versatility and range. His recent performance in "Typhoon" was quite memorable. He is the author of more than one play, and the adapter of others, and takes a keen interest in the more intellectual drama of the modern stage, both at home and abroad.

Another remarkable group of brothers is afforded by the Lankesters, sons of Dr. Edwin Lankester, late Coroner for Central Middlesex. Of these the best-known is Sir Edwin Ray Lankester, whose fame as a zoologist is not confined to scientific circles. It is familiar to a wide circle of the public, which welcomes week by week Sir Edwin's "Science from an Easy Chair" in The Daily Telegraph. His appointments and professorships are too numerous to be mentioned in detail. He is a Cambridge man, claimed by Oxford, where, after holding the Chair of Natural History at Edinburgh, he became Professor of Comparative Anatomy. Thence, in 1898, he passed to the Directorship of the Natural History Departments of the British Museum, which he held till 1907. Edwin's world-wide reputation has brought him countless honours from learned bodies at home and abroad.

Another of the family, Edward Forbes Lankester, K.C., a Pauline like his eldest brother, entered Lincoln College, Oxford, and graduated with a First in Greats. He was called to the Bar in 1878, and thereafter practised for four years in Liverpool. In London his practice has lain chiefly at the Common Law Bar and before Parliamentary Committees.

A third brother, Dr. Alfred Owen Lankester, is a distinguished physician and surgeon, and has held many important public appointments in connection with hospital work. He is the author of a well-known book on "The Human Body." In the province of sport in general, and in such games as cricket and tennis in particular, there are many more instances of famous brothers than can be adequately mentioned here.

Still green among us is the memory of the exploits achieved, and never surely rivalled, of the Graces. Here, until the death of poor "G. F." in 1889, there was a distinguished trio, with a world-wide reputation as "The Three Graces," of modern, not ancient, date. The many other brotherhoods of the cricket field have already been grouped in these pages in an interesting series of portraits.



Photo by] DR. E. M. GRACE.

[Hawkins, Brighton. DR. W. G. GRACE.

THE-WHITE-HORSES BY-HALLIWELL-SUTCLIFFE



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II. THE LAST LAUGH



OAN GRANT, when she bade Christopher climb a high tree if he sought her heart, had not told him that she was taking a journey. When afterwards she waved a farewell to him, as he rode out

with his kinsfolk, she had given no hint that she, too, was following adventure on the morrow.

The day after the Metcalfes, a hundredand-twenty strong, journeyed out to serve King Charles, she set out on a more peaceful quest. Her aunt, Lady Ingilby of Ripley, had commanded this favourite niece of hers—all in my lady's imperious, highhanded way—to join her in the widowhood that her husband's absence with the Royal army enforced on her. Her father was somewhere in Oxfordshire with the King, her brothers with Prince Rupert, and in their absence Lady Grant had decided that her daughter must obey the command. "I was always a little afraid of my sister

"I was always a little afraid of my sister of Ripley," she explained, in her pretty, inconsequent way. "She would not forgive me if I kept you here; and, after all, the roads may not be as dangerous as one fancies. You must go, child."

Joan took the road with some pomp. All the younger men had gone with the master to the wars, but her chaise was guarded by two old men-servants who had pluck and good pistols, if no great strength to fight pitched battles; and she had her maid Pansy with her in the chaise.

"Do you know, mistress, what I found

at the gate this morning?" asked the maid, as they went through the pleasant vale of Wensley.

" I could not guess, Pansy."

"Why, a stirrup-iron. Horseshoes are lucky enough, but a stirrup-iron-""

Joan laughed eagerly; she had the country superstitions close at heart, because she, too, was a daleswoman. "There's a knight riding somewhere for me, Pansy."

"Knights are as knights do," said the other, with the Puritan tartness ingrained in her. "For my part, I'll hope he's better than most men. It's not asking much."

"In the doldrums, girl? I shall have to train you. It's easier to laugh than cry —that's the true Royalist faith."

Pansy—half maid, half confidant, and altogether spoiled — began to whimper. "It's easy to laugh with all the road in front of you, and a riding knight ahead. I've no man to think of, and that leaves a woman lonesome-like."

"It is not for want of suitors," said Joan, humouring her maid as good mistresses do. "You had your choice of the dalesmen, Pansy."

Pansy bridled a little and shifted her headgear to a more becoming angle. "Ay, but they're rough." Her speech relapsed into the mother-tongue she had tried often to forget. "A lass that kens more doesn't mate with the li'le bit less. She has her pride."

The mistress did not answer, but fell into a long reverie. What was true of the maid was true of herself. Young Kit Metcalfe, riding for the King, was just "the li'le bit less," somehow. She had a regard for him, half real and half fanciful;

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but he seemed shut off from her by some intangible difference that was not uncouthness, but something near to it. He was big and forthright, and shocked her daintiness.

They went through the pleasant dale. In Wensley they met a wagon coming home with corn, ingathered for the threshing. All down the valley men were reaping in the fields. The land yielded its produce, and folk were gathering it as if no blight of civil war had fallen about the land. This, too, disturbed Joan Grant. She had pictured her journey to Ripley as one long road of peril—a battle to every mile, and danger's swift excitement scudding on before her.

"There's no war at all, Pansy," she said fretfully, watching mile after tranquil mile go by. "They gather in their corn, and the peace is undisturbed."

"We should be thankful for the mercy," said the maid austerely.

"Oh, we should, girl, but we're not. Undoubtedly we are not thankful."

At Skipton, the day before, there had been battle enough, as the Riding Metcalfes knew. When the fight was ended, and they had spiked the guns lying wide across the highway of the Raikes, they gathered for the forward ride. A hundred-andtwenty of them had ridden out, and not one was missing from their number, though half of them were carrying wounds.

Old Metcalfe—" Mecca," as his kinsfolk had the name—rounded up his company. "The Governor tells me, lads, that a company of Fairfax's men are coming through. We've to go wide of Skipton and ambush them."

The big simplicity of the man sat finely on him. He had no doubts, no waywardness. He was here for the King, to take orders from those placed above him, and to enforce them so far as his own command went.

"A Mecca for the King !" roared Christopher, the six-foot baby of the flock.

The cry was to sing like a northern gale through the Yorkshire highlands; and now the running uproar of it drifted up the Raikes as they came to the track that led righthanded down to Embsay village. Down the pasture-lands they went, and through the small, grey township, and forward on the road to Bolton Abbey. Half between Bolton and Long Addingham they met a yeoman jogging forward at a tranquil trot.

"Why, Squire Metcalfe, it's a twelvemonth and a day since we set eyes on each other," he said, reining up. "Are you riding for Otley market?"

"Ay," said Metcalfe, with the dalesman's wariness. "Is there aught stirring there, Demaine?"

"Nay, nowt so much—not enough to bring all your Nappa men with you, Squire. Maybe it's men you're seeking, instead of ewes and cattle."

"Maybe it is, and maybe it isn't."

"Well, if it's men you're seeking, you'll find 'em. I overtook three hundred of Fairfax's soldiery just setting out from Otley."

"Oh, you did ? Were they horsed ?"

"No, they were going at a sharp marching pace. They were a likely set o' rogues to look at—thick in the beam, but varry dour of face. I take no sides myself in this business of King and Parliament. I only say, Squire, that a nod's as good as a wink in troubled times."

"Thanks, Demaine," said the Squire of Nappa.

"Nay, no need. Neighbour knows neighbour, and good day to ye."

The whole intimacy of the dales was in that brief greeting—the freemasonry that ran like quicksilver in between the well-laid plans of ambitions generals. Fairfax had sent three hundred of his men to strengthen Lambert's attack on Skipton Castle. A country squire and a yeoman met on the highway and talked a while, and there was an ambush in the making.

an ambush in the making. "Hi, lad Christopher!" said the Squire, beckoning the lad to his side. "Ride forward on the Otley road till you see those men of Fairfax's. Then turn about and gallop."

Kit saluted gravely, as he, or any Metcalfe of them, would have saluted if the chief bade them ride through the Fiery Gate. His wounds smarted as he rode for Otley, and he relished the keen pain. He was young, with his eyes to the stars, and suffering for the King's sake was haloed by romance.

He went through Ilkley. Its strawthatched cottages clustered round the brown stream of Wharfe; and, half a mile beyond, he saw a company of men on foot marching with quick and limber step. He forgot his wounds. With a boy's careless devilry, he galloped to meet them and reined up within twenty paces.

"Are you my Lord Fairfax's men?" he asked. "If so, you're needed at Skipton. Put your best foot forward."

"We're Lord Fairfax's men, sir," said the

officer in command. "Do you come from Captain Lambert?"

"From Skipton—yes, I come from Skipton. There's need for haste."

With a laugh and a light farewell, Kit reined about and spurred his horse. When he came to the top of the hill overlooking the wonderful, quiet sweep of river that rocked despoiled Bolton Abbey into dreams of yester-year, he found his kinsmen in waiting on the rise.

"What news, Kit?" asked the Squire.

"Sir, it will be butchery," said the lad, stirred by generous pity. "There's a big company of them, all on foot, and I—have led them into ambush."

Squire Metcalfe snarled at his baby-boy. "The King will be well rid of his enemies. Men do not fight, Kit, on milk-and-water fancies."

A laugh went up from the Metcalfes—a laugh that was not easy for any lad to bear. "I've given my message, sir. Put me in the forefront of the hazard, if you doubt me."

The Squire had one of his sharp repentances. This son of his had shamed him, and for a moment he strove with the hot temper that was the inheritance of all the Metcalfe breed.

"You shall lead us, Kit," he said at last.

The time seemed long in passing before the three hundred men of Fairfax's came marching at a stubborn pace into the hollow down below. Then, with a roar of "A Mecca for the King!" Christopher was down among them with his kinsmen.

When all was done, there was nothing left of the three hundred except a press of fugitives, some prisoners, and many bodies scattered on the high-road. The garrison at Skipton might sleep well to-night, so far as recruits to the besieging forces went.

It was the prisoners who troubled the Squire of Nappa. His view of war had been that it was a downright affair of enemies who were killed or who escaped. He glanced at the fifty captives his men had taken, massed together in a sullen company, and was perplexed. His roving troop of horse could not be burdened with such a dead weight of footmen. The garrison at Skipton Castle would not welcome them, for there were mouths enough to feed there already.

"What shall I do with them, lads?" he asked, riding apart with his men.

Michael Metcalfe, a raking, black-haired fellow, laughed carelcssly. "Best take powder and pistols from them and turn 'em adrift like sheep. They'll bleat to little purpose, sir, without their weapons."

The Squire nodded. "Thou'rt not noted for great strength of head, Michael, save so far as taking blows goes, but that was sage advice."

The Metcalfes, trusting first to their pikes, afterwards—the gentry-sort among them to their swords, were disposed to look askance at the pistols as tools of slight account, until Michael again found wisdom. King's men, he said, might find a use for weapons the enemy found serviceable.

When the arms had been gathered, Squire Metcalfe reined up in front of the prisoners. "Men of Fairfax's," he said bluntly, "you're a ragged lot to look at, but there are gentlemen among you. I do not speak of rank or class. The gentlemen, as the price of freedom, will take no further part in the Rebellion. The louts may do as they please, but they had best not let me catch them at the fighting."

The words came hot and ready, and though the dispersed company of prisoners laughed afterwards at the Squire's handling of the matter, they warmed to his faith in them. They had volunteered from many occupations to serve the Parliament. Blacksmiths and clothiers and carpenters from Otley were mingled with farmers and slips of the gentry from the outlying country. All answered to the keen issue Squire Metcalfe had given them. They were trusted. On the next day, twenty of them lost hold of his message and went in search of arms; but thirty were constant to their pledge, and this, with human nature as it is, was a high tribute to the Squire's persuasiveness.

The Metcalfe men rode quietly toward Skipton. For the first time since their riding out from Nappa, they felt lonely. They had fought twice, and their appetite was whetted; but no other battle showed ahead. They were young to warfare, all of them, and thought it one happy road of skirmish, uproar, and hard blows, from end to end of the day's journey.

The only break in the monotony came as they rode up the steep track to Embsay Moor. At the top of the hill, dark against the sunlit sky, a solitary horseman came into view, halted a moment to breathe his horse, then trotted down at a speed that the steepness of the road made foolhardy. He did not see the Metcalfe company until it was too late to turn about, and trotted forward, since needs must. "On which side of the battle?" asked Squire Metcalfe, catching the bridle.

" On which side are you, sir ?"

"The King's, but you are not. No King's man ever bandies questions; he answers straight to the summons which side he stands for."

They found a message after diligent searching of his person. The message was in Lambert's neat Quakerish handwriting, and was addressed to a captain of horse in Ripon, to take his men to Ripley and keep watch about the Castle. "That termagant, Lady Ingilby, is making her house a meetingplace for Cavaliers," the message read. "Her husband at the wars is one man only. She rallies twenty to the cause each day. See to it, and quickly."

"Ay," said the Squire, with his rollicking laugh, "we'll see to it."

It was astonishing to see the change in this man, who until yesterday had been content to tend his lands, to watch the dawn come up and sunset die over the hills he loved, and get to his early sleep. His father and his grandfather had handled big issues in the open, though he himself had chosen a stay-at-home squire's life; and the thing that is in the blood of a man leaps forward always at the call of need.

Squire Metcalfe, with brisk courtesy, claimed the messenger's horse. "Lest you ride back to Skipton with the news," he explained, "and because a spare horse is always useful these days. For yourself, get back at leisure, and tell Mr. Lambert that the Riding Metcalfes have carried the message for him."

Without another word, he glanced at the sun, guessed hastily the line of country that pointed to Ripley, and rode forward at the head of his good company. It was rough going, with many turns and twists to avoid wet ground here, a steep face of rock there; but at the end of it they came to a high spur of moor, and beneath them, in a flood of crimson—the sun was near its setting—they saw the tower of Ripley Castle and the long, raking front of the house and outbuildings.

The Squire laughed. His face was aglow with pride, like the sunset's. "I've few gifts, lads, but one of them is to know Yorkshire from end to end, as I know my way to bed o' nights. I've led you within sight of Ripley; the rest lies with lad Christopher."

Michael, the black-haired wastrel of the flock, found voice.

"Kit will be saddle-sore if he rides all

your errands. Give one o' them to me, sir."

The Squire looked him up and down. "You've a heart and a big body, Michael, but no head. I tell you, Kit must take this venture forward."

So Michael laughed. He was aware that, if wits were asked, he must give place to Kit, whom he loved with an odd, jealous liking.

"What is your errand, sir?" asked Christopher.

The Squire put Lambert's letter into his hand, bade him read it over and over, then snatched it from him. "Have you got it by heart, Kit?"

Kit repeated it word by word, and his father tore the letter into shreds and threw them to the keen west wind that was piping over the moor. "That's the way to carry all messages. If you're taken, lad, they can turn your pockets inside out and search your boots, but they cannot find what's safe inside your head, not if they tap it with a sword-cut."

There was a high deed done on the moor at this hour of the declining day. Without a tremor or regret, the Squire of Nappa sent his son—the one nearest his warm heart—to certain danger, to a hazard from which there might well be no returning.

"Find Lady Ingilby," he said gruffly, "and beware of Roundheads guarding the approaches to the house. Give her the message."

" And then, sir ? "

"It is this way, Kit," said the Squire, after a restless pacing across the moor and back again. "Take counsel with Lady Ingilby and any Cavaliers you find at Ripley. Tell them the Metcalfes have picketed their horses here on the moor, and wait for orders. If she needs us, we are ready. And so good-bye, my lad."

The Metcalfes, by habit, were considerate toward the hale, big bodies that asked good feeding. On the way they had contrived to victual themselves with some thoroughness, and now they unstrapped each his own meal from the saddle. When they had eaten, and crowned the meal with a draught of water from the stream, Michael laughed that easy, thoughtless laugh of his.

"When the King comes to his own, I'll petition him to make the moors run ripe October ale. I never thrive on water, I."

"It's not in you to thrive, lad," snapped the Squire. "You've no gift that way, come ale or water."

They had not been idle, any of them, since yesterday's riding out from Nappa; and now they were glad to lie in the heather and doze, and dream of the cornfields ripe for harvest and the ingle-nook at home. The Squire, for his part, had no wish for sleep. To and fro he paced in the warm, ruddy gloaming, and his dreams were of the future, not the past. Ambition, that had taken his forbears to high places, was changing all The King had his old, quiet outlook. summoned him. About his King there was a halo of romance and great deserving. It was good to be asked to fight for such a cause.

Metcalfe did not know it, but his soul was ripening, like his own harvest fields, under this fierce sun of battle and peril and hard riding. Instead of a pipe by the hearth o' nights, he was asked to bivouac on the moor, to throttle sleep until Kit rode back or sent a messenger. He was content. Better a week of riding for the King than years of safety in home-fields.

He had not cared specially for thinking, save of crops and horses and the way of rearing prime cattle for market; but to-night his mind was clear, marching out toward big issues. Little by little it grew plain to him that he had been given a leadership of no There were a hundred-andusual sort. twenty of them, keen to charge with the whole weight of men and horses; but each of the six-score could ride alone on errands needing secrecy, and summon his kinsmen when any hazard pressed too closely. The clan was one man or six-score, just as need asked, and the Squire was quick to realise the service they could render. It might well be that, long afterwards, men would tell their bairns, close huddled round the hearth on winter nights, what share the Riding Metcalfes had in crushing the rebellious Parliament.

As he thought about it all, his heart beating like a lad's, his imagination all afire, a step sounded close behind him. He turned to find Michael at his elbow.

"Well, scapegrace?" he asked. "It all goes bonnily enough."

"Ay, for Christopher," growled the other. The black mood was on him, and at these times he had no respect of persons. He was, indeed, like one possessed of an evil spirit. "Kit was a favourite always, and now he gets all errands."

"He can keep his temper, Michael, under hardship. I've proved him, and I know. A soldier needs that gift." Michael met the rebuke sullenly, but made no answer, and a restless silence followed.

"My lad," said the Squire by and by, "you broke into a fine dream of mine. There were six-score Metcalfes, I fancied, pledged to ride together. Now there is one less."

"How so? We've a few wounds to boast of between us, but no dead."

"One of us is dying by slow stages. Jealousy is killing him, and I tell you, Michael, I'd rather see the plague among us than that other pestilence you're nursing. The sickness will spread. When times are slack—food short and nothing to be done by way of blows—you'll whisper in this man's ear and in that man's ear, and turn their blood to ice."

A great, overmastering repentance swept Michael's devilry away. He was himself again. "1 love Christopher," he said very simply, "though I'm jealous of him."

"Ay, I know! But take this warning from me, Michael—when the black dog's on your shoulder, shake him off. Jealousy's your prime failing. It will break up our company one day, if you let it."

Christopher, his shoulders very straight and his head somewhere up among the stars, had trotted quietly down to Ripley village. His own failing was not jealousy, but an extreme foolhardy belief that luck was with him always, and that blue sky watched every day's adventure. As he reached the top of the street, he was thinking less of Lady Ripley and his errand than of Joan Grant, who had sat on a stile in the home-country while he made love to her, and had bidden him climb high.

He was roused from his dream by a company of Roundhead soldiery that blocked the way, twenty paces or so ahead. It did not occur to him—his wits were country-reared as yet-that they need not know for which side he rode, or that he was the bearer of a message. Moreover, there was adventure to his hand. He put spurs to his horse, lifted his pike, and rode in among them. The big-hearted simplicity of his attack bewildered the enemy for a moment; then they closed round him, plucked him from the saddle, and held him, a man gripping him on either side, while Ebenezer Drinkwater, their leader, looked him up and down.

"So you're for the King?" said Drinkwater.

"I have that privilege."

"Ay, you've the look of it, with your easy

laugh and your big air. Have you never heard of the Latter Judgment, and what happens to the proud folk?"

^t I've heard much of you canting cropheads," said Christopher suavely. This was not the adventure he had hoped to meet, but he accepted it blithely, as he would have met a stiff fence fronting him in the middle of a fox-hunt.

"You're carrying a message to Ripley Castle?"

" I am."

Drinkwater, a hard man, empty of imagination, could make nothing of this youngster who seemed to have no thought for his life. He ordered one of his men to search the prisoner. Boots and pockets, shirt and the inner lining of his coat were ransacked. And Christopher felt no humiliation, because the laughter was bubbling at his heart.

"Well?" asked the prisoner.

Drinkwater, dour, persistent, believing what his arid creed had taught him—that each man had his price—found a rough sort of diplomacy. "You can go safe if you tell us where the message is."

"I never cared too much for safety," said Kit, with great cheeriness. "Offer another bribe, good crophead."

Ebenezer, fond of food and good liquor, fell into the usual snare, and measured all men's appetites by his own. "You look starved and empty. A good supper, say, and a creaming mug of ale to top it?"

"I'll take that draught of beer. Supper I'm in no need of for an hour or two."

Drinkwater laughed, without merriment, as he bade one of his men go to the tavern and bring a measure of home-brewed. It was brought to Christopher, and the smell of it was good as he blew the froth away.

Between the cup and the drinking he halted. "Let us understand the bargain. I drink this ale—I'm thirsty, I admit—and in return I tell you where I hide the message."

"That is the bargain," assented Drinkwater. "I always knew every man was to be bought, but your price is the cheapest I've heard tell of."

Kit lingered over the draught. "It is good ale" he said. "Send for another measue."

"Well, it's not in the bond, but you can have it. Now, youngster," went on Drinkwater, after the second measure had been despatched, "where's that message of yours?"

"In my head, sir," said Kit, with a

careless nod. "Safe behind wooden walls, as my father put it when he bade me learn it all by rote."

"No jesting !" snapped Drinkwater, nettled by a guarded laugh from one of his own men. "The bargain was that you told us the message."

"That I told you where it lay—no more, no less. I have told you, and paid for that good ale of yours."

Drinkwater was no fool. He saw himself outwitted, and wasted no regrets. After all, he had the better of the jest.

"Tie him by the legs and arms," he said dourly, "and set him on the bench here till we're ready to start. There are more ways than one of sobering a King's man."

Christopher did not like the feel of the rope about his limbs, nor did he relish the attentions of stray village-folk who came and jeered at him after his captors had gone in to supper. One can despise louts, but still feel the wasp-sting of their gibes.

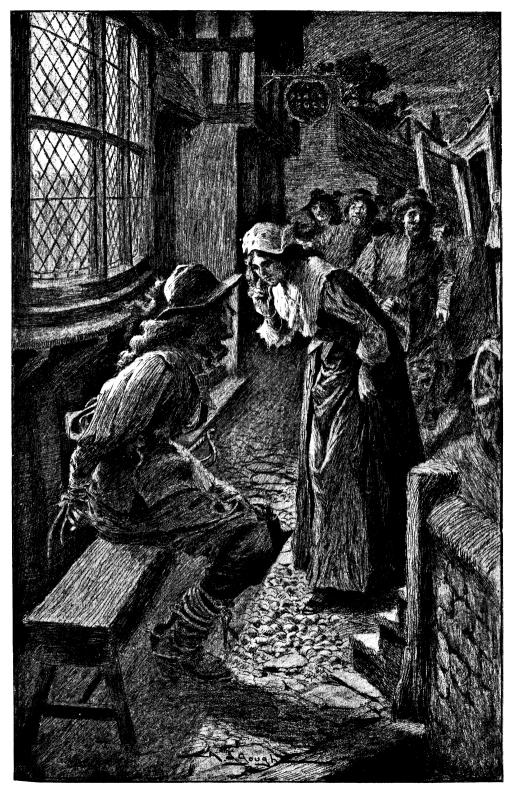
Into the middle of it all came two horsewomen; and to Kit, seeing the well-known horses, it was as if a breath of Yoredale and the spring came to him. He knew the old men, too, who guarded the horsewomen, front and rear. Under his gladness went an uneasy feeling that yesterday's hard riding and hard fighting, or Drinkwater's ale, or both, had rendered him light-headed. It was not possible that she could be here in Ripley.

Miss Grant was tired of the uneventful journey, tired of her maid Pansy, whose tongue ran like a brook. "This should be Ripley, at long last," she said fretfully. "Tell me, girl, am I grey-headed yet? It seems a lifetime since the morning."

Pansy, looking through the right-hand window of the coach, saw a tavern-front, lit with candles from within. On the bench in front of it, lit by the ruddy gloaming, was a man bound with ropes, a man who threw gibe for gibe at a company of Ripley's cowards who baited him.

"He carries no knight's air just now," said Pansy, with a bubble of laughter, "but it was not for naught I found that stirrupiron at the gate this morning."

Then Joan Grant looked, and, seeing Kit there, friendless and courageous, a strong hand plucked at the wayward thing she called her heart. She got down from the carriage, stepped to the bench that stood under the inn wall; then, seeing the welcome in Kit's eyes—a welcome near to adoration —she withdrew a little.



"So this comes of riding for the King?" she asked, with high disdain.

And something stirred at Kit's heart—a new fire, a rebellion against the glamour that had put his manhood into leadingstrings.

"If this comes, or worse, I'm glad to ride for the King," he said.

"If I loosed your hands and bade you take a seat in my coach----"

"I should not take it; there is other work to do."

Miss Grant, under the smart of the rebuff, was pleased with this man of hers. Something had happened to him since yesterday. He was no longer the uncouth boy, thinking he could have the moon by asking for it.

"-You're rough and uncivil, sir."

"I am. These rough lambs of the Parliament are teaching me new manners."

She bowed carelessly, drew her skirts away from the litter of the roadway, and went perhaps ten paces toward her carriage. Then she turned. "I can be of no service to you, then? she asked coldly.

His face grew eager, but not with the eagerness that had pleased and affronted Miss Grant just now; and he tried to beckon her nearer, forgetting that his hands were tied. She guessed his meaning, and came to his side again.

"Yes, you can be of service," he said, his voice too low for the wondering onlookers to catch. "Lady Ingilby lives close by—it will scarcely be out of your way to take a message to her."

"So little out of the way that we are bound for the Castle, my maid and I, at the end of a fatiguing journey. If this is civil war, I'd as lief have peace. There were *no* adventures on the road."

Kit could not understand her gusty mood —for that matter, she could not understand herself—but he was not concerned with whimsies. Folk were dependent on him, and he was answerable for their safety. He recalled that she was kin to the folk at Ripley Castle, and accepted this surprising luck.

"Listen, and remember," he said sharply. "These lambs may quit their supper any moment and disturb us. Tell Lady Ingilby that we caught a messenger on his way from Skipton. His letter was to the Roundheads here in Ripley. "That termagant, Lady Ingilby, is making her house a meetingplace for Cavaliers' — have you that by heart?" "Oh, yes," assented Miss Grant, laughing at herself, because he was not the suitor now, but the lord paramount, who must be obeyed. "Proceed, Captain Metcalfe – or have they made you colonel since yesterday? Promotion comes so quickly in time of war."

"You can flout me later," said Christopher, with country stolidness.

He repeated the rest of the message, made sure that she had it by heart. "My folk are up the moor," he finished. "They're waiting near the High Cross till they hear what Lady Ingilby asks of them."

Joan Grant again, for no reason that she understood, grew lenient with this man's bluntness, his disregard of the glamour she had been able once to weave about him as a spider spins its threads.

"Your folk are as near as the High Cross, and you ask no more of me?"

"What is there to ask, except that you get into your carriage and find Lady Ingilby? My work's done, now that I find a messenger."

She looked him in the face. In all her life of coquetry and whims, Miss Grant had never stood so close to the reality that is beauty. She smiled gravely, turned without a word, and got into her carriage.

"Pansy," she said, as they were covering the short journey to the Castle, "I have met a man to-day."

"Snares o' Belial, most of them," murmured Pansy.

"He was tied by ropes, and I think he was in pain, his face was so grey and drawn. It did not seem to matter. He had all his folk at call, and would not summon them, except for Lady Ingilby's needs. He forgot his own."

"Knighthood," said Pansy, in her practical, quiet voice. "He always had the way of it."

So Miss Grant boxed her on the ears for her pains. "Small use in that, girl, if he dies in the middle of the business."

She stopped the carriage, summoned old Ben Waddilove, who rode in front to guard her journey. "Ben, do you know the High Cross on the moor?" she asked.

"I should do, Miss Joan, seeing I was reared i' this country before I went to Nappa."

"Then ride for it. You'll find Squire Metcalfe and his men there. Tell him that his son is sitting on a bench in Ripley, tied hand and foot."

After the loiterers of the village had

watched Miss Grant's carriage out of sight, they turned again to baiting Christopher, until this diversion was interrupted by Drinkwater coming with his men from supper in the tavern. Whether the man's digestion was wrong, or his heart out of place, only a physician could have told; but it happened always that a full meal brought out his worst qualities.

"Tired of sitting on a bench, lad?" he asked, with what to him was pleasantry.

"No," said Kit. "I'm glad to have a bench under me, after the riding I've done lately. A bench sits quiet—not like a lolopping horse that shakes your bones at every stride."

"About this message that you carry in your head? Would a full meal bribe you?"

"The message has gone to Lady Ingilby, as it happens. There's consolation, Puritan, in having the last laugh."

For a moment it seemed that Drinkwater would strike him on the face, but he conquered that impulse. "So the message *was* to Lady Ingilby?" he said. "I guessed as much."

Kit reddened. To salve his vanity, under the humiliation he was suffering, he had blurted out a name that should have been kept secret. What would the old Squire say of such imprudence?

"You're a lad at the game o' war," went on Drinkwater. "The last laugh is with us, I reckon. We shall keep a stricter watch than ever on the Castle."

Remembering the burden of the message entrusted to Miss Grant, Kit was more keenly aware how he had blundered. "Perhaps I lied," he suggested.

"Most men do, but not you, I fancy. You've a babe's sort of innocence about you. Now, listen to me. You can go free if you repeat that message."

"I stay bound," said Kit impassively.

A butcher in the crowd pressed forward. "He sent it on by a slip of ladydom—a King Charles sort o' lass, every inch of her, all pricked out with airs and graces. The lad seemed fair daft about her, judging by his looks."

"Thanks, friend," said Drinkwater grimly. "See you, lad, you can go free to kiss her at the gate to-night, if you'll tell us what Lady Ripley knows by now."

Kit was young to the pillory, young to his fine regard for Joan Grant. An intolerable pain took hold of him as he heard her name bandied between Drinkwater and the rabble. "You lout!" he said, and that was all. But the quietness of his loathing pierced even Drinkwater's thick hide.

Miss Grant, meanwhile, had got to the Castle and had been welcomed by her aunt with something near to effusiveness.

"I've been so lonely, child," Lady Ingilby explained. "If one doesn't happen to care for one's husband, it is fitting he should go to the wars; but if one does—ah, if one cares—___"

A little later Joan explained that she had met a mad neighbour of hers sitting on a bench in front of the Ripley inn. The man had showed no care at all for his own safety, but had been zealous that she should carry a message for him.

Lady Ingilby's face grew harder as she listened to the message, but still her unconquerable humour stayed with her. "So they know me as 'that termagant.' Good ! I'm making this house a training-school for Cavaliers. I stay at home while my husband rides for the King ; but I, too, am riding. Joan, the suspense would kill me if I had no work to do. Sometimes he sends word that he is hale and busy down in Oxfordshire, and always he calls me sweetheart once or twice in these ill-written, hasty letters. At my age, child, to be sweetheart to any man !"

Something of the spoiled days slipped away from Joan as she breathed this ampler air. The aunt who had been a little cold, austere, in bygone years was showing her true self.

"What of your mad neighbour?" asked Lady Ingilby, repenting of her softer mood. "You did not leave him on the bench, surely, tied hand and foot? You cut the ropes?"

"He would not have them cut. I asked to do it, and he—was rough with me."

"There, child ! Never wave the red flag in your cheeks. Folk see it, like a beaconfire. You're in love with the madman. No denial, by your leave. I'm old, and you are young, and I know my world."

"He is uncouth and rude. I hate him, aunt !"

"That proves it to the hilt. I'll send out a rescue-party. Men who have no care for their own lives are precious these days."

"You have no need," said Miss Grant. "I forgave him for his roughness."

"Tut, child ! Forgiveness won't untie his hands."

"But I sent word, too, to his kinsmen, who are near."

"So!" laughed Lady Ingilby. "How

fierce your loathing burns, you babe just come from the nursery ! "

On the moor guarded by the High Cross the Squire of Nappa was pacing up and down, halting now and then to watch his kinsfolk as they slept beside their horses. He envied them their slumber, would have been glad to share it after the turmoil of the last two days, but, under all the casual temptation to lie down and sleep, he knew that he was glad to be awake--awake, with the free sky above him and the knowledge that so many Metcalfes needed him.

"We ought to strike well for the King," was his constant thought. "If we fail, 'twill not be for lack of wakefulness on my part."

As dusk went down the hill, and on the edge of dark a big moon strode above the moor's rim, he heard the faint sound of hoofs. None but ears sharpened by a country life could have caught the sound; but the Squire was already handling his pike. As the rider drew nearer, his big horse scattering stones from the steep drift of shale they rode up, Metcalfe gripped the shaft of his weapon and swung it gently to and fro.

The moon's light was clear now, and into the mellow gold of it the horseman rode.

"Who goes there?" roared the Squire, lifting his pike.

It was a quavering voice that answered. "Be ye going to fight Ben Waddilove? I'm old and home-weary, and we were lads together."

The Squire's laugh should have roused his sleeping kinsmen. "Why, Ben, I came near to braining you! What brings you here, so far from Nappa?" "Oh, Miss Joan. She's full of delicate, queer whimsics. Told me, she did, I had to ride up the moor, as if my knees were not raw already ! Said li'le Christopher, your youngest-born, was sitting on a bench in Ripley, tied hand and foot by Roundhead folk. So he is. I saw him there myself."

Without pause or hesitation, the Squire turned to his sleeping kinsfolk. Some he shook out of slumber, and kicked others to attention. "We're for Ripley, lads!" he roared.

With astonishing speed they unpicketed their horses and got to saddle. The discipline of farm and field, out yonder at Nappa, had not gone for naught. They knew this rough-tongued Squire who meant to be obeyed.

Ben Waddilove tried to keep pace with them as they skeltered down the moor, but gave it up at last. "Nay," he muttered, "I'm not so young as I was. I'll just be in at the death, a li'le bit late."

Drinkwater and his lambs were tiring of their prisoner, who would not speak, would not budge or accept a price for liberty, when a trumpet-call rang down the village street.

"A Mecca for the King !" roared the Squire, his voice like a mountain burn in spate.

When all was done, and Kit's hands loosened, the lad knew his weakness and the galling pains about his limbs. He lifted his head with the last rally of his strength.

"Sir, where is Drinkwater?" he asked his father.

"Dead, my lad. He ran against my pike." "That's a pity. I wanted you to—to tell him, sir, that I had the last laugh, after all."

Another episode in the story of "The White Horses" will appear in the next number.

MEMORY'S POOL.

Y^{OU} leaning o'er the pool, I—at your side— Saw all my world reflected in its face; But, as I watched your loveliness, the tide Broke o'er the brim to blur the mirrored grace.

Now, as I gaze in memory's pool to see Reflections of our past, life's tide creeps on To dim the thoughts of things that used to be. Oh, Love, come back lest memory, too, be gone!

ALLAN ELPHINSTONE.

THE AXING OF THE BANNS

By EDEN PHILLPOTTS

Illustrated by Gunning King



Y Aunt Milly be up over eighty year old now, and yet she remembers her great adventure so well as if it wasn't five year old, instead of sixty-five. And no wonder, neither, for that happened to her as

never happened to any woman afore or since, I should think, though to say so much as that is going pretty far, when we think how old the world is and how human nature repeats itself.

You wouldn't say she was an ugly woman now, at eighty-five year old, for her hair be white as lint and her eyes not dimmed with age, though she's bent two-double, I grant, and her teeth are gone, and she only puts in the false ones when she goes to church, for she's happier without 'em. But when she was eighteen, I've got her own word for it that she filled the eye very nice, and roused a good deal of feeling among the young men. Which I steadfastly believe, for though there's nobody living now to make good my aunt's assertion, yet such a truthful woman as her wouldn't lie, and, for that matter, her eldest son-a man of sixty-eight-assures me that his memory goes back to a time when his mother was a bowerly piece; and when he walked along with her in his youth in Exeter, he well remembered being proud, because the town men all turned round to have another look at her.

At sixteen Milly Masters was left an orphan, and her uncle, David Masters, her father's brother, took her in his house. But not for charity, I assure you. None even pretended to applaud the man, for when he took Milly, he turned off old Mrs. West, as had been his cook and housekeeper for twenty year, and Milly had to earn her keep and a bit over, which she did do; but he always grumbled when she asked for a crown to get a bit of stuff for a gown, and he'd let her mend her stockings till there weren't an inch of the original stuff left. However, he was too clever to quarrel with her, and when she got wife-old, and the boys began wanting to keep company, old David grew terrible afeard he'd soon lose her and be forced to get somebody else to look after him for wages. He was a pinikin creature, and went short on one side, owing to an accident in his youth. He was also troubled with spasms, and often couldn't let down his food for days together, owing to a weak stomach that turned his food to air; but, for all that, he was pretty tough, and he'd worked hard at his trade of datching * and put by a tidy dollop of money.

Bald he was, with a fringe of whisker under his chin, that had been ginger once, but was now faded to grey. He had one evelid down and showed one tooth, which was all he had left; and 'twas the only thing he was ever known to thank God for, because it steadied his pipe. He'd never married, and was all against women in a general way, yet civil enough and always very careful not to anger them. In fact, his great idea was peace and quiet. He found himself very contented in his own company, and Milly Masters told the people how her uncle would just sit and think by the hour of a night, though what he thought about none ever knew, because he never told.

His needs were few, and for that I don't blame him, but he never could see that what was enough for an old man like him—crusts and weak tea and weak spirits and shag tobacco—wasn't enough for a growing maid. But Milly told her troubles to sympathetic ears, and so it came about that old David heard a thing or two, and began to get terrible afeard she'd want to wed.

With that, he laid his plot, and told the girl that he'd make a bargain with her. "You bide along with me till I die," he said, "and I'll leave my fortune to you—everything. And if you don't believe it, I'll get lawyer to set it down, and you can see it in

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^{*} Datching—Thatching.

lawyer's language, all signed and sealed. But if you go, then I shall hold myself at liberty to change my will and leave everything to your Cousin George. Not that I want to do so, because I'm very fond of you, and George will be well off, whereas, if I don't make you my heir, you'll have to go in the workhouse when I die."

Of course, Milly weren't a fool, and she knew very well that you don't find girls with a face and figure like hers in the workhouse, and her uncle knew it, too; but she hid her feelings, because a bird in the hand be worth two in the bush, as they say, and she thanked her uncle kindly and said she wouldn't think of leaving him.

"I wouldn't go and leave you to a strange woman, I'm sure, Uncle David, and I never thought about what might happen to me if you was took," said Milly Masters; "but since you put it like this, of course I'll do your bidding very gladly; and though there ain't any call to have no lawyer's writing with such an honest Christian man as you, still, since you wish it, I wish it too, because my only wish is to echo you."

You see, for a seventeen-year maid she was pretty clever, but, of course, no match for the old datcher. However, there seemed no reason why he should do otherwise than he promised, for none had a just call upon him, and he signed the will and made Milly his heir, and let it be generally known that it was so.

Of course, after that his niece grew to be somebody, and the first that offered for her washerown cousin, George. She had no use for him, however, and, indeed, looked to be very indifferent to any of them. 'Twas said that David talked a lot to her against marriage; but you can't keep love out of a maiden's heart with words, and, when she was turned eighteen, Milly met the man.

Nat Parsons was well-to-do and prosperous and healthy and well thought upon. One of they black men he was, with a blue muzzle, a very saving man, and said to be a thought hard in his dealings for a chap not turned thirty, but the joy of his widowed mother's heart and a regular church-goer-born good, you might say. In fact, he was so wonderful good himself by nature, that he lacked the experience to make allowance for other people; for that's the crown of goodness, in my opinion-to be good yourself, yet go in patience and charity with them that haven't climbed to your own height, or be less blessed. For, you see, every man has to be himself, and on the blood in your veins a terrible lot depends. And the first thing that fine blood did ought to teach you be sympathy and understanding for them that lack it.

Nat Parsons offered, and Milly Masters said "Yes" first time; and seeing she'd never smiled on any other man but one, only that one felt a chill go over his life when the deed was done and the pair was tokened in sight of the nation. The other one was William Bassett, the under-keeper at Tudor Hundreds-not a very popular man, but that's a sign of grace in a gamekeeper, for times be changed, and you won't find the folk in a village so respectful in their opinions about pheasants and hares as they used to be. In the old days nobody doubted that the earth and the fulness thereof was the lord of the manor's; but now you'll find terrible sharp questions being put to the arithmetic of the rich, and where men go in doubt about the land itself, 'tis natural they should set still less store about the ownership of the creatures that walk or fly on the land. In fact, that anointed scamp, old "Moleskin" of Merivale, argued very steadfast that a bird in the air belonged to anybody, and he got a good many rash and reckless fools to agree with him round our parts.

It followed that Billy Bassett, who was a proper watch-dog and ficrce along of misfortunes, had his foes. Not a very cheerful man in his sunniest days, but he got right down glum after Milly took Nat Parsons; and he was heard to say that it weren't so much because she had no use for him that he was troubled, but because, in his opinion, she was going to wed a man as would never breed her lasting happiness.

"'Tis out of the frying-pan into the fire for her," declared William, "for if her uncle be a greedy hunks, so's Nat—a proper miser, that man. I'll grant he's never done a crooked deed in his life, and I'll frankly allow he's terrible good; but what forwhat's he good for? To get money and nothing else on earth. Money's his god, and if her uncle have beat the girl with whips, then Nat will flay her with scorpions. He'll demand of her to make sixpence do the work of a shilling every time, and 'tis better far to marry a man so poor as a coot, if he's easy and rich in heart, than throw in your lot with a rich man as will keep his fist over the mouth of the purse. There's no worse poverty than marrying a rich man if he's a miser."

That was the way the keeper talked, and



"She had to hold on to the edge of the table and set her teeth to keep herself from going fainty."

some said it was just disappointment, and some said it was true, and that Milly wouldn't find Parsons much of a lasting treat as a husband. However, she liked the black eyes of the man and his busy, bustling ways, and his strength and power ; and as she truly said, 'twas better to be too close than too free, for nobody's sooner forgot than a generous man when his turn comes to get pinched. And she also said that her life along with her uncle was a very good training. And she liked Billy Bassett well enough to explain these things to him, and hope that he wouldn't go about running down the match no more, for her sake. Of course he saw the point of view and obeyed her, for he was a proper man with a biting sense of justice and very correct opinions on the rights of property. He understood also that Milly meant to give herself to Parsons for love, so there was nothing left for him to do but shut his mouth and live down his great loss.

She rewarded him, in a manner of speaking, for she admired his character and respected him. So it came about that she felt quite safe in his company, and, indeed, liked very well to be with him. For. as time went on, Nat Parsons frequently took a line about life that puzzled Milly, and often, when she met the other, she'd put a case now and then, to see what Billy thought. And sometimes the keeper agreed with her lover and sometimes he did not. He was always as straight as a line, and there was no feeling in the mind of Parsons that he need fear rivalry in that quarter, for he knew Bassett, too, and they generally saw alike; and, in any case, Nat was too busy to be jealous.

There weren't no secrets, for Bassett would criticise Nat to his face just as free as behind his back, and Milly, knowing his truthful nature and views of conduct, never minded trusting herself with him.

But she loved her man exceedingly well, and if he puzzled her, she was always better pleased at heart to find Bassett on Nat's side instead of her own. Indeed, sometimes, when he was opposed to Nat, she fretted, and, woman-like, changed her own mind promptly, rather than that Billy should agree with her against her lover.

She used to say at this time that she wanted all the friends and sympathy she could get, for her uncle fell ill, and was so brutal and exacting that the poor girl couldn't call her soul her own. There's no doubt about it that she had a proper horrid time, for he wouldn't hire a nurse at first, and he kept her waiting on him morning, noon, and night. The moment she unrayed herself and went to bed, he'd bawl out for food, and then, when she rose and got it, he'd cuss her because it was too hot or too cold; and once, in a fit of rage, he flinged a cup of soup in her face and scalded her cheek, and might have put her eyes out. But she stuck to him through thick and thin-from fear, not love ; for she knew that he was all there in his mind, and would change his will in an instant moment if she ran away and deserted him. So she nursed the man for two months, and by that time his trouble had grown that fearful that the end came in sight. The doctor insisted on a nurse, and David Masters had to suffer it, though he said fearful things against Milly, and called her a coward and a shedevil to let a hired woman smooth his pillow. But, as a matter of fact, the girl did most of the work to the end, for he couldn't abide the nurse, and she kept out of sight as much as possible, and only sat with him when he was asleep.

Meantime Nat Parsons got busy, for the moment the end was in sight, he began to repaper his house and put in a new cooking range, and prepare for his bride. He'd figured up what Milly's uncle was worth very careful, for he was a master at that work, and though he couldn't smell out where David Masters had got his money, he judged, from various things and from what Milly could tell him, the worth of the man. He was always cautious before figures, and always put his estimates under the mark to avoid disappointment, but he brought out the calculation at two thousand pounds, because it was clear to him that Mr. Masters saved more than he spent. The furniture was worthless, and the cottage likewise of little value, for it was a leasehold and had but few more years to run; but Milly stood to be worth two thousand pounds when David went underground, and Nat Parsons confessed openly to Bassett and another here and there that he was fairly itching to get his fingers on the money. He knew of a brave investment crying for capital at that moment, but he wouldn't squeak about it, for fear somebody else should get wind and find the money.

The dying man seemed to know what was doing, and though they kept the arrangements that Parsons had made for an early marriage from his ears, he found 'em out through a neighbour, and was a lot niffed at the thought. He told Milly that she was a heartless little cat, and he promised her that he'd live just so long as ever he could draw breath; and when Parsons came to see him, hoping that he might get David's secrets out of him, now that he was weak and at death's door, David surprised the busy man not a little, and wouldn't tell none of his secrets. They parted enemies, and Nat was troubled, for he hated to think of all the good money being wasted on the old man's illness, not to mention Milly's pink cheek turning pale and her nerves being sadly fretted by the service of the sick chamber. But then, just as they began to fear David was a thought stronger and fighting his evil as well as ever, something went wrong with the old man's vitals, and one night he was gone, like the dew off the grass, before the doctor could get to him.

And Nat, who had been waiting for the glad day, did the only ardent and uncalculated thing ever known against him, for the moment David Masters had breathed his last, he went straight to the vicarage and had the banns up. "Twas a fine advertisement for his love, yet a premature act from such a cautious man, and long afterwards, when he was old himself and rolling in money, he often used to say 'twas the only rash deed he ever performed in all his life.

You see, David died o' Saturday night, just after closing time, and Nat, coming out of "The Green Man," where he'd been for his evening pint, heard tell about it, and went off that instant moment to his reverence. Then he comforted Milly, but didn't tell her what he'd done. She promised to go to church with him, however, to morning service on the following day; and she went, and he enjoyed the sight of the flichets * in her pale cheeks when she heard the axing of the banns. And a proper crowd came round them after. and all congratulated the pair of 'em; and the women wanted to hear the last details of old David's end, and the men were very wishful to know what he'd cut up for in pounds, shillings, and pence. But none could tell as to that till lawyer came, and when he did come, in due course, he brought along a proper thunderbolt in his pocket for "Milly Masters, spinster, and Nathaniel Parsons, bachelor, both of this parish."

In a word, the hookem snivey old rogue had been living on an annuity ever since he got his money. There wasn't enough to pay for his oak coffin ; and such was the feeling in Milly's mind at the time that she'd have turned the man out of it and put him in a pauper's box if she could. "Twas a harsh blow; but before the Thursday in that same week the poor girl got a harsher, and saw a glimpse of human nature that might have well turned her young soul sour.

She'd seen enough of Nat since the thunderbolt to find he was hit pretty hard, too, and despite the miz-maze into which her sad shock had thrown her, she couldn't help feeling that he was a lot sorrier for himself than for her; but she felt, with his character, that was natural, and didn't worry overmuch. Then came the funeral, and Nat didn't go, and there was only her Cousin George and William Bassett to support her. Not, of course, that she wanted support, for she was a strong girl, and she'd got her happiness in sight despite the cruel disappointment of coming to Nat empty-handed.

The same evening, as he didn't turn up, she went to him to ask about the furniture and the few gimcracks and joanies. Her wish was to sell the lot, if anybody would buy 'em, but she wanted Parsons to look over 'em and see if there was anything he'd like to keep and have in his house.

So she went to him, and he was along with his old mother, and he explained, so well as he could, that the case was entirely altered along of this fearful misfortune, and that, as a man with his future to think upon and many responsibilities—especially his old mother—he couldn't marry yet awhile.

"I ban't going back upon it, nor nothing like that, Milly Masters," he said. "God forbid," he said, "that I should do anything like that; but truth's truth, and the truth is that if you can't fetch along the bit of money we counted upon, I can't marry you for a good few years; and—and my dear mother thinks as you ought to go in service for the present, or something like that. And I dare say, such a clever girl as you be, that you feel the same about it."

Sick as a davered rose went she, no doubt ; indeed, she well remembered, fifty year after, how she had to hold on to the edge of the table and set her teeth to keep herself from going fainty. And she always did declare that if the man had spoke any more, she must have fainted on the spot ; but, instead of that, his old mother began, and that roused up Milly and put the devil into her just when she most needed a pinch. She looked at the man like a flame of fire, and the blood came back in her face, and she said—

"Thank you, Nat Parsons. "Tis a wonderful world, and we never know our luck, seemingly, nor whether the ground under our feet be firm or soft. A bit ago I cussed my Uncle David and let my tongue go on the man, though he was dead; but now, since I've heard you and your mother, I bless him. I bless him for what's he's done. and I'm thankful to God as he cut me off. for my poverty have saved me from a man what ban't worthy to tie my shoe-lace ! And I wouldn't marry you now if I had ten thousand a year: I loved you with all my heart and soul-not for your money, but for yourself-and you-you-you loved me so well that now, because I can't bring you two thousand pounds, you bid me go into service. And I'm only sorry I haven't got enough money to pay for repapering your cottage and getting in the new kitchen grate. But if you send in the bill, I'll be glad to do so when I can save a bit. So good night, you miserable creature, and don't you ever dare to walk on the same side of the street as me no more, or I'll get a man to talk to you with his hoss-whip!"

With that she marched off, leaving his mother to tell Nat Parsons what a blessed escape he'd had; but though she went away game, with her chin high, it came down quick enough when she was out in the dark, and such was her unhappy state that she very near went off and made a hole in the river. For never had she dreamed of any such thing, and far from thinking to bring a sorrow on Nat, her one hope and expectation was that he would run to comfort her.

And, of course, that's what somebody else did do, and wasted no time, neither; for that very night, as poor Milly lay sleepless and tossing on her bed, a little stone clinked on the glass of her window, and then another, and she jumped up and peeped out. A moony night it was, and she saw Billy Bassett down under. He'd heard tell the news at "The Green Man," for Nat went there, as usual, and made no secret of the "We're too poor to wed now, but matter. I'd meant to wait for her till Doomsday," he said to the neighbours; "but I'm terrible sorry to find she's bitter angered against me, and, in a word, she's thrown me over."

And when Bassett heard that, just before closing, he forgot his duty for an hour, and, instead of going to work at Tudor Hundreds, he went up to the house where David Masters used to dwell, half a mile out of the village, and he roused Milly and bade her ray herself and come down house and let him in.

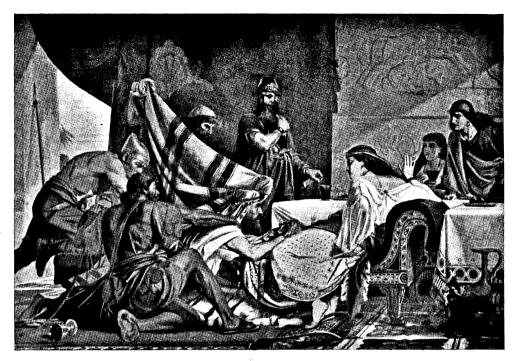
Which she did do, and the upshot was that Bassett went to his work, ten minutes later, a tokened man. Yes, faith, he catched her at the right moment, and the next day, fierce and fiery, he went to his reverence and bade the banns be put up. But though a large-minded chap where his people were concerned, the parson had a good measure of reason, and he took no steps at all till he'd seen Milly Masters herself and heard the particulars. Then he had Nat Parsons afore him, too, and so convinced himself 'twas all proper and regular. And, being a rare sportsman himself, 'tis very easy to guess where his sympathy went.

So it came about in due course, much to the wonder of the folk, no doubt, that Milly Masters heard herself called out one Sunday with Nat Parsons and the very next with William Bassett. The people fluttered like fowls in a hedge, so 'twas said, and many, ignorant of the facts, thought that his reverence was wrong and had muddled They thought every his advertisements. moment that Nat Parsons would leap up in his place and deny, and defy the man and make a brave upstore about it; but Nat didn't turn a hair. He was neat as ninepence in his Sunday black, and he took the plate round and done his part, and found his mother's hymns for her just as usual. But Milly Masters and Billy Bassett were not in church, and they didn't go to worship no more till after their marriage, six weeks later.

"No woman ever had a better husband," said my ancient Aunt Milly to me only a bit ago. "And as for Parsons, he took a rich publican's daughter, but not for fifteen year after he jilted me. She was elderly-older than him-and a very homely woman to the eye. But she'd got tons and tons of money, and more in sight, so Parsons was very proud of her. She tried to bring him out a bit, and make him go to a revel now and then, and taste a little of the joy of life; but she soon found that casting up the credit side was his only joy, and the poor soul lived a twilight sort of life among her husband's ledgers. They didn't have no childer.

"We was all very good friends, as time went on, and when Billy found himself a good bit worried for cash, after our youngest's long illness, Nat lent him ten pounds, and, as a matter of sentiment for old time's sake, only charged him five per centum interest upon it.

"But there weren't many generous things like that told against the man."



"ESTHER'S BANQUET." BY EDWARD ARMITAGE, R.A. From the original in the Diploma Gallery at Burlington House.

THE ART OF EDWARD ARMITAGE, R.A.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

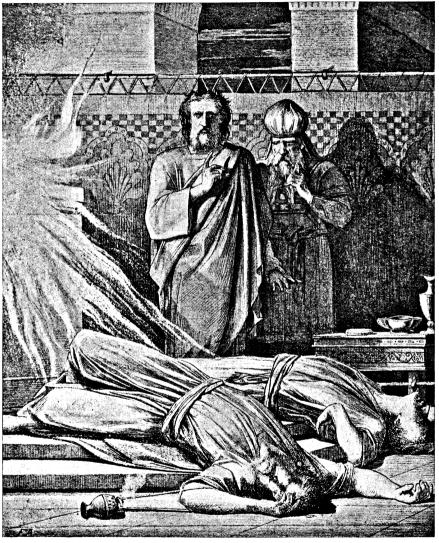
THE son of a Yorkshire gentleman of independent fortune, Edward Armitage, who was born in 1817, was exempt from monetary considerations in the choice of a profession. After a good general education in London, in France, and in Germany, he adopted that of painter against the wishes of his family, the members of which, although inclined to encourage amateur talent, were prejudiced against his making a serious career of art. Their objections were not overcome until he was eighteen, at which age he entered himself, as Delaroche's pupil, at the Ecole des Beaux Arts.

He must have been overjoyed, later on, to be one of the four young men, chosen from the whole school, who were trusted with the task of "laying-in," to use a technical expression, from the master's eharcoal studies and coloured sketches, for the famous Hemicycle, working under the Professor upon it until the mural decoration was complete, and not a little pleased that the Professor himself should select him as model for the figure and head of Tommasso Guido Masaccio, the Italian painter of the Renaissance period, who formed one of the members of the group receiving the rewards of the goddess of Fame.

From the first the bias of the young talent was inclined towards painter's historical *genre* and solidity by methods which are to be found on the canvases of those of his immediate forerunners in English Art, who neglected the technical charm of texture and variety of handling which, as Englishmen, they should have inherited from our great eighteenth-century painters, in favour of incident and story. When, in 1835, Armitage went to Paris to receive his art education, the work of Descamps, Delacroix, Delaroche, Isabey, Scheffer, and Roqueplan it was which, in consequence, attracted his admiration rather than the beauty to which Millet, Rousseau, Corot, and Dupré, to whom the be-all and end-all of painting was romance, were trying to open the eyes of the world.

Edward Armitage thus became a follower in a road which certain of his predecessors in English art had worn to easy footing, and this the more naturally because he was a pupil of Paul Delaroche, and became imbued with the view of classic art which that gifted man maintained.

In 1842, seven years after his first serious apprenticeship to Art, Edward Armitage exhibited his first picture in the Salon. Called "Prometheus Bound," this picture heads the list of those allegorical subjects which on sundry occasions attracted his talent. After "Prometheus Bound" had

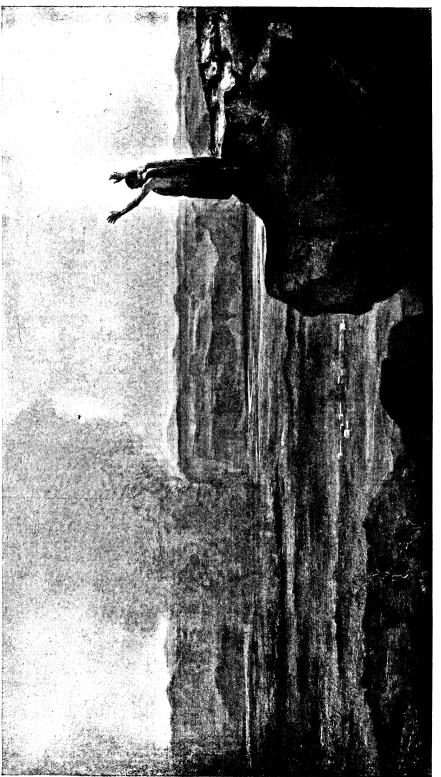


"NADAB AND ABIHU, SONS OF AARON." BY EDWARD ARMITAGE, R.A.

The fact that he soon became one of the master's favourite pupils probably confirmed him in his affinity for the neo-classical school, and of the fellow-students, who were some of them to win greater fame in less formal paths of art, the only one with whom he much associated appears to have been Yvon.

attracted the attention of the French critics and been pronounced "well-drawn but brutally energetic," its painter came back to England as one of the competitors for the decoration of the new Houses of Parliament, and with his cartoon "Cæsar's First Invasion of Britain," he won the first prize of three hundred pounds. So remarkable a work was

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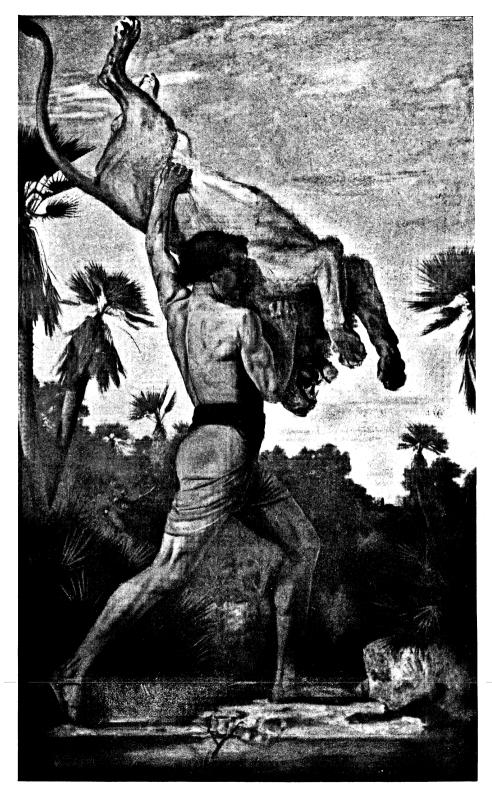
BY EDWARD ARMITAGE, R.A. "ABRAHAM WATCHING THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CITLES OF THE PLAIN." this considered by the judges, for so young an artist to have put forth, that, says the compiler of the brief memoir in the handsome portfolio of reproductions from his works published after his death, "Before the prize was definitely allotted to him, Armitage was obliged to execute hurriedly,

incident to a sensitive young artist, all ended well after he had convinced the judges by drawing on the spot, and under supervision, a very vigorous design of a different subject, "A Briton Defending His Son." Curiously enough, he seems never to have developed this subject for



"MOSES AND THE TABLES OF THE LAW." BY EDWARD ARMITAGE, R.A.

in England, still another small cartoon under supervision." The suggestion, apparently, was that Delaroche might have helped him in some degree with the work; but that master, when interrogated on the subject, declared that he had never even seen it, and despite the unpleasantness of the any further use, although the first design of it remains one of the most powerful of his early works. In the ensuing competitions his allegorical design "The Spirit of Religion" obtained a prize of two hundred pounds. A second imaginary subject, "The Personification of the

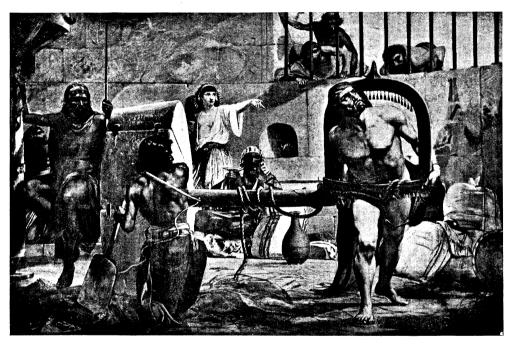


"SAMSON AND THE LION." BY EDWARD ARMITAGE, R.A. From the original in the Brighton Art Gallery, reproduced by permission of the Corporation.

Thames," a fresco in the upper waiting-room of the House of Lords, won another prize.

Yet again he was successful with his "Battle of Meeanee" or "Miané"—that brilliant feat of British arms in Indian history, a battle fought in 1843, in Sind, when three thousand British troops defeated twenty thousand Baluchis. The picture which chronicles this famous occasion reaped, as prize in the competition, five hundred pounds, and had the honour of being bought by Her Majesty Queen Victoria, who had it hung in St. James's Palace. To the list of his Westminster Hall prizes was added designs which preceded them, and this fact confirms the impression that, from this point onward in his career there might almost be fixed upon the work of Edward Armitage Ingres's famous saying : "Le dessin est la probilé de l'art," so completely does his work show the essential quality of good draughtsmanship, which, however, without the equally essential qualities of fine colour and an intimate realisation of character, is insufficient to allow any greater encomium than that of talented being attached to any painter's name.

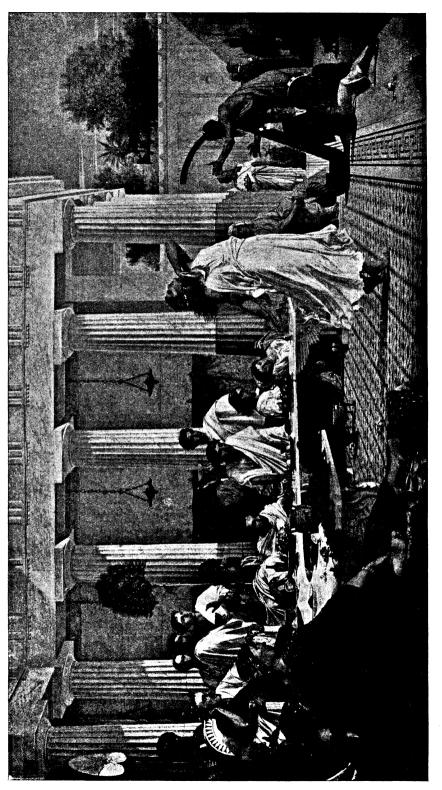
"Time," Emerson assures us, "dissipates



"SAMSON IN PRISON." BY EDWARD ARMITAGE, R.A. From the original in the Bristol Art Gallery, reproduced by permission of the Committee.

the inclusion of the fresco "The Death of Marmion" in the scheme of decoration of the upper waiting-hall of the House of Lords. These large mural works were not finished till 1852, and during the ten years which had elapsed since his painting of "Prometheus Bound" for the Salon, Armitage had left Paris, studied for nearly two years in Rome, and also made his *debut* on the walls of London's Royal Academy in 1848, with two pictures, both themes from English history, "Henry VIII. and Katharine Parr" and "The Death of Nelson."

Neither of these works are of anything like the same importance as his mural to shining ether the solid angularity of facts. No anchor, no cable, no fences, avail to keep a fact," but here, fortunately, the artist steps in to bridge time and to reconstruct an obliterated past. We see this in the basreliefs from Assyria, in the treasures recently recovered from Egypt, and in Europe, to come to practically modern days, we have but to turn to the so-called Winchester School of Illumination, which flourished at Winchester during the century which preceded the style, memorials of the lives and characters and fashions of people who once lived, which satisfy the imagination and the understanding.



"HEROD'S BIRTHDAY FEAST." BY EDWARD ARMITAGE, R.A. From the original in the Corporation Art Gallery at the Guildhall, E.C. History told in line has a definiteness which distinguishes the scenes it represents and to which the fluid quality of words can never attain. Therefore we need not labour the point that, in his art, Edward Armitage showed little of the spirituality of the poet, and that no mute music attached itself to his canvases, but can be definitely grateful that he should have set himself resolutely, as he did, to mould his art round bygone occurrences, and show us, as in a glass, how our forbears looked and acted, displaying with much archaeological accuracy early episodes of both religious and secular history. His work is a veritable magazine of forgotten Gomorrah, watches the cataclysm of Nature swallow them up.

"And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the Lord. And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace."

This is one of the few lay sermons in paint which Armitage preached, for his picture suggests the fine simplicity of the great Israelite, showing him, as Goethe expresses it, one of those whose modes of life "on the sea, on the desert, and the pasture-land, gave



"THE PARENTS OF CHRIST SEEKING HIM." BY EDWARD ARMITAGE, R.A.

or never-known occasions, represented, since he was a craftsman of singular ability, with as much dexterity and as much dramatic power as even his master, Delaroche, encompassed.

It is, therefore, of interest to survey his pictures in the chronological order of the events which they illustrate, rather than in the order in which they were painted by the artist.

Of his pictures which are actually historical, the first takes us back some two thousand years before the Christian era. It is that of Abraham, as he stands on Mount Hermon and, looking towards the Valley of Siddim, which contains the cities of Sodom and breadth and freedom to their convictions. The star-sown vault of heaven, under which they lived, ennobled their emotions; they were more than active and skilful hunters, more than industrious, home-loving husbandmen; they believed that God was confiding in them, visiting them, taking an interest in them, leading and saving them."

Next in the chronological sequence of the Bible narrative, Armitage treated a subject popular in art, the poignant story of "Hagar and Ishmael in the Wilderness," and then "The Finding of Moses by Pharach's Daughter." Then follows a design taken from Leviticus, illustrating the scene in which

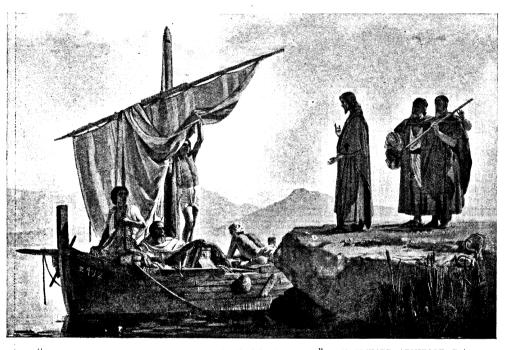
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Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, offered strange fire before the Lord.

"The Cities of Refuge" illustrates an episode in the Book of Numbers, and an occasion forty years later than the tragedy of Nadab and Abihu, and then comes "Moses and the Tables of the Law." "Samson and the Lion," "Samson and the Foxes," and "Samson in Prison, Grinding at the Mill," belong to the twelfth century B.C., and the "Ahab and Jezebel" to the tenth. "Esther's Banquet" forms the last episode in the Old Testament illustrated by Armitage; but single figures of Judith and Susannah Apostles St. James and St. John," "Christ's Reproof to the Pharisees," "Christ and the Twelve Apostles," "Gethsemane," "The Hymn of the Last Supper," "St. John Taking the Virgin Home," "The Remorse of Judas," "The Dawn of the First Easter Day," "Herod's Birthday Feast," "St. Paul a Prisoner in Rome," "Saul Witnessing the Death of Stephen," and a number of mural paintings in churches, to which allusion is made later in this survey of the artist's work.

Passing on to a later period, Armitage painted "The Christian Martyr," "The Burial of a Christian Martyr in the Time of

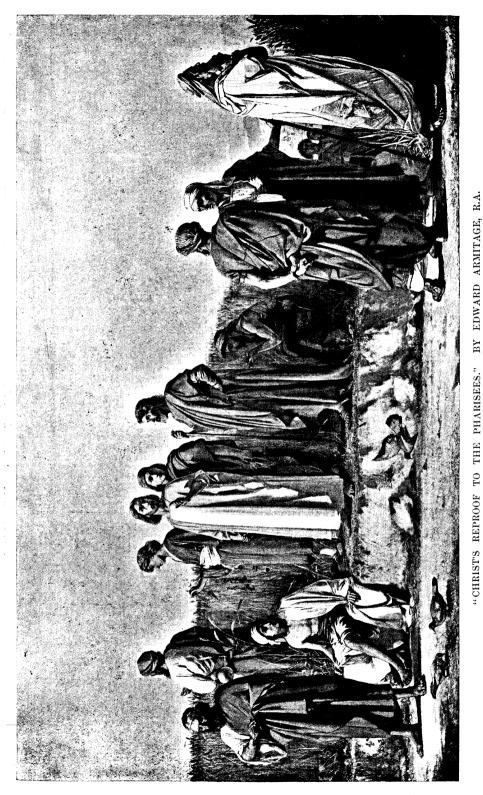


"CHRIST CALLING THE APOSTLES ST. JAMES AND ST. JOHN." BY EDWARD ARMITAGE, R.A. From the original in the Mappin Art Gallery, Sheffield.

appear in his long decorative painting for a frieze, "A Dream of Fair Women," in which the women identified with the earlier Books of the Old Testament through which we have traced Armitage's selection of themes are— Eve, Hagar, Rebekah, Rachel, Pharaoh's daughter, Miriam, Jephthah's daughter, Delilah, Ruth, the Queen of Sheba, and Esther. The ensuing series of figures of this design are heroines of classical myth and literature.

It was to the New Testament that Armitage turned for the source of the chief of his subjects, which include "The Parents of Christ Seeking Him," "Faith," "Christ Healing the Sick," "Christ Calling the Nero," and "Julian the Apostate Presiding at a Conference of Sectarians," which picture marks the date somewhere between 361 A.D. and 363 A.D., for these were the two years of the reign of Flavius Claudius Julianus, nicknamed the Apostate. Brought up in the Christian faith, this last descendant of Cæsar Augustus completed his education in the philosophical schools of Athens, and on his accession to the purple, after announcing his conversion to paganism, he published an edict in which he gave toleration to all religions.

With "The Institution of the Franciscan Order," founded 1210, and "St. Francis and His Early Followers Before Pope Innocent III.,"



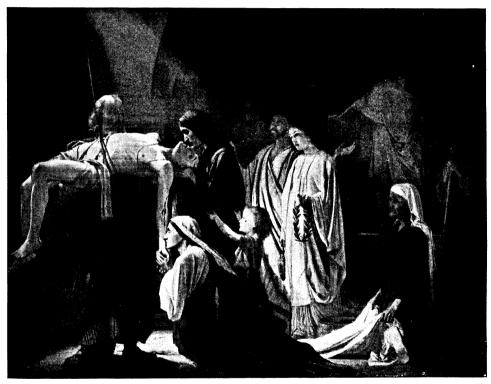
From the original in the Mappin Art Gallery, Sheffeld.



"THE REMORSE OF JUDAS." BY EDWARD ARMITAGE, R.A.

we are back in the Italy of the thirteenth century, and are reminded how the great religious event of this pontificate, the foundation of the Mendicant orders, was extorted from a reluctant pontiff. "Savonarola and Lorenzo the Magnificent" advances us to the fifteenth century and to the Court of the Medicis.

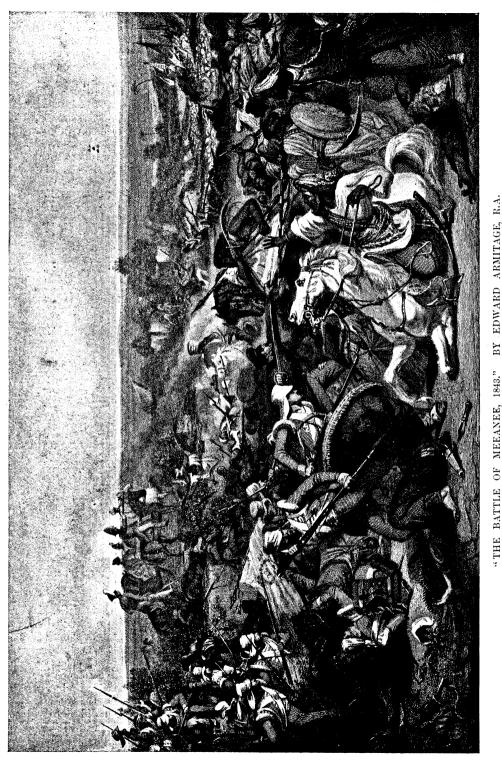
Changing his scene from Italy to England, Armitage painted "An Anglo-Saxon Noble on His Death-bed Emancipating His Serfs." A later subject from English history, as we have seen, was the first picture he exhibited Redeemer. In the Roman Catholic Church of St. John the Evangelist, Islington, he decorated the apse with large figures of Christ and the Twelve Apostles, and for the same building he did a fresco on another wall representing the Institution of the Franciscan Order; but, in the course of years, this latter was found to have so badly perished from atmospheric effects, that he subsequently painted the same subject again in oils, and, after exhibiting it at the Royal Academy, gave it to the church to be hung on the wall previously occupied by the fresco. For yet



"BURIAL OF A CHRISTIAN MARTYR IN THE TIME OF NERO." BY EDWARD ARMITAGE, R.A. From the original in the Glasgow Public Art Gallery, reproduced by permission of the Corporation.

in the Academy, one of "Henry VIII. and Katharine Parr."

In later life Armitage reverted with tireless energy and enthusiasm to the mode of work for mural decoration, with which he had first achieved success in the Westminster competitions; but, having in the meantime inherited a considerable fortune, he gave this later work to various churches entirely at his own expense. In the Parish Church of Marylebone he executed six life-size frescoes representing Noah, David, Isaiah, the Virgin Mary, St. John the Baptist, and the another London church, that of St. Mark's, Hamilton Terrace, Armitage excented a very handsome reredos. Amid this enthusias n for church decoration, it was but natural that his thoughts should turn to the question of some suitable decorative scheme for the interior of St. Paul's Cathedral; but in this he was before his time, and the consensus of opinion of the authorities did not lead to any development of the idea until the much later date at which Sir William Richmond's scheme was adopted. It is all the more interesting now to look at Armitage's bold



From the picture which gained a prize of five hundred pounds, and was subsequently purchased for the Royal Collection by Queen Victoria.



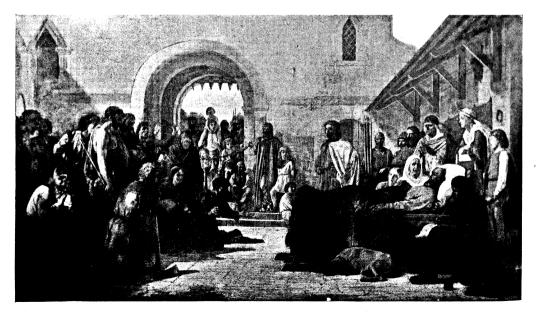
From the mural painting in the House of Lords.

design for the decoration of the interior of the dome of St. Paul's with both fresco and statuary.

In addition to these many ecclesiastical decorations. Armitage undertook, at his own expense, the public-spirited work of adorning the walls of University Hall in Gordon Square, in memory of Henry Crabb Robinson, who was one of the principal founders of University College, London. This series of figures, more than life size, formed a very strenuous undertaking, but was successfully completed, thanks to the enthusiasm which inspired the painter's great technical skill in this kind of work. To-day the series of figures has an even greater interest than it had when first done, since every face is a portrait of some man or woman of real distinction in the generation of celebrities whom the work commemorates. Among the personages represented by these portraits are : William Hazlitt, William Godwin, Thomas Clarkson, Walter Savage Landor, Gilbert Wakefield, Karl von Savigny, August Wilhelm von Schlegel, Mrs. Barbauld, Madame de Stael, Edward Irving, Samuel Rogers, Dr. Arnold, and the Rev. F. W. Robertson.

A few modern themes attracted the versatile talents of Edward Armitage, for during the war with Russia he visited the Crimea, and, on his return, produced several military pictures : "The Bottom of the Ravine at Inkerman," "The Stand of the Guards at Inkerman," "The Heavy Cavalry Charge at Balaklava," and "A Souvenir of Scutari." Under the title of "Retribution," he painted also a large canvas commemorating the suppression of the Indian Mutiny, in which a symbolical figure of Britannia is slaving an attacking tiger, representing the mutineers, the terrible massacre of English women and children by Nana Sahib being recalled by the figures of children and their dead mother who have fallen victims to the "A Moslem Doctrinaire," a few enemv. portraits, a memory in colour of the great fire at Chicago, a few subject-pictures such as "Sea Urchins," "After an Entomological Sale," and "A Deputation to Faraday," "The Women of Ancient Greece," "A Siren," "A Sphinx," "Phryne," "A Dream of Fair Women," "Incident Suggesting Æsop's Fable of Fortune," "Simplex Munditiis," "Hero and Leander," "Pygmalion and Galatea," and "Arcadia," are among the principal other works of one of the most industrious painters of the nineteenth century.

Edward Armitage was elected an A.R.A. in 1866, and a full member of the Academic body in 1872. His "Esther's Banquet" was his diploma picture, and hangs in the Diploma Gallery at Burlington House. Others of his pictures represent his art in various public galleries.



"AN ANGLO-SAXON NOBLE ON HIS DEATH-BED EMANCIPATING HIS SERFS." BY EDWARD ARMITAGE, R.A. From the original in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

DAVIE-DEAR AND THE CARDS

By AGNES GROZIER HERBERTSON

Illustrated by Charles Pears



AVIE-DEAR," I said, "do run away."

He had been tilting the lid of the ink-bottle and letting it fall patiently for ten minutes.

There was я beautiful lull; then: "Where?" asked Davie-Dear.

I said : "Oh, I don't know. Just run away, and-and be quiet."

"You can't do being quiet," complained Davie-Dear. "It isn't anything. It's-it's just the same as bein' tired."

Perhaps it was. I wanted to get on with my letter, but Davie-Dear had claims. Besides, I reflected, he would soon be going to bed.

"Where are your soldiers?" I asked, casting a glance at the rug. "You haven't finished drilling them, have you ? "

Davie-Dear wetted a finger and rubbed it on my desk. He gave me a reproachful glance.

"It's Christmas Eve. 'Course I've put them away. They need a rest. They're old soldiers now. I'm having a new box to-morrow."

"Oh, Davie-Dear !" I said.

He nodded his head. "Old soldiers need to rest a while," said Davie-Dear.

I cast about in my mind.

"There are three-five-seven letters here," said Davie-Dear. He fingered lovingly the mass of envelopes lying at the side of my desk. "I b'lieve they're Christmas cards, Uncle Edward, that's what I do b'lieve."

I believed it, too. That was why I had set the envelopes aside. I am not usually so dilatory about my post. I hesitated a moment. "You may open them, Davie-Dear, if you like," I said.

Davie-Dear's eyes glowed. "Me? Every one ? Oh, good Heavens !"

He clutched them.

" Davie-Dear !" I cried.

"I heard you," said Davie-Dear, nodding. "You must have been mistaken," I said

feebly.

"Oh, good Heavens !" repeated Davie-Dear. He said it in an absent-minded manner as he picked up the letters, but I was not deceived.

"If you say that again, Davie-Dear, I'll take them from you."

Davie-Dear retired to the rug.

I heard him seat himself solidly. After that there was a blessed interval of silence. Davie-Dear is an odd child, and indulges in long periods of silent "gloating." Then: "Some of them aren't really

shut. You can open them without tearing," announced Davie-Dear. "The people what posted them only poked the back bit in, 'stead of sticking it-lazy."

I didn't feel called upon to explain.

"But there's one that's stucked," said Davie-Dear with satisfaction. "It's in very careless writing," added Davie-Dear.

I took no notice, and he began to open the letters.

I wrote steadily. A little gurgle broke from Davie-Dear.

"Uncle Edward, it's got a cat an' a dog on it, an' a fat ole man! He's goin' to slide, that ole man is ! Here's a little boy like me. He's—he's laughing ! " My nephew gurgled whole-heartedly.

"Here's words in the corner-two lines of words. That's 'Christmas'-the first one; after that comes 'c-o-m-e-s b-u-t o-n-c-e-""

"Christmas comes but once a year, And when it comes it brings good cheer,"

I quoted absently.

Though my back was to him, I knew Davie-Dear turned, arrested.

"'Course you've bin and looked at them all first; an' you said I could open them,"

he said at last, in gloomy reproach. "No, I haven't, Davie-Dear. I haven't opened any of 'em. I—I only guessed." I hastened to clear my character.

Davie-Dear accepted my explanation at once.

"It was a very good guess," he said.

"C-h-e-e-r — is that 'cheer,' Uncle Edward ?"

"Yes."

"What's 'cheer'?"

"It's what you get at Christmas, if you're good," I said.

"Sure to," I said cheerfully, "if you're good, and don't ask questions."

I finished the first page of my letter and turned over. I heard my nephew attack another envelope.

"There !" cried Davie-Dear. "Now I've gone an' tore him ! He *wouldn't* come out, not when I told him to ! Uncle Edward, he's bin and gone an' stuck to the card, that sticky bit has, and I've given him two tears !"

"All right, old man," I said. "But don't tear the card, not before I've seen it."

"It's pretty," said Davie-Dear condescendingly. He added in a thoughtful tone: "There's such a big bird on it—bigger'n the flower. That's a funny kind of flower. It's got—..."

The rest of Davie-Dear's art criticisms were uttered under his breath, and were lost on me. They ceased at length, and a further rustling ensued.

"There's some letter-paper in the letter, too. It's got 'Dear Edward '—that's you from Aunt S-o-p-h-i——."

"That's all right, Davie-Dear. Put it with the card," I said absently.

"I never seen such a short letter before !" remarked Davie-Dear.

My second page was almost full of the rather large bold handwriting which I always employ at Christmas-time when Davie-Dear next claimed my attention.

"This one came out quite easily when I told him to." Then, in a tone of disgust : "It's not—it's not a real Christmas card !"

"Never mind. I dare say it's a new kind, Davie-Dear."

"There's only one teeny-weeny bird at the top, with nothing to sit on !" wailed Davie-Dear. "Then there's funny writin', not like what you get on the real cards. 'M-r. and M-r-s. — 'What's that, Uncle Edward ?"

"My dear Davie-Dear, don't interrupt," I said wearily. "That's a silly kind of card, so just set it aside and don't bother me with it."

"I shan't bother with you !" said Davie-Dear loudly; and I was rather taken aback till I realised that my nephew was addressing the card which had incurred his displeasure. He added in a wheedling tone : "I b'lieve he would rather like to be burnt up in the fire, Uncle Edward."

"Very likely," I said carelessly, "but it can't be burnt up, not yet." Having come within hail of a fresh idea, I wrote half a dozen lines hurriedly.

When next Davie-Dear became audible, I was chasing the tail-end of that idea, an elusive game, and Davie-Dear had embarked on a new item in my post.

"On-e l-i-t-t-le woo-r-d of loove I b-r-i-n-g," spelt my nephew carefully. "Can you guess that one, Uncle Edward?"

Despite myself, I chuckled. "I've no doubt I could, but at the moment life holds more important things."

^{*} There's 'Maud ' in the corner, written in ink," Davie-Dear informed me. "I know M-a-u-d spells 'Maud,' 'cause of Maud what comes sometimes to see us. She told me."

"You're getting to be a great deal too clever, Davie-Dear," said I. "I shall have to take my correspondence away from you."

"I'm goin' to be clever when I'm a man," said Davie-Dear carelessly. He shouted with glee: "M-a-u-d, Maud! M-a-u-d, Maud! M-a----"

"They must have forgotten your bed-time," I said with pain. "I wish they wouldn't. I'm sure it isn't good for you to sit up like this."

"I'm quiet," said Davie-Dear in a chastened voice, and promptly was. Fear of rousing the authorities to a realisation of their remissness kept him silent and subdued, while I scrambled over the third page of my letter to the last.

It was evident that Davie-Dear had kept the closed letter for the finish. I heard him wrestle with it, evidently unable to insert a finger, but he did not appeal for help.

Finally, after some rending and rustling— "This is a funny kind of Christmas card !" ejaculated Davie-Dear.

But I was not to be drawn, and wrote on without the hesitation which would, I knew, prove fatal.

"There aren't any pictures. Nobody ever would call *this* a picture—no, they wouldn't. Oh, there's a Christmas card as well, *and* this funny bit of paper I'm lookin' at !"

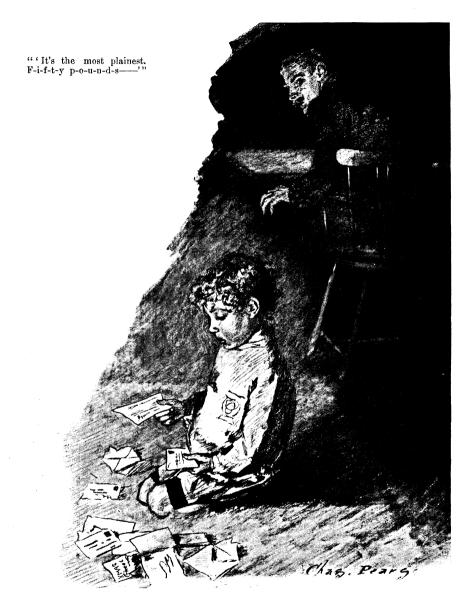
"An odd piece wrapped round the card, I dare say," I murmured.

"There's a picture of sheep on the card,"

said Davie-Dear, apparently after a scrutiny. He added, sighing heavily: "It isn't a real picture with pink an' red an' green; it's only black."

Ďavie-Dear's idea of what constitutes

this a funny bit of paper. I never seen a bit with a lot of wriggly-wrigglies runnin' about all over him like this ! If I jest tore off this teeny-weeny corner, I do b'lieve there's be about ten or a hundred. Uncle Edward, if



reality is colour, and plenty of it. There is something to be said for the point of view.

"No, *that* one isn't the pretty one," soliloquised Davie-Dear. "You needn't pretend you're goin' to be choosed for the pretty one, 'cause you're not! I do think I jest tore the teeniest-weeniest bit off this funny bit of paper——"

"Well, don't tear it off where the writing is," said I. "Is there writing on it?"

Davie-Dear paused. "There's some bits. They ain't all the same kind of writing. You can read the bit in this corner; it's the most plainest. F-i-f-t-y p-o-u-n-d-s----" " *What*?" I cried.

Whirling round in my chair, I fell upon the astonished Davie-Dear. I snatched the precious slip from him.

A light burst upon my nephew. "Couldn't you guess that one, Uncle Edward? Couldn't you ——"

"No, I couldn't," I said. I certainly had not guessed that old Uncle Jeremy had tucked a cheque into the envelope along with his Christmas card. Just like him! The old man never did do things like other people. And I, silly ass, had allowed Davie-Dear to play about with that precious piece of paper. He had been within an ace——

"A teeny-weeny bit off the corner," murmured Davie-Dear.

I rang the bell.

"Davie-Dear, my son," I said firmly, "when I allowed you to sit here and jeopardise my financial affairs by playing with my Christmas correspondence, I did not realise that to-day was Christmas Eve. Now, on Christmas Eve, Santa Claus comes and fills the stockings of good little boys, but not unless the said stockings have been hung up for at least—er—six hours, Davie-Dear, so you had better quick-march to bed."

Davie-Dear understood just one portion of this harangue—the portion that had to do with his Christmas prospects. He rose with alacrity.

"Uncle Edward, how many hours — If I tied the stocking up in one wee minute, would it make six hours when Santa Claus came? If I — "

"If you go to bed at once, and if you hang your stocking up the very first thing—well, you'll just do it," said I.

It was opportune of Jane to appear then, and tactful. Davie-Dear fell upon her. "Jane, if I go to bed this very minute——"

As I stood with the unexpected cheque in my hand, pondering my good luck, and shuddering at the remembrance of danger safely past—

"Good night, Uncle Edward !" I heard Davie-Dear call to me from the stair.

I guessed the reminder to be Jane's.

I'm not sure that the small boy heard me when I replied "Good night."

Davie-Dear was in a hurry.

The Christmas cards lay upon the rug.



WINTER SLEEP.

VANISHED all colour, sweetness, song, and gladness,

♥ Sadly the last rose hangs her pallid head: Nature sinks wrapped in universal sadness, Slow tears are falling on earth's flowerless bed.

Silence and sleep—long slumbers without breaking— So Mother Nature soothes her brood to rest: Too deep for dreams, and yet full swiftly waking At the first tremor of the wide earth's breast.

If from man's sleep such magic might be moulded, Wrought from his torpor, beauty to fulfil His utmost aim, as from her sheath unfolded, Shines on our sight the first wild daffodil!

LADY SCALEBY'S HOUSE-PARTY

By JOHN BARNETT

Illustrated by A. Wallis Mills



HEY all seem to be enjoying themselves,"mused Lady Scaleby, with the slightly doubtful complacence of a veteran hostess. "A country houseparty in November can be a terrible handful, if the

weather is vile. But then Dicky Bennett is a great help, I must admit. He can generally be relied on to keep things going."

This was no more than the truth. Mr. Richard Bennett had much in common with the Admirable Crichton. There was little in the way of sport and games that he could not do, and do well. His shooting had even satisfied Stokes, that most exacting martinet of head keepers, and had completely "wiped the eye" of Colonel Brainham, a local magnate, for many years the recognised crack shot for miles around Tracot. It is only just to say that the Colonel had accepted his own effacement like a man and a sportsman. Whether Dicky himself, in similar circumstances, would have behaved as handsomely was perhaps an open question. Even in success he was a shade inclined to jealousy and to the patronage of lesser That, alas, is sometimes the way with men. Admirable Crichtons. They get a false sense of proportion; their hats become too small for them. But Dicky, if things went well with him, possessed a cheery temperament and some charm, and he was undoubtedly very useful all round. He could give very useful all round. He could give Kathleen Hemming six strokes at golf and beat her, and Kathleen could hold her own with most men, level. She was keen on golf; she had ambitions connected with the Ladies' Dicky's play had been Championship. rather a revelation to her. But she had proved herself as good a loser as Colonel Brainham. She had laughed and asked for her revenge, and the Admirable Crichton had answered, rather impressively, rather more seriously

than usual, that nothing, nothing, would give him greater pleasure than another game with Miss Hemming.

"I suppose Dicky's in love with her," reflected Lady Scaleby. "Most young men seem to be. I'm not sure that he's good enough for Kathleen. Games aren't everything. But the young woman of to-day seems only to live for her golf, or to go out with the guns, or to try to shoot herself. But Kathleen's not altogether a fool. She's quite pretty and rather a dear, as girls go."

There were men in the world-several men -who would have considered this an understatement. Dicky Bennett, as Lady Scaleby had guessed, was one of them. He was thinking a great deal of Kathleen these days. Pretty ? She was a goddess-a goddess with blue-black, gleaming Irish hair and grey Irish eyes that held a gentle mockery. That mockery puzzled him vaguely, but those eyes had spun a queer spell about him. He was not, however, cursed with many doubts and fears. Most girls were charming to him, and so why should not this Irish witch be kind ? It took quite an effort to dismiss her from his thoughts when he was shooting. If he had failed to do so, it would have been disastrous. But, happily, he was able to accomplish the feat. And with regard to golf, he almost wished that he had let her win that match, sinking his own slight natural vanity. Kathleen, if she could have read that thought, would have been moved to royal wrath.

"No, Dicky's not good enough for her," Lady Scaleby decided. "He's just a goodlooking image with a knack for all sports. And he's too pleased with himself altogether, for my taste. But that's the way with your modern youth. Maurice Glayde's the exception that proves the rule. I wish he had a little more natural vanity. He's worth a round dozen Dickies! And it's a pity that he's not rather fitter in health just now. A man who's come back from West Africa all skin and bone and full of fever can hardly do himself justice side by side with a

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splendid young pagan like Dicky. I wish I could lend Kathleen my eyes."

And Lady Scaleby shook her head with annoyance tinged with self-satisfaction. She rated her own judgment and powers of discernment very highly indeed, and with some justice.

"I wonder if Maurice is attracted by Kathleen?" she mused. "I've seen him looking at her rather curiously once or twice. But you can never tell what Maurice is thinking about. He was always something of a sphinx, even when he was a boy, before he had done really splendid work and squandered his health and pretty well given his life for a thankless tribe of natives. What's that? The gong for lunch, and the weather's still too awful for words ! I shall have to rely on Dicky getting something up for this afternoon."

Lady Scaleby's confidence was not misplaced. Mr. Bennett rose to the situation nobly. The weather was unspeakable, too bad even for shooting or golf. But Dicky put forward a suggestion after lunch that met with general approval.

"I vote we get up a big billiard handicap," he proposed. "If the handicapping is done with care, it ought to be great sport."

Everyone seemed to like the idea. Most of the house-party, as it chanced, were more or less keen on billiards. Their skill naturally varied widely, but that was where the handicapping came in. Lady Scaleby never touched a cue, but her main hunger in life was for reposeful placidity combined with a sense of duty nobly performed, and so long as her guests could amuse themselves without active aid from her, she asked no better of the gods. Her sense of duty was under admirable control.

"Then you're all on?" said Dicky Bennett, very much in his element as leader of affairs. "We must have short games, of course, and a knock-out tournament. We'd better try and fix the handicaps at once. How many of us will there be? You'll play, Glayde, I suppose? You do play billiards?"

His tone was pleasant cnough, but it held a distinct touch of patronage. Since he had joined the house-party, Captain Glayde had taken little share in the general amusements. To a man with malaria in his system, an English autumn rather more villainous than usual had proved distinctly trying. He had said quietly that he had not felt up to either golf or shooting just yet. He had made no fuss about his health. That was not his way at all. But, feeling as he did, loneliness and a big arm-chair by the smoking-room fire had held more attractions than the damp open air.

Dicky Bennett was always conscious of a vague feeling of irritation against the man. Kathleen Hemming was perhaps in part responsible for this. Dicky had seen her chatting once or twice with Captain Glayde, and he was in a state when a man has an absurd proprietorial feeling about a woman. No one else had any right to chat with Kathleen. Besides, in a way, despite Dicky's natural complacency, Captain Glayde made him feel slightly dissatisfied with his own career. He had a jolly good time always, and proposed to go on having one, if the gods were kind, but people said that Captain Glayde had been doing rather great work in a poisonous climate. And Dicky was man enough to feel that his own smooth, pleasant life left something to be desired when compared with this other man's.

"No, thanks, I don't think I'll play," Captain Glayde answered quietly. "I'll mark, if you like."

Dicky's vague sense of irritated inferiority made him persist. He would show the man up, if he could. Perhaps he declined to shoot and play golf or billiards simply because he was not a great performer. And, after all, they had to take his work in West Africa entirely on trust! Now, anyone who liked was welcome to watch Dicky shoot.

"Are you anything of a player?" he asked.

His tone was only just civil. It suggested doubts. The others in the room were conscious of a slight tension in the atmosphere. Kathleen Hemming, for one, was struck by the contrast between the two men. Dicky, tall and clean-built, blue-eyed, fair-haired, and beautifully groomed, was a splendid example of the type he represented. He looked as though the fear of being bored had been the one serious trouble he had known through all his life.

Maurice Glayde stood half a head shorter than Dicky. His face was bronzed and sallow, and he still looked rather ill. But his eyes were steady and tolerant, and when he smiled, his face altered very pleasantly. He smiled now, ignoring any possible grounds of offence, and Kathleen Hemming, watching him, found herself thinking that it was a pity he did not smile more often.

"Yes, I have played a bit," he answered. "But I really won't play to-day." Dicky Bennett shrugged his shoulders rather expressively and turned to the question of the handicaps. He seemed to suggest that Captain Glayde preferred not to put to the test any reputation for skill he might possibly possess. Anyhow, Kathleen read

final after dinner. Kathleen, who received twenty, played rather a good game for a girl. She had a straight eye and an absence of nerves. The leaves favoured her at first, and, amid great chaff and excitement, she got within three of game. Then Dicky had a



"'I warn you I shall try my very best to win."

his shrug in that way, and for the first time Dicky Bennett struck her as being rather petty.

The billiard handicap was a distinct success. Heats of fifty up were played, and, in the result, Dicky and Kathleen met in the chance, and by sound, open play he got to forty-five. For an amateur he was above the average. Long losers from hand and an occasional cannon were the strength of his game. When he broke down, Kathleen was left with no opening. Dicky, coming again to the table, played a good cushion cannon and the red rolled in, giving him the five he required. Rather characteristically, he explained to the company at large that he had meant to make the double shot. The explanation was received without much enthusiasm. Most of the spectators judged the stroke to have been a fluke, and, as far as the men, at any rate, were concerned, they had wanted Kathleen to win. Dicky was a good enough sort, of course, and jolly useful all round, but he *was* a little too palpably pleased at all times with his own performances.

After dinner next evening Lady Scaleby treated Kathleen to a short monologue in a corner of the drawing-room. Lady Scaleby's methods of diplomacy were simple but effective. Praise a man to a girl, she considered, and she will straightway begin to notice his defects, of which, being a man, he is bound to have a fairly liberal share. (Lady Scaleby was a resigned and contented widow.) On the other hand, if a man is disparaged to a girl, she at once begins instinctively to look about for his good points. (And it is quite possible that he may have one or two.) For the average girl, according to Lady Scaleby, is a contrary creature.

"I don't wonder that everyone likes Dicky Bennett," she began, and proceeded to speak at some length of his good looks, good temper, and skill at sport. "If I were a girl——" she concluded, and came to an eloquent pause.

Heaven only knows what Kathleen thought! What she *said* was: "He is awfully nice. I think Captain Glayde is looking rather better to-night."

Any pleasure that Lady Scaleby may have felt was not revealed. Her plump countenance never did reveal much.

"Perhaps he is," she answered coolly. "He is not at his best just now. But, anyway, I suppose he would compare badly with Dicky. Most men do. And Maurice is rather tiresomely absent-minded. I believe his thoughts are in West Africa most of the time. A man ought not to be so wrapped up in his work. And such work, too ! What do you think of a man venturing into a native village where smallpox was raging, and doing his best for the wretched people almost single-handed ?"

"Did Captain Glayde do that?" Kathleen asked.

"Yes, he did," Lady Scaleby answered quite snappishly. "It's not fair to us ratepayers, I consider, for a highly-trained man to risk his life so foolishly." "It was rather brave," Kathleen said quietly enough, but her eyes were rather oddly bright. She possessed imagination. She was able to picture Captain Glayde toiling with dogged coolness amid the heat and horrors and anguish of that terror-stricken, tormented village.

"Oh, yes, it was brave enough," Lady Scaleby said slightingly, and went on to speak of Dicky Bennett in terms of almost fulsome compliment until the men came in.

It rained again next day. In the afternoon Kathleen was alone in the billiard room, knocking the balls about, when Maurice Glayde came in. She noticed that his eyes brightened a triffe at sight of her—she could not help noticing that—and perhaps she was a little pleased.

They chatted for a while about trifles, and then Kathleen spoke out her thoughts abruptly.

"Why do you never by any chance mention your work, Captain Glayde?" she asked.

He laughed with some surprise.

"Oh, I don't know," he answered. "I hate boring people with 'shop,' and, anyway, that kind of thing is not of general interest."

"To us, you mean," Kathleen retorted rather sharply. "You think we only care about games and childish things?"

"Indeed, I did not mean that," he protested rather unhappily.

But Kathleen was pleased to go off at a tangent.

"I hate modesty when it is carried too far!" she cried. "But, at any rate, most of us are not guilty of that! When we have done a good score at golf or killed so many birds with so many cartridges, we like everyone to hear about it." It is to be feared that she was thinking of a recent brilliant feat of Mr. Bennett's. "But I'm sorry you think us childish."

Captain Glayde had pulled himself together.

"I don't," he said firmly. He met her eyes just for a moment, and Kathleen divined somehow that he wished to frame a compliment, but was unpractised in the gentle art.

"I think — on the contrary, I think that you ——" he began haltingly, and she interrupted him.

"Then, if you don't, why have you never told any of us about your work?" she demanded.

"Oh, one doesn't care to talk about oneself or one's own job," he said awkwardly.

"But it is almost worth talking about,"

Kathleen said. "What you did in that smallpox village, for example. Lady Scaleby told me. Oh, really, even a game-mad, childish person like myself can appreciate that sort of thing !"

"I don't doubt that Lady Scaleby exaggerated the affair," he protested, but in his heart he was conscious of a deep affection for his hostess.

Kathleen's mood seemed to alter bewilderingly.

"I dare say she did," she said indifferently. "I dare say it was nothing worth repeating. No doubt you merely had a good time and amused yourself in West Africa." She glanced at his thin, lined face, and it seemed to Maurice Glayde that her eyes were disparaging. He lost his small glow of unusual happiness, and the sudden wild hope that had flickered up in his heart died clean away. The ways of women were utterly beyond his understanding, he decided. "Why do you despise all games ?" Kathleen demanded.

"But I don't," he answered patiently. She seemed to him—oh, infinitely lovable, with her delicate, mobile face and changeful moods.

"Then why don't you do anything here?" she asked.

"I've not been very fit," he answered diffidently, "and this is rather a beast of a climate to come back to."

Kathleen lost her disparaging severity quite suddenly.

"But you're looking much better to-day," she said gently. "Would you care would it bore you to play me a game at billiards?"

"I should like it immensely," he declared, and again his thin face brightened.

"How shall we play?" she asked. "Level? Mr. Bennett gave me twenty in fifty, but he is rather good."

"Shall we play a hundred up, and shall I try to give you fifty?" suggested Captain Glayde, with some diffidence. Kathleen shot one surprised glance at him and then she nodded.

"I warn you I shall try my very best to win," she said, her pride slightly piqued.

"Of course," agreed Maurice Glayde, with vast solemnity.

Kathleen only made seventeen altogether. Maurice Glayde proved himself to be in a different class from anyone whom she had met. He had touch, and he could control the balls. In the end he got position to his liking, and ran out with a break of fifty-three.

"Game !" said Kathleen, and she smiled. "You—you are rather a fraud, you know, Captain Glayde ! I never dreamed you could play like this."

"I used to play a good bit," he answered. "Mayn't we have another game?"

"Óh, I'm no match for you at all," Kathleen said. "I was going to ask you to take on Mr. Bennett, but he couldn't give you a game. And he rather hates to be beaten at anything."

"It's quite depressing to play anyone who takes a beating to heart," Maurice Glayde agreed. "I would much rather have a game at golf with you, if you will honour me, and if it ever stops raining."

"So you play golf, too?" Kathleen said thoughtfully. "And are you a champion at that, Captain Glayde?"

"Anything but," he assured her. "My game is entirely in the hands of the gods. It may be anything from four to thirty!"

"After the billiards, I don't trust you," Kathleen retorted. "But I will play you with pleasure, if we get a chance. And, now that you have proved that you do not really despise games, you may tell me something about West Africa, if you like."

Maurice Glayde was always a halting speaker, but perhaps the world has not altered greatly since the days when Desdemona listened bright-eyed to Othello's tales of war. Just a week later Lady Scaleby's diplomacy was crowned with triumph.



THE SECRET ORCHARD

By WARWICK DEEPING

Illustrated by Allan Stewart



ICHARDSKELTON rode armed, for the Black Death was abroad, and the Black Death meant hunger and despair in the forest, and the madness of men who had become as wild beasts.

Yet it was Death

in a green season, and a man might marvel at the ways of God. The great oaks were budding out into bronze and gold, and the green shimmer of beech leaves had wiped out the purple winter gloom. At sunset birds sang against a vellow sky. Above the brown wreckage of last year's leaves a thousand flowers were blooming.

All through the day, on the forest road, Skelton had heard the cuckoo calling, a strange voice in the hush of the woods. Birds sang their spring song, and yet Death walked there in the green alleys and sat beside the brown water of the forest streams. Nor was Death here a noble figure, but a lean, snarling, starved lousel, ready to stab and to rob through sheer hunger.

Skelton had a broken arrow hanging in a fold of his green surcoat. It had been loosed at him that morning from behind a tree, and had snapped against his harness, and Skelton had left it there for luck. He rode with basinet on head, his long spear over his The bay horse he rode had its shoulder. harness of red leather studded with bosses of burnished steel.

"Come now," said he to himself, "may Our Lady confound that rogue of a hedge priest! What was it-right or left by the three thorns? Send me to Mount Carmel, but I have forgotten !"

His brown face looked grave and a little grim. The forest was not merciful to strangers, even when a haughty and adventurous spirit looked at life out of shrewd, steel-bright eyes.

"At the stone cross by the three thorns

on the heath? Yes, to be sure. And I gave the lousel a groat ! 'Pax tecum, lording. A silver groat for a brown pocket.' And then someone loosed that arrow !"

He frowned a young man's frown, remembering the harsh voice of the strolling priest, and the quick, red-eyed glances that the fellow had shot at him from under his Here was the heath, sure brown cowl. enough, rising in rusty purple and green out of the deeper murk of the woods. Great white clouds came out of the south, and northwards before him he saw the stone cross and the three wind-blown thorns outlined against the blue of the sky-line. The road forked by the three thorns.

Mounting the hill, he saw a figure in blue seated at the foot of the stone cross. The man sat huddled up as though asleep, his hood drawn forward over his face. Beside him lay a lute, a leather wallet, and a stout The sunlight, streaming from behind staff. two cloud masses, fell full upon the heath, but the thorn trees threw three patches of ragged shadow, and one of the shadow patches covered the man by the cross.

"Hallo, there !"

The man in blue still slept. Skelton could see the black peak of a pointed beard jutting out under the hood. The man's hands were clenched upon his girdle. There was something bleak and stiff in the way his legs lay thrust out from under the blue cloak.

"Wake up, friend, wake up !"

Skelton swung his spear and prodded the figure in the ribs. The man did not stir. Skelton's mouth tightened and his brows came closer together. Catching the edge of the hood on his spear-point, he lifted it up and back, and then sat staring at the dead man's face. It was a parched, grey mask, all blue about the mouth and eyes. The nostrils sneered, the lips were drawn back over the teeth. Skelton crossed himself and backed his horse.

"Poor rogue ! Half starved even in running away, and then the Black Death caught Copyright by Little, Brown & Co., in the United States of America.

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him. He'll sing no more romances. He is dead, with Tristram and Iseult."

Skelton sat staring, puzzled in the midst of his pity.

"Ah, my friend, we cannot help each other, unless I put up a few prayers. To the right or to the left? Which shall it be?"

He chose the right, and left the dead man sneering at the foot of the cross.

The road tricked Skelton as only a forest road can trick a stranger, luring him some six miles from the three thorns, only to branch into three vague and dubious tracks. Wooded hill hung beyond wooded hill, the ashen grey trunks of the beeches rising from a blue and bronze floor of dead leaves and wild hyacinths. A great hush held, yet Skelton could fancy that he heard a murmur like the sound heard in a hollow shell.

Sudden and from a great distance came a strange cry—a thin, small sound in the vastness of the forest. Skelton's horse pricked up his ears and shivered. The cry held a moment, and then broke abruptly, as though a hand had been clapped over the wailing mouth. The horse shivered and fidgeted. Skelton's face looked sharper and more white in the shadows. He chose the middle path and rode on.

The leafage was young as yet, and the forest clear of underwood. Skelton, glancing from right to left, looked along aisle after aisle of trees, all of them utterly alike, each ending where the black trunks converged and met in the distance. Sunlight glimmered through, tracing a network of shadows on the grass, and giving here and there a mysterious sense of movement. Twice Skelton reined in, ready to swear that he had seen figures flitting from tree to tree. But the vast hush held. He felt to find that his sword was loose in its scabbard, and swung his shield forward on the leather loop that slung it round his neck.

Then, like the breaking of clouds in a wet and windy sky, the forest thinned before him and fell away into a haze of golden light. A gleam of water came up out of the deeps of a narrow valley. Skelton found himself on the edge of the woodland, looking down over a stretch of yellow-flowered gorse.

Below him lay a mere, and in the midst of it an island. He could see the reflected shapes of the white clouds moving over the water, and the flakes of blue sky in between, while under the banks the water lay black as jet. The island itself might have been a May Day garland afloat upon the water. It was a mass of fruit blossom, rose and white, piled upon the branches of a hundred trees.

Skelton shaded his eyes with his hand. The gable end of a house, dark and shaggy with thatch, discovered itself in the thick of the island orchard. Moreover, he saw a wooden landing-stage, with a barge moored there, where kingcups studded the banks with gold, and flags thrust their green swords up out of the water.

"H'm !" said he. "No smoke is rising. Has death been there? And that cry I heard?"

Skelton's horse threw up his head and shivered.

"Sancta Maria, Sancta Maria!"

Skelton was well-nigh as startled as his horse. The shrill, wild voice rose from the secret orchard yonder, carrying the two hundred paces between the island and the forest's edge. The words were so distinct that Skelton thought of witchery or magic.

"A new cry, and the voice of a girl! By the king's honour, am I afraid? And of what?"

The horse still shivered, and Skelton scanned this secret hollow hidden away in the thick of the forest. A dogged and adventurous look came into his eyes.

He spoke to the horse. "Gaillard, let us see what we can find yonder."

He rode down to the water's edge, noticing the double ropes that ran from a post on the bank to the barge on the further side. A wooden palisade came into view, and beyond it the roof shingles and louvre of a hall.

Skelton dismounted, looped Gaillard's bridle over his spear, and thrust the truncheon into the ground. The ferry ropes ran through a pulley-block, and, by drawing on one of them, Skelton found that he could bring the barge across. It came sliding towards the bank, ripples running from its blunt black prow, and, climbing in, he kept the wet rope moving, and so ferried over to the island.

Skelton stood listening, glancing right and left into the alleys of the orchard. The island and the house half hidden by fruit blossom was so silent that Skelton felt a certain eeriness stealing towards him like a shadow. Ahead of him rose the palisade, an open gate showing the paving-stones of a courtyard. He passed through, and swerved swiftly to one side from a huge hound that lay crouching within the gate, its muzzle between its paws. Skelton's sword came out against the dog's spring. But nothing happened; the beast did not stir. Like the man under the cross by the three thorns. it was dead.

Skelton's eyes fell into a hard stare. He turned slowly on one heel, scanning the courtyard and the silent house like a man who is fearful of being taken unawares. Straight before him yawned a timber porch, the thatch coming down within three feet of the ground, the hollow within dark as the hollow of a cave. Skelton crossed the court, and had one foot inside the porch before he stiffened and recoiled against one of the massive corner-posts.

In a recessed seat sat the figure of an old man-an old man with a white beard and a clay-coloured face. The filmy eyes stared into nothingness. One lean hand held a crust of bread.

Skelton drew his breath sharply, and his face looked pinched.

"Mother of Heaven, is the whole world dead?"

A blank horror of the place seized him and sent him swinging back across the court with a clatter of steel. The Black Death had been here, and pestilence might be in his nostrils. His eyes fell on the dead hound by the gate. Did dogs die of the Black Death, or was there more than he imagined?

He turned with a set face and, frowning. walked back towards the house.

"Richard Skelton, my friend, you are very like a coward. You shall see the end of this before you cry Nunc dimittis."

The door leading from the porch into the hall stood ajar. Skelton could see nothing but the end of a wall hung with green arras, and the carved oak panels of a screen. Recklessness seized him-an impetuous desire to see all that this house contained. Sword on shoulder, he pushed across the threshold, turned, and stood staring up the hall.

In a great chair on the dais sat a girl clad in a gown of green sarcenet broidered with crimson thread. Her hands hung limply over the lion-headed arms of the chair; her eyes were two dark circles, her mouth open as though to utter a cry. Purple-black hair fell over her shoulders and about a face that was white as milk. Behind the chair rich arras made a cloud of red and gold.

For the moment Skelton thought that the girl, too, was dead, so white, stiff, and still was she. Then one hand raised itself and gripped the arm of the chair. She leant forward, with chin lifted, her eyes the eyes of one who dazedly accepts some prophetic doom.

"You have come! I have waited !"

She spoke in the French tongue, and like no Englishwoman, her voice a mere whisper.

Skelton stared.

"Assuredly, madame, I am here." "The naked sword ! Hasten ! V Waste no pity! Let it be done quickly!"

A dozen thoughts hastened together through Skelton's mind. "By my honour, she is but a child ! Is it madness, or some terror greatly to be feared ? What manner of man am I held to be? And this sword, too? Those eyes of hers stare one into stammering." He went forward three steps. and, dropping the point of his sword to the floor, looked at her compassionately with his shrewd grey eyes.

"Madame, if it was God's wisdom that brought me here, I come as a friend."

Her white face strained towards him.

"Sir, do not jest with me. You are my lord's messenger."

"I am no man's messenger."

"But you come to make an end !"

She tottered, put a hand to her throat, and then sank sideways over the arm of the chair. Her hair fell down over her face, leaving her white neck showing.

Skelton put hissword back into its scabbard, gave one glance over his shoulder, and made towards the dais.

"Good saints, a man feels a knife at his back in such a place ! Some devil's work a-brewing. What's to be done? Maybe she is dead with fear."

He bent over her, touched the black hair and the white neck, and a sudden awe came over him. This helpless thing lying like a wounded bird ! Skelton's eyes softened. He lifted her and carried her out into the courtyard, passing the dead man, who still stared into nothingness.

" T'st ! That, and the silence of the place, would be enough to kill. Blue sky and the sunlight on apple blossoms are kinder."

He found a gate leading from the courtyard into the orchard, and laid the girl on the grass under a tree. Her head fell back, showing the white throat, and some of her hair clung to the joints of his arm-braces. The pale mouth, partly open, might have uttered a cry of pain.

Skelton ran back to the hall, found a silvermounted maple cup on the dais table, and. filling it with water from a pitcher, returned to the orchard. He knelt and sprinkled some of the water on her throat and face.

She opened sudden eyes on him—great brown eyes full of a swimming fear.

"Sir, is it ended?"

She felt her bosom and then looked at her hands as though expecting to see blood. Pity, and something more than pity, seized Skelton and possessed him.

"Come, sister, why look at me with eyes of terror? Drink—here is water."

She had started up, and sat leaning against the trunk of the tree. Skelton held out the cup, but she put out a hand with the gesture of one warding a blow.

"No, not that—it is poisoned !"

"I took it but a moment ago from the pitcher in the hall."

" "It is poisoned ! Rather would I feel the sword in my heart ! "

He looked at her with compassion.

"Madame, I tell you that you speak in riddles. Some great fear is upon you. Take courage. Is a Skelton of Skeltons a man likely to bring you death?"

His man's pride sounded a new note. Shading her eyes with her hand, she bent towards him and looked intently into his face.

"You do not look like one who has been sent to kill."

He laughed with a touch of grimness.

"We Skeltons are not cut-throats."

Yet, seeing that her eyes were still troubled and questioning, he drew his sword and, holding the crossed hilt before him, kissed it and made an oath.

"By the blessed blood, I, Richard Skelton, ride as a stranger through the forest, being bound for the sea, where I take ship for France. This I swear."

Her eyes filled with misty light.

"France !" She murmured the word. "St. Gilles and the Norman apple orchards !"

For some moments she dreamed, and then, waking, stretched out her hands with a sharp cry—

"Sir, is it the truth ?"

"Have I not sworn it, I, Richard Skelton?" She looked long into his eyes, and then let them fall under the downward shadow of their black lashes.

"I am called Nicolette," she said.

"Then, Nicolette, trust me. Speak, and let me serve."

She gave him one quick, upward glance of the brown eyes.

"Oh, I am hungry—I have tasted no food for three days !"

He was on his feet. "I have food and wine in my saddle-bag."

"Wait-let me tell everything. For three nights I have sat and watched. Messire Richard, have pity ! I am the Lord of Mount Badon's lady. He brought me out of France, out of the great war. But then he tired, for he is quick and passionate, and very fierce. I was but a child. And it befell that a perilous secret that was his came to my ears. He would have killed me then, but I pleaded. And then came that other woman with the head of gold and the red, sneering mouth. I cannot tell you all, save that I knew that my lord desired my death. A month ago he sent me in a closed litter to this place. There were three good servants-that was his cunning-and they were true to me. First Bertrand went to the woods to hunt, and came not back again. Geoffrey crossed to seek him, and he, too, came not back again. Then-then three evenings ago a priest came. Old Stephen ferried him across. That night old Stephen and the dog died, and in the morning the priest had gone. But I-I was very fearful. I had a vision of things. I knew that death was watching---watching like a wolf in the dark. I could see the yellow eyes. I was I touched neither food nor drink, alone. and sometimes I cried aloud with fear. Nor had I courage in me to fly into the forest. Death is there. For three days I have had a voice near me; it speaks, and I listen. 'Death comes,' it says; ' if not with poison, then with the sword.' Do not laugh. It is true. I know that my lord desires my death."

She lay back panting, her hands over her bosom. Skelton was walking to and fro, clean, lithe, hawk-faced fighter that he was, trained from his youth to arms and to the governing of his manhood. This Norman girl, Nicolette, had spoken the truth. It had gushed out on his feet like water from a spring. Her white face and fear-weary eyes stirred a great wrath in him—wrath that was quickened by compassion.

"Nicolette," he said suddenly, coming to a stand before her, "this is a knot for a man's fingers to unravel."

Her eyes waited on his.

"I, Richard Skelton, bind myself to meddle in this matter. Maybe, it is in your heart to see the orchards of Normandy again?"

He saw before him the face of an eager, incredulous child.

"The orchards, and the white roads, and the green fields of St. Gilles ! Messire, do not mock me !"

"Should I mock you in this?"

"Messire Richard-----"

"Courage ! I am here to serve."

He glanced at the western sky. The sun was hanging low above the tree-tops, and long shadows lay upon the orchard grass. In an hour twilight would fall, and the forest at night was no place for a man who knew not the ways.

"Nicolette," he said, "you shall rest here to-night, and I will stand on guard. But first you must eat. I left my horse over the water, and there is food for three days in the saddle-bag. I will go and bring him over."

He left her there, and forced upon himself a task that was done for pity and not for joy. Taking the body of the old man from the porch, he laid it in an outhouse, and, dragging the hound to the same place, he left it beside the body of the man. Skelton's face looked older. It was a grim business, gone through with set teeth and frowning eyes.

"Pah, the dead can witness ! What does this child know of such things ? The Sheriff must come here and hold his nostrils. France—surely ! But first a word for honour and dishonour."

He brought his horse across, turned him into the empty stable, and went back to lash the barge to the landing-stage.

"If any cut-throat would come at us to-night, let him swim for it. As for the Lord of Mount Badon, I will haul him by the heels to the ordeal of the sword. Now for the child's hunger."

Before they supped together under the apple tree, Skelton put off his body armour and knelt for Nicolette to unfasten the laces of his helmet. He set red wine and white bread and venison before her on the grass, smiling at the shyness with which she sought to dissemble her hunger, and watching the colour steal back into her lips and the fear melt out of her eyes. His own close-cropped, sun-browned head stood out like the head on a medallion, with the green and shadowy spaces between the trees for a background.

The shy, gliding uplift of her eyes towards him made him forget that he had been on the road all day. Mostly she looked down into her own lap, the long black lashes making two curves of shadow. There was just a gleam of soft light now and again, like sunlight on coy water. The red mouth displayed provoking curves. The silences between them lured them to watch and wonder.

A blackbird burst into song on one of

the trees. A musing tenderness crept into Nicolette's eyes. She began to hum a Norman song, swinging one white hand to and fro, with the forefinger pointed. Skelton watched her, and the hush of the forest was the listening heart of a lover.

Her soul dropped back to earth when the blackbird ceased singing. She met Skelton's eyes, and went red to the lips.

"Ah, messire, I say my prayers when I sing. As for you, I shall always remember you in my prayers."

He held the cup towards her and then drank.

"My troth to you, Nicolette."

Dusk came, and with it a heavy dew. The fruit trees stood black against a saffron sky, and there were strange gleams of gold upon the darkening water of the mere. Skelton fastened on his body armour, while the girl stood holding his basinet. Her white face drooped towards him as he knelt for her to helm him.

"I crown you with my gratitude, Messire Richard."

Skelton felt the dusk like a sweet vapour about him, heavy with the scent of apple blossom.

He went to feed and water his horse, while Nicolette brought torches into the hall, lit them, and set them in the brackets. She saw that the dead man had gone from the porch, and blessed Skelton in her heart.

Night fell. Skelton sought to persuade her to go into the upper room and sleep.

"I can keep guard here," he said.

But she would not be persuaded.

"I could not sleep; and after all the horror of loneliness, it is good to look into the face of a friend."

"Then let us tarry here and talk. If you should fall asleep in your chair, Nicolette, I shall watch over you, and I shall wake you at dawn."

Her eyes questioned his.

"Tell me all that is in your thoughts."

He began to tell her of his journey to France, why he went thither, and whence he came. Very gently he brought the morrow before her, with its needs, perils, and importunities. Her face showed a vague unrest, but her eyes met his without fear.

"Messire Richard, I trust you, for who else is there for me to trust? I will do all that you desire, though, to tell the tale before strangers, to have it tossed abroad——"

"Nicolette, let not that shame you. The shame shall lie elsewhere. Tell me the truth. This false lord of yours—your heart will not weaken out of pity?"

He saw her face stiffen.

"He is horrible to me. Ah, if you knew!"

bloom from the orchard trees; the torches burnt steadily in the brackets. The vast hush of the forest shut the place in as with a great black cliff.

Suddenly Nicolette started in her chair.



"'It is he !"

She did not catch the gleam in Skelton's eyes.

"Then let God judge him," he said.

The night was wonderfully still. No wind stirred to rattle the lattices or blow the

She sat rigid, listening, her eyes on Skelton's face.

He saw her lips move.

"Listen !"

A faint sound came out of the night, a

splashing sound, as though someone were swimming the mere. Skelton had laid his sword and shield on the table. He drew them towards him.

Nicolette's hand pointed.

"The door!"

It stood half open, with the oak bar leaning against the wall.

"Quick—let us bar the door !"

"Let the door bide as it is. Take courage, Nicolette ! Listen !"

The splashing had ceased, and out of the stillness of the night came the sound of rapid and heavy breathing. The pupils of Nicolette's eyes dilated, and her lips moved as though she were praying. Skelton put himself between her and the door.

Soft, paddling footsteps crossed the courtyard. The two in the hall waited, wondering what the torchlight would reveal. Skelton's eyes were set steadily towards the door. He drew his breath through twitching nostrils.

"Ah!"

Then they saw the thing that had padded across the courtyard—a huge, tawny-coloured mastiff with a spiked collar about his throat. Water was dripping from the beast's body, and his eyes shone blood - red in the torchlight.

The dog turned, blinked, and then shot forward like a stone from a mangonel. It uttered no sound, but leapt at Skelton and took the sword's point in its throat.

Skelton slew the dog as it struggled to rise. Nicolette had covered her face with her hands. She remained cowering till she heard the sound of Skelton's voice.

"Heaven be thanked that I missed the right road to-day!" he said. "There are those who sent the dog to be reckoned with across the water."

He glanced at the torches, kindled two fresh ones and thrust them into the brackets before he went to the door and peered through the gap by the hinges. A full moon had just topped the forest, and its light lit the whole courtyard, save where the palisade threw a deep black shadow.

Skelton held his breath and listened. A faint, creaking sound came to his ears, and the swish of a rope striking the water.

"Thunder! Someone has swum across and unfastened the barge!"

A black figure darted into the moonlit courtyard, stood motionless a moment, and then began to steal towards the porch. Skelton saw that it came alone. He drew back behind the helf-closed door, standing close to the wall.

Footsteps shuffled at the porch. He could hear the man breathing close to the doorhinges. An eye would be peeping there— Skelton guessed that much—but he knew that whoever spied there could not see the figure in armour set like a pillar against the wall. Skelton's sword-arm stiffened. He never moved his eyes from the edge of the door.

The door moved very slightly, then something red appeared at the edge thereof the fringe of a man's hair. A face followed it, a long, lean, crooked-nosed face straining forward at the end of a leathery neck. Then eyes looked towards Nicolette, seated in the chair on the dais. They were narrow eyes, set close together under oblique eyebrows.

Then Skelton struck. He had a moment's glimpse of the narrow eyes darting round at him and dilating with fear. The sword fell before the man could dodge. He sprawled face downwards, shooting out his hands at the ends of the green sleeves of a closefitting jupon.

Skelton wasted no pity, and, dragging the body inside the hall, left it behind the door. Then he put an eye to the hinge-crack and waited. He could hear the plash of ripples against the landing-stage, and the noise of the ferry rope running through the pulleyblock. The prow of the barge ground against the stage.

Skelton stood ready to close and bar the door should the odds promise to be too heavy. He watched the gateway in the palisade. A solitary figure came into view, and, by the way the moonlight glinted upon it, Skelton knew that the man came armed. A silver streak betrayed the naked sword that he carried upon his shoulder.

The figure remained poised for an instant between the black barriers of the palisade. Presently it moved forward into the courtyard, turning its head this way and that, and showing a snout-visored basinet that gave it the look of some grotesque beast. No other figure followed it, and Skelton's grim mouth twitched out a smile.

He turned, strode up the hall, and took his shield from the table. Nicolette's dark eyes gazed at him in mute appeal.

"Bide there," he said to her in a low voice, "and leave us room to quarrel."

He dropped the point of his sword to the floor and rested his hands on the pommel.

They heard footsteps enter the porch. The door was thrust open, and a knight in polished harness, with a red surcoat turned up over his sword-belt, stood in the dark entry. Behind the black holes in the snout-like visor were eyes, but they were invisible to Richard Skelton and Nicolette. For fully half a minute the figure remained motionless in the torchlight, as though the man within the steel shell were astonished at what he saw. The red-haired servant in the green jupon lay dead behind the door, the mastiff under the table. Nicolette, with chin tilted, stared wide-eyed down the hall. Skelton, grim and inscrutable, stood beside her, leaning on his sword.

The man in the red surcoat moved at last. He advanced up the hall and, raising his sword, pointed towards the door.

Skelton threw up his head and laughed.

"God's mercy, sir, if I stand in your way, the saints be thanked for it !"

"Out, out !"

"The dog and the servant go before their lord."

A sob of wrath came from the closed helmet. He of the red surcoat rushed suddenly upon Skelton, heaving up his sword. Skelton sprang forward so as to smother the blow. The two steel-clad bodies met with a crash.

Skelton's sinews proved the stiffer, and the man in red went back. He brought up with a jerk against the heavy table, and saved himself, only to find Skelton's sword rattling about his head. The blade glided off the basinet to the left shoulder, cut the linked mail between the shoulder-plates, and drew blood.

The red knight was a big man and no lap-dog. He dropped his shield, and, putting both hands to his sword, he fell upon Skelton like a labourer flailing corn. The blows came with a savage clatter, but they were rash, tempestuous blows that a cool fighter could put aside. Skelton gave back, guarding himself and watching his man.

Then the red knight showed his colour. He swerved aside and made a rush towards the dais, where Nicolette sat very white and still. The great sword flew up. Her brown eyes watched it as though bewitched.

Skelton shouted, as he leapt after the man in red—

"Down, down! Throw yourself down!" His cry broke the spell. She threw herself forward under the very blade of the sweeping sword. The sword struck the back of the oak chair and jammed in the tough wood.

The red knight wrenched it free, but Skelton was on him with eyes of fire. His wrath whistled with the sweep of his sword. A blow on the gorget wrenched the plates apart. A second blow went home even more grimly. The red knight blundered back and struck the wall close to one of the torch brackets.

He recovered himself, snatched the torch, and rushed blindly at Skelton, trying to thrust the flames into Skelton's face. Skelton struck the arm down and, making a point of his sword, aimed for the broken gorget. The point went home. For a moment the red knight hung like a doll on a wire, and then fell backwards with an upjerking of the arms.

Skelton trod out the torch and stood over him, but the red knight did not move. A red stream poured out over the broken plates of the gorget.

Nicolette had risen, her black hair clouding about her eyes. Skelton glanced at her, and, bending over the fallen man, cut the helmet laces with his dagger. The steel shell fell away, showing the turgid, fleshy face of a man of strong passions and coarse desires.

Skelton heard Nicolette utter a strange cry. She was at his elbow, staring at the dead man.

"It is he!"

She gripped Skelton's sword-arm with her two hands and looked at the face of the man—her husband—who had plotted to bring her death.

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The sun was still tangled among the treetops when Richard Skelton and Nicolette took leave of the secret orchard. The light of the dawn streamed over the forest, slashing the dark water of the mere with swords of gold. A thin white mist still shimmered about the island, and the fruit trees looked dim and grey.

Utter weariness had given Nicolette sleep, but a horror of the place lived in her eyes as she looked back across the water. Death and dishonour remained there, and she dreaded the hard, cold eyes of the world.

Skelton had crossed before it was light to discover whether the Lord of Mount Badon had left men hidden in the woods. He had found two horses tethered to a tree, and had unfastened the beasts and turned them loose into the forest. Now he was cutting the ferry rope and sending the barge adrift on the water.

He came, and saw Nicolette's frightened eyes.

"Look not back at life," he said. "Come, little sister, courage !"

She held out her hands to him.

"Ah, Messire Richard, if there were no men to ask questions, to gape at me and say: 'Why this? Why that?' My heart is weak in me. I cannot bear it!"

Skelton took her hands.

"Nicolette," he said, "would you be at the mercy of that yellow-headed woman's tongue? No, by my honour, you must suffer this, for my sake, child, as well as for your own. The truth must be told."

She looked at him and burst into tears.

"Do with me as you desire. I have none to trust but you."

Gaillard carried them both that morning, and the good saints were kind to them in the forest. At the three thorns, where the dead man still sat at the foot of the cross, they fell in with a forester who knew all the ways.

"Good friend, is Sir Thomas of Broomhanger still Sheriff?"

"He is, lording, and may Mother Mary give him a long life."

"Show me the road to Broomhanger."

"Follow your left hand, lording, and two leagues will take you there."

Sir Thomas and Richard Skelton had fought together in the French wars, and the Sheriff was a shrewd man and straight as a sword.

"Tarry here three days," he said, "and we will have the truth stored in the noddles of our inquest men. They will be brisk for love of me. Geoffrey of Mount Badon? Pah, a bullying, profligate devil! And that black-eyed child, too! Had the man no pity?"

They looked at Nicolette, eating sweetmeats in the window-seat, with Dame Isabelle to comfort her.

"Spare the child where you can, old comrade."

"Trust me, Dick. In a week you shall be in France."

Thomas of Broomhanger was as good as his word.

The fruit blossom had fallen in the orchards of St. Gilles when Nicolette walked once more in her father's garden, and saw the white pigeons crowding the red roof of the great dove-cot. Aspens shivered against a sky of blue, and the broad meadows about the chateau were covered with cloth of gold.

A month had passed, and Nicolette had the look of one who waited. She sat often at a turret window, gazing along the white road that ran between the aspen trees.

"He will come again," she said to herself ----"yes, he will come."

A wet sunset in June brought Richard Skelton to St. Gilles. Faces peeped out of the chateau windows at him; good folk had conspired.

"If Messire Skelton would walk in the garden, the Sire de St. Gilles may be found there."

Skelton went, and found Nicolette walking amid the rose bushes and the beds of lavender and thyme. The sky had broken in the west, and the wet world smoked like a sweet sacrifice.

Her startled face caught the sunset glow.

"Messire Richard !"

"Nicolette, I have ridden seven leagues to-day."

"Through the rain?"

"Ah, and I am discontented—angry with this fair place. No man may carry you away from St. Gilles."

She looked at him with shy brown eyes that glimmered.

"Some men are so strong," she said.

"So strong?"

"That it is useless for a woman to say them nay."

He caught her and held her fast.

"My desire, I am stronger than death !" She put up her mouth to be kissed.



MUSIC READING AT SIGHT METHODS FROM A SCIENTIFIC STANDPOINT

By G. R. FANSHAWE



HEN the history of the opening years of the twentieth century comes to be written, stress will be laid upon the multiplication of facilities for rapid development along educational lines. The pace of

progress has been speeded up; the pitfalls that were to be found strewn so liberally along the road to Parnassus have been filled It may be admitted at once that there in. was ample room for an improvement in old methods. Discovery and invention have multiplied the claims upon life, with the result that the value of time has risen as rapidly as the cost of living. If we can accomplish in one year the task that cost our parents two, we are adding to the wealth of nations. The pressure of life is felt most in the world of business, with the result that the spare time to be given to study, when school-days are over, has been greatly curtailed. Happily, since new methods are superseding old ones, it is possible to turn a little leisure to a great advantage.

Among the great aids to a happy life, music takes a high place, and it must be admitted that no art is approached by a worse made road. In the case of the pianoforte, for example, the keyboard was settled more than five hundred years ago, except that its compass has been greatly extended. while the system of tuning was definitely fixed in the time of J. S. Bach. Yet musical theory still continues to turn the seven alphabetical notes of the scale into thirty-five with the aid of sharps, double sharps, flats, and double flats, while harmony, ignoring the twelve actual sounds that a piano can produce---the thirteenth note that completes one octave begins another, and can therefore be left out—bases itself upon the thirty-five imaginary sounds. Granting that a knowledge of harmony and tonal relationship helps us to understand great music, it is of

secondary importance to the vast majority of those who devote long years to the study of pianoforte playing. What is needed for the spread of musical interest is the ability to read readily at sight, and to face the modern writer, who uses extreme keys as though the difficulties in which he takes delight had no existence. Dr. Somervell, Chief Inspector of Music to the Board of Education, has expressed himself very strongly on the subject of sight-reading. Speaking of the musical education of girls in secondary schools, he condemns the present system very thoroughly when he says that after ten years' work, varying from half an hour to an hour a day, the student can be expected to play at sight only hymn tunes, easy accompaniments, and dance music. Those who have left student days behind may be even in a worse plight.

Sir Frederick Bridge has told the Incorporated Society of Musicians that sightreading is a weak point in our musical education, and that the inability to read music at sight is deplorable and general. He saw the difficulty, but had no remedy to offer.

This frank confession of the ordinary method's failure has one special value; it opens the door to new ideas, it declares in so many words that the system of music teaching at present in vogue is tiresome in its incidents and unsatisfactory in result. We may grant that it serves fairly well for the few who bring a natural aptitude to their study of the art, who would be expert players or complete masters of theory if the technical and mental difficulties could be made even greater than they are. But these fortunate ones constitute a very small minority, so small, in fact, that they hardly call for consideration when we consider the hundreds of thousands who would be extending the empire of music in this country if the necessary drudgery could be reduced to reasonable proportions. At present many people are compelled to stifle their inclinations, and, after spending a certain amount of money and time upon study, to lay music aside, as a recreation and a delight incompatible

with the service that the chief labour of their life demands. There is hardly one of us who does not number among friends and acquaintances people who have made a plucky but unsuccessful effort to keep on terms with music, and are now compelled to listen to others because they feel they can never hope to listen to themselves.

Yet, for music to exert its best influence upon our lives, we must be music-makers as well as units in the audience that listens to the master-player and the masterpiece. If cricket, tennis, golf, rowing, and other sports were left to the expert few, and the man and woman who could not excel might do no more than look on, the whole physique of the nation would be the poorer. Similarly in music, the mentality of the nation suffers because the vast majority must depend upon the efforts of others, not because there is any great difficulty inherent in performance. but because our complicated system of notation and the obsolete methods of our forefathers combine to check our progress.

What music wants is a competent iconoclast who believes that, in all the pursuits of life, the substance is more desirable than the shadow, who is content to brave the anger of the ultra-conservative theorist, who believes that, if he can, bring the blessing of music into thousands of homes to which at present it cannot gain admittance, he is justified in breaking down the old barriers. that do not remain standing by reason of their utility, but on account of their age. Round these barriers, in the case of music, there are great vested interests, ever a stumbling-block to progress, and they, too, must be cleared away. Even the men who have managed to climb over the barriers and have paid lifelong tribute to the interests mentioned, realise that in many cases they have given too much of the irrecoverable wealth of time, and those who have done best by reason of some special mental equipment recognise that they are greatly favoured, and that for the rank and file the difficulties must be well-nigh insurmountable.

Happily this, being an age of progress, has its iconoclasts in every walk of life, and there is in London to-day a man who has seen the complicated absurdities of our musical teaching, and has not feared to reduce them to terms of simplicity. Mr. Walter H. Thelwall, author of a "Note for Note" system of music writing that sweeps away into the limbo of unnecessary thinge sharps, double sharps, flats, double flats, and varying clefs, has turned his attention to the great problem of sight-reading with excellent success. He has devised a method that will not only bring hope to thousands of struggling students, but will enable countless parents to feel that the money they have laid out with such touching faith upon the musical equipment of their children has not been spent in vain. This is what Mr. Thelwall claims, and his claim is substantiated by many pupils in various parts of the world, men and women of all ages and of varying degrees of proficiency as performers, and by some of London's leading authorities, that, under his system, the ten years that give moderate results in sight-reading are reduced to less than half a year, with results that are very much better. It is the ripe work of years of experiment, a theory founded upon practical common-sense. He has divested of their terrors the cumbersome trappings that the slow-going centuries immediately our own had heaped upon preceding music.

It is advisable to enlarge upon this statement in order to justify its large scope. The word "notation" is used in music to represent the weird combination of staves, clefs, leger lines, naturals, sharps, flats, double sharps, double flats, key signatures, rests, etc., etc., which appear in printed music, and its primary function—for the sightplayer—is to indicate what notes or the keyboard are to be struck, at what relative times, how long they are to be kept down, and with what force, rhythm, and expression they are to be played.

Leaving out the stave, all these symbols are the survival of a dim and complex past, and could be removed with little loss, if any, to the present century.

Let us examine the notes on the keyboard that have to be struck in accordance with the signs that appear in the notation. The keyboard consists of a series of octaves all exactly alike, but if asked the question how many notes are there in an octave, numbers of players will answer, without the slightest hesitation, "eight," apparently quite ignoring the black notes, as if they were of no consequence at all. But are there eight white notes in an octave? Only by counting as one of the notes of one octave the note that begins another. The fact is that in a single octave there are seven white and five black notes in all. Why are the notes divided into white and black? Because, when the keyboard was first invented, only the white notes were used, and when musicians required more sounds, a very ingenious method of inserting them between some of the white notes was devised. It is not necessary here to go into the question of what the actual sounds then used were, or what were their mutual relations : we are dealing with the music of the present day, and the facts in regard to this are that the octave is divided into twelve sounds, all of equal value and importance, each separated from its neighbour, whether this next note is black or white, by the same interval of sound. There is no difference in value between the black notes and the white. The arrangement of the keyboard gives a very wrong impression as to the nature of the sounds used ; it suggests that the white

the same way in each octave, they are all written in different ways in every octave.

Let us just take one note as an example. Turn to the lowest note on the keyboard, which is A. It is written as the seventh space below the bass stave, and if the ordinary player were to come across the seventh space below the bass stave by itself, *i.e.*, unaccompanied by the octave above it, he would not have the slightest idea what note he was expected to play, *because he has not been* properly taught. The A above this is written as the third line below the bass, the octave above as the first space in the bass, the next as the second space in the treble, the next as the



ONE OF MR. YORK BOWEN'S STUDIES COMPOSED FOR THE THELWALL SYSTEM.

are the principal notes, and the black in some way subsidiary to them. There is, however, one very strong point in favour of the keyboard, namely, that, from a mechanical point of view, it is the most convenient arrangement that has yet been devised for the performer. In no other way can the performer manipulate the twelve notes of the octave so conveniently.

We have now arrived at the root of all the difficulties of reading, namely, that the twelve sounds of the octave are called by thirty or forty different names and written in seventy or eighty different ways. There is the still further complication that the keyboard's division into series of precisely similar octaves is ignored in the notation, and instead of each note being written in first line above the treble, the next as the fifth space above the treble, and finally the A that is the highest note on most pianos in the same way as the previous note, but with an octave sign over it. Again, in every octave the note A appears in many different forms, according to the various key signatures and the "accidentals" that are so plentifully sprinkled over the pages of modern music.

The twelve notes of the seven octaves are therefore written in five or six hundred different ways, all of which have to be recognised instantaneously by the reader, who gets practically no guidance through all this maze of signs. Not only does he lack trustworthy direction, but he is taught to divert his attention from finding on the keyboard the notes represented in this way in the notation, to questions in regard to the construction of chords, changes of kev. These, however useful and other matters. they may be as a part of technical musical education, simply make the task of finding the right notes more difficult, unless, indeed. the player's musical education has been carried to greater lengths than that of most people.

It may be well to explain how it was that Mr. Thelwall set to work to solve the problem, and the way in which he did it; and in order to appreciate his point of view, a note or two as to his life, his occupations and surroundings, may be useful. Born and brought up in London, an Englishman with a very little French blood in his veins on his mother's side, he was educated in the capital, and in due time adopted the profession of civil engineering. For many years he has been a Member of the Institute of Civil Engineers, carrying out works in England, Eastern Europe, India, Brazil, and other parts of the world. He married a daughter of the Rev. S. Farman, the marriage taking place from Layer Marney Tower, a remarkably fine specimen of Tudor architecture at that time belonging to The connection between the family. civil engineering and music may not at first sight be obvious, but the two have always run together in Mr. Thelwall's life, a great many of his spare hours having been given to music, and particularly to its scientific side. Some time ago he took up the scientific side more definitely, and discovered that, alone among the sciences, music, instead of being founded on a careful investigation of the facts, is based on fictions. The very first question which Mr. Thelwall, who had spent long years in the design and construction of railways, bridges, and other engineering works, asked himself was: "What is the nature of the various sounds used in

music, and what are their mutual relations?" Naturally he turned to standard books on the subject, and there he found certain statements on these points which were generally accepted; but when he came to examine these statements and make the necessary calculations for himself, he found a wide discrepancy between the assumptions of the acousticians and the facts of music.

The difference between the facts and assumptions cannot be gone into here. The sounds assumed in the acoustical theory are even more complicated than the signs in the notation, while the actual fact that the music of the present day is based on sounds produced by the piano is ignored.

On first arriving at this conclusion, the idea that passed through Mr. Thelwall's mind was, if he were to build a bridge on principles no more reliable than these, the bridge would

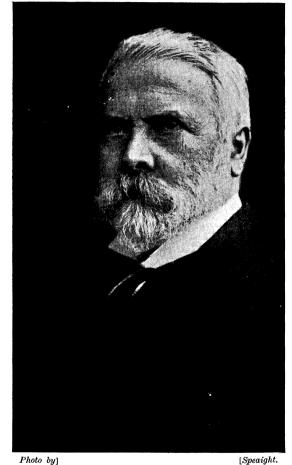


Photo by]

MR. WALTER H. THELWALL.

fall down, or, at any rate, it would not carry the number of passengers it was intended to This is very much the case in regard carry. to music. Neither the science of musical acoustics nor the theory of musical notationthey are quite different, but assumed to be the same-will carry the passengers who want to travel along the road; numbers are left behind.

Mr. Thelwall then set to work to find out what the facts really are, and took great pains to verify them, examining books and music,

and consulting musicians, and, having satisfied himself, he proceeded to develop a new theory, one of the first practical results of which was the working out of the "Note for Note" system of music before referred to. Later he saw in the newspapers a report of Sir Frederick Bridge's statement about the comparative failure of teaching sight-reading, and determined to set to work and try to solve that problem also, with results that have proved perfectly satisfactory.

Among the musicians who have expressed their entire approval of the scheme are Dr. Borland, who was the first thoroughly to investigate it—and whose opinion was given on theoretical grounds before a single pupil had gone through the system—Sir Frederick Bridge, who expressed himself as perfectly satisfied with Dr. Borland's report, Mr. Landon Ronald, the eminent conductor, composer, and teacher, and Mr. Arthur O'Leary, F.R.A.M., one of the oldest professors at the Royal Academy of Music.

The value and the need for Mr. Thelwall's rapid system of sight-reading which he teaches from his studio in New Bond Street, London, by correspondence all over the world, is shown by the fact that the piano has spread from the upper and middle-class establishment to the workman's house. It was stated recently that, in the manufacturing districts of Lancashire, there is a piano in every house with rental of three shillings and sixpence a week and over.

A large measure of simplification in the existing methods of teaching should make competent players as common as pianos, and should multiply many times the number of those who are enabled to play the piano. We have now, in fact, a quite new condition in regard to music. The great barrier of notational difficulties, which has hitherto been the stumbling-block of almost every player, has not, indeed, disappeared, but a simple and easy method of surmounting it has been discovered. This has long passed the experimental stage, and has been tested and approved by hundreds of players. The way is open by which pianists of all degrees of efficiency as performers can derive the maximum of pleasure from their technical ability.



- THE SECRET
- DREAM in essences of rose, Of lavender and musk,
- I flit, 'mid clouds of heliotrope, The scented hour of dusk.
- I am the shadow of the pines, The murmur of the breeze,
- The rush of little furry folk That run among the trees.
- I am the mossy path that winds To nowhere in the world,
- I am the little faery life In newborn blossoms curled.

- I am the lisp of wandering streams That slumber to the sea,
- I pass, and yet for aye remain In deep tranquillity.
- I am the sweep of great white doves Above the windy lawn,
- I fill the promise of the day, I am the pearl of dawn.
- I am the golden, dancing feet Of sunlight after rain,
- I am the thought that sings of you Till you shall come again.

HENRY SIMPSON.

PEARLS OF PRICE

By FRED M. WHITE,

Author of "The Corner House," "The Slave of Silence," etc.

Illustrated by W. R. Stott



ALTBURN scooped the beaded sweat from his forehead and flicked it from his fingers as it had been something noisome.

"I'd give," he muttered — "Heavens, what would I not give

for a tub of sweet, wholesome, hot water and a piece of yellow soap? Ralph, I stink —we both of us stink! The effluvia has got into the pores of my skin. I am loathsome and repulsive to myself, and my mind's getting as vile as my body!"

Ralph Scarsdale sat up like a startled rabbit in a field of corn.

"Now, that's dashed odd !" he gurgled. "I've been sitting here for the last hour, sweltering in my own juice, and thinking exactly the same thing. It's queer, Ted, my boy, very queer. I suppose this infernal country is getting on our nerves. Were we not the best of friends?"

"Pals for years," Saltburn said, as if making a confession he was ashamed of— "school and college. Made fools of ourselves together, lost our money together, and came out here together. Three years ago? Three centuries!"

"Ever feel at times as if you hated me?"

"Yes, you and myself and all creatures, black and white. It's the fever of the place, my son. It's in the air that rises from this dismal swamp. You can produce the same effect by drink, if you take enough of it. You hardly call a man a murderer who kills his best friend during an attack of delirium tremens. Yet, if I put your light out here, and a slaver-hunting gunboat happened along at the time, I should swing for it. And yet it's just the same thing. Hartley warned me of it before we came out. He said it was a disease you catch, the same as Yellow Jack. Boil it down to the formula of the medical dictionary, and it's homicidal mania."

Now, this was a strange conversation for two bosom friends to be having in the dead of night on the beach at the mouth of the Paragatta River. It was the first time for months that either of them had given to the other an insight into his mind. For months they had been growing more moody and silent. They had little tiffs—whole days when neither spoke. And Saltburn was drinking too much whisky, Scarsdale thought. And Saltburn *knew* that Scarsdale was overdoing it, otherwise why was it necessary to open one of the case bottles so frequently ?

They had drifted here, broke to the world, glad to look after copra for old Hans Breitelmann, the fat and prosperous old Dutchman down at Dagos. And they had stayed because they had heard the story of the Redpath Pearls. The Redpath Pearls were there hidden in the swamp, all right. It was no fairy tale; Joshua, the Papuan servant, had seen them once. It was Josh who kept them going, who stimulated curiosity and, be it said, greed. For the sake of their bodies, to say nothing of their souls, they should have turned their backs upon this hideous swamp, and they knew it. But, if they could find the pearls, they were made men. The pearls were in little wicker baskets attached to a float in the middle of the swamp. These Redpath had hidden there before the Papuans murdered him, and they were there till this day. But it was impossible to fish or boat or work an oar in that oily blue-and-gold scum, which the tide hardly touched. Josh had a legend to the effect that, at certain spring-tides, the swamp was passably dry, and, given a northeast gale of sorts, the tide was held back, sometimes for a day or two, and then under the sun the mud caked hard, and one could cross the lagoon dry-shod. He had seen this more than once himself, but not since

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Redpath had hidden the pearls there. Tf the excellent gentlemen would only wait-And they had waited, but they were looking into the bloodshot eyes of stark tragedy. The heat, the loneliness, the desolation of it, had long since frayed their nerves. They had come to the point now when they no longer talked, but merely muttered. It was weeks since eye had looked into eye, and times when a smile might have suggested insanity. There was a mark on the side of Scarsdale's neck-a red mark-and Saltburn wondered how it would look with a razor-slash across And Scarsdale's sister's letter was in his it. pocket, and her photo in a case next his heart.

Josh, the Papuan, was squatting somewhere near in the reeking darkness, watching. Nothing disturbed his serenity; he was troubled by no scruples or frayed nerves. He was just eleven stone ten of original sin -as all Papuans are-without heart or conscience or bowels of compassion. He was a loathsome thing, born of the meanness and rottenness of corruption, a human upas tree, a hawk to be shot at sight. He would have murdered his employers long ago had it been worth his while to do so. He had argued the matter out philosophically a good many But they had no money or articles times. of value, and their premature demise would have meant the cutting off of Josh's whisky. He was prepared to crucify creation for a bottle of "square-face." Still, this taking off of the white men would only have meant one colossal spree, followed by a total abstinence, perhaps, for years. It was far better to get just comfortably drunk every night, and this inevitably was the reason why Scarsdale and Saltburn suspected each other of overdoing it.

And now there had come along a temptation that shook the philosophy of the Papuan to its foundations. Eight, nine, ten cases of whisky had arrived by the last copra boat from Dagos, awaiting Breitelmann's orders. And Josh's strong point was not arithmetic. He figured out that here was enough whisky to carry on a fine, interminable, whole-souled jamboree to the confines of time. He pictured They would himself alone with these cases. have to be smuggled away and safely hidden, of course. One by one the bottles would have to be stolen, and their places taken by empty bottles filled with water. If he was caught at the game, he would be shot on sight, but the prize was worth all the risks. Therefore it resolved itself purely into a matter of time.

If the Englishmen stayed, it was all right.

If they resolved to chuck the whole thing, then it would be wrong. If they went, they would send up to Paterson's station for help to clear the stores, and then the glorious opportunity would be lost for ever. And they were talking about going at that very Scarsdale and Saltburn had seen minute. the red light-they had not been in this accursed country three years for nothing. They had seen a new-comer shot and nearly killed merely for telling a funny story and laughing at it afterwards. Some spring had been touched, and the two friends were nearer together than they had been for And Josh's sharp ears took in months. every word of it.

He came towards the crazy hut and kicked the fire together with a heel as hard as ebony. The fire was a mascot, and kept *some* of the mosquitoes off. In an attitude of fine humility Josh waited for orders.

"Ain't any," Scarsdale said curtly. "Be off, ye scoundrel !"

"Big spring-tide, morning," Josh grinned amusedly. "Un biggest spring-tide since three more years. Wind am gone northeast."

Surely enough, the hot north-east wind was reeking with rottenness and corruption, and blasting like a furnace at the door of the hut. The man who takes the future in his hands, and is prepared to back it against the forces of a continent, is ever a gambler, and Scarsdale's nostrils twitched. A red spark gleamed in Saltburn's eyes. If what Josh told them was true—

Half an hour ago they had practically made up their minds to leave the place. The resolution was wiped off their mental tablets as by a sponge. Simultaneously the same thought leapt to each mind. They had been here three years, hungering, thirsting for these pearls. They had been pushed to the verge of insanity for the sake of them. And if success came now, it meant everything. It meant fortune, and comfort, and clothes, and hot baths, golf, shooting, hunting, fishing, and, for one of them-Saltburnthe kisses of Mary Scarsdale on his lips. And, curiously enough, he could not at the moment think of her as Scarsdale's sister. There was no cohesion in the world just then; everything was resolving itself into original atoms.

Who was that chap sitting on the other side of the fire? For the life of him, Saltburn could not put a name to the other. It was merely a man — a superfluous, unnecessary man, who was probably after the pearls also. In other words, an enemy to be watched. If the pearls were to be found, Saltburn was going to have them. Why should he trouble about the other fellow? Oh, the poison was rank and strident in the air to-night !

And Scarsdale was following Josh with a hard, vulpine curiosity.

"Very big ebb," the rascal went on cheerfully, "an' much sun to-morrow. Lagoon be dry by nightfall. Perhaps dry for three—four days, if wind can hold on. An' pearls—dem hidden in lagoon."

Josh passed on to his own quarters, his teeth showing in an evil grin. He knew exactly what the two men were suffering from-he had seen the disease often before. He had seen battle and murder and sudden death spring from it. Generally it took the more prosaic form of drink, followed by the purple patches of delirium tremens; but Scarsdale and Saltburn had successfully avoided that, though they suspected one another-to Josh's material advantage. He had been racking his brains for a way of keeping the two on the soil a little longer, and, just as mental resource had failed him, the wind had changed. He had always prophesied that, sooner or later, the wind and tide would conspire, and the sea would give up its dead, so to speak. But he had never really counted on it. He would not have dared to touch the pearls himself, for they were haunted. With his dying breath Redpath had laid a spell on them. The hand of the Papuan that touched the shining discs would wither at the wrist and rot, because Redpath had said so, and he was a man of his word. Josh did not care a red cent for the pearls, but he was very keen and very desperately in earnest so far as concerned the cases of whisky. Therefore the change in the wind had come just in the nick of time. He would have three or four days more, at any rate, for he had seen at a glance that the men did not mean to go before they had had a shot at the pearls. In the ordinary course of things, they would have discussed Josh's news. A few months ago they would have caught at it eagerly.

As a matter of fact, they turned into their respective bunks with never a word passing between them. The hut simmered in the heat. There was a deadly silence save for the sharp ping of the mosquitoes. It might have been taken for granted that the two men were fast asleep. As a matter of fact, each lay in his bunk looking into the darkness with hard, restless eyes. "I shall never sleep again," Scarsdale was telling himself. "And yet there was a time when—— How many centuries ago was that? No such thing as sleep in this accursed continent. If I could get away from it! Only let me finger the pearls! They are as much my property as anybody else's, and I do not see why I should share them with anybody. Heavens, if I could only sleep!"

He dropped into a kind of soddened doze presently, yet half conscious of himself all the time. He tossed and muttered uneasily.

"I'll get 'em," Saltburn was telling the darkness. "See if I don't! Why should I share them with anybody? I spoke to Josh first. Funny thing! I'd a queer notion in my head that I'd got a partner in the business. But the other man who was here to-night is no partner of mine. Bound to be civil to the chap. But when he comes talking of shares— And Scarsdale's drinking too much whisky! Why should I worry about that? And who is Scarsdale? And where have I heard the name before? Sleep, you fool, *sleep*!"

He grabbed at himself with a certain despairing rage. But he, too, dropped off presently into the same strange, half-alert semi-unconsciousness till the dawn came and the sickly, languid day rose from the sea of oil and ooze. Scarsdale had disappeared, but Saltburn thought nothing of that; he had actually forgotten the very existence of his friend. There was a little more sign of dampness in the wind to-day; then came the blessed consciousness of something to be done. If the wind held good, he would have the pearls or perish in the attempt. And the wind did hold good. The orangeyellow mist faded away, and the sun beat fiercely over the mud of the lagoon, while the reek of a thousand acrid poisons filled the air. The sluggard tide was creeping in from the sea again, but it did not reach the lagoon, for the fierce level beat of the north-east wind kept it back. Saltburn grinned as he saw the hard, dry mud caking on the surface. He asked himself no questions as to Scarsdale. It never seemed to occur to him to wonder where the lake had gone to. When the fiery orange sun began to dip, he would go out to search. And when these pearls were his, ah, then-

The great copper sun was beginning to slide over the shoulder of the mango groves before Saltburn set out on his journey. He had the air and manner of a man who walks in his sleep. His red-rimmed eyes were hard and vacant; his lips twitched oddly, as if they had been made of elastic. It was all one to Saltburn, as he had not tasted food since he had dragged himself from his bunk. He had touched the ground in accordance with the laws of gravity, but to him it was as if he were plunging along knee-deep in cotton-wool.

He came to the edge of the lagoon

remains of a wreck, cast up there ages ago by some great storm or intense volcanic disturbance, and there Redpath, flying headlong from his foes, had cast the pearls before he had been sucked down by the mud and suffocated by the slime and ooze and filthy corruption of it. How Redpath had contrived to get so far was a mystery.



"Josh was no longer watching two men, but two wolves fighting for each other's throats."

presently—came to the edge of the liquid ooze of amber and gold and crimson, where the tide had ebbed; but the brilliant dyes were there no longer, and the flow of the lagoon was baked to grey concrete. He crept across it like an old man. Now and then a foot would go through the crust and bring him up all standing. He knew his way by heart. Away to the left was the He had found some sort of a footing, some sort of a trail on the lagoon by accident. Another fifty yards, and he might have reached safety and the river. For the river was there, as more than one rascally slaver knew. They found salvation there sometimes, when His Majesty's gunboat *Snapper* was more than usually active.

Saltburn was on the spot at last. Down

here, under the sand somewhere, the wicker baskets containing the pearls lay. And Saltburn was groping for them like a man in a dream. He broke his way through the crust on the mud and plunged in his arms. He was black to the shoulders, as if he had been working in ink. He fought on with a sudden strength and fury; new life seemed to be tingling in his veins. Presently his right hand touched something, and he drew it to the light. It was one of the small wicker baskets, dripping and slimy. Inside was a handful of round, discoloured seeds the pearls beyond a doubt.

Saltburn burst out into a drunken, staggering, hysterical yell. Fortune and happiness, comfort, prosperity, all lay in the hollow of his trembling hands. He grasped blindly and hurriedly, and again and again with the same pure luck. One, two, three, four of the little baskets ! Hadn't somebody told him that there had only been four of the baskets altogether ?

Now, who the deuce had he got the information from? Why, Josh, of course! And where was Josh? Confound him !

Josh was not far off. He was standing on the edge of the lagoon, showing his greatwhite teeth in an expansive smile. He was waiting for Scarsdale to put in an appearance. Josh was a bit of an artist in his way, with a fine eye to an effective curtain. And the air was heavy with impending tragedy. There would be murder done here, or Josh was greatly mistaken. And when these two bosom friends had choked the life out of each other, Josh would collect the whisky and report the matter, and that would be the end of it.

Scarsdale was coming now, approaching Saltburn from below the wreck. He stood for a moment contemplating Saltburn in a dull, uncomprehending way. He, too, was like a man who walks in his sleep; he had the same hard, red-rimmed eves, the same elastic twitching of the lips. Who was this mud-lark, and what was he doing with another man's pearls? It was that blackguard Saltburn. of course. Curse Saltburn ! The fellow had followed him everywhere—had been the bane of his existence. He had always hated Saltburn from the bottom of his heart-could never get rid of him. And here was the scoundrel robbing him of his fortune before his very eyes !

With a roar of rage, he dashed forward.

"Get out of it !" he croaked. "Go back to your kennel, you hound ! What do you mean by coming here and robbing me of my hard-earned money? You were a sneak and a thief even in your school-days!"

Saltburn showed his teeth in an evil grin.

"Come near me, and I'll kill you !" he said hoarsely. "Come near me, and I'll take you by the throat and choke the life out of you ! Call me a thief, eh? What do you call yourself, then? You'd take the coppers from a blind man's tin ! Keep away, or I shall do you a mischief!"

Scarsdale came on, gibbering and muttering. They were at grips, to the great delight of Josh, standing like a black sentinel on the edge of the lagoon. Ah, this he had engineered carefully and cleverly ! Why should he take the trouble to kill those two white men when they were so ready to destroy each other ? They had never done him any harm, either ; on the contrary, he had enjoyed a great many splitting headaches at their expense.

He saw the white men grip and reel and stumble ; he could hear their cries and curses, as the bark of civilisation peeled off and the raw primeval man underneath stood out in his hideousness. Josh was no longer watching two men, but two wolves fighting for each other's throats. He saw how the mud was being churned up in the struggle, he saw flakes of the crust break away like ice on a lake in the springtime. It was all very well for one man to walk circumspectly on the thin rind of dry mud, it was possible to make holes in it and be safe, but here was a different matter. The ice had given way, so to speak, and these men were in a sea of mud, with the certainty of a horrible suffocation before them. They were sinking deeper and deeper in the pernicious slime without being in the least aware of it. All this Josh saw, and a great deal more from his seat in the stalls.

But there was one thing he did not see, for it was concealed under the edge of the bank that formed the margin of the sluggish river. He did not see a boat belonging to H.M.S. Snapper, full of blue-jackets and armed marines, creeping cautiously along in search of the slave dhow that lay concealed, as the commander of the Snapper very well knew, in a creek hard by. The look-out in the stern had a keen eye and ear for sign and sound, and at the hideous din going on just over his head he stopped. It was no difficult matter to climb up the sun-dried bank and investigate. And Lieutenant Seaton understood. He had heard of this form of malarial madness before. He swept his eye round the lagoon and took in the nigger in the stalls like a flash. And Josh realised the delicacy of the situation all too late. A couple of bullets whizzed by his ear, and he stopped. A sergeant of marines beckoned to him and he went.

"Rise up, William Riley, and come along with me," the sergeant quoted. "Now, sir, what are we going to do about this?"

"Get back to the ship," Seaton directed, "and hand these two poor devils over to the doctor. Take the nigger with us as well. One of these madmen thinks that those baskets are full of pearls. Better humour them and take the baskets along. The black rascals of the creek will keep for an hour."

Scarsdale and Saltburn lay in the bottom of the boat, half suffocated, wholly exhausted, and quite oblivious to their surroundings. They were both in the heart of some hideous nightmare. Whether they came out of it or not was very largely a matter of indifference. The commander of the *Snapper* looked at his deck, then looked at the doctor, who seemed to have grasped the situation.

"Mad as hatters," the doctor muttered. "These chaps have got malarial mania, which precedes chronic insomnia and madness. Good food and sea air is the cure. We'll get these chaps bathed, and I'll put a few grains of morphia into each, and they'll sleep the clock round. When they come to themselves, they ought to be as right as rain."

"Um! Morton says that it was no delusion as to the pearls. He says they are real pearls and worth a huge fortune. I'll bet that nigger can tell a story. Seaton, send the Papuan to my cabin."

Josh made the best of it. He told the story of the Redpath pearls and how they had been found. He had a good deal to say also on the score of the slave dhows and their artful ways, all of which pleased the commander of the *Snapper* very much. But he quite forgot to say anything about the whisky, and that must remain a secret.

"I've got those chaps cleaned and in bed," the doctor explained, as the armed boat dropped away again, with Josh in the bows to act as guide. "When I soaked them out of the mud, I found an old chum of mine called Scarsdale. Oh, yes, I pumped some considerable morphia into them, and they dropped off peacefully as kids. Shouldn't be at all surprised if they slept for the next four-and-twenty hours. Anyway, we found 'em in the nick of time."

It was, as a matter of fact, the morning of the second day before Scarsdale stirred and opened his eyes. A brace of slave dhows had been destroyed and their crews shot, and the *Snapper* was in blue water again. The fine crisp breeze blowing in through the port-hole swept Scarsdale's cheek, and a pure hunger gripped him.

"Where the deuce am I?" he muttered, "And what a head I've got on me! If this is a dream, Heaven send I may go on with it!"

"Then we're dreaming together," Saltburn said from the next bunk. "We're on a gunboat, my son. Here, let's try to think it out. Where were we? And what the dickens were you and I quarrelling about?"

"The pearls!" Scarsdale cried. "We were both after the pearls. The wind had gone round to the nor'-east. Don't you remember? We must have been fighting like cats until these good chaps picked us up. I'd bet a dollar they were creeping along after slavers and spotted us. And we were trying to murder one another, old boy ! By Jove, it is coming back to me a bit at a time !"

They lay there thinking it out in silence, a strained, shamed silence, for each was holding himself as actually to blame. They were still deep in retrospect when the doctor looked into the cabin.

"Well, you chaps?" he said breezily. "Hallo, friend Scarsdale ! Haven't forgotten Monroe, eh? Because that's me. And this is the *Snapper*, and I'm her doctor. Small place the world, after all, isn't it? Oh, yes, we took you off the mud all right. We got it all out of a picturesque rascal who said his name was Josh. Friend Josh gave us the slip during a little scrap we had up the river yesterday, so he's done with. Now, don't you fellows say anything and get blaming vourselves. I have heard of your particular trouble many a time before. And, however, luck came to you just at the right time. We saved your lives and your pearls, too. One of our men, a judge of stones, says they are worth a couple of hundred thousand quid easy. A few good meals and a day in bed and the air will put you as right as right can be. We fetched your kits away, and your clothes are here. Now get up and come to breakfast."

"What's the next move?" Scarsdale asked unsteadily.

asked unsteadily. "Back home," Saltburn said, with lips that trembled. "England, home, and beauty. And jolly well stay there, as far as I'm concerned. Old boy, as far as that goes, I don't care if the last two years be never mentioned again."

"It's a bet," Scarsdale said fervently.

THE FISHER IN THE CHUTES

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS,

Author of "Hoof and Claw," "The Feet of the Furtive," "Neighbours Unknown," "Kings in Exile," "More Kindred of the Wild," etc.

Illustrated by Paul Bransom



E was plainly a duck. The most casual and uninitiated of observers would have said so at a glance. Yet not the most stupidly casual could have taken him for any ordinary duck. He was too imposing

in appearance, too gorgeous in apparel, too bold and vigilant in demeanour to be so misunderstood. Moreover, he was not in the situation or the surroundings which one is wont to associate with ducks.

In fact, after the fashion of a cormorant or a kingfisher, he was perched motionless on a big dead stub of a branch. This branch was thrust out very obligingly in just the place where this most singular of ducks would have desired it if he had been consulted in the matter. It directly overhung a transparent amber-brown chute of unbroken water in the midst of the loud turmoil of North Fork Rapids. The strange-mannered duck had no proper talons wherewith to grasp his perch, but his strong clawed webs held him steadily, none the less, as he peered downward into the clear rush of the torrent.

The duck was a handsome male of the red-breasted merganser family, and the absorbing interest of his life was fish. It was not in the quiet pools and long, deep reaches of dark water that he loved to seek his prey, but rather to snatch it from the grasp of the loud chutes and the roaring rips. Here, where the North Fork stream fell into the Ottanoonsis, was a resort exactly to his liking. And most of the fish-trout, salmon, grilse, or parr-which journeyed up and down either the Fork or the parent river chose to pass through that sluice of swift but unbroken flow immediately beneath the overhanging branch on which he perched.

For all the splendour of his plumage, the merganser was not conspicuous where he sat. All about him was a tumult of bright and broken colour, scattered in broad splashes. The rapids were foam-white, or golden ruddy, or deep, shining green-brown under the sharp and patchy sunlight, and they were sown thickly with wet black rocks, here and there glinting with purple. The merganser had a crested head of iridescent green-black, a broad collar of lustrous white, black back, black-and-white wings, white belly, sides finely pencilled in black and white, and a breast of rich chestnut red streaked with black. His feet were red, his long narrow beak, with its saw-toothed edges and sharp hooked tip, was bright red. In every line and hue he was unmistakably an aristocrat among ducks, and an arrogant one at that.

His fierce red eyes, staring down fixedly into the flowing amber of the current, marked piercingly every fish that passed up and down. Most of them were much too big, not for his appetite, but for his powers. His beak, with its keen-toothed edges, was a formidable weapon, by means of which he could doubtless have captured, disabled, and dragged to shore even a fish of a pound or so in weight. But here he was at a terrible disadvantage as compared with the owls, hawks, and eagles. He had no rending claws. Had he taken such a prize, he could not have profited by it, having no means of tearing it to pieces. He had no use for fish too big to be swallowed whole; so he was obliged to watch greedily and savagely the great salmon, the grilse, and the larger trout, as they darted through the sliding glow beneath his perch.

But suddenly, straight and swift as a diving cormorant, he shot down into the torrent and disappeared beneath the surface. A watcher directly overhead, escaping the baffling reflections, might have seen him swimming, head outstretched, mastering the tremendous rush of the stream with mighty

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strokes, fairly outspeeding the fish in their own element. Near the limit of the clear water he overtook and seized the quarry which he had marked—a trout not far from seven inches in length. The saw-toothed edges of his beak gripped it securely, and he rose with it to the surface just where the chute was breaking into a smother of trampled foam.

With a furious flapping of wings, he lifted himself almost clear of the flood, and beat along the tossed surface, dragging tail and feet for perhaps a dozen yards before he could get into full flight. Once fairly a-wing, however, he wheeled and made back hurriedly for his perch. Here he proceeded to swallow his prize head first. It was a long, difficult, choking process, for the fish was one of the stoutest he had ever attempted. But a little choking was of small consequence in view of his heroic appetite, and, after many an undignified, paroxysm, he accomplished the task. It might have seemed that a trout of this size was a fairly substantial meal. But such was his keenness that, even while the wide flukes of his engorged victim were still sticking out at the corners of his beak, his fierce red eyes were once more peering downwards into the torrent in search of fresh prey.

Just about this time, in the clear blue overhead, a green-winged teal was beating his way above the tree-tops, making for the stream with the fear of death at his heart. A mighty flier, his short muscular wings drove him through the air at a speed not much less than ninety or a hundred miles an hour. But behind him, overtaking him inexorably, came the shape that stood for doom itself in the eyes of all his tribe—the dreadful blue falcon, or duck-hawk. The teal knew that his only chance of escape from this long-winged pursuer was to reach the water, plunge beneath it, and swim for some hiding-place under the fringing weeds.

The teal's wings, throbbing with a swift, short vibration, whistled shrilly in the still air, so that a prowling wild-cat by the waterside heard the sound even above the dull roar of the rapids, and glared upward alertly. The long wings of the hawk, bent sharply at the elbows, worked more slowly, but with a nervous terrific thrust which urged him through the air like a projectile. For all its appalling speed, the sound of his flight was nothing more than a strong pulsating hiss.

Close ahead of him now the teal saw refuge—the flashing line of the rapids. But the hawk was already close upon him. In

despair he hurled himself downwards too soon. The pursuer also shot downwards and struck. But the lofty top of a waterash, just missed by the short wings of the fugitive, forced the long pinion of the hawk to swerve a little, so that he partly missed Instead of clutching the his stroke. victim's neck and holding it securely, he dealt merely a glancing blow upon the back behind the wings. It was enough, however, and the unhappy teal was hurled earthward, flapping through the tips of the branches. The great hawk followed hurriedly, to retrieve his prey from the ground.

As it chanced, however, the victim came down with a thud almost beneath the whiskered nose of the wild-cat. A pounce, and the great cat had her paw upon it, and crouched snarling up at the hawk. In a fury the hawk swooped and struck downwards. But wisdom came to him just in time, and he did not strike home. His swoop became a demonstration merely, an expression of his rage at having his prey thus snatched from his beak. With one short, shrill cry of anger, he swerved off and sailed upwards over the river. The cat growled softly, picked up the prize in her jaws and trotted into the bushes to devour it.

The spot where all this happened was perhaps a hundred yards below that dead tree upon whose out-thrust naked branch the splendid merganser drake was making his meal. In fact, he had just finished it—the last of the trout's tail had just vanished with a spasm down his strained gullet-when the baffled hawk caught sight of him and swooped. Happily for him, he on his part caught sight of the hawk, and dropped like lead into the torrent. The hawk alighted on the dead branch, and sat upright motionless, as if surprised. The change was so sudden that it almost seemed as if the duck had been metamorphosed into a hawk on the instant by the stroke of an invisible enchanter's wand.

The fisher of the chutes, meanwhile, was swimming straight down stream for the broken water. Like his unfortunate little cousin, the teal, he, too, had felt the fear of death smitten into his heart, and was heading desperately for the refuge of some dark overhanging bank, deep-fringed with weeds, where the dreadful eye of the hawk should not discern him.

The hawk sat upon the branch and watched his quarry swimming beneath the surface. At last the swimmer came to the broken water and plunged into it. Almost instantly he was forced to the top. With only head and wings above the mad smother, he flapped onward frantically, beating down the foam about him. Straightway the hawk glided from his perch and darted after him.

The drake sank again instantly. But at this point in the rapids it was impossible for him to stay down. As long as his body was completely submerged, it was at the mercy of the twisting and tortured currents, which rolled him over and over, in spite of his swimming craft. He would have been drowned, the breath battered clean out of him, in half a minute more, had he maintained the hopelessly unequal struggle. Once more he half emerged, filled his gasping lungs, and pounded onward desperately, half flying and half swimming. It was a mongrel method of progression, in which he was singularly expert.

Immediately over his outstretched gleaming head flew the hawk. But this frequenter of the heights of air, for all his savage valour, was troubled at the leaping waves and the tossing foam of these mad rapids. He did not understand them. They seemed to jump up at him, and he dare not let his sweeping wing-tips touch them, lest they should seize and drag him down. As he flew, his down-reaching, clutching talons were not half a yard above the fugitive's Where the waves for an instant sank, head. they came closer, but not quite within grasping reach. The marauder from the upper air was waiting till his quarry should reach less turbulent waters.

A few yards further on, the torrent fell seething over a long ledge into a pool of brief quiet. Immediately beyond the lip of the ledge the hawk lifted his wings high over his back and struck downward, so that his talons went deep into the water. But water was all they clutched. The wily drake had plunged with the plunge of the fall itself, and was now darting on ward at a safe depth. The hawk followed, his wing-tips now almost brushing the water.

The pool was, perhaps, a hundred yards in length. Then the combined flow of the North Fork and the Ottanoonsis broke once more into turbulence, and once more the desperate swimmer was forced to the surface. But, as before, the leaping waves of the rapids were too much for his pursuer, and he was able to flap his way onward in a cloud of foam, while doom hung low above his head, yet hesitated to strike.

The odds, however, were now laid heavily against the fugitive. The hawk, embittered

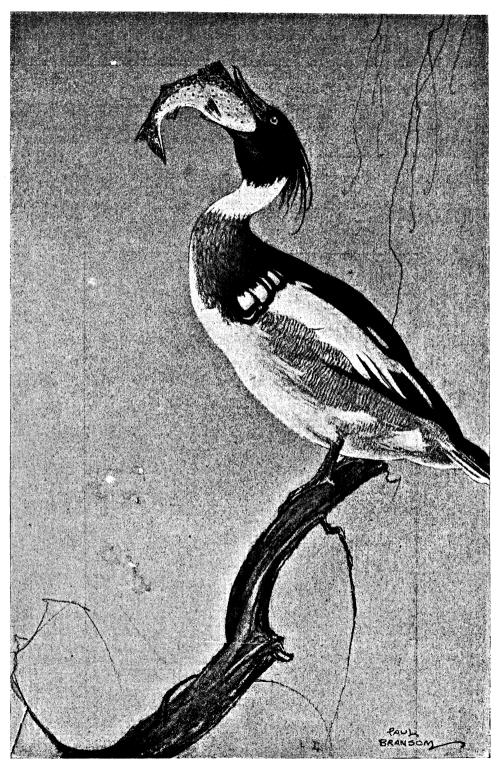
by the loss of his first quarry, had become as dogged in pursuit as a weasel, not to be shaken off or evaded or deceived. The rapids would presently come to an end. Then, in the still water, unless he should chance upon a hiding-place, the drake would soon be forced to come to the top for breath, and those throttling talons would instantly close upon his neck. But the antic forest Fates, wearied of the simple routine of the wilderness, had decreed an altogether novel intervention, and were giggling in their cloaks of ancient moss.

Beside the pool at the foot of the rapids stood a fisherman, casting for trout amid the whirling foam-clusters. He had three flies on his cast, and, because in these waters there was always the chance of hooking a grilse, he was using heavy tackle. His flies, as befitted these amber-brown, tumultuous northern streams, were large and conspicuous —a Parmachenie. Belle for the tail fly, with a Montreal and a Red Hackle for the drops.

Far across the pool, v here an eddy sucked sullenly at the froth-patches as they swung by, the fisherman had just had a heavy rise. He had struck too quickly, deceived by the swirl of the current, and missed his fish. He had a lot of line out, and the place was none too free for a long cast; but he was impatient to drop his flies again on the spot where the big fish was feeding.

Just as he made his cast, he saw the fleeing drake and the pursuing hawk come round the bend. He saw the frantic fugitive dive over the ledge and disappear. He saw the great hawk swoop savagely. He tried to check his cast, but it was too late. A remark unsuitable to the printed page exploded upon his lips, and he saw his leader settle deliberately over the long, beating wings, the tail-fly coiling about them like a whip-lash.

The last drop-fly, as luck would have it, caught just in the corner of the hawk's angrily open beak, hooking itself firmly. \mathbf{At} the sudden sharp sting of it, the great bird turned his head and noticed, for the first time, the fisherman standing on the bank. At the same moment he felt the light restraint of the almost invisible leader upon his wings, where the other two flies had affixed themselves. He shot up into the air, and heard a sharp, disconcerting rattle as the taut line raced from the reel. The drag upon his beak and the light check upon his wings were inexplicable to him, and appalling. Drake, teal, hunger, and wrath were all alike



"It was a long, difficult, choking process."

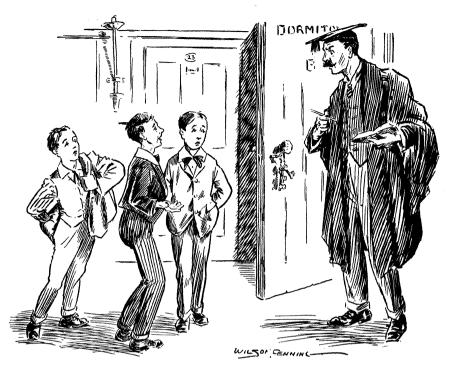
forgotten, and he beat upwards with a rush that made the reel fairly screech its indignant protest. For a moment the fisherman, bewildered, tried to play him like a salmon. Then the leader parted from the line. The fisherman reeled in the limp coils, and the worried hawk flew off with the flies.

The drake, unrealising that the dreadful chase was done, sped onward beneath the surface till he could go without breath no longer. Then he came up among some arrowweeds, lifted his head beneath the shelter of one of the broad-barbed leaves, and floated there quivering. For a good ten minutes he waited, moveless, with the patience of the wild things. Then his terror faded, appetite

once more began to invite his attention, and he took note of a minnow flickering slowly over the sun-flecked mud below him. He dived and caught it, came to the surface and swallowed it. Much refreshed, he looked about him. There was no such thing as a hawk in sight. Some way up the shore there was a man at the water's edge, fishing. The drake was suspicious of men, though he did not greatly fear them, as he and his rankfleshed tribe were not interesting to the He rose noisily into the air, hunters. made a detour over the tree-tops to avoid the fisherman, and flew back to his dead branch overhanging the amber rush of the chutes.



"YOU MUST STAY THERE!" BY ARTHUR J. ELSLEY. Reproduced by permission of Messrs. C. W. Faulkner & Co., Golden Lane, E.C., owners of the copyright and publishers of the large plate.



THE SOFT ANSWER.

MASTER ON DUTY : It's perfectly disgraceful, the number of times you three are late in the morning. I'm never late for chapel : why should you be? CHORUS : Please, sir, we had to wash !

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

THE LAST PAVING-STONE.

I've broken the lot-Those reckless, red-hot Resolutions of 1913-That I'd knock off my smoke,

That I'd rise when I woke, That for work I'd be eager and keen.

As I muse, with a groan, On the year that has flown, With its record of impotent fails, One fact I can't waive-I've been helping to pave My passage to Stygian halls.

So on Jan. 1, '14, To keep my slate clean, When Conscience rat-tats at the door, Shall I stubbornly shun Resolutions, bar one, Namely-never to make any more?

No !-- perish the thought !--

I'll do as I ought.

Though my paving-stones may be increased; And, though I may rue it, I've got to go through it,

And show I'm a "trier," at least.

J. P.

AN UNNECESSARY FUSS.

A SCOTCH minister was walking through a street in the village one misty evening, when he fell into a deep hole. There was no ladder by which he could make his escape, and he began to shout for help. A passing labourer heard his cries, and, looking down, asked who he was. The minister told him, whereupon the labourer remarked-

"Weel, weel, ye needna kick up sic a noise. You'll no be needed afore Sawbath, an' this is only Wednesday nicht."



TO KEEP IN TOUCH.

THE hotel patron had waited fully an hour

for a very slow waiter to serve two courses. "Now, my man," he said to the waiter, "can you bring me some tomato salad?"

"Yes, sir," said the waiter. "And," continued the customer, "while you're away, you might send me a picture postcard every now and then."

THERE was a sound of revelry by night, for the Bloggses were giving a party. Mr. Bloggs was singing "Tis Love That Makes the World Go Round," and Master Bloggs seized the opportunity to slip into the other room with his father's pipe.

Shortly afterwards it was apparent that Willie wasn't well.

"Goodness, child," cried his mother, "have you been smoking?"

"'Tisn't that, mother," said Willie feebly. "If it's true what dad's been singing about, I-I must be in love."



At last the top of the omnibus emptied, and there were left behind an old gentleman and a young one. The freedom, after the cramped position, induced the young man to stretch out his long legs. In doing so, one big foot struck the old gentleman seated in front. The old gentleman frowned.

Again the freed limbs were thrust out, and again one of them collided with the old gentleman.

"Are you aware that you have kicked me twice?" he said, rounding on the youngster with livid face.

"I'm very sorry, sir. Will you keep count, or shall I?" was the suave reply, and they both laughed.



DIVISION OF LABOUR.

"Give us a 2d. haircut between the two of us, will yer, mister?"



AN IRISH TESTIMONIAL.

IRISH PARENT (proudly): Ye can depind on my son Micky. He never tould me a lie but onst, and then I found out he was right afterwards.

THEY say that an Irishman gets out of a train without waiting to look for anything, an Englishman thinks it is advisable to ascertain if his own belongings are intact, and that a Scotchman looks to see if anybody else has left anything.



YES OR NO.

Father says I should be a young fool to refuse, That girls nowadays want to pick and to choose; 'Twould be one out of six off his hands, I confess--If I go by the pater, I'm bound to say "Yes."

Dear mother is fluster'd and rushes about; She's told every soul in the village, no doubt. "Of course you'll say 'Yes,' dear!" She laugh'd, then she wept—

If I go by the mater, I'm bound to accept.

The girls all decided at once for the Earl, They're jealous as cats: "I'm the luckiest girl! A Countess, just think, with the *entrée* at Court, If I go by the girls, as I certainly ought.

The boys are half crazy. "He's one of the best," It seems that he found them a tit-willow's nest, Or something of that sort. His handicap's scratch. If I go by the boys—well, I'm in for a match.

And I, when I think of a ship on the sea, That's bringing my sailor-love homewards to me, Promoted Commander R.N., D.S.O.,

My heart says politely but fervently, "No."

Arthur H. Scaife.



VERY FAINT.

MODISTE: Hold your head a little higher, Miss Brown. Now, madam, that gives you a faint idea of how the dress will look.

WHEN he had carefully examined the shoes the doctor had brought in for repairs, the German cobbler handed them back, saying: "Dem shoes ain't worth mending, doctor."

"Very well, Hans," said the doctor, "then of course I won't have anything done to them."

"Vell, but I sharge you feefty cents already yet."

"Why, what for ?"

"Vy, when I came to see you de udder day, you sharged me t'ree dollars for telling me dot dere ain't nodding der matter mit me."" OLD LADY IN TRAM (who has been annoyed by men spitting): Conductor, is it permitted to spit in this tram?

CONDUCTOR : Better wait till you get outside, mum.



JILL: But why must men always drink when they are together?

JACK: Because they would bore each other to death without a strong antidote.

"YES," said the shopkeeper, "I want a good, bright boy to be partly indoors and partly outdoors.

"That's all right," said the applicant; "but what becomes of me when the door is shut?"



"You do certainly eat an awful lot for a little boy," said the uncle, who had noticed his nephew's onslaught on the nursery tea-table.

"Well," replied the boy, "perhaps I'm not really so little as I look from the outside."

ONCE, when a famous artist was at a dinnerparty, a gushing woman said to him : "I saw your latest picture, and kissed it because it was so like you.

" And did it kiss you in return?"

"Why, no."

"Then," said the artist, "it was not like me."



"I'm very sorry, Mr. Dixon," said the girl to the young man who had asked if he might take her in to supper at the dance, "but I've



NO ILLUSIONS.

MISTRESS (to servant who has just given notice): Well, I am sorry you are going, Mary. I suppose you are going to better yourself? SERVANT: Oh, no, ma'am. I'm going to get married.

"You seem to have trouble with your lessons at school, Tommy," said his father. "What is it that seems to be in your way most?"

"The teacher, principally, father," answered Tommy.



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At the close of the wedding breakfast a gentleman noted for his lack of tact arose, causing keen anxiety to the bridegroom, who knew his failing.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he cried genially, "I propose the health of the bridegroom. May he see many days like this ! "

promised to go in to supper with someone else; but I'll introduce you to a very handsome and clever girl."

"No," replied the disappointed young man disconsolately, "I don't want a handsome and clever girl; I want you."



"How's Jones getting along with his new car?" asked Brown.

"Finely," said his friend. "He's now got so that he can almost tell what's the matter when it won't go."



AN ECCLESIASTICAL ECONOMIST.

MOTHER: Why did you not put that threepenny bit I gave you into the plate? DORIS: Well, mummy, when it came to me, it looked so full that I thought they had quite enough.



COLD COMFORT.

GOLFER: Dear, dear, there surely cannot be worse players than I am.

CADDIE: Well, there may be worse players, but they never play.

AU PIED DE LA LETTRE.

THE chief window-dresser stood in the shopwindow surveying his handiwork. He was dealing exclusively in brooms and brushes that morning. It is true it was the ironmongery department of Messrs. Simpson's stores, but he had determined that nothing but bristles should be admitted for one week only.

"They show each other up more if you keep to one class of thing," he explained to the shopwalker, who didn't altogether agree; and he arranged a miniature carpet in the middle of the window, and had a tableau of brooms, carpet-whisks, and patent sweepers working on it quietly, all alone, and, as far as one could see, quite ineffectively. This was the chief exhibit, and all round was every other kind of brushscrubbing - brushes, dusting - brushes, fluebrushes, clothes-brushes, tooth-brushes, hair-There seemed to be hundreds of brushes. varieties of hundreds of brushes. But the large brooms, hard and soft, and the patent sweepers in the foreground were what he seemed to set most store on.

"What ticket shall we have up?" he said to the shopwalker. "Don't want many tickets. My idea is *one*, just one. In the centre. More telling that way."

"How about one of these?" said the shop-walker, and he handed some along.

The chief window-dresser looked at the top one and, after a glance at its legend, decided it would do and stuck it up.

It read : "Sweeping Reductions."

VIEWS.

Young people have views. They consider it exceedingly important that they should have views about things; definite. clear - cut. unalterable views that show great sagacity and perspicacity and erudition and instinct; big, broad, comprehensive views that compass the cosmos, reach infinitely into both ends of eternity, and correct all the aberrations of the universe; keen, incisive, penetrant views that sink into the very soul of spirituality and hit the bull's-eve of the heart of things at any given range; views that ramify the uttermost reaches of rarefied ether; that roam the gamut of heaven, earth, hell, and infinity with firm and confident tread.

As fast as they grow older, their views change, and, if they finally reach years of wisdom, they have almost no views at all. They find that views, besides being erroneous in something like nine hundred ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of a million, are decidedly bothersome, and very apt to interfere with the landscape. When that time comes, it is their great delight to sit and smoke a silent pipe and smile indulgently while the views of ambitious youth are being aired. Examine your views. They will tell you your exact place in the scheme of evolution.



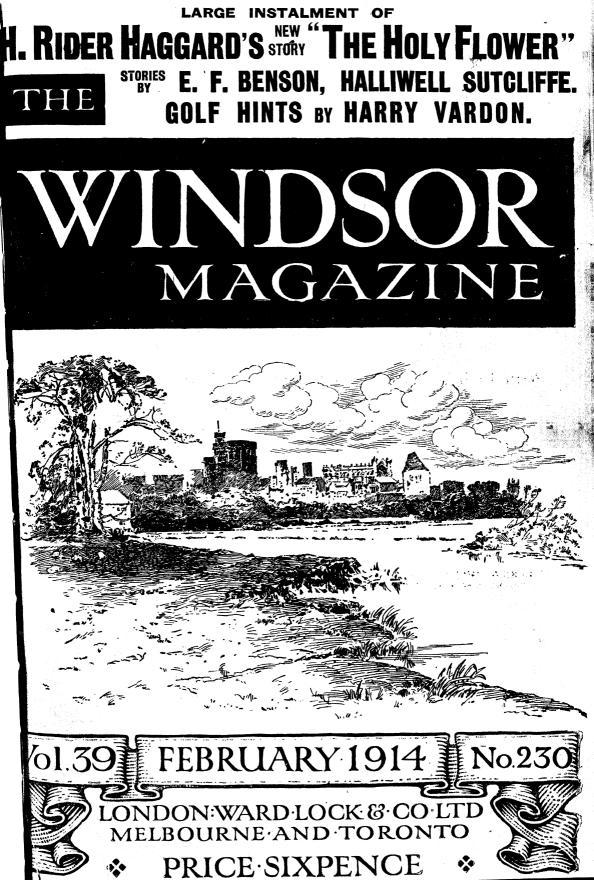
BROWN: Jones is certainly tied to his wife's apron-strings.

SMITH: Well, in these days, he is lucky if he has a wife with apron-strings.



SUPERFLUOUS INFORMATION.

SHE: When you married me, you didn't marry a cook. HE: I know all about that—you needn't rub it in.







"THE SHEPHERD OF JERUSALEM." BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A. From the original in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, by permission of the Corporation.



"Just when I'm lunching! You are the most selfish and inconsiderate ---- "

A COMEDY OF STYLES

By E. F. BENSON

Illustrated by Charles Pears

THE blaze of the January sun was pouring down on to the huge rink at Frédon, hot and invigorating, and yet by that inimitable conjuring trick which the sun so deftly performs all day in the high thin air of Alpine eyries, not melting one fragment of the ice, nor making the surface Above stretched steep of it even soft. pastures covered with fresh-fallen snow, and dotted with châlets fit to be hung on some immense Christmas tree, complete and toylike with their little green-shuttered windows and their icicles depending from the snowsmothered eaves of the shingled roofs. Above, again, stretched the forest of pines, looking raven-black, where the snow had

melted from off their tassels, against the shining dazzle of the white fields, while behind and beyond, remote and austere, rose the horns and precipices of the greater peaks.

Below, the ground declined sharply away : a few outlying châlets of the village stood in the foreground ; beyond them the hillside leaped like a waterfall into the cloudsmothered valley of the Rhone, a couple of thousand feet below. Like a solid floor of grey mottled marble, this platform of cloudland, as seen from above, stretched right across to the slopes on the far side of the valley, a floor level and motionless, fitted in with the cunning of some neat-jointed puzzle to the promontories and bays of the hills

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opposite. These, as they climbed upwards, rose again into the blaze of the midwinter sun, and guarding it all, like some great beast with head thrown back and paws outstretched, rose the shining snows of the Dent du Midi.

The rink, which had been crowded all morning, was emptying fast, for from the various hotels the bells had announced lunch-time, and there were but half a dozen enthusiasts left. Among those, enthusiastic to the point of mania, was Agnes Cartright, who, recuperating for a few minutes on a bench at the side of the ice, was utterly oblivious to the view and glory of the sun, and was entirely intent on a small and ragged pamphlet which she held in her hand, and which contained the list of the greedy requirements demanded of any who offered themselves as candidates for the firstclass English test of skating. For the last three weeks she had lived, breathed, and dreamed skating; nothing else in the world seemed to her to matter at all, and if she had been awakened in the night by an armed inquisitor, who, with pistol to her head, had told her instantly to name the three greatest men in the world, she would have unhesitatingly have told him the names of three very fine skaters who were spending a month Two were to be her judges in the here. approaching test, the third was her brother, who, sitting beside her now with his mouth full of ham sandwich, was trying to explain to her the placing of one of those horrible and adored figures.

"Hold on to your back outside edge," he said, "till you get quite close to the centre, and change it at the centre. When you change it, don't wobble like a Channel boat in a cross-sea. Just change it. Hold on to your inside edge till you get half round the circle, then make your three, and—and stand still and go to sleep till you come back again to the centre. I don't see what bothers you in it."

"Skate it for me, Ted," she asked.

"Just when I'm lunching ! You are the most selfish and inconsiderate ------"

"I know. But I do want to see it done. It helps so enormously."

He stood up, with half-eaten sandwich in one hand, a tall, satisfactory sort of young man, snub-nosed and sandy-haired, a sort of parody of the tip-tilted golden-haired girl who stood beside him. It was easy to see their relationship; the parody was unmistakable.

"I'll skate the whole set with you if you

like," he said. "We've got the ice to ourselves."

"You are a darling. If I can get through this thing at all, it will be entirely your doing, Ted."

"Well, yes, mainly. All the same, you have got a certain natural aptitude."

Then followed a quarter of an hour of strenuous performance, as they wove the mystic dance, with its swift long edges and flicked turns, which is known as English combined skating. Whatever Agnes's power of execution might be, there was no question about the excellence of her style, as standing erect, yet not stiff, she swooped like a swallow into the centre, and sped out again to the circumference of the figure twenty yards away. It was impossible to see where the impetus for these bird-flights came from; they were as inexplicable as the movement of a soaring eagle, and her brother's speed was even more incomprehensible. He but seemed to lay his skate-blade on the ice and shot off with ever-increasing velocity. Their timing, too, from long-repeated practice together, was perfect; they passed each other at the centre with hardly a foot to spare between them, and soared away again. Occasionally he called a critical word to her, or made her repeat some evolution; but when, a guarter of an hour later, the practice was over, his praise was almost unfraternal.

"Yes, that will quite do," he said. "If you skate no worse than that, you will get through. Now, for Heaven's sake, let us finish lunch in peace."

She beamed appreciation of these high compliments.

"I'll just have ten minutes more alone," she said. "You might be an angel, Ted, and shout curses at me if I'm not up to the mark."

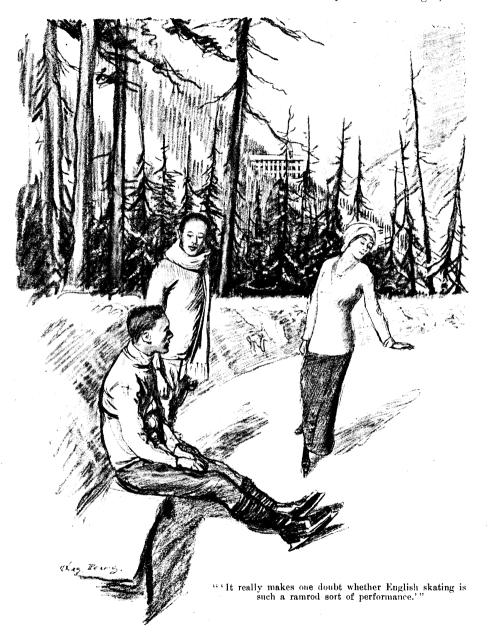
A young man, who had been watching this really charming performance, skated up to the bench where Ted was sitting, with arms and unemployed leg outstretched, in the approved and graceful International He really did rather resemble some style. flying Mercury, a pose which all skaters of his school do not attain with any marked degree of success. He had arrived here only the evening before, and nodded kindly to Ted, unaware of his immensity. In Agnes's opinion, this would be about equivalent to some criminal in the dock—skaters in the International style were all criminals in her eyes-negligently saluting the Lord Chief Justice on the bench.

"It really makes one doubt whether

English skating is such a ramrod sort of performance as we think it," he said, "when you see a girl like that doing it. Isn't she at the Royal Hotel? I think I saw her there at the dance last night. You were

infernal patronage of the only real form of skating.

"Her name is Cartright," he said. "Miss Agnes Cartright. Perhaps I had better mention that my name is Cartright, too."



skating with her, weren't you? What is her name?"

Ted Cartright looked at him with a rather pleasant mixture of amusement and resentment. The resentment was for this He paused a moment.

"In fact, I'm her brother," he said.

The flying Mercury laughed.

"Do you know, that's rather funny," he said. "Then, of course, you are the Mr. Cartright who skates. I assure you that the people I came up in the train with mentioned you with a sort of holy awe. And here am I telling you that perhaps English skating is not entirely a ramrod performance. But, really, I couldn't tell. I hope you don't mind. My name is Turner, if it's the slightest interest to you."

Ted Cartright laughed also.

"Then, of course, you are *the* Mr. Turner, if it comes to that," he said. "And your arrival has been spoken of with holy awe. You won all the cups and things last year, didn't you, in—in your style?"

"I suppose I did. It looks awful to you, doesn't it? A silly, showing-off, posing kind of game?"

"Well, I don't want to do it myself. But I expect-----"

Further attempts at compliments were interrupted by Agnes.

"That was better, wasn't it, Ted?" she asked.

"I don't know; I wasn't looking. Agnes, may I introduce Mr. Turner to you?"

Mr. Turner, apparently, had already lunched, and soon left them. He skated off to the other side of the rink, and there took advantage of the empty ice. With flying, outstretched arms, he glided and poised and turned, launching himself at full speed on his hard, curved edges. He whirled in entrancing spirals, every inch and muscle of him was plastically part of woven loops and brackets. Anyone could see how masterly was his control, how vehement his force.

Agnes turned to her brother.

"It's really rather nice when it is done like that," she said. "You can see he is a-man."

"He doesn't in the least degree resemble a girl," said her brother. "Nor does he look like a cross between a hairdresser and a dancing-master, if that is what you mean."

"Yes, just that," she said. "But, of course, we can't call it skating. All the same..........."

And she drank the remainder of Ted's beer.

Two days afterwards Agnes went up for her supreme trial. She was horribly nervous, and the sight of the reserved end of the rink, entirely emptied of skaters on her behalf, who lined the edges of it instead, made her think with bitter envy of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, those happy victims of the opening earth. But the moment she got under way, as soon as she felt her skate really bite the smooth, satin-like ice, she was conscious of nothing else but extreme exhibitation. Mr. Turner had left his International followers, who were standing about on one leg, in attitudes of extreme dejection, like hens on a wet day, and established himself on a seat in the sun, and the sight of him following her with perfectly undisguised admiration, made her not nervous, but immensely self-confident. Even the approving grunts of her brother, when in pauses she went and sat by him, did not lend her such solid encouragement. She had begged Mr. Turner not to come and watch her, when she danced-rather frequently-with him the night before at one of the hotel balls, and it may be added that she would have been extremely vexed if he had been so untrustworthy as to dream of keeping this promise she had extorted from him. In fact, as far as he was concerned, her state of mind is thus sufficiently Once or twice she made misindicated. takes, which caused him much greater anxiety than they caused her. So his state of mind, as far as she was concerned, is also adequately outlined.

Ted skated excitedly up to her, after her judges had held but a brief conference.

"So that's floored," he said ; "and now you can begin to learn to skate properly."

"Oh, Ted," she said, "do you mean I have passed ?"

"Yes, of course. Let's have lunch."

Now, a certain proportion of the immigrant English at Frédon during the winter months think of practically nothing else all day, and a certain amount of the night, but ski-ing; to others, curling is a similar obsession; But the greater to others, tobogganing. number of the obsessed have no thoughts, day or night—except when they are actually engaged on some such frivolity as dancing, or dining, or bridge—but for skating. And the skaters, divided into two camps, as has been seen, the English style and the International, abstain, if polite, from passing the smallest criticism or taking the slightest notice of the other's doings; if impolite, use such words as "ramrod" or thev "dancing-master." They have even been known to attempt to parody-with marked unsuccess-each other's styles. Consequently, rumours that began to creep about, some few days after Agnes Cartright had passed her first-class English test, thrilled these obsessed people to the core. Very early in the morning Miss Cartright had been seen on a sequestered corner of the rink with her unemployed leg wildly waving. With her arms she appeared to be swimming in short, ungainly strokes. An examination of the ice where these contortions had taken place showed beyond doubt that somebody had been trying to skate loops there—those dreadful, wicked, horrible loops which violated every rule of correct English style. to practise which laid the foundations for every immoral habit. It was true that, when observed, she made herself into a ramrod again and jerked her shoulders about in that distressing English manner, but later on, when the rink had cleared for lunch, she was seen again trying to do a spiral. Then she had been seen watching Mr. Turner for quite a long time that afternoon. This, of course, might be for other reasons, and the speaker-who had been doing just the samewreathed her withered lips into what must have been a sarcastic smile. Such was the thrilling news brought into the International camp.

Later in the evening a spy came into the English camp. He had been on the rink that afternoon when dusk fell, and with his own eyes had seen a solitary figure in a withdrawn situation at the farther end, practising (apparently) in the English style. The speaker, at any rate, thought that these stiff, rigid attitudes, these jerked turns, were meant to be in distant emulation of it. With the amiable intention of assisting this ungainly struggler, and with a certain incredible conjecture in his mind, he skated The ungainly struggler, on up to him. seeing him approach, instantly began whirling his arms and legs again. It was Turner. And that night, after dinner, Turner had been seen again in the lounge of the hotel, absorbed in a book which was easily recognisable as one of the text-books of English skating. Being observed, he hurriedly covered it up with a week-old copy of a daily paper, upside down, and pretended to be immersed in it. A little later he and Miss Cartright played bridge together, and it was credibly ascertained that neither of them had mentioned the word "skating" throughout the course of three long rubbers.

A week later all concealment was at an end. Agnes Cartright had openly joined the ranks of the Internationalists, while the star and mainstay of International skating was busy practising the English style, and hoped before the end of the season, if he was very industrious, to pass the third and most elementary of the English tests. What added to the comedy of the situation was that each went to the other for tuition, and each was at present hopelessly at sea. They, the pillars and ornaments of their schools, floundered and bungled, and were a source of the most blissful encouragement to other beginners. Occasionally a brief spell of apostasy would seize one or other of them, and Turner would giddily trace out a perfect back loop eight, or Miss Cartright, tall and swift and stable, would skim up to a centre from the distance of sixty yards, flick out a dream of a rocker, and hold the back edge for another sixty yards. But these were but infrequent weaknesses; for the most part, from morning till night, they were diligent with the alphabets of their In the evening they respective studies. often sat near each other, strenuously reading. Turner's book was a volume on the English style, with Agnes's name at the beginning; she read the text-book he had written himself.

A further thrill awaited Frédon, ten days later, when their engagement was made known. As for them, they had a great deal to say to each other on other subjects; but one sunny day, as they sat on the edge of the rink, in the lunch interval, the question which had really been a good deal in their minds found utterance. Agnes broached it.

"There's another thing we must talk about," she began.

"I know," he interrupted. "Skating, you mean. It's quite ridiculous to go on as we are. You see, I *had* to take to English skating when I saw you do it. I couldn't help myself. There was never anything so divine."

She laughed.

"Oh, Jack, that's just what happened to me. And here we are, dear, both making the most dreadful fools of ourselves. I shall never be able to do it ! I should be utterly miserable about it if I wasn't so happy. What is to be done?"

"We might toss up," he suggested. "The point is, that we should both skate in the same style, isn't it?"

" Of course."

He took an Italian five-franc piece from his pocket.

"Heads, English style; tails, International," he suggested.

"Yes," said Agnes tremulously, and he spun the coin, caught it, and opened his hand.

And anyone who happens to be at Frédon this winter will see whether it was heads or tails.

THE TRAIL FROM NAPOLI.

BY LLOYD ROBERTS.

FROM Capo de Sorento, its poppies and its clover, The headlands of Posilipo, the wharves of Napoli,

A wide blue trail runs westward to the ocean rim and over

To where there lies a little town with lights along the sea.

Here, pink and blue, the villas crowd beside the yellow sand,

And sweet and hot the scented winds puff sultry to the bay; The shadow of Vesuvius lies grey across the land,

And on my heart a loneliness that calls me far away.

My restless feet are weary of these hills of purple vines,

These crooked groves of olive trees that scrawl the crooked lanes; The walnuts shoulder weakly round the tall Italian pines

That whisper like the waves of wheat across the yellow plains.

All day beneath the ruins of Don Anna gaunt and black,

The boats of fisher-folk go by with song and trailing net;

And dim the cloud of Capri where the red feluccas tack-

But still the belching funnels smirch the trail I can't forget.

Virgil's tomb gapes empty where the oranges are bright,

Above the Roman corridors that goats and beggars tread;

Soft voices and thin music and laughter all the night-

I only see a thousand leagues the Channel lights burn red;

I only hear dear English tongues for ever calling me

Across the high white English cliffs and flowers of the foam; I only breathe sweet lilac bloom a-blowing out to sea-

A=blowing down the long sea-lanes to lead a lover home!



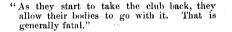
HINTS FOR THE LONG-HANDICAP GOLFER By HARRY VARDON

Illustrated by A. Wallis Mills

success, but that assiduity is bound to be wasted so long as they continue, all unconsciously, to sin against the fundamental rules of action. Occasionally they obtain a gleam of satisfaction in a curious fashion: they stand, perhaps, in such a manner as to make for a shot to the left-although they do not know it—and impart an unintentional slice, with the result that the ball finishes somewhere on the fairway. But it is certain that they cannot depend upon doing this every time, since they are not trying to do it, and therefore have no control over the action; and, in any case, it is not the proper thing to benefit by the fact that two glaring wrongs sometimes do make a modest right.

I must confess that I like to see a man trying to play the shots correctly, and frankly confessing to his good fortune when the end is obtained in a way which he did not endeavour to adopt. He is the sort of golfer who will succeed, because he is a thinker, and he is not wholly content to secure good effects by "flukes." We all delight in a bit of luck every now and again, but to trust very largely to chance, as so many long-handicap golfers do, is one of the most retardatory influences that can enter into anybody's game. When you are practising, and you achieve an object in a manner different from that which you endeavoured to put into operation, it is good to acknowledge the fact in its fulness—at any rate, to yourself. Otherwise you are apt to develop a lot of faith in shots of a spurious nature, and such faith is a bar to real progress.

Errors of grip or stance, or both, and their attendant distresses, are often the penalties of early neglect. The player has



A FTER a fairly long experience of all kinds and conditions of golfers, I have come to the conclusion that the majority of long-handicap players handicap themselves to a very large extent. They do it by failing to devote a reasonable amount of thought and attention to a few matters which are as important as they are simple. Particularly is this the case in regard to the grip and the stance. When a pupil presents himself for the treatment of his faults, the first features of his methods which the practical instructor examines are the grip and the stance.

It is surprising how often they are wrong. It is possible to hold the club in such a way that the chances are about a hundred to one against the player hitting the ball cleanly; equally possible is it to stand in such a way as practically to ensure hitting the ball in the wrong direction, even though the shot be a clean one. There are some golfers —indeed, there are many—who regularly commit both these errors. Often they are so keen as to go out and practise strokes for half-hours in the hope of striking a vein of



"Let the arms and club go through with a swish."

failed to take a few lessons at the beginning of his golfing career, and, as a result, has fallen into wrong modes where essentials of a most elementary nature are concerned. In other cases sheer lack of attention breeds the evils. To the inefficient golfer I would say: "First, look to your grip."

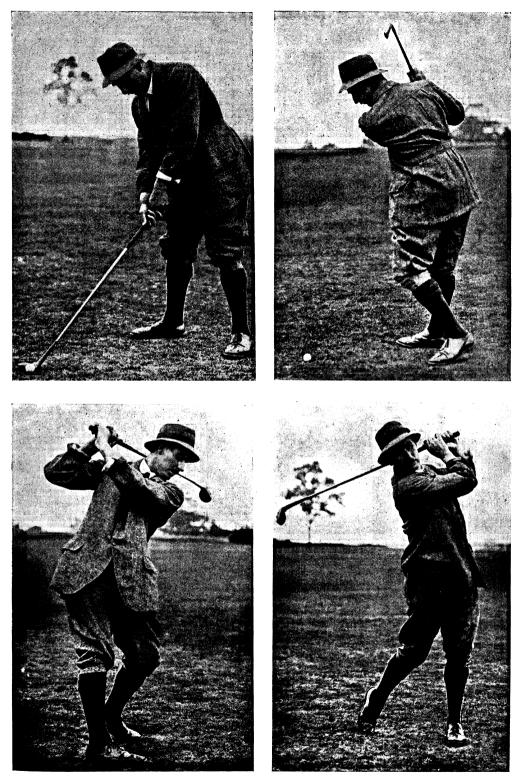
To have the grip correct is a matter of The most common fault great moment. among inefficient golfers is that of getting the right hand too far under the club. So look to your right hand. If the knuckles are pointing towards the ground during the address, the odds are heavy against your securing the proper position for the club at the top of the swing, and, therefore, the proper position at the instant of impact. A few men can do it, but they constitute a law unto themselves, and I submit that they only can do it by letting the club turn in the hands during the upward swing. That is a highly dangerous procedure for The nuisance the ordinary mortal. of the correct golf grip is that it does not often come naturally. Seldom is it that it presents itself

to the player as being the easiest way of holding the club. Consequently he is apt to go wrong, unless he takes pains to be right. Briefly, the club should be held in such a way that the thumb and forefinger of each hand form something like letter V's on the shaft. That is to say, the knuckles of the left hand should be pointing towards the line of play, while those of the right hand should be pointing in the opposite direction. If the golfer will just take hold of a club or a poker or anything handy and illustrate for himself what I have indicated, he will see that his thumbs and forefingers form into V's. As a rule, it is the right hand that is wrongly placed; it is turned too far under. Personally I feel convinced that the overlapping grip is better than the palm grip, and this, indeed, is proved by the fact that practically all the leading professionals adopt the former; but if the reader dislikes it, let him adhere to the old-fashioned way of holding the club. But he still must be sure that his hands are in the right position, and also that they are If they are apart on the shaft, touching. the results are almost sure to be disastrous.

The stance is a curious matter. Very many players imagine that they are slicing or pulling when all the while they are



"Standing too far from the ball."



HARRY VARDON. Photographs by the Sport & General Press Agency.

standing for a shot either to the right or the left. As they walk towards the ball, they study the locality of the pin or other object at which they intend to aim; when they reach the ball, they ground the club with a kind of subconscious feeling that they are in the correct position for a straight shot. If only they knew the frequency with which they drop into a wrong position, they would exercise more care. It is excellent to consider the outlook as one advances, but it is of the utmost importance to make certain that the club is grounded so that the face of it is square to the line foundation of failure in the first stage of the swing; what happens afterwards is the inevitable emphasis of the early error. As they start to take the club back, they allow their bodies to go with it. That is generally fatal. They should struggle for all they are worth against such a tendency; even should they determine to move their bodies in the direction opposite to that which the club takes at the beginning of the upward swing. In point of fact, they need to maintain a perfect balance during the operation, and they cannot do it if they sway back with the club. Let us spend a



"He makes a special effort to push the face of the club right under the ball. That is how bad shots are perpetrated."

which the player proposes to take. When a golfer is suffering the throes of deviation from the course, he should ascertain, as he adopts his stance, that his club is grounded at right angles to the line. Another cause of errant shots is a habit of fidgeting on the feet after having taken up the correct stance. Sometimes a player will turn an inch or two out of position through this restlessness during the waggle, and an inch makes a difference.

The main principles of the swing are the same for all clubs. Much might be written on this subject; it will suffice if I point out where the majority of unsuccessful golfers come to grief. As a rule, they lay the moment with the player who sways in this manner. Let us ask him to pause at the top of the swing. Nearly all his weight has gone in the direction towards which he has permitted his body to incline. Let us accentuate it by giving him a gentle push in the same direction. At once he will be thrown almost off his feet. His last vestige of balance will disappear. Is it not clear that he is in a very precarious position for hitting the ball properly? He ought to be so perfectly poised at the top of the swing that a push on the shoulder will not disturb his balance.

I always have said, and always shall say, that the great secret of success at golf is to

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keep the head still during the upward swing. I do not mean to indicate that you dare not move the head to the extent of even an eighth of an inch, but that you should keep it as nearly rigid as is possible in the case of a mortal wielding an implement with which he wants to hit a ball a considerable distance. If you recollect this point, the swing is likely to be right. You will screw round from the hips for the simple reason that the body must do something in order to allow the arms to take the club up. With the head steady, the body cannot sway, and so it has to twist. Thus you preserve a balance, which is the chief desideratum, and the body turns on its own axis. That is why I say that, if you look after your head, the other parts of the human frame will generally prove capable of looking after themselves.

In driving, it is a great thing to give the arms plenty of play. The fault of many moderate golfers is that, as they are on the point of hitting, they stiffen their arms in an attempt to put extra power into the shot. At the same time they involuntarily contract their bodies-the stiffening of one set of muscles presumably communicates itself to others-with the result that they are in a condition of tautness by the time they strike the ball, which, therefore, travels a disappointingly small distance. You want to hit strongly, but you simply must let the arms go through with an utter absence of restraint. If you start to stiffen them only a foot before reaching the ball, you are not likely to secure a long shot. So give them There is no need to throw plenty of play. your body at the ball : let the arms and the club go through with a swish, and the body will put its own weight into the shot and pivot of its own accord for the finish of the swing.

The mistake which very many players make with the cleek and the iron is that of standing too far from the ball. Presumably

they overlook the fact that the cleek is usually a little shorter than the driver, just as the iron is generally shorter than the cleek, and that the "lie" of iron clubs is, as a rule, more upright than that of wooden clubs. These differences in length of shaft and degree of "lie" are natural and proper and helpful, but it is obvious that if you stand as far from the ball for the cleek as for the driver, the toe of the former is bound to be cocked up in the air as you ground it. In most cases the consequence is that only the heel takes the turf during the impact, and the club turns in the hands. It is important to remember that the shorter the club, the nearer to the ball you require to stand, and the closer together should be your feet. Some players stand straddle - legged - a position which makes the true swing practically impossible.

With the mashie, the commonest faultand it is also about the worst imaginable-is that of trying to scoop the ball into the air. The player is impressed by the fact that the face of the club is laid back very nicely, and he seems to think that he ought to do his utmost to take advantage of the fact. So. just as he is going to hit, he makes a special effort to push the face right under the ball, in order to be sure, as he thinks, of lifting the object well into the air. That is how bad shots are perpetrated. The club is shaped so as to produce the requisite loft, and it will do all that is necessary if only the golfer will strike the ball firmly without attempting to scoop it. When he is executing cleek shots, he does not resort to any little scheme for poking the ball high into the air. If he would play his mashie shots with the same decisiveness by hitting the ball in a straightforward way and trusting to the club itself to secure the loft, he would fare much better. Such are a few of the everyday errors of the links-errors which any player ought to be able to extirpate by the exercise of thought and a little determination.





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THE-HOLY-FLOWER by-h-rider-haggard

ILLUSTRATED-BY MAURICE-GREIFFENHAGEN

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.—This is the record of the strange adventure of the famous hunter and explorer, Allan Quatermain, on his perilous expedition into an unknown region of Africa in the days before those experiences which are now historical in that modern classic "King Solomor's Mines." At the opening of the present narrative, Hunter Quatermain, while shooting tig game in South Africa, met one of the strangest characters then known in all South Africa, an American gentleman, who was a docto by profession, but for some years past had wandered about South and Eastern Africa collecting butterflies and flowers. To the natives he was known as "Dogeetah," but white people usually called him "Brother John." From him Allan Quatermain first heard of a wonderful plant with blooms of extraordinary size and marvellous beauty, with a monkey's head outlined on every bloom, which he proclaimed to be the most marvellous cypripedium on the whole earth. A healthy root of this plant, he maintained, would be worth at least twenty thousand pounds; but all he could show was a single bloom, without any root. This had come into his possession in the country of the Mazitu, a warlike race whom no white man had ever visited, beyond the western boundary of whose territory was a large and fertile land, supposed to be an island in the midst of a great lake, with a mountain in the centre. The name of both this territory and its inhabitants was Pongo, which was also the native name for a gorilla, and the god of the Pongo people was said to be a gorilla, whose worship was combined with that of the wonderful orchid. One night, while camping near the Pongo had announced that he had coue to the famous master of medicine to have his hand cured of a wound made by the bite of a terribue monkey, of which he deelared they all went in fear in his native land. He suggested that he would help the white man to riches if he would go and kill went in fear in his native dand. He suggested when he found by his tent, a week later, only a single bloom

CHAPTER V.

HASSAN.

I SUPPOSE it must have been about two hours after dawn on the following morning that I was awakened by knocks upon the door and the voice of Jack saying that Sam, the cook, wanted to speak to me.

Wondering what he could be doing there, as I understood he was sleeping on the ship, I called out that he was to come in. Now, this Sam, I should say, hailed from the Cape, and was a person of mixed blood. The original stock, I imagine, was Malay, which had been crossed with Indian coolie. Also, somewhere or other, there was a dash of white, and possibly, but of this I am not sure, a little Hottentot. The result was a person of a few vices and many virtues. Sammy, I may say at once, was perhaps the biggest coward I ever met. He could not help it; it was congenital, though, curiously enough, this cowardice of his never prevented him from running into fresh danger. Thus he knew that the expedition upon which I was engaged would be most hazardous. Remembering his weakness, I explained this to him very clearly. Yet that knowledge did not deter him from imploring that he might be allowed to accompany me. Possibly this was because there was some mutual attachment between us, as in the case of Hans.

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Once, a good many years before, I rescued Sammy from a somewhat serious scrape by declining to give evidence against him. I need not enter into the details, but a certain sum of money over which he had control had disappeared. I will merely say, therefore, that at the time he was engaged to a coloured lady of very expensive tastes, whom in the end he never married.

After this, as it chanced, he nursed me through an illness. Hence the attachment of which I have spoken.

Sammy was the son of a native Christian preacher, and brought up upon what he called "The Word." He had received an excellent education for a person of his class, and in addition to many native dialects with which a varied career had made him acquainted, spoke English perfectly, though in the most bombastic style. Never would he use a short word if a long one came to his For several hand or, rather, to his tongue. vears of his life he was, I believe, a teacher in a school at Capetown where coloured persons received their education, his " department," as he called it, being "English language and literature."

Wearying of or being dismissed from his employment for some reason that he never specified, he had drifted up the coast to Zanzibar, where he turned his linguistic abilities to the study of Arabic, and became the manager or head cook of an hotel. After a few years he lost this billet—I know not how or why—and appeared at Durban in what he called "a reversed position." Here it was that we met again, just before my expedition to Pongoland.

In manzers he was most polite, in disposition most religious. I believe he was a Baptist by faith, and in appearance a small brown dandy of a man of uncertain age, who wore his hair parted in the middle and, whatever the circumstances, was always tidy in his garments.

I took him on because he was in great distress, an excellent cook, the best of nurses, and, above all, for the reason that, as I have said, we were in a way attached to each other. Also he always amused me intensely, which goes for something on a long journey of the sort that I contemplated.

Such, in brief, was Sammy.

As he entered the room, I saw that his clothes were very wet, and asked him at once if it were raining, or whether he had got drunk and been sleeping in the damp grass.

"No, Mr. Quatermain," he answered. "The morning is extremely fine, and, like the poor Hottentot Hans, I have abjured the use of intoxicants. Though we differ on much else, in this matter we agree."

"Then what the deuce is up?" I interrupted, to cut short his flow of fine language.

"Sir, there is trouble on the ship"-remembering Mavovo, I started at these words-"where I passed the night in the company of Mr. Somers at his especial request." (It " This was the other way about, really.) morning, before the dawn, when he thought that everybody was asleep, the Portuguese captain and some of his Arabs began to weigh the anchor quite quietly, also to hoist But Mr. Somers and I, being very the sails. much awake, came out of the cabin, and he sat upon the capstan with a revolver in his hand, saying-well, sir, I will not repeat what he said."

"No, don't. What happened then ?"

"Then, sir, there followed much noise and confusion. The Portugee and the Arabs threatened Mr. Somers, but he, sir, continued to sit upon the capstan with the stern courage of a rock in a rushing stream, and remarked that he would see them all somewhere before they touched it. After this, sir, I do not know what occurred, since, while I watched from the bulwarks, someone knocked me head over heels into the sea, and, being fortunately a good swimmer, I gained the shore and hurried here to advise you."

"And did you advise anyone else, you idiot?" I asked.

"Yes, sir. As I sped along, I communicated to an officer of the port that there was the devil of a mess upon the *Maria*, which he would do well to investigate."

By this time I was in my shirt and trousers, and shouting to Mavovo and the others. Soon they arrived, for as the costume of Mavovo and his company consisted only of a moocha and a blanket, it did not take them long to dress.

"Mavovo," I began, "there is trouble on the ship-----"

"O Baba," he interrupted, with something resembling a grin, "it is very strange, but last night I dreamed that I told you——"

"Curse your dreams!" I said. "Gather the men and go down—— No, that won't work; there would be murder done. Either it is all over now, or it is all right. Get the hunters ready. I come with them. The luggage can be fetched afterwards."

Within less than an hour we were at that wharf off which the *Maria* lay in what one day will be the splendid port of Durban, though in those times its shipping arrangements were exceedingly primitive. A strange-looking band we must have been. I, who was completely dressed and, I trust, tidy, marched ahead. Next came Hans in the filthy wide-awake hat which he usually wore, and greasy corduroys, and after him the oleaginous Sammy, arrayed in European reachme-downs, a billycock and a bright blue tie striped with red, garments that would have looked very smart had it not been for his recent immersion. After him followed the fierce-looking Mavovo and his squad of hunters, all of whom wore the "ring," or isicoco, as the Zulus call it—that is, a circle of polished black wax sewn into their short hair. They were a grim set of fellows, but as, according to a recent law, it was not allowable for them to appear armed in the town, their guns had already been shipped, while their broad stabbing spears were rolled up in their sleeping mats, the blades wrapped round with dry grass.

Each of them, however, bore in his hand a large knobkerrie of red-wood, and they marched four by four in martial fashion. It is true that when we embarked on the big boat to go to the ship, much of their warlike ardour evaporated, since these men, who feared nothing on the land, were terribly afraid of that unfamiliar element, the water.

We reached the Maria, an unimposing kind of tub, and climbed aboard. On looking aft, the first thing that I saw was Stephen seated on the capstan with a pistol in his hand, as Sammy had said. Near by. leaning on the bulwark, was the villainouslooking Portugee Delgado, apparently in the worst of tempers and surrounded by a number of equally villainous-looking Arab sailors clad in dirty white. In front was the captain of the port, a well-known and esteemed gentleman of the name of Cato, like myself, a small man who had gone through many adventures. Accompanied by some attendants, he was seated on the after-skylight smoking, with his eyes fixed upon Stephen and the Portugee.

"Glad to see you, Quatermain," he said. "There's some row on here, but I have only just arrived, and don't understand Portuguese, and the gentleman on the capstan won't leave it to explain."

"What's up, Stephen?" I asked, after shaking Mr. Cato by the hand.

"What's up?" replied Somers. "This man"—and he pointed to Delgado—" wanted to sneak out to sea with all our goods, that's all, to say nothing of me and Sammy, whom, no doubt, he'd have chucked overboard as soon as he was out of sight of land. However, Sammy, who knows Portuguese, overheard his little plans, and, as you see, I objected."

Well, Delgado was asked for his version of the affair, and, as I expected, explained that he only intended to get a little nearer to the bar and there wait till we arrived. Of course he lied, and knew that we were aware of the fact, and that his intention had been to slip out to sea with all our valuable property, which he would sell after having murdered or marooned Stephen and the poor cook. But as nothing could be proved, and we were now in strong enough force to look after ourselves and our belongings, 1 did not see the use of pursuing the argument. So I accepted the explanation with a smile, and asked everybody to join in a morning nip.

Afterwards Stephen told me that while I was engaged with Mavovo on the previous night, a message had reached him from Sammy, who was on board the ship in charge of our belongings, saying that he would be glad of some company. Knowing the cook's nervous nature, fortunately enough, he made up his mind at once to go and sleep upon the *Maria*. In the morning trouble arose, as Sammy had told me. What he did not tell me was that he was not knocked overboard, as he said, but took to the water of his own accord when complications with Delgado appeared imminent.

"I understand the position," I said, "and all's well that ends well. But it's lucky you thought of coming on board to sleep."

After this everything went right. I sent some of the men back in the charge of Stephen for our remaining effects, which they brought safely aboard, and in the evening we sailed. Our voyage up to Kilwa was beautiful, a gentle breeze driving us forward over a sea so calm that not even Hans—who I think was one of the worst sailors in the world—or the Zulu hunters were really sick, though, as Sammy put it, they "declined their food."

I think it was on the fifth night of our voyage, or it may have been the seventh, that we anchored one evening off the island of Kilwa, not very far from the old Portugnese fort. Delgado, with whom we had little to do during the passage, hoisted some queer sort of signal. In response, a boat came off, containing what he called the port officials, a band of cut-throat, desperatelooking black fellows in charge of a pockmarked elderly half-breed, who was introduced to us as the Bey Hassan-ben-Mohammed. That Mr. Hassan-ben-Mohammed entirely disapproved of our presence on the ship, and especially of our proposed landing at Kilwa, was evident to me from the moment that I set eyes upon his ill-favoured countenance. After a hurried conference with Delgado, he came forward and addressed me in Arabic, of which I could not understand a word. Luckily, however, Sam, the cook, who, as I think I said, was a great linguist, had a fair acquaintance with this tongue, acquired, it appears, while at the Zanzibar hotel; so, not trusting Delgado, I called on him to interpret.

"What is he saying, Sammy?" I asked.

He began to talk to Hassan, and replied presently—

"Sir, he makes you many compliments. He says that he has heard what a great man you are from his friend, Delgado, also that you and Mr. Somers are English, a nation which he adores."

"Does he?" I exclaimed. "I should never have thought it from his looks. Thank him for his kind remarks, and tell him that we are going to land here and march up country to shoot."

Sammy obeyed, and the conversation went on somewhat as follows :---

"With all humility, I (*i.e.*, Hassan) request you not to land. This country is not a fit place for such noble gentlemen. There is nothing to eat, and no head of game has been seen for years. The people in the interior are savages of the worst sort, whom hunger has driven to take to cannibalism. I would not have your blood upon my head. I beg of you, therefore, to go on in this ship to Delagoa Bay, where you will find a good hotel, or to any other place you may select."

A. Q. : "Might I ask you, noble sir, what is your position at Kilwa, that you consider yourself responsible for our safety?"

H.: "Honoured English lord, I am a trader here, of Portuguese nationality, but born of an Arab mother of high birth, and brought up among that people. I have gardens on the mainland, tended by my native servants, who are as children to me, where I grow palms and cassava and ground nuts and plantains, and many other kinds of produce. All the tribes in this district look upon me as their chief and venerated father."

A. Q.: "Then, noble Hassan, you will be able to pass us through them, seeing that we are peaceful hunters who wish to harm no one."

(A long consultation between Hassan and Delgado, during which I ordered Mavovo to bring his Zulus on deck with their guns.) H.: "Honoured English lord, I cannot allow you to land."

A. Q.: "Noble son of the Prophet, I intend to land with my friend, my followers, my donkeys, and my goods early to-morrow morning. If I can do so with your leave, I shall be glad. If not——" And I glanced at the fierce group of hunters behind me.

H.: "Honoured English lord, I shall be grieved to use force, but let me tell you that in my peaceful village ashore I have at least a hundred men armed with rifles, whereas here I see under twenty."

A. Q., after reflection and a few words with Stephen Somers: "Can you tell me, noble sir, if from your peaceful village you have yet sighted the English man-of-war *Crocodile*—I mean the steamer that is engaged in watching for the dhows of wicked slavers? A letter from her captain informed me that he would be in these waters by yesterday. Perhaps, however, he has been delayed for a day or two."

If I had exploded a bomb at the feet of the excellent Hassan, its effect could scarcely have been more remarkable than that of this question. He turned, not pale, but a horrible yellow, and exclaimed —

"English man-of-war! Crocodile! I thought she had gone to Aden to refit, and would not be back at Zanzibar for four months."

A. Q.: "You have been misinformed, noble Hassan. She will not refit till October. Shall I read you the letter ?" And I produced a paper from my pocket. "It may be interesting, since my friend, the captain, whom, you remember, is named Flowers, mentions you in it. He says____"

Hassan waved his hand. "It is enough. I see, honoured lord, that you are a man of mettle, not easily to be turned from your purpose. In the name of God the compassionate, land and go wheresoever you like."

A. Q. : "I think that I had almost rather wait until the *Crocodile* comes in."

H.: "Land! Land! Captain Delgado, get up the cargo and man your boat. Mine, too, is at the service of these lords. You, captain, will like to get away by this night's tide. There is still light, Lord Quatermain, and such hospitality as I can offer is at your service."

A. Q.: "Ah, I knew, Bey Hassan, that you were only joking with me when you said that you wished us to go elsewhere. An excellent jest, truly, from one whose hospitality is so famous. Well, to fall in



"Delgado was asked for his version of the affair."

with your wishes, we will come ashore this evening, and if the Captain Delagado chances to sight the Queen's ship *Crocodile* before he sails, perhaps he will be so good as to signal to us with a rocket."

"Certainly, certainly," interrupted Delgado, who up to this time had pretended that he understood no English, the tongue in which I was speaking to the interpreter, Sammy.

Then he turned and gave orders to his Arab crew to bring up our belongings from the hold and to lower the *Maria's* boat.

Never did I see goods transferred in quicker time. Within half an hour every one of our packages was off that ship, for Stephen Somers kept a count of them. Our personal baggage went into the *Maria's* boat, but the goods, together with the four donkeys, which were lowered on to the top of them, were tumbled pell-mell into the barge-like punt belonging to Hassan. Here also I was accommodated, with about half of our people, the rest taking their seats in the smaller boat under the charge of Stephen.

At length all was ready, and we cast off.

"Farewell, captain !" I cried to Delgado. "If you should speak the *Crocodile*-----"

At this point Delgado broke into such a torrent of bad language in Portuguese, Arabic, and English that I fear the rest of my remarks never reached him.

As we rowed shorewards, I observed that Hans, who was seated near to me under the stomach of a jackass, was engaged in sniffing at the sides and bottom of the barge, as a dog might do, and asked him what he was about.

"Very odd smell in this boat," he whispered back in Dutch. "It stinks of Kaffir man, just like the hold of the *Maria*. I think this boat is used to carry slaves."

"Be quiet," I whispered back, "and stop nosing at those plauks." But to myself I thought: "Hans is right. We are in a nest of slave-traders, and this Hassan is their leader."

We rowed past the island, on which I observed the ruins of an old Portuguese fort and some long grass-roofed huts, where, I reflected, the slaves were probably kept until they could be shipped away. Observing my glance fixed upon these, Hassan hastened to explain, through Sammy, that they were storehouses in which he dried fish and hides and kept goods.

"How interesting !" I answered. "Further south we dry hides in the sun."

Crossing a narrow channel, we arrived at a rough jetty, where we disembarked, whence

we were led by Hassan not to the village, which I now saw upon our left, but to a pleasant-looking though dilapidated house that stood a hundred yards from the shore. Something about the appearance of this house impressed me with the idea that it was never built by slavers; the whole look of the place, with its verandah and garden. suggested taste and civilisation. Evidently educated people had designed it and resided here. I glanced about me and saw, amidst a grove of neglected orange trees that were surrounded with palms of some age, the ruins of a church. About this there was no doubt, for there, surmounted by a stone cross, was a little pent-house in which still hung the bell that once summoned the worshippers to prayer.

"Tell the English lord," said Hassan to Sammy, "that these buildings were a mission station of the Christians, who abandoned them more than twenty years ago. When I came here, I found them empty."

"Indeed," I answered. "And what were the names of those who dwelt in them?"

"I never heard," said Hassan ; "they had been gone a long while when I came."

Then we went up to the house, and for the next hour and more were engaged with our baggage, which was piled in a heap in what had been the garden, and in unpacking and pitching two tents for the hunters, which I caused to be placed immediately in front of the rooms that were assigned to Those rooms were remarkable in their us. Mine had evidently been a sitting way. chamber, as I judged from some much broken articles of furniture that appeared to be of American make. That which Stephen occupied had once served as a sleeping-place, for the bedstead of iron still remained there. Also there were a hanging bookcase, now fallen, and some tattered remnants of books. One of these, that, oddly enough, was wellpreserved, perhaps because the white ants or other creatures did not like the taste of its morocco binding, was a Keble's "Christian Year," on the title-page of which was written : "To my dearest Elizabeth, on her birthday, from her husband." I took the liberty to put it in my pocket. On the wall, moreover, still hung the small water-colour picture of a very pretty young woman with fair hair and blue eyes, in the corner of which picture was written in the same handwriting as that in the book : "Elizabeth, aged twenty." This I also annexed, thinking that it might come in useful as a piece of evidence.

"Looks as if the owners of this place had

left it in a hurry, Quatermain," said Stephen.

"That's it, my boy, or perhaps they didn't leave ; perhaps they stopped here." "Murdered ?"

I nodded and said: "I dare say friend Hassan could tell us something about the matter. Meanwhile, as supper isn't ready yet, let us have a look at that church while it is light."

We walked through the palm and orange grove to where the building stood finely placed upon a mound. It was well constructed of a kind of coral rock, and a glance showed us that it had been gutted by fire; the discoloured walls told their own tale. The interior was now full of shrubs and creepers, and an ugly yellowish snake glided from what had been the stone altar. Without, the gravevard was enclosed by a broken wall, only we could see no trace of graves. Near the gateway, however, was a rough mound.

"If we could dig into that," I said, "I expect we should find the bones of the people who inhabited this place. Does that suggest anything to you, Stephen ? "

"Nothing, except that they were probably killed."

"You should learn to draw inferences. It is a useful art, especially in Africa. It suggests to me that, if you are right, the deed was not done by natives, who would never take the trouble to bury the dead. Arabs, on the contrary, might do so, especially if there were any bastard Portuguese among them who called themselves Christians. But whatever happened must have been a long while ago." And I pointed to a self-sown hardwood tree growing from the mound which could scarcely have been less than twenty years old.

We returned to the house to find that our meal was ready. Hassan had asked us to dine with him, but for obvious reasons I preferred that Sammy should cook our food, and that he should dine with us. He appeared, full of compliments, though I could see hate and suspicion in his eye, and we fell to on the kid that we had bought from him, for I did not wish to accept any gifts from this fellow. Our drink was "square-face" gin, mixed with water that I sent Hans to fetch with his own hands from the stream that ran by the house, lest otherwise it should be drugged.

At first Hassan, like a good Mohammedan, refused to touch any spirits; but as the meal went on, he politely relented upon this point, and I poured him out a liberal tot. The appetite comes in eating, as the Frenchman said, and the same thing applies to drinking. So, at least, it was in Hassan's case, who probably thought that the quantity swallowed made no difference to his sin. After the third dose of "square-face," he grew quite amiable and talkative. Thinking the opportunity a good one, I sent for Sammy, and through him told our host that we were anxious to hire twenty porters to carry our packages. He declared that there was not such a thing as a porter within a hundred miles, whereon I gave him some more gin. The end of it was that we struck a bargain -I forget for how much—he promising to find us twenty good men who were to stay with us for as long as we wanted them.

Then I asked him about the destruction of the mission station; but although he was half drunk, on this point he remained very All he would say was that he had close. heard that, twenty years ago, the people called the Mazitu, who were very fierce, had raided right down to the coast and killed those who dwelt there, except a white man and his wife, who had fled inland and never been seen again.

"How many of them were buried in that mound by the church ?" I asked quickly.

"Who told you they were buried there?" he replied, with a start, but, seeing his mistake, went on, "I do not know what you mean. I never heard of anyone being buried. Sleep well, honoured lords. I must go and see to the loading of my goods upon the Maria." Then, rising, he salaamed and walked or, rather, rolled away.

"So the Maria hasn't sailed, after all," I said, and whistled in a certain fashion. Instantly Hans crept into the room out of the darkness, for this was my signal to him.

"Hans," I said, "I hear sounds upon that island. Slip down to the shore and spy out what is happening. No one will see you if you are careful."

"No, Baas," he answered, with a grin, "I do not think that anyone will see Hans if he is careful, especially at night." And he slid away as quietly as he had come.

Now I went out and spoke to Mavovo, telling him to keep a good watch, and to be sure that every man had his gun ready, as I thought that these people were slave-traders and might attack us in the night. In that event, I said, they were to fall back upon the stoep, but not to fire until I gave the word.

"Good, my father," he answered. " This is a lucky journey; I never thought there would be hope of war so soon. My Snake forgot to mention it the other night. Sleep safe, Macumazahn. Nothing that walks shall reach you while we live."

"Don't be so sure," I answered, and we lay down in the bedroom with our clothes on and our rifles by our sides.

The next thing I remember was someone shaking me by the shoulder. I thought it was Stephen, who had agreed to keep awake for the first part of the night, and to call me at one in the morning. Indeed, he was awake, for I could see the glow from the pipe he smoked.

"Baas," whispered the voice of Hans, "I have found out everything. They are loading the *Maria* with slaves, taking them in big boats from the island."

"So !" I answered. "But how did you get here? Are the hunters asleep without?"

He chuckled. "No, they are not asleep. They look with all their eyes and listen with all their ears, yet old Hans passed through them; even the Baas Somers did not hear him."

"That I didn't," said Stephen. "Thought a rat was moving, no more."

I stepped through the place where the door had been on to the stoep. By the light of the fire which the hunters had lit without, I could see Mavovo sitting wide awake, his gun upon his knees, and beyond him two sentries. I called him and pointed to Hans.

"See," I said, "what good watchmen you are when one can step over your heads and enter my room without your knowing it !"

Mavovo looked at the Hottentot and felt his clothes and boots to see whether they were wet with the night dew.

"Ow!" he exclaimed, in a surly voice. "I said that nothing which walks should reach you, Macumazahn, but this yellow snake has crawled between us on his belly. Look at the new mud that stains his waistcoat."

"Yet snakes can bite and kill," answered Hans, with a snigger. "Oh, you Zulus think that you are very brave, and shout and flourish spears and battle-axes. One poor Hottentot dog is worth a whole impi of you, after all. No, don't try to strike me, Mavovo, the warrior, since we both serve the same master in our separate ways. When it comes to fighting, I will leave the matter to you; but when it is a case of watching or spying, do you leave it to Hans. Look here, Mavovo" and he opened his hand, in which was a horn snuff-box such as Zulus sometimes carry in their ears—"to whom does this belong?"

"It is mine," said Mavovo, "and you have stolen it."

"Yes," jeered Hans, "it is yours. Also I stole it from your ear as I passed you in the dark. Don't you remember that you thought a gnat had tickled you, and hit up at your face."

"It is true," growled Mavovo, "and you, snake of a Hottentot, are great in your own low way. Yet next time anything tickles me, I shall strike, not with my hand, but with a spear."

Then I turned them both out, remarking to Stephen that this was a good example of the eternal fight between courage and cunning. After this, as I was sure that Hassan and his friends were too busy to interfere with us that night, we went to bed and slept the sleep of the just.

When I got up the next morning, I found that Stephen Somers had already risen and gone out, nor did he appear until I was half through my breakfast.

"Where on earth have you been?" I asked, noting that his clothes were torn and covered with wet moss.

"Up the tallest of those palm trees, Quatermain. Saw an Arab climbing one of them with a rope, and got another Arab to teach me the trick. It isn't really difficult. though it looks alarming."

"What in the name of goodness ——" I began.

"Oh," he interrupted, "my ruling passion ! Looking through the glasses, I thought I caught sight of an orchid growing near the crown, so went up. It wasn't an orchid, after all, only a mass of yellow pollen. But I learned something for my pains. Sitting in the top of that palm, I saw the Maria working out from under the lee of the island. Also, far away, I noted a streak of smoke, and watching it through the glasses, made out what looked to me uncommonly like a man-of-war steaming slowly along the coast. In fact. am sure it was, and English, too. Then the mist came up and I lost sight of them."

"My word," I said, "that will be the *Crocodile*! What I told our host, Hassan, was not altogether bunkum. Mr. Cato, the port officer at Durban, mentioned to me that the *Crocodile* was expected to call there within the next fortnight to take in stores after a slave-hunting cruise down the coast. Now, it would be odd if she chanced to meet the

Maria and asked to have a look at her cargo, wouldn't it?"

"Not at all, Quatermain, for unless one or other of them changes her course, that is just what she must do within the next hour or so, and I jolly well hope she will. I haven't forgiven that beast Delgado the trick he tried to play on us by slipping away with our goods, to say nothing of those poor devils of slaves. Pass the coffee, will you?"

For the next ten minutes we ate in silence, for Stephen had a splendid appetite, and was hungry after his morning climb.

Just as we finished our meal, Hassan appeared, looking even more villainous than he had done on the previous day. I saw also that he was in a truculent mood, induced perhaps by the headache from which he was evidently suffering as a result of his potations. Or perhaps the fact that the *Maria* had got safe away with the slaves, as he imagined, unobserved by us, was the cause of the change in his demeanour. A third alternative may have been that he had intended to murder us during the previous night, and found no safe opportunity of carrying out his amiable scheme.

We saluted him courteously; but without salaaming in reply, he asked me bluntly, through Sammy, when we intended to be gone, as such "Christian dogs defiled his house," which he wanted for himself.

I answered: As soon as the twenty bearers whom he had promised us appeared, but not before.

"You lie," he said. "I never promised you bearers; I have none here."

"Do you mean that you shipped them all away in the *Maria* with the slaves last night?" I asked sweetly.

My reader, have you ever taken note of the appearance and proceedings of a tom-cat of established age and morose disposition when a little dog suddenly disturbs it on the Have you observed how it contorts prowl? itself into arched but unnatural shapes, how it swells visibly to almost twice its normal size, how its hair stands up and its eyes flash, and the stream of unmentionable language that proceeds from its open mouth? If so, you will have a very good idea of the effect produced upon Hassan by this remark The fellow looked as though he of mine. were going to burst with rage. He rolled about, his bloodshot eyes seemed to protrude, he cursed us horribly, he put his hand upon the hilt of the great knife he wore, and finally he did what the tom-cat does-he spat.

Now, Stephen was standing with me, looking as cool as a cucumber and very much amused, and being, as it chanced, a little nearer to Hassan than I was, received the full benefit of this rude proceeding. My word, didn't it wake him up! He said something strong, and next second flew at that halfbreed like a tiger, landing him a beauty straight upon the nose. Back staggered Hassan, drawing his knife as he did so; but Stephen's left in the eye caused him to drop it, as he dropped himself. I pounced upon the knife, and since it was too late to interfere, for the mischief had been done, let things take their course and held back the Zulus, who had rushed up at the noise.

Hassan rose and, to do him credit, came on like a man, head down. His great skull caught Stephen, who was the lighter of the two, in the chest and knocked him over, but before the Arab could follow up the advantage, he was on his feet again. Then ensued a really glorious mill. Hassan fought with head and fists and feet, Stephen with fists alone. Dodging his opponent's rushes, he gave it to him as he passed, and soon his coolness and science began to tell. Once he was knocked over by a hooked one under the jaw, but in the next round he sent the Arab literally flying head over heels. Oh, how those Zulus cheered, and I, too, danced with delight. Up Hassan came again, spitting out several teeth, and, adopting new tactics, grabbed Stephen round the middle. To and fro they swung, the Arab trying to kick the Englishman with his knees and to bite him also, till the pain reminded him of the absence of his front teeth. Once he nearly got him down-nearly, but not quite, for the collar by which he had gripped himhis object was to strangle-burst, and, at that juncture, Hassan's turban fell off over his face, blinding him for a moment.

Then Stephen gripped him round the middle with his left arm and with his right pommelled him unmercifully till he sank in a sitting position to the ground and held up his hand in token of surrender.

"The noble English lord has beaten me," he gasped.

"Apologise," yelled Stephen, picking up a handful of mud, "or I shove this down your dirty throat !"

He seemed to understand. At any rate, he bowed till his forehead touched the ground, and apologised very thoroughly.

"Now that is over," I said cheerfully to him, "so how about those bearers?"

"I have no bearers," he answered.

"You dirty liar !" I exclaimed. "One of my people has been down to your village there, and says that it is full of men."

"Then go and take them for yourself," he replied viciously, for he knew that the place was stockaded.

Now, I was in a fix. It was all very well to give a slave-dealer the thrashing he deserved, but if he chose to attack us with his Arabs, we should be in a poor way. Watching me with the eye that was not bunged up, Hassan guessed my perplexity.

"I have been beaten like a dog," he said, his rage returning to him with his breath. "but God is compassionate and just; He will avenge in due time."

The words had not left his lips for one second when from somewhere out at sea there floated the sullen boom of a great gun. At this moment, too, an Arab rushed up from the shore, crying—

"Where is the Bey Hassan?"

"Here," I said, pointing to him.

The Arab stared until I thought his eyes would drop out, for the Bey Hassan was indeed a sight to see. Then he gabbled in a frightened voice—

"Captain, an English man-of-war is chasing the *Maria*!"

Boom ! went the great gun for the second time. Hassan said nothing, but his jaw dropped, and I saw that he had lost exactly three teeth.

"That is the *Crocodile*," I remarked slowly, causing Sammy to translate, and, as I spoke, produced from my inner pocket a Union Jack which I had placed there after I heard that the ship was sighted. "Stephen," I went on, as I shook it out, "if you have got your wind, would you mind climbing up that palm tree again and signalling with this to the *Crocodile* out at sea?"

"By George, that's a good idea !" said Stephen, whose jovial face, although swollen, was now again wreathed in smiles. "Hans, bring me a long stick and a bit of string."

But Hassan did not think it at all a good idea.

"English lord," he gasped, "you shall have the bearers. I will go to fetch them."

"No, you won't," I said ; " you will stop here as a hostage. Send that man."

Hassan uttered some rapid orders, and the messenger sped away, this time towards the stockaded village on the right.

As he went, another messenger arrived, who also stared amazedly at the condition of his chief. "Bey, if you are the Bey," he said, in a doubtful voice, for by now the amiable face of Hassan had begun to swell and colour, "with the telescope we have seen that the English man-of-war has sent a boat and boarded the *Maria*."

"God is great!" muttered the discomfited Hassan, "and Delgado, who is a thief and a traitor from his mother's breast, will tell the truth. The English sons of Satan will land here. All is finished; nothing is left but flight. Bid the people fly into the bush and take the slaves—I mean their servants. I will join them."

"No, you won't," I interrupted through Sammy—" at any rate, not at present. You will come with us."

The miserable Hassan reflected, then he asked—

"Lord Quatermain"—I remember the title, because it is the nearest I ever got, or am likely to get, to the peerage—" if I furnish you with the twenty bearers and accompany you for some days on your journey inland, will you promise not to signal to your countrymen on the ship and bring them ashore?"

"What do you think?" I asked of Stephen.

"Ob," he answered, "I think I'd agree. This scoundrel has had a pretty good dusting, and if once the Crocodile people land, there'll be an end of our expedition. As sure as eggs are eggs, they will carry us off to Zanzibar or somewhere to give evidence before a slave court. Also nothing will be gained, for by the time the sailors get here, all these rascals will have You see, bolted, except our friend Hassan. it isn't as though we were sure he would He'd probably escape, after all. be hung. International law, subject of a foreign Power, no direct proof-that kind of thing, you know."

"Give me a minute or two," I said, and began to reflect very deeply.

Whilst I was thus engaged, several things I saw twenty natives being happened. escorted towards us, doubtless the bearers who had been promised; also I saw many others, accompanied by other natives, flying from the village into the bush. Lastly, a third messenger arrived, who announced that the Maria was sailing away, apparently in charge of a prize crew, and that the man-ofwar was putting about as though toEvidently she had no accompany her. intention of effecting a landing upon what was-nominally, at any rate-Portuguese territory. Therefore, if anything was to be done, we must act at once.

Well, the end of it was that, like a fool, I accepted Stephen's advice and did nothing, always the easiest course and generally that which leads to most trouble. Ten minutes afterwards I changed my mind, but then it was too late—the *Crocodile* was out of signalling distance. This was subsequent to a conversation with Hans.

"Baas," said that worthy, in his leery fashion, "I think you have made a mistake. You forget that these yellow devils in white robes who have run away will come back again, and that when you return from up country, they may be waiting for you. Now, if the English man-of-war had destroyed their town and their slave-sheds, they might have gone somewhere else. However," he added, as an after-thought, glancing at the disfigured Hassan, "we have their captain, and of course you mean to hang him, Baas. Or, if you don't like to, leave it to me. I can hang men very well. Once, when I was young, I helped the executioner at Capetown.

"Get out!" I said, but, nevertheless, I knew that Hans was right.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SLAVE ROAD.

THE twenty bearers having arrived, in charge of five or six Arabs armed with guns, we went to inspect them, taking Hassan with us, also the hunters. They were a likely lot of men, though rather thin and scared-looking, and evidently, as I could see from their physical appearance and varying methods of dressing the hair, members of different tribes. Having delivered them, the Arabs, or, rather, one of them, entered into excited conversation with Hassan. As Sammy was not at hand, I do not know what was said, although I gathered that they were contemplating his rescue. If so, they gave up the idea and began to run away as their companions had One of them, however, a bolder done. fellow than the rest, turned and fired at me. He missed by some yards, as I could tell from the sing of the bullet, for these Arabs are execrable shots. Still, his attempt at murder irritated me so much that I determined he should not go scot-free. I was carrying the little rifle called "Intombi," that with which, as Hans had reminded me, I shot the vultures at Dingaan's kraal many years before. Of course, I could have killed the man, but this I did not wish to do. Or I could have shot him through the leg, but then we should have had to nurse him or leave him to die. So I selected his right arm, which was outstretched as he fled, and at about fifty paces put a bullet through it just above the elbow.

"There," I said to the Zulus, as I saw it double up, "that low fellow will never shoot at anyone again."

"Pretty, Macumazahn, very pretty!" said Mavovo. "But, as you can aim so well, why not have chosen his head? That bullet is half wasted."

Next I set to work to get into communication with the bearers, who thought, poor devils, that they had been but sold to a new master. Here I may explain that they were slaves not meant for exportation, but men kept to cultivate Hassan's gardens. Fortunately I found that two of them belonged to the Mazitu people, who, it may be remembered, are of the same blood as the Zulus, although they separated from the parent stock generations ago. These men talked a dialect that I could understand, though at first not very easily. The foundation of it was Zulu, but it had become much mixed with the languages of other tribes whose women the Mazitu had taken to wife.

Also there was a man who could speak some bastard Arabic sufficiently well for Sammy to converse with him.

I asked the Mazitus if they knew the way back to their country. They answered "Yes," but it was far off—a full month's journey. I told them that if they would guide us thither, they should receive their freedom and good pay, adding that if the other men served us well, they also should be set free when we had done with them. On receiving this information, the poor wretches smiled in a sickly fashion and looked at Hassan-ben-Mohammed, who glowered at them and us from the box on which he was seated in charge of Mavovo.

"How can we be free while that man lives?" their look seemed to say. As though to confirm their doubts, Hassan, who understood or guessed what was passing, asked by what right we were promising freedom to his slaves.

"By right of that," I answered, pointing to the Union Jack, which Stephen still had in his hand. "Also we will pay you for them when we return, according as they have served us."

"Yes," he muttered, "you will pay me for them when you return, or perhaps before that, Englishman."

It was three o'clock in the afternoon before we were able to make a start. There was so much to be arranged that it might have been wiser to wait till the morrow, had we not determined that, if we could help it, nothing would induce us to spend another night in that place. Blankets were served out to each of the bearers, who, poor naked creatures, seemed quite touched at the gift of them; the loads were apportioned, having already been packed at Durban in cases such as one man could carry. The pack saddles were put upon the four donkeys, which proved to be none the worse for their journey, and burdens to a weight of about one hundred pounds each fixed on them in waterproof hide bags, besides cooking calabashes and sleeping mats which Hans produced from somewhere. Probably he stole them out of the deserted village, but, as they were necessary to us, I confess I asked no questions. Lastly, six or eight goats which were wandering about were captured to take with us for food till we could find game. For these I offered to pay Hassan, but when I handed him the money, he threw it down in a rage, so I picked it up and put it in my pocket again with a clear conscience.

At length everything was more or less ready, and the question arose as to what was to be done with Hassan. The Zulus, like Hans, wished to kill him, as Sammy explained to him in his best Arabic. Then this murderous fellow showed what a coward he was at heart. He flung himself upon his knees, he wept, he invoked us in the name of the compassionate Allah, who, he explained, was, after all, the same God that we worshipped, till Mavovo, growing impatient of the noise, threatened him with his kerry, whereon he The easy-natured Stephen became silent. was for letting him go, a plan that seemed to have advantages, for then, at least, we should be rid of his abominable company. After reflection, however, I decided that we had better take him with us-at any rate, for a day or so—to hold as a hostage in case the Arabs should follow and attack us. At first he refused to stir, but the assegai of one of the Zulu hunters pressed gently against what remained of his robe furnished an argument that he could not resist.

At length we were off. I with the two guides went ahead. Then came the bearers, then half of the hunters, then the four donkeys in charge of Hans and Sammy, then Hassan and the rest of the hunters, except Mavovo, who brought up the rear with Stephen. Needless to say, all our rifles were loaded, and generally we were prepared for any emergency. The only path—that which the guides said we must follow-ran by the seashore for a few hundred yards, and then turned inland through Hassan's village where he lived, for it seemed that the old missionhouse was not used by him. As we marched along a little rocky cliff-it was not more than ten feet high-where a deep-water channel perhaps fifty yards in breadth separated the mainland from the island, whence the slaves had been loaded on to the Maria, some difficulty arose about the donkeys. One of these slipped its load, and another began to buck and evinced an inclination to leap into the sea with its precious burden. The rearguard of hunters ran to get hold of it, when suddenly there was a splash.

"The brute's in !" I thought to myself, till a shout told me that not the ass, but Hassan had departed over the cliff's edge. Watching his opportunity and being, it was clear, a first-rate swimmer, he had flung himself backwards in the midst of the confusion, and, falling into deep water, promptly dived. About twenty yards from the shore he came up for a moment, then dived again, heading for the island. I dare say I could have potted him through the head with a snap shot, but somehow I did not like to kill a man swimming for his life as though he were a hippopotamus or a crocodile. Moreover, the boldness of the manœuvre appealed to me. So I refrained from firing and called to the others to do likewise.

As our late host approached the shore of the island, I saw Arabs running down the rocks to help him out of the water. Either they had not left the place, or had reoccupied it as soon as H.M.S. *Crocodile* had vanished with her prize. As it was clear that to recapture Hassan would involve an attack upon the garrison of the island, which we were in no position to carry out, I gave orders for the march to be resumed. These, the difficulty with the donkey being overcome, were obeyed at once.

It was fortunate that we did not delay, for scarcely had the caravan got into motion, when the Arabs on the island began to fire at us. Luckily no one was hit, and we were soon round a point under cover; also their shooting was as bad as usual. One missile, however—it was a pot-leg—struck a donkeyload and smashed a bottle of good brandy and a tin of preserved butter. This made me angry; so, motioning to the others to proceed, I took shelter behind a tree and waited till a torn and dirty turban, which I recognised as that of Hassan, poked above a rock. Well, I put a bullet through that turban, for I saw the thing fly, but unfortunately not through the head beneath it. Having left this P.P.C. card on our host, I bolted from the rock and caught up the others.

Presently we passed round the village; through it I would not go for fear of an It was quite a big place ambuscade. enclosed with a strong fence, but hidden from the sea by a rise in the intervening land. In the centre was a large Easternlooking house, where doubtless Hassan dwelt with his harem. After we had gone a little way further, to my astonishment I saw flames breaking out from the palm-leaf roof of this house. At the time I could not imagine how this happened, but when, a day or two later, I observed Hans wearing a pair of large and very handsome gold pendants in his ears and a gold bracelet on his wrist, and found that he and one of the hunters were extremely well set up in the matter of British sovereigns-well, I had my doubts. In due course the truth came out. He and the hunter, an adventurous spirit, slipped through a gate in the fence without being observed, ran across the deserted village to the house, stole the ornaments and money from the women's apartments, and, as they departed, fired the place "in exchange for the bottle of good brandy," as Hans explained.

I was inclined to be angry, but, after all, as we had been fired on, Hans's exploit became an act of war rather than a theft. So I made him and his companion divide the gold equally with the rest of the hunters, who, no doubt, had kept their eyes conveniently shut, not forgetting Sammy, and said no more. They netted eight pounds apiece, which pleased them very much. In addition to this I gave one pound each, or, rather, goods to that value, to the bearers as their share of the loot.

Hassan, I may remark, was evidently a great agriculturist, for the gardens which he worked by slave labour were beautiful, and must have brought him in a large revenue.

Passing through these gardens, we came to sloping land covered with bush. Here the track was not too good, for the creepers hampered our progress. Indeed, I was very glad when, towards sunset, we reached the crest of a hill and emerged upon a tableland which was almost clear of trees and rose gradually till it met the horizon. In that bush we might easily have been attacked, but on this open country I was not so much afraid, since the loss to the Arabs would have been great before we were overpowered. As a matter of fact, although spies dogged us for days, no assault was ever attempted.

Finding a convenient place by a stream, we camped for the night, but, as it was so fine, did not pitch the tents. Afterwards I was sorry that we had not gone further from the water, since the mosquitoes bred by millions in the marshes bordering the stream. and gave us a dreadful time. On poor Stephen, fresh from England, they fell with peculiar ferocity, with the result that in the morning, what between the bruises left by Hassan and their bites, he was a spectacle for men and angels. Another thing that broke our rest was the necessity of keeping a strict watch in case the slave-traders should elect to attack us in the hours of darkness; also to guard against the possibility of our bearers running away and perhaps stealing the goods. It is true that, before they went to sleep, I explained to them very clearly that any of them who attempted to give us the slip would certainly be seen and shot, whereas, if they remained with us, they would be treated with every kindness. Thev answered through the two Mazitu that they had nowhere to go, and did not wish to fall again into the power of Hassan, of whom they spoke literally with shudders, pointing the while to their scarred backs and the marks of the slave yokes upon their necks. Their protestations seemed and indeed proved to be sincere, but of this, of course, we could not then be sure.

As I was engaged at sunrise in making certain that the donkeys had not strayed and generally that all was well, I noted through the thin mist a little white object, which at first I thought was a small bird sitting on an upright stick about fifty yards from the camp. I went towards it and discovered that it was not a bird, but a folded piece of paper stuck in a cleft wand, such as natives often use for the carrying of letters. I opened the paper and with great difficulty, for the writing within was bad Portuguese, read as follows :—

" ENGLISH DEVILS,-

"Do not think that you have escaped me. I know where you are going, and if you live through the journey, it will be but to die at my hands, after all. I tell you that I have at my command three hundred brave men armed with guns, who worship Allah and thirst for the blood of Christian dogs. With these I will follow, and if you fall into my hands alive, you shall learn what it is to die by fire or pinned over antheaps in the sun. Let us see if your English man-of-war will help you then, or your false God either. Misfortune go with you, whiteskinned robbers of honest men !"

This pleasing epistle was unsigned, but its anonymous author was not hard to identify. I showed it to Stephen, who was so infuriated at its contents that he managed to dab some ammoniar with which he was treating his mosquito bites into his eye. When at length the pain was soothed by bathing, we concocted this answer :—

"MURDERER, known among men as Hassanben-Mohammed—

"Truly we sinned in not hanging you when you were in our power. O wolf who grows fat upon the blood of the innocent, this is a fault that we shall not commit again. Your death is near to you and, we believe, at our hands. Come with all your villains whenever you will. The more there are of them, the better we shall be pleased, who would rather rid the world of many fiends than of a few.

" Till we meet again.

"Allan Quatermain. "Stephen Somers."

"Neat, if not Christian," I said when I had read the letter over.

"Yes," replied Stephen, "but perhaps just a little bombastic in tone. If that gentleman did arrive with three hundred armed meneh?"

"Then, my boy," I answered, "in this way or in that we shall thrash him. I don't often have an inspiration, but I've got one now, and it is to the effect that Mr. Hassan has not very long to live, and that we shall be intimately connected with his end. Wait till you have seen a slave caravan, and you will understand my feelings. Also I know these gentry. That little prophecy of ours will get upon his nerves and give him a foretaste of things. Hans, go and set this letter in that cleft stick. The postman will call for it before long."

As it happened, within a few days we did see a slave caravan, some of the merchandise of the estimable Hassan.

We had been making good progress through a beautiful and healthy country, steering almost due west, or rather a little to the The land was undulating north of west. and rich, well-watered and only bush-clad in the neighbourhood of the streams, the higher ground being open, of a park-like character, and dotted here and there with trees. It was evident that once, and not very long ago, the population had been dense, for we came to the remains of many villages, or rather towns with large market-places. Now, however, these were burned with fire, or deserted, or occupied only by a few old bodies who got a living from the overgrown gardens. These poor people, who sat desolate and crooning in the sun, or perhaps worked feebly in the once fertile fields, would fly screaming at our approach, for to them men armed with guns must of necessity be slave-traders.

Still, from time to time we contrived to catch some of them, and through one member of our party or the other to get at their stories. Really it was all one story. The slaving Arabs, on this pretext or on that, had set tribe against tribe. Then they sided with the stronger and conquered the weaker by aid of their terrible guns, killing out the old folk and taking the young men, women, and children-except the infants, whom they butchered—to be sold as slaves. It seemed that the business had begun about twenty years before, when Hassan-ben-Mohammed and his companions arrived at Kilwa and drove away the missionary who had built a station there.

At first this trade was extremely easy and profitable, since the raw material lay near at hand in plenty. By degrees, however, the neighbouring communities had been worked out. Countless numbers of them were killed, while the pick of the population passed under the slave yoke, and those of them who survived vanished in ships to unknown lands. Thus it came about that the slavers were obliged to go further afield and even to conduct their raids upon the borders of the territory of the great Mazitu people, the inland race of Zulu origin of whom I have spoken. According to our informants, it was even rumoured that they proposed shortly to attack these Mazitus in force, relying on their guns to give them the victory and open to them a new and almost inexhaustible store of splendid human mer-Meanwhile they were cleaning chandise. out certain small tribes which hitherto had escaped them, owing to the fact that they had their residence in bush or among difficult hills.

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"I heard him call to me in a horrified voice."

The track we followed was the recognised slave road. Of this we soon became aware by the numbers of skeletons which we found lying in the tall grass at its side, some of them with heavy slave-sticks still upon their shoulder bones and the palm-fibre ropes about their wrists. These, I suppose, had died from exhaustion, but others, as their split skulls showed, had been disposed of by their captors.

On the eighth day of our march we struck the track of a slave caravan. It had been travelling towards the coast, but for some reason or other had turned back. This may have been because its leaders had been warned of the approach of our party. Or perhaps they had heard that another caravan, which was at work in a different district, was drawing near, bringing its slieaves with it, and wished to wait for its arrival in order that they might join forces.

The spoor of these people was easy to llow. First we found the body of a boy follow. about ten. Then vultures revealed to us the remains of two young men, one of whom had been shot and the other killed by a blow from an axe. Their corpses were roughly hidden beneath some grass, I know not why. A mile or two further on we heard a child wailing, and found it by following its cries. It was a little girl of about four, who had been pretty, though now she was but a living skeleton. When she saw us, she scrambled away on all fours like a monkey. Stephen followed her, while I, sick at heart, went to get a tin of preserved milk from our stores. Presently I heard him call to me in a horrified voice. Rather reluctantly, for I knew that he must have found something dreadful, I pushed my way through the bush to where he was. There, bound to the trunk of a tree, sat a young woman, evidently the mother of the child, for it clung to her leg.

Thank God, she was still living, though she must have died before another day dawned. We cut her loose, and the Zulu hunters, who are kind folk enough when they are not at war, carried her to camp. In the end, with much trouble, we saved the lives of that mother and child. I sent for the two Mazitus, with whom I could by now talk fairly well, and asked them why the slavers did these things.

They shrugged their shoulders, and one of them answered with a rather dreadful laugh—

"Because, Chief, these Arabs, being blackhearted, kill those who can walk no more, or tie them up to die. If they let them go, they might recover and escape, and it makes the Arabs sad that those who have been their slaves should live to be free and happy."

"Does it? Does it, indeed?" exclaimed Stephen, with a snort of rage that reminded me of his father. "Well, if ever I get a chance, I'll make them sad with a vengeance!"

Stephen was a tender-natured young man, and, for all his soft and indolent ways, an awkward customer when roused.

Within forty-eight hours he got his chance, thus. That day we camped early for two reasons. The first was that the woman and child we had rescued were so weak they could not walk without rest, and we had no men to spare to carry them; the second, that we came to an ideal spot to pass the night. It was, as usual, a deserted village, through which ran a beautiful stream of water. Here we took possession of some outlying huts with a fence round them, and as Mavovo had managed to shoot a fat eland cow and her half-grown calf, we prepared to have a regular feast. Whilst Sammy was making some broth for the rescued woman, and Stephen and I smoked our pipes and watched him, Hans slipped through the broken gate of the thorn fence, or boma, and announced that Arabs were coming, two lots of them, with many slaves.

We ran out to look, and saw that, as he had said, two caravans were approaching; or, rather, had reached the village, but at some distance from us, and were now camping on what had once been the marketplace. One of these was that whose track we had followed, although during the last few hours of our march we had struck away from it, chiefly because we could not bear such sights as I have described. It seemed to comprise about two hundred and fifty slaves and over forty guards, all black men carrying guns, and most of them, by their dress, Arabs or bastard Arabs. In the second caravan, which approached from another direction, were not more than one hundred slaves and about twenty or thirty captors.

"Now," I said, "let us eat our dinner, and then, if you like, we will go to call upon those gentlemen, just to show that we are not afraid of them. Hans, get the flag and tie it to the top of that tree; it will show them to what country we belong."

Up went the Union Jack duly, and presently, through our glasses, we saw the slavers running about in a state of excitement; also we saw the poor slaves turn and stare at the bit of flapping bunting, and then begin to talk to each other. It struck me as possible that some one among their number had seen a Union Jack in the hands of an English traveller, or had heard of it as flying upon ships or at points on the coast, and what it meant to slaves. Or they may have understood some of the remarks of the Arabs, which, no doubt, were pointed and explanatory. At any rate, they turned and stared till the Arabs ran among them with sjambocks—that is, whips of hippopotamus hide—and suppressed their animated conversation with many blows.

At first I thought that they would break camp and march away; indeed, they began to make preparations to do this, then abandoned the idea, probably because the slaves were exhausted, and there was no other water they could reach before nightfall. In the end they settled down and lit cooking fires. Also, as I observed, they took precautions against attack by stationing sentries and forcing the slaves to construct a boma of thorns about their camp.

"Well," said Stephen, when we had finished our dinner, "are you ready for that call?"

"No," I answered, "I do not think that I am. I have been considering things, and concluded that we had better leave well alone. By this time those Arabs will know all the story of our dealings with their worthy master, Hassan, for no doubt he has sent messengers to them. Therefore, if we go to their camp, they may shoot us at sight. Or, if they receive us well, they may offer hospitality and poison us, or cut our throats suddenly. Our position might be better; still, it is one that I believe they would find difficult to take. So, in my opinion, we had better stop still and await developments."

Stephen grumbled something about my being over-cautious, but I took no heed of him. One thing I did do, however. Sending for Hans, I told him to take one of the Mazitu—I dared not risk them both, for they were our guides—and another of the natives whom we had borrowed from Hassan, a bold fellow, who knew all the local languages, and creep down to the slavers' camp as soon as it was quite dark. There I ordered him to find out what he could, and, if possible, to mix with the slaves and explain that we were their friends. Hans nodded, for this was exactly the kind of task that appealed to him, and went off to make his preparations.

Stephen and I also made some preparations in the way of strengthening our defences, building large watch-fires and setting sentries. The night fell, and Hans with his companions departed stealthily as snakes. The silence was intense, save for the occasional wailings of the slaves, who now and again broke out in bursts of melancholy sound, "La-lu La-lua!" and then died away, to be followed by horrid screams as the Arabs laid their lashes upon some poor wretch. Once, too, a shot was fired.

"They have seen Hans," said Stephen.

"I think not," I answered, "for, if so, there would have been more than one shot. Either it was an accident, or they were murdering a slave."

After this, nothing more happened for a long while, till at length Hans seemed to rise out of the ground in front of me, and behind him I saw the figures of the Mazitu and the other man.

"Tell your story," I said.

"Baas, it is this. Between us we have learned everything. The Arabs know all about you and what men you have. Hassan has sent them orders to kill you. It is well that you did not go to visit them, for certainly you would have been murdered. We crept near and overheard their talk. They purpose to attack us at dawn to-morrow morning unless we leave this place before, which they will know of, as we are being watched."

"And, if so, what then ?" I asked.

"Then, Baas, they will attack us as we are making up the caravan, or immediately afterwards as we begin to march."

"Indeed. Anything more, Hans?"

"Yes, Baas. These two men crept among the slaves and spoke with them. They are very sad, those slaves, and many of them have died of heart-pain because they have been taken from their homes and do not know where they are going. I saw one die just now-a young woman. She was talking to another woman and seemed quite well, only tired, till suddenly she said in a loud voice : 'I am going to die, that I may come back as a spirit and bewitch these devils till they are spirits too.' Then she called upon the fetish of her tribe, put her hands to her breast, and fell down dead. At least," added Hans, spitting reflectively, "she did not fall quite down, because the slave-stick held her head off the ground. The Arabs were very angry, both because she had cursed them and was dead. One of them came and kicked her body and afterwards shot her little boy, who was sick, because the mother had cursed them. But fortunately he did

not see us, because we were in the dark far from the fire."

"Anything more, Hans?"

"One thing, Baas. These two men lent the knives you gave them to two of the boldest among the slaves, that they might cut the cords of the slave-sticks and the other cords with which they are tied, and then pass them down the lines, that their brothers might do the same. But perhaps the Arabs will find it out, and then the Mazitu and the other must lose their knives. That is all. Has the Baas a little tobacco?"

"Now, Stephen," I said, when Hans had gone and I had explained everything, "there are two courses open to us. Either we can try to give these gentlemen the slip at once, in which case we must leave that woman and child to their fate, or we can stop where we are and wait to be attacked."

"I won't run," said Stephen sullenly; "it would be cowardly to desert that poor creature. Also we should have a worse chance marching. Remember Hans said that they are watching us."

"Then you would wait to be attacked."

"Isn't there a third alternative, Quatermain? To attack them?"

"That's an idea," I said. "Let us send for Mavovo."

Presently he came and sat down in front of us, while I set out the case to him.

"It is the fashion of my people to attack rather than to be attacked, and yet, my father, in this case my heart is against it. Hans"—he called him Inhlatu, a Zulu word which means Spotted Snake, that was the Hottentot's Kaffir name—"says that there are quite sixty of these yellow dogs, all armed with guns, whereas we have not more than fifteen, for we cannot trust the slave men. Also he says that they are within a strong fence and awake, with spies out, so that it will be difficult to surprise them. But here, father, we are in a strong fence and cannot be surprised. Also men who torture and kill women and children, except in war, must, I think, be cowards, and will come on faintly against good shooting, if, indeed, they come at all. Therefore I say : 'Wait till the buffalo shall either charge or run.' But the word is with you, Macumazahn, wise Watcher-by-Night, not with me, your hunter. Speak, you who are old in war, and I will obey."

"You argue well," I answered; "also another reason comes to my mind. Those Arab brutes may get behind the slaves, of whom we should butcher a lot without hurting them. Stephen, I think we had better see the thing through here."

"All right, Quatermain. Only I hope that Mavovo is wrong in thinking that those blackguards may change their minds and run away."

"Really, young man, you are becoming very bloodthirsty—for an orchid-grower," I-remarked, looking at him. "Now, for my part, I devoutly hope that Mavovo is right, for let me tell you, if he isn't, it may be a nasty job."

"I've always been peaceful enough up to the present," replied Stephen. "But the sight of those unhappy wretches of slaves with their heads cut open, and of the woman tied to a tree to starve——"

"Make you wish to usurp the functions of God Almighty," I said. "Well, it is a natural impulse, and perhaps, in the circumstances, one that will not displease Him. And now, as we have made up our minds what we are going to do, let's get to business, so that these Arab gentlemen may find their breakfast ready when they come to call."

(To be continued.)





PHOENIX AND THE PALM THE

By CAMPBELL MACCULLOCH

ILLUSTRATED BY CYRUS CUNEO

THE only thing that ever took a free white man to San Felipe del Monte was a combination of circumstances over which he had no manner of control. The foreign population was composed largely of gentlemen who had appeared off the bar in a rusty fruit steamer before daylight. They usually came ashore hurriedly, breathed sighs of intense relief, and waited more or less patiently until their friends had compromised with the authorities, or the Statute of Limitations had done its leisurely work. In the former case, they hung about the

wireless station and officially avoided the consulates; in the second, they avoided the wireless establishment, and spent their days checking off the consulate calendar; in the interim they assisted the local patriots to conspire more or less successfully against the existing Government. Conspiring was good at all times, for San Felipe del Monte was the capital, the more or less uneasy seat of affairs, and looked like a dish of pistachio ice-cream sprinkled with bleached almonds. Besides, there was a river that led back into the chain of mountains that seemed as if they Copyright, by Campbell MacCulloch, in the United States of America.

had huddled together to keep the town from escaping to the westward. Among these, revolutions could be prepared and cooked to a satisfying crisp. The rest of existence was composed of palms, soft breezes, much heat, music on the municipal plaza, longing homeward glances, cool drinks, and the visit of the semi-monthly banana boats. So much for the *mise en scène*.

At five o'clock on the morning of the day upon which Guantepec threw off the yoke of the oppressor for the third time within as many years, Beverley Beauchamp sat up on the white sand beach and rubbed the rheum and cobwebs from his bloodshot eyes. There may have been more forlorn specimens of white humanity along the Central American coast, but assuredly they would have been hard to find. Briefly, Beverley was about the last word in applied indigency.

With a smothered groan he affixed a blackrimmed monocle in its place and arose shakingly to his feet by the primitive method of the infant-that is, he turned over upon all fours and elevated his hinder portion The cow also performs this feat most first. successfully. With a shaking hand over his burning eyes, he staggered up the beach to the row of one-storey dobe structures where the natives sold aguardiente and some less potent spirits. At the edge of the white roadway he paused, considering which of the places he would make his goal. As an afterthought, he turned out his tattered pockets and searched the million wrinkles of his garments. He produced nothing but trickling streams of sand.

"Stony!" he croaked hoarsely. "Not a stiver!"

Painfully he made his way to the nearest bodega, where a negro in white cotton shirt and ragged linen trousers, held in place by a leather belt, was sprinkling the hard-baked pavement from a green-painted earthen pot, and essayed to pass him.

"Vamos! Perro!" cried the native with a scowl, and promptly slung Beauchamp into the middle of the roadway, where he fell again upon his hands and knees. There was no word of astonishment or resentment even from the human wreck as he painfully picked himself up and staggered off to try in another direction.

Six months before, he had been landed on the beach at night from a boat manned by blue-clad silent men. Outside the bar a great dim grey shape rolled silently in the ground swell, and across the tumbling waters the faint roar of an exhaust pipe came shoreward. In the morning there was nothing on the shimmering horizon, and Beverley Beauchamp was seated at a table in a *rafé* greatly disused by the populace, drinking raw *ron bacardi*. As Biggar, the British Consul, expressed it—

"The beggar's as noisy as a stewed oyster, but not quite so sociable."

No man had ten words from the new arrival during the month his money lasted. When it was finished, he became by slow degrees a nuisance that touched the nerves of every foreigner in the place. He kept to himself, apparently enshrouded in a determined hopelessness that was as irritating as bad language, and while he never asked for liquor, he generally seemed to find a way to get it. No man knew where or how he lived, nor did he ever try for work.

Within two months of his arrival, the spectacle of Beverley Beauchamp thrown. from even native drinking-places became White men turned away in common. disgust, and inwardly fumed to see one of their breed kicked about by filthy peons, while the native population grinned de-lightedly at each fresh humiliation. The derelict had become a sore-lipped jest, and slipped even further down. Continually he clung to the monocle and a half-puzzled expression. His feet were bare, his hair ragged and unkempt, but he was always cleanly shaved, and the mystery of how this was accomplished was great until Schmidt, the agent for the German rubber planters in the interior, came upon him painfully bent over the mirror of a pool, and scraping himself with a piece of bacon rind and a broken bottle, whereat Schmidt went off to the club and kept silent two hours. At the end of that time he arose, knocked the ashes from his pipe, and nodded his head slowly.

"He vos a chentleman !" he informed the wall.

On this particular morning of glorious liberty, Beauchamp wandered in a living flame of agony from one resort to another, begging, pleading, beseeching for just one drop of liquor. The sun rose higher, and he crawled along with the dancing devils, aching of thirst, deep in the backs of his eyes. His baked and parching throat cried fiercely for relief. Place after place he tried, to be thrust aside with jeers and even blows.

The streets and drinking-places were filled with chattering groups and shrill, excited laughter, for the old Government had fied when the liberators appeared at sunrise; not a shot had been fired, and but one bugle blew. The cause of glory had triumphed

with not even a barked knuckle to show for a casualty, while the national armadillo squeaked his joyous song of freedom. Time after time Beauchamp had tried to worm himself into one of these joyous groups, only to be pushed ignominiously forth again. In one place a peon slung a pail of dirty water over him as he lay sprawling in the dirt, and O'Reilly, the good-natured scamp who offended high art and good taste by conducting the local photograph gallery until affairs should have quieted down at home, knocked the jester through an adjacent doorway with a clean left-handed jolt, and scowled as the derelict picked his shaking way to his feet and shuffled off.

"White man he is, an' th' divil take him," muttered the Irishman, looking after the other; " but I feel as if somewan had slapped me ould mother's face whiniver they give him th' boot!"

All the morning the sorry jest of San Felipe del Monte wandered feverishly about the rum shops that lined the water front and plaza, and the sun beat down upon his unprotected head. Once, in sheer desperation, he gulped some water from a public fountain, and the spasms that followed left him weak and doubled up with pain. He was panting like an animal, and his swollen tongue worked horribly about his blistered lips.

"Just a drop !" he murmured continually. Just one drop !"

From far up the gentle hill where stood the Casa Blanca, the white marble Presidential palace, there came the sound of a band playing the national air, and, for no apparent reason, the sound seemed to attract him so that he set himself painfully to follow the white-paved avenue that led upward. He stopped many times to rest. The staggering progress, the black-rimmed monocle, and the half-puzzled, dim expression of the face, excited even the dogs to derision, and these snapped idly at his heels. From far above him came a bugle call, clear as a tone of a bell, and then the smart roll of a drum. For an instant he stood erect, but drooped again as the sound ceased abruptly. At the great gates to the palace he paused, and, finding the sentry drinking with some comrades in the shadow of the orange trees, he slunk within, hardly knowing where or why.

In the great banquet hall within the palace the new Government was inaugurating itself into office with a cheer and such champagne as the former Administration had been forced to leave behind, and it may be that the rum-crazed brain of Beauchamp ferreted out the drinking quite subconsciously. In the lands just north of the equator, but three things are really necessary to the founding of a state or maintaining social prestige champagne, music, and a sword. Given the time to use them, much may be accomplished.

The former President of Guantepec, who was just then coaxing extraordinary speed out of a Spanish mule over the mountain trails, had been somewhat of a dandy, and had indulged his æsthetic tastes by the purchase of a marine confection called She was some fifty feet on the the *Dolores*. water-line, sloop-rigged, and carried an auxiliary engine for calm emergencies; altogether, she was as dainty a bit of shipyard product as one would wish to see. Having hastily adopted the overland route away from a stone wall and firing squad, the former owner had naturally left the yacht behind. She was now, therefore, the property of the Government, and lay in the sheltered mouth of the river.

The new Administration had settled the more important affairs, dealing with division of the spoils and offices, and was now in mood for lighter things, such as had to do with the welfare of the country, and whether iguana steak should be served with fruit and claret, or with lettuce and rum, a somewhat fine point. So it was that the President, an agile, wiry person with a black beard of the same texture, and a neat French trick of shrugging the shoulders, arose unsteadily to his feet and addressed his compatriots in arms and spoliation.

"Brothers glorious," he exclaimed, being upheld by the Secretary of State on one side, and an inverted musket upon the other, " brothers glorious, and camarades inseparable, thees day of libert' have we achiev' victory stupendous an' mos' gran'. Viva la Wow! In all things, my fr'ens, libertad ! have we advancement. A great army have Mos' noble an' victorious commanders, we. therefore "-here he tapped himself upon the breast and swelled up two inches—" and much soldiers courageous. But, camarades glorious and brothers inseparable, one theeng we have No sheep for fight on which to fly our not. thrice glorious banner of the land. Those so great sister-countrees, Angleterre, France, America, they send the great sheeps to lie without, an' we mos' fire salute from our shore!" Here he burst into tears and sobbed convulsively for several minutes at the thought of his country's fearful deprivation. "It ees time, camarades and compatriots, that we shall have the navy. Now ! "...

Cheers burst forth irregularly from the remainder of the Government, and the President saw he had touched a popular chord.

"The start to make lies ready within our han'," he declared, opening and closing his fist dramatically. "The cruel tyrant so malignant, who now has fled, has lef' behind hees sheep. We all have seen her. She s'all begin the glorious, magnificat navy of Guantepec! The sheep we have, but not the man! To us eet ees not give that we s'all of comfort be upon the sea, but to others the rolling beelow "-he waved his hands about—"ees but a pleasure. Who, then, s'all we have for that thrice brav' commandante of thees sheep, gentlemen? I ask you. S'all it be-_____,,

It makes little difference whom the President had in mind for the glory he had named, for from the floor beside him arose the ragged, tottering figure of Beverley Beauchamp.

The President stared, with extended hand and dropping jaw. The Secretary of State closed his eyes and shivered. Beauchamp swayed and glared horribly; then his eyes fell upon the President's brimming glass, and he seized it. He drank feverishly and grasped another. As he dropped the second with a crash upon the floor, the Secretary of the Treasury, with a mocking bow, presented him with a full bottle and a glass. The Minister of War took in the situation, and, with a wide grin, placed a chair.

"'Ave some seat, señor—capitan !" he finished, in a vivid burst of enthusiasm, and the table took up the word.

"Ho! El capitan !" was the cry. With sincere admiration in his somewhat florid face, the President placed a hand upon the proud shoulder of the Minister of War.

"Buenos!" he declared. "Eet ees mos' fit. You have nominate, I s'all appoint! From the sea he comes, to the sea s'all he go!"

Perhaps it was the sense of absurd contrast between the flamboyant and imaginative position to be filled, and the abject misery of the object suggested, that inflamed the temperament of these emotional liberators. So close to great ideas does lie the ridiculous. At any rate, pens, ink, and official paper, together with the great seals, were sent for post haste, and, with great labour and much composite advice, the first naval commission in the history of Guantepec was drawn up, signed, sealed, and witnessed by the entire Government present.

The President managed to erect himself

with difficulty, and amiably navigated down the table to where Beauchamp sat, dully clasping the bottle. In his upraised hand the chief executive bore the commission, and in his eyes were tears. His lips moved, and in more sober company it would have been agreed that the thrice noble accident of fortune was talking to himself. He halted before Beauchamp and regarded him affectionately and owlishly.

"In the name of thees, our mos' 'dorable lan' of liberty, I gif into your han's, señor, thees emblem of her trus'. You have been appoint the capitan ; the good sheep *Dolores* ees yours. Go, gallant camarade ; to you ees confide our honour ! Mos' noble protector of Guantepec, your sheep awaits you ! In the name of our brotherhood, *por Dios*, *por libertad*, go !"

A feeble scattering cheer trickled from such members of the new Government of liberty as were still awake and semi-sensible.

The President gravely placed within the arms of the dazed Beverley the commission and the two bottles of wine that were left upon the table, assisted the unfortunate bit of wreckage to his feet, and turned him in the direction of the door. Together they steered a wavering course toward the portal, where a squint-eyed sentry slept against the wall. The President pushed the new commander of the fleet into the corridor and waved his hand.

"Attencion!" he cried. "Salute el capitan, muchachos!" and forthwith subsided gracefully upon the floor.

Between the lines of wondering, nondescript soldiery the dazed, limping, swaying figure staggered out into the sunlight of the marble portico.

Surely no man may say when his fellow shall have touched the depths of degradation from which there may be no return. Always, until the final bugle call, there is the chance that some fertile spot in the bruised and fevered soul will receive the seed of retrieval, and grow fresh and clear again in response to the single whispered word.

In the wide portico Beauchamp leaned against a pillar and looked down at the white houses below him. Far away over the red roofs he could see the estuary, and close among the sheltering palms shone the glistening sides of the little *Dolores*. Then his glance sought the roll of paper he carried, and into his bloodshot, burning eyes there crept great welling, blinding, scorching tears. With a crash, the two bottles fell upon the marble pavement, and the bubbling liquor went hissing unheeded down the broad steps. Beauchamp clutched the paper to his breast.

"Good Heavens !" he cried aloud. "My -good-Heavens !"

Stumbling, he made his way down the steps and out along the curving pathway to the white shell road. The sentry at the gate shrugged his shoulders as the tattered, weeping figure passed him. "Caramba!" he muttered to himself,

"*Caramba*!" he muttered to himself, gazing curiously after the other man. "All are crazed, these gringos! Each one!"

From beneath the orange trees, where lounged a group of soldiers, came a mocking cry.

" Loco ! Loco ! " it rose.

The foreign residents maintained a club on a modest scale over the portrait gallery where O'Reilly produced abusive caricatures of the native populace, swearing continually during the process. It was a long, cool, high-ceiled room with many windows and six electric fans imported with great ceremony by Dan Cleveland, who gave his address very solemnly as "Ohio," and acted as shipping agent for the coffee planters. The electric fans were operated without cost from the dynamo of the wireless station a hundred feet away. A Japanese artist who had thoughtlessly carved a compatriot into saddle-coloured souvenir shipping tags in Mexico City was in smiling and efficient charge.

Visiting white men, as a matter of course, were conducted to the club and installed on the wide sheltered gallery that faced the sea, and there fed a rather neat effect in dynamics produced by the judicious admixture of rum, cocoanut juice, sugared claret, and one lime. It followed, therefore, that when the *Esperanza* of the Blanco Line dropped her hook off the bar the morning after Beauchamp's appointment, the single keen-eyed and alert passenger who came ashore in the purser's boat should be conducted by the British Consul to the club.

"My name's Burnham," he had said to Biggar, when he had appeared in the doorway of the consulate, "and I'm down here to look after a financial matter. I dropped in on you to get a line off who's who in this centre of progress, and perhaps take a peep into the social register."

"Looking for anybody?" asked Biggar, when he had bestowed the customary chcroot upon his visitor, and the latter raised his eyes quickly. What he saw in the Consul's made him throw up his head with a laugh. "All right," he said whimsically. "I see you're awake and kicking. Confidentially, I'm looking for a fellow who was just a little careless with some funds that had been entrusted to him."

Biggar stood up and took his Panama from a peg.

"Come on over to the club and I'll introduce you to some of the fellows worth knowing. There's no need to advertise the fact that you're—..."

"I think we'll say I'm a shoe salesman," the new arrival suggested a little grimly.

"Suit yourself," returned the Consul. "I don't mind. There's been no new arrival here for months, so perhaps you'll want to wait."

Seven men loafed comfortably in the deep wicker chairs and sipped from seven long glasses.

"I wonder what particularly fool thing the new chorus up yonder will feel called on to perpetrate," said Jack Manning, the local manager for the Atlas Fruit Company. "It's even betting they'll slap an export tax on pineapples, and then I'll have to reach over and tap them on the wrist."

He lifted his hand, and the Jap replenished his glass.

"I'm offering odds they get into a row with Honduras before three months are out," said Hemenway, the wireless operator, lazily. He was a tall Canadian with a tired drawl and a horrible hunger for curried fish. "There's that boundary dispute old Rosario patched up last year. As soon as the Honduras outfit finds out there's been a change over here, they'll be perfectly safe to open it up again with a machete or a breechloading can-opener. And this gang is simply spoiling for a fight."

Biggar nodded and stretched his legs out comfortably.

"My last advices tell me that Honduras has picked up a gunboat from the Thornycrofts. If they don't blow it up before they want to use it, we'll be having them stand off out there and pot-shot us," he said cheerfully. "A few shells chucked in here would make this second act set look like a Swiss cheese. Hello! Who's this?" he finished abruptly, sitting up as running footsteps were heard on the stairway.

"O'Reilly coming for a drink," commented Hemenway.

The photographer dashed into the room with bulging eyes.

with bulging eyes. "For th' love av Lucy," he cried, "come out here an' take wan look ! Th' worrld is topsy-turvy, an' I lift six nigatives av local beauties sp'ilin' in th' deviloper below! Tell me, am I crazy?"

They crowded to the rail of the gallery and peered into the street. Toward them came an erect figure clad in well-fitting white duck, carefully pipe-clayed shoes, and a white cap. The man walked smartly, but there was an air of indecision in his progress, as if he had but recently arisen from an illness.

"Who is it,?" asked Dan Cleveland, shading his eyes.

"Beauchamp, or I'm a liar!" ejaculated Hemenway, in an awed voice. "Heavens, what's happened?"

The man below glanced up instinctively as he came toward them, feeling the stare of the many eyes, and flushed deeply. He made no sign of recognition, however, to the wondering faces above him, but stepped steadily by without a turn of his head. The others followed him amazedly with their eyes until he turned off down a narrow street that led back from the beach, then they stared at each other, and, wordless, returned to the big room. The man who called himself Burnham remained upon the gallery, looking after Beauchamp. Finally he came inside and looked about.

"How do I get a wireless off from here?" he asked, with elaborate carelessness.

"I'm the goat," answered Hemenway. "Hop along over with me."

Five minutes after they had gone, Jim Anderson, who had spent seven years in San Felipe del Monte as port doctor, came in and dropped angrily into a chair.

"Bring me something wet," he ordered, and turned to the others. "I suppose you've heard of the blackguardly slap Sorolla and his minstrel troupe passed us," he went on gloomily.

"Not a word ! What is it?" they chorussed.

"That poor devil Beauchamp seems to have wandered in where the precious gang of highbinders were celebrating their 'mos' glorious victory.' He was looking for booze, I suppose, and they commissioned him captain of the navy," he finished savagely.

"Navy ! What navy ?" they demanded.

"That's it! What navy? It's an infernal outrage, and I don't mind telling that monkey on a stick so, either," Anderson went on wrathfully. "In their drunken orgy they decided to make Rosario's boat, the *Dolores*, the nucleus of a navy. Can you beat it? And—it makes me boil! Poor beggar ! It's bad enough to see him kicked about, but I'll be hanged if I want to see him made a stuffed joke for a lot of spiggoty burglars! Every bally town on the coast will laugh at him!"

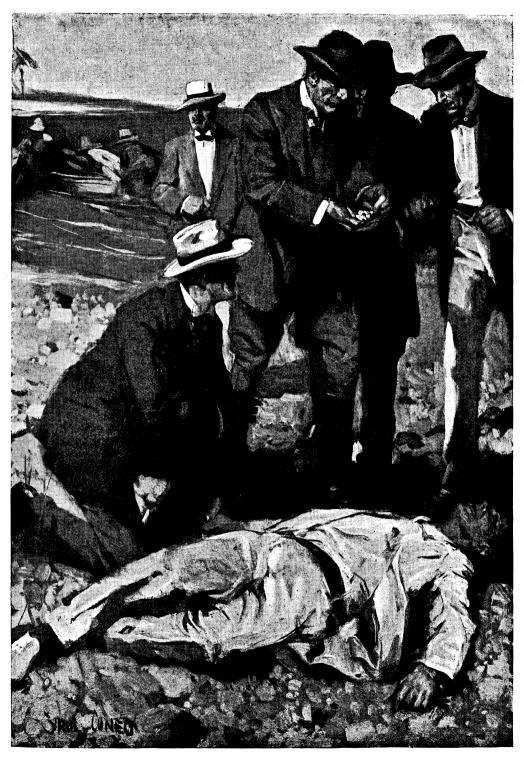
Biggar filled his pipe slowly and did not look up.

"He passed here a few minutes ago, doc.," he said quietly. "I don't believe you need waste much sympathy on his case. He seems to have had the one jolt that was needed to shove him straight. Somebody trusted him." He paused to apply a match to the black bowl. "You never can tell what queer twists a fellow's brain will take, but it's my idea that Sorolla and his comic opera chorus did us all a mighty good turn. We'd have tried something of the sort if any of us had possessed the refined instincts of a trained hog. Think what that poor devil's been through !" He looked up as Burnham entered the room, and his mouth set in hard lines. The new arrival dropped his keen eyes before the Consul's steady gaze.

When the new Government effected a reorientation of itself and its surroundings. which was when the former incumbents' wine bins were empty, it looked about, individually and collectively, and began to reconstruct the incidents attending the glorious dawn of liberty. Among the first of the dim memories of those fevered days to skip into the mental foreground of President Sorolla was the appointment of Beverley Beauchamp as commander of the fleet-count 'em ! One ! As he recalled the circumstances, a flush of red stole coyly in and out of his wiry whiskers, and he scuffled with his feet. Somehow, from this sober angle, the navy programme did not seem quite so glorious; in fact, it bore traces of dangerous He clapped his hands to summon absurdity. an attendant.

There was just a chance that the matter had gone no further than the banquet hall, he thought hopefully. It was also just possible that the pobrecito diablo had crept into a corner somewhere and quietly drunk himself away. In any case, it would be well to search for that so foolish commission and to destroy it pronto. Some of these insane foreigners might misconstrue the matter. Madre de Dios! Yes, they might take umbrage at a thing that made one of their so savage blood ridiculous, even were he but a sodden drunkard. Then who should say? Might there not be cruisers, gunboats, insults ·----The President shrugged his and--nervous shoulders with a little shiver. He would have the entire army search for this

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[&]quot;" Why, that's the Victoria Cross!"

mad señor with the naval commission. Besides, the navy was unnecessary.

To-day, in San Felipe del Monte, they will describe for you the magic birth of Guantepec's navy; they will tell you delightedly what occurred in the estuary of the river that lay below the red roofs and to the south, and how rapidly El Capitan Beaucham' did engage a brave crew of ten Caribs and one Mexican, and forthwith proceed to drill them in cleanliness and seamanship. They will smile proudly when they speak of the manner in which the flag of the country, that deep blue emblem with the golden sun at its glorious centre, floated from the gaff of the Dolores for the first time as she went forth And further will they describe to the sea. delightedly how the Mexican learned to blow upon a dented bugle many strange calls, and at last did play-

Ter-ra glo-ri-o-sa de lib-er-tad, Vos-o-tros cor-a-zon vos-o-tros

and how that national air provoked all the enthusiasm for the new navy that any patriot could wish.

President Sorolla was as good as his word. In the shame that beset him, he sent forth the army and instructed them secretly to search the *cantinas* and the city's purlieus for the mad foreigner. Unfortunately for his excellent intentions, events had transpired a little too quickly for him; he had prolonged the period of celebration beyond the limits set by Fate, and when he came to adjust accounts, the new navy had come into actual being, and was busy holystoning decks and setting up standing rigging. Supplies had been promptly furnished at sight of the inspiring commission, and in the very midst of the President's plans for the summary abolition of the marine force of the country, there occurred an interruption. A delegation from the foreign population called to pay its respects, and was admitted to the executive presence with great promptitude.

Messrs. Anderson, Biggar, Schmidt and O'Reilly bowed most formally and presented the usual felicitations. President Sorolla executed a jack-knife movement at the waist and smiled. Then Biggar fixed the small wiry man with his cold eye.

"We have learned with sincere pleasure of the honour your Administration has conferred upon our compatriot," he began, and the Presidential smile promptly slid around to the back of the Presidential neck, where it remained in hiding. "It is a compliment to the foreign residents they will not soon forget." He paused to let these words sink in, and the President swallowed hard. "In so far as we may assure you of our loyalty and of that of our compatriot, we desire to do so, and we are convinced your Excellency will see no reason to regret your choice of a commander for the new arm of your service."

That settled it in the Presidential mind. He bowed to the will of Fate. With a smile that caused him acute agony, he begged to assure the illustrious señors that the appointment had been a matter of deep thought and careful consideration by the entire Cabinet. That they had been divinely guided in their choice was most completely apparent.

When the delegation had departed, he kicked every soldier in the Casa Blanca and chewed the moustachios from the left side of his mouth. The search was ended, of course, and the navy had become an official adjunct to the Sorolla Administration. For some reason the Minister of War could never fathom, he had suddenly lost his popularity with his chief, and in a month was compelled to resign his portfolio and retire to the mountain fastnesses for meditation and conspiracy.

In two months' time Beauchamp had brought the navy to such a pitch of perfection that President Sorolla was not above using it as an official carry-all up and down the coast. Two long parrot guns that had graced the Presidential palace were placed fore and aft upon the *Dolores*, and a couple of mitrailleuses that had remained unpacked in the *cuartel* also found place upon the snowy decks. But Beauchamp kept rigidly to himself, and flushed when by chance he encountered one of the foreign contingent.

Biggar strolled into the club one afternoon and found Hemenway playing chess with Anderson, while the man Burnham watched them from a corner. The Consul rudely swept the men from the board on to the floor and sat down between the players.

"All right. It's too beastly hot even to curse you," complained the Canadian. "What's up?"

"You remember you offered to bet there'd be boundary trouble?" Biggar observed quietly, and the long man nodded. "Well, the fat's in the fire, and I'll lay a bath bun against the State of Texas that there'll be trouble. Honduras has moved the frontier monuments."

"War?" asked Anderson quickly.

"I've come in here to rout you out for the purpose of sending a wireless to the Foreign Office, telling them what's in the wind, and suggesting that if they have a spare cruiser loafing around these parts, it might be a good idea to have it drop in here and leave a card. Personally I hate to become a target for a lot of red-legged lunatics with big guns in their possession."

"You think it's serious, then?" asked Anderson, and the other nodded.

"Sorolla's no coward when it comes to the pinch, and there's wind of another revolution. If he can stave that off by picking up the Honduran gauntlet, it's ten to one he'll do it. A little fighting will let out the revolutionary fever nicely, and whether he wins or loses, he clinches his job."

Three days later the sun was rising redly from the sea, when San Felipe del Monte was rudely awakened by the sound of a heavy gun. At the same instant the squat tower of the cathedral went down in a shower of dust and shrill screams. Out in the roadstead lay a leaden-coloured gunboat with the Honduran ensign flapping at her mast-head. A puff of white smoke from her deck, and the whole seaward end of the *cuartel* disappeared in a shower of splinters.

"Boom !"

From the estuary there came an answering heavy crash, and a wisp of bluish smoke drifted slowly over the tops of the trees that lined its shore. Then into the open shot the white hull of the *Dolores*, with every rag of her snowy canvas set, and the staccato exhaust of her engine cracking like a Gatling. As she cleared the river mouth, she yawed, and one of the long parrots neatly kicked the black funnel of the gunboat overboard. Then she resumed her course and swept forward again.

It is hard for the excitable Latin-American temperament to confine itself to calm gunsighting at any time, even from a steady shelter on shore, but when you set a saddlecoloured gentleman on a rolling deck and let an enemy pot at him in the open, he is likely to shoot very wide indeed.

"Whack !" went the other parrot, and the gunboat's foremast disappeared. The *Dolores*, being small and white, and, moreover, presenting only her somewhat narrow beam for a target, bow on, made the enemy's shooting even more erratic, and the greatest damage done was to the water, where the shot from the leaden-coloured craft threw up great fountains of spray. One of the Caribs had the wheel, while Beauchamp did his own gun-pointing. When he had got within half a mile, he had knocked a respectable-sized hole in the gunboat's stern, and had suffered no damage himself. Then he set his quickfirers to work, and when he had come to within five hundred yards, he had made the decks too hot to hold the Honduran crew. The rest of the action was short and assuredly to the point.

The *Dolores* pumped two more neat holes in the hull of the gunboat, and then paid off for the purpose of running astern and raking the enemy along the decks with the machine-guns. Just as the little craft presented a fair broadside, a six-inch gun in an after-sponson of the Honduras ship let go and plumped a shell squarely into the diminutive engine-room of the small vessel, where it exploded.

"O-he!" was the cry from the enemy.

The yacht shivered to her keel and heeled over with the terrific shock. The helmsman swung himself on the wheel in response to an order, and brought the boat up in the wind, where she hung for an instant slatting her canvas. Then she paid off on the other tack and plunged forward toward the bow of the gunboat.

"Bang!" went a forward gun on the larger craft, and the whole side of the small vacht seemed to vanish inward. Again she reeled with the blow and began to settle, and Beauchamp caught the wheel himself and put it over, bearing now directly down upon the high bow of the enemy as it rose and fell in the sea. Relinquishing the wheel, he swung open the breach of one of the big guns. heaved in a shell, and slammed the block shut again. He sighted carefully, and, as the *Dolores* rose on a long swell, pulled the lanyard. The heavy shot struck just forward of the gunboat's bridge and raked her from there to the after-deckhouse, leaving a mass of splinters and wreckage in its path.

Shouting an order, he seized the helm himself and sent his crew forward. There was one desperate chance, and he took it. He drove his sinking vessel down upon the heaving bulk of the steamer, and as he neared her, put down his wheel and brought the yacht around in a long trembling, wavering arc until, with a heave, she crashed against the port bow of the big craft. The half-naked Caribs, dripping with sweat and looking more like musical comedy pirates than anything else, leaped and caught the low bulwarks of the gunboat with the agility of monkeys. The Mexican, with bugle slung about his swarthy neck and grinning fiercely, was chucked aboard by his commander, while Beauchamp, with a long black revolver dangling from a strap at his wrist, barely

managed to clutch the rail of the gunboat just as his little *Dolores* sank from beneath him. Tucked in his waistband he bore the flag of Guantepec, cut from the halliards at the last moment.

There was a Colt one-pounder on the foredeck of the enemy's craft, and this the boarding crew swung about with a cheer until it pointed aft. A few quick turns of the handle and the gun merrily banged a ragged line of holes in the forward deck-house just below the bridge, which immediately spewed forth a group of frightened, screaming, redlegged, moustached soldiers, who, chattering sounds faster than the machine-gun could vomit shells, reached for the high heavens with wildly clawing fingers.

The rest is soon told. The German captain, filled with disgust at the scene before him, and of which he had been an unwilling witness, gloomed in a corner by himself and smoked. He had been hired to navigate alone. The boat had held seventy men, and of these the guns of the little Dolores had accounted for twelve ; eleven others were wounded by splinters and flying ironwork, and the remainder wished nothing quite so much as to get behind something on shore. Within ten minutes the entire crew of the gunboat was neatly lashed along her rails, and the blue-and-gold flag of Guantepec was snapping from the masthead. Slowly the vessel gathered way and swung her nose toward San Felipe del Monte, while Beverley Beauchamp, with a tired grin on his blackened face, leaned against the bulwarks. On shore the entire population of the town had gathered along the white beach to view the struggle with exclamations and fears. Now the President, accompanied by the Secretary of State, both of whom had been careering up and down the sands, dashed in the direction of a surf-boat pulled up on the strand. As this was launched.

Sorolla turned to Biggar and Doc. Anderson. "Shall it please you, señors, to accompany me to the scene of thees mos' glorious victory? Your compatriot is uphol' the honour of our lan'! Eet ees fit to him that he s'all receive your tears!"

Lined up at the gangway of the gunboat stood the grinning Caribs, each with his hand at the salute. As the President and his party stepped proudly aboard, the Mexican gathered the battered bugle from his neck and blew lustily.

> Ter-ra glo-ri-o-sa de lib-er-tad, Vos-o-tros cor-a-zon vos-o-tros . . .

the instrument blared, and the President

removed his hat with a grandiloquent flourish. Tears coursed down his dark cheeks and mingled with his wiry whiskers. Flinging his arms about Beauchamp, he kissed him furiously upon both cheeks.

"Por Dios, por libertad !" he sobbed noisily. "Saviour of our countree; señor, the worl' ees yours! Our children s'all learn of thees great victory in the book of the history por siempre!"

Beverley Beauchamp looked at him curiously and quietly toppled over upon the deck. Anderson opened the white uniform jacket and regarded the growing red spot upon the shirt. President Sorolla bent forward.

"He is woun' ver' bad?" he inquired anxiously, and Anderson shook his head.

"No. It's just a rifle ball through the shoulder. He'll be around in a week or so, but we'd better get him ashore."

As they lifted Beauchamp out of the surfboat and carried him up the beach, a bright object dropped from his clothing. Jack Manning picked it up.

Manning picked it up. "What's that?" asked Hemenway curiously.

Manning turned it over in his hand. It was a small copper cross with a bit of bright ribbon attached. On one side of it in small letters was engraved "For Valour." Manning looked up, and there was a suspicious brightness in his eyes.

"Why, that's the Victoria Cross !" he said, with a catch in his voice, turning to the others. "And we called him — Oh, hell ! I move we each take turns in kicking one another !"

Burnham came quickly along the beach and pushed his way to the side of the group where Beauchamp lay unconscious upon the sand, with Anderson bending over him. His eyes met Biggar's, and the big Englishman's face took on a steely look. He stepped forward quickly and touched the new arrival on the chest.

"I think you said you were a detective," he observed in a low tone. Burnham looked into the other man's savage eyes, and he stepped back quickly, removing a silver badge from his shirt and dropping it in his trousers pocket.

"Who? Me?" he mumbled. "Whyer-no. Suppose we-er-say I'm representing the-er-Hudson-Alaska Fur Company? Think there's a good opening here for-ercoats and things?"

Biggar took the man by the shoulder and turned him about.

"They're waiting tea at home for you," he said.

ALL FOUND By DORNFORD YATES

Illustrated by G. C. Wilmshurst



HAD seen her but once before, and that was at the Savoy on New Year's Eve. She had been with her party at one table, and I with mine at another. And in the midst of the revelling I had

chanced to look up and into one of the great mirrors which made a panel upon the wall. There I had seen the girl, sitting back in her chair, smiling and fresh and whiteshouldered, in a dress of black and gold, her fingers about the stem of her goblet. Not talking—listening, rather, to the words of a man at her side, whose eyes were watching her smiling lips somewhat greedily. He had red hair, I remember, and a moustache brushed up to hide a long upper lip. And, as I looked, she also had looked up, and our eyes had met. There and then I had raised my wine and toasted her - her of the looking-glass. The smile had deepened. Then she had raised her glass and drunk to me in return. That was all. And when Berry had leaned across the table and asked-

"Who's your friend?"

"I wish I knew."

"Pshaw!" said my brother-in-law. "I say it deliberately."

"I drank to a thought," said I. "Believe me."

After all, a thought is a reflection.

And now here she was, sitting in the grass by the wayside.

"She's brown, isn't she?" said I.

"As a berry. I like his breeches."

I bowed.

"Thank you. And for you, 'picturesque' is the word—one of the words. Shall I compare you to a summer's day?"

"I'd rather you collected that cow. She's getting too near the river for my liking. I'm looking after the dears."

"Are you?" said I. "But-"

"But what?"

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" Quis custodiet ------ "

The apple she threw passed over my shoulder.

Mountains and valleys, swift rivers and curling roads, here and there a village shining in the hot sun, and once in a while a castle in the woods, white-walled, redroofed, peaceful enough now in its old age, but hinting at wild oats sown and reaped when it was young. Hinting broadly, too. At nights shaken with the flare of torches and the clash of arms, at oaths and laughter and the tinkle of spurs on the worn steps, at threats and blood-lettings and all the good old ways, now dead, out of date and less indebted to memory than imagination. And then at galleries with creaking floors, at arras and the rustle of a dress; whisperings, too, and the proud flash of eyes, hands lily-white, whose fingers men must kiss and in the eyes mirror themselves. But these things are not dead. Old-fashioned wrath is overgone to its long home : love is not even wrinkled. Yet again it was before wrath---

I set out to describe the province of Krain, and now I have strayed from the highway up one of those curling roads to one of those white castles, only to lose myself in the thicket of Romance beyond. Perhaps it does not matter. Anyway, it was on the slope of a green meadow all among the mountains of Krain that the girl was sitting, herself unminded, minding her cows. And out of the woods above her a round white tower proclaimed a chateau set on the shoulder of a hill.

Her dress was that of the country, and yet perhaps rather such as Croatian peasants wear. All white linen, embroidered ever so richly, cut low and round at the neck, and with the skirt falling only four inches below her knee: short sleeves, a small white apron, and over her thick fair hair a bright red kerchief. But her stockings were of black silk, and small black buckled slippers kept the little feet. Clear blue eyes hers, and a small merry mouth, and a skin after the sun's own heart. It was so brown—such an even, delicate brown. Brown cheeks and temples, brown arms and hands, brown throat. Oh, very picturesque.

I rounded up the cow errant, returned to my lady and took my seat by her side.

"Thank you," she said. "And now, who are you and what do you want?"

"My name," said I, "is Norval. And I want to know the way to the pageantground, and when does your scene come on ? "

"It is a nice dress, isn't it?"

She rose and stood smoothing her frock and apron.

Only you ought to have bare "Sweet. brown legs."

"My dear man, this isn't the Garden of Eden.'

"No? Some other Paradise, I suppose. Old Omar's, perhaps. Besides, I forgot. Dolls never go barefoot, do they ? " "Dolls ? "

"Yes. Aren't you the 'great big beautiful doll' they sing of?"

She threw back her head and laughed at that, pleasedly. Then she began to sing softly-

Oh, you beautiful doll.

You great big beautiful doll. . . .

We finished the verse together, the cows watching us with big eyes.

"I think we're rather good," said I, when it was over.

"I know we're both mad," said she. "And I don't feel a bit like singing really, either."

"Oh, great and beautiful one," said I, "what is the matter? Indicate to me the fly that dares to lurk in this fair bowl of ointment."

She looked away over the river. Then----

"After all, it's nothing to do with you."

"Nothing whatever," said I.

"Then why do you ask ?"

"Something to say, I suppose. Is not the clemency of the weather delightful ?"

"Yes, but those cows belong to me."

I laughed scornfully. Then—

" My aunt has four eggs," I said simply.

She turned away, ostensibly to pick a flower, but I saw her shoulders shaking. length-

"There is a pig in the grass," she said. " It's name is Norval."

"The doll is on its hind legs," I replied, getting up. "As for me, is it not that I shall have been about to go? Adieu. mademoiselle."

" Er-au revoir, monsieur."

"That's better," said I. "And, now, what's the trouble, my dear ? "

Well, it was about the chauffeur. You see, she was spending the summer here in the chateau. Yes, the chateau above us, white on the hillside. She and a companion-a girl-alone, with a household of their own, very happy, very comfortable . .

"We are really, you know. Don't think we're suffragists. Truth is, I'd got about sick of men, and thought I'd take a rest. heard of this old place to be let furnished, came to see if it was half as nice as it sounded. and never even went back to England to collect Betty. Just couldn't leave it. Betty followed post-haste with the servants and heavy luggage and-and-

"And the parrot?" I hazarded.

Oh, the linen and everything. I'd " No. got the car with me. We've been here nearly two months now, and I love it more every day. Don't miss men a bit, either." This last in an inimitable tone, half nonchalant, half defiant.

" I expect they do most of the missing."

"Thanks awfully. However, I may tell you the family's been rather narky-----

" I beg your pardon."

"Narky. Like a nark."

Same "Of course. How stupid of me! root as 'snirksome.' As you were."

"Well, rather ratty about it all. Said it was all ridiculous and unheard of."

"Did they use the word 'proceeding '?"

"They did."

"Ah !"

"The one thing that sort of stopped them from really doing anything was the fact that Betty was with me. Betty's a dear, and they all know it. And her being here, I suppose, seemed to save it from being what's called 'an impossible position.' Well, a week ago comes a letter from the Brethes-that's my uncle and aunt-saying they're motoring through Austria to Italy, and are going to stay a night at Laipnik on the way. Would like to run over and see me, as they understand Savavic-that's me-is only thirty miles away. All very nice."

"Sweet of them," I agreed.

"Isn't it ? Only three days ago Betty gets a wire to say her mother's ill, and she has to bolt for the night train to Paris."

" Ah !"

"Yes. So that uncle dear mustn't come to Savavic at any price. If he does, Betty's absence becomes apparent, and the good old 'impossible position' arises at once. Consequently, I send a nice letter to the one hotel at Laipnik 'to await arrival,' saying the road's so bad and hard to find that I'll come over to them instead of their coming here."

"Much as you would have loved them to see Savavic.'

"Exactly. You're rather intelligent."

"Oh, I'm often like that. It's in the blood. Grandpa got his B.A.," I explained. "We've loaned his hood to the Wallace Collection. Go on."

"Well, that all sounds very nice and easy, doesn't it? Then, to put the lid on, my chauffeur breaks his arm yesterday afternoon."

" And the uncle's due when ?"

"Slept at Laipnik last night. I was to have lunched with them to-day. Oh. the fat's in the fire all right this time. I may expect them any time after three."

I reflected a moment. Then-

"I'll drive you to Laipnik," said I. "I'm as safe as a house at the wheel."

"You're awfully good and kind," said the girl, shaking her head, "but it's no good. Think. How on earth would I explain you ? "

"It is unnecessary to explain a chauffeur."

"Oh, but you can't-

"Certainly I can. At any rate, I'm going to. Come along and get changed, mistress." I scrambled to my feet. "If you'll show me the way to the garage, I'll be looking over the car. What is she, by the way? And where does your late chauffeur keep his boots?"

"Are you an angel?" said the girl, getting up.

"Who told you ?" said I.

The boots were much too big and the gaiters a little small. Still, they did. A long dust-coat came down over the tops of the gaiters, making the uniform unnecessary. I took the cap to wear when we reached the town. Gloves, near enough.

It was a big open car, and all the way to Laipnik the girl, looking priceless in a fawncoloured dress, sat by my side. We went like the wind. After a while-

"He drives well," said my companion half to herself.

"Thank you, beautiful doll-I should say madam. Is that right?"

" Quite, thanks. How are the boots ?"

"A bit spacious. I'm afraid I've lost one of my toes already." "You poor man. Which one?"

"Baldwin," said I. "He's got separated

from the others, you know. I'll be able to look for him when we get to Laipnik. Told them to keep together, too," I added bitterly.

She gave a little peal of laughter. Then-

"How tiresome !" she said. "And I'm afraid your calves weren't made for those gaiters.'

"I admit they don't fit as well as your stockings, but----

" Norval."

"Madam?"

"Behave yourself."

"Very good, madam. By the way, what about my wages ? "

"What do you suggest ? I shan't object to anything reasonable."

"No? Well, I was getting eleven-three a yar-day in my last place, and all foundespecially all."

`' ' Alľ found's ' rather a dangerous phrase."

"Not at all. It only means washing and beer and the English papers, when you've done with them, and meat on Sundays. A smile, too, when I'm tired, and a word of thanks after seventy miles in the rain with a head wind."

"It might cover a multitude of sins, Norval."

Here I saved a dog's life and passed two waggons before their drivers had had time to inspire the horses with the terror they felt themselves. Then-

"'All found's' all right, if you know your man," said I. "But I don't."

I caught her laughing eyes in the windscreen and straightway drank to them from an imaginary wine-glass. She smiled gently, and the eyes looked away with the look that sees at once, not at all, and yet farthest. She was gazing down the vista of memory.

"Then it's a compact," I said quietly. "Sealed with a drink."

"I never drank to you this time. Norval."

"Yes, you did," said I. "Only with thine eyes, doll beautiful."

"You forget yourself."

"I remember you. You were wearing a black and gold dress. Sweet you looked.'

She turned away and pointed to a church we were leaving on our right.

"That," she said, " is a church."

"You amaze me. I thought it was a swimming-bath." She bit the lip that wanted to smile. "To return to you, who are my mutton, I wish this road wasn't so

I can't look at you except in the narrow. screen."

"We first met in a looking-glass."

"True. But now I want something more -more tangible."

" Indeed ?"

I glanced down.

"At any rate, I've got your feet, bless I shall compose a sonnet to them, them. beautiful doll."

"And I'll write an epic about yours."

Five minutes passed.

"How's the epic going ?" said I.

"I've only done five lines."

"Let's have them."

"The beetling beetle-crushing baulks of boots Crashed on their thunderous way, while men-at-arms, Who knew no fear, shuddered and crossed themselves, And little children whimpered with a fright Too fierce for tears."

"Very good," said I. "Now you shall have mine.

I thought they were stars,

And I know they were shining,

But so brightly.

The daintiest things that were ever created,

They danced on my heart from the moment I saw them, But so lightly

That while they were there my heart became lighter.

Yet on it they made an enduring impression, Lasting and deep. Fairies' steps may be slighter, But so slightly.

You'll think I am mad, but I'm only a blighter.

I thought they were stars, And I know they were shining."

"Thank you very much. I didn't know you were a poet."

"Nor was I till I entered your service," said I.

So presently we came to Laipnik. stopped outside the little town, put on my cap, and settled the girl on the back seat. Five minutes later we rolled up to the hotel.

On the steps stood a stout man with a serious face, looking suspiciously at the cigar he had just lighted.

"Hullo, Uncle Dick," said my mistress.

"My dear child, I am glad you've come. Your aunt's upstairs, rather tired, but wild to see you. We're going to stay another night here and go on early to-morrow."

"Are you? I'll come up at once."

I opened the door of the car and handed her out. She kissed her relative and turned to me.

"Er-will you-er-"

I coughed.

"You will get your own lunch, Norval, and come to the office for orders at half-past two."

"Very good, madam."

As I raised my cap—

"Oh, I feel such a beast," she murmured.

I never gave Berry and the others a thought till I had eaten my lunch and was musing over my coffee with a cigarette. They were coming in the car from Salzburg, and were going to join me this evening at a farm called Poganec, where I had slept last night and where we were all going to stay. We had told people we were going to fish. I think Jonah meant it. We others were going to sleep and watch him and sleep again. Now, Poganec and Savavic were only seven miles apart, and were served by the same post-office. In fact, they were at opposite ends of the same valley, in the midst of which, half-way between the two, our common village slept in the hot sun. It was in the course of my first walk that I had come upon Savavic. And now, instead of being at Poganec to welcome them this afternoon, here was I at Laipnik pretending to be a chauffeur. What did it matter? I should be back that evening. Only seven miles.

At half-past two I was at the office, and at twenty-nine minutes to three my lady appeared in the hall. I went to her, cap in hand. She turned and walked to a little lounge-place out of sight of the office. followed her there. For a moment she did Thennot speak.

"Oh, I feel such a beast!" she said passionately. "Such a beast ! Don't take your cap off to me. Put it on. For Heaven's sake, put it on ! And sit down. Sprawl about. Light a cigarette. Shake me. Kiss me, if you like. Anything to show you're my own class and not a servant." She stopped and passed a hand over her eyes. Then she spoke hopelessly. "And all the time it's no good. You've got to take us out for a drive, and I've got to treat you-you like a servant. And you've got to say 'Yes, madam,' and 'No, madam,' and have your tea alone, - Oh, what on earth did I do it for ? " and-

She was on the verge of tears. I put my hands on her shoulders and looked into her eyes.

"My dear beautiful doll, don't take it all so seriously. It's only a game. We're both play-acting. You've just got to keep it up and order me about in the most monstrously imperious manner this afternoon, and then in the evening we're going to drive home together. And I'm going to get some of my own back then, I don't mind telling you.



I'll sprawl and smoke cigarettes and shake you, and — What else was it you said? I haven't forgotten that you agreed to 'all found,' you know. You wait. And I think your eyes are absolutely wonderful. How did it go?

I thought they were stars,

And I know they were shining."

She looked me full in the eyes now, and a grand smile swept into her face. Then she put her arms round my neck and kissed me. The next moment she was half-way up the broad stairs.

Ten minutes later I brought the car round to the door.

Niece and uncle and aunt all sat together on the back seat. As I shut the door—

"We don't want to go too far, Norval, or too fast. Lady Brethe is rather tired. I think about twenty miles out and twenty back will do. About two hours altogether."

"Yes, madam. Shall I go towards Savavic?"

"Yes, I think so."

We had done our twenty miles out, and I was looking for a place to turn the car, when I caught sight of Poganec below us in the valley, by road some three or four miles away. Then suddenly for the first time a terrible thought flashed into my mind. We were on the very road which Berry and the others must take, coming from Salzburg. Supposing we met them—

Here the road broadened, so I slowed down, and, in response to a nod from my mistress, proceeded to turn round. I accomplished the manœuvre as in a dream, and ended by stopping the engine. This brought me to my senses. As we started off again, I became cooler. After all, very likely we should not meet them. The chances were against it. And if we did, I could accelerate and push by them before they knew where they were. Again—

Here we swung round a corner, and there, fifty paces away, by the side of the road in the hot afternoon sun, stood our car, my car, Berry and Co.'s car. The bonnet was open, and Jonah's head and hands were inside it. Daphne sat still on the back seat, while Jill was sitting on the bank, a posy of wild flowers in her hand. Berry leaned easily against the side of the car, his hat over his eyes, watching Jonah at work. From his attitude he appeared to be offering idiotic advice. So I saw them for less than a second, for the instant they heard us coming, all four started and looked up. I was wondering whether I dared accelerate and dash by like a madman. I dare say the girl was thinking the same. But her uncle settled it.

"Hullo," he said. "Fellow-motorists in trouble? English, apparently, too. Wonder if we-----"

And the worthy aunt put the lid on.

"Why," she said, "if it isn't those nice children we met at the Europe at Salzburg, Dick."

There was nothing to be done now. I just slowed down. Very slowly we drew abreast, and all the time, till we stopped, I leaned forward and gazed at the four in turn —open-mouthed they were—bending my brows into the fiercest frown and laying my fingers on my lips. Then—

"How d'ye do ?" said Lord Brethe.

Berry swallowed, said, "Er—oh, how d'ye do?" and took off his hat.

The next moment he had himself in hand. Daphne got out of the car, and Jonah and Jill came up. Greetings were exchanged between them and the Brethes, and my mistress was introduced. I sat as one in a trance. Then I heard the girl saying nervously: "I don't know whether my chauffeur can be of any assistance?" I pulled myself together and got out of the car.

There never was such a situation. The Brethes knew nothing and thought nothing. The girl, unaware that these were my own people, saw me being used and treated as a chauffeur by four strangers, while she looked on and got the thanks; and the thought made her writhe. Berry and the others found me about to call them "Sir" and "Madam" and to serve them by mending my own car in the capacity of chauffeur to somebody they had never seen. And I wanted to burst out into hysterical laughter, swear, kick Berry, and hide in the woods. Instead of which, I went up to Jonah, who had gone back to the engine.

"What's the trouble, sir?"

Jonah put his head into the bonnet and exploded with silent laughter. I put my head in, too, and swore at him in a whisper. Then—

"One of the cylinders has been missing since Krainbach," he said. "I think that's the seat of the trouble: But I've only just——."

"I think it's the carburettor, sir," said I, with a finger on the float. "There's practically no petrol in it."

I tried the pressure pump, but it was no good. The petrol pipe was stopped up properly.

"You'll have to have the pipe down, sir. It's the only way." "How long will that take?" said Lord Brethe, who was standing on the other side of the car, talking to Berry.

"It's half an hour's job, at least, my lord."

"Oh, well, you'd better do it. Hadn't he, Dolly? We aren't pressed for time, are we, my dear?"

"Oh, no. That is--I mean, of course. Please do everything you can, Norval."

" Very good, madam."

I got some tools out of the tool-box and began to take the pipe down.

"Hadn't you better take your dust-coat off, man?" said Berry.

"No, thank you, sir."

Berry turned to Lord Brethe, who had come to watch the operation.

"All this comes through letting my young brother-in-law play about with the car," he explained airily.

"No, really?" said Lord Brethe.

"Yes," said Berry. "He's done more damage, the few times he's driven it, than a skilled chauffeur would do in five years."

"Dear me," said the other. "Knows nothing of the mechanism. I suppose ?"

"Doesn't know the difference between the carburettor and the—er—exhaust."

Lord Brethe laughed.

"Dear, dear. These young men----" he said.

Here the spanner I was using slipped off a nut.

"Gently, my man, gently," said Berry pleasantly.

"Yes," said Lord Brethe, "be careful of the paint."

I almost choked.

"Won't you two come and talk to us?" the girl called from the other side of the road.

"I always like watching a repair, dear," replied her uncle. "And Mr. Pleydel is an expert."

"I think I'd better be here just to supervise," said Berry. "Er — have you your cotton-waste handy, man?"

"It's on the step, sir," I said with an effort. "Do you want it?"

"No, no. But you should always keep it by you."

I wiped the sweat off my forehead.

"Will you smoke?" said Lord Brethe, producing a cigar-case.

"Ah, thanks," said Berry. With the tail of my eye I saw that it was a corona corona.

By this time I had taken the pipe down.

It was choked with a regular wad of dirt. I remembered bitterly that, when I left them at Strasburg, I had begged them never to fill up without a filter.

"So that was the obstruction ?" said his lordship.

I straightened my back.

"Comes of not using a filter, my lord."

Berry's brows contracted. He touched the wad with his foot.

"No," he said loftily. "This has clearly worked in from the engine. It is a piece of valve-packing."

I sighed. Heaven only knows what he thought he meant. But old Brethe lapped it up.

Heavily I began to replace the pipe. As I unscrewed them, I had put the nuts on the step. Now one was missing. It had rolled off.

"Lost something ?" said Berry.

"A nut, sir. I shall see it directly."

"Never put anything where it can roll off, man. When you are executing a repair, always lay your tools on the ground and mark the place. It's quicker in the long run. Found it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Wipe it carefully before replacing it." He turned to Lord Brethe. "You'll excuse me, but you can't be too careful, can you?"

"No, indeed. Quite right, quite right," said the old fool. "We're none of us too old to learn."

The repair was finished at last. I started up the engine, just to make sure she was all right, put away the tools, wiped my hands on a piece of cotton-waste, and resumed my seat in my lady's car without a word.

The girl, looking flushed and anxious, followed her aunt into the car. Lord Brethe climbed in after them. The others stood round.

"It's been awfully kind of you to lend us your chauffeur like this," said Daphne. "I don't know-----"

"Oh—er—that's all right," stammered the girl.

"Only too glad," said Lord Brethe. "Mr. Pleydel's been very good and given him several wrinkles well worth having."

"Don't mention it," said Berry, with a smirk. "Here you are, my man."

I took the crown he offered me in silence and raised my hat. A crown is worth ten pence. As I was letting in the clutch, I heard Jill's voice on my left.

"Thank you very much indeed for helping us so beautifully," she said, and laid her posy of wild flowers on the seat by my side.

"Thank you, madam."

As we moved off-

"What a queer child !" said Lady Brethe.

Two hours later the girl and I slipped once more out of Laipnik. When we were clear of the town, I stopped for a moment, and she took her old seat by my side. For Then a minute or two neither of us spoke. she reached up and took off my cap and pitched it behind into the car. I laughed.

"I wanted to do that a dozen times this afternoon," she said. "And I'd have done it, too, if I'd had the courage of a fieldmouse.'

"You know what I've wanted to do a dozen times this afternoon, don't you?"

Will you "And those odious people. ever forgive me? If it's any consolation to you, I nearly died of shame."

"And I nearly punched Berry's head and spoiled it all."

"Berry's?"

I explained.

When I had finished—

"It was nice of Jill to give you those flowers," she said. "Dear of her. But I shall never forgive Berry."

"He's only human," said I. "And he really was awfully funny."

"I shall tell him what I think of him."

"We've all done that once a week for five years. My dear, he's quite hopeless. Besides, he gave me a whole crown."

"And uncle gave you five. I saw him. I nearly cried, it made me so angry."

"Six altogether," said I. "I bought you some carnations with them. They're in the hood."

"Sweet of you, Norval. Coals of fire?"

"No, dear. Only malmaisons. Isn't that beautiful?"

We had climbed until we were at the top of a pass. Over the mountains the sun was going down. The great valley was already in shadow, but the light on the high woods was wonderful. Away on the top of a hill a little white shrine stood up like a candlestick against the sky. A rosy flush lay on the distant snow mountains, and the heavens themselves were filled with a great red glory.

The same thought occurred to both of us.

"Who wouldn't be a day?" said I. "It's worth living only twelve hours to die a death like that.

We reached Savavic about half-past seven. I drove straight to the garage. She watched me put the car away and waited while I slipped into my brogues. Then-

"Now I must be off to Poganec," said I. "So endeth the first day's service."

"And the last."

I drew myself up.

"Am I dismissed, then ?"

"Oh, well—

"Of course, if you're not satisfied, madam----______,

"But I am, only----" "Then," said I, "I'll stop on. Good night, beautiful doll."

" Dolly."

"Dolly, then."

I swept off my hat and turned to go.

"Don't you want to-er-shake me?" said Dolly.

I reached Poganec just as they were finishing dinner. As I entered the room-

"Hullo," said Berry. "This your night out ? "

"That'll do," said I. "You had your show this afternoon."

"My show? My humiliation," said my brother-in-law. "Think of it. My wife's brother in service ! How can I ever hold up this noble head again ? And this after all my years of striving to elevate. But there ! Can the leopard change his spots, or the chauffeur his boots? By the way, how did you get into them? Rather a tight fit, wasn't it? You don't look very penitent. I suppose you know I'm bowed with grief?" "I see you're gorged with food," said I.

"Haven't you any dinner for me?"

"It's in a red handkerchief by the coachhouse door," said Berry, "Now you can go. I shan't want you any more to-night. Don't forget the-ah, wrinkle I gave you about the cotton-waste."

"Fancy Boy earning some money !" said Daphne. "What wages d'you get?"

"Six and tenpence farthing a week," said I, " and all found."

"That's a dangerous phrase," said Jonah. "Might mean anything."

"Exactly," said Berry. "It includes boots, we know. What else besides boots?"

"Depends on the man," said I.

"It does," said Daphne. "And that's why you've got to give notice at once."

"Notice?"

I felt Jill's hand pushing my hair back from my forehead. She was standing behind my chair.

"Yes," she said, "and come back to us. Fact is, Boy, we can't spare you."



"CYNTHIA, FAIR REGENT OF THE NIGHT." BY PHIL R MORRIS, A.R.A. Reproduced from a photograph by H. Dixon & Son.

The Art of Phil R. Morris, A.R.A.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

RT is the victim of fashion, and the art teachers of the first half of the nineteenth century—consciously or unconsciously, all critics are art teachers - seemed, unfortunately, incapable of dividing true from fashionable art. A vigorous literary instinct was then held to be greater than a sense of tone. Colour and line were held subordinate to subject and sentiment. A painter was esteemed great, not because he painted well, but because either he "exampled the charm of the domestic hearth," or told any sort of story with emphasis. The more obvious his appeal to sentimentality, the more popular, as a rule, were his pictures. "'Tis art's decline," the critics, with many a head-shake, cried to the progressive element in their own generation; and when, in the middle of the century, a small knot of earnest young men, of which Millais and Rossetti were the most prominent members, sought to throw off the shackles of an absurd convention, the art critics, and the public which they led, failed to see either the beauty or the significance of the movement. A little later, when the

Pre-Raphaelite movement had given way to that of the Impressionists, the art critics were again at fault-again found to be incapable of dividing true from fashionable art, and to see this we have but to turn to the evidence in the famous Whistler trial. A leading critic condemned work now placed on an equality with that of the greatest masters as "but one step nearer pictures than a delicately-tinted wall-paper." The opinions of England's then most celebrated painters, brought in as experts, were that the pictures were "not serious works of art," and that they possessed "of detail and composition absolutely nothing"; whilst the greatest writer on art of the time, John Ruskin, asserted the extraordinary opinion that "for Mr. Whistler's own sake, no less than for the protection of the purchaser, Sir Coutts Lindsay" (referring to the exhibition of the work in the Grosvenor Gallery) "ought not to have admitted works into the gallery in which the ill-educated conceit of the artist so nearly approached the aspect of wilful imposture. I have seen," he said, "and heard much of Cockney impudence before

now, but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face."

It was into this blind and inartistic age that a man whom Nature had gifted above boyhood to his many friends and afterwards more professionally as "Phil"—pursued for five years on his own account a not very rigid artistic training. His employer, it is said, steadily refused to cancel his indentures,



"PURITY." BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A. Reproduced from a photograph by H. Dixon & Son.

the average, Philip Morris, was born. He was the son of John Simmons Morris, an engineer and ironfounder. Born in Devonport in 1833, he was apprenticed to an engineer, with a view to following his father's profession, but in the interval of manual work, Philip Morris known from and Morris chafed against the time lost in the slow acquirment of that technique which is, above all things, necessary to the painter, since only by its possession can be hope successfully to address himself to the emotions of his public. It has been wisely said that not even genius can afford to

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"EDWARD I. PRESENTING TO THE WELSH PEOPLE, AS THE FIRST PRINCE OF WALES, HIS INFANT SON, BORN IN CARNARVON CASTLE IN 1284." BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A.

despise the means through which it has to be expressed.

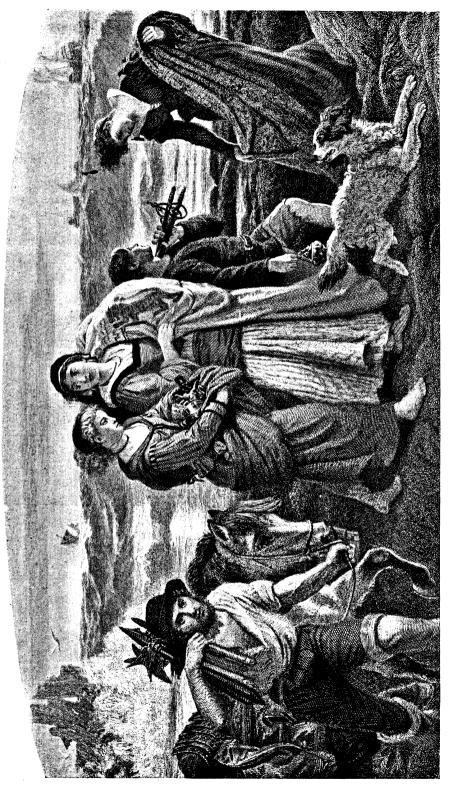
Hating the engineering occupation in which he was employed, the mind of Phil Morris was always fixed upon the hope of freeing himself from it; and it is probable that he dreamed and, in his imagination, saw the pictures aglow with the vision he felt, yet to which he was not, as yet, to give expression. and once invested with all they can teach, what could we not do?"

Nothing could have been more promising than was the opening of Phil Morris's career. After a few months passed in copying the Elgin Marbles, he was enabled to enter the schools of the Royal Academy, and in his first year he secured a medal for drawing. In the next he won further honours, and in the following year, 1858, the gold medal for



"THE GOOD SAMARITAN." BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A. From the original in the Blackburn Art Gallery, reproduced, by permission of the Art Committee, from a photograph by W. A. Mansell & Co.

It was not uptil he was twenty-two years of age that he was able to shake off the shackles of commerce. He, at that time, showed to Holman Hunt some of his sketches, and that great artist, who had so large an influence on the art of the last fifty years, helped him, as he helped so many other, with useful, practical advice. He persuaded the young aspirant's employer to relent and give his apprentice release, and set him free to make a study of the Elgin Marbles. "They stand for our copy, the best historical painting was awarded him, and two canvases, "The Good Samaritan" and "Peaceful Days," were given good positions on the walls of the Academy. The former work is now in the Public Art Gallery of Blackburn. After this he gained the Prize of Rome and the travelling studentship, and spent two years in Italy and France, and, as a natural consequence of his study of the early Italian masters, some of his best work is shown in subjects from the Bible story. As notable renderings



"DRIFT-WRECK FROM THE ARMADA." BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A. Reproduced from an engraving published by Messrs, Virtue & Co. of New Testament themes, there stand forth his "Jesus Salvator," "The Summit of Calvary," "Where They Crucified Him," "The Shadow of the Cross," in the Burdett-Coutts collection, and "The Shepherd of Jerusalem," now in the Walker Art Gallery at Liverpool. In this last picture we note not only the unfolding of a beautiful thought, a rejection of the commonplace,

but that seemingly in his painting of it-some of the mystery of the world must have been amongst the colours on his palette. The empty spaces of this canvas serve their happy part in the picture's composition, and it must, on the whole, be accepted as one of the most satisfactory works Phil Morris ever accomplished. Had he adhered to the presentations of such themes, his individuality of vision would have secured for him a position in the hierarchy of paint which would have



been very much higher than that his talent occupies to-day, for art which has employed itself upon religious subjects is that which has reached to the highest known standards. It would, indeed, be impossible to name an epoch in which art has risen to greater eminence than the fifteenth century—the ardent, serious, and impassioned fifteenth century — in which there arose those men who, by their fine touch of spiritual things, were to weave pictorial design into the fabric of the Gospels till words and pictures became an inextricable texture which was to bind the age in which it arose to each succeeding year. We cannot doubt that the elevation of theme which men like Leonardo, Raphael, and Dürer employed themselves upon, accounts for their pre-eminence quite as much as does their lucidity of expression and grand

sobriety of treatment.

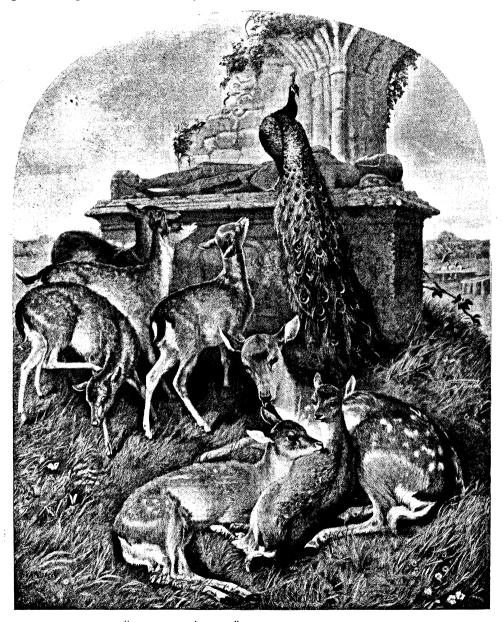
Coming to the modern movement of the young revolutionists of the nineteenth centurv--men who, according to Ruskin. " raised and changed the spirit οf modern art raised in a b s o l u t e attainment. changed in direction of temper "--- it is their religious work which stands forth as preemineñt. "The Ecce Ancilla Domini," by Rossetti, "Christ in the House of His Parents," by Millais, and "The Light of the World," by

Holman Hunt, form a trilogy of splendid achievement.

In the picture by Phil Morris, "The Shepherd of Jerusalem," which has led us into this long digression, there is an originality of conception and a strength of sentiment to which in no other class of subject did he ever attain. Very few, even amongst so-called religious painters, have ever looked beyond the event they have chronicled, but Morris has done so in "The

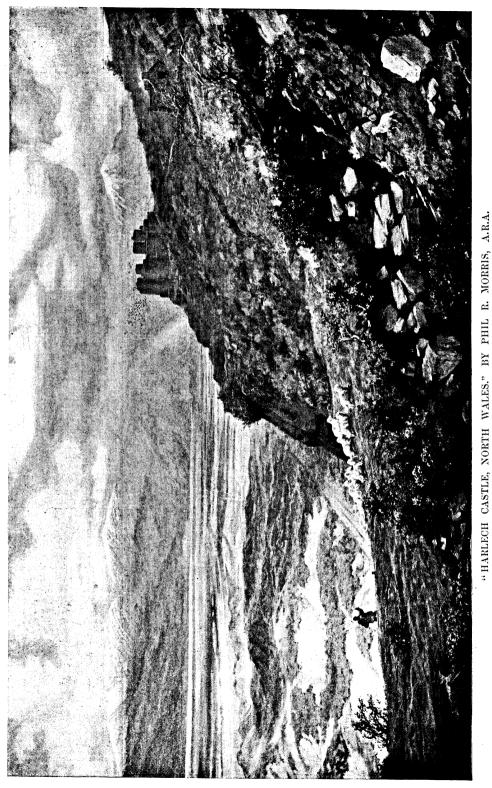


"THE KNIGHTLY MIRROR." BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A. Reproduced from the large plate published by Messrs. Henry Graves & Co., Pall Mall, S.W. Shepherd of Jerusalem." It holds the suggestion of local curiosity which must have been kept awake by the sight of the upstanding Cross long after the actual day of the same quality of far-sighted idealism, and which was probably meant to pair with "The Shepherd of Jerusalem," is that which shows a Jewish woman holding up her child to



"THE SARACEN'S TOME." BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A. Reproduced from the large plate published by Messrs. Henry Graves & Co., Pall Mall, S.W.

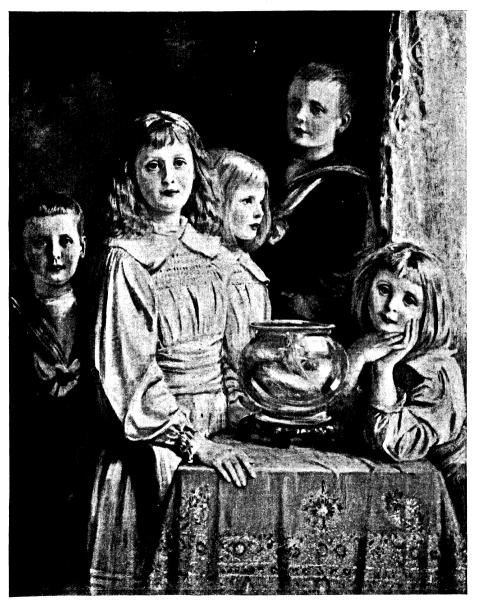
Crucifixion, and some shepherd, tending his sheep without the gates, may well have stood idly observant of the cruel ensign of our faith. Yet another picture which holds this study the not yet effaced inscription. Plainly she has been telling him the story of the divine tragedy, and the words with which she ends, "And They Crucified Him," form the



Reproduced from a photograph by H. Dizon & Son.

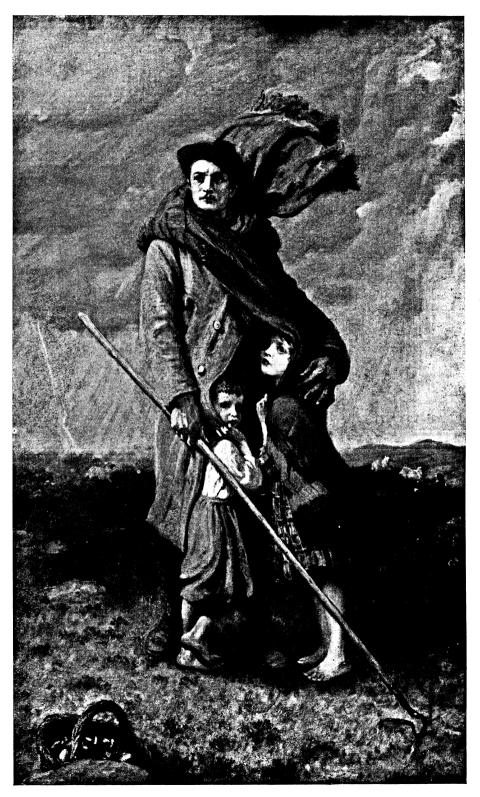
title of the picture. "The Good Samaritan" also shows an unusual version of the parable. Ordinarily the painter chooses the moment when a certain Samaritan, as he journeys, comes upon "a certain man who went down wayside, but after their arrival at the inn, and there is much tender pity in the Samaritan's attitude.

Of other serious religious and symbolic work accomplished by Phil Morris, we must



THE ARTIST'S CHILDREN: A PORTRAIT GROUP BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A.

from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed leaving him half dead." Morris shows us both the Samaritan and the man, not upon the enumerate "Purity," and "The Return of the Dove," in which he shows a daughter of Noah some years younger than the two girlish figures of Millais's beautiful rendering of the same theme, "Crowns of



"THE STORM." BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A.

Joy and Sorrow," and "Jesus Salvator." The last-named picture, exhibited at the Royal Academy of 1865, is explained in the catalogue as follows—

"In the year 1588 the Spanish ship Florida, forming part of the Invincible Armada, was lost on the island of Tubermore, or Well of Mary, near a religious house dedicated to the Virgin, and here, long after the Reformation of Scotland, the Synod of Argyll allowed the nuns to remain." a wistful pathos that make it one of the most successful of the artist's works after his more important paintings of religious symbolism; "The Tambour Minor," "The Promenade," "Friends or Foes," "Startled," "The Forester's Pets," all of which are happy and humorous examples of Morris's method of painting children, which, indeed, is also equally well illustrated in the more important picture "May Day."

Other pictures of one phase or another of child-life which show this branch of the



" А ШІ́НЦАND FUNERAL." ВУ РИЦ. R. MORRIS, А.R.А. Reproduced from a photograph by H. Dixon & Son.

In the domain of historical themes Phil Morris painted a dramatic picture of Edward I. displaying the new-born prince in his shield to the Welsh people as their future king, who could speak no English, a picture which chronicles a much-appreciated royal pleasantry. A semi-historical moment is illustrated in the picture "Drift-Wreck from the Spanish Armada." Under the title *genre* we may group the excellent picture "Sons of the Brave," representing a group of the fatherless boys of the Duke of York's School, which has a charm and artist's work at its most pleasing are "The Foster-Sisters," for which his two little daughters were his models, and "Omnia Vincit Amor," in which the child seated on the head of a lion, his playmate, was painted from his son Claud at the early age of two years.

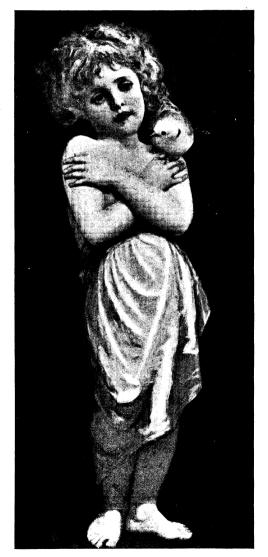
Animal life and character in juxtaposition to those of the human child supplied the motive for sundry of these fanciful pictures, fawns, rabbits, and other creatures of the wild being drawn with a very faithful and happy touch of characterisation, and in



"SONS OF THE BRAVE." BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A. From the original in the City Art Gallery, Leeds, reproduced by permission of the Leeds Corporation.

painting the plumage of birds, Morris obtained some notably decorative effects in more than one of his pictures, and broke a lance with Stacy Marks in his halfhumorous flock of turkeys at feeding-time, entitled "The Condition of Turkey."

Some of these pictures achieved a very wide success when reproduced as prints, notably three subjects, "Quite Ready," "The Best of Friends," and "Oh, Vanity!" which greatly pleased the public as coloured plates of *The Graphic, The Illustrated London News*, and *The Christian Million* respectively. And to find favour in that



"THE RETURN OF THE DOVE." BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A.



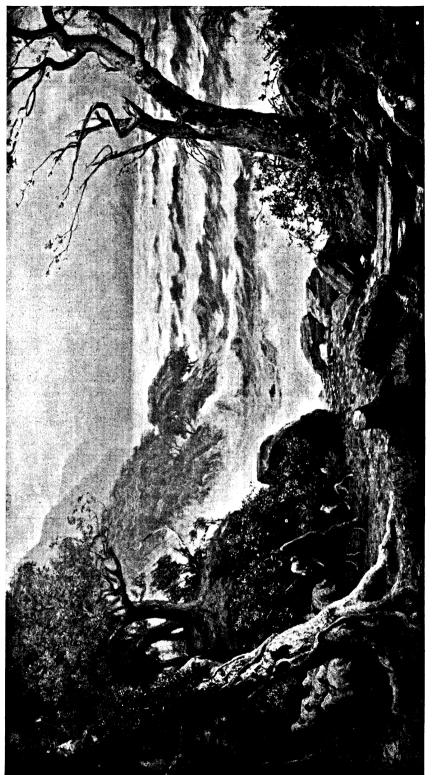
"UNDER THE LILAC." BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A.

form in turn with some of the happiest of Millais's pictures from child-life was something more than a journalistic achievement in those days.

Under the same heading of *genre* we may include "The Queen's Shilling," "May Day on the Dorsetshire Coast," "Evening, North Wales," "Through the Dell." "The End of the Journey," "The Widow's Harvest," "The Mowers," and that pathetic subject "A Highland Funeral." This last work is solemn and full of dignity of conception; it also reveals simplicity both of sentiment and effect; it has affinity to the poignant picture of a funeral scene painted by Frank Holl, who, however, shows the grief of women and children in the sorrowful little procession of "A Village Funeral." Phil Morris chose a more isolated locality, and shows only the men comrades of the dead bearing the coffin shoulder-high to the grave.

Another subject suggested by the Church's services Morris painted under the title of

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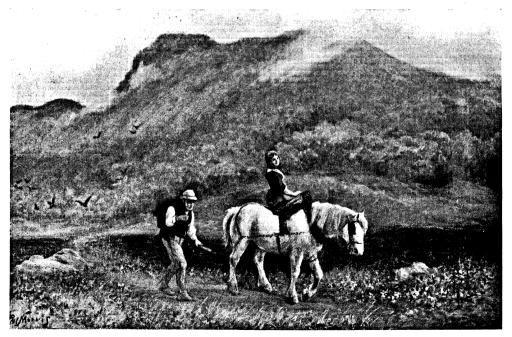
From the original in the Corporation Art Galiery at the Guildhall, E.C., reproduced from a photograph by H. Dixon & Son. "A STORM ON ALBION'S COAST." BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A.

"The First Communion." The scene is laid in Dieppe, and shows a procession of young girls in white dresses and veils passing one of the quays, on their way to church, against a background of masts and sails in the harbour, with the gleam of the open sea beyond. Here the artist gave the same halfwistful appeal to the youth and innocence of his scene which distinguish so happily his "Sons of the Brave." A deeper note is sounded in the more pathetic pastoral scene of village children greeting a veteran of the scythe, which the artist called "The Reaper and the Flowers."

From 1858—when he won the gold medal for the best historical painting of the year till 1875, when he was elected A.R.A., Morris's career was extraordinarily varied in its output, ambitious pictures of religious symbolism being interspersed with "Comedy, Tragedy, History, Pastoral," to adopt the classification of Polonius. Landscape and seascape alike inspired him, but in the former domain he was, perhaps, less fortunate than in his various pictures from the lives of those who go down to the sea in ships, such as "Nancy Lee," "The Sailor's Wedding," "Sweethearts and Wives," and the sea plays a part also in such merely idyllic themes as "May Day on the Dorsetshire Coast," or such wilder moods of Nature as "A Storm on Albion's Coast."

In the late 'seventies, Phil Morris was suddenly discovered and acclaimed as a fashionable portrait painter. He painted women and children with pleasing effect and perhaps with a little flattery.

In his somewhat fanciful portraiture we get much work which, in the words of Ruskin, written in 1858, "is very beautiful, and easier in mode of laying colour than most of the work of the year," and of which "Under the Lilac" is a good example, whilst of his actual portraiture, the picture entitled "The Artist's Children," a portrait group by their father, is a good specimen. Two of the girls whom we there see as children have since made for themselves positions in a different field of art. Mrs. Fletcher Robinson retired from the stage. on her marriage, with the reputation of a very promising young actress, whilst the name of Miss Kate Sergeantson in a playbill is welcomed by all theatre-goers as an assurance that they will see a clever bit of character-acting. Miss Sergeantson is the artist's step-daughter, his wife having been previously Mrs. Sergeantson.



"EVENING, NORTH WALES." BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A. Reproduced from a photograph by H. Dixon & Son.

CONFIDENCES

By EDEN PHILLPOTTS

Illustrated by Gunning King



HEN Polly Rowland threw over Bob Bickford at her father's orders, Bob took the disappointment with a good deal of sense. In fact, he behaved in such a gentlemanly way about it that, six

months later, Polly's father changed his mind and would have let them wed. If Bob had gone to him again then and pressed for it, we all agreed that James Rowland must have withdrawn his objection. But it was like this: the younger man showed no feeling whatever against Rowland objecting to him for a son-in-law, because he was poor and still had his way to make. Being, in fact, a very clever youth, and with a good stock of mother-wit, that came to him from a parent who died when he was born, Bob saw how the situation looked from James Rowland's point of view. But what he did not see was the line that Polly herself took. In fact, when she fell in with her father's wishes so prompt, and told Bob she was going to drop him because her father said so, and that after they'd walked together for six months, then Bob fell to thinking. His level sense applauded her for obeying her father, but all the time he couldn't help feeling it was the woman who had changed her mind. He even guessed that perhaps she'd gone to James Rowland about it and axed him to take this line, so she might save her face, and drop him without hard words and a scandal. But he'd loved her in a quiet, steadfast fashion, and couldn't think so bad of her as that; and so he accepted his dismissal in a very orderly manner, and just thought the daughter in Polly was stronger than the lover, and left it there. She was one of those rash, reckless girls-all heart and no head. She felt first and thought afterwards -a wayward thing, good to look on,

impulsive, with a voice like a wood dove. gentle one minute, but hard as a stone the next. All storm and sunshine, you might say, and no settled weather about her. In fact, the very opposite of Bob; and that's why he'd been so powerful drawn to her without a doubt. As for her, she'd liked him for his fine strength and thoughtful way of talking, and for speaking to her just the opposite way of the other young chaps. For, with her sly eyes and beautiful voice and oncoming sort of ways, of course she'd got a lot of admirers. Which her father and she knew, and when he broke off the match, he had his eye on Nathan Parsons and Huccaby Farm; and so had Polly. That would have meant a prosperous husband for her; and Nathan being up home, thirty years old, and a very strong man and a Wesleyan Methodist, her future and her soul's future would have been properly assured in her father's opinion.

But, at the end of six months, things looked different. By that time Robert Bickford's uncle, though only sixty, was dead of a tumour, and left him fifty pound a year; and Nathan Parsons, the farmer, had happened to see James Rowland's daughter playing bob - cherry with Tom Foster, the policeman. Well, a girl can play bob-cherry when cherries are in season, and no harm done. For my part, 'tis an innocent and ancient amusement, and don't lead to any of the deadly sins as ever I heard about; but Parsons, he was a serious and particular man, and he held the pastime showed a light mind, and from that day forward he lost interest in Polly. Which she speedily discovered, and then, meeting him on his hoss, she gave him the edge of her tongue, and showed she could snap as well as coo. She told him to be largerminded, and not shut his heart to all the joy of life and turn so narrow and acid.

"If you'm like that now," she said, "goodness gracious me, you'll be frozen through and through afore you turn fifty; and what price your wife and childer then?"

Well, he didn't like being talked to that way by a slip of a girl, so 'twas "Good-bye" to him. Then she took to giving Bob the time of day again when they met, and one of them beautiful, twinkling smiles, that made any man happier for the minute, no matter what was on his mind. And James Rowland himself, marking how Robert stood to work and wasn't puffed up by his fifty pound a year, but just put it by and minded his business, felt that, after all, he might meet the case. 'For he'd got an old head on young shoulders, and was a Church of England man, and, along of his superior education and powers of speech, would often read the Lessons in church of a Sunday to give his reverence a rest.

So there it was. Bob might have had Polly back and tokened to him in a week if he'd wished it; but six months don't leave anybody standing still, and he didn't want her back. She fretted for five minutes, they say—not more.

And then the Allens came into the storysister and brother both. Timothy Allen was a stone-cutter, and never a more cheerful soul made grave-stones. 'Tis a calling that might be counted upon to steady a young man, but he was that joyous and devil-maycare by nature that his mournful business never sobered him, and 'tis well known that while he cut his own mother's memorial he whistled, though the tears fell to whet his tool all the time. Anyway, he enjoyed his life, and of all the verses and hymns that he cut, to stand above the sleeping-places of the dead, he only minded one. "Life is short. so make the most of it," was his motto; and he did ought, of course, to have tried to make the best of it, too. But us can't in honesty tell that Master Timothy did that. He was terrible charming, and nobody-man or woman-ever got anything but a pleasant answer from him; but he was shifty, and you couldn't count on his fine speeches to bear fruit always. His heart wasn't bad, but it was hard, and nobody didn't really interest him much except Number One. At least, so Then he got it was till his mother died. work in Princetown, and him and his sister came to live there together. They was orphans, and she looked after him, and he looked after her, when he hadn't got nothing better to do, which wasn't often.

Eliza she was, a peart, red-haired maid with a freckled face and light brown eyes and great strength of character. She kept the people at their distance, and was shy of making friends—a very self-respecting girl, in fact, with a living pride in her cottage and herself, and very nice habits. The sensible folk liked her from the first; the others, who are the greater number, as we all know, thought her proud, and reckoned that, for a poor girl, she was far too stuck-up. But she was good-natured and sensible, and her disposition and way of looking at life was very high-minded. In fact, Eliza Allen might have been called a masterpiece in her small way, and 'tis pity her brother, Timothy, weren't more like her.

He got twenty-one shilling a week, and she took in a bit of washing and did what she could to make a shilling or two. And she taught in Sunday-school, being quite equal to it, with a great power of keeping order among the boys.

They hadn't been in Princetown above a year when adventures overtook both of 'em, and Tim, he fell tail over head in love with James Rowland's daughter, while, as for Eliza, very much to her astonishment, she found a man after her, too. And no common man, neither, for she wouldn't have looked at no common man; but it was Bob Bickford, and no less a chap; and that gentleman-like was he, that just to scrape acquaintance in the usual way wouldn't do for him. In fact, he went to a common friend, old Mrs. Maine, at "The Grey Bird Inn," and he axed her if she'd be so good as to invite Eliza Allen to tea one Sunday, and if she'd be so good as to invite him likewise. Which she did do; and so they met, and he saw her home after, and went in a miz-maze of doubt and hope from that day forward. In fact, the man was in love for the second time in his life, and now the dream of his days and nights was Eliza—nothing but Eliza. But he didn't know for many a long month that she felt the same, though afterwards she confessed to him that he'd come into her life like the sun into a grey dawn, and that she'd lost her heart to him the very first time they met at Mrs. Maine's.

"I'd liked the look of you already," she said, when he offered for her about a year after the first meeting. "You was such a clean chap, and so straight in the back; and then you was well-educated, same as me, and I put education above anything, because it is a great softener of manners, and makes a man look all round a thing and keeps him just and large-minded. And when you read the Lessons in church without turning a hair, I felt a proper admiration for you. And there is only one thing that casts a shadow on it, for I dearly love you, Robert." "And what might that be?" he axed, knowing very well all the time.

"T'other girl," she said. "I'd have given my life to be the first and only one."

Well, he couldn't and wouldn't say nothing about that. No doubt some men might have swore they'd never really loved Polly Rowland, and have run her down, and said 'twas all moonshine, and that she was dirt to Eliza, and so on ; and very like Eliza would have been glad to hear it and felt comforted to hear her lover flout the other. But Bob weren't built so—too simple or too straight, according how you look at him. He said nought against Polly, but reminded Eliza that she knew all about his former engagement, because he'd told her concerning it.

"If you'd only chucked her," said Eliza, "that might have been some comfort; but it was she chucked you, and you took it lying down, by all accounts."

"What's past is past," he said. "We should not have suited each other so well as you and me will, and that's all I'll say about it. So put her out of your head, my dinky dear, and never think of nobody else but me."

That was easy, but she made him swear that he didn't love Polly no more, which he was quite willing to do.

And yet Polly wasn't done with, by no means, for, as I've told 'e, Eliza's brother had got to be properly mad after her now, and so Eliza had to meet her, and see a lot of her, and hear tell about her good qualities for Timothy's sake. And the more she saw of Polly, the more she wondered what the mischief Bob Bickford could ever have seen in such a girl; and the more Timothy Allen saw of Polly, the more he wondered however Bob could be such a born fool as to let her go, once he'd got her.

In fact, he told her so, when they were mooning down a hedge in the dimpsy light one evening.

"To think that Bob Bickford was your fancy man, and then to think your father frighted him off you!" said Timothy. "Why, Moses and Aaron!" he said, "if I'd got you to see me like that, not fifty fathers would have frighted me off you! And now he's took up with that little, red-haired bantam hen, my sister! He may be a very clever chap, and read out the Lessons to church, and take round the dish and count the money after, and all the rest of it; but he ain't got no eyes in his head, nor yet no ears outside of it," he says.

"And why not?" axes Polly.

"Because, if he'd got eyes, he'd see what

you was; and if he'd got ears. he'd know your voice against Eliza's be a blackbird's to a hedge-sparrow's," he told her.

But Polly kept a very sharp memory for Robert Bickford, and wouldn't hear nothing against him.

"He was a sensible, far-seeing chap," she said, "and even if I'd held up a finger to bring him back, which, of course, I never would do, he wouldn't have come. He's proud—I never knew such a proud man. And your sister's proud, too. They'll go very well together, and if it happened that me and you saw with the same eyes, as you be wishful for us to do, then we'd have very useful relations in Bob and her, because he's got a lot more sense than you, and your sister have got a lot more sense than me."

Of course he wouldn't allow that for a moment.

"We'd do them far more good than ever they'll do us," he said. "They take life a lot too serious—that's what's the matter with them. If you'll have me for a husband, we'll set 'em a fine example and stir 'em up and keep 'em young. That terrible sober-minded sort always go in fear of a rainy day, and be always saving and scraping against trouble they're a great deal too elever to run into. Such as them want a few cheerful, dashing relations to shake 'em up sometimes. 'Twill be the saving of them to find a five-pound note now and again to keep the bailiffs out of our house."

But she didn't like that picture none too well, and though a good deal taken by Timothy's free-and-easy disposition and love of fun and frolic, felt in two minds about him for a husband. Besides, there was another-the policeman, Tom Foster, him that taught her to play bob-cherry. For he loved her, too, and had offered time and again; and he was rising up very well in the force, and had got to be a man marked for promotion after he catched the brothers Tutt—John and Andrew—poaching in Dart, and had 'em both put away for a month. Foster in some ways hit the happy mean, for he wasn't so light-minded as Timothy Allen, and he stood three inches taller, besides ; but he loved a revel or a rally of neighbours very well, and was a strong, trustworthy man, older than Allen and more like to wear. But then, again, he hadn't Allen's comical way with him, and she knew by instinct that he'd be stricter than Allen, and keep her to her work closer, and see she didn't have too much liberty for her good.

Things stood like that with her when a

very curious and painful adventure fell on three of the parties I be telling about; and Bob was one, and Polly was another, and Bob's sweetheart was the third.

An autumn evening 'twas, and Bob had ordained to meet Eliza away out at Greena Ball beyond Great Mis Tor, for he was coming home that way from Tavy Cleeve, where he had business.

And then it happened, in that lonely place, he see'd a woman's sun-bonnet flutter, and marked Eliza, as he thought, a mile away afore he reached her. But as they came together, who should he find but Polly Rowland, and not Eliza at all. And Polly was there to meet him all right, for she'd heard from Timothy Allen that Bob was gone to Tavy Cleeve, and she knew he'd come back that So now you have Polly meeting Bob, way. very much to his surprise; and next you have Bob roaming his eyes around, seeking Eliza and wondering why for she wasn't there according to promise. But that ain't all, because down by Walla-the little river under Great Mis Tor-was a pile of big stones, and hidden very close in the midst of 'em was Eliza. For no purpose to spy, you understand, for she'd never have done no mean thing like that. She'd just popped in there to watch Bob arrive, and then she was going to pop out and jump into his arms and rejoice him, and feel his kisses and trudge home along beside him. But it fell out terrible different, for Eliza hadn't got into her hiding-place ten minutes before she see'd Bob 'pon top the hill; and then her smiles changed to wonder, for there was a footfall behind her, and a woman jumped over two big rocks above the apron of a waterfall; and there was Polly going to meet Bob!

And she did meet him, and they walked so close together as possible, and once Polly put her hand on Bob's arm, and they nodded and chattered and was so thick as thieves. And Eliza's eyes grew harder and brighter, and her bosom heaved. She began to pant a bit and wonder if she saw straight. Her first idea was to leap out and go to 'em and ax Polly what she was there for; but she didn't do that, unfortunately for herself.

The pair stood still presently, when they was got to within fifty yards of the river; and then, after more earnest talk, they dawdled on again, and then, like a thunderbolt, came a proper awful shock for Eliza. In a word, Polly, without one sign of warning, threw her arms round Bob and hugged him and kissed him. He laughed, with his eyes on the opposite hill; and then Polly went off light-footed and happy as a wren, while Bob sat down on a stone and mopped his forehead.

But he'd got more to mop for in a minute, when out came Eliza, a proper figure of doom, you may be sure.

"Good powers ! Was you hiding ?" cried out Robert. "I wish you'd come along a bit sooner, my dear."

"Yes, faith, you wretch," she said, "and thank Heaven I was hiding ! But little you thought, you false coward, that my eyes were on you; and if I'd not seen, I'd never have known a word about it."

"That's quite true," he answered. "'Tis certainly a case of ' blessed are those that have not seen.'"

Then she let loose on him, and he bent his head and waited for the storm to rattle by.

"We'd best walk while we talk," he told her, "else we shall be night-foundered, and it won't be no fun getting over Mis Tor in the dark."

"'Tis the dark that ought to suit you, you hateful fox," she answered; "and if you think I'll ever walk one step with you again, you're wrong. To deceive an innocent, honourable, trusting girl—a girl as loved you with her whole heart and soul— 'tis a monstrous piece of wickedness—and you to get up, so cool as a frog, and read the Lessons of a Sunday and all—a beastly, wicked hypocrite that you are !"

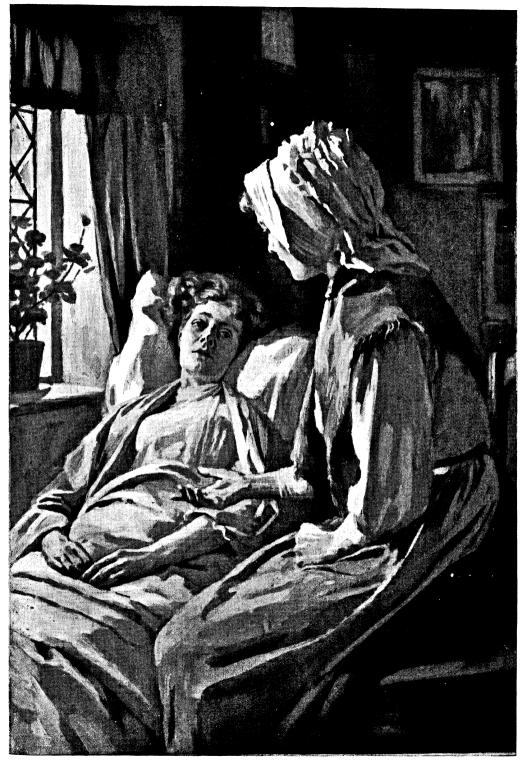
She gave it to him from a wounded and outraged heart, and he took it very quiet, but was a good bit troubled, none the less. In fact, Master Bob stood in a very difficult position, as soon appeared. When Eliza allowed him a chance, he set to work.

"She's a very excitable girl," he explained. "You must bear that in mind first. Always remember 'twas she kissed me without a moment's warning. If she'd told me she was going to, I'd have forbid it."

"And 'tis an everyday thing, of course, for your old sweethearts to fling themselves in your arms. So set on you they are that they can't talk to you without kissing you! It sounds a likely thing. However, I've had my say. Now you can speak, and then we'll part for evermore," answered Eliza. And Bob went pretty pale and stared at the river, which had got pale also in the waning light.

"You've put me in a terrible difficult position," he said.

"And what sort of a position have you put me in ?" she asked. "You needn't beat about the bush. 'Tis all in a nutshell.



"Then the invalid was forced to listen, willy-nilly, to all tother had got to say."

What did you say to bring that girl into your arms? That's what I've a right to know, and that's what I will know."

He nodded and looked cruel wisht.

"To think—to think—and us what we were to each other—and a stupid piece of nonsense like this—"

She was mistress of herself now and interrupted him.

"Nonsense, perhaps. A bit of fun, I dare say. Well, I want to know the joke, that's all. Then, perhaps, I'll laugh too."

"Exactly—a most natural wish; and the mischief of it is you can't," replied the man. "Not fit for my ours. I done say?"

"Not fit for my ears, I dare say?"

"It would be awkward to tell you," he answered calm as ever. "In any case, it might have hurt you a good deal, Eliza, and I'm far ways from wanting to do that. But there's a hard and fast reason. Polly Rowland came to me in strict confidence. She followed me here so that she might be alone with me. I've promised her faithfully, on my honour, not to speak a syllable about it. You must ax her—that's the only right and proper thing."

With that, poor Eliza let go again, danced round him like a Red Indian, and raged something shocking.

"Ax her! Go to her—me! Me to go to that woman—me—and say, 'Please, Miss Polly Rowland, will you be so kind as to tell me why you was hugging and kissing the man that's promised to marry me?' Me to do that!"

"That's about the size of it, Eliza," Bob answered. "Things often look a thought queer till you've seen the other side. But I can't show you the other side, because my mouth's shut."

"Then get gone, for a low, common creature !" she said. "I'd never, never have believed such a hateful thing if my own eyes hadn't showed it. Go back to her, and let her kiss you till she's tired of it; but never you speak a word more to me—never—never ! It's all broke off between us, and I'd rather die a maiden ten thousand times than marry a man like you. You're a hard-hearted, lying traitor, and if I can't get somebody to thrash you afore the nation, as you deserve, then I'm ashamed of the men ! Go ! Get out of my sight, or I won't answer for myself."

Knowing her opinions on such matters, he wasn't surprised that it had gone like this; and, indeed, he took a very black view of it, and had a passing feeling that the girls wasn't doing him any good, anyway, and that, after this, he'd better bide a bachelor and not tempt fortune no more. He was dreadful sorry for Eliza and quite as sorry for himself; and the more he thought, the uglier it looked, remembering Eliza's strong views on morality in general. But lie he couldn't, and since his word was given to Polly, he wouldn't break it, even though his silence now pretty well broke him.

He begged the angry woman to be patient a bit longer, but he wasn't able to say anything to justify the tragedy, and could only keep on asking Eliza to go to Polly, which angered her till she fairly screamed. And then, when she said she'd throw herself in the river if he didn't leave her, he went. But not home along. He turned in his tracks and tramped the Moor, a broken and frantic man. He forgot the time, and his home, and his supper, and his rest, and everything else before this shattering blow. He actually wandered over the heath all that night, now walking and now sitting on a rock, till the dawn surprised him, and he found himself faint and weary and caring nought whether he lived or died. Of course. he'd flogged his poor brains all night; but they'd done nothing for him. He couldn't see no way out of it but that Eliza should go to Polly; and that he knew she'd rather die than do.

Then he cheered up, for, with morning light, a great thought came to the poor wretch.

"If she don't go to Polly, Polly must go to her." he said out loud. Of course, that might have been pretty clear to anybody else; but in his state—hungry, tired to death, and dirty all over, along of slipping in a bog -'twas quite a surprising stroke of genius. It heartened him up a lot, and he set his face for Princetown. In an hour, or less, he was back beside Walla, thinking how that the spot by the boulders would bear a fatal meaning to his mind for ever and ever; and then, as he prepared to cross and ascend the hill beyond, he cast his sleepy eyes into the little hollow where Eliza had hid. But there he saw a sight that brought him wide awake in a moment. For a scrap of pink cotton peeped round a stone, unknown to her that wore it, and, hastening to the spot, he looked in where the boulders made a little chamber. And there, if you please, sat Eliza.

And pretty awful she looked, with her eyes staring out of her head and her cheeks burning with fever, and her hair down and her teeth chattering, and her clothes all wet.

"Good Providence! What's the meaning of this !" he axed. "Didn't you go home, neither?"

She looked at him, and her red face grew still redder with hate and shame.

"Get out of my sight," she said. "I don't want you."

"But-but you're sick-you're terrible ill. Oh, Eliza, darling, don't say you've been trying to do away with yourself !"

"No, I haven't," she answered, "and 'twould take a better man than you to make me do such a thing. And if I once started to do it, I shouldn't mess it up, either. And you needn't stand yelping there, Robert Bickford, for I'd take no help from you if I was dying !"

"You look as if you was, I do assure you, Eliza. At least you can say what's the matter; then I'll run and send others to you."

"I'm waiting for a man to pass, not a fox. Foxes ain't no good to me," she panted.

"A man don't pass here once a month," "For Heaven's sake, let me he told her. serve you! You need not think of me as a friend—only just as a fellow-Christian."

"You a Christian ! 'Tis the last thing I'd think of you as," she said. "What is it, Eliza—what's wrong?"

" Mind your own business."

"It is my business. I'm the cause of it."

"That's true enough, whatever else ain't," she told him. "You kept me here seeing your wickedness and listening to your lies till the way was dark and the night down ; then, trying to get over the river, all blinded with tears, I slipped and fell in the waterfall. How I got out will never be known. I've broke my leg above the ankle, and I've fainted ten times this night for agony; and every time I wept for bitter grief that I'd come to again and wasn't dead and in heaven."

Well, of course, the man wouldn't hear no more after that; and though she said that she'd scratch his eyes out if he touched her, he chanced that, and, her being such a light weight, picked up poor Eliza and somehow carried her to old "Moleskin's" cottage, down over half a mile from Great Mis Tor. Once there, Sarah Cawker, "Moleskin's" wife, got the unfortunate creature into bed, with her clothes off and her stocking cut away; and in an hour, or less, the doctor was there, with Bob and a nurse and another neighbour and Eliza's brother, Timothy. For he was a bit put about, of course, that his sister hadn't come home the night afore, though he never went to look for her.

Eliza had her leg set, but was forced to bide along with Mrs. Cawker and her husband and a professed nurse for three weeks; and, after that, she was moved to the cottage hospital. She wouldn't see Bob, or read the letters he wrote to her ; for there came another bad sign, and young Timothy told Eliza one day that Polly Rowland had now thrown him over for good and all—why for he couldn't tell. Of course that looked as if Polly had really and truly gone back to Bob—as Eliza supposed—and it threw back her leg a good deal when she heard of it. But still she wouldn't see the man that she'd promised to marry. Then, a week afore she went in the hospital, Polly Rowland herself came along, and though the nurse refused her at the door, she jumped through the window and was in the sick-room that way before the nurse could get back and prevent it. And then the invalid was forced to listen, willy-nilly, to all tother had got to say.

Polly began by assuring Eliza that there Then she praised weren't no call to fret. Bob very heartily.

"The likes of you and me, Eliza, are much too good for most men," said Polly, "but now and again you'll come across a man that's much too good for us; and Bob Bickford be one of them."

"So I thought," answered Eliza, whose fight was pretty well gone out of her by now-"so I thought till I see him kiss vou."

"He didn't kiss me," answered Polly. "He never kissed me in all my life. We was only just coming to the kissing stage when father broke it off. 'Twas I kissed him-just for gratitude because he'd done me a very good turn. I axed his advice, and he advised me the very way I wanted to go; which was such an amazing and uncommon thing to happen to me that I quite lost myself and threw my arms round the man's neck and kissed him. He couldn't help my doing it no more than I could. It just came over me to do it. And I'd made him promise solemnly to keep my confidences, knowing, of course, that you'd be the first to hear 'em if I didn't."

"And why for not?" asked Eliza. "Why for should you have confidences with my engaged husband that ain't for my ears?"

"I'm here to tell you," said t'other. "You was in it, in a manner of speaking-at any rate, your brother was. I went to Bob for

advice, because he's the cleverest and wittiest man in these parts. A clever man's at the call of everybody, and ought to be. That's what he's here for. I was faced with a difficult question, and wanted his opinion. I'd decided, you see, to marry Tom Foster or else your brother, Timothy, and I couldn't for the life of me settle which I liked best, though, if anything, I always leaned a thought to policemen; and when Bob Bickford leaned to the policeman, too, and reckoned, from his knowledge of my nature, that I should do better along with Tom Foster than with Timothy, I felt dead sure he was right, and such was my relief that I kissed the man. But of course he wasn't going to tell you that he'd advised me against your own brother. How could he?"

"Why not?" axed Eliza. "I'd have advised against Timothy myself. He ain't no good for a husband."

"I couldn't tell you'd feel like that about it, and perha₁s you wouldn't if you'd heard it just then," answered Polly, who had her bit of cleverness too, you see. "And now that you know the solemn truth, Eliza, I hope you'll explain to Timothy that I've only done what was wise and right; but you needn't drag in your Bob, of course."

"You'd better go now," said Eliza Allen. "And thank you for coming. You've given me enough to think on for a month of Sundays."

"And I'll tell Bob you want him—eh?" inquired Polly, with a good dash of pluck.

"Yes," answered Eliza slowly, "he can come, if he's got any use for a girl whose left leg will always be an inch shorter than her right."

Polly didn't even answer that, and of course Bob was up over afore you could shave your chin. And when she went in the cottage hospital a week later, 'twas him that pushed the ambulance, and he'd have put his heart under the wheels to make 'em go easy.

She had a very clever recovery indeed, and her gait weren't spoiled, after all.

You might say that Timothy Allen was the only one who come out of it a loser; but though he cussed the girls a bit all round, as men will when they're crossed, he mighty soon landed another, because the maidens always will put looks afore sense— 'tis a very unfortunate trick of Nature in 'em.



For LOCK. BI THOMAS FARD, RAA. From the original in the Public Art Gallery, Leicester, reproduced by permission of the Art Gallery Committee.

LADY KENNETT'S JEWELS

By JAMES NAIRNE

Illustrated by Charles J. Crombie



Y name is Jack Redesdale, and my father is the rector of Beckington, a fairly comfortable living in the West of England.

My Cousin Mabel was a very pretty girl, with whom I was

desperately in love when our respective ages were twenty and fourteen. Then she married Lord Kennett and broke my heart. Lady Kennett was famous for her jewels; her collection included more than one stone with a world-wide reputation, and her husband delighted in adding to it. Fortunately, he was a rich man.

Some few years ago I was asked by my cousin to go down to Newmarket for one of the back-end meetings. As usual, we had a good time, for she and Kennett always did you well.

Kennett was engaged to help to shoot someone's covers on Friday and Saturday, so he went on Thursday afternoon. Mabel remained for the last day's racing; she was going to some people for the week-end. They had a place half-way between Newmarket and London, so she and I travelled together till we arrived at her station.

Now, as luck would have it, my cousin had taken some of her most valuable jewellery down to Newmarket, a most unusual proceeding, the reason being that she and Kennett had been asked to a dinner on Wednesday to meet Royalty, and there it was in the carriage with us, a square leather box with two locks and a handle on the top. However, as we neared her destination, it suddenly occurred to her that she didn't want her gems at the house she was bound for; so, with one of her charming smiles, she suggested that I should take them up to London and deposit them with her bankers, in whose safe they usually reposed when not required. responsibility was too great—but she had so timed her request that there remained but a few minutes to argue, and, before I knew where I was, I found myself alone in the carriage with the jewel case.

Her ladyship's last words, as she kissed her hand to me, were not comforting: "Take care of them, like a dear boy, won't you? That little lot is worth twenty-five thousand at least." I sank back in my seat with a groan.

Of course it was too late to get rid of the beastly thing; that night. To say I was nervous would be absurdly understating the state of my feelings—I was simply consumed with anxiety. I drove to my rooms in Jermyn Street with the case on my knees. When I got there, I bolted into my bedroom, unlocked the wardrobe, and put it in the top drawer. Then, feeling happier, I wont into the sitting-room, and was busy opening and reading a pile of letters—mostly bills, I remember—when my servant came in with a request for the key of the wardrobe, as he wanted to put my things away.

"Oh, never mind," I said; "put 'em somewhere else."

"Are you going to dress to-night, sir?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied.

"Then I must have the key," he persisted, "because the shirts are there."

I'm afraid I swore; anyway, I made some excuse to accompany him into the bedroom, and didn't leave it till I was ready to go out, and the key safely in my pocket. Poor Denham, he couldn't understand it.

I dined early. I had a stall for the first night of a new piece, but all through the first act I fidgeted so that I was a perfect nuisance to my neighbours, and when the act-drop fell, I could stand no more, but left the theatre, thereby giving mortal offence to the author, who was a friend of mine, and spotted me from his box.

I spent a restless night. When I did drop off to sleep, it was only to dream of burglars and other equally unpleasant things.

Naturally, I didn't like the job-the

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I very nearly came to hating my cousin, and quite detested her jewels.

A quarter to ten next morning found me outside the bank. Close behind was a man with red whiskers, dressed in loud checks. There was only one clerk disengaged, and to him I addressed myself. "This contains Lady Kennett's jewels," I began, when, to my disgust, he turned from me to the redwhiskered man and commenced talking to him.

"Will you be so good as to take this case and give me a receipt for it?" I insisted peremptorily.

He glanced round at me. "Oh, that will be all right!" he rejoined, with a careless wave of his hand in the direction of my precious charge. "We never give receipts for those sort of things."

"Oh, don't you?" I retorted. "Then am I to leave this box where it is for anyone to snatch who happens to come in? Do you know it contains jewellery worth many thousand pounds?"

"I tell you it's all right," replied this extremely casual young man. "We've had charge of it before, often."

"Well, I'm not going to leave it without some acknowledgment," I declared stubbornly, "and I shall let Lord Kennett know the reason."

Here someone in authority appeared, and to him I applied. "It's quite true we don't give receipts for property left with us," he informed me courteously. "You see, we only take care of it to oblige customers, but in this case I will make an exception." And he handed me a memorandum stating that a brown leather case, said to contain jewellery, had been left by Mr. Jack Redesdale for Lady Kennett. With this I had to be content, so left the bank, having tried to convey to the clerk, who was still talking to the redwhiskered man, my opinion of his conduct by giving him a look into which I threw all the disgust and contempt I was capable of.

Ten days later, Lady Kennett sent for her jewels. They had gone, having been handed over to a bogus messenger on the strength of a forged order that wouldn't have deceived a child—the clerk and the man in the checked suit were responsible, I thought, and still think.

Naturally, I was thankful I had insisted on having a receipt, not that the bank denied having had the property, but it was more satisfactory.

The police were on their mettle. When they had exhausted their inquiries, there were two men under surveillance. I was one, and the Honourable Rupert Manson, Lord Kennett's brother, the other, and we were both shadowed for four weeks. My cousin knew nothing of this at the time, neither did her husband. When they did, they were very much annoyed.

One day, about two months after the catastrophe, I had been lunching with the Kennetts. The weather was miserable. My host had gone out, and Mabel and I had adjourned to the billiard-room to smoke and play, when Gaunt, the butler, announced that a man wanted to speak to her ladyship.

"What does he want, Gaunt?" asked my cousin, who was in the middle of a break and hated being disturbed. She played quite a good game.

"Looks like a furriner, my lady."

"Yes, but that doesn't tell me what he is here for."

"Couldn't say, I'm sure, my lady. Most important, he said it were, and I was to give you this"—handing her a bit of paper on which was written : "Think can put your ladyship on the track of the jewellery."

"Come on, Jack," she exclaimed, suddenly all excitement, and nearly putting out Gaunt's eye with her cue. "We'll have a look at this mysterious stranger, anyhow. Where is he, Gaunt?"

"In the hall, my lady."

"Then show him into the smoking-room." So saying, she bustled out of the room. I followed.

There were two things I have forgotten to mention—one that a reward of a thousand pounds had been offered for the recovery of the jewels, and a further sum of five hundred for information that would lead to the conviction of the thief or thieves; the other that the red-whiskered man had balf of the lobe of his right ear missing.

The individual who was ushered into our presence was a clean-shaved man of about twenty-five. He had fair hair, but not much of it, and hardly any eyebrows. He was dressed in a very loosely-made lounge suit of some dark material, and his collar and tie proclaimed the Frenchman; but what caught my eye at once was the fact that his right ear was mutilated ! Half the lobe was missing. He gave a little start when he saw me; evidently, my appearance was as unexpected as it was unwelcome.

"You have something important to tell me, Mister—Mister—"

"Joubert," suggested the stranger, with a bow.

"Joubert," continued my cousin. "What is it?"

"Pardon me, my lady, but my information is for your ear alone."

"Oh, that's all right. This gentleman"and she pointed to me-" is a near relative, and I have no secrets from him.'

He shrugged his shoulders. "I'm sorry, but I cannot speak before a third person,' he said, with an air of finality.

But he didn't know my cousin. She refused to be bluffed. "Then you have wasted your time and mine," she remarked, quietly moving towards the bell.

He held up his hand. "Pray don't ring." "I'll waive the point, but may I he said. stipulate that our conversation be kept strictly private? I have a proposition to make which you may not care to entertain. I am only an intermediary, and my instructions are to ask for your word of honour that you will say nothing of my visit here to anyone, whatever the result may be." "Not even to my husband?"

"Not even to his lordship."

"What do you think, Jack?" she asked, turning to me.

"That, unless we give this promise, we shall be told nothing. Therefore let us bind ourselves to secrecy. After all, whatever we hear can do us no harm, even if no good comes of it."

"That's true," murmured she thoughtfully. Then, turning to Mr. Joubert, she ordered him to go ahead.

He produced a large red handkerchief, with which he proceeded to mop his forehead. He certainly was extremely agitated. "I have your solemn promise, then ?" he mumbled nervously.

"Of course," snapped my cousin impatiently.

"How much do you value the lost jewels at?" he asked.

"Twenty-five thousand pounds."

"Would you be prepared to give five thousand for them, and no questions asked?"

Mabel looked to me for inspiration. 1 nodded assent. "Yes," she said.

He was evidently immensely relieved by her promptiude. "I think it can be worked," he remarked, after a pause.

"Not much use your bothering us unless you know it can," I suggested.

"I think I may go so far as to say it's a certainty, but there are grave difficulties. In the first place, the police must be put off the scent."

"They haven't been on it yet," remarked Mabel.

Mr. Joubert grinned appreciatively. "Your property was abstracted by the cleverest gang in Europe. Their headquarters are in Paris, and the French police have informed Scotland Yard that, although they have no direct clue, they know who worked the job. Consequently, there is a great difficulty in disposing of the stuff; the principals are being watched night and day."

"Then how do you know the police won't find out about your coming here?" I asked.

He smiled. "Although I arrange these little matters between parties, I have nothing to do with the criminal part of it," he explained urbanely.

"That's as it may be, Mr. Joubert," I remarked; "but as we are tiled, as the Freemasons say, and can therefore safely indulge in a little frankness, I may remark that you and I have met before."

"It may be so, but I have no recollection," he lied.

"It was in the bank one morning. You had red whiskers and wore a wig."

"I assure you——"

I pointed at his ear. "You needn't," said I; "that gives you away."

There was a pause. "Even if you were right, which I don't admit, it would make no difference, I presume ?" he asked.

"Of course not. Still, as we appear to be about to enter into a conspiracy to condone a crime, it's better that you should know that I recognise the fact that you engineered the *coup* and respect you accordingly." And here, I am ashamed to say, I held out my hand to the scoundrel, which he cordially shook.

"Oh, Jack !" murmured Mabel in my ear.

"Holding a candle to the devil!" I whispered back.

"Now, then," I suggested, "perhaps you would like a whisky and soda and a cigar? While you are disposing of them, we will listen to your plan." So after Gaunt had brought the refreshments, and when our queer guest had taken a good pull at a pretty stiff drink and was puffing away at one of Kennett's choicest weeds, he unfolded his scheme, which was as follows.

An approved messenger was to meet a representative of the gang at Dieppe; he was to be provided with one hundred and twenty-five thousand francs-five thousand pounds—in French notes, the value of any one of which was not to exceed one thousand francs. He was to hand over this money in exchange for the jewels, which were to be intact, just as when taken from the bank.

"That sounds all right," I agreed, "but it's a lot of money for a man to carry about."

"What do you suggest, then?" inquired Mr. Joubert.

"That there be two persons in charge of the money instead of one."

"No objection to that—at least, I don't see any."

"Another important point," I continued. "Your people have had these valuables for over three months. They may have had them copied, and so get our money for comparatively worthless stones."

Mr. Joubert repudiated this suggestion with well-simulated horror. "My dear sir," he cried, "what a monstrous idea ! Surely you don't think I would be a party to such infamy?"

"No worse than the original theft," I retorted.

"Pardon me," he pointed out, with a suave smile, "that was done in the ordinary course of business, but what you hint at would be a very different thing—in fact, a gross breach of confidence such as we are incapable of." The air of injured innocence he assumed was delicious. My cousin gazed at him in astonishment, and then gave way to a hearty burst of laughter, in which I joined.

Mr. Joubert didn't know whether to be offended or not, but, being a jovial ruffian at heart, he took a huge gulp of his whisky and soda, and laughed louder than either of us.

"Well," I said, "with Lady Kennett's permission, we will agree to your terms on condition that Lord Kennett's brother, Mr. Rupert Manson, and myself take charge of the money, and that we are accompanied by an expert in precious stones."

He shook his head at this. "So far as the first part goes, all right," he said, "but I can't agree to the expert till I have consulted my colleagues."

"Then perhaps you will do so at once, and let us know the result. I may tell you, however, that we deal on no other conditions, and the sooner the affair is carried through, the better."

"He rose to his feet. "I am obliged to your ladyship and to you, sir, for your courtesy," he said, making each of us a low bow. "I sincerely hope everything will turn out satisfactorily, and, if I may be permitted to say so, I greatly regret any inconvenience your ladyship may have suffered through the deprivation—only temporary, I trust—of your ornaments."

"Thank you," replied Mabel coldly. Then to Gaunt, who was at the door : "Show this gentleman out."

When he had departed, she turned to me. "Jack," she said, "you mustn't go; it's dangerous. What if they're after the five thousand as well as the jewels? I shall never forgive myself if anything happens to you or Rupert."

"Nothing will," I replied, feigning a confidence I didn't quite feel. "And, anyhow, someone's got to go—someone you can trust not to bolt with the money. I don't see who else there is except Archie himself "—this was Lord Kennett—" and I don't think we ought to drag him into it. If there's any trouble with the authorities, the less he knows, the better."

The Honourable Rupert Manson accepted the offer to be my partner in breaking the laws of his country with avidity. He was a subaltern in the Grenadier Guards, and a very popular person. He had been in the Eton eleven, and was one of the best polo players and steeplechase riders in the Service. Mabel pointed out to him, at my suggestion, that if we were caught trafficking with the thieves, he might lose his commission, but he poohpoohed the idea. "To think of the bounders of police having the audacity to suspect me, not to mention Jack, of having stolen the blessed things !" he exclaimed indignantly. "By Jove, if we do get 'em back for you, old lady, I'll have some fun, you'll see ! " He was a tall fellow without an ounce of superfluous adipose matter about him. He could ride ten-stone-seven, and was a curlyheaded blue-eyed warrior who had never been known to take anything seriously. His age was twenty-four.

Mr. Joubert paid us another visit two days after the first. Everything was arranged, and we were to be allowed to take along the expert. We settled on a cipher to use when telegraphing, and there was nothing more to be done except to wait for our co-conspirator to tell us the date fixed for the meeting at Dieppe.

The five thousand was a bit of a difficulty. As we had decided not to let Lord Kennett into the secret, it was obviously impossible to apply to him. Mabel hadn't got it. I should have had difficulty in raising as many shillings, so our only hope was Rupert, who, as he frankly declared, was "stumped." However, "where there's a will there's a way," and, knowing his brother would repay it, he borrowed from a moneylender, who charged four hundred for three months, which was certainly not exorbitant, considering that mine was the other name on the back of the document.

II.

A WEEK passed, and then the looked-for summons arrived. We left Victoria the same evening. Now, one hundred and twenty-five thousand francs in French notes take up a lot of room, and we had debated anxiously as to the safest way to carry them, finally deciding each to have a waistcoat made with six large pockets in the lining, into which the money would go without being doubled up. We agreed to carry half each : even then our figures were not so graceful as usual. A revolver of the latest type formed part of our equipment, in addition to which I carried a sheath knife.

Our expert, whose name was Drake, had been told as little as possible. He had been lent to us by a big firm of Bond Street jewellers, and turned out a real good sportsman.

Dieppe in January is the most forsaken place I have ever been in. All the more fashionable hotels are closed, and we had to go to one of which the only patrons appeared to be commercial travellers of unprosperous appearance.

However, here we were to keep our rendezvous, and great was our disgust when we found a telegram containing the information that no one would arrive till next day. Even Rupert's equable temper was ruffled. He heartily cursed Joubert & Co. and all their works, after which we devoted ourselves to impressing the people of the place with a sense of our importance before ordering the best food and wine procurable.

We had worked ourselves up to encountering the gang, and unconsciously hoped for a crisis of some sort; it was very disappointing. Mr. Drake dined with us, and the stories he told us afterwards about jewel robberies and the tricks resorted to by the depredators were well worth listening to. He was useful in other ways, for although Rupert and I had a smattering of French, we were certainly not fliers in the language, whereas our expert was as well up in it as in precious stones. He was certainly a blessing in disguise, and I don't think an apology is necessary for describing him, seeing how much we owed to his courage and foresight before we had finished.

He was a man rather below middle height,

but very strongly built, with broad shoulders and a deep chest measuring over forty inches. He had strongly-marked features, with very dark eyebrows, almost meeting, and strong white teeth. His hair was cut very short, so much so, indeed, as to make a parting impossible. He wore blue glasses, and was certainly no beauty, but gave one the impression of being an honest Englishman of the true bull-dog stamp.

Next day we were wandering disconsolately about, wondering what was going to happen, when a man appeared round a corner and took off his hat to us.

" Bon jour, messieurs," he said.

"Bon jour," I replied.

"Do you prefer Parisian or London cooking?" he continued.

"Neither. Vienna is the best," I rejoined.

"Then come this way, please." And our new acquaintance conducted us up one street and down another, till we came to a barber's shop, into which we followed him. The above little conversation was the sign by which we were to recognise our friends the brigands. I didn't like the look of this one at all. He was a short, forbidding-looking ruffian, with a closely-cropped black beard and sallow complexion. He had a cast in one eye, of which I have a holy horror, and was not prepossessing in any way. He was well dressed in blue serge.

We passed through the shop, where two men were being shaved, into a room beyond, and up some stairs to an apartment on the first floor, and there we found Joubert.

He rose and bowed. "I'm sorry to have to give you gentlemen the trouble of coming here," he said, with great gravity, "but it's safer than your hotel."

"I don't understand you," was my reply.

"Oh !" he retorted, with an undisguised sneer. "Perhaps you will tell me that the two detectives who crossed in the same boat with you are here accidentally, or on some other errand quite unconnected with us."

"What the deuce do you mean?" cried Rupert indignantly. "Are you insinuating that we have given the show away? It seems to me you're nothing more nor less than an idiot!"

Joubert regarded him with an unpleasant smile on his crafty face. "That is exactly what you must take *me* for," he remarked.

"There's nothing to be gained by recrimination," I interposed. "You're on the wrong tack, Mr. Joubert. I'll stake my life no one followed or accompanied uf across the Channel. Further, beyond Lady Kennett and our two selves, not a soul knows where we are. If you consider my word of honour of any value, you have it that this is the truth."

"Of course, sir, I must believe you," he grudgingly admitted, "but our information came from a quarter not often wrong."

Rupert looked intensely disgusted. "Well, what are we going to do now?" he asked. "If I'd known how easily you fellows are scared, I'd nèver have started on such a wild goose chase."

"My orders from the captain are to ascertain whether you are willing to carry through the business in Paris instead of here?"

I looked at Rupert for inspiration. "I'd rather be in prison in Paris than live in luxury in Dieppe," he declared, without hesitation.

"Then, if you tell me where you will stay, I'll call this evening, and we can conclude the transaction to-morrow. There is a train in an hour you can catch, and we will come by a later one."

"But if there are police on our track, won't they follow us?" I reminded him. "Yes," he replied, "but we can dodge

"Yes," he replied, "but we can dodge them in Paris, whereas it would be hopeless in Dieppe."

Having given the Hotel Meurice as our address, we hurried back to get our traps and pick up Mr. Drake.

Rupert had been very silent since our interview with the thieves, and it wasn't till we were comfortably ensconced in the train that he unbosomed himself. "Tell you what, Jack," he burst out, "that was all piffle about the detectives. Those beauties wanted an excuse to get us to Paris, where a murder more or less doesn't matter, or, anyway, create so much fuss as it would in a provincial town. We'd better mind our p's and q's, old man, or we shall find ourselves lying on cold marble slabs in the Morgue, being criticised by that section of the public who like morbidity. I can imagine a hideous old crone mumbling her opinion that you make a lovely corpse. By Jove, I----" But here I threw a book at his head. My nerves wouldn't stand any more, and I told him so. "All right, I won't harrow your feelings," he promised, "but, seriously, I don't like it. Anyhow, I've got a pal at our Embassy, and before we trust ourselves in the haunts of these beggars, we'll just give him a look up and ask his advice. He's an intelligent young man is Master Reggie-I

was his fag at Eton, by the way—and if anyone can lend us a helping hand, he can and will."

The familiar smiling face of the big porter at Meurice's, where I had often stayed, as he came forth to greet us, gave me quite a home-for-the-holidays feeling, and we treated ourselves to a truly epicurean repast that evening.

At ten o'clock we were back at the hotel, awaiting Joubert & Co., and at ten-thirty they appeared, but not the same. Joubert came; the Co. was different.

Imagine Dickens's Mr. Chadband disguised as a Frenchman, and you will have some idea of the creature introduced to us as Monsieur Roques. He was tall and stout, his face was large, pale, and flabby; it had no hair on it. His head was covered by an untidy yellow wig, which straggled down behind over his coat collar.

He had pendulous cheeks and a looselipped mouth. His feet and hands were enormous. The latter seemed to be never still; they kept on opening and shutting. The fingers reminded me of the tentacles of an octopus. His arms were of abnormal He had little red eyes, like those length. of an angry wild boar, and his few teeth were discoloured. He was dressed in a frock-coat much too big for him and reaching below his knees, a turn-down collar and a huge black silk scarf, tied in a flowing bow, ornamented his fat neck, and his boots had the appearance of not having been cleaned for a week. Such was the individual who domineered over the most dangerous gang of thieves on the Continent.

We carried on our conversation in English, his knowledge of which was sufficient for practical purposes, certainly more so than my French. In addition to his other peculiarities, he had a curious squeaky voice, which seemed unnatural coming from such a big man.

He began by expressing his regret that we should have spent the night at Dieppe, where, he feared, we must have been very uncomfortable. I admitted our change of quarters was for the better, and suggested we might just as well have arranged to meet in Paris originally. "Yes," he said, "but in that case you might have been followed by police—I don't mean with your connivance, of course."

"But," I pointed out, "that was just what happened—at least, Mr. Joubert told us two officers crossed to Dieppe by the same boat as ourselves." "Exactly," replied the fat man, "and our spies had no difficulty in identifying them. They were the only two passengers besides yourselves who remained in Dieppe. One was disguised as a woman."

I exchanged glances with Rupert. He remembered the couple as well as I did—an old man and his niece.

"Now, if you had come on here," he continued, "they would have done the same, which would have added considerably to the difficulty both of recognising and locating them."

"Do you know where they are now?" asked Rupert.

Joubert nodded. "We have their address. As for their whereabouts, one of them was downstairs when we came in, disguised as a gentleman."

"Well," I said, "we are in your hands. If you will tell us what you want, we will endeavour to meet you."

"In the first place, you will see the necessity of dodging these detectives?" suggested Monsieur Roques.

Yes, we agreed that was advisable.

"Very well. Take a couple of stalls at the Odeon to-morrow night, wait till ten o'clock, then slip out and come to that address." And he handed me a card on which was written : *Rue de la Pont Seine, numero dix-huit.*

"Do we ring, or knock, or what?" asked Rupert.

"Neither. As you approach the house, you will be accosted by one of my people. He will say: 'The restaurants of Paris are better than those of Dieppe, don't you think so?' And you will reply: 'There is no comparison.' He will then walk on, and you will follow."

"How do we get to this place?" I said. "Is it far?"

"Some little distance," chimed in Joubert. "Better take a *fiacre* to the corner of the Rue St. Just; then you will have a quarter of a mile to walk."

"And the expert?" I inquired.

The fat man frowned. "Is it necessary?" he growled.

I pretended to consider. "If the property was mine," I declared, "I wouldn't insist on his being present; but, under the circumstances, I don't feel justified in leaving him behind."

"Very well, then ; he had better meet you at the corner of the Rue St. Just."

"And the hour?" I asked.

"Ten-thirty. You will, of course, bring the money, and, when it has been counted, the case will be handed to you just as it left the bank." And here Monsieur Roques rose and bade us *bon soir*, an example followed by his companion. The atmosphere of the room seemed to me decidedly purer when no longer polluted by his loathsome presence.

The first thing, next morning, was to send a note round to Lord Wallace, eldest son of the Earl of Kinrossa, known to his friends as Reggie, requesting him to join us at *déjeuner*. It was conveyed to the British Embassy by no less a person than Mr. Drake, admirably disguised.

The reason why we did not deliver our invitation personally was that Mr. Drake warned us that every movement we made was watched. He felt certain we were playing a dangerous game of some sort, and, as he was accustomed to carry parcels of great value, sometimes across the Continent, his wits were preternaturally sharp. "Why, bless you, sir," he said to me, "I can smell a spy a mile off, and when I looked out of my window this morning and saw a shabby old man speak to a *cocher*, and make a gesture in this direction, I thought you had better be warned."

We thanked him warmly, and, as he suspected something, we concluded he had better know everything, giving him his choice as to whether he would keep the appointment that night at the corner of the Rue St. Just or not.

"No," he said, "my services will not be required. With your permission, I'll keep a watch on *numero dix-huit*, and I'll go armed. Of course you will do likewise?"

We assured him on that point, and then asked why he was so certain about his not being wanted.

"Because," came the startling reply, "there will be nothing in the case, and whilst one of you unlocks it, and the other leans forward to see its contents, you will be attacked."

"Great Scott, what makes you so certain?" exclaimed Rupert, his eyes shining with anticipation of what he called a glorious row.

"Because I know these people; I've had dealings with them before. I was set upon by some of this same gang two years ago, in a railway carriage, and had a narrow escape. Two of them are doing time at the Devil's Isle through me at this moment."

"Then they will recognise you!" I exclaimed.

"No," he replied coolly. "I doubt if any here have ever seen me; but, in case of accidents, I have shaved off my beard and moustache and wear these glasses." He alluded to the blue spectacles on his nose, which he was wearing for the first time. "They evidently anticipate the possibility of trouble," he added, "or Roques, the captain; as they call him, wouldn't be present. He only turns up on important occasions."

Lord Wallace having put in an appearance, we discussed the situation at *dejeuner*.

Our new friend was a tall, athletic man, with fair, almost red, hair and moustache. His twinkling blue eyes proclaimed the fact that he looked upon life from a humorous point of view, and, when he heard our story, his first words showed that he was frankness itself.

"You're a couple of fools, that's what !" he said, and we laughed till we cried at his emphatic manner. "It's all very well, though," he went on, when order had been restored. "Do you seriously tell me that you are going to venture into a house close to the river in one of the most dangerous parts of Paris with five thousand of the best about you ?"

"Is the Rue de la Pont Seine as bad as that?" asked Rupert.

"I don't know it," admitted his lordship, "but the Rue St. Just is, and I gather it is close by."

"Well," said Rupert, "it's too late now, I suppose we ought to have insisted upon the exchange taking place here. But, as it is, having made the arrangement, we'll have to stick to it."

Lord Wallace whistled, and after a pause did all he could to dissuade us from what he called an act of criminal lunacy; but Rupert stuck to his guns, and I felt I was bound to stick to Rupert. We couldn't very well go back to Mabel and confess we were afraid to face the music—that was unthinkable.

"There's only one thing to be done," declared Wallace. "As you've made up your minds to carry this thing through, you must at least take ordinary precautions. I'll see the head of the police—I won't tell him more than I can help—and I'll promise that, if it turns out to be a square deal, after all, there shall be no interference. If not—if you don't come out of that house within twenty minutes, I shall take steps to ascertain what has become of you."

Rupert shook his head. "It isn't playing the game, old man. We promised not to tell the police anything about it." "And neither shall you. You've told me, and I ain't a policeman, am I? Don't you worry, my son. You've got yourself and Mr. Redesdale into a nice hole. Lucky I'm here, or the British Army would be minus two of its most promising and ornamental young officers to-morrow."

"I'm afraid the boot's on the other leg, Lord Wallace," I said, with a smile. "I'm the culprit who suggested that Rupert should accompany me on this trip."

"Oh, hang it!" cried that volatile gentleman. "What does it matter? Vive le sport! That's about all the French I know. They're Mabel's jewels; it's all in the family."

"Then *au revoir*, and good luck," quoth his lordship. "I don't half like it, but I suppose we shall have to do our best. I shan't see you again till the affair is over." And, so saying, he left us.

The next thing we did was to stroll to the Odeon, where we booked our stalls.

We were lounging in our sitting-room, too anxious to go out. Rupert was lying on a piece of furniture, of which, if it felt half as uncomfortable as it looked, no one would have had the heart to deprive him. He was consuming dozens of those pernicious cigarettes. I had smoked numerous pipes, and Drake was looking out of the window, hidden by the curtain, watching the watcher opposite with amusement, to judge by the chuckles that proceeded from him.

Suddenly there was a loud knock at the door, and, in response to our invitation to enter, a messenger appeared with a telegram. "Monsieur Drake?" he inquired. And, before anyone could reply, that gentleman reached him with one bound, snatched the wire from his hand, and perused it. A look of satisfaction crossed his countenance, succeeded by one of anxiety. He looked at his watch.

"Three o'clock! Pray Heaven it mayn't be too late!" he murmured, as he dismissed the messenger. "Gentlemen," he announced, "I must leave you. We may not meet again till to-night. All I ask of you is to have faith in me. What I am about to do I honestly believe is the only way to avert the imminent danger which menaces you—that is to say, if you are still determined to run the risks, which, in my humble judgment, no jewels are worth, and which Lady Kennett, were she here, would move heaven and earth to prevent."

"Too late - the die is cast," said Rupert.

"Then all that remains is for me to do

my best. Farewell, gentlemen." And he was gone.

"There goes a good, straight man," exclaimed Rupert.

"Yes. He's white all the way through, and, if he gets hurt to-night instead of us, I'll-well, I'll have someone's blood in exchange !" I growled savagely.

Rupert seized my hand and wrung it hard. "I'm with you all the way, old man," he said.

"It's rough on Mabel, too," I continued. "She's got a heart of gold, that girl, and she'd rather lose everything she possesses than anyone should come to grief. Well, we can only hope and trust in Providence."

"That's so," agreed Rupert. "I expect, if it comes to a row, our adversaries will be rather astonished. I'd like to leave my mark on the fat one, and let some of the grease out of the oily beast."

I looked at my watch. "Time to dress," I announced. "We shall have to dine early—six or thereabouts."

"By Jove !" ejaculated Rupert, pulling a long face.

"What's the matter now?"

"We can't dress."

"Can't dress?" I echoed. "Why not?" "Because of our waistcoats, you old chump!"

It was too true. We were going to dine in one of the most exclusive restaurants in Paris, where we had ordered a most *recherché* repast, and go to a fashionable theatre attired in morning clothes.

Oh, Mabel, Mabel! Rupert, a most immaculate young man, nearly shed tears —in fact, he hinted at a scheme which involved dressing for dinner and changing afterwards.

But I resolutely declined. "I consider it sinful to insult one's digestion."

Then he suggested countermanding dinner and hiding ourselves in a secondclass feeding place, but that, too, I negatived. I meant to eat what we had with great care selected, and said so. Rupert capitulated.

"Ten o'clock!" I whispered to my partner, as the drop-curtain fell on the second act of what was doubtless an amusing comedy, if we could have understood it, and five minutes later a *fiacre* was conveying us to the Rue St. Just.

It was a dismal street, in a deserted neighbourhood, at the corner of which the *cocher* pulled up. Not a soul was in sight. I gave him ten francs, having no change, and was rewarded by a hurried whisper: "Prenez garde; très mal!" He didn't even glance in our direction as he conveyed this warning, but drove rapidly away.

I felt to see if my revolver and knife were all right, and derived some comfort from my hand coming in contact with them. Suddenly—it seemed from nowhere—a figure wrapped in a melodramatic cloak, with a huge slouch hat covering its features, appeared at my elbow.

¹^t The restaurants of Paris are better than those of Dieppe. You think so, monsieur ?" muttered a gruff voice in my ear.

"There is no comparison," I replied, upon which the figure, beckoning us to follow, shuffled along in front, showing the way. When we reached the end of the street, another figure came hastily round the corner, nearly colliding with us. He volubly apologised.

"" N'importe," said our guide, trying to push past him.

" *Prenez garde, mon ami, toujours prenez garde,*" advised the other, holding up a warning finger. Our guide stared at the speaker.

"" Prenez garde, mon frère, toujours," he rejoined.

"Toujours prêt," exclaimed the new-comer, exposing his hand as if by accident, but in such a way that a large cat's-eye ring, worn on the thumb, became distinctly visible.

on the thumb, became distinctly visible. "C'est bien," muttered the guide; and we resumed our progress, the two members of the gang—for the new-comer evidently belonged to them—going on in front and conversing eagerly in a low voice. We emerged from the narrow street on to a large open space paved with cobble stones, beyond which was the river. There were several streets exactly like the one we had just passed through, leading in different directions, and all composed of very high, shabby, tumbledown-looking buildings.

It was very dark; there was no light except for the infinitesimal gleam proceeding from two or three old-fashioned lamps. "Which is the Rue de la Pont Seine?" asked the latest addition to our party, in French.

"Why, don't you know?" replied the other suspiciously.

"How should I? You forget I arrived from London only to-day. It is ten years since I was in Paris. Ten years out of my life! Ah, mon ami, the galleys are hell!"

"How did they catch you, and for what?" questioned his friend, as he led the 2 p way into the narrowest and darkest of the thoroughfares.

"It was a jewel job, same as this. There were two of them on to me, one French, the other English. I shot the Frenchman, but threats of what he would do when he got a chance of revenge.

Here the man in charge of our little party, having motioned to us to be silent, knocked first once, then three times, then



the other—mon Dieu, he had the strength of a bull! I couldn't shake him off."

"What was his name?" asked the guide, much interested, as he stopped at a door belonging to one of the most forbidding of the houses.

"Drake," was the reply, accompanied with a savage curse and divers blood-curdling once again, and we heard the door—a very heavy one—being unbolted and unbarred till it was possible to open it about a foot, a heavy chain limiting the size of the aperture.

A voice, which I recognised as Joubert's, said : "Avez-vous l'argent ?"

"C'est ici," was the reply.

" Combien ?" continued the voice.

" Cinq mille livres."

"C'est bien." And the door was closed in order to take the chain off.

I looked up and down. Alas, nothing

and yet—— But at this moment the door opened.

"Welcome, gentlemen," said Joubert, as he stood aside to let us pass. "I congratulate you on your punctuality. Through the



but black, forbidding darkness. No sign of any assistance as yet, and involuntarily I sighed.

"Courage!" It was only the ghost of a whisper, yet it reached my ear. I glanced at the ex-galley slave. His eyes were fixed on the door, and Rupert had evidently heard nothing. I must have dreamt it, I thought, passage, the first on the right. If you will wait while I close the door, I will show a light."

He locked and barred what I remembered, with a sensation akin to fear, was our only means of escape, and then held up a lantern which enabled us to see a long corridor leading to the back of the house. Along this he bustled. "Better let me go first," he said, with a cackle of laughter. "There are two steps here. That's right." And he threw open a door lined with green baize, which, when the last of us passed through, closed with a click.

"Spring lock," I thought.

We found ourselves in a large square room with shelves full of books all round it. Joubert immediately went to one of the corners and touched a button that looked like electric light, and instantaneously the words "Qui est lâ?" appeared on the ceiling in letters of fire. Upon this he pulled several books out of one of the shelves, and, behold, a telephone !

"Pardon me," he said. "I won't be long now." And, after a couple of minutes' conversation, a bookcase moved on one side, and in its place there was a lift.

"Sorry to be so mysterious, but the Parisian police are so very inquisitive," apologised our cicerone. "However, if you will oblige"—and he indicated the lift— "this will land us at our destination."

There was nothing for it but to "oblige," and another few seconds found us in a handsome, well-lighted apartment, luxuriously furnished, with a cheerful fire blazing.

Monsieur Roques and the individual who had escorted us to the barber's shop at Dieppe, and whose name was Le Brun, were the sole occupants of the room. They rose and greeted us with the utmost politeness.

"But where is your expert?" asked Roques, frowning.

"I don't know," was my answer. "I can't understand his conduct; he promised to meet us at the corner of the Rue St. Just. To be perfectly candid with you, it occurred to me that some of your men might have mistaken him for an official and treated him accordingly."

"Impossible, monsieur. With our organisation, such an error could not take place."

"Well," I said impatiently, "it is no fault of mine. I did my best to arrange matters so that everything should go without a hitch."

"After all, his presence is not essential," remarked the fat man, with a smile. "It isn't as if he carried the money."

I was relieved to see that smile. It was one difficulty got over. To tell the truth, I had been funking this explanation—a very lame one—of Drake's non-appearance. But that was nothing to what was coming. Up to now Roques had not taken the smallest notice of the stranger from the galleys, though I had noticed that he cast suspicious glances at him every now and then. Suddenly he unmasked his batteries. "And now, sir," he cried in French, turning on him, "who the devil may you be?"

For answer, the man whispered something and showed the ring on his thumb.

Roques's change of manner was extraordinary and instantaneous. "Welcome, brother, welcome, a thousand times ! You will pardon me; I expected Jacques," he said.

"I have reason to believe that Jacques has betrayed us," announced the stranger coolly.

The fat man turned a sickly green. "Mon Dieu!" he muttered.

"Besides," went on the other, "it is ten years since we met, and I have lived two lifetimes since then. I have changed, *n'estce pas*?"

He removed his hat and cloak, which up till then he had been wearing. We saw a man under middle height, but broadshouldered and powerful-looking. He had iron-grey hair, rather long, was clean-shaved, with hardly any eyebrows, and piercing black eyes.

"Yes, you are much older. I shouldn't have known you," said Roques.

"Ah, that is not surprising, is it? We only met twice. You were always in Paris, and I in London, though it was in Manchester they caught me. I was betrayed. Do you remember *le chien noir*?"

The fat man nodded assent.

"He did it, scelerat, cochon ! I wish he were here now !" And the speaker ground his teeth and his eyes flashed fire. "To think that such a company as ours should be at the mercy of the scum of the earth ! That a man with brains like yours"—and he bowed to the greasy ruffian, who swallowed the flattery as a pike does a minnow—" may be sent to the galleys, or even make the acquaintance of Monsieur de Paris, on the information of a worm like Jacques, and he gets off scot-free—it makes one's blood boil !"

Of course, I found it a little difficult to follow all this, spoken rapidly as it was, but the speech and the manner of its delivery removed any lurking suspicion that all was not right with the credentials of the speaker. In fact, Roques was so carried away that he embraced the poor man. "Certainly," I thought, "whatever crime he has committed, *that* is sufficient punishment."

"But we must get to work," said the leader. "Will you get the case?" he asked Joubert. "And perhaps, gentlemen, you will produce the money?"

We were seated at a round table. The box which I had last seen on the counter at the bank was placed between Rupert and myself, and the two keys, one for each lock, on the top.

"Now, then," said Roques, "when Joubert and I have counted the notes, you can open the case. You probably have a list of the contents."

• "Yes," replied Rupert, "here it is." And he produced a note-case, from which he extracted it.

We then unbuttoned our coats and waistcoats, and proceeded to empty the various pockets of the wads of paper with which they were stuffed. As Rupert unloaded, he passed his cargo over the table to Roques, and I mine to Joubert, who counted each bundle carefully.

"Come," exclaimed the stranger to me, "why shouldn't I help—that is to say, unless you have an objection?"—this last to Roques. "No," was the reply. "It will save time." Thereupon he came and sat next to me and produced a piece of paper and a pencil. I handed him a wad, he counted and passed it to Roques and made a note on his paper. I handed him another parcel.

"That one is a bit knocked about, isn't it?" he said, pushing one of the notes under my eyes. As he did so, he moved the paper. "Drake-don't resist," was written on it.

"Oh," I rejoined, "I don't call that so bad for a French note. I've seen 'em much worse." And I tossed some more to Joubert.

"Have you?" grunted Drake, pretending to be very busy.

By this time the whole of the money was on the table. "Seems it's all here," said the fat man. "Perhaps, gentlemen, you would like to go through your little lot while we finish."

I needed no second suggestion. It suddenly struck me that Lord Wallace and his myrmidons would spoil everything if they interfered at this juncture. It would have been very different if there had been no Drake.

As I inserted the first key, Roques directed Le Brun to put some coal on the fire. Now, to do this he had to get behind us, the grate being in a direct line with Rupert's back. Almost simultaneously with Roques's order, Joubert signed to Drake. When the lid was opened, and before there was time to realise that Drake's prophecy was correct, and there was nothing but the empty box, Rupert was seized from behind, and the table received such a push from the other side that it knocked us both backwards. Drake had me down, to all appearances choking the life out of me, while Joubert and Le Brun were subduing Rupert, who gave them a hard time of it. He reduced one side of Le Brun's face to pulp—in fact, it was only with the assistance of Roques that they managed at last to tie him up. Really, I was quite proud of him.

"Beastly hard luck, old chap! We didn't even get a shot at them," was all he said, when it was evident further resistance was futile. They had trussed him up like a fowl, so that he couldn't move.

I may mention that I had been trying to convey the good news of Drake's presence to him ever since I knew it myself; but there was no chance, and, if I had been rash, we might all three have been killed. Roques and Joubert were as cunning as monkeys.

The first thing the bounders did was to open some priceless champagne, of which they each had a bumper. It was owing to Drake, bless him, that we were given some.

"I am sorry to be compelled to break faith," said that arch-scoundrel Roques, "but the risks are great and the profits small, comparatively speaking—in addition to which, business has been very slack lately, and expenses are heavy. I may also mention that Lady Kennett's jewels resulted in terrible disappointment. The majority of them were so well known that we had to let them go for almost nothing."

"Then they have gone !" exclaimed Rupert, with a groan.

"I fear so," replied the oily voice. There was silence for a minute, then he continued : "Before deciding what is to be done with you gentlemen, we will adjourn to the room downstairs."

In obedience to his directions, Drake and Joubert carried me, while Le Brun and the guide attended to Rupert.

Not a word was spoken till we found ourselves back in the room with the book shelves. They were all in their places; no door was visible. On each side, close to the books, a mattress was laid. I was placed on one, Rupert on the other. There was a large, comfortable-looking saddle-bag chair for Roques, and one of smaller dimensions for each of the others. At Roques's elbow was a small square table with writing materials.

"In cases of this kind," began the villainin-chief, "it is our usual custom to take the opinion of the members present as to what is to be done with prisoners. The verdict is usually-in fact, invariably-death."

"You murderous villain!" ejaculated Rupert.

"Personally," continued Roques, "I am extremely loath to proceed to extreme measures under present circumstances, if it can possibly be avoided."

"Why not?" snarled Le Brun. "Death, say I-take no chances! Dead men can't speak. Death, now, at once ! As for this canaille "----and he gave Rupert a kick in the ribs which hurt him for months-" I'd give half my share of the swag to put him out of the way myself with my own hands !"

This, of course, was spoken in French, and therefore unintelligible to Rupert; but the fiendish expression of the brute's face was quite enough, not to mention the kick, which the recipient showed no sign of having felt. I remember thinking in a sort of confused way that, if it ever had to be paid for, the reckoning might be heavy. Drake made a convulsive movement, but controlled himself with a tremendous effort.

And now one thing which had puzzled me was going to be made clear. Whence did this weird-looking man, their so-called captain, derive his authority? Why did this notorious gang of thieves, numbering even more than the celebrated forty of the fairy tale, yield him unquestioning obedience? Mental superiority and an extraordinary personality would help, but surely it wanted more than that?

When Le Brun interrupted him, Roques rose to his feet. He stood there, perfectly impassive, till the other had finished, then he asked in a soft, low voice, in which the usual squeak was hardly noticeable : "What is the cause of this outburst?"

Le Brun, deceived by his manner, turned his face round so as to display a terrible black eye and a badly cut cheek. "That's his work," he growled.

"And you kick him when he is helpless !" Roques made one gigantic stride towards the wretch, seized him in his long arms, swung him above his head as if he had been a child, and then dashed his carcase into the corner of the room. I don't know what injuries he sustained, but they must have been considerable. As for his chief, he went back to his seat as if nothing had happened.

"Thank you!" murmured Rupert.

Roques resumed where he had left off. "I say," he declared, "that I would rather let our prisoners go; but it must be evident

to them, as to us, that they can only regain their freedom by binding themselves in the most solemn and drastic manner to keep silence about to-night's proceedings. They must promise to refuse to give any information or evidence that can in any possible way assist the enemies of our community to trace any member thereof or any property in our possession."

"I'm afraid it's not much good going on with these conditions," quoth Rupert.

"What do you mean ?" exclaimed Roques.

"Can't entertain the idea-at least, I don't think so. What do you think, Jack?"

"I agree with you," I said; and, as I did so, I wondered if I should have given the same reply if there been no Drake. Rupert was looking death in the face without a tremor. From his point of view there could be no escape, yet, rather than come to terms with these scourges of society, he preferred to sacrifice his life. I wish I could have been sure that I should have done the same.

"But you must be mad !" said Joubert. "You force us to kill you by the course you are taking."

"Show them their grave," said Drake, throwing as much brutality into his voice as possible. "Perhaps that will bring them to their senses."

Joubert went to the left bookcase, removed some books, and turned a handle. There was a creaking noise, and two flaps slid away, leaving a gaping void, from which the sound of rushing water proceeded.

There was dead silence. I glanced at Rupert. His face, stern and set, was pale to the lips, but it was he who first spoke. "I congratulate you on the possession of this room," he said, addressing Roques. "For your purposes it is perfect.'

"Unless you agree to our terms," declared Joubert impatiently, "your bodies will be thrown down that hole, bound as you are. We have already wasted much time ; we must demand an immediate decision."

"Will you give us ten minutes more?" I pleaded. "It can do you no harm, and I should like to discuss it with my friend."

Rupert looked at me. "You don't mean to say you're weakening, Jack !" he exclaimed.

"I don't like that hole," I replied. "You're not the first," said Roques, with a fat chuckle.

Drake made a movement of disgust. "We've had enough of this," he declared. "It's got to be one thing or the other. What do you think, captain ? "

"If they want to say their prayers, I won't say 'No,'" replied Roques.

"But you'll leave us alone?" I entreated. "No," said Drake, "not for a minute; and if it wasn't for Jacques having turned traitor, I'd have had you out of the way before now; but, as it is, I'd rather let you go."

At this juncture, Le Brun, who had been groaning a good deal, asked for a drink.

"Oh, you're not dead yet!" continued Drake. "Look here, captain, you go up with him and open another bottle of wine. I'll watch over these two, but don't be longer than you can help."

Roques hesitated for a few seconds—they seemed hours to me—then he said: "Very well. Get the lift." And in two minutes Roques, Joubert, Le Brun, and the guide were on their way to the upper regions.

Never shall I forget Rupert's astonishment when Drake's identity became known to him. "You ought to have the V.C.!" he gasped, while his bonds were being loosened. "By George, I am stiff!" And he threw his arms and legs about and stretched himself till I thought he'd break somewhere.

"Now for the front door," I said. "Wallace must have been there long ago."

Drake shook his head. "No, I sent him a message to wait in the Rue St. Just, instead of coming here. As for the front door, how are we going to get there?"

We looked helplessly round. "By Heavens, you're right!" I cried. "There's no way out of this room!"

Drake smiled. "We've got to do it on our own, gentlemen," he said quictly. "Pity they took your revolvers, but I've got mine."

"And my knife may come in useful," I remarked. "They missed that."

"I've got my hands," murmured Rupert, with a grim smile, as he looked at those useful members, which showed traces of contact with Le Brun's ugly face.

"What's the plan of campaign?" I asked. "You'd better arrange it, Drake."

"I should suggest that you lie just as you were. They will ask for your decision; you will refuse their terms. Roques will order Le Brun and the guide to throw you in there "—and he pointed to the hole. "First one of you, and then the other, as they approach, will spring to your feet. I'll settle Joubert and Roques. Quick, here they come !"

And, sure enough, the lift was heard descending. We just had time to resume our recumbent attitudes before it came in sight. Joubert was the first to step out, then the two minor villains, who both assisted Roques to alight. He settled himself comfortably in his chair before speaking.

"They have decided?" he questioned, with a wave of his great paw in our direction.

Drake shook his head. "I regret, but they are English, and Englishman are obstinate pigs."

"Then they choose death?"

"They choose death."

"So be it." He turned to Le Brun. "Throw them in !" he ordered. "That one first !"—and he indicated Rupert.

As they approached him, Drake's pistol rang out, and Roques fell forward with a yell. We sprang to our feet. " Quits ! " I heard Rupert shout, as he caught Le Brun under the jaw. There was a terrible scream of agony, and he disappeared into the water below-I heard the splash. In the meantime, the guide, who was a strong, wiry ruffian, had got to close quarters, and was fighting like a wild-cat. Joubert had ducked. and was covered by the back of the big Fortunately I caught sight of his chair. hand with a pistol in it, aiming at Drake from behind, and threw my knife at it, with the result that his weapon dropped to the floor. I followed this up by jumping over the intervening chair and getting him by the throat; then, with Drake's assistance, we tied him up.

In the meantime, Rupert had been enjoying himself. His second opponent met with the same fate as the first. He threw him into the river, "where he meant to put me," he remarked.

The first thing we did was to examine Roques. His shoulder was smashed, and he was bleeding profusely. "We must get a doctor for him," suggested Drake; "but in the meantime his hands and feet had better be tied. He's as cunning as they make them. Oh, would you?" he cried, as the fat man made a snatch at my knife with his uninjured hand; it was lying just by the chair. "Just shows you," remarked Drake, "he's still dangerous."

The expression on Roques's face, when he looked at Drake, was positively fiendish. He spoke no word, simply looked.

"I must run round and tell Wallace," said Rupert. "How do I get out, Drake?"

But this was not easy, and we had to swing Joubert over the water and threaten to drop him before we could induce him to show us the trick of the door. Wallace speedily was on the scene, full of admiration. He was accompanied by the Chief of Police, who very soon had an ambulance at the door, in which our two prisoners were removed. We then went upstairs and collected our five thousand, also the jewel case, empty, alas !

We enjoyed our supper that night. We felt we had earned it. Drake, of course, was the hero of the occasion.

We asked him for an explanation of the telegram. It was from Mabel. He wired her that our lives were in grave danger, and asked for *carte blanche* to do what he liked and spend what he liked. She went straight to Kennett, who gave the required permission. Thereupon he went off to a man who he knew had just been released from the galleys, one who had been a power in the gang before he was arrested, and got the ring and password. He paid seventy-five thousand francs—pretty stiff, but it was undoubtedly the price of our lives.

Roques and Joubert both suffered the extreme penalty of the law; the number of murders they were responsible for was awful to contemplate. Drake was set up in business as a jeweller by Lord Kennett, and is now a rich man.

Our welcome home was of that description usually reserved for conquering heroes, instead of for failures, as we dolefully admitted we were, so far as results went.

"If anything had happened to either of you two," said Mabel, with tears in her lovely eyes, "I should never have worn a precious stone again ! As it is, I can't look at them without shuddering."

"You'll get over that, darling," quoth her husband, who knew.

The bank, being threatened with an action, compromised for fifteen thousand pounds. I wonder if they sacked that clerk.



THE MOVING FINGER.

B^{LACK} are the boughs against a wintry sky, And through the narrow day,

Arching from wintry dawn to wintry dusk, A prisoner I lay,

Intent upon the branching sprays, the small Fair tracery, the Writing on the Wall!

On beetling precipice and craggy fell Her formidable nest

The raven piles, and clear on every shell* Beneath her brooding breast

The mystic scroll! O meditative bird,

Who gave, who taught thy heart the Written Word?

Grey is the broad expanse of peopled sea,

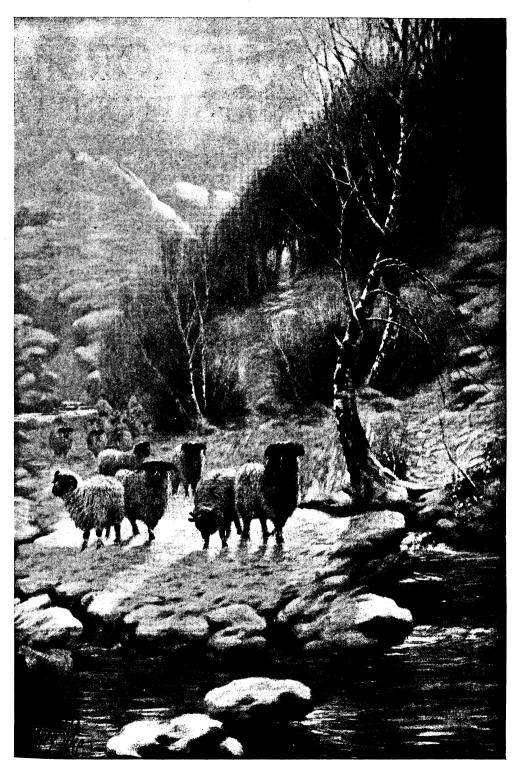
And wave on racing wave

Hurls its white message up the shelving sands.

What would the waters grave On the reluctant rock against our need? The Moving Finger writes—but who shall read?

C. A. DAWSON SCOTT.

* The eggs of the raven appear to be covered with black script.



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THE-WHITE-HORSES BY-HALLIWELL-SUTCLIFFE



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III. HOW MICHAEL CAME TO YORK



HEY carried Christopher into the tavern, and the Squire thrust the gaping onlookers from the room and shut the door. He thought the lad was dying.

Kit lay on the lang - settle. The

dancing firelight showed the pallor of his face, the loose, helpless surrender of limbs and body.

"I cared for the lad too much, maybe," growled the Squire. "He was littlish, as we Metcalfes go, and my youngest, and a man's heart yearns, somehow, about the baby of a flock."

For two hours he watched, and then Kit stirred. "The louts bandied Joan's name about !" the lad murmured.

"Ay, so they did. Get up and fight, lad Christopher—for Joan."

Kit obeyed the summons with a promptness that dismayed the Squire. He got to his feet, looked about him, moved across the floor; then his legs grew weak under him, and he tottered to the settle.

"Tell her it doesn't matter either way," he said. "Tell her I'm for the King, as all the Metcalfes are."

He slept that night like a little child; and the Squire, watching beside him, returned to his own childhood. The bitterness of fever was over. Kit would live, he thought.

Pansy was early astir next morning, and moved among the servants of the Castle with an aloofness that enraged the women, with a shy, upward glance of her Puritan eyes that enthralled the men. She was demure and gentle; and when a lad came into the yard with his milking-cans, and said that there had been a bonnie fight in the village overnight, Pansy asked him how it had fared with Master Christopher.

"Oh, he?" said the lad, his eyes big and round at sight of her. "He was ready to die last night; but he's thought better of it, so they say."

Pansy did not take the news to her mistress, whose moods were not to be reckoned with these days, but to the lady of the house. Already she had learned, with her quick instinct for character, that Lady Ingilby and she had much in common.

"The Riding Metcalfes are in Ripley, by your leave," she said, with downcast eyes.

"I'm vastly glad to hear it. Miss Grant has told me of their loyalty. Well?"

"Master Christopher lies wounded in the tavern—he that carried the message so well. It seems shame that he should stay there with only men to nurse him."

"Ah, Master Christopher! I've heard of him. Why do you bring the news to me, girl, instead of to your mistress?" "Because, my lady, she's deep in love

"Because, my lady, she's deep in love with him, and does not know it. I'd as lief meet a she-wolf in the open as talk of him to the mistress."

The other laughed whole-heartedly. It was the first real laugh she had found since her husband left her for the wars. "You've a head on your shoulders, child, and a face rather too pretty for the snares of this world. I thank you for the news."

An hour later Lady Ingilby went out, alone and on foot, into Ripley street. There was a press of Metcalfes about the roadway —brawny men who had slept beside their horses wherever they could find room about

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the fields, and who had gathered for the next day's call to action.

"Is the Squire of Nappa here?" asked Lady Ingilby.

"He's indoors," said Michael, with his graceless ease of bearing, "tending Christopher, the darling of our company."

"Go in and tell him that Lady Ingilby commands."

When the Squire came out, a little dizzy with his vigil, and altogether glad that Kit had so far slept off his weakness as to ask for breakfast, he saw a lady with a high, patrician nose and keen grey eyes, who smiled at him.

"Sir, I come to inspect your company. In my husband's absence I undertake his duties."

"Madam," he answered, with rough grace, "my men are honoured. The King may have better soldiers, but has he six-score to set side by side with mine for height and girth?"

He bade his men get to horse—as many of them as the street afforded room for—and marshalled them briskly into line. Lady Ingilby was astounded by the discipline they showed. It was as if their leader scarcely needed to give an order; their readiness seemed to go with the command, as if one brain guided the whole company.

She took the salute with lively satisfaction. "You dwarf our houses, Metcalfes. I never guessed how low the inn roof is. You are all for the King? Good! That was a lusty roar."

They faced each other, the cavalry and the slim, straight lady whose husband was at the wars. And the Nappa men answered her laugh; and from this day forward they were comrades, she and they, and she could command them anything.

"Undoubtedly prayers are answered, if one prays long enough," she said, in her odd, imperative way. "There's been a siege of Ripley Castle, a stealthy siege, and I've needed men about me."

"We are free for your service," said the Squire. "Indeed, we were in fear of idleness, after doing what was asked at Skipton yesterday."

"There's no speed of attack in this venture." She read the man's need for blows and the gallop, and would not tempt him into a promise rashly given. "You will understand, Mr. Metcalfe, that my house is a hospital just now. Whenever a Cavalier takes wounds too hard for him, he drags himself to Ripley. The countrymen all know my mind ; and, when they find a lame dog of the King's, they bring him to my gate. The garrison of my good castle, I tell you frankly, is made up of women and sick men."

"But we're no nurses," protested the Squire, with laughable simplicity. "You'd have six-score other ailing men if you shut us up indoors."

Lady Ingilby laughed, for the second time since her husband rode for the King. "We could not house you, sir. If there's scarce room for you in Ripley's street, you would overfill the Castle. I have other work for you."

"In the open?"

"Ah, your eagerness ! Yes, in the open. Keep our gates safe from without, sir. There are few hale men among the garrison, and these are wearied out with sleeplessness. Prowling companies of Roundheads come this way, giving us no rest. They know Sir William Ingilby is with the King, they know I keep open house here for Cavaliers—."

"Bid your household rest," the Squire broke in. "There are six-score of us here judge for yourself whether we're big enough to guard you."

"Big enough," assented Lady Ripley, with a brisk, friendly nod. "But how to feed your company, sir?" she added, returning to the prose of housewifery.

"We feed ourselves," laughed the Squire. "It seemed a fat country as we rode through. Mutton—and corn for our horses—wherever these are, there's a meal for us."

Kit had left his half-finished breakfast at the sound of Lady Ingilby's voice outside. It was not her quality, or the courage she was showing under hardship, that stirred his pulses. As she turned to go in at the tavern door, saying she must see the wounded man, Christopher himself crossed the threshold.

"My faith, sir," she said tartly, "you should be in your bed, by the look of you. You can scarce stand."

"Miss Grant is with you?" he asked, a sudden crimson in his cheeks.

"Oh, yes. The most wonderful maid that ever came to Ripley—her eyes like stars she feeds on thistledown."

"You are pleased to jest," he said, aloof and chilly.

"Not so hasty, by your leave. You've a message for this girl who sups on moonbeams?"

Some kindness in her voice arrested Kit. "Tell her that I wish her very well." "I shall tell her nothing of the kind, my lad. D'ye want to win her? Then I shall tell her you were thinking of the wars—that, when I asked if you had any message, you seemed to have forgotten her. I shall make much of that ugly scar across your face taken yesterday, by the look of it—and hazard that you may live for a week, with some good luck to help you."

some good luck to help you." "You've no heart," he said, the Metcalfe temper roused.

"An older heart than yours—that is all. I have lived through your sort of moonlight, and found the big sun shining on the hilltop. My man went out to the wars, and I— I would not have him back just yet for all the gold in Christendom. Absence is teaching me so much."

"I need her. You do not understand."

"Tut-tut! You'll have to wait till you have proved your needing." She looked at the Castle front, saw a star of light flicker and grow clear in a window on the left. "That is her room, Sir Love-too-well," she said, with the gentlest laugh. "When you are weary of guarding the Castle, glance up and picture her yonder, sipping dew, with all the fairies waiting on her."

"I thank you," said Kit, with childish gravity. "I shall know where to look when all else in Ripley seems drab and tawdry."

Lady Ingilby beckoned Squire Metcalfe to her side. "Your son is no courtier, Mr. Metcalfe," she said tartly.

"He was not bred that way. I licked him into shape."

"And yet he is a courtier. He loves well. Only, by your leave, defend my gate against all women from the Yoredale country. I've Joan Grant here, and her maid Pansy, and between them they're turning our men's wits. Two pretty women can always outflank a troop of horse."

The Riding Metcalfes had a busy season between October of that year and the next year's spring. So far as history-making went, the Civil War was quiet enough. Pym, with his same strength, died as Christmas was nearing, and left the Parliament in a muddle of divided leadership. The King summoned a Parliament at Oxford, but nothing fruitful came of it. Yet in Yorkshire the Metcalfes found work enough to Loyal to their pledge, they always left do. some of their number to guard Ripley Castle ; the rest of them went harrying Puritans wherever they could find them. Sometimes they made their way to Skipton, creating uproar and a diversion of the siege : at other times they paid minute and embarrassing attention to Otley, for, of all the Parliament's officers, they detested most the Fairfaxes, who, as old Squire Mecca had it, should have learned better manners from their breeding.

Kit was divided between two allegiances One was owing unalterably to the now. light which Lady Ingilby had shown him shining from Joan's upper room. The other was Prince Rupert's. Through all the muddled rides and skirmishes and swift alarms of that hard winter, the Metcalfes had heard constantly the praises of two men sung-Rupert's and Cromwell's. Rupert had succeeded in the making of a cavalry troop that already, rumour said, was invincible; Cromwell was building up his Ironsides, grim and heavy, to meet the speed and headlong dash of Rupert's men. Gradually, as the months went on, Kit shaped Prince Rupert to the likeness of a hero—a little less than saint, and more than man. Whenever he came home to Ripley, he roamed o' nights. and looked up at Joan's window, and shaped her, too, to the likeness of a maid too radiant for this world. He was in the thick of the high dreams that beset an untrained lad : but the dreams were building knighthood into the weft and woof of him, and no easy banter of the worldlings would alter that in years to come.

Joan played cat's-cradle with his heart. She would flout him for a day, meet him at the supper-board thereafter with downcast eyes and tender voice; and Squire Metcalfe would suppress his laughter when Kit confided to him that women were beyond his reckoning.

Soon after dawn, on a day in late April, Kit stole out for a glance at the left wing of the Castle, where Joan's window grew ruddy in the sunlight. Rain was falling, and a west wind was sobbing up across the sun. And suddenly he fancied that women were not beyond his reckoning. They were April bairns, all of them—gusty and cold, warm and full of cheer, by turns. He remembered other Aprils—scent of gilly-flowers in the garden far away in Yoredale, the look of Joan as she came down the fields to greet him—all the trouble and the fragrance of the days when he was giving his heart to her, not knowing it.

He felt a sharp tap on his shoulder. "Day-dreaming, Kit?" laughed the Squire of Nappa. "Oh, she's there, my lad, safe housed. I was about to knock on the gate, but I fancy you'd best take my message to a Lady Ingilby."

Kit was glad to take it, glad to be nearer by the width of the courtyard to that upper window. Women—who, for the most part, are practical and ruled by household worries —must laugh often at the men who care for them with true romance.

When the gate was unbarred, and he had passed through, a kerchief fluttered down —a little thing of cambric, ladylike and foolish. Kit did not see it. His glance had roved to the upper window, and there, framed by the narrow mullions, was Joan's face.

"You do not care to pick it up," she said, with a careless laugh. "How rough you are, you men of Yoredale !"

Kit saw the favour lying at his feet, and pinned it to his hat. When he glanced up again, the window overhead was empty, and Lady Ingilby, standing at his side, was bidding him good-morrow.

"I have urgent news for you," he said, recovering from confusion.

"Not so urgent but a kerchief could put it out of mind. But come indoors, lest a snowstorm of such favours buries you. You'll have many such storms, I hazard you, with your big laugh and your air of must-be-obeyed."

When they had come into the oak parlour, and Lady Ingilby had seen that the door was close-shut against eavesdroppers, Kit gave his message.

"A man rode in an hour ago from York. The garrison there is near to famine. They're besieged by three armies—Lord Fairfax at Walmgate Bar, my Lord Manchester at Bootham Bar, and the Scots at Micklegate. My father sends me with the message, and asks if you can spare the Riding Metcalfes for a gallop."

"Six-score to meet three armies?"

"If luck goes that way."

She stood away from him, looking him up and down. "My husband is of your good breed, sir. I gave him to the King, so I must spare my six-foot Metcalfes to the cause."

Joan Grant came into the parlour. Kit, seeing the filtered sunlight soft about her beauty, thought that the world's prime miracle of womanhood, a thing dainty, far-away, had stepped into the room.

"Can I share your secrets?" she asked diffidently.

"I've none," said Kit, with a sudden laugh. "I carry your kerchief, Joan-at least, my hat does, whenever I wear it in the open, for men to see."

She was aware of some new self-reliance, some ease of speech and carriage that had been absent in the Yoredale days. A few months of peril had accomplished this; she asked herself, with a queer stab of jealousy, what a year of soldiery would do.

"I dropped the kerchief by chance, sir," she said coldly. "You will return it."

"By and by, when it has been through chance and mischance. Lady Ingilby, you shall be judge between us. Is the kerchief mine?"

The older woman laughed. "Yours when you've proved your right to wear it. Meanwhile, it is a loan."

"Women always forsake each other at the pinch," said Joan, with a gust of temper.

"To be sure, girl. Our men-folk are so often right, in spite of their absurdities. This venture toward York, Mr. Metcalfe? You propose to ride against three armies a hundred and twenty of you?"

"No, by your leave. We hope to get near the city in one company, and then decide. If York is leaguered by regiments, there'll be an outer rim of Metcalfes, waiting their chance of capturing news going in or coming out."

"Good! I begin to see how strong you are, you clan of Metcalfes. You are one, or two, or six-score, as need asks. I think you are well advised to go to York."

Joan Grant turned from the window. Her aloofness and disdain were gone. "Would you not stay to guard our wounded here?" she asked.

The mellow sunlight was busy in her hair. Her voice was low and pleading. Kit was dizzied by temptation. And Lady Ingilby looked on, wondering how this man would take the baptism.

"We fight where the King needs us most --that is the Metcalfe way," he said at last.

"If I asked you not to go? Of course, I care nothing either way. But suppose I asked you?"

With entire simplicity and boyishness, Kit touched the kerchief in his hat. "This goes white, so far as I can guard it."

"Ah !" said Lady Ingilby. "The King should hear of you, sir, in days to come."

When he had gone, Joan came to her aunt's side. "He—he does not care, and I would we were home in Yoredale, he and I. I was free to flout him there."

"Never trust men," said Lady Ingilby, with great cheeriness, "He does not care, of course—no man does when the battle music sounds."

"But he—he was glad to wear my kerchief."

"It is the fashion among our Cavaliers. That is all. He would not care to take the field without a token that some poor gentlewoman was dying of heart-break for his wounds."

Joan found her dignity. "My own heart is sound," she protested.

"Then don't accuse it, child, by protests."

"I'm so glad that he's gone—so glad !" She crossed to the window again, looked out on the sunlit street. "How drab the world is !" she said pettishly. "There'll be snow before night, I fancy; it grows chilly."

before night, I fancy; it grows chilly." "The world's drab," assented Lady Ingilby. "What else does one expect at my years? And our six-foot Metcalfe will forget you for the first pretty face he meets in York."

"Is he so base? Tell me, is he so base?" "No; he forgets — simply, he forgets. Men do."

Without, in Ripley street, there was great stir of men and horses getting ready for the York road. Lady Ingilby, hearing the tumult of it, crossed to the window, and her heart was lighter by twenty years as she watched the cavalcade ride out.

"The White Horses, and six-score giants riding them! They'll make history, girl. The pity is that not all of those six-score will sit a saddle again. They have the look of men who do not care how and when they die, so long as King Charles has need of them."

"Kit will return," said Joan, in a chastened voice.

"That is good hearing. How do you know it, baby-girl?"

"Because I asked him to return. Just to nurse his wounds would be—Paradise, I think."

The Metcalfe men were a mile on the York road by now. Michael, the reputed black sheep and roysterer of the clan, rode close beside Christopher, and chattered of a face he had seen at an upper window of the Castle.

"A face to lead a man anywhere," he finished. "Hair like wind in the rusty brackens."

Kit touched the favour in his hat. "It is she I fight for, Michael—for the King and Joan."

"Are you always to have luck, just for the asking ?" growled Michael.

"This time, yes, unless brother fights with brother."

For a moment they were ready to withdraw from their kinsfolk and settle the issue in some convenient glade. Then Michael yielded to the queer, jealous love he had learned, long since in Yoredale, for this lad.

"Oh, we'll not quarrel, Kit. There'll be another face for me at the next town we ride through. There are more swans than one, and all turn geese in later life."

Squire Mecca, hearing high words from the rear, rode back to learn what the uproar was about. "So you're at your brawling again, Michael?" he roared.

"No, sir. I was wishing Kit good luck for the lady's favour he is wearing in his hat."

"You're a smooth-tongued rascal! As for you, Kit, lady's favours can bide till we're through with this rough work. Moonshine is pretty enough when the day's over, but the day is just beginning."

They rode by way of Tockwith village, long and straggling, and forward over a heath studded thick with gorse and brambles, and set about with black, sullen wastes of bog.

Squire Metcalfe, for all his hardihood, was full of superstition, as most folk are who have good wits and healthy souls. A little wind —of the sort named "thin" in Yoredale blew over Marston Moor, chilling the warm sunlight.

"There's a crying in the wind," he said, turning to Kit, who was riding at his bridle-hand. "I trust it's sobbing for the end of all foul traitors to the King."

They crossed the moor, and so, through Long Marston, made forward on the York road till they reached a hamlet three miles from the city. Here they captured a shepherd, known to the country speech as "an old, ancient man," who was driving a flock of ewes from a neighbouring pasture. They asked him if he knew anything of the to-and-froing of the Parliament troops.

"I've seen a moil o' horsemen scummering out to York for three days past. But they asked me no questions, and so I asked them none. Reckoned they were riding to a hunt. Gentlefolk must fill up their time, one way or another."

"But, man," snapped old Metcalfe, "d'ye live so close to York and not know there's war between King and Parliament?".

"Nay. I've been tending sheep. Have they fallen out, like, King and Parliament? Well, let 'em fratch, say I. I'm a simple man myself, with ewes to tend."

Squire Metcalfe broke into that big laugh

of his that seemed to set the world to rights. "Forward, Mecca lads!" he said. "We've ewes to tend ourselves; but, bless you, this shepherd brings a wind from Yoredale to us."

A half-mile further on they met a company of Fairfax's horse, foraging for meat and drink. There were fifty of them, and the Metcalfes went through them like a sickle cutting through the bearded corn. Ten were killed, and they let all but one of the retreating forty go. From him, before they freed him, they learned that it was unwise to venture further than a mile on the York road, unless they wished to try conclusions with the Scots at Micklegate.

"One of us must find a way into York Castle," said the Squire, calling a council of war about him.

It was part of the man's downrightness, his faith that Providence was kind to every stark adventure, that he was able to make the forlorn hope seem a deed already done.

"I claim the venture, sir," said Michael, with his unalterable smoothness and the air of one who jests. "Kit, here, has had his share already."

"Well, well, 'twill keep you out of mischief for a while. Get you from saddle, Michael. Steal into York as privily as may be, and ask my Lord Newcastle what service six - score Metcalfes can do him in the open. We shall be waiting for you, here or hereabouts, when you return."

Michael, as he trudged along the road, overtook a tall fellow who walked beside a donkey-cart piled high with vegetables. "I'll buy that donkey, friend," he said, "and all your cart holds, and the clothes you stand up in."

"For how much?" asked the countryman, stolidly indifferent to all except the call of money.

Michael took a guinea from his pocket, and watched cupidity brighten in the rascal's eyes as another coin was added. Then they went aside into a little wood beside the road, exchanged clothes there, and the bargain was complete.

"Clothes make a difference," chuckled the countryman. "Here's thee, looking as gaumless a lad as ever brought produce into camp; and here's me, the gentleman fro' my head to my riding-boots. All I need is to steal a horse; then I shall be the gentleman quite. I knew the feel o' stirrups once, before I drank away a snug little farm and had to take to the road."

Something in the man's voice, something

in his sturdy height, the devil-may-care acceptance of life as it was, roused Michael's interest. "You sell your wares to the Roundhead army?" he asked sharply.

"Ay, but that doesn't say I hold wi'them. I've my living to earn, and sell in any market."

"Have a care, man. You're for the King, I fancy, apart from trade. And how do you know that I'll not take you by the ear and lead you into camp for a traitor to the Commonwealth?"

The rogue looked up and down the road. "There's none to come in between us," he laughed. "I care never a stiver on which side you be. I'm for the King, and always was; and, if you say nay, we can fight it out here with our fists. We're much of a height and girth."

This was the sort of wayfaring that tickled Michael's humour. "My lad," he said, between one break of laughter and the next, "it would be a pity for two King's men to fight. Go back a mile along the road to Ripley, and find a company of rascals as big as you and me. When they ask your errand, say 'A Mecca for the King,' then tell them that I've sent you to fill the gap I left. There'll still be six-score Metcalfes while I see about affairs in York."

"This is fair dealing?" said the countryman, after a puzzled silence.

"Take it or leave it. We Metcalfes never trust by halves."

The other clapped his hand suddenly into Michael's. "That's a bargain," he said. "I'd liefer join your company than sell cabbages to these durned Cropheads."

The donkey was waiting patiently in the road until they had settled their differences. When the new master put a hand on the bridle and urged her forward, the brute lashed out a hind leg and scarzed his leg from knee to heel.

"Ah, there, be gentle !" laughed the rogue who was wearing Michael's clothes. "My name's Driver—Will Driver, at your service —and I allus said—said it to gentle and simple, I did—that, though I'm named Driver, I willun't be druv." He came and patted the brute's face, talked to its elemental obstinacy, praised some qualities that only he could find to praise. "There, mister ! She willun't be druv. Treat her kindly. That's the password. Don't drag her bridle, thinking she's going to gallop for the King. You're no horseman now—just a sutler bringing his wares to camp."

Michael, out of the harum-scarum years

behind, had learned one good thing, at least —the gift to pick up sound advice when he found the rare type of man who was fit to give it.

On the road to York his patience was sorely tried. It was easier to lead a squad of cavalry than this crude ass that dragged a cart of garden produce. He tried cajolery of Will Driver's kind, but had no gift for it. He tried force. Nothing served, until it occurred to him to turn her, by sheer strength, with her face to Ripley. She turned instantly about, with her face to York, and thereafter the going was quick and pleasant.

"Women have taught me something, after all," chuckled Michael, as they went forward.

When he came into the lines, he found a press of soldiery about him. They were ravenous, and ate raw cabbages from his cart as if they were beef-steaks.

Michael had not known what hunger meant until he saw the faces of these Roundheads who were beleaguering York. He went among them with ears open, heard that they had eaten the fat lands round about until no food way left. However it was faring with the garrison behind the city walls, it was certain that the besiegers were thin and mutinous for lack of food.

When his wares were sold, he went up and down the camp, the simplest countryman that ever brought a donkey-load to market; heard of the dissensions among the leaders; knew, once for all, that the Puritans, with all their dour talk of heaven waiting for those who denied all joy in life, were much as usual men are-needing food and liquor, and finding a grim temper when ale and victuals were denied them. He brushed shoulders with a thickset, rough-faced officer, who hurried by on some business connected with the siege, and was astonished when he learned that so plain a man was no other than Oliver Cromwell, of whose genius for warfare and hard blows all Yorkshire had been talking lately. Later in the day, too, he saw Cromwell's Ironsides, and their hefty, rugged air roused a wild impulse in him. Ìf only they would pick six-score of their number, and ride out to battle with the Metcalfe clan, what a fight it would be in the doing !

He was losing himself in a day-dream, when a musket-ball, fired from the city wall, whizzed so close to his cheek that he put a hand up, thinking he had taken a wound. So then he took his cart to the rear of the camp, got the donkey out of harness and picketed it. The soldiery were digging trenches or taking their ease, some reading Bibles, others passing lumbering jests with the women who attend on every camp. He passed among them unheeded, and went the round of York, seeking some way of entry. He saw none, till in the dusk of the April evening he found himself on the river-bank near the grey old bridge. With all his random handling of life, Michael had this in common with the Riding Metcalfes—he answered always to the high call of trust. He was pledged to his folk to make an entry somehow into York, and pass on his message. One way or another he must do it.

As he stood there, the lap-lap and gurgle of the river began to thread itself into Lis thoughts. There must be some road into York—that was the burden of Ouse river's song. And then the thing grew clear. The way into York was here beside him. He doffed coat and boots, dived in, and came up to the top of the roaring current just under the grey bridge. The stream was strong, but so were his arms, thickened by ploughwork, field-sports, and many swims in the deep pool of Yore that lay beneath his home at Nappa. He struck out for the left bank, found it, stepped up the muddy foreshore. When he gained the roadway up above, a sentry came bustling through the April moonlight and challenged him.

"A Mecca for the King goes here!" laughed Michael, in high good spirits after his battle with the river.

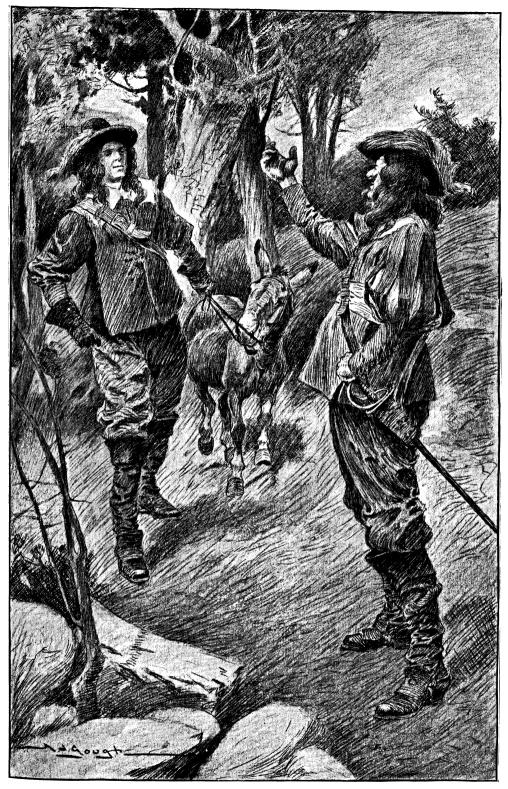
"That's not the password," said the other, fingering his pike.

"It's all you'll get, friend. I seek my Lord Newcastle."

The sentry, his wits none too sharp at any time, was bewildered by this huge man who had come dripping from the river, this man who talked of the King and my Lord Newcastle. As he halted, Michael rushed forward and snatched his pike from him.

"My lord's lodging—where is it?" he asked, with his big, easy-going air. "Your pike in return for the news. And, by the word of a Mecca, I'll come back and drown you in the river if you lie to me!"

The sentry began to surmise that this man was not human, but a ghost risen from the stream that flowed over many dead. Moreover, it was death to him to-morrow if he were found without his weapon at the change of sentry. So he directed Michael to the house where Lord Newcastle was lodged, took the pike in his hands again, and spent a chilly vigil by the river until relief came from his duty for the night.



"Old Squire Metcalfe, as he went out to meet him, broke into a roar of laughter."

Michael pressed forward through the streets and byways until he found the house he sought. A sentry was on guard here, too. He answered the challenge by running sharply in, closing with his man, and putting him into the street. Then he opened the door, barred it behind him, went down a wide passage, heard voices from a chamber on the right. He pushed open that door also, and the men who were holding a council of war within glanced up in sheer astonishment. They saw a giant of a man standing there without boots or coat, Ouse river running down him still in little runnels that made pools about the beeswaxed floor.

Lord Newcastle was the first to recover. He glanced across at Michael with a scholarly, quiet smile. "Your errand?" he asked.

"From the Riding Metcalfes to the garrison of York," answered Michael, forgetting all his disarray. "I carry a message."

"A damp sort of message," hazarded Newcastle.

"I had to swim under York bridge to bring it; and, after that, two sentries challenged me. Will you listen, gentlemen, when I tell you that I'm for the King? Or will you, too, challenge me?"

Truth is a clean sword-blade that always makes a road in front of it. They knew him for a man who had no lies or secrecies about him; and Newcastle, with his quick sympathy, suggested that he should drink a bumper to counteract the chill of Ouse river before giving them his message.

"By your leave, not till my errand is done," said Michael, with that random laugh of his. "When I get near a bumper, I have a trick of forgetting many things."

They laughed with him, as men always did; and with the same easy air, as if he jested, he told them of the Riding Metcalfes, of their readiness to carry messages or to serve the garrison in any way in the open country wide of York. Before his coming there had been high words, dissensions, warring plans of campaign; this talk of six-score men, zealous for the King, united in their claim to serve beleaguered York in any way that offered, brought a breath of fresh air into the council-chamber. It was Newcastle who first found voice.

"Go find Rupert for us," he said.

"Ay, find Rupert," echoed the others, with a hum of sharp agreement.

"We're shut up here in York," went on Newcastle, "and all the news we have is hearsay, brought in by messengers as greatly daring as yourself. Some of them say Prince Rupert is with the King at Oxford, some that he's busy in Lancashire, raising sieges there. We know not where he is, but you must find him."

Michael reached down to touch his swordbelt, found only the wet breeches he had borrowed from the sutler. "On the sword I do not carry, gentlemen, I pledge one or other of the Metcalfes to bring Rupert to you."

A jolly, red-faced neighbour of Lord Newcastle's glanced across at Michael. "Ah, there's the Irish blood in your veins, God bless you ! Who but an Irishman could have swum the Ouse and then pledged faith on the hilt of a sword he left behind him?"

"Tell him that the mere news of his coming would put heart into the garrison—that his presence would light a fire among our faminestricken folk. I dined on a tough bit of horseflesh to-day, and was glad to get it."

"We'll bring Rupert to you," said Michael.

When they pressed him to take a measure of the wine that was more plentiful, for a week or so to come, than food, Michael glanced down at his disarray. "I would borrow decent raiment before I pledge His Majesty. Indeed, I did not guess how ashamed I am to be wearing such rough gear."

They found him a suit, and the Irishman, in a storm of liking for this man, buckled his own sword on the messenger. "That's the sword you'd have sworn by, sir, if you hadn't left it behind," he explained, with entire gravity.

Michael lifted his glass to the King's health, drained it at a gulp. Responsibility always made him thirsty. He drained a second measure; but, when the Irishman was filling a third for him, he checked his hand.

"My thanks, but I must get out of York at once. I shall need a clear head for the venture."

"Friend, you've done enough for one day," urged Newcastle. "Sleep here to-night."

"My folk are waiting for me," said Michael, with grim persistence.

When they asked how he proposed to make his way out of a city surrounded on all sides, he said that he would return as he came—by water. He added, with a return of his old gaiety, that he preferred this time to ride river Ouse like a horse, instead of swimming in deep waters.

"There are boats in York?" he said.

"I know the way of oars, and there's a moon to light me."

"You're the man to send in search of Rupert," laughed Newcastle. "Undoubtedly we must find a boat for you."

A half-hour later Michael was rowing swiftly up the Ouse. Twice he was challenged from the banks; once a pistol-ball went singing over his head. He reached the bridge, was nearly wrecked against a pierthe eddies of the current were troublesomeand came through that peril into the moonlit beauty of the open country. He was challenged now by Roundhead sentries, and a shot or two went playing dick-duck-drake across the water. He rowed on, and suddenly, across the stillness, a donkey brayed.

Michael, left alone with Nature, was yielding to the call of superstition in his blood. He remembered that luck had come with buying of a sutler's donkey, and would not leave the brute to the tender mercies of the soldiery. He turned his boat for the right bank, grounded her in the sloping bed of sand, pushed her out again into the stream, lest the Roundheads found a use for her, and went cheerfully in the direction of the braying. The whole procedure was like the man. He was right, perhaps, to trust luck always, for he had known no other guidance from the cradle.

Guided half by the music of her voice, half by recollection of the spot where he had picketed her, he found the donkey. Two hundred yards or so behind he heard the restless clamour of the besieging camp. In front was the open country.

In the moonlight Michael and the donkey regarded each other gravely. "I came back for you, old sinner," he explained.

The brute seemed to understand him, and put a cool snout into his hand.

"I had a thought of riding you," went on Michael, pursuing his heedless mood, "but consider the stride of my legs. We'll just have to jog forward on our six feet, you and I."

Michael had a sound knowledge of any country he had trodden once, and came without mishap or loss of route to the clump of woodland where his people waited for him. Old Squire Metcalfe, as he went out to meet him, broke into a roar of laughter.

"Here's Michael and one of the company he's wont to keep.'

"True, sir," assented Michael. " Look after this friend of mine; she has had little to eat to-day, and I begin to love her."

For an hour they could not persuade him to tell them what he had learned in York. All his kinsmen's misunderstanding of him in old days-their distrust of the one man among them, except Christopher, who asked more than the routine of every day-came to a head. He was like the donkey he had brought back from York—onswerable to discipline, if it came by way of sympathy and quiet persuasion.

The Squire understood this scapegrace son of his better than he thought. "There, you'll bear no grudge, lad," he said, with quick compunction. "I only jested."

There was a look in Michael's face that none of them had seen there in the old days. "Was it a jest, sir?"

"A jest. No more."

"Then I'll tell you what I learned at The Roundheads have eaten bare York. the countryside. Their leaders are at Within the city the garrison is variance. eating horseflesh, and little of that. Lord Newcastle bade me give you the one message. Find Rupert, and bring him here to raise the siege. That is the message."

"Then we've work to do," said the Squire. "I have work to do," put in Michael peremptorily. "I took the hazard, sir. See you, the business would be noised abroad if six-score of us went galloping across to Lancashire or to Oxford, wherever he may be. I pledge myself to find Rupert and to bring him."

"Since when did you find gravity?" asked the Squire testily.

Then Michael laughed, but not as he had done of yore. "Since I found my comrade and bought her for two guineas, with some market produce thrown into the bargain. See to the welfare of this donkey, sir. She's our luck."

An hour later, as he was getting to horse, he saw Christopher come out of the Castle gateway and cross the street.

"What did you learn in York, Michael?" he asked.

"What you'd have learned, if you had not been dallying in the Castle," said Michael, roughened by a sharp gust of jealousy. "How does it fare with Mistress Joan ?"

"Oh, very well."

"And it fares very well with me. I go to bring Rupert from the West-to bring Rupert. Ah, your face reddens at the thought of it !"

Kit was lost in one of his high day-dreams. All that he had heard of Rupert—the tales hard-fighting men, simple and gentle, told of him—had been woven into a mantle of romance that separated the Prince Palatine from those of common clay. And Michael had the venture.

The elder brother fought a private battle of his own. Then something in Kit's eager, wistful face—some recollection, maybe, of old days in Yoredale—conquered his jealousy. "I should ride the better for Kit's company," he said, turning to the Squire. "Give him to me for the journey."

"As you will," growled the Squire. "He'll be out of the worst sort o' harm, at any rate. Ladies' eyes are pretty enough in times of peace, but they don't match with war."

Every Metcalfe of them all, save Kit himself, laughed slily. They had forgotten sundry backslidings of their own, in Ripley here and on the many journeys they had taken. Michael and his brother rode out, not knowing which way led to Rupert, but following the setting sun because it led them westward.

"Nobody seems to know, even in Ripley, that catches most news, where the Prince is. We'd best make for Lancashire."

Kit was already at his dreams again. "I care not," he said cheerily, "so long as we find him in the end."

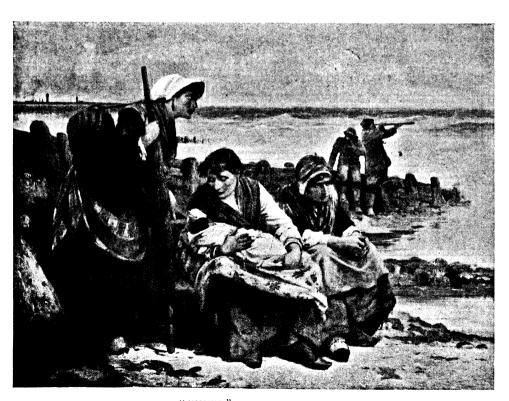
"D'ye think he wears a halo, lad?" snapped Michael.

"Not for you to see, perhaps."

"Ah, a neat counter ! Not for my blurred eyes, eh? Kit, you've been reading fairylore with Mistress Joan."

So they went forward into the red of the gloaming, and each was busy with the selfsame dream — to find Rupert, and to remember Joan Grant.

A further episode in the story of "The White Horses" will appear in the next number.



"MISSING." BY ROBERT KEMM. From the picture in the Public Art Gallery, Oldham, reproduced, by permission of the Corporation, from a photograph by Mansell Brothers, Teddington.



PERPETUATED PERSONALITIES

Second Series

By OLIVER HYDE

To the last class belong such words as "Derrick." That useful crane, used by builders and in the lading of ships, took its name from Derrick, the public hangman, who flourished at the beginning of the seventeenth century. This sinister fact recalls, by the way, another nickname, "Jack Ketch," applied to any executioner. John Ketch, public executioner from 1663 till 1686, was the clumsy headsman who so abominably butchered Lord William Russell and Monmouth. After his hideous bungling of poor Monmouth's business, he was with great difficulty saved from the violence of the mob.



ALESSANDRO VOLTA, The Italian physicist whose name is commemorated in the terms "volt" and "voltage" in electricity.

FRIEDRICH ANTON MESMER, Whose theory of magnetism is still known by his name.

AME and immortality are hazardous things, likewise notoriety. A chance incident will bestow them. Apart from great or nefarious deeds or useful services, men may live in the remembrance of their fellows by some isolated circumstance. "Single - speech Hamilton," for example, spoke once and once only in the House of Commons, and so earned a nickname and everlasting remembrance. Again, a man's personal history may be almost forgotten, and yet his name may live by its association with some object. In the best sense of this particular, he gives his name to some invention which has grown more familiar to ordinary people than the inventor's history. In a secondary sense, the article or common utensil may have been named out of compliment to a popular character of the moment, in order to facilitate trade; in the last and worst sense, some infamous association perpetuates the personality. Of the first, we may take, for example, the "vernier," an instrument no engineer or mathematician can do without. This beautiful arrangement of two sliding scale-rules, divided in greater and less proportions, by which the most minute fractional measurements can be read off automatically, was invented by a French engineer, Pierre Vernier, born in 1580, who spent most of his life in the service of the King of Spain in the Low Countries. Vernier died in 1637, leaving his fame secure in the instrument that bears his name. Very few of the hundreds who use this ingenious contrivance daily think of the man, and some, doubtless, never heard of him or even suspect his existence, for vernier is spelt with a small "v." Of the second class are such names as the "Peg Woffington," once a fashionable hat, called after the famous actress of the eighteenth century, to whom Charles Reade devoted a novel.

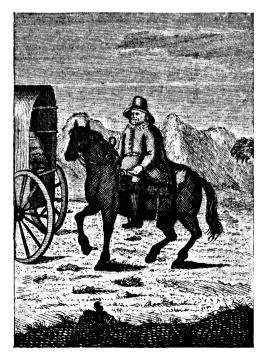


THOMAS CAVENDISH, The sixteenth-century explorer after whom a tobacc, is named.

In a former article, this magazine discussed a number of examples of these survivals; but the list was by no means exhausted, and the interest is sufficient to justify a return to the subject, in order to bring forward further instances and to illustrate in more detail cases that were merely alluded to in passing.

Practical and theoretical science has been particularly rich in this form of nomenclature, for it is only just that an inventor should live by his invention or discovery, although, alas, too many have found only fame and but little daily bread thereby. Thus in physics we have "Atwood's machine," "Avogadro's law," "Boyle's law," the "Cartesian diver," Wheatstone's bridge, Foucault's pendulum, and a host of others. George Atwood, a Fellow and tutor of Trinity College, Cambridge, who was born in 1745 and died 1807, invented a machine for illustrating the relations of time, space, and velocity. His name is synonymous with the instrument in every physics lecture-room. Avogadro's law of the Atomic Theory was formulated by Amadeo Avogadro in 1811. He was Avogadro's period is 1776-1856. professor at Turin. Boyle's law, otherwise known as Mariotte's law of the ratio between mass and pressure of gases at a uniform temperature, was discovered and stated by the Hon. Robert Boyle (1627-1691), seventh son of the first Earl of Cork. He established his law independently seven years before its statement by Edme Mariotte, the French physicist. The Cartesian diver, the familiar scientific toy otherwise known as the "bottle imp," is called after the great French philosopher Descartes. It illustrates the incompressibility of water. Wheatstone's bridge for measuring electrical resistances was the invention of Sir Charles Wheatstone, the pioneer of telegraphy, and Foucault's pendulum experiment for demonstrating the rotation of the earth was devised by Jean Foucault, the French physicist, in 1851.

Mention of the famous name of Boyle recalls the occurrence in scientific phraseology of the name of another member of that family. But Charles Boyle, fourth Earl of Cork and Orrery, lives rather by patronage of science than by actual achievement. He interested himself in Graham, a poor inventor, and enabled him to complete his machine for showing the motions of the planets and their satellites, whence the grateful protégé called his contrivance an "Orrery." The instrument is now used in an adapted form for purposes of astronomical illustration. Charles Boyle is otherwise remembered as an exceedingly poor poet. He lived from 1676 to 1731, and got sent to the Tower as a Jacobite. Beyond his patronage of Graham, he did nothing whatever in the cause of science.



TOBIAS HOBSON, The Cambridge carrier, with whos: business the phrase of "Hobson's Choice" originated.



GARIBALDI. The great Italian patriot's name has been bestowed upon various commodities, among them a popular biscuit and a certain shape of jacket.

Still in the region of science, mention may be made of the Bunsen burner and the Bunsen cell, invented by the famous chemist Baron de Bunsen. There is also the Daniell cell, called after the English electrician of that name, and the Leclanché cell, named from the French scientist. Very curious and somewhat comical are the associations of the word "Babbage." It recalls one of the most ingenious failures of the nineteenth century. Charles Babbage, born in 1791, was the Lucasian professor of mathematics at Cambridge. He did a great deal of useful work, but is chiefly remembered for the years of fruitless toil he spent on his invention, Babbage's calculating machine, to give mechanically the value or values of any formula or function. Babbage spent on his machine six thousand pounds of his own money and seventeen thousand pounds voted to him by the Government, but the machine was never perfected. Part of it is to be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington, and some four hundred drawings and many volumes of notes are also preserved. It was a white elephant, and proved a great disappointment inventor. In his later years to the Mr. Babbage was obsessed by a fearful hostility to organ-grinders-somewhat ungrateful in one who sought, by turning a handle, to grind out mathematical results. The futile Babbage machine, however, is better remembered than the man himself.

That form of electricity which is chemically produced, and which gives a continuous current, is known as "voltaic," as opposed to the "static" charge produced by a frictional machine. The name arose from Alessandro Volta, the Italian physicist. who was the pioneer experimenter in this department, and has a better claim than his countryman, the physician Luigi Galvani, of Bologna, who, however, made the discovery of animal electricity. From Galvani comes the almost obsolete term "galvanism," and the name of the galvanometer, for measuring electric currents. Volta gives his name to two words of later coinage, very familiar now in these days of the general application of electricity, "volt" and "voltage," a volt being the unit of electric pressure, and voltage the specific amount of pressure in any given case. Ampère, or "amp," again the unit of current. takes its name from André Marie Ampère, the French physicist, mentioned in our previous article; while the "ohm," or unit of resistance, is called after Georg Simon Ohm, of Erlangen and Munich, who died in 1854.

The dubious science of "mesmerism," which attracted our great-grandfathers and great-great-grandfathers, was founded by Friedrich Anton (or Franz) Mesmer, a native of Constance. Born in 1734, he was trained for the priesthood, but deserted the Church for medicine. Together with a Jesuit named Hell, he became interested in



FIELD-MARSHAL VON BLÜCHEP, The distinguished Prussian soldier ofter whom a boot is still named.

curative magnetism, and from this formed his theory of animal magnetism, or mesmerism. His experiments were certainly astounding, and he attracted a great deal of notice in Paris. A committee of scientific men — Bailly, Lavoisier, and Franklin reported unfavourably upon Mesmer's work, his popularity declined, and he died in obscurity in 1815. Somewhat akin to Mesmer's doctrine is the more modern practice of hypnotism.

The fame of Mesmer and the associations of his name are not altogether free from the suspicion of charlatanry. It is very different with a later man of science, Louis Pasteur, from whom we get the term "Pasteurised," applied to fluids that have been rendered sterile or free from bacteria. Pasteur, whose beneficent work has placed him in the very foremost rank of nineteenth-century men of science, was born in 1822 at Dôle, in the Department of Jura. He studied at Arbois, Besançon, and Paris. In 1867 he became professor of chemistry at the Sorbonne, and for a time chemistry was his chief interest.



Inventor of the form of rifle named after him.

His observations of the fermentation of impure tartrate of lime led him to suspect that the ferment was a living organism comparable to the yeast-plant. He established this theory and laid the foundations of bacteriological science, by a long course of brilliant research. He discovered a bacteriological cause for the silkworm disease, and suggested precautions, he demonstrated the harmful effects of bacteria on beer and



COLONEL COLT, Whose improvements in firearms are known by his name.

wine, and at length he applied his studies to the service of human pathology. He "tamed" virulent bacilli and used them, by inoculation, as a preventive and cure. His best-known achievement is his investigation and cure of hydrophobia. The Pasteur Institute in Paris, where he conducted his researches from 1886 onwards, will always commemorate his magnificent services to mankind.

Just on the border of science, pure and simple, is the practical art of photography, of which an early form was the daguerreotype. This is called after Louis Daguerre, a Parisian scene-painter, who, although not the first to obtain a fixed image, perfected, together with Nicephore Nièpce-who had already obtained permanent pictures-the process that keeps his memory alive. The daguerreotype was first put before the public in 1839. It has now fallen into disuse, but most families possess those quaint portraits on metal, enclosed in velvet-lined leather cases, curious and sometimes precious survivals of an earlier day. In some respects the daguerreotype is superior to modern processes, and for delicacy of portraiture it runs the miniature-painting



THE EARL OF YARBOROUGH, Whose name is identified with a difficult "hand" in the game of Bridge.

a good second. Dagnerre died in 1851. The process of printing from a glass negative, introduced by Fox-Talbot, also in 1839, is sometimes called Talbotype. Another process, the Woodburytype, is called after the inventor, Woodbury.

The revival of interest in our great highways has been a natural consequence of the popularity of the motor-car, and the relative values of "macadam,"" tar-macadam," shortened to "tar-mac," and other methods of road-construction has become one of the vital questions of the hour. "Macadam" and "macadamise" are words used every day with very little thought of their origin. But John Loudoun Macadam was a real benefactor to coaching mankind in days when roads were often veritable Sloughs of Despond. It is worth noting, by the way, that the Slough of Despond in the "Pilgrim's Progress" was simply a hopeless piece of road directly in the path of Christian and Pliable, and therefore unavoidable. Bunyan, on his travels, must often have met such a piece of foul going. Too many illustrators make the Slough a sort of pond or morass off the main road, which quite spoils the point. The pilgrims had to go through it, willy-nilly - Hobson's choice, in fact, of To return to which more hereafter. Macadam, he was born at Ayr in 1756, the son of a landed proprietor. When he was fourteen, he was sent to New York, where he remained for many years. Returning at length to Ayrshire, he served as Deputy-Lieutenant of the county, and as Justice of the Peace, which office brought him upon the Board of Road-Trustees and turned his attention to the improvement of highways.

Later he became a victualling agent to the Navy, went to reside at Falmouth, removing later to Bristol, where he was appointed surveyor to the Bristol roads. There he first put his ideas into practice, and built roads with a bed formed of fragments of stone, no stone to be too large to pass through an iron ring two and a half inches in diameter. He saw his scheme brought into general use, and received a Parliamentary grant of $\pounds 2,000$, in addition to his expenses. Macadam died, aged eighty-one, at Moffat.

Another peaceful benefactor was Samuel Plimsoll, "The Sailors' Friend," M.P. for Derby from 1868 to 1880. He waged a long warfare for the betterment of the seaman's lot, and introduced the load-lines on ships' sides. These lines are called Plimsoll marks or Plimsolls. Loaded down to her Plimsolls means to the very last point of safety. Mr. Plimsoll died in 1898. Warfare and weapons of war yield a number of examples, the Enfield, the



The statesman whose name is now inseparable from the kind of carriage which he patronised.



DR. KITCHENER, Whose ermeriments are recalled by the form of cooking stove named after him.

Martini-Henry, the Lee-Metford, the Lebel rifles, the Armstrong, Maxim, Nordenfeldt, and Creusot guns, the old Minie rifle and the Colt revolver. Of the inventors of the two last we give portraits. Colonel Claude Etienne Minie, whose rifle did deadly service in the Crimea, where it was the pioneer of modern weapons of precision, was born in Paris in 1814, enlisted as a private and retired as colonel. He invented his famous weapon in 1849. Nine years later the Khedive appointed him head of a small arms factory and musketry school at Cairo. From Napoleon III. he received the Cross of the Legion of Honour. Minie died in 1879. Colonel Samuel Colt, inventor of the Colt revolver, belonged to the United States Army. He was born at Hartford, Conn., in 1814, ran away to sea, travelled widely, and in 1835 took out his first patent. His armoury at Hartford cost him 2,500,000 dollars. He died in 1862, and his memory, curiously enough, is kept alive, not only by his destructive weapon, but by a beautiful church erected by his widow.

More domestic are the associations of the word "kitchener," applied to the familiar cooking-stove, but not, strangely enough, from any connection with the kitchen. It is called after the famous epicure and eccentric character, Dr. William Kitchener, whose dinners were one of the curiosities of London society in the early and middle twenties of the last century. Kitchener. the son of a wealthy coal merchant, had inherited what was then considered a large fortune, some £70,000. He studied medicine. but did not require to practise, and devoted himself to the practical and theoretical study of cookery. He was, besides, a very various virtuoso, played the piano admirably, published the "National Songs of Great Britain," and edited "The Sea-Songs of Charles Dibdin." He dabbled also in astronomy and optics. His droll invitations to "Eta Beta Pi" at Warren Street, Fitzroy Square, were greatly coveted, and his parties were models of taste, choice company, and temperate good-His oddity peeped out in many A placard over the fireplace fellowship. directions. warned the guests to "come at seven, go at eleven." George Colman, the younger.



JOHN LOUDOUN MACADAM, Whose improvement of highway roads coined the new words "macadam" and "macadamise" from his own name.



GEBER,

The Arab alchemist from whose strange assortment of scientific words the term "gibberish" is held by some to have originated.

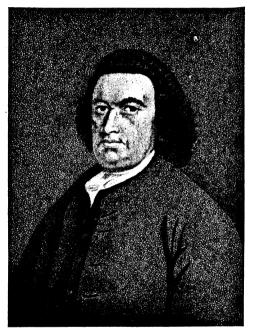
altered this to "go it at eleven," an advice more in George's line than in his host's, for Kitchener, though an epicure, was most abstemious. His "Cook's Oracle," a very sound work, is now somewhat old-fashioned in these days of French kickshaws. Kitchener



THE CHEVALIER BAYARD, Whose name still stands for chivalry and honour.

also wrote "The Art of Invigorating and Prolonging Life," but his counsels, though he followed them, did not save him from a too early death. He passed away, regretted by troops of friends, on February 26, 1827. He was in his fiftieth year.

Articles of dress, as we have already mentioned, have perpetuated the names of inventors and wearers, or they may merely have been named out of compliment to popular persons. This inevitably suggests Blücher boots, worn by Field - Marshal Blücher, best known for his timely aid to Wellington at Waterloo. But he had a



JOHN GLAS, Founder of the sect known as the Glasites.

great military career otherwise, and is revered by the Germans. The decoration of the Iron Cross was introduced for his reward. He would have sacked Paris, but Wellington prevented him.

We recall also Wellington boots, Spencer waistcoats, Cardigan jackets, Chesterfield and Raglan overcoats, and the blouse known as the Garibaldi. This, though an article for women's wear, took its name from the open red woollen shirt worn by the Italian patriot and his followers, who were often spoken of as "Garibaldi and his Red-Shirts." It is, perhaps, a trivial matter, and we would not for a moment suggest that the real fame of the deliverer of the Italian people and the



Whose name gives us an adjective of various associations.

maker of United Italy rests upon association with his picturesque garment, or upon a biscuit beloved of schoolboys which is also named after him. These are monuments in no way proportional to Garibaldi's greatness, yet

> Imperial Cæsar, dead, and turn'd to clay, Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.

And the survivals illustrate aptly enough Hamlet's earlier remark :----

To what base uses we may return, Horatio! 🔬

A similar example of trivial connection is to be found in "brougham," the carriage named from the statesman Lord Brougham, a man so versatile that Samuel Rogers said of him : "There goes Solon, Lycurgus, Demosthenes, Archimedes, Sir Isaac Newton, Lord Chesterfield, and a great many more in one post-chaise." Against this we may set Daniel O'Connell's gibe : "If Brougham knew a little of law, he would know a little of everything." The sneer, made à propos of Brougham's elevation to the Woolsack, was sufficiently stinging, but hardly fair.

Of minor interest are the two associations of the word Cavendish. In its sense of tobacco, it is said to be derived from Thomas Cavendish, an ancestor of the Duke of Devonshire, who first soaked tobacco with molasses and pressed it into sticks. Others say Cavendish was an American manufacturer. In the sense of a guide to whist, Cavendish takes its name from the famous treatise so signed but written by Mr. Henry Jones. "Refer to Cavendish, sir," is the cry in all whist disputes. In cards, the phrase "a Yarborough," meaning a hand with no card higher than nine, is derived from an Earl of Yarborough.

The phrase "a Joe Miller" stands for a famous jest-book. The name was bestowed out of compliment to Joseph Miller, a comedian of Drury Lane, who flourished from 1684 to 1738, and died in the height of his popularity. He was so grave and even lugubrious that the wits of the town ascribed every new joke to him, although he was never known to make a joke in his life. Joe was buried in St. Clement Danes, where there is an epitaph in his praise.

We have alluded to Hobson of "Hobson's Choice," who, although dealt with fully in a previous article, reappears here merely because a further interesting picture, showing Hobson on the road with his carrier's van, has been obtained for reproduction. Hobson was the Cambridge carrier and job-master in Milton's time, and the poet wrote two pieces to his memory, curiously enough without mentioning the famous "Choice." When undergraduates wished to hire riding horses, Hobson, who was a martinet, compelled them



JOE MILLER, Whose name is identified with certain jests of which he was not the originator.

to take their mounts in regular rotation. It was "Hobson's choice; that or none." Milton was more tickled with the idea that the energetic Hobson, when he ceased from his regular journeys to London, died of sheer inaction.

Ease was his chief disease, and, to judge right, He died for heaviness that his cart went light.

Hobson's death took place on January 1, 1630, two years before Milton took his



MRS. BLOOMER,

Whose name is still associated with the substitution of the trouser for the skirt in women's attire.

degree of Master. He was not, however, an undergraduate when he celebrated the University carrier, for he had already taken his Bachelor's degree. No doubt he had often, at Cambridge, to put up with Hobson's choice of a horse, and the joke seemed too commonplace to celebrate in verse.

Religious sects named from the founder are legion. The Darbyites, the Morrisonians,



Whose name stands for his own valuable discoveries in medicine.

the Irvingites, Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, the Wesleyans, are cases in point, and we have just heard of the Coonevites. John Glas, founder of a small and curious Scottish sect, the "Glasites," was born at Auchtermuchty in 1695. He entered the Church of Scotland, and became popular as a preacher, but was suspended in 1728, and finally deposed in 1730. He held independent views on the Holy Communion and on Christian fellowship, and revived the observance of the love feast and the kiss of peace. Never really unorthodox in doctrine, though illegal in practice, Glas was in 1739 restored to the status of a Christian minister, but was not permitted to resume office in the Kirk of Scotland. He was no dangerous sectary, but a man of sound sense, which he showed by his rejection of the Hutchinsonian doctrine that the Bible contained a complete system of physical science. As opposed to Newton's "Principia," he wrote "Moses' Principia."

But examples of this nomenclature are endless. We can but allude delicately to "bloomers," introduced in 1851 by Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, of Seneca Falls, New York, and diffidently to "gibberish," from Gebir, or Geber, the Arabian alchemist of the eighth century, whose outlandish terminology probably gave rise to the word. The Chevalier Bayard, who fell at the

passage of the Sesia, in 1524, left his name to such as are without fear or blame. All men loved him. On the wall of a French church some sentimental Scottish archer scratched the line of eloquent regret, "Bavard is deid." We look at houses with the break in the slope of the roof for the insertion of a window and call the device "Mansard," thereby commemorating the inventor, François Mansart (1598-1666), a distinguished French architect. And no word is harder worked than Platonic, which refers not only to the philosophy of Plato, but to the most disinterested form of human affection. It is also loosely used of doctrines that are really neo-Platonic, and have little or nothing to do with the teachings of the great Athenian.

Yet in some cases the survival of a name by a circumstance is short the full measure of a man's reputation. This might be held to be true in the case of Dr. Bowdler. from whom we get the contemptuous verb "Bowdlerise," meaning to cut an author's work about unskilfully. Dr. Thomas Bowdler, whose period is 1754-1825, is remembered as editor of "The Family Shakespeare," from which all objectionable expressions were carefully expunded. He has been execrated and his name has become a byword, but, in fairness to his purpose, it should be remembered that he was lovally championed by no less a poet than Swinburne, who wrote: "More nauseous and foolish cant was never chattered than that which would deride the memory or deprecate the merits of Bowdler. No man ever did better service to Shakespeare than the man who made it possible to put him into the hands of intelligent and imaginative children."



FRANÇOIS MANSART, Whose name, with the final letter changed, survives in that of a form of roof window.



"NOBLESSE OBLIGE."

NEPHEW: I say, uncle, can you lend me a couple of sovereigns? UNCLE: That's pretty cool, young man, is it not? You've been You've been doing yourself well here for the last fortnight, and now, when you are leaving, you want to borrow money. NETHEW: That's just it, uncle. You see, I must tip your servants.

A HALF-MEASURE.

(It is seriously suggested in Sweden that women's right to pop the question shall be enforced by legislation.)

Sisters! It's only just and fair That each of us should claim The legal sanction to lay bare (Before we're asked) our wish to share An income and a name.

Yet, what are inches to a sex That's frankly out for ells? These poor half-measures merely vex, Nor can they bridle lordly necks, Or peal the wedding-bells.

They keep hard-hearted Man on top, And Woman down below. For, though by statute we may pop, The selfish sex retains the op. To snub us with a "No!"

There lies the stuluifying flaw That flouts at our distress. Come, Sisters! Struggle tooth and claw For one great equitable Law

That makes the men say "Yes!"

Jessie Pope.

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

WHEN the waiters struck in London some time ago, seven of the eight cooks employed at a certain hotel went out. This left the kitchen rather inadequately manned, and the proprietor hurried downstairs to see what could be done. He found the faithful one ready for business.

"You will remain?" asked the proprietor.

"Yes, sir."

"What do you do? What sort of cook are you?"

"I make the meringues!" said the man proudly.



GEORGE was famous for being late at his appointments. He was engaged to be married to a girl in a neighbouring town, and when the day of the ceremony arrived, George, as usual, did not appear. The bride was on the verge of hysterics, and her family were already very indignant, when the following telegram was "Missed the early train. Will arrive on

the 4.31. Don't get married until I get there. "GEORGE.

SOME DEFINITIONS BY A MODERN CYNIC.

ABSURDITY. - Any foolish thing that is recognised to be foolish. Foolish things which are not recognised as foolish are given other names, such as etiquette, "proper thing," "fashion," etc.

Accounts-Records or statements of affairs by which one is unable to find out one's financial condition.

Philosopher-One who withdraws himself from the world and then undertakes to formulate for the world's guidance rules to which the world pays not the slightest attention.

Anthracite - A kind of fuel which cannot

"THERE'S a dead horse on Kosciusko Street." announced a police patrolman of a certain Colonial city, coming into the station after his day on duty.

"Well, make out a report," ordered the sergeant.

"Why, you make out the reports, don't you, sergeant?"

"I don't. Make out your own reports. You've passed your Civil Service examinations."

Mike equipped himself with a pen and began scratching laboriously. Presently the scratching stopped. "Sergeant," he asked, "how d'you spell Kosciusko?"



THE POINT OF VIEW. GOLFER: Miss MacPherson is a very careful player, isn't she, Jimmie? CADDIE: Yes, sir; she can make sixpence go as far as anybody in the club.

be utilised without great profit to a few individuals.

Anecdote-A brief account of an incident that never occurred in the life of some famous man.

Bargain-Something you do not want, sold at a low enough price to make you want it.



"A LAWYER," said the dinner-table wit, when asked for a definition, "is a man who arranges your future destiny according to a rule laid down about two thousand years ago by some Roman; but when he charges you, he adds on the increased cost of living between that date and this."

"G'wan! You're writing that report." An interval of silence. Then: "Sergeant, how do you spell Kosciusko Street?"

"Stop bothering me," the sergeant ordered. " I'm no information bureau."

Pretty soon the patrolman got up, clapped on his helmet, and started for the door.

"Where you goin'?" demanded the sergeant. "I'm a-goin'," said the policeman, "to drag

that dead horse around into Myrtle Avenue."

NEWLY-ARRESTED ONE: There goes my hat! Shall I run after it?

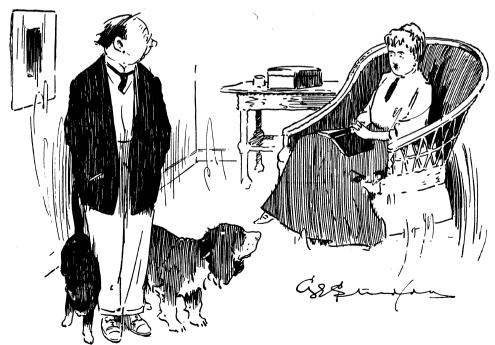
VERY IRISH POLICEMAN: Phwat? Run away and never come back again? No fear! You stand here, and I'll run after your hat.

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HER(B) BEER.

LADY (engaging cook): We are all vegetarians, and should expect you to become one. Have you any objection? Cook (hesitatingly): Well, mum, it depends. Is beer a vegetable, mum?



QUITE THE REVERSE.

SHE: Why do you get so cross when I ask you questions, Alfred? Surely you don't think it is idle curiosity? HE: No, it is the most pernicious, energetic, wide-awake curiosity it has ever been my fate to encounter.



THE OBVIOUS WAY.

SHE: No, I won't be your sweetheart; I mean to be a duchess when I'm grown up. HE: How can you become a duchess?

SHE: Why, by marrying a Dutchman, of course.

LINES TO A DINOSAUR.

Propped on iron rods you slumber, Viewed by multitudes ad llb. Prison'd, with a printed number

- Pasted on a bony rib;
- Like a scaffolding arising Quite a dozen feet or more, Haughtily monopolising

Nearly twenty yards of floor.

Stark anachronism, I wonder If a phantom memory stores Phantom recollections under

That impassive skull of yours; If you spurn oblivion's trammels,

Musing on that glorious time When you slaughtered brother mammals, Scrapping in Jurassic slime.

Then the new-born world was quiet, And you led the simple life On a pterodactyl diet

- With your armour-plated wife. Then huge monsters fled before you;
- All in fear slunk past your den; Now shrill-piping pygmies paw you, Erstwhile king of marsh and fen.
- Oft you ranged abroad together, Lumbering over hill and scaur; Oft you strewed upon the heather Chunks of some rash brontosaur, To your peers you were a lusty Despot, but to modern man

You are just a rather dusty

Oolitic saurian.

D. Newbold.

MARK TWAIN was in a restaurant one day, and found himself next to two young men who were putting on a great many airs and ordering the waiters about in a most impressive fashion. One of them gave an order, and told the waiter to inform the cook for whom it was. "Yes, said the other, "better tell him my name. too. so as to make certain of its being all right.

Mark Twain, who hated swagger, called the waiter and said in a loud voice : " Bring me a dozen oysters, and whisper my name to each of them.



UPTON SINCLAIR tells this story about a school address he once made.

"It was a school of little boys," said Mr. Sinclair, "and I opened my address by laying a coin upon the table.

"'I am going to talk to you boys about Socialism,' I said; 'and when I finish, the boy who gives me the best reason for turning Socialist will get this money.'

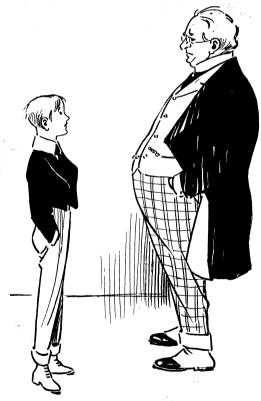
"Then I spoke for some twenty minutes. The boys were all converted at the end. I began to question them.

"'You are a Socialist?' I said to the boy nearest me.

"' Yes, sir,' he replied.

" ' And why are you a Socialist?' I asked.

"He pointed to the coin. 'Because I need the money,' he said.



THE LAW OF CHANGE.

FATHER (desirous to impress son): History repeats itself, my boy. Son: Not at our school, dad; they make us kids do it.

THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE.



WILLIE JOHNSON'S father gave him twopence to buy sweets with, and Willie bought sixty jaw-breakers and ate them.

Willie's Uncle Tom gave him a penny, and Willie bought a further selection of fruit drops and ate them.

Willie's Uncle Jim gave him a penny, and Willie bought several sticks of sugar-candy and ate them.

Willie's paternal grandfather gave him sixpence, which he invested in some toffee, some chocolate creams, and twelve white sugar mice, and ate the lot.

Willie's maternal grandfather gave him a shilling, which Willie turned into a varied assortment of cocoa-nut ice, liquorice balls, Two ragamuffins, engaged in a day's fishing at Highgate ponds, arranged at the end of the sport to equally share the spoil. While one was absorbed in his occupation, the other, with the cruel curiosity of youth, extracted one of the captive roach from the can of water, performed various vivisections upon it, finally dissected it, and stealthily threw what remained of his victim into the pond. When the time came to divide the spoil, the industrious boy was shocked to find only six fish in his can, and seven in his companion's.

"Hi, Arfer," he ejaculated, "we cort fourteen, and we oughter 'ad seven apiece!" "Yus, I know," replied the other gravely, "but one died."



TWO POINTS OF VIEW. MOTORIST: This is terrible, isn't it? RURAL OPTIMIST: Well, I dunno, sir. It lays the dust.

lemon drops, and peppermints, all of which he ate.

When the family gathered for dinner, it being the annual reunion, Willie's mother would not let him eat any of the nicest dishes, because she did not approve of rich foods for children.

Willie Johnson was the only one of the family who did not suffer indigestion next day, and Willie's mother reminded him gently that, if she had permitted him to gorge himself on sweet foods, he, too, would have been ill.



THE girls were asked to write an essay on Empire Day. One began as follows: "There are many empires, but the Holborn Empire is the best." THE successful man had just fitted up a beautiful country home, and the library was provided with an expensive parquet floor, of which the owner was very careful. An old friend went to see him, who had lost a leg, in place of which he wore a wooden one.

The host was glad to see his friend, and hurried into the library, where he was horrified to find his guest stumping around the precious floor on a tour of inspection. Finally he breathed a gentle hint: "Henry, hadn't you better keep well on the rug? I'm afraid you might fall."

"Oh, that's all right," Henry reassured him —"I shan't fall! There is a good spike in the end of the old peg, you know!"

THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE.



GREEK WIT.

CLEOMENES, when asked what was the duty of a good king, replied : "To do good to your friends, but harm to your enemies." On which the philosopher Aristo observed : "Would it not be still better to make your enemies friends, and so to do good to them also?"

and so to do good to them also?" Philip of Macedon, being advised by his friends to banish one of his slanderers, replied: "If I do, he will go about and abuse me where there are more to listen to him."

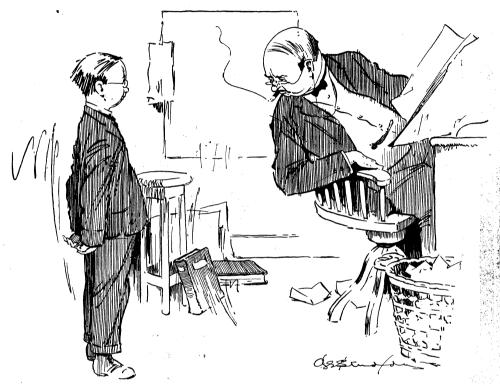
Dionysus the Tyrant, to put a slight upon Plato, gave him the lowest seat at his table. answer shall I return to the Perinthians?" he asked.

"Say," replied the king, "that you talked a great deal, and that I did not utter a word."

Diogenes was asked at what time of life one had best marry. "If you are young," he replied, "not yet; if you are old, never."



A BENEVOLENT gentleman, walking down the street, was grieved to see two sturdy boys engaged in a desperate fight. He immediately



NO MISTAKE THIS TIME.

CHIEF: Look here, I distinctly remember you asked for a day off for your grandmother's funeral last summer.

Boy: Ye-es, sir; it was a mercy she wasn't buried alive that time, sir.

"I dare say," he observed, "when Plato goes back to Athens, he will have plenty to say against us."

"Sir," said Plato, "I hope I may never be so at a loss for subjects of conversation as to have to talk about you."

Aristippus was once asked why he borrowed money of his friends.

"Not for my own benefit," he replied, "but to teach them the proper use of wealth."

Anaximander was once laughed at by some little boys for his singing. When told of it, he said: "We must sing better on account of these small boys."

An ambassador having come to Sparta from Perinthus, spoke at great length. "What proceeded to stop them and inquire the cause of their encounter.

"He said he'd punch my sister's nose, sir, and I wasn't going to stand *that*!" said the aggressor, bleeding and dishevelled.

"Certainly not, my boy," said the old gentleman.

"Well, 'e dared me to say it," whimpered the other combatant.

The old gentleman looked bewildered. "Why," he said, turning to the first boy, who had by this time wiped the blood off his face, "it's Harry Jackson! Why, Harry, my lad, you haven't got a sister!"

"No, I know I haven't, sir," replied Harry, "but I was fighting for the principle."

THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE. THE CURE OF CONSUMPTION.

SUCCESS OF "THE ALABONE" During the last twelve months methods for the cure of consumption have been placed more prominently before the public than in any previous apoch of the world's history. More especially has this been so in the case of sanatoria, but, unfortunately, statistics which have been put forward by these institutions purposely to show their curative value have, on analysis by the most distinguished men, been declared erroneous and misleading.

There is, however, a book which is full of most valuable information on the subject. At the same time it offers the chance of cure to those who suffer from this disease. It is entitled "The Cure of Consumption," and is in its 47th edition, and was written by Dr. E. W. Alabone, of Highbury Quadrant, London, N., who for more than 40 years made a speciality of the treatment of this malady, and probably had more patients through his hands than any other living physician. His system, known all over the world as the "Alabone Treatment," has restored to perfect health some thousands of sufferers, a very large percentage of whom had been given up as hopeless cases by our leading chest specialists, while others had been sent home from sanatoria to die.

There can be no manner of doubt as to the bonafides of these cases, seeing that they are attested to by many well-known physicians, divines, and men of the highest standing in the world of literature and art. Moreover, a considerable number of cures reported are those of medical men themselves, who had been compelled to relinquish their practice, but who, after adopting this treatment, were enabled to resume their work, a permanent cure having been effected.

The same can be said of members of the legal and other professions. The late Bishop of Gloucester, Dr. Parker, and many others, were strong supporters of Dr. Alabone's method, and did all they could to get it universally adopted. Many other clergymen hold a similar view, their experience among their parishioners having proved its efficacy in case after case.

There is nothing more convincing in a case of this kind than giving, chapter and verse, details of actual cases in which a victim of consumption has been restored to perfect health.

TRIBUTES FROM DOCTORS.

No evidence will carry more weight than that of doctors who have adopted the treatment, and who have given spontaneous tributes to its wonderful effects. From an immense number of letters from physicians the following may be quoted :--

Sir,—It is my honest opinion that no treatment—open air, medicinal, dietetic, or otherwise —is comparable to the inhalation treatment adopted by Dr. Alabone for the actual cure of consumption. I speak from experience in cases coming under my observation; and, for the sake of suffering humanity, I do think it a very great pity that Dr. Alabone's method does not find its way into all our hospitals and sanatoria where consumption is made a speciality.—Yours faithfully, —, M.D., L.R.C.P., &c.

Whilst Dr. L -----, M.R.C.S., Eng., states :--

It having been my good fortune to meet several patients of Dr. Alabone's, I feel bound to add my testimony as to the success of his treatment, having proved it by personal observation of the changes effected in their appearance, and their gratifying statements made by their own free will. I have seen cases pronounced "utterly incurable" by the highest chest specialists quite recover. I therefore feel it a duty to write, expressing my gratification and surprise attheir recovery.

TREATMENT.

Sir,—I have some thirty patients in all stages of phthisis undergoing Dr. Alabone's treatment —some very bad, so that I should not be surprised if I had lost one or two, but at present I have lost none. The improvement in them is most marked and surprising. I do not think there is any doubt of the efficacy of his treatment in stopping the advancement of the disease. It has in my hands been very successful in many cases.—I am, yours faithfully,

W. F. ____, M.D., L.B.C.P., L.M.Edin.

It is satisfactory to be able to record the fact that a considerable number of physicians have adopted this treatment with their patients, and have obtained from it the most satisfactory results —results, we venture to affirm, which have been attained by no other system known. Boards of Guardians are also discussing the advisability of introducing it into their infirmaries, many having witnessed its extraordinary success with members of their own families.

NURSES' EXPERIENCES.

Nurses at Sanatoria and Hospitals who were stricken down by Phthisis, and who, after undergoing open-air treatment, were pronounced incurable, have been cured, and resumed their usual avocations. One of many such writes :---

I consider the open-air treatment a cruel and wicked experiment. It has been permitted long enough to prove unsatisfactory results. My experience in one of our largest and most popular sanatoria was very sad. Many went in very slight cases, but they got worse, as I did myself. Many got bronchitis and pleurisy added to their lung disease. A doctor told me last October a little more of such treatment would have killed me. I was a wreck when I commened Dr. Alabone's treatment in November. I weighed 8 st. 1 lb., but I made wonderful progress, and now I have regained my normal weight, 10 st. 8 lb. Thanks to Dr. Alabone, I am able to return to my work. In a consumptive hospital, where I was for fourteen weeks getting worse, I used to hear the patients say how they wished they could avail themselves of Dr. Alabone's remedies. "JUSTICA." Alabone's remedies.

Pages could be filled with similar letters, but these must convince the most sceptical that the statements brought forward are undeniably genuine. Those who have any interest in the matter are recommended to procure a copy of Dr. Alabone's work, "The Cure of Consumption," and, after reading it, judge for themselves as to its value. They may, however, be perfectly sure that in placing themselves under this treatment they will be adopting the best chance of cure that can at present be offered.

"The Cure of Consumption, Asthma, Bronchitis, and Other Diseases of the Chest," by Fdwin W. Alabone, M.D.Phil., D.Sc., ex-M.R.C.S.Eng., illustrated by numerous cases pronounced "incurable" by the most eminent physicians, now in its 47th edition, 171st thousand, can be obtained for 2s. 6d., post free, from Lynton House, Highbury Quadrant, London, N. Other works by the same author are: "Testimonies of Patients," price 1s., and "Facts Regarding the Open-Air Treatment," price 1s. BENJAMIN PRIOTO, the French statesman of the seventeenth century, said: "Man possesses only three things—his soul, his body, and his estate, and they are perpetually exposed to the attacks of three enemies—the soul to the attacks of the controversial theologians, the body to those of the doctors, and the estate to those of the lawyers."

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LILLIE MAY came to her mistress, an Englishwoman who was keeping house for a brother in a certain island in the West Indies. "Ah would like a week's vacation, Miss Annie," FAITH HEALER: My terms are half a guinea and one guinea per treatment.

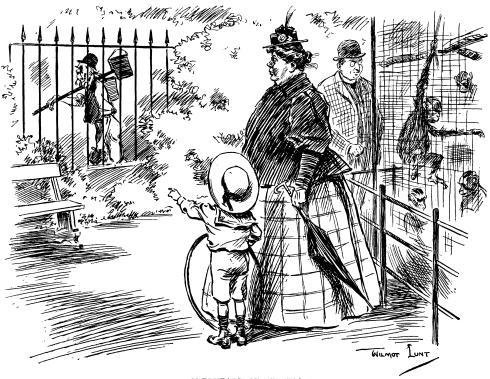
INVALID: What is the difference?

FAITH HEALER: My guinea patients I think more of.



REPORTER: If you should not be re-elected, will you feel that you have made the most of your opportunities while you were member for the constituency?

CANDIDATE FOR RE-ELECTION: No, in that case I can think of one or two home-truths which I might easily have told my constituents in the course of my speeches.



OVERHEARD AT THE ZOO.

SMALL BOY IN ZOO GROUNDS (seeing workman pass): Oh, mummy, look at the wild man doing his tricks!

she said, in her soft negro accent; "Ah wants to be married."

Lillie had been a good girl, so her mistress granted her request and gave her a white dress, a veil, and a plum-cake.

Promptly at the end of the week Lillie returned, radiant. "Oh, Miss Annie," she exclaimed, "Ah was the mos' lovely bride! Ma dress was perfec', ma veil mos' lovely, the cake mos' good—an', oh, the dancin' and the eatin'!"

"Well, Lillie, this sounds delightful," said her mistress, "but you have left out the point of your story. I hope you have a good husband?"

Lillie's tone changed to indignation. "Now, Miss Annie, what yo' think? Tha' darn nigger nebber turn up!" THE day before she was to be married, an old rustic servant came to her mistress and entrusted her savings to her keeping.

"Why should I keep your money for you? I thought you were going to be married," said the mistress.

"So I am, ma'am; but you don't suppose I'm going to keep all this money in the house with that strange man about the place?"

Hostess: Do you know how to dance the Tango?

Young MAN FROM THE COUNTRY: Well, I know the holds, but I don't know the steps.

Strength of Body and Mind

Must come from the food we eat. Look into it !

Nature provides in the inner shell of Wheat and Barley, food materials—the organic phosphates—which, along with other elements, are vitally necessary for making bone, brain, muscle, and nerve.

Many articles of food lack these vital phosphates.

In the making of

Grape=Nuts

the selected parts of the <u>whole</u> grains are used, and these valuable materials are retained to provide the body with the true food values which Nature requires to do her marvellous daily rebuilding.

'There's a Reason"

JOE JEFFERSON, the famous comedian, once played a one-night engagement as Rip Van Winkle in a certain small town. In the hotel at which he stopped was an Irish porter, who, from the serious interest he took in the house, might have been the proprietor. At six o'clock the next morning Mr. Jefferson was awakened by a violent thumping on his door. He had left no "call" order, but his sleep was spoiled, so he arose and soon appeared before the clerk, indignantly demanding to know why he had been called.

The Irishman was summoned. "Mike, there

"WELL, Pat," said the doctor. "I hope your master's temperature is lower this morning than it was last night."

"Well, sur, that's hard to till, sur," replied Pat.

"Why?" said the doctor, smiling.

"He died this mornin', sur."



THE physician had been treating a man for dyspepsia for a long time, and finally, wishing to know how his patient was coming on, he told him to take a certain medicine, which he



CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE.

MAGISTRATE (to witness): Did vou see the prisoner knock down the deceased? WITNESS: No, sir; 'e was alive when I seen 'im knocked down.

was no call for Mr. Jefferson," said the clerk. "Why did you disturb him?"

Taking the clerk by the coat, the Hibernian led him to one side and said in a whisper: "He were shnoring like a horse, sor, and Oi'd heerd the b'ys say as how he were onct afther shlaping for twinty years, so Oi sez to mesilf: 'Moike, it's a cooming on to him ag'in, and it's yer duty to git him right out o' the house.'"



A COUNTRY dentist advertises that "he spares no pains" to render his work satisfactory.

Another recent advertisement ran as follows: "Lost—A cane belonging to a gentleman with an aluminium head." had made up in the form of a pill, just before going to bed, in order to see if he could retain it on his stomach through the night. The next day the man called, and the physician asked him the result.

"Oh, it was all right, doctor," he said, "as long as I was awake; but when I went to sleep, it rolled off."



HE had just been rejected, and the shock had made a deep effect upon him.

" I shall never marry now," he said dejectedly. " Don't be foolish! Why not?" she inquired. " Well," he said, " if you won't have me, who will?"

"Foods shot from Guns"

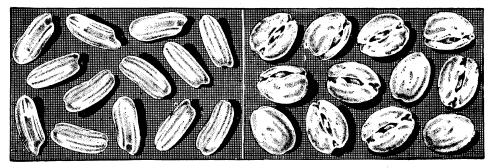
Everybody's talking about them —

Puffed Rice and Puffed Wheat are so different from any food you have ever tried that you too will talk about them once you taste them.

Imagine rice or wheat puffed up to eight to ten times their normal size, all the starch in each kernel rendered perfectly digestible, the flavour intensely developed to an hitherto unsuspected richness, the grain so porous as to melt on the tongue — all ready to eat, without cooking or trouble!

That's Puffed Rice and Puffed Wheat—a more digestible and delicious form of the world's most nourishing foods than ever before known.

Try Puffed Rice and Puffed Wheat with milk, cream or fruit at any meal, or alone 'tween meals. They meet the modern need of an easily digested yet highly nourishing food.



Puffed Rice-7d. per packet.

Puffed Wheat—6d. per packet.

WONDERFUL METHOD OF COOKING

They are made by this curious process: the whole rice or wheat kernels are put into bronze-metal guns. The guns are sealed, then revolved in specially constructed ovens heated to over 550 degrees. The heat turns the moisture in the grain to steam, and the pressure becomes terrific. Then the guns are fired off. Instantly every starch granule in the grain is blasted into a myriad particles. The kernel of grain is expanded *eight to ten times* its original size. Yet the coat is unbroken; each kernel is shaped as before. It is now perfectly cooked, far more digestible than bread, and ready to be eaten. Serve as directed on packets. Sold by Grocers everywhere.

If any difficulty in obtaining either of these nourishing foods, send us your name and address on a post-card and we will see you are supplied.

QUAKER OATS LTD, FINSBURY SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.



ACCOMMODATING.

"So my daughter has consented to become your wife. Have you fixed the day of the wedding?" "I will leave that to my *flancée*." "Will it be a large or a private wedding?"

"I will leave that to her mother." "What will you have to live on?"

"I'll leave that entirely to you, sir."

JEALOUSY IN BIRDS.

"My dear," said the professor's wife, "the hens have scratched up all that egg-plant seed you sowed."

"Ah, jealousy!" mused the professor. And he sat down and wrote a twenty-page article on "The Development of Envy in the Minds of the Lower Bipeds."

THE PROBABLE REASON.

THE information editor received this letter from a correspondent-

"Kindly tell me why a girl always closes her eyes when a fellow kisses her."

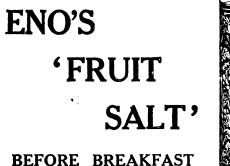
The editor replied—

"If you will send us your photograph, we may be able to tell you the reason."

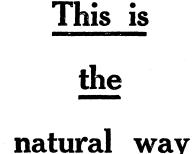


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No Special Diet-no drugs-no loss of timejust a glass of sparkling, refreshing, purifying







This well-known standard aperient gently stimulates the liver, the body's filter. With this important organ working properly the blood becomes pure, the nerves normal, the impoverished tissues restored. Sound refreshing sleep, a clear brain, a hearty appetite, and a good digestion are sure to follow.

Prepared only by J. C. ENO, Ltd., 'Fruit Salt' Works, LONDON, S.E.

SOLD BY CHEMISTS AND STORES EVERYWHERE.

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CONVENIENT, SANITARY, and ECONOMICAL, "VASELINE" is a reliable family friend of good standing, and no home medicine eupboard should be without "VASELINE" in some form or another. Tubes are cleanest and handiest to use. NO WASTE.

For giving beautiful complexions-for healing all skin affections-for relieving Rheumatism and Neuralgia-there is a "VASELINE" preparation for all these-and much more. You should never be without these "VASELINE " Specialities :---

"VASELINE"

CAMPHOR ICE

CAPSICUM "VASELINE" Better than a mustard plaster. 1/-

For Chapped Hands and The best of all antiseptic lips. To allay all irrivations dressings. 1/of the skin. 6d.

WHITE "VASELINE"

Of absolute purity for external and internal use. **60.** and **100.**

If not obtainable locally, any article will be sent Post Free to any address in the United Kingdom, upon receipt of Postal Order or Stamps. Descriptive Booklet, containing many household hints and telling all about the "Vaseline" Preparations, post free.

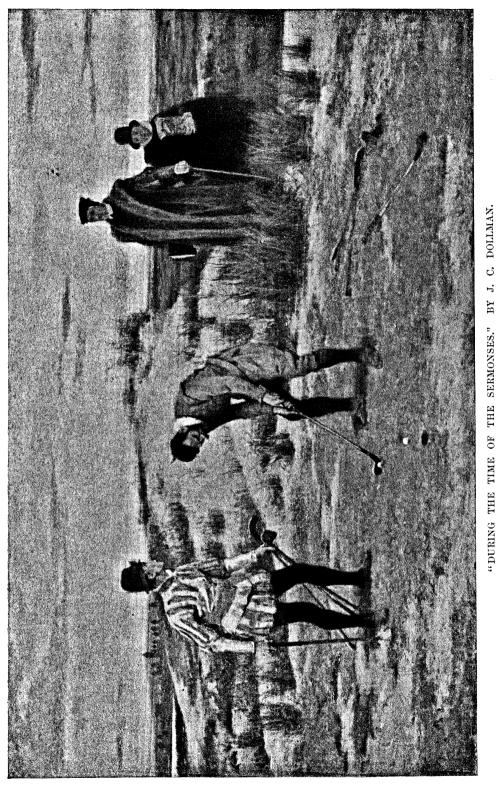
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For nervous headaches, colds in the head, neuralgia, &c. 1/-



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WHY GELDEN MADE A MILLION

By EDGAR WALLACE

Illustrated by Dudley Hardy

I N the days when Carfew was living on the verge of poverty, he knew a man named Gelden. Not a pleasant man, by any means, because he had habits which are not pleasant to nice men. He associated with people who did not move in the best of circles, and he drank more than was good for an ambitious junior reporter. For ambitious he was, this lantern-jawed lank youth, with his crudities of speech and his scarcely hidden brutality.

Gelden lived with his invalid sister and his widowed mother in the days when he and Carfew had been reporters on *The Dallington Times and Herald*, and Carfew had boarded with them. Mrs. Gelden had an income derived from an investment in ¹⁹¹⁴. No. 231. Consolidated Funds, and it is probable that she accepted Carfew as a boarder at a ridiculous tariff because she stood in some fear of this wild scapegoat of a son. How far her fears were justified, Carfew learnt later.

Gelden lived in the faith that the future held a fortune for him, and he lived up to his expectations. One day he came to Carfew—newly established in London—and borrowed twenty-five pounds. A month later Carfew learnt that his former landlady was taking the boarding-house business seriously, for with Carfew's twenty-five had disappeared almost all the unfortunate woman's capital. Gelden had had a scheme —one of many—for getting rich quick, and

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had cashed his mother's Consols and vanished with the money.

That was years before this story opened. At the period of which I write, things were not going as well with Carfew as he wished them to go. His investments had proved speculations, and his speculations were, of necessity, investments.

"Of necessity" because he found that the stocks he had bought at six, to sell at seven, were quite unsaleable at four. There was nothing for it but to lock away these jumpers that would not jump until the great miracle day when all stocks reach for the sky, and the only thing which is flat and unprofitable is the "bear" who has sold short.

If there was one person in this bright and lovely world whom Carfew did not wish to meet at this moment of adversity, it was Gelden, and since Carfew's luck was freezing, the mercury, you may not need telling that Gelden was the very man who came hideously on the skyline and refused to harmonise with the landscape.

Carfew was in his office one day, totting up his losses on 'Change. He had the arithmetic of the optimist, which is the science of counting nine as ten on the profit side, and omitting to count it at all when it lay under the "Dr." symbol. He was ever the apostle of the "round figure" system. A gain of nine thousand six hundred was in round figures ten thousand. A loss of nine thousand eight hundred was by simple adjustment a loss of nine thousand.

His banker, who was a born Jonah, had worked out Carfew's position into four places of decimals, and Carfew hated the bank manager for his cruelty.

The young financier threw his pass-book into a drawer, banged the drawer into its place, and hunched back into his chair with a scowl which expressed his entire disapproval of existence as he found it.

It was at that solemn moment, when disaster was written so plainly, and when the only physical effort he seemed capable of making was the drawing of impossible old men upon his blotting-pad, that the vision of Gelden obtruded itself.

There was a confident knock at the door.

"Come in !" said Carfew sternly.

A man stood in the doorway—a selfconfident young man, who was, perhaps, twenty-eight and who certainly looked forty. He was dressed a little extravagantly. The pearl pin in his cravat was just a shade too large. The spats which covered his glossy shoes should, by the strictest canons of fashion, have been of some other design than shepherd's plaid; and his entrance coincided with the arrival of a delicate and subtle odour of violets.

Carfew frowned up at him. This was not the Gelden he knew. The man's face was lined and seamed and sallow. There were little pouches under his tired eyes, his cheeks were hollow, and the hand that removed the amber-and-gold cigar-holder from his teeth shook a little.

His manner was buoyant enough as he stepped forward with a little grin and extended a lemon-glove-covered hand.

"My dear boy !" he said. And Carfew, annoyed by the patronage in the tone, and impressed by the evident prosperity in the other's appearance, indicated a chair.

It was five years since Theodore Gelden had borrowed twenty-five pounds, at a moment when twenty-five pounds was a lot of money. Theodore was buying Siberian oil-fields with Carfew's good gold, and incidentally with his mother's pitiably small capital. I forget whether he was on the verge of clearing two millions profit or four. It was something fabulous, and all that was required to complete the impending negotiations were those twenty-five pounds. And Carfew lent them. And Carfew never saw Theodore again, or saw a prospectus, or smelt the faint, musty smell of oil, or heard one word in the Siberian language which might convey to him a sense of part pro-The prietorship in that wonderful country. oil-fields of Tomskovski faded away like a quivering mirage.

"Here we are," said Theodore, comfortably stretching his impressive feet.

"Here you are," reforted Carfew, in a noncommittal tone.

Suddenly Gelden straightened himself.

"By the way," he said.

He had a trick of employing inconsequent phrases, and his conversation was a very patchwork of speech. His gloved hand sought an inside pocket. From this he withdrew a large, flat pocket-book of green Russian leather, bordered and bound and initialled in gold. This he opened, and from a pocket therein extracted a flat pad of notes.

"Have you change for a hundred?" he asked, and peeled a thin, crinkly sheet from the mass.

Carfew took the note. There was no doubt as to its genuineness. That admirable institution, the Bank of England, through its chosen official, promised to pay on demand to the man who earned or stole this wonderworking slip of paper one hundred golden sovereigns.

"I owe you something," said Gelden carelessly. "Fifty?"

"Twenty-five," said Carfew. "I can give you a cheque for the balance."

Gelden replaced his pocket-book.

"Send it round to my hotel," he said, and relapsed into his attitude of ease.

Carfew was interested. He was always interested in people who had large sums of money.

Gelden watched him lazily.

"Things a-booming ?" he asked.

Carfew nodded gravely.

"I've several things on hand," he said. "I'm interested in a new hotel, I've a concession in Bulgaria, timber and that sort of thing."

Gelden chuckled.

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"Small," he said, and snapped his long, unshapely fingers. "Tiny—petty. Look at me!"

Carfew was looking.

"I've told you I'd be a millionaire," said Gelden. "A million or nothing, eh? How often have I said that?"

Carfew said nothing. He was thinking that the change from the hundred-pound note might with advantage go to the wronged mother, unless this son of hers indicated restitution.

Gelden had an uncanny knack of reading the thoughts of people.

"You're thinking of the mater," he said easily. "I suppose you know I ruined her? But, my boy, I've been cruel to be kind she's a rich woman."

His smile of triumph, the sense of information suppressed which his attitude conveyed, were all imposing. Carfew was impressed.

"Getting along," said Gelden, and rose abruptly.

He scanned the face of a gold chronometer which he extracted from his left-hand waistcoat pocket, pursed his lips as if dissatisfied with the inspection, and produced another gold chronometer from his right-hand pocket.

"One moment," said Carfew softly, when the other's hand was on the door-knob. "You haven't told me anything about yourself."

Gelden frowned a little.

"I made a million out of tin," he said simply. "I am now making another million out of rubber." Carfew was speechless. The man spoke with such conviction, was so evidently speaking the truth. Moreover, he referred to a million with such insolent familiarity that there was no wonder Carfew found himself a little breathless.

For he himself had secret ambitions concerning millions, vaporous nebulæ of hopes and doubts which might, by the alchemy of time, solidify into a material something expressible in seven figures.

Gelden was watching him.

"I could make you a millionaire in a week," he said, and, returning to the chair, he had vacated, he sat down and began to talk.

II.

A TAXI-CAB carried Carfew to his broker, and Mr. Parker forgot to be facetious as he entered. To a question Carfew put he replied readily.

"If one may judge by his style of living," he said, "there's no doubt about his having made a fortune, though I doubt very much if it is a million. Gelden has been bulling tin. He does a little business through Transome and Cole, but the bulk of his buying has been through some other firm."

"Am I to follow him in his oil speculations?"

Parker shook his head.

"I say 'No,' but I am aware that I may be advising you against your best interests. There is pretty sure to be an oil boom, but whether it is coming now or in ten years' time it is impossible to say."

Carfew bought a few oil shares cautiously, and that night dined with Gelden at the Celvoy.

"It's dead easy," said Mr. Gelden over coffee. "You've only to ask yourself sane questions. I ask myself questions. One: What will the traffic of the world be carried upon? Answer—Rubber. I bought rubber, Now I say: What is the motor power of the future? Answer—Oil. I buy oil. Everybody's nibbling at it. The big men who know most are hesitating because they're risking more; the little men wait for the big men. I know."

Gelden spoke with some reason. In a week from that evening London was in the delirium of an oil boom. On 'Change they call it the Gelden boom to this day. It was Gelden who amalgamated the Banker Fields with the Southern Odessa concern; Gelden who put Steam Oil up to 6; Gelden who smashed the corner in West African Wells. Carfew saw little of him. Now and again the young man would drop into his office, throw out disjointed comments on the condition of the market, and as abruptly as he had arrived he would go, without a word of farewell, save a slurred "S'long !" as he vanished through the swing doors of Carfew's suite.

Carfew was making money in little sums. He cleared three hundred pounds out of Bankers, and one thousand one hundred pounds from the phenomenal rise in Steam Oils.

What Gelden was making was conjectural. Parker shook his head when Carfew put the question.

"It isn't what he's making," he said gravely; "it is what he has behind him that is puzzling me. Do you realise that he should be in a position to produce two millions in liquid assets?"

"Can he?"

"His broker says he can find four," said Parker.

There was a long silence, the two men looking at one another across the table.

"He arrived in May from nowhere," said Parker, consulting a little table which he had compiled. "Beyond the fact that he seemed to have plenty of money, and made no secret of his having made a million in oil, I cannot discover anybody who had dealings with him before that date. And here is a curious circumstance : Gelden says he made a fortune in oil prior to May, but there has been no big market in oil before May."

Parker might have his doubts, and Carfew his misgivings, but the very apparent fact was that Gelden went from big to bigger things. His photograph was a daily occurrence in the papers. His house in Grosvenor Square was purchased on a Monday; on the Tuesday it was in the hands of three hundred decorators; on the Thursday it was furnished by eight of the greatest furnishing houses, each supplying the articles which the others had not in stock.

He bought seven motor-cars in one week, and purchased, at a cost of eighty-three thousand pounds, the steam yacht *Terra Incognita* from the Earl of Dambert.

London was oil mad. However important might be the news which monopolised the contents bills, be sure there was a subsidiary line, "Oil Boom: Latest," to supply the needs of the frenzied investors.

And Gelden had done this, Gelden the Magnificent, who had appeared over the horizon as violently as a tropic sun; Gelden the unknown, who had fallen into the City an unknown millionaire from nowhere, and, as he prospered, so prospered his friends.

Carfew was returning home late at night from the theatre, in an agreeable frame of mind. He was making money, he had discovered flaws in the play he had witnessed, he was smoking a rare and peculiarly fragrant cigar, and the people he had met at dinner had made a fuss of him. As to this last event, it may be said that his popularity was due less to his own qualities than to his known friendship with Gelden.

If there was an uneasy note in the harmony of his self-satisfaction, it lay in the fact that there was a something about Gelden which worried him. He had tried to trace this discomfort to its first cause, without any great success. References to the genius and wisdom and goodness of Gelden—he had to-day presented a new wing to a children's hospital—jarred him slightly.

It may have been, he told himself, because of his acquaintance with a Gelden that the public did not know—the earlier Gelden, a little vicious, a little unscrupulous, and something of a liar.

As he walked along the Strand, threading a way through the homeward-bound theatregoers, the sense of distrust, which was ever present, was for the moment overlaid by the material comforts which a pleasant evening had brought.

He turned into the covered courtyard of the Celvoy at peace with the world.

He hoped to find Gelden, but the inquiry clerk informed him that the millionaire had gone out a few minutes before. Gelden, in his splendour, maintained a suite at the hotel in addition to his new town house.

"Do you know where he has gone?"

The clerk shook his head.

"He has been here all the evening," he said, "looking at his six new motor-cars."

The man smiled proudly as one accepting the reflection of Gelden's glory.

"Six?" gasped Carfew.

"Yes, sir; he bought 'em all to-day. You're Mr. Carfew, aren't you, sir? Well, one of the cars is for you. Mr. Gelden happened to be at the motor show this afternoon and bought 'em."

Carfew went out of the hotel a little dazed. He was living at Buckingham Gate Gardens in a flat which was neither modest nor magnificent. It was just expensive, and London is full of such unsatisfactory homes. His man-servant met him in the little hall.



"There is a lady to see you, sir," he said. Carfew was not in the habit of receiving lady visitors in the neighbourhood of midnight, and the elderly woman who turned to him, when he entered his cramped

drawing-room, was certainly not any friend that he recognised. "Mr. Carfew," she said, with a sad little smile. "you don't remember me?" Only for a moment was he puzzled, then—

"Mrs. Gelden, of course," he said heartily.

It was his sometime landlady, a faded woman whose richness of apparel went incongruously with the drawn pale face and restless, nervous hands.

"I've come to see you about my son," she said.

His first inquiries satisfied Carfew that Gelden had made handsome amends for his earlier fault.

"But it is the money he has given me which worries me," she said. "Mr. Carfew, a week before my son arrived in London I had to wire him money for his fare."

She said this quietly, and Carfew looked at her in amazement.

"But he came to London with a million," he said incredulously.

She shook her head.

"A paper said that the other day, but all that I know is this: one week he was so poor he was obliged to telegraph to me for money, the next week he was in London spending money lavishly. I have seen the broker who transacted his earlier business."

" And----"

"He says that my son gave a hundred thousand pound order at a time when I knew Gregory could not have possessed a hundred pounds."

Carfew was troubled. He had accepted the meteoric rise of his friend without question. He accepted meteoric rises as part of the natural order of things.

"But he has plenty of money now," he said.

Mrs. Gelden shook her head.

" I don't know—I ean't understand," she said. "He has put two hundred thousand pounds to my credit in the bank; but though he is rich, I am worried, and I want you to see him to-morrow and find out the secret of his sudden wealth. I feel I cannot rest until I know."

Carfew looked dubious.

"I doubt whether he will tell me," he began.

"You are the only friend he ever mentions in his letters," said the woman, "and—and I was hoping, perhaps, that it had been you who gave him this start."

To any other person in the world Carfew would have admitted his responsibility, but here was one to whom he could not so much as boast.

He saw her to a cab and returned to review the situation. The next day he sought Gelden, and found him just as he was leaving his house.

Carfew thought the man was looking older.

There were lines about his eyes, and the corners of his mouth drooped pathetically. None the less, he was cheerful, almost boisterously so.

"How's things?" he jerked. "Bought you a car—a fine car—sen'in' it along."

He would have passed out with that, but Carfew had a mission to perform. He induced the other, albeit reluctantly, to go with him to the library. Without any preliminary, and with the desperate sense of his own impertinence, Carfew dashed out the subject.

"Want to know where I got my money from, eh?"

There was an amused glint in Gelden's eye.

"Got it out of gold-Siberian gold-mine."

"But you told me tin!" protested Carfew.

"Gold—gold!" insisted the other. As he warmed to the subject, he spoke rapidly, dropping his lazy habit of clipping his short periods. "A whole mine given to me by you'll never guess—a Grand Duke! No, I won't lie to you—given to me by the Czar!"

He leant back and looked at Carfew triumphantly.

"There is royal blood in my veins! Yes, yes, yes !" He laid his hand on Carfew's knee. "Carfew, I always had money—I can make you a rich man—I've twenty million pounds invested in Russia!"

He leant forward and dropped his voice.

"I've got enemies who hate me," he whispered ; "they follow me wherever I go —but I am prepared for you !"

He glared at Carfew, and his face was set and horrible.

"You-you-you !" he yelled.

In a flash his hand went to his hip-pocket. Carfew saw the revolver and realised his danger.

With one spring he leapt at the man as he fired.

Three days later Carfew interviewed Sir Algernon Sinsy, M.D., and Sir Algernon is the most famous of alienists.

"My theory is that your friend was mad when he arrived in London, and that, like most madmen, he was most convincing. I think also that he came to London without a penny, and the enormous fortune which will now be administered on his behalf was made whilst under the influence of the mania."

"Will he never recover?"

Sir Algernon looked at him gravely.

"He died this morning," he said.

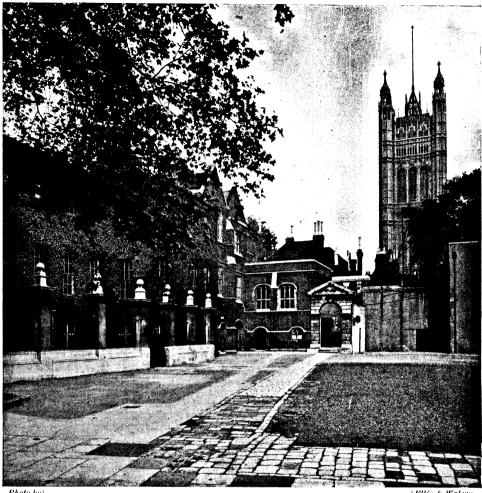


Photo by

LITTLE DEAN'S YARD.

Ellis & Walery.

WESTMINSTER SCHOOL.

BY LAWRENCE E. TANNER.

ESTMINSTER shares with Eton and Winchester the distinction of being one of the three Royal Colleges, and in the Act of Uniformity "our College of Westminster" is, from its greater antiquity, placed first. But the beginnings of the School are shadowy, though a school of some kind there undoubtedly was, attached to the Abbey Church from the earliest times, either simply a school of novices—and the holes for the games they played may be seen on the stone benches in the north-west corner of the Cloisters—or a separate school in the

Almonry. In the fifteenth century, however, the grammar school begins to emerge as separate from both novices and singing boys.

Then came the dissolution of the monastery, and from the ruins of the old system there was to spring a new and vigorous foundation. Henry VIII. began to remodel the School, but it was left to Elizabeth to complete the work which her father had begun. She refounded the School as a boarding-school, with a Head Master, usher, and forty Queen's Scholars, and the right of election to scholarships at Christ Church, Oxford, and Trinity College, Cambridge; and every year, from 1561 to the present day, the Dean of Christ Church and the Master of Trinity, together with the Dean of Westminster and the examiners, come to the School at the time of "election" to choose the scholars for the two colleges. Moreover, the buildings which the monks had left were used -as they continue to be used-by the School. Thus the



Photo by]

[A. F. Brown.



monks' dormitory became the great schoolroom ("School") wherein the whole School was taught until 1882, and where, as a Royal College, Latin prayers continue to be said every evening; the abbot's diningroom, where Elizabeth Woodville had taken

sanctuary, became the College Hall; the Head Master's house incorporates much of the cellarer's buildings, and the beautiful seventeenth - century house and garden, which it seems that Inigo Jones built for William Ashburnham on the site of the

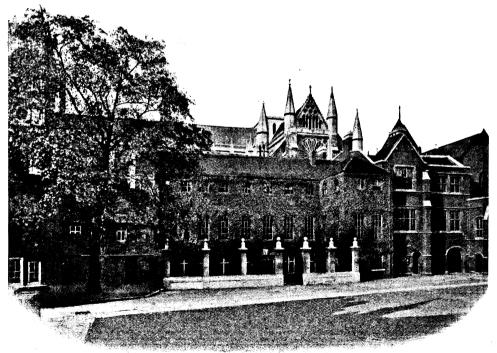
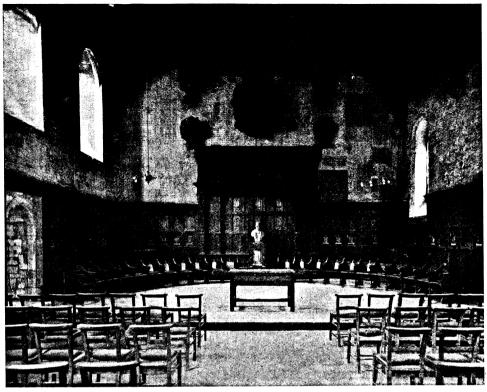


Photo by]

ASHBURNHAM HOUSE, USED AS THE SCHOOL LIBRARY. One of the finest seventeenth-century houses in London.

[Ellis & Walery.



THE UPPER END OF "SCHOOL."



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misericorde and refectory, became in 1884 the School Library, while every day a service is held in the noblest of all school chapels, the Abbev Church itself.

Elizabeth is, then, rightly regarded as the foundress, for much of her work remains Before the end of her reign untouched. the School had numbered Ben Jonson and Hakluyt among its scholars. It still remained, however, for one man to stamp his personality on the School. In 1638 Richard Busby became Head Master. " Dr. school were greater than those gained from a private tutor, who dared publicly to pray in school for Charles I. an hour or so before his execution, who was allowed to remain in office throughout the Commonwealth and call his scholars King's Scholars, and was still Head Master under William and Mary, who kept his hat on in the presence of Charles II., on the ground that he could not allow his boys to think that in school there was anyone greater than himself, was no ordinary man. He said himself, in later life, that he had



Photo by]

THE OLD "BUSBY " LIBRARY, NOW THE SEVENTH FORM ROOM.

Busby ! A great man-he whipped my grandfather," says Sir Roger de Coverley, and it is Busby's misfortune that he is largely remembered as the type of the great flogging head master. But Busby was far greater than a mere disciplinarian, though it is true that, in a recently-found account book of his, the grim and frequent entry for "switches" is followed by the still more ominous entry for "diachylon plaster." But the man who first showed the great families of England that the advantages gained from a public

educated most of the bench of bishops, and Dryden, Locke, Sir Christopher Wren, Charles Montagu (Earl of Halifax), Philip Henry, and Matthew Prior, were among his pupils.

In other ways, too, he benefited the School, for he built the old library which bears his name, and also the Head Master's house, he compiled for the School a Greek grammar, which was used for the next two hundred and fifty years, and in times of sickness he took the whole School at his own cost to Chiswick-he himself, perhaps, making



ONE OF THE THREE STUDIES "UP GRANT'S" KNOWN AS "CHISWICK'S."



Photographs by]

THE SCIENCE LABORATORY.

[Elis & Walery.

a leisurely progress there on his horse, which bore the pleasing name of "Old Woe"—and to this day some studies, originally built as sick-rooms, in one of the boarding-houses, are called "Chiswick's." "You see, sir," wrote one who had been under Busby, on sending his own son to the School, "your cares are never at an end, your labours are immortal; children come and beg to be under the same care and protection that their fathers were . . . Those doors of the best school in the world, which once were years of his unhappy life, Gibbon, the historian, and Warren Hastings. The silver cup which Hastings and other Westminsters sent back from India to Westminster is one of the School's most cherished possessions. Cowper tells us that he "excelled in cricket," and the game, which was then in its infancy, owed much to Westminster, for its development was largely due to the Sackvilles and Lennoxes, who had learnt to play the game in the broad expanse of open fields and marsh known as the Tuttle Fields, extending



Photo by]

COLLEGE HALL.

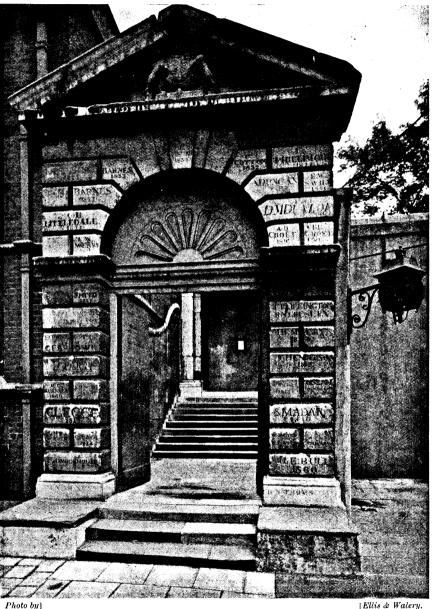
[Ellis & Walery.

open to grandfather and father, I know you will not shut against this child." In 1695 death closed his long reign of fifty-seven years.

Under Busby's successors, Westminster became the great Whig School, and in 1729 the numbers rose to four hundred and thirty-nine. A few years later, under Dr. Nicoll, there were three boys at the School who were afterwards pre-eminently to attain fame—William Cowper, who, fresh from the miseries of his private schools, spent at Westminster the eight happiest from Millbank over much of what is now Belgravia, where snipe existed within the memory of living Westminsters, which was, and still is, though now reduced to the ten acres known as Vincent Square, the playingfields of the School. Again, the oldest annual cricket match (which is known to have been played since about 1770) is that between the King's Scholars and Town Boys, and the first recorded Public School match was between Eton and Westminster in 1796.

From the pre-eminent position of the two schools it was inevitable that there should be rivalry, and in one of the verses of their boating song Etonians hurl "defiance to Westminster men," and from 1829-47 the boat race between them aroused interest

adopted pink, and that has since been the School colours. But Westminster rowing was killed by the Embankment and the steamboat, and would seem a thing of the



THE SCHOOL GATEWAY.

[Ellis & Walery.

second only to the University Boat Race. Eton won five and Westminster four of these contests. Up to 1837, both crews had rowed in light blue, which were the Westminster colours, but in the race that year Westminster

past, although the present Head Master has made some tentative efforts to revive it. It is worth noting, moreover, that actually the earliest authentic records of Thames aquatics are the Westminster rowing Ledgers.

But with the nineteenth century there came a change. As late as 1818 a contemporary note informs us that "a challenge from the Charterhouse to play them at cricket was very properly refused . . . because it was thought beneath Westminster to accept a challenge from a private school." Time brings its revenges, and Westminster now plays Charterhouse both at cricket and football, and the Association game claims the two schools as its parents. But the century saw the rise of many new and vigorous rivals to the older schools, and a But this was not peculiar to Westminster, as the evidence of the Public Schools Commission shows; but unfortunately there the necessary reforms were delayed until the arrival of Dr. Liddell as Head Master in 1846, and in the meanwhile the numbers of the School went down. But under Dr. Liddell and his successors, Dr. Scott, Dr. Rutherford, and the present Head Master, Dr. Gow, the record has been one of steady recovery, and the numbers have again risen to three hundred, which is as many as the School can conveniently accommodate. The School

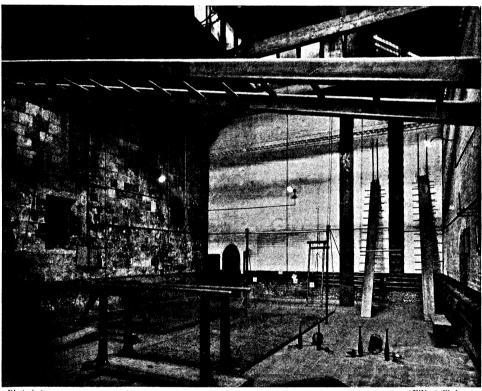


Photo by]

THE GYMNASIUM.

[Ellis & Walery.

change in attitude towards prevailing conditions. Indeed, the roughness and lack of discipline, the excessive fagging and lack of proper accommodation, seem almost incredible to us. Lady Mansfield came to see her son, who was ill in one of the Dame's houses. There was but one chair in the room, upon which the boy was reclining. A friend who was with him was seated on the coal-scuttle. When Lady Mansfield entered the room, he got up and, with perfectly natural politeness and good breeding, offered it to her ladyship to six down upon ! is divided between the forty resident King's Scholars, together with twenty non-resident King's Scholars, who are scattered among the other houses, and the Town Boys, who include both boarders and day boys. The boarders belong either to "Grant's" or "Rigaud's," together with a few half-boarders, as they are called, who are attached to these houses, but sleep at home. The other day boys are divided into two large houses, "Ashburnham" and "Home Boarders." It is, perhaps, inevitable that in a London school the day boys should be the more numerous, but of

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late years the tendency has been for the boarding element to increase steadily, and "the School retains the essential features of a boarding-school." It is hardly possible that the genius loci should be felt quite so fully by those who are only at the School for a few hours daily as by those who live, as it were, under the shadow of the Abbey. It has always been the custom, too, for many of the boarders to go home for the week-ends. and thus a more direct connection is kept with their homes than is possible in most bourding-schools. But the erroneous idea that London is unhealthy for boys dies hard, though, as a matter of actual fact, the health records of Westminster are considerably better than many country schools, and the longevity of Westminsters is proverbial.

There is a classical and modern side, and the highest form on the classical side is not the usual sixth, but the seventh. From Westminster, too, comes the "shell" form, a name which has been adopted in

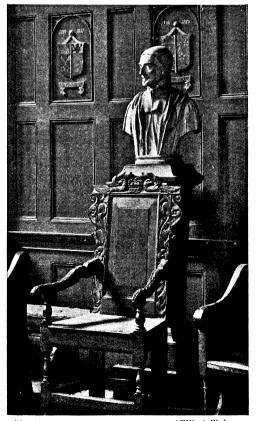


Photo by] [Ellis & Walery BUST OF DR. BUSBY, Head Master of Westminster School, 1638-1695.

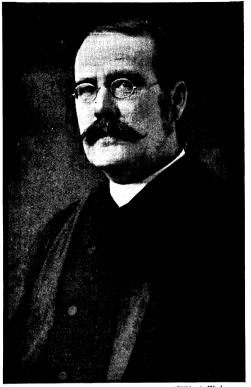


Photo by] [Ellis & Walery. REV. JAMES GOW, LITT.D., Head Master of Westminster School.

other schools, but had its origin from a semicircular recess at the end of "School" in which the form was taught. The Captain and School Monitors, aided by the Heads of houses and house monitors, are responsible for the internal discipline of the School, and a certain amount of fagging is carried on in the different houses. There is an Officers' Training Corps, which is well supported, and sends an eight to Bisley, and there is a School debating society, as well as literary, scientific, natural history, and other societies.

The School buildings are grouped round Little Dean's Yard, the two boarding-houses, "Grant's" and "Rigaud's," occupying the south side. In 1905 new and up-to-date science laboratories and a racquet court were opened in Great College Street. The gymnasium adjoins the Chapel of the Pyx, and is entered from the Cloisters, and there are three fives-courts in Little Dean's Yard, where also, against the back wall of College, a form of squash racquets peculiar to Westminster and the Old Fleet Prison is played. The playing-fields are the ten acres known as Vincent Square—from Dr. Vincent, Head Master, 1788-1802—situated between Victoria Street and the Vauxhall Bridge Road. Besides the Charterhouse match, Westminster play Winchester and an Eton eleven at football, and Radley at cricket, and other cricket fixtures include the Household Brigade, M.C.C., the I Zingari (who for many years used to make the captain of the eleven a member, in memory of the fact that one of their founders, Mr. John Loraine Baldwin, was a Westminster), the Free Foresters, etc. Of words there are many. A Westminster always goes "up" or "down" ("up school," "down fields," "up Rigaud's"); a studious boy is a

it is justly proud. Two of these call specially for notice. At Coronations it has fallen to the King's Scholars, certainly since that of James II., to represent the people of England and confirm their choice by being the first to acclaim the Sovereign when he enters the Abbey. Those who were present at the last Coronation will remember the startling and impressive effect when, as the procession moved up the Abbey, and the last notes of the opening anthem died away, there came the sudden shout, "Vivat Regina Maria! Vivat Rex Georgius ! Vivat ! Vivat ! Vivat!" as the Queen, followed by the King, entered the choir. There are but



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THE ABBEY FROM "GREEN." "Green" is the School name for the playing-ground in Dean's Yard.

"muzz"; a boy of the lower classes is a "sci" (pronounced "sky"); a new boy is a "shadow," and to him is attached a "substance" (a slightly older boy) to show him the ways of the School, who is held responsible if the new boy does wrong in his first week or fortnight; "station" is set at certain times and in certain places for certain objects (e.g., there is station up fields from half-past five to seven on summer evenings to play cricket).

It is natural that Westminster, "standing," as it has been said, "in the most sacred precinct of the Empire," should be a school of many privileges and traditions of which few ceremonies in the Abbey at which the School is not present or does not take a part. The other is the privilege which the Westminster boy enjoys of being able to go into either House of Parliament and listen to the debates, and of going on to the terrace of the House after "Abbey" on Sundays. Many who in after-life attained fame have borne witness that it was this unique privilege which first fired their ambition.

Of the many Westminster customs the quaintest is "tossing the pancake," of which the origin is unknown. On Shrove Tuesday the College cook, in full dress, accompanied

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by a verger, proceeds up School and tosses a pancake over the bar from which formerly hung the curtain dividing the Upper from the Lower School. Chosen representatives from each form then scramble for it (the pancake "greaze"), and he who gets the largest in the College Dormitory. The Prologue is spoken by the Captain, and refers to the chief events of the School year. Then follows the Play—the Andria, Adelphi, Phormio, and the Famulus (Eunuchus) of Terence are acted in rotation. Finally



comes the Epilogue, which has grown from a monologue to a "skit" by all the characters of the play on the chief events of the year.

Under Busby, as we have said, Westminster was a school for bishops, and there are few sees which cannot claim at some date a Westminster among their holders. In the next century the School produced politicians, and of Prime Ministers.

FOOTBALL IN "GREEN."

piece is led off in state, preceded by the verger with the silver mace, to the Dean, who presents him with a guinea.

But the best known of all the customs is the annual Latin Play. The acting of a play was ordained in the statutes of the School b v Elizabeth, and though the record of the prologues and epilogues only begins in 1704, yet there is no doubt that it was



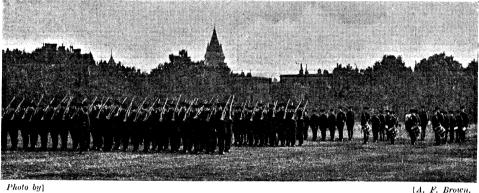
Photographs by A. F. Brown.

acted annually throughout the seventeenth century. In 1564 Elizabeth was present herself, and the actors evidently made a special effort, for from the bill of expenses we learn that there was provided "butterd beere for ye children being horse." The Plav is acted entirely by the King's Scholars Westminster can claim Charles Montagu (Earl of Halifax), John Carteret (Earl Granville), Henry Pelham, the Dukes of Newcastle and Portland, Rockingham, and, later, Earl Russell. At the end of the eighteenth century it became the great military school, and of Wellington's officers, Lords

Strafford. Anglesey, Combernere, and Fitzroy-Somerset (afterwards Lord Raglan), Sir William Gomme, and Lord Albemarle, the last officer survivor of Waterloo, and many others, were Westminsters. Lord William Lennox, who was on Wellington's Staff, maintained to the end of his days that, for this reason, the remark about the playingfields of Eton could never have been made. But, however that may be, it is recorded that Wellington once remarked that when he gave an order to a Westminster, he was sure of it being well carried out. At the present day it is, perhaps, to the Law that one turns, and Lord Parker, Lords Justices Vaughan - Williams and Phillimore, and Mr. Justices Bucknill and Lush, worthily maintain the legal traditions of the School which produced Lord Mansfield and Lord Chancellors Nottingham ("The Father of English Equity"), Jeffreys, Macclesfield, and

Northington. Other living Westminsters who may be mentioned include the Bishop of Bangor, the Dean of Christ Church, the Dean of Gloucester, the Provost of Oriel, Sir Edward Poynter, and Sir Clements Markham.

It is impossible to write of Westminster without referring much to its past, for it is especially true that there the past lives in the present, and a Westminster is reminded at every turn that he is "a citizen of no mean city," nor can he ever be entirely insensible to the names which he sees around him of the great who have gone forth from the School before him; and when, in due course, the time comes for himself to go forth, he carries with him that feeling of pride and affection towards the School which seems especially to be felt by those to whom "the lot has fallen on a fair ground " as members of a great and ancient foundation.



THE WESTMINSTER SCHOOL OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS IN VINCENT SQUARE.

THE HIDDEN SORROW.

WRAPT my sorrow in a joy That thou, beloved, should'st think me glad; I would not I should make thee sad, Or grief of mine thy sweets alloy.

I wrapt my sorrow in a shroud That thou, beloved, should'st think it dead I would not I should bow the head So noble now, so proud.

I wrapt my sorrow in a dream, Now would, beloved, the truth impart; It wakened with the morning gleam And fluttered to thy heart.

THE-HOLY-FLOWER BY-H-RIDER-HAGGARD

ILLUSTRATED·BY MAURICE·GREIFFENHAGEN

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.—This is the record of the strange adventure of the famous before those experiences which are now historical in that modern classic "King Solomon's Mines." At the opening of the present narrative, Hunter Quatermain, while shooting big game in South Africa, met one of the strangest characters then known in all South Africa, an American gentleman, who was a doctor by profession, but for some years past had wandered about South and Eastern Africa collecting butterflies and flowers. To the natives he was known as "Dogeeath," but while people usually called him "Brother John." From him Allan Quatermain first heard of a wonderful plant with blooms of extraordinary size and marvellous cypipedium on the whole earth. A healthy root of this plant, he maintained, would be worth at least twenty thousand pounds; but all he could show was a single bloom, without any root. This had come into his possession in the contry of the Mazitu, a warlike race whom no white man had ever visited, beyond the western boundary of whose territory was a large and fertile land, supposed to be an island in the midst of a great lake, with a mountain in the center. The name of both this territory and its inhabitants was Pongo, which was also the native name for a gorilla, and the god of the Pongo people was said to be a gorilla, whose worship was combined with that of the wonderful orchid. One night, while camping near the Pongo border, the Doctor was awakened by a solitary visitor, who declared himself to be Kalubi, the Chief of the Pongo bander, the Doctor was awakened by a solitary visitor, who meticine to have his hand cured of a wound made by the bite of a terrible monkey, of which he declared they all went in fear in his native land. He suggested that he would help the white man to riches if he would go and kill went in fear in hein and cured visitory as further kindled by the American's addition to his earlier narrative of the report that "a white goddess "was said to preside over the Holy Flower. The famous

CHAPTER VII.

THE RUSH OF THE SLAVES.

WELL, we did all that we could in the way of making ready. After we had strengthened the thorn fence of our *boma* as much as possible, and lit several large fires outside of it to give us light, I allotted his place to each of the hunters, and saw that their rifles were in order and that they had plenty of ammunition. Then I made Stephen lie down to sleep, telling him that I would wake him to watch later on. This, however, I had no intention of doing, as I wanted him to rise fres^h and with a steady nerve on the occasion of his first fight.

As soon as I saw that his eyes were shut, I sat down on a box to think. To tell the truth, I was not altogether happy in my mind. To begin with, I did not know how the twenty bearers would behave under fire. They might be seized with panic and rush about, in which case I determined to let them out of the *boma* to take their chance, for panic is a catching thing.

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A worse matter was our rather awkward position. There were a good many trees round the camp, among which an attacking force could take cover. But what I feared much more than this, or even than the reedy banks of the stream along which they could creep out of reach of our bullets, was a sloping stretch of land behind us, covered with thick grass and scrub, and rising to a crest about two hundred yards away. Now. if the Arabs got round to this crest, they could fire straight into our boma and make it Also, if the wind were in their untenable. favour, they might burn us out or attack under the clouds of smoke. As a matter of fact, by the special mercy of Providence, none of these things happened, for a reason which I will explain presently.

In the case of a night, or, rather, a dawn attack, I have always found that hour before the sky begins to lighten very trying indeed. As a rule, everything that can be done is done, so that one must sit idle. Also it is then that both the physical and the moral qualities are at their lowest ebb, as is the mercury in the thermometer. The night is dying, the day is not yet born. All Nature feels the influence of that hour. The bad dreams come, then infants wake and wail, then memories of those who are lost to us arise, then the hesitating soul often takes its plunge into the depths of the Unknown. Tt. is not wonderful, therefore, that on this occasion the wheels of Time drave heavily for me. I knew that the morning was at hand by many signs. The sleeping bearers turned and muttered in their sleep, a distant lion ceased its roaring and departed to its own place, an alert-minded cock crew somewhere, and our donkeys rose and began to pull at their tether-ropes. As yet, however, it was quite dark. Hans crept up to me; I saw his wrinkled, yellow face in the light of the watch-fire.

"I smell the dawn," he said and vanished again.

Mavovo appeared, his massive frame silhouetted against the blackness.

"Watcher-by-Night, the night is done," he said. "If they come at all, the enemy should soon be here."

Saluting, he too passed away into the dark, and presently I heard the sounds of spear blades striking together and of rifles being cocked.

I went to Stephen and woke him. He sat up yawning, muttered something about greenhouses, then, remembering, said—

"Are those Arabs coming? We are

in for a fight at last. Jolly, old fellow, isn't it?"

"You are a jolly fool !" I answered inconsequently, and marched off in a rage.

My mind was uneasy about this inexperienced young man. If anything should happen to him, what should I say to his father? Well, in that event, it was probable that something would happen to me too. Very possibly we should both be dead in an hour. Certainly I had no intention of allowing myself to be taken alive by those slaving devils. Hassan's remarks about fires and ant-heaps and the sun were too vividly impressed upon my memory.

In another five minutes everybody was up, though it required kicks to rouse most of the bearers from their slumbers. They, poor men, were accustomed to the presence of Death, and did not suffer him to disturb their sleep. Still, I noted that they muttered together and seemed alarmed.

"If they show signs of treachery, you must kill them," I said to Mavovo, who nodded in his grave, silent fashion.

Only we left the rescued slave-woman and her child plunged in the stupor of exhaustion in a corner of the camp. What was the use of disturbing her?

Sammy, who seemed far from comfortable, brought two pannikins of coffee to Stephen and myself.

"This is a momentous occasion, Messrs. Quatermain and Somers," he said, as he gave us the coffee, and I noted that his hand shook and his teeth chattered. "The cold is extreme," he went on, in his copybook English, by way of explaining these physical symptoms which he saw I had observed. "Mr. Quatermain, it is all very well for you to paw the ground and smell the battle from afar, as is written in the Book of Job. But I was not brought up to the trade, and take it otherwise. Indeed, I wish I was back at the Cape—yes, even within the whitewashed walls of the Place of Detention."

"So do I," I muttered, keeping my right foot on the ground with difficulty.

But Stephen laughed outright and asked— "What will you do, Sammy, when the fighting begins?"

"Mr. Somers," he answered, "I have employed some wakeful hours in making a hole behind that tree-trunk, through which I hope bullets will not pass. There, as a man of peace, I shall pray for our success."

"And if the Arabs get in, Sammy?"

"Then, sir, under Heaven, I shall trust to the fleetness of my legs." I could stand it no longer. My right foot flew up and caught Sammy in the place at which I had aimed. He vanished, casting a reproachful look behind him.

Just then a terrible clamour arose in the slavers' camp, which hitherto had been very silent, and just then also the first light of dawn glinted on the barrels of our guns.

"Look out !" I cried, as I gulped down the last of my coffee. "There's something going on there."

The clamour grew louder and louder, till it seemed to fill the skies with a concentrated noise of curses and shrieking. Distinct from it, as it were, I heard shouts of alarm and rage, and then came the sounds of gun-shots, yells of agony, and the thud of many running feet. By now the light was growing fast, as it does when once it comes in these latitudes. Three more minutes, and through the grey mist of the dawn we saw dozens of black figures struggling up the slope towards us. Some seemed to have logs of wood tied behind them, others crawled along on all fours, others dragged children by the hand, and all yelled at the top of their voices.

"The slaves are attacking us," said Stephen, lifting his rifle.

"Don't shoot!" I cried. "I think they have broken loose and are taking refuge with us."

I was right. These unfortunates had used the two knives which our men smuggled to them to good purpose. Having cut their bonds during the night, they were running to seek the protection of the Englishmen and their flag. On they surged, a hideous mob, the slave-sticks still fast to the necks of many of them, for they had not found time or opportunity to loose them all, while behind came the Arabs firing. The position was clearly very serious, for if they burst into our camp, we should be overwhelmed by their rush and fall victims to the bullets of their captors.

"Hans," I cried, "take the men who were with you last night and try to lead those slaves round behind us. Quick ! Quick, now, before we are stamped flat."

Hans darted away, and presently I saw him and the two other men running toward the approaching crowd, Hans waving a shirt or some other white object to attract their attention. At the same time the foremost of them had halted and were screaming, "Mercy, English ! Save us, English !" having caught sight of the muzzles of our guns.

This was a fortunate occurrence indeed, for otherwise Hans and his companions could never have stopped them. The next thing I saw was the white shirt bearing away to the left on a line which led past the fence of our *boma* into the scrub and high grass behind the camp. After it struggled and scrambled the crowd of slaves like a flock of sheep after the bell-wether. To them Hans's shirt was a kind of "white helmet of Navarre."

So that danger passed by. Some of the slaves had been struck by the Arab bullets. or trodden down in the rush, or collapsed from weakness, and at those of them who still lived the pursuers were firing. One woman, who had fallen under the weight of the great slave-stick which was fastened about her throat, was crawling forward on her hands and knees. An Arab fired at her, and the bullet struck the ground under her stomach. but without hurting her, for she wriggled forward more quickly. I was sure that he would shoot again, and watched. Presently, for by now the light was good, I saw him, a tall fellow in a white robe, step from behind the shelter of a banana tree about a hundred and fifty yards away, and take a careful aim at the woman. But I, too, took aim and---well, I am not bad at this kind of snap-shooting when I try. That Arab's gun never went off. Only he went up two feet or more into the air and fell backwards, shot through the head, which was the part of his person that I had covered.

The hunters uttered a low "Ow!" of approval, while Stephen, in a sort of ecstasy, exclaimed—

"Oh, what a heavenly shot!"

"Not bad, but I shouldn't have fired it," I answered, "for they haven't attacked us yet. It is a kind of declaration of war, and," I added, as Stephen's sun-helmet leapt from his head, "there's the answer. Down, all of you, and fire through the loopholes."

Then the fight began. Except for its grand finale, it wasn't really much of a fight when compared with one or two we had afterwards on this expedition. But, on the other hand, its character was extremely awkward for us. The Arabs made one rush at the beginning, shouting on Allah as they came. But though they were plucky villains, they did not repeat that experiment. Either by good luck or good management, Stephen knocked over two of them with his double-barrelled rifle, and I also emptied my large-bore breech-loader--the first I ever owned—among them, not without results, while the hunters made a hit or two.

After this the Arabs took cover, getting behind trees and, as I had feared, hiding in the reeds on the bank of the stream. Thence they harassed us a great deal, for amongst them were some very decent shots. Indeed. had we not taken the precaution of lining the thorn fence with a thick bank of earth and sods, we should have fared badly. As it was, one of the hunters was killed, the bullet passing through the loophole and striking him in the throat as he was about to fire, while the unfortunate bearers, who were on rather higher ground, suffered a good deal. two of them being dispatched outright and four wounded. After this I made the rest of them lie flat on the ground close against the fence in such a fashion that we could fire over their bodies.

Soon it became evident that there were more of these Arabs than we had thought, for quite fifty of them were firing from different places. Moreover, by slow degrees they were advancing, with the evident object of outflanking us and gaining the high ground behind. Some of them, of course, we stopped as they rushed from cover to cover, but this kind of shooting was as difficult as that at bolting rabbits across a woodland ride, and, to be honest, I must say that I was the only one who was much good at the game, for here my quick eye and long practice told.

Within an hour the position had grown very serious indeed, so much so that we found it necessary to consider what should I pointed out that, with our small be done. number, a charge against the scattered riflemen, who were gradually surrounding us, would be worse than useless, while it was almost hopeless to expect to hold the boma till nightfall. Once the Arabs got behind us, they could rake us from the higher ground. Indeed, for the last half-hour we had directed all our efforts to preventing them from passing this boma, which fortunately the stream on the one side and a stretch of quite open land on the other made it very difficult for them to do, without more loss than they cared to face.

"I fear there is only one thing for it," I said at length, during a pause in the attack, while the Arabs were either taking counsel or waiting for more ammunition, "to abandon the camp and everything, and bolt up the hill. As those fellows must be tired, and we are all good runners, we may save our lives in that way."

"How about the wounded," asked Stephen, "and the slave-woman and child?" "I don't know," I answered, looking down.

Of course, I did know very well; but here, in an acute form, arose the ancient question: Were we to perish for the sake of certain individuals in whom we had no great interest, and whom we could not save by remaining with them? If we stayed where we were, our end seemed fairly certain, whereas if we ran for it, we had a good chance of escape. But this involved the desertion of several injured bearers and a woman and child whom he had picked up starving, all of whom would certainly be massacred, save perhaps the woman and child.

As these reflections flitted through my brain. I remembered that a drunken Frenchman named Leblanc, whom I had known in my youth, and who had been a friend of Napoleon, or so he said, told me that the Emperor, when he was besieging Acre in the Holy Land, was forced to retreat. Being unable to carry off his wounded men, he left them in a monastery on Mount Carmel, each with a dose of poison by his side. Apparently they did not take the poison, for according to Leblanc, who said he was present there-not as a wounded man-the Turks came and butchered them. So Napoleon chose to save his own life and that of his army at the expense of his wounded. But, after all, I reflected, he was no shining example to Christian men, and I hadn't time to find any poison. In a few words I explained the situation to Mavovo, leaving out the story of Napoleon, and asked his advice.

"We must run," he answered. "Although I do not like running, life is more than stores, and he who lives may one day pay his debts."

"But the wounded, Mavovo—we cannot carry them."

"I will see to them, Macumazahn; it is the fortune of war. Or, if they prefer it, we can leave them—to be nursed by the Arabs," which, of course, was just Napoleon and his poison over again.

I confess that I was about to assent, not wishing that I and Stephen, especially Stephen, should be potted in an obscure engagement with some miserable slavetraders, when something happened.

It will be remembered that shortly after dawn Hans, using a shirt for a flag, had led the fugitive slaves past the camp up to the hill behind. There he and they had vanished, and from that moment to this we had seen nothing of him or them. Now of a sudden he reappeared, still waving the shirt. After him rushed a great mob of naked men, two hundred of them, perhaps, brandishing slavesticks, stones, and the boughs of trees. When they had almost reached the *boma*, whence we watched them amazed, they split into two bodies, half of them passing to our left, apparently under the command of the Mazitu who had accompanied Hans to the slave camp, and the other half to the right, following the old Hottentot himself. I stared at Mavovo, for I was too wonderstruck to speak.

"Ah," said Mavovo, "that Spotted Snake of yours"—he referred to Hans—" is great in his own way, for he has even been able to put courage into the hearts of slaves. Do you not understand, my father, that they are about to attack those Arabs, yes, and to pull them down, as wild dogs do a buffalo calf?"

It was true; this was the Hottentot's superb design. Moreover, it succeeded. Up on the hillside he had watched the progress of the fight and seen how it must end. Then, through the interpreter who was with him, he harangued those slaves, pointing out to them that we, their white friends, were about to be overwhelmed, and that they must either strike for themselves or return to the Among them were some who had voke. been warriors in their own tribes, and through these he stirred the others. Thev seized the slave-sticks from which they had been freed, pieces of rock, anything that came to their hands, and at a given signal charged, leaving only the women and children behind them.

Seeing them come, the scattered Arabs began to fire at them, killing some, but thereby revealing their own hiding-places. At these the slaves rushed. They hurled themselves upon the Arabs; they tore them, they dashed out their brains in such fashion that within another five minutes quite twothirds of them were dead, and the rest, of whom we took some toll with our rifles as they bolted from cover, were in full flight.

It was a terrible vengeance. Never did I witness a more savage scene than that of these outraged men wreaking their wrongs upon their tormentors. I remember that when most of the Arabs had been killed and a few had escaped, the slaves found one—I think it was the captain of the gang—who had hidden himself in a little patch of dead reeds washed up by the stream. Somehow they managed to fire these; I expect that Hans, who had remained discreetly in the background after the fighting began, emerged when it was over and gave them a match. In due course out came the wretched Arab. Then they flung themselves on him as marching ants do upon a caterpillar, and, despite his cries for mercy, tore him to fragments, literally to fragments. Being what they were, it was hard to blame them. If we had seen our parents shot, our infants pitilessly butchered, our homes destroyed, and our women and children marched off in the slave-sticks to be sold into bondage, should we not have done the same? I think so, although we are not ignorant savages.

Thus our lives were saved by those whom we had tried to save, and for once justice was done even in those dark parts of Africa, for in that time they were dark indeed. Had it not been for Hans and the courage which he managed to inspire into the hearts of these crushed blacks, I have little doubt but that before nightfall we should have been dead, for I do not think that any attempt at retreat would have proved successful. And if it had, what would have happened to us in that wild country, surrounded by enemies and with only the few rounds of ammunition that we could have carried in our flight?

"Ah, Baas," said the Hottentot a little while later, squinting at me with his beadlike eyes, "after all, you did well to listen to my prayer and bring me with you. Old Hans is a drunkard, yes, or at least he used to be, and old Hans gambles, yes, and perhaps old Hans will go to hell. But meanwhile old Hans can think, as he thought one day before the attack on Maraisfontein, as he thought one day on the Hill of Slaughter by Dingaan's kraal, and as he thought this morning up there among the Oh, he knew how it must end. bushes. He saw that those dogs of Arabs were cutting down a tree to make a bridge across that deep stream and get round to the high ground at the back of you, whence they would have shot you all in five minutes. And now, Baas, my stomach feels very queer. There was no breakfast on the hillside, and the sun was very hot. I think that just one tot of brandy-oh, I know I promised not to drink, but if you give it me, the sin is yours, not mine."

Well, I gave him the tot, a stiff one, which he drank quite neat, although it was against my principles, and locked up the bottle afterwards. Also I shook the old fellow's hand and thanked him, which seemed to please him very much, for he muttered something to the effect that it was nothing, since, if I had died, he would have died too, and therefore he was thinking of himself, not of me. Also two big tears trickled down his snub nose, but these may have been produced by the brandy.

Well, we were the victors, and elated, as may be imagined, for we knew that the few slavers who had escaped would not attack Our first thought was for food, us again. for it was now past midday and we were But dinner presupposed a cook, starving. which reminded us of Sammy. Stephen, who was in such a state of jubilation that he danced rather than walked, the helmet with a bullet-hole through it stuck ludicrously upon the back of his head, started to look for him, and presently called to me in an alarmed voice. I went to the back of the camp and found him staring into a hole like a small grave, that had been hollowed behind a solitary thorn tree, at the bottom of which lay a huddled heap. It was Sammy, to all appearance. We got hold of him, and up he came, limp, senseless, but still holding in his hand a large, thick Bible bound in boards. Moreover, in the exact centre of this Bible was a bullet-hole, or, rather, a bullet which had passed through the stout cover and buried itself in the paper behind. remember that the point of it reached to the First Book of Samuel.

As for Sammy himself, he seemed to be quite uninjured, and, indeed, after we had poured some water on him—he was never fond of water—he revived quickly enough. Then we found out what had happened.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I was seated in my place of refuge, being, as I have told you, a man of peace, enjoying the consolations of religion"—he was very pious in times of trouble. "At length the firing slackened, and I ventured to peep out, thinking that perhaps the foe had fled, holding the Book in front of my face in case of accidents. After that I remember no more."

"No," said Stephen, "for a bullet hit the Bible and the Bible hit your head and knocked you silly."

"Ah," said Sammy, "how true is what I was taught, that the Book shall be a shield of defence to the righteous ! Now I understand why I was moved to bring the thick old Bible that belonged to my mother in Heaven, and not the little thin one given to me by the Sunday-school teacher, through which the ball of the enemy would have passed."

Then he went off to cook the dinner.

Certainly it was a wonderful escape, though whether this was a direct reward of his piety, as he thought, is another matter. As soon as we had eaten, we set to work to consider our position, of which the crux was what to do with the slaves. There they sat in groups outside the fence, many of them showing traces of the recent conflict, and stared at us stupidly. Then of a sudden, as though with one voice, they began to clamour for food.

"How are we to feed several hundred people?" asked Stephen.

"The slavers must have done it somehow," I answered. "Let's go and search their camp."

So we went, followed by our hungry clients. and, in addition to many more things, to our delight found a great store of rice, mealies, and other grain, some of which was ground into meal. Of this we served out an ample supply, together with salt, and soon the cooking pots were full of porridge. Mv word, how those poor creatures did eat, nor, although it was necessary to be careful, could we find it in our hearts to stint them of the first full meal that had passed their lips after weeks of starvation. When at length they were satisfied, we addressed them, thanking them for their bravery, telling them that they were free, and asking what they meant to do.

Upon this point they seemed to have but one idea. They said that they would come with us who were their protectors. Then followed a great indaba, or consultation, which really I have not time to set out. The end of it was that we agreed that so many of them as wished should accompany us till they reached country that they knew, when they would be at liberty to depart to their own homes. Meanwhile we divided up the blankets and other stores of the Arabs, such as trade goods and beads, among them, and then left them to their own devices, after placing a guard over the foodstuffs. For my part, I hoped devoutly that in the morning we should find them gone.

After this we returned to our *boma* just in time to assist at a sad ceremony—that of the burial of my hunter, who had been shot through the head. His companions had dug a deep hole outside the fence and within a few yards of where he fell. In this they placed him in a sitting position, with his face turned towards Zululand, setting by his side two gourds that belonged to him, one filled with water and the other with grain. Also they gave him a blanket and his two assegais, tearing the blanket and breaking the handles of the spears, to "kill" them, as they said. Then quietly enough they threw in the earth



about him, and filled the top of the hole with large stones to prevent the hyenas from digging him up. This done, one by one they walked past the grave, each man stopping to bid him farewell by name. Mavovo, who came last, made a little speech, telling the deceased to hamba kachle, that is, go comfortably to the land of ghosts, as, he added, no doubt he would do who had died as a He requested him, moreover. man should. if he returned as a spirit, to bring good and not ill-fortune on us, since otherwise when he, Mavovo, became a spirit in his turn, he would have words to say to him on the matter. In conclusion, he remarked that as his, Mavovo's Snake, had foretold this event at Durban, a fact with which the deceased would now be acquainted, he, the said deceased, could never complain of not having received value for the shilling he had paid as a divining fee.

"Yes," exclaimed one of the hunters, with a note of anxiety in his voice, "but your Snake mentioned six of us to you, O Doctor!"

"It did," replied Mavovo, drawing a pinch of snuff up his uninjured nostril, "and our brother there was the first of the six. Be not afraid; the other five will certainly join him in due course, for my Snake must speak the truth. Still, if anyone is in a hurry" and he glared round the little circle—" let him stop and talk with me alone. Perhaps I could arrange that his turn—" Here he stopped, for they were all gone.

"Glad I didn't pay a shilling to have my fortune told by Mavovo," said Stephen, when we were back in the *boma*. "But why did they bury his pots and spears with him?"

"To be used by the spirit on its journey," I answered. "Although they do not quite know it, these Zulus believe, like all the rest of the world, that man lives on elsewhere."

CHAPTER VIII,

THE MAGIC MIRROR.

I DID not sleep very well that night, for now that the danger was over, I found that the long strain of it had told upon my nerves. Also there were so many noises. Thus, the bearers who were shot had been handed over to their companions, who disposed of them in a simple fashion, namely, by throwing them into the bush, where they attracted the notice of hyenas. Then the four wounded men who lay near to me groaned a good deal, or when they were not groaning, uttered loud prayers to their local gods. We had done the best we could for these unlucky fellows. Indeed, that kind-hearted little coward, Sammy, who at some time in his career served as dresser in a hospital, had tended their wounds, none of which were mortal, very well indeed, and from time to time rose to minister to them.

But what disturbed me most was the fearful hubbub which came from the camp below. Many of the tropical African tribes are really semi-nocturnal in their habits—I suppose because there the night is cooler than the day—and on any great occasion this tendency asserts itself.

Thus every one of these freed slaves seemed to be howling his loudest to an accompaniment of iron pots or stones, which, lacking their native drums, they beat with sticks.

Moreover, they had lit large fires, about which they flitted in an ominous and unpleasant fashion that reminded me of some mediæval pictures of hell which I had seen in an old book.

At last I could stand it no longer, and kicking Hans, who, curled up like a dog, slept at my feet, asked him what was going on. His answer caused me to regret the question.

"Plenty of those slaves cannibal men, Baas. Think they eat the Arabs and like them very much," he said with a yawn, and then went to sleep again.

I did not continue the conversation.

When at length we made a start on the following morning, the sun was high over us. Indeed, there was a great deal to do. The guns and ammunition of the dead Arabs had to be collected-the ivory, of which they carried a good store, must be buried, for to take it with us was impossible* -and the loads apportioned. Also it was necessary to make litters for the wounded, and to stir up the slaves from their debauch. into the nature of which I made no further inquiries, was no easy task. On mustering them, I found that a good number had vanished during the night-where to I do not know. Still, a mob of well over two hundred people, a considerable portion of whom were women and children, remained, whose one idea seemed to be to accompany us wherever we might wander. So, with this miscellaneous following, at length we started.

To describe our adventures during the next month would be too long, if not impossible, for, to tell the truth, after the lapse

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^{*} To my sorrow we never saw this ivory again.-A. Q.

of so many years, these have become somewhat entangled in my mind. Our great difficulty was to feed such a multitude, for the store of rice and grain, upon which we were quite unable to keep a strict supervision, they soon devoured. Fortunately the country through which we passed, at this time of the year—the end of the wet season —was full of game, of which, travelling as we did very slowly, we were able to shoot a great deal. But this game killing, delightful as it may be to the sportsman, soon palled on us as a business. To say nothing of the expenditure of ammunition, it meant incessant work.

Against this the Zulu hunters soon began to murmur, for, as Stephen and I could rarely leave the camp, the burden of it fell on them. Ultimately I hit upon this scheme. Picking out thirty or forty of the likeliest men among the slaves, I served out to each of them ammunition and one of the Arab guns, in the use of which we drilled them as best we could. Then I told them that they must provide themselves and their companions with meat. Of course, accidents happened. One man was accidentally shot and three others were killed by a cow elephant and a wounded buffalo. But in the end they learned to handle their rifles sufficiently well to supply the camp. Moreover, day by day little parties of the slaves disappeared-I presume to seek their own homes-so that when at last we entered the borders of the Mazitu country, there were not more than fifty of them left, including seventeen of those whom we had taught to shoot.

Then it was that our real adventures began.

One evening, after three days' march through some difficult bush, in which lions carried off a slave woman, killed one of the donkeys, and mauled another so badly that it had to be shot, we found ourselves upon the edge of a great grassy plateau that, according to my aneroid, was one thousand six hundred and forty feet above sea-level.

"What place is this?" I asked of the two Mazitu guides, those same men whom we had borrowed from Hassan.

"The land of our people, Chief," they answered, "which is bordered on one side by the bush and on the other by the great lake where live the Pongo wizards."

I looked about me at the bare uplauds, that already were beginning to turn brown, on which nothing was visible save vast herds of buck such as were common further south. A dreary prospect it was, for a slight rain was falling, accompanied by mist and a cold wind.

"I do not see your people or their kraals," I said ; "I only see grass and wild game."

"Our people will come," they replied rather nervously. "No doubt even now their spies watch us from among the tall grass or out of some hole,"

grass or out of some hole," "The deuce they do !" I said, or something like it, and thought no more of the When one is in conditions in matter. which anything may happen, such as, so far as I am concerned, have prevailed through most of my life, one grows a little careless as to what will happen. For my part, I have long been a fatalist, to a certain extent. I mean, I believe that the individual, or, rather, the identity which animates him, came out from the Source of all Life a long while—perhaps hundreds of thousands or millions of years-ago, and when his career is finished, perhaps hundreds of thousands or millions of years hence, or perhaps to-morrow, will return perfected, but still as an individual, to dwell in or with that Source of Life. I believe also that his various existences, here or elsewhere, are foreknown and fore-ordained, although in a sense he may shape them by the action of his free will, and that nothing which he can do will lengthen or shorten one of them by a single hour. Therefore, so far as I am concerned, I have always acted up to the great injunction of our Master and taken no thought for the morrow.

However, in this instance, as in many others of my experience, the morrow took plenty of thought for itself. Indeed, before the dawn, Hans, who never seemed really to sleep any more than a dog does, woke me up with the ominous information that he heard a sound which he thought was caused by the tramp of hundreds of marching men.

"Where?" I asked, after listening without avail—to look was useless, for the night was dark as pitch.

He put his ear to the ground and said— "There."

I put my ear to the ground, but, although my senses are fairly acute, could hear nothing.

Then I sent for the sentries, but these, too, could hear nothing. After this I gave the business up and went to sleep again.

However, as it proved, Hans was quite right; in such matters he generally was right, for his senses were as keen as those of any wild beast. At dawn I was once more awakened, this time by Mavovo, who reported that we were being surrounded by a regiment or regiments. I rose and looked out through the mist. There, sure enough, in dim and solemn outline, though still far off, I perceived rank upon rank of men, armed men, for the light glimmered faintly upon their spears.

"What is to be done, Macumazahn?" asked Mavovo.

"Have breakfast, I think," I answered. "If we are going to be killed, it may as well be after breakfast as before." And, calling the trembling Sammy, I instructed him to make the coffee. Also I awoke Stephen and explained the situation to him.

"Capital !" he answered. "No doubt these are the Mazitu, and we have found them much more easily than we expected. People generally take such a lot of hunting for in this confounded great country."

"That's not such a bad way of looking at things," I answered. "But would you be good enough to go round the camp and make it clear that not on any account is anyone to fire without orders. Stay, collect all the guns from these slaves, for Heaven knows what they will do with them if they are frightened !"

Stephen nodded and sauntered off with three or four of the hunters. While he was gone, in consultation with Mavovo, I made certain little arrangements of my own, which need not be detailed. They were designed to enable us to sell our lives as dearly as possible, should things come to the worst. One should always try to make an impression upon the enemy in Africa, for the sake of future travellers if for no other reason.

In due course Stephen and the hunters returned with the guns, or most of them, and reported that the slave people were in a great state of terror and showed a disposition to bolt.

"Let them bolt," I answered. "They would be of no use to us in a row, and might even complicate matters. Call in the Zulus who are watching at once."

He nodded, and a few minutes later I heard—for the mist which hung about the bush to the east of the camp was still too dense to allow of my seeing anything—a clamour of voices, followed by the sound of scuttling feet. The slave people, including our bearers, had gone, every one of them. They even carried away the wounded. Just as the soldiers who surrounded us were completing their circle, they bolted between the two ends of it and vanished into the bush out of which we had marched on the previous evening. Often since then I have wondered what became of them. Doubtless some perished, and the rest worked their way back to their homes or found new ones among other tribes. The experiences of those who escaped must be interesting to them if they still live. I can well imagine the legends in which these will be embodied two or three generations hence.

Deducting the slave people and the bearers whom we had wrung out of Hassan, we were now a party of seventeen—namely, eleven Zulu hunters, including Mavovo, two white men, Hans and Sammy, and the two Mazitus, who had elected to remain with us, while round us was a great circle of savages which closed in slowly.

As the light grew—it was long in coming on that dull morning-and the mist lifted, I examined these people without seeming to take any particular notice of them. They were tall, much taller than the average Zulu, and slighter in their build, also lighter in colour. Like the Zulus, they carried large hide shields and one very broad-bladed spear. Throwing assegais seemed to" be wanting, but in place of them I saw that they were armed with short bows, which, together with a quiver of arrows, were slung upon their backs. The officers wore a short skin cloak or kaross, and the men also had cloaks, which I found out afterwards were made from the inner bark of trees.

They advanced in the most perfect silence and very slowly. Nobody said anything, and if orders were given, this must have been done by signs. I could not see that any of them had firearms.

"Now," I said to Stephen, "perhaps if we shot and killed some of those fellows, they might be frightened and run away. Or they might not; or, if they did, they might return."

"Whatever happened," he remarked sagely, "we should scarcely be welcome in their country afterwards, so I think we had better do nothing unless we are obliged."

I nodded, for it was obvious that we could not fight hundreds of men, and told Sammy, who was perfectly livid with fear, to bring the breakfast. No wonder he was afraid, poor fellow, for we were in great danger. These Mazitu had a bad name, and if they chose to attack us, we should all be dead in a few minutes.

The coffee and some cold buck's flesh were put upon our little camp table in front of the tent, which we had pitched because of the rain, and we began to eat. The Zulu hunters also ate from a bowl of mealie porridge which they had cooked on the previous night, each of them with his loaded rifle upon his knees. Our proceedings seemed to puzzle the Mazitus very much indeed. They drew quite near to us, to within about forty yards, and halted there in a dead circle, staring at us with their great round eyes. It was like a scene in a dream; I shall never forget it.

Everything about us appeared to astonish them, our indifference, the colour of Stephen and myself—as a matter of fact, at that date Brother John was the only white man they had ever seen—our tent, and our two remaining donkeys. Indeed, when one of these beasts broke into a bray, they showed signs of fright, looking at each other and even retreating a few paces.

At length the position got upon my nerves, especially as I saw that some of them were beginning to fiddle with their bows, and that their General, a tall, one-eyed old fellow, was making up his mind to do something. I called to one of the two Mazitus, whom I forgot to say we had named Tom and Jerry, and gave him a pannikin of coffee.

"Take that to the captain there, with my good wishes, Jerry, and ask him if he will drink with us," I said.

Jerry, who was a plucky fellow, obeyed. Advancing with the steaming coffee, he held it under the captain's nose. Evidently he knew the man's name, for I heard him say—

" O Babemba, the white lords, Macumazana and Wazela, ask if you will share their holy drink with them?"

I could perfectly understand the words, for these people spoke a dialect so akin to Zulu that by now it had no difficulty for me.

"Their holy drink !" exclaimed the old fellow, starting back. "Man, it is hot redwater. Would these white wizards poison me with *mwavi*?"

Here I should explain that muavi, or mkasa, as it is sometimes called, is the liquor distilled from the inner bark of a sort of mimosa tree, or sometimes from a root of the strychnos tribe, which is administered by the witch-doctors to persons accused of crime. If it makes them sick, they are declared innocent. If they are thrown into convulsions or stupor, they are clearly guilty, and die, either from the effects of the poison or afterwards by other means.

"This is no *mwavi*, O Babemba," said Jerry. "It is the divine liquor that makes the white lords shoot straight with their wonderful guns which kill at a thousand paces. See, I will swallow some of it." And he did, though it must have burnt his tongue.

Thus encouraged, old Babemba sniffed at the coffee and found it fragrant. Then he called a man, who from his peculiar dress I took to be a doctor, made him drink some, and watched the results, which were that the doctor tried to finish the pannikin. Snatching it away indignantly, Babemba drank himself, and, as I had half filled the cup with sugar, found the mixture good.

"It is indeed a holy drink," he said, smacking his lips. "Have you any more of it?"

"The white lords have more," said Jerry. "They invite you to eat with them."

Babemba stuck his finger into the tin and, covering it with a sediment of sugar, sucked and reflected.

"It's all right," I whispered to Stephen. "I don't think he'll kill us after drinking our coffee, and, what's more, I believe he is coming to breakfast."

"This may be a snare," said Babemba, who now began to lick the sugar out of the pannikin.

"No," answered Jerry with creditable resource. "Though they could easily kill you all, the white lords do not hurt those who have partaken of their holy drink—that is, unless anyone tries to harm them."

"Cannot you bring some more of the holy drink here?" he asked, giving a final polish to the pannikin with his tongue.

"No," said Jerry. "If you want it, you must go there. Fear nothing. Would I, one of your own people, betray you?"

"True !" exclaimed Babemba. "By your talk and your face, you are Mazitu. How came you—— 'Well, we will speak of that afterwards. I am very thirsty. I will come. Soldiers, sit down aud watch, and if any harm happens to me, avenge it and report to the king."

Now, while all this was going on, I had made Hans and Sammy open one of the boxes and extract therefrom a good-sized mirror in a wooden frame, with a support at the back so that it could be stood anywhere. Fortunately it was unbroken; indeed, our packing had been so careful that none of the looking-glasses or other fragile things were injured. To this mirror I gave a hasty polish, then set it almost upright upon the table.

Old Babemba came along rather suspiciously, his one eye rolling over us and

everything that belonged to us. When he was quite close, it fell upon the mirror. He stopped, he stared, he retreated, then, drawn by his overmastering curiosity, came on again, and again stood still.

"What is the matter ?" called his secondin-command from the ranks.

"The matter is," he answered, "that here is great magic. Here I see myself walking towards myself. There can be no mistake, for one eye is gone in my other self."

for one eye is gone in my other self." "Advance, O Babemba," cried the doctor who had tried to drink all the coffee, "and see what happens. Keep your spear ready, and if your witch-self attempts to harm you, kill it."

Thus encouraged, Babemba lifted his spear and dropped it again in a great hurry.

"That won't do, fool of a doctor," he shouted back. "My other self lifts a spear also, and, what is more, all of you who should be behind are in front of me. The holy drink has made me drunk; I am bewitched. Save me!"

Now, I saw that the joke had gone too far, for the soldiers were beginning to string their bows in confusion. Luckily, at this moment, the sun at length came out almost opposite to us.

¹ O Babemba," I said in a solemn voice, "it is true that this magic shield, which we have brought as a gift to you, gives you another self. Henceforth your labours will be halved and your pleasures doubled, for when you look into this shield, you will be not one, but two. Also it has other properties —see!" And, lifting the mirror, I used it as a heliograph, flashing the reflected sunlight into the eyes of the long half-circle of men in front of us. My word, didn't they run !

"Wonderful!" exclaimed old Babemba. "And can I learn to do that also, white lord?"

"Certainly," I answered ; "come and try. Now, hold it so while I say the spell." And I muttered some hocus-pocus, then directed it towards certain of the Mazitu who were gathering again. "There ! Look ! Look ! You have hit them in the eye. You are a master of magic. They run, they run !" And run they did indeed. "Is there anyone yonder whom you dislike ?"

"Plenty," answered Babemba with emphasis, "especially that witch-doctor who drank nearly all the holy drink."

"Very well; by and by I will show you how you can burn a hole in him with this magic. No, not now, not now. For a while this mocker of the sun is dead. Look"—and,

dipping the glass beneath the table, I produced it back first—"you cannot see anything, can you?"

"Nothing except wood," replied Babemba, staring at the deal slip with which it was lined.

Then I threw a dish-cloth over it and, to change the subject, offered him another pannikin of the "holy drink" and a stool to sit on.

The old fellow perched himself very gingerly upon the stool, which was of the folding variety, stuck the iron-tipped end of his great spear in the ground between his knees, and took hold of the pannikin. Or, rather, he took hold of a pannikin and not the right one. So ridiculous was his appearance that the light-minded Stephen, who, forgetting the perils of the situation, had for the last minute or two been struggling with inward laughter, clapped down his coffee on the table and retired into the tent, where I heard him gurgling in unseemly merriment. It was this coffee that, in the confusion of the moment, Sammy gave to old Babemba. Presently Stephen reappeared, and to cover his confusion seized the pannikin meant for Babemba and drank it, or most of it. Then Sammy, seeing his mistake, said-

"Mr. Somers, I regret that there is an error. You are drinking from the cup which that stinking savage has just licked clean."

The effect was dreadful and instantaneous, for then and there Stephen was violently sick.

"Why does the white lord do that?" asked Babemba. "Now I see that you are truly deceiving me, and that what you are giving me to swallow is nothing but hot *mwavi*, which in the innocent causes vomiting, but that in those who mean evil, death."

"Stop that foolery, you idiot," I muttered to Stephen, kicking him on the shins, "or you'll get our throats cut !" Then, collecting myself with an effort, I said—

"Oh, not at all, General. This white lord is the priest of the holy drink, and what you see is a religious rite."

" Is it so ?" said Babemba. "Then I hope the rite is not catching."

"Never," I replied, proffering him a biscuit. "And now, General Babemba, tell me, why do you come against us with about five hundred armed men?"

"To kill you, white lords. Oh, how hot is this holy drink, yet pleasant ! You said that it was not catching, did you not ? For I feel-----" "Eat the cake," I answered. "And why do you wish to kill us? Be so good as to tell me the truth now, or I shall read it in the magic shield, which portrays the inside as well as the out." And, lifting the cloth, I stared at the glass.

"If you can read my thoughts, white lord, why trouble me to tell them ?" asked Babemba sensibly enough, his mouth full of biscuit. "Still, as that bright thing may lie, I will set them out. Bausi, king of our people, has sent me to kill you because news has reached him that you are great slavedealers, who come hither with guns to capture the Mazitus and take them away to the Black Water, to be sold and sent across it in big canoes that move of themselves. Of this he has been warned by messengers from the Arab men. Moreover, we know that it is true, for last night you had with you many slaves, who, seeing our spears, ran away not an hour ago."

Now I stared hard at the looking-glass and answered coolly—

"This magic shield tells a somewhat different story. It says that your king, Bausi, for whom, by the way, we have many things as presents, told you to lead us to him with honour, that we might talk over matters with him."

The shot was a good one. Babemba grew confused.

"It is true," he stammered, "that—I mean, the king left it to my judgment. I will consult the witch-doctor."

"If he left it to your judgment, the matter is settled," I said, "since certainly, being so great a noble, you would never try to murder those of whose holy drink you have just partaken. Indeed, if you did so," I added in a cold voice, "you would not live long yourself. One secret word, and that drink will turn to *mwavi* of the worst sort inside of you."

"Oh, yes, white lord, it is settled," exclaimed Babemba, "it is settled. Do not trouble the secret word. I will lead you to the king, and you shall talk with him. By my head and my father's spirit, you are safe from me. Still, with your leave, I will call the great doctor, Imbozwi, and ratify the agreement in his presence, and also show him the magic shield."

So Imbozwi was sent for, Jerry taking the message. Presently he arrived. He was a villainous-looking person, of uncertain age, hump-backed like the picture of Punch, wizened and squint-eyed. His costume was of the ordinary witch-doctor type, being set off with snake skins, fish bladders, baboon's teeth and little bags of medicine. To add to his charms, a broad strip of pigment-red ochre probably-ran down his forehead and the nose beneath, across the lips and chin, ending in a red mark the size of a penny where the throat joins the chest. His woolly hair also, in which was twisted a small ring of black gum, was soaked with grease and powdered blue. It was arranged in a kind of horn, coming to a sharp point about five inches above the top of the skull. Altogether, he looked extremely like the devil. What was more, he was a devil in a bad temper, for the first words he said embodied a reproach to us for not having asked him to partake of our "holy drink" with Babemba.

We offered to make him some more, but he refused, saying that we should poison him.

Then Babemba set the matter out, rather nervously, I thought, for evidently he was afraid of this old wizard, who listened in complete silence. When Babemba explained that, without the king's direct order, it would be foolish and unjustifiable to put to death such magicians as we were, Imbozwi spoke for the first time, asking why he called us magicians.

Babemba instanced the wonders of the shining shield that showed pictures.

"Pooh !" said Imbozwi. ""Does not calm water or polished iron show pictures ?"

"But this shield will make fire," said Babemba. "The white lords say it can burn a man up."

"Then let it burn me up," replied Imbozwi with ineffable contempt, "and I will believe that these white men are magicians worthy to be kept alive, and not common slave-traders such as we have often heard of."

"Burn him, white lords, and show him that I am right," exclaimed the exasperated Babemba, after which they fell to wrangling. Evidently they were rivals, and by this time both of them had lost their tempers.

The sun was now very hot, quite sufficiently so to enable us to give Mr. Imbozwi a taste of our magic, which I determined he should have. Not being certain whether an ordinary mirror would really reflect enough heat to scorch, I drew from my pocket a very powerful burning-glass which I sometimes used for the lighting of fires in order to save matches, and holding the mirror in one hand and the burning-glass in the other, I worked myself into a suitable position for the experiment. Babemba and the witchdoctor were arguing so fiercely that neither

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of them seemed to notice what I was doing. Getting the focus right, I directed the concentrated spark straight on to Imbozwi's greased top-knot, where I knew he would feel nothing, my plan being to char a hole in it. But, as it happened, this top-knot was built up round something of a highly inflammable nature, reed or camphor-wood, I expect. At any rate, about thirty seconds later the top-knot was burning like a beautiful torch.

"Ow!" said the Kaffirs, who were watching.

"My aunt !" exclaimed Stephen.

"Look, look !" shouted Babemba in tones of delight. Now will you believe, O blownout bladder of a man, that there are greater magicians than yourself in the world?"

"What is the matter, son of a dog, that you make a mock of me?" screeched the infuriated Imbozwi, who alone was unaware of anything unusual.

As he spoke, some suspicion rose in his mind which caused him to put his hand to his top-knot and withdraw it with a howl. Then he sprang up and began to dance about, which, of course, only fanned the fire, that had now got hold of the grease and gum. The Zulus applauded; Babemba clapped his hands; Stephen burst into one of his idiotic fits of laughter. For my part, I grew frightened. Near at hand stood a large wooden pot such as the Kaffirs make, from which the coffee kettle had been filled, that fortunately was still half full of water. I seized it and ran to him.

"Save me, white lord !" he howled. "You are the greatest of magicians, and I am your slave."

Here I cut him short by clapping the pot bottom upwards on his burning head, into which it vanished as a candle does into an extinguisher. Smoke and a bad smell issued from beneath the pot, the water from which ran all over Imbozwi, who stood quite still. When I was sure the fire was out, I lifted the pot and revealed the discomfited wizard, but without his elaborate head-dress. Beyond a little scorching he was not in the least hurt, for I had acted in time; only he was bald, for, when touched, the charred hair fell off at the roots.

"It is gone," he said in an amazed voice, after feeling at his scalp.

"Yes," I answered, "quite. The magic shield worked very well, did it not?"

"Can you put it back again, white lord ?" he asked.

"That will depend upon how you behave," I replied.

Then without another word he turned and walked back to the soldiers, who received him with shouts of laughter. Evidently Imbozwi was not a popular character, and his discomfiture delighted them.

Babemba also was delighted. Indeed, he could not praise our magic enough, and at once began to make arrangements to escort us to the king at his head town, which was called Beza, vowing that we need fear no harm at his hands or those of his soldiers. In fact, the only person who did not appreciate our black arts was Imbozwi himself. I caught a look in his eye as he marched off which told me that he hated us bitterly, and reflected to myself that perhaps I had been foolish to use that burning-glass, although in truth I had not intended to set his head on fire.

"My father," said Mavovo to me afterwards, "it would have been better to let that snake burn to death, for then you would have killed his poison. I am something of a doctor myself, and I tell you there is nothing our brotherhood hates so much as being laughed at. You have made a fool of him before all his people, and he will not forget it, Macumazahn."

(To be continued.)



KINCRAIG'S LUCK

By MARY GRANT BRUCE

Author of "Glen Eyre," "Mates at Billabong," "A Little Bush Maid," "Timothy in Bushland," etc.

Illustrated by W. R. Stott



ENNY M'GRATH leaned against a post, with rage in h is heart, and coughed. Before him the dawn came up softly over the racecourse; the sun hung, faintly golden, in a sea of tremulous pink. In

its rays was scarcely life enough to turn to jewels the dewdrops on the spiders' webs that lay across the tussocks in a misty haze. Later, when that golden ball swung aloft, the day would be cloudless and hot; just now there was sufficient "bite" in the air to make the boys riding the sheeted thoroughbreds out to exercise button their coats across their narrow chests and turn up their collars. The nipping morning caught Denny. He shrugged himself further into his big overcoat and coughed again.

He was an undersized, thin youngster, with "jockey" written all over him; on the tightly-clad limbs, on the nervous hands, and, most of all, on his face, keen and watchful, yet redeemed from cunning by a pair of Irish grey eyes that were very honest. There were blue shadows beneath them now, and hollows under his cheekbones, where hay a hectic splash of red. It did not need the hard cough to tell you that things were not well with Denny M'Grath.

There was sullen resentment queerly mingled with pride in his eyes, as he looked across the turf at a knot of mounted men coming slowly in from the galloping track. Two were his own kind, sparely-built jockeys, on racehorses sweating after a hard run, a workmanlike black and a big brown horse with a white blaze. Before them, on a grey pony, came a little man whose hard, side-whiskered face spoke him plainly as a trainer, and with him a tall, looselimbed fellow, sitting easily a dancing bay mare, eager for a gallop on her own account. Denny's eyes passed them lightly over, to dwell longingly on the big brown horse.

"See him, the beauty," he muttered, "shteppin' wid the pride that's in him, an' divil a hang he cares for the couple av miles he's done ! Lave off jerking his head, Tom Patten, or I'll break y' neck, even if I am out av it all! Didn't he run well enough f'r you to respect him, y' misunderstandin' lump? An' himself as can't stand the laste taste av a heavy hand on his mouth ! Look at him now !"-as the brown threw up his head impatiently. "If I cu'd get on him again f'r a fortnight, and lave me darned old lung to the pigs! There's never wan o' them'll know him like me, or ---- " The cough caught him again, and, when the paroxysm was over, he leaned against the post silently, panting a little.

Across the grass Harry Thornton gave his impatient bay mare her head, her quick hoofs scattering the dew as he cantered over to Denny. The jockey greeted him with a little smile.

"Well, it was good enough, Denny, my boy," Thornton said, swinging himself off. "You had the watch on him?"

Denny nodded.

"Good as gold; but I always knew it," he said. "Tis a gift, bar accidents. I reckon it 'd be a gift if he had a stone more, instead av a weight that's nothing but an almighty joke to him. The black horse never had a look in, an' old Kincraig carryin' thirteen pounds more'n he'll have on Cup day! I'd say to put y'r boots on him, sir!"

Thornton laughed a trifle grimly.

"They're on," he said. "Anyhow, I won't have much left beyond them if he doesn't get home in front, Denny."

"He'll get home, don't you worry,"

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Denny said. "I'd gamble me life on him, if 'twas worth anybody's wagerin' as much as a guinea-pig against it. It—it's not aisy f'r me to swallow not bringin' him home in front f'r you, sir."

"Ah, Denny, you know I'm sorry, old chap," said Thornton quickly. He put his hand for a moment on the boy's shoulder. "It's the worse bit of luck we could have had. Upon my soul, it aggravates me every time I see Patten on the old horse's back. Never mind, Denny; we'll have you fit and back into the saddle before next year's Cup."

"Not me," said Denny, smiling faintly. "I always knew I'd go like all the M'Graths, but I didn't care, so long as I hung on to ride Kincraig in the Cup. Well, one can't have everything. "Twill be something to see, anyhow, an' Tommy Patten'll get his chance. He's a good boy, is Tommy, if he *is* a trifle heavy on the bit." He broke off, coughing, and Thornton watched him with troubled eyes.

Kincraig's bad luck was something of a proverb even in a notoriously unlucky stable. Beginning with excellent prospects as a two-year-old, he had been galloped on in his first race, and so badly knocked about as to throw him out of work altogether for The enforced idleness had the season. worked wonders, and his owner had entertained high hopes of the next year's Fate, however, had other views. Derby. Kincraig was a queer-tempered horse, and worked kindly for one rider only, Denny M'Grath, who adored him blindly, and was said almost to live in his box. But Denny fell ill, and another boy was put up to ride Kincraig in his work, the result of which was a bolt across country on a fine September morning, ending in an encounter with a barbed wire fence that left the Derby colt in such wise that Mat Gleeson, the trainer, hesitated over him, thinking a friendly bullet the easiest solution of his troubles. It was Denny who saved the big brown, a white-faced, eager-eyed Denny, pleading between paroxysms of the cough that had already laid the hand of doom upon him; alternately begging for a chance for his favourite, and reviling himself for being the unwitting cause of the accident. Gleeson had given in-people always gave in to Denny in the end-and Kincraig had lived in slings for a time, and completed his cure by another year's rest. Now, as a four-year-old, he was in perfect condition, fit as hands could make him; and whatever soreness yet lingered in Harry Thornton's heart over the Derby that had not come his way was considerably tempered by the feather weight allotted him in the Cups. Kincraig had annexed a couple of minor handicaps with ridiculous ease. The one dark cloud on the horizon lay in Denny himself.

There was no secret about Denny's health. Everyone knew-for he told everyone-that consumption made short work of the Everyone knew, too, that the M'Graths. work in Denny's case was likely to be shorter than usual, and that he cared very little so long as he might ride Kincraig to victory in the Melbourne Cup. Denny was not one to pull a long face at anything. He was quite prepared to meet death, as he met life throughout, with a joke, so long as it left him Kincraig's Cup. Then, two days before the Caulfield Cup, had come the hæmorrhage that left him a limp rag, chafing furiously in the hospital, while Kincraig had chafed and fumed in Patten's hands, refusing absolutely to be a trier in the big race.

The big brown had shaken down to a grudging acquiescence in his new rider's methods, when Denny crawled out a week later, shaken and pinched, with the doctor's absolute veto against riding making anything but music in his ears. There was no reason any more for the daily and nightly vision that had been his for three years—of a crowded field, a two-mile run, and Kincraig under him, coming away from them all at the finish. It was only a dream, and he had awakened now.

He moved away from Thornton as the horses came up, and went to meet Kincraig. Patten slipped to the ground, grinning. He was only human and a jockey, and Denny's loss was his gain, and he knew his mount had just accomplished something rather special in the way of Cup trials. There was some justification for his grin. Denny returned it readily enough, and his light "Good f'r y', me son !" bore not a trace of resentment.

Kincraig had sidled fretfully away as Patten laid his hand on the girth, but he steadied at Denny's voice, and nuzzled gently at his pocket in search of the lump of sugar that never failed him. He put his nose into the Irish boy's hand confidently and rubbed against him, while Denny talked to him, too low to be heard. He must give him up, but he was too shy of anyone knowing what he and Kincraig had to say to each other, especially Tom Patten, who had a hand like a half-brick on a horse's mouth, and so could not be expected to have comprehension. The brown horse stood quietly while he was rubbed down, seeming not to notice the strange hand while Denny was at his side; but when Gleeson called the jockey away, Kincraig immediately became restive, and the remainder of the operation was not an easy one. Patten remounted at length and rode sulkily away.

"Well, Denny," the trainer said, "there's only one thing wrong about this Cup, I guess, and that is that you won't have on the colours."

Denny seemed to shrink further into his big overcoat.

"We won't be talkin' about it," he said. "Sure, if they come home in front, it 'ud ought to be enough f'r any wan av us!"

There was a little crowd in the saddling paddock about Kincraig's box, a knot of the knowing ones, who had wind of the trial the unlucky brown horse had run, augmented by a number of the curious, who do not know anything at all, but who regard every Cup horse as meet food for inspection and sapient comment. Kincraig himself was restless, and regarded his admirers with an unfriendly eye. While being walked round, he had done his best to account for one permanently with a quick lash of his heels, and possibly failure was weighing on his spirits. Denny M'Grath, coming up, laid a sympathetic hand on his neck, and the horse rubbed his head against the sleeve of the boy's immaculate coat and quietened down. Denny looked better; rest and open-air life had given him a healthier colour, and his hard cough did not come so often. He looked at his four-footed mate miserably.

"I cu'd do it !" he said very low. "You'n me cu'd do it together, old man. Divil take that interferin' omadhaun av a doctor an' Tom Patten, too !"

Gleeson came into the box hurriedly.

"Denny, I wish you'd find Tom and hurry him up," he said irritably. The strain on the trainer's nerves is fairly acute during the last hour before the Cup. "He's gone to weigh some time ago—ought to be back by this." He dropped his voice. "You know he's such a fool, and I don't like that crowd of Witchery's. Ours is the only horse they're frightened of, and I don't believe they'd stick at much. Hurry along, my boy !"

Denny nodded and was gone, threading his way swiftly among the crowd. A curt inquiry within the jockeys' room revealed no Patten. Most of the lads had dressed and gone, and none of those remaining knew anything of Kincraig's jockey's whereabouts. The sole trace of him was a leather bag, placed carefully under a seat, which Denny noticed as he turned to go. He pounced on it and opened it. There was the riding gear which at present should be gracing Mr. Patten—boots, breeches, and colours, all complete. The question remained—where was Mr. Patten himself?

It was after five minutes of breathless search that Denny ran his quarry to earth. On the floor in the casualty room Mr. Patten snored serenely, his heavy head pillowed on his saddle. To Denny's shaking, which at first was merely hurried, but rapidly became furious, he gave no response, save that, if anything, his snores became deeper. A mingled odour of strong drink hung about him, with something heavier that was not very difficult to locate. Denny straightened himself at last.

"They've doctored him, the brutes!" he groaned. "Poor old Tom! An' it was his chance! What'll we do now, at all?" And, even with the question, the answer came to him, and for a moment he stood transfixed. Then he said "Blessed hour!" very softly, and, turning, ran.

Mr. Gleeson had time to work himself into something approaching frenzy before he saw the familiar scarlet-and-white jacket threading its way towards him. He uttered an exclamation of relief, and immediately composed a fine effort of rhetoric to be hurled at the tardy delinquent. It died upon his tongue as he caught sight of the jockey's face.

"'Tis all right," said Denny briskly, adjusting girths rapidly. "They've laid out poor old Tom wid a dose of some divilment, so it's up to me, I guess."

"You!" said the trainer. "Does Thornton know? I've sent him hunting for Tom, too. He doesn't? Well, I can't let you ride, Denny."

"You can't?" said Denny furiously. "Can't? Then who'll y' be puttin' up, tell me? An' the horses goin' out this minnit! We're late as it is. Just you let down that stirrup two holes, an' don't be talkin'!"

There came a quick step, and Harry Thornton dived under the rail.

"It's all up, Mat," he said. "Tom's laid out-hocussed." He bit off a strong word, catching sight of the gay jacket. "Good Heavens, Denny-you !"

"'M !" said Denny. He slipped the bridle upon Kincraig's head. "It's up to me, sir."

"You can't do it, Denny. The doctor-""

"Och, to blazes wid the doctor!" said Denny cheerfully. "Don't talk doctors to me! I wouldn't give a hoof av Kineraig for a paddock full av 'em! Don't you be worryin', sir. I'll bring him home f'r y'."

"I'd sooner lose fifty Cups," said Thornton. "It might kill you, Denny. No good, old chap! It's just on a piece with the rest of Kincraig's luck!"

"It's the best bit av luck he's had, then !" Denny cried. "Y' couldn't ever be sure av him goin' kind wid that hand of Tom's on him—sure, it weighs like a lump av lead, so 't does! An' I'm fit as ever I was! D'y' think I don't know? Y' can't stop me! He's me own horse, if ever a horse was!"

"That he is," said Thornton soothingly; "we all know that, Denny. But I won't risk you; it wouldn't be safe. I'll go and scratch him."

"If y' do——" Denny cried. His voice rose almost to a scream as he faced Thornton, his eyes blazing in his white face. "There's Dawes over there wid his mare. He's sending her out wid little Levy on her, 'cause he can't get no other jockey. He'd jump at the chance of me. I swear I'll ride her if y' scratch Kincraig !"

if y' scratch Kincraig !" "Don't be a fool !" Thornton said curtly, his own voice shaking. "I can't do it, Denny. Do you think I want to kill you?"

"Me?" said Denny. His voice had grown calm, except for the self-contempt it held. "Me, and I'm booked to die, anyhow! I'd do it aisy, too, if I had this one ride. Haven't I dreamed av it since he was a foal? If y' want to kill me now, y'll do it if y' stop me—I couldn't live if y' took me chance! Let me—" He broke off and, with a mighty effort of will, choked back the cough that tried to rend him.

"Heavens, but it's true !" Gleeson said. "I do believe you'll kill him if you disappoint him now. Best let him go, sir."

At the first hint of hesitation, Denny had run Kincraig out of the box. For a moment Thornton wavered, then he moved forward to check him. But Denny was too quick for him.

"Hurry !" he said breathlessly. He held a booted leg to a bystander, and the man, gaping, tossed him into the saddle. There was a scatter of badly frightened people as the big thoroughbred shot down the saddling paddock and under the pines. The gate clanged after him.

Thornton looked at his trainer weakly.

"If it hurts him," he said wretchedly, "I'd never forgive myself, Mat." "I dunno," said the trainer reflectively.

"I dunno," said the trainer reflectively. "There's some of us glad of a chance to die like a man, not a log. Things are pretty rough on Denny."

sk But, out in the straight, the whole world sang to Denny just then. The joy of living had come back to him. It laughed in the blue sky and the warm air, heavy with the scent of roses; in the myriad tints of the women's dresses on the crowded lawn, and the black mass on the flat that took up Kincraig's name as he steadied him past the stands. He had never felt so well, so strong. Sickness was a thing forgotten ; all that was worth remembering was that he was on Kincraig, and this was the Cup-Kincraig's Cup. He took the big brown by the head, and they flashed by in their preliminary. Ah, but it was good to feel the old horse moving under him again ! And Kincraig knew, too ; he felt it in the ripple of every powerful muscle, in the pride of each stride. If for but once, it was worth dying to be together again !

He caught a glimpse of his master's anxious face as he passed the lawn again, Kincraig reefing happily, rejoicing at the light hand that gave to the strain on the bit. Denny laughed, waving gaily. It was so ridiculous to think that they were actually worrying about him when he was having the time of his life ! Then he suddenly realised that he was late, and he trotted up the straight to the starting-gate.

If you have not known it, there is nothing that can quite bring it home to you-that tense, strained moment, when a hundred thousand voices are hushed, a hundred thousand faces turned towards the shifting line of dim colours that forms across the green ribbon of the course as the gate goes down. Now and then a voice breaks out insistently with a name; there is a ripple of impatience when the dust from the restless hoofs drifts into a cloud, for a moment blotting out the view. It is a moment that seems an hour. Then the line condenses suddenly, the voices, released, ring out. The bell, clanging that the field is off, strikes as an anti-climax.

But Denny knew nothing of that. His whole mind had lain on steadying Kincraig



to the barrier, and getting away well as he rose. It was, perhaps, lucky for him that the start was a quick one. He was scarcely in line before the gate flew up, and he realised that they were off. Then—for the big brown was fighting for his head—he found his work cut out for him. Nor did he gain control by sheer strength—that, indeed, he lacked. It was to his voice Kincraig finally responded, settling into his stride.

The lawn and stands flashed by, a gay kaleidoscope of colour. He saw it dimly, all his soul fixed on the turn ahead, where so much ground may be lost in swinging with a big field. They were jostling round him, and Kincraig held his own; and presently they were going along the back of the course, running easily with the first dozen. Near him was Witchery's lean chestnut head, and once he caught sight of her rider's face, keenly curious. Then he realised that he must look nowhere, think of nothing but Kincraig. This was not play; even the glamour of those first few moments had faded. He knew now that to ride in such a race was work indeed.

They rounded another turn. Something bumped him as he swung, and just for a moment he had a sick fear that Kincraig was going to fail in his stride; but it passed, and he knew that his horse was going under him like a lion. He began to feel that his chance was indeed good, if he himself could but last out. Could he? It was only for a moment that he permitted himself the question. Then he gave a sudden little laugh that sounded queerly enough in the press. They came round for the last time. The straight lay clear before them.

Yet not quite clear. Even as his heart leaped exultantly, the way closed up. At his side Witchery was boring him into the rail; ahead, two horses he could not name blocked him. He had a sudden desperate vision of being "pocketed" in the straight, like so many good horses in a big race. He shouted angrily at Witchery's rider. Then, just for a moment, the way opened before him, and he took Kincraig by the head and shot him through. It was the distance post, and they were leading the field !

And then, quite suddenly, he knew that he was very tired.

He sat perfectly still, afraid to move. Something was at his girths, at his horse's shoulder; then it dropped back, and he was again alone. There came into his mouth a bitter taste that he knew. He could not spare a hand to wipe away the thin, bright stream that presently trickled across his parted lips and down his jacket, more scarlet than the silk it stained. Beyond came a confused sound of shouting; he heard a thousand voices that echoed his horse's name, "Kincraig!" Then came another sharper cry : "Witchery !"

The lean head crept up beside him-up and up, till it drew level; and still he sat motionless, a queer buzzing in his ears that left him so weary that nothing seemed to Beside him Witchery's jockey was matter. flogging madly. His own whip dangled idly from his wrist. But then Kincraig never liked the whip-his voice was always enough. The thought seemed to recall him to himself. But Witchery was forging ahead, and the post was very near. Already there was but one name on all the shouting tongues. He took up his own horse again." "Kincraig !" he cried, and suddenly lifted him forward. The brown horse answered to the call as though he were fresh. There was a moment's struggle-a white streak on a black ground that flitted past.

He did not know that he had won until someone—a kind-faced lad on a bay—had helped him pull up. The field was all round him then. There were curious eyes on the grim stains on his face and jacket and even on Kincraig's glossy shoulder, where the stream had trickled from his lips. The news brought him to himself a little. He squared his shoulders as he rode back to the tumult —even tried to lift his cap as the applause came in a deafening tide. But his hand fell back limply.

Somehow—nothing was very clear—he got to the scales. There did not seem anything to trouble about but the horrible weariness that chained him. He had a moment's vision of the cool, dim hospital ward—it seemed infinitely restful, infinitely desirable. Then, out of the blackness wrapping him about, a voice said "All right!" and he reeled off the scales into Thornton's arms.

The vision had materialised when he opened his eyes. The ward was spacious, and the light trickled in through shaded windows. He was very peaceful and altogether weary. Someone was holding his hand. It was a little while before he raised his heavy eyes to see Thornton. A nurse held something to his lips quickly.

"Well, sir," he said, "we done it." Something of the old ring came back to his voice.

"Denny!" Thornton said brokenly. "Denny!"

"Don't go worryin'," Denny said. He smiled faintly, feeling his strength come back to him a little. "It's the finish, I hope," he said.

" Í—I'm afraid so, Denny, lad."

"Don't y' dare be afraid," said Denny. "If y' only knew! I was always thinkin' about it, back in me heart—the months and months av slow dying! An' to think I've got this!"

He lay very still, watching the sunlight.

"The old horse," he said—"he's all right?"

"Fit as possible," Thornton told him. "They say they never saw such a Cup as yours, Denny—the way you rode him."

"Do they, now?" Denny asked, with a little flash of pleasure. He smiled. "Much they know—'twasn't me at all. Truly, sir, I didn't know much about it—'twas the old horse. Tell—tell Tom to go aisy on his mouth."

"I'll tell him. They-they all sent you their love, Denny. And I brought you this."

He took from the table a photograph and held it where the boy could see. The light came back into Denny's eyes as he looked.

"Now," he said, "I do think not anywan would have thought av that but you, sir ! The beauty he is-the beauty ! Did y' ever see such a horse wid the natural pride av him ! Bless him !" He lifted a weak hand for the photograph, but the effort to hold it was too much, and Thornton propped it where he could see the light on Kincraig's mighty muscles. He murmured happily, half inaudibly.

"Put it with me, won't y', sir?" he asked once. "An' don't you go worryin'. Think av me luck. You'd die fightin' y'self, if y' had the choice, I bet."

His eyes closed, and so softly came the breathing that Thornton thought he was gone. But he started suddenly.

"They're blocking me !" he cried wildly. "Ah, they've got me jammed on the rails ! Give a fellow room, can't you? Run fair ! It's Witchery ! Take her away ! She's trying to block me, an' we've got to win ! Ah-h-h!" The long sigh was the end of the convulsive effort, and suddenly peace came over his face. "Come up, old horse !" he said very gently. He smiled, and shut his eyes.



DEAD LEAVES.

THEN the Spring comes, the poor dead leaves awake And pitifully flutter, for the wind,

Kissing their withered cheeks, renews dim, blind Desires within them; fain would they forsake Winter's dank wreckage, once again partake

The aching ecstasy of birth, unbind

Their swelling buds, and hear the good thrush wind Spring's jolly horn in reddening copse and brake.

When the Spring comes, the poor dead hearts awake.

Like the brown leaves they flutter; the keen wind Of memory stings the scars Love left behind,

Scars where dead hearts have bled ere they could break. Pale memories for life do they mistake,

Soon blest forgetfulness again they find:

Silent they lie, nor heed the teasing wind; Pity their last poor flutterings-for Love's sake.

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ERNEST BLAKE.

WHICH TO ADORE

DORNFORD YATES By

Illustrated by G. C. Wilmshurst



SUPPOSE you think I'm going to swear," said Berry defiantly. Jill and Daphne clasped one another and shrieked with laughter. Berry stopped addressing the ball and gazed at them.

"Go on," he said,

"Provoke me nodding sardonic approval. to violence. Goad me in the direction of insanity."

His caddie sniggered audibly. Berry turned to him.

"That's right, my boy. Make the most of your time. For you I have already devised a lingering death."

"Look here, old chap," said I, "there's some mistake. I said I'd give you a stroke a hole, not a divot a stroke.'

Jonah strolled up. "Hullo," he said. "Making a new bunker, old man? Good idea. Only a cleek's no good. Send the boy for a turf-cutter. Quicker in the long run."

My brother-in-law regarded us scornfully. Then-

"What I want to know," he said, " is how the Punch office can spare you both at the same time."

Daphne, Berry and I were playing a threeball match, while Jill and Jonah-who had sprained his wrist-were walking round with Berry is rather good really, but just us. now he was wearing a patch over one eye, which made him hopeless.

It was glorious spring weather on the coast of Devon. A little village is Feth. Over and round about it the wind blows always, but the cluster of white cottages and the old brown inn themselves lie close in a hollow of the moorland, flanked by the great cliffs. Only the grey church set up on the heights, half a mile distant, endures the tempests. The wind passes over Feth and is gone. A busy fellow, the wind. He has no time to stop. Not so the sunshine. That

lingers with Feth all day, decking the place gloriously. It is good to be a pet of the sun. So are the gardens of Feth bright with flowers, the white walls dazzling, the stream, that scrambles over brown pebbles to the little bay, merry water.

Except for the natives, we had the place to ourselves. But then Feth sees few visitors at any season. Sixteen miles from a station is its salvation. True, there is Mote Abbey hard by-a fine old place, with an ancient deer-park and deep, rolling woods. Ruins, too, we had heard—a roofless choir, a few grass-grown yards of cloister and the like. Only the Abbot's kitchen was at all preserved. There's irony for you. We were going to see them before we left. We were told that in summer, at the house itself, parties assembled. But the family was away now.

The round of golf proceeded.

"How many is that ?" said Berry, as he sliced into the sea.

"Seven," said I. "Not seven into the sea, you know. Seven strokes. You've only hit three into the sea altogether."

"Isn't he clever with his sums? Here, Where's Henry?" give me another ball. I handed him the last-named—a favourite cleek. The caddie had gone to collect the flotsam. "Now, then. Ladies and gentlemen, with your kind permission I shall now proceed to beat the sphere into the sky."

It was a tremendous shot, and we could see that it must have reached the green; but when we came up and found the ball in the hole, nobody was more surprised than Berry. Of course he didn't show it. Berry doesn't

give things away. "Ah," he said pleasantly, "that's better. I'm beginning to get used to playing with one eye. You know, all the time I-erseem to see two balls.

"Nonsense," said Daphne.

"If you said you'd been seeing two holes all day, I could believe it," said Jonah. "Anyone might think so from the way you've been playing."

Berry smiled ecstatically.

"My recent-er-chef d'œuvre (note the

Parisian accent) has *ipso facto* (Latin of the Augustan Age) placed me beyond the pricks of criticism. The venom, brother, which you would squirt upon me bespatters but yourself. Boy, place me the globe upon yon pinnacle of sand. So. Now indicate to me the distant pin. Thank you. Do I see it? No. Natheless (obsolete, but pure), I say, natheless it beckons me. And now give me —yes, give me Douglas."

The caddie handed him a brassy. He had caddied for Berry before.

"Don't breathe for a moment, anyone," said Daphne.

Her husband frowned and silently sliced into the sea.

"How many balls did you see that time?" said Jonah.

"Three," said I. "That's why he's going to pawn his clubs."

* * * * * *

"The aftermath of gluttony."

I spoke disgustedly. It was after luncheon, and Daphne was already asleep. Jill and Jonah drooped comfortably in huge chairs. Berry sprawled upon a sofa.

"I suppose we outrage what you call your sense of decency," murmured the latter.

"You do. Incidentally, you also irritate me, because I shall have to go round alone."

"Friend, your foul egoism leaves me unmoved. Go forth and harry the balls. I am about to slumber like a little child. Do you think I shall dream, brother?"

"Probably," said I. "About fried-fish shops."

Jill shuddered in her chair, and Berry sat up.

"After that most offensive allusion," he said pompously, "I have no option but to ask you to withdraw. The touts' room is downstairs. Before leaving, you may give me what cigarettes you have in your case."

I smiled grimly. Then: "I'm afraid I don't approve of—ah—children smoking," I said, moving towards the door. "Besides, a little exercise'll do you good. There's a box in my room. You know where that is?"

"Where ?" snarled my brother-in-law.

I put my head round the door and looked at him.

"Immediately above the touts'," said I.

The breeze of the morning had died away, and though the month was the month of April, it might have been a midsummer afternoon. I started on my solitary round, well enough pleased, really, to be alone. The weather was excellent company. My clubs I carried myself. The fourth hole lies in a little valley, under the lee of a steep rock-studded hill, the other side of which falls sheer into the tumbling waves. On an idle impulse I left my clubs at the fifth tee, and scrambled on up the green slope to gaze upon and over the sea below. I have a weakness for high places on the edges of England. I cannot match the dignity of them. Where yellow sands invite, these do not even stoop to challenge. They are superb, demigods, the Royalty of the coast.

As I breasted the summit, I heard a child's voice reading aloud.

"And the people told him of all the splendid things which were in the city, and about the King, and what a pretty Princess the King's daughter was.

"'Where can one get to see her?' asked the soldier.

""She is not to be seen at all,' said they all together. "She lives in a great copper castle, with a great many walls and towers round about it. No one but the King may go in and out there, for it has been prophesied that she shall marry a common soldier, and the King can't bear that.'

"'I should like to see her,' thought the soldier . . ."

The reading came from beyond and below me. I fell on my knees, crawled forward, and peered over the top of a slab of rock. On the warm grass, twenty paces from the edge of the cliff, sat a little boy, his brown knees propping a book. By his side, facing the sea, lay a girl of nineteen or twenty years, her hands clasped behind her head. Her eyes were closed. She seemed to be asleep. The reading continued.

"And all his friends knew him again, and cared very much for him indeed.

"Once he thought to himself: 'It is a very strange thing that one cannot get to see the Princess. They all say she is very beautiful; but what is the use of that, if she has always to sit in the great copper castle with the many towers? Can I not get to see her at all? Where is my tinder-box?' And so he struck a light, and, whisk ! came the dog, with eyes as big as tea-cups.

"'It is midnight, certainly,' said the soldier, 'but I should very much like to see the Princess, only for one little moment.'"

Here the child shaded his eyes and looked down at the sands of a creek a quarter of a mile away.

"There they are," he exclaimed, dropping the book and scrambling to his feet. He waved delightedly to two specks on the sands below. Then, "Good-bye, Cousin Lallie," he cried. "I'll be home by six," and tore away down the green slope like a mad thing. But his cousin never waked. I watched her meditatively.

A skirt of grey-blue tweed, while her blouse showed white beneath her longsleeved woollen coat. That was blue, and so were her stockings. Her little feet were crossed comfortably, and the bright sun lighted a face at once strong and gentle, clear-cut under its thick, black hair, which was parted in the middle, and hung low over each temple. Her brows were straight, and on the red mouth was a faint smile.

I looked away over the glittering waves. Then I came quietly down, picked up Hans Andersen, and took my seat by her side. I found the place and continued the story aloud.

"And the dog was outside the door directly, and, before the soldier thought it, came back with the Princess. She sat upon the dog's back and slept; and everyone could see she was a real Princess, for she was so lovely. The soldier could not refrain from kissing her, for he was a thorough soldier."

Here the girl stirred, opened her eyes, saw me, and sat up.

"Who on earth----" she began.

"It's all right," said I. "It's only a fairy tale. Besides, I'm not a soldier, although I don't see-----"

"How long has this been going on ?"

"Only just begun," said I. "Listen.

"Then the dog ran back with the Princess. But when morning came-----"

"Where's Roy?"

"He had to go and join his friends," said I. "Fortunately, I happened to be here to take his place. He asked me to say he should be home not later than six. Where were we? Oh, I know.

"But when morning came-"

She raised a slim hand for me to stop. Then she clasped her knees and regarded me with her head on one side.

"A bad end," she said laconically.

"A good beginning, anyway," said I.

"I might be a sorceress."

"I believe you are."

"Or an adventuress, for all you know."

"Or a princess," said I.

"What made you do this?"

"I'll tell you," said I. "Whilst you were asleep, a little smile was playing round your lips. And this smile told me that he had two twin-sisters who dwelt in your eyes. And, like the soldier, I wanted to see them, Princess."

"Well, you have now, haven't you?"

I looked at her critically.

"I'm afraid they must be out," said I. In spite of herself, she laughed. "No, there they are. Besides——"

"What ? "

"The little smile said he had a big brother living in your heart."

"Yes?" she said softly.

"Yes. And that made me very brave, Princess. Otherwise, I should never have dared. Honestly, it was all the little smile's fault, bless him. Isn't it glorious here?"

The bright eyes swept the horizon.

"Yes," she said slowly, "it is. In fact, every prospect pleases."

"And only golf is vile."

"Byron never said that."

"I know he didn't," said I. "Nor, in fact, did Heber. He said 'man.' All the same, I'm not vile. I'm rather nice, really. At least, so one of the smaller birds told me."

"Not really?"

"I mean it."

"Perhaps it was a skylark."

"As a matter of fact," I said stiffly, "it was an owl—a breed famous for its wisdom."

"Ah, but you shouldn't believe everything vou're told."

"It isn't a question of what I believe, but of what other people believe," said I.

"But, if you don't believe it yourself, how can you expect----"

"I never said I didn't believe it myself. Besides, I don't want to argue. I want to watch the smiles playing 'Here we go round the mulberry bush."

The girl broke into peals of silvery laughter.

"Is my nose as bad as all that?" she said presently.

"Your nose is the nose of dainty Columbine," said I. "Dream noses, they call them. And you know that mulberry bushes don't figure in that game any more than the bells of St. Clement Danes are ever used by children playing 'Oranges and lemons.'"

"Admit it was a floater on your part, and I'll let you play a round with me."

"I-er-confess, upon consideration, that the allusion-""

"That'll do," she said, laughing.

I rose. She put out a hand, and I drew her to her feet.

"My clubs are just by that rock there. Do you think you can manage Hans Andersen?" "Every time," said I, picking up the book. I shouldered her clubs, and together we

scrambled over the rise and down towards the fifth tee.

"Oh, I told you I adored you, didn't I?" I said suddenly.

"I don't think so."

"Surely I did. Perhaps you were asleep." "Asleep!" she said scornfully. "I was

awake all the time. I nearly died when you began to read."

I stopped short and looked at her.

"You are a deceitful witch," I said.

"A what witch?"

"The which to adore," said I.

After the fourth hole the course lies inland. For the next ten holes you play directly away from the sea. Then the fifteenth takes a sharp turn to the left, skirting the deer-park of Mote Abbey, while the sixteenth bears to the left again, heading straight for the club-house and the coast once more.

My lady was a pretty player. I gave her two strokes a hole and led till the fourteenth, but on that green she holed a ten-foot putt, which made us all square.

If she hadn't sliced her drive from the fifteenth tee, it would have been a beautiful shot. We watched it curl over the grey wall into the sunshot park.

"Out of bounds, I suppose," said I. "What a pity, pretty Princess !"

"Not at all," she replied. "It was a lovely shot. You can't do better than follow that line."

"Into the deer-park?"

"Why not? It's much prettier."

"I'm sure it is," said I. "But what of that? Unless somebody's moved it since this morning, the green's about a hundred and twenty yards away from the wall on this side—to say nothing of the fact that the park's private property, while there's a notice-board about three feet square, beginning, 'Golfers are requested to remember,' at the one place where a giant might effect an entrance."

"Yes," she said quietly, "I got brother to put that board there. We tried to make it polite. The caddies used to frighten the deer so."

I just stood and looked at her. The three smiles blazed back at me. In silence I turned and teed up. Then I drove after her ball into the fair park.

When we reached the place where the board was posted, she touched my hand and pointed to her little brown shoe. For an instant she rested on my palm. The next moment she was on the top of the wall. She smiled her thanks before disappearing. I followed with the clubs. There was a ladder on the other side. She was awaiting my descent. In silence we walked forward together. Presently I touched her arm and stood still. She turned and looked at me, the sun making all manner of exquisite lights in her glorious hair.

"If I had a hat on," I said simply, "I should uncover."

The little bow she gave me would have launched another "thousand ships." In the slight action all the charm of her was voiced exquisitely. Grace, sweetness, and dignity—all in a bow. So it was always. Helen's features would not have fired a sheepcote; the charm that lighted them blotted out a city. Cleopatra's form would not have spoiled a slave; the magnetism of her ruined Mark Antony. Elizabeth's speech would not have sunk a coracle; the personality behind it smashed an Armada.

We came to her ball first. As I handed her her brassy, "Tell me one thing," said I. "If I had not been there, how would you have got over the wall?"

She looked at me mischievously.

"I have a way," she said.

"I know," I said, patting her golf-bag. "These aren't really clubs at all."

"What are they, then ?"

"Broomsticks."

It was the best part of a mile to the fair lawn, where we holed out underneath the cedars. I won with fourteen, which wasn't bad, considering I was bunkered in a bed of daffodils.

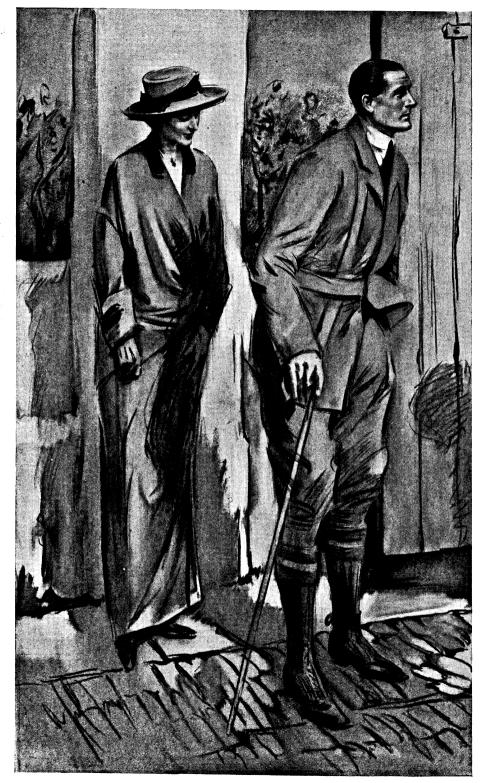
She gave me tea in the old library, sweet with the fragrance of potpourri. Out of its latticed windows I could see the rolling woods, bright in their fresh green livery. For nearly an hour and a half we sat talking. I told her of Daphne and the others. She told me of her mother and sisters, and how her brother had cared for the Abbey since her father's death. It was true that the family was away. She was alone there, save for her eldest sister's child—Roy. Next month she would go to London.

"Where I may come and see you?"

"I should be very hurt if you didn't. It's going to be rather nice."

"It is," I said with conviction.

"I meant the season. I'll enjoy it all the dances and theatres, Ranclagh, Ascot, Lord's, the Horse Show, and everything. But——"



[&]quot;' I'm going to,' said I "



"'I'm going to let you out.""

"How glad and happy she'll be to get back to the Abbey, with its deep woodland and its warm park, its gentle-eyed deer, its oaks and elms and cedars, its rose-garden and its old paved court. How grateful to lean out of her bedroom window into the cool, quiet, starlit nights. How pleased to watch the setting sun making the ragged clerestory more beautiful than did all its precious panes."

I stopped. She was sitting back in her chair by the window, chin in air, showing her soft white throat, gazing with halfclosed eyes up at the reddening sky.

"He understands," she murmured, "he understands."

For a little space we sat silent. Then I rose.

"Good-bye," I said. "You have been very kind. Perhaps I may come again."

She did not move. Only her eyes left the

window and rested on mine. "Ring the bell," she said. "I am going to take you to see the ruins. They are at their best, as you said, at sundown."

"Thank you," I said, and stepped to the fireplace.

A footman entered the room.

"I want the key of the Abbot's kitchen," said my hostess.

"Some visitors have it, madam. A gentleman called to ask for it ten minutes ago."

"Oh, all right." She rose and turned to "Let's go, then. We'll probably meet me. them bringing it back."

The half-light lent the old choir's walls a rare beauty. A great peace hung over them. Perhaps it was of them. For a little we strolled, talking, upon the greensward. Then-

"Now you shall see the kitchen," she said. " If you please, Princess."

The kitchen stood away from the ruins, in the middle of a fair meadow—a circular building of grey stone, very lofty and about sixty paces in circumference. Its great oak door was closed. I could see one tiny window-glassless, of course-some sixteen feet from the ground.

"Why," said the girl, stopping suddenly, "the door's shut."

"Yes," said I, " but what of that?"

"Well, the people must have gone."

"Why?"

"Well, you can't see inside if you shut the door. Besides, if you do, you can't open it again. Not from within, I mean. It's a spring lock."

" Perhaps they're locked in."

"They can't be."

"They might," said I. "Come on."

I was right. As we drew near, a confused murmur fell upon our ears-people talking Then came the sound of blows excitedly. upon the door.

"O-o-oh!" said my companion. "So they are."

At that moment feminine tones were raised in a wail of expostulation.

"Yes, I shall. It's silly not to. Help! He-elp!"

Daphne's voice.

I fell on the green grass and writhed in silent laughter. When the girl recoiled in horror, I caught her by the ankle.

"Don't move," I whispered. "Don't speak. Don't make a sound. Listen. It's my own party in there—Berry and Co. It's the most priceless thing that ever happened. Hush! We're going to have the time of our lives."

Again I rolled in an ecstasy of mirth. As the comedy of the situation dawned upon the girl, she began to laugh helplessly.

The knocking began again. I got up, and together we approached warily. As we reached the door-

"I'm glad I had four cups of tea," said Berry. "How many did you have?"

"Two," said Jill tearfully.

"Ah, I shall survive you, then. Very likely I shall be alive, if insane, when found. At any rate, with the aid of artificial respiration-----"

"Rubbish!" said Daphne. " Someone must hear us soon."

" My dear, the noise we can make wouldn't flush a tit-lark at twenty paces. No, no," he went on airily, "a lingering death awaits us. I only wish my caddie was here, too. Is anyone's tongue swelling ? That's a sure Directly you feel that, you know sign. you're thirsty."

"Fool," said his wife. "Besides, they'll miss the key soon."

"Where is the key?" said Jonah. " If we once lose that, we shall never find it again."

There was an awful silence. Then-

"Er-didn't I give it to you?" said Berry.

His words were the signal for a general The others fell upon Berry and uproar. rent him. As it died down, we heard him bitterly comparing them to wolves and curs about a lion at bay. Then a match was struck and there were groping sounds.

"When you've quite finished with my feet," said Daphne, in a withering tone.

"Sorry, dearest. I thought it was a bag of meal," said her husband. "My thoughts run on food just now, you see." Here he gave a yell of agony. "Get off!" he screamed. "You're on my hand."

"That's more like it," said Jonah. "That ought to carry."

"Meal-bags don't hurt, do they?" said Daphne coolly. My sister is proud of her dainty feet.

"Vixen," replied her spouse.

I slipped my arm into that of the girl, who was leaning against the wall, shaking with laughter. Tears were coursing down my cheeks. I drew her away from the door and whispered brokenly in her ear. She nodded and pulled herself together. Then she went to the door and knocked. Silence.

"Hullo !" she said.

"Er-hullo !" said Berry.

"I thought I heard somebody calling," said the girl.

"Er-did you ?" said Berry.

"Yes, but I'm afraid I must have been mistaken. Perhaps it was some boys calling. Good-bye."

There was a perfect shriek of "Don't go!" from Daphne and Jill. Then—

"You idiot !" said Daphne. "Let me." We heard her advance to the door.

"I say," she purred, "it's awfully sweet of you to have come. We did call. You see, it sounds awfully silly, but we're locked in."

"Oh, how dreadful for you!" said the girl.

"Yes, isn't it? There's no keyhole this side."

"How awfully tiresome ! Have you been there long ?"

"Oh, no. Only a few moments. We just came to see the place."

"Well, do you think you can manage to throw the key out of the window? Then I could unlock the door for you, couldn't I?"

"Oh, thank you so very much. If you don't mind waiting a minute—er—it's so dark in here, and so confusing that——"

"You don't mean to say you've lost the key?" said the girl.

"Oh, it's not lost," said Daphne. "It's just here somewhere. One of us laid it down for a moment, and, really, in this darkness you can't see anything. If we only had some more matches—..."

"I've got a box," I said.

A long silence followed my words. Then:

"My dear lady," said Berry, "are you still there?"

"Yes," said my companion, her voice shaking a little.

"Then I beseech you to have no dealing with the being whose vile accents I heard but a moment ago. A man of depraved instincts and profligate ways, he is no fit companion for a young and innocent girl. Moreover, viper-like, he bears malice towards us, who have shielded him for years."

"How awful !" said the girl.

"Yes," said Berry, "for your own sake, dear lady, beware of him. And for ours, too, I beg you. On no account accept his proffered assistance—in the matter of the key, I mean. If he really has matches, tell him to throw them in. Adopt a hectoring tone, and he will fear you. But, remember, he is as cunning as a serpent. Let but that key fall into his hands—"

"Wait till it's fallen into your own hands, old cock," said I.

"Dear lady," said Berry, "you hear his ribald-----"

The rest of the sentence was drowned in the peals of laughter to which my companion at last gave vent. I joined her, and the meadow resounded with our merriment. When we had recovered a little—

"Will you have the matches," said I, standing beneath the window, "or shall I send for the battering-ram?"

"Throw them in, fathead," said my brother-in-law.

"Ask nicely, then."

" I'll see you----"

"Please, Boy, dear," cried Jill.

I laughed, and pitched the box into the kitchen. The next second we heard a match struck, and the groping sounds recommenced.

The girl and I strolled a little back from the window, and stood awaiting the key.

"So it's all come true," said I, looking at her.

"What has?"

"The fairy tale." I pointed to the kitchen. "There is the copper castle, and here "—with a bow—"the pretty Princess. The tinder-box I have just thrown to my companions."

"And I suppose you're the soldier," she said slowly.

"Yes," I said, "the common soldier."

"Common?"

"Yes, dear," I said, taking her hand. "Common, but thorough: thoroughly common, but uncommonly thorough. And now look at me, pretty Princess." She turned a laughing face to mine. Suddenly, as I bent forward, the eyes flashed.

" I suppose this is the little smile's fault, too," she said quietly.

Instantly I released her hand and stood up, smiling.

"No," I said gently, "it would have been the soldier's."

For a moment she smiled back. Then she slipped an arm round my neck.

"Let's call it Hans Andersen's," she whispered.

A perfect babel arose suddenly from the kitchen. In the midst of the turmoil I

seemed to discern Berry's fat laugh. The next second a large key hurtled through the window.

I picked it up and strode to the door. When I had put it into the keyhole, I paused.

"Buck up, Boy," said Berry.

"One question," said I. "Where was the key?"

"Where d'you think?" said Jonah bitterly.

"In his pocket all the time," said I.

"Right," said Berry. "Now do your worst."

"I'm going to," said I. "I'm going to let you out."



SHEEP.

HAVE you seen them at the dawn, Dusty-white and newly shorn? Like pale dreams they pass you by, Till you wonder where and why They have come from, all the sheep That have woken you from sleep.

You must sleep upon the hill On a summer night so still, So that, waking with the dawn, You will see them newly shorn, Biting off the grass and flowers In the early morning hours.

After them, not far away, we Comes the shepherd old and grey And his dog that walks to heel, we Waiting for some sheep to steal From the flock, then off he goes, Barks, and brings them huddled close.

Scores of them will pass you by (You can count them, if you try, Till they've passed you every one), Then the quickly rising sun Up the hill will laughing creep, And you think it was a dream, All those slowly passing sheep.



""TWELFTH NIGHT': THE COUNTESS OLIVIA PUZZLED BY MALVOLIO'S ANTICS." BY DANIEL MACLISE, R.A.

From the picture in the National Gallery of British Art.

HUMOUR IN PAINT

By AUSTIN CHESTER

THERE is no bad subject for a good painter. We may take this sentence as containing a truth, in spite of Ruskin's curiously - expressed assertion that "in art the likeliest and properest thing for everybody to do is almost always the last that will be done." In art, said another of its authorities, Heine, "it is less difficult to paint large tragic subjects than those which are small and droll"; and, indeed, it has frequently been demonstrated that it requires a genius to place so volatile an emotion as that of laughter upon canvas.

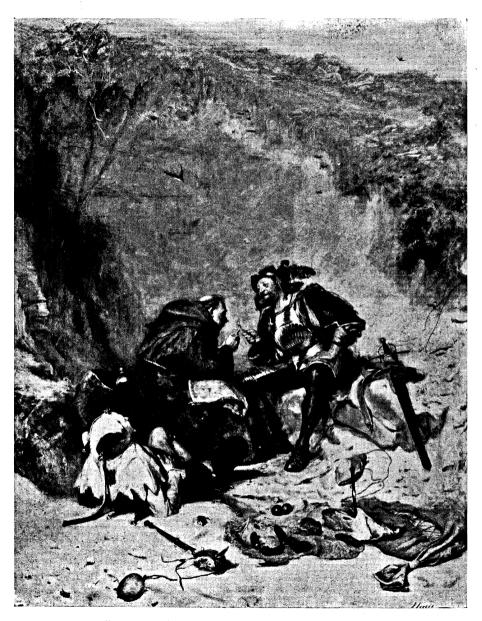
Wit, since it depends on quickness of retort, and almost invariably on its context with other words, is unpaintable, and even humour in pictorial art has so much to do with language that often it becomes but the painter's tribute to the writer, and when he crystalises a humorous occasion into colour and line, it is his way of paying the literary genius back in his own coin.

It is noticeable, as illustrating our theory

that a humorous picture requires context of words, that if we want such pictures for our billiard and our smoking-rooms, we buy them—or, more frequently, reproductions of them—with their titles attached, from the printshops.

Humour is defined by Annandale as "a turn or frame of mind," as a "caprice," a "whim," or a "fancy," as, in fact, the mental quality which gives to ideas a ludicrous or fantastic turn, tending to the excitation of mirth. It differs from wit in that it depends for its effect on kindly human feeling rather than on point of brilliancy of expression, and whereas wit is spontaneous, unpremeditated, a sudden illuminating flash thrown on the familiar by a caustic tongue, humour is dependent on its observer being on the same level as the people or things observed, and it abides, not infrequently, in the prepared anecdote.

The painter, unless he has transcendent talent, is apt to suffer in his art in becoming 2 K the delineator of humour, so frequently does he permit the humorous interest to obliterate the pictorial. Indeed, looking at the great pictures of the world, we can only point to a illustrated in the case of the great Japanese painter Kāno Masa-Nōbu, who lived at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century. In his "Two Sages,"



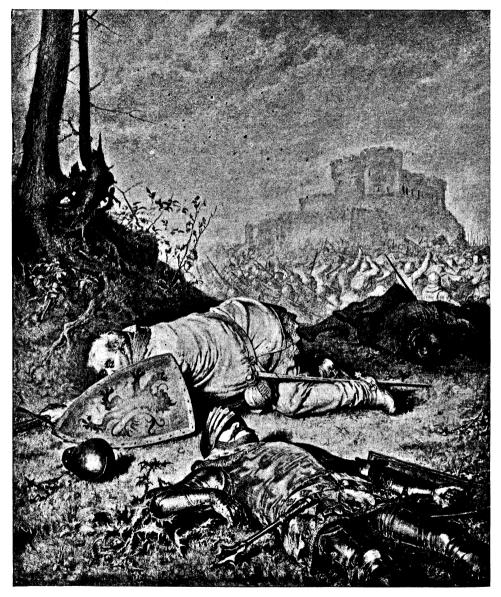
"THE JESTER'S MERRY-THOUGHT." BY JOHN PETTIE, R.A. Reproduced from a photograph by Virtue & Co.

very small number that, without the context of words, can be described as humorous, since the expression of amusement on a face is as far as humour can go in paint. This is the men's countenances are instinct with merriment, just as is that of "The Laughing Cavalier," by Franz Hals.

Hogarth is accounted the greatest English



humorist in paint, but with him humour, instead of merely illuminating occasion with mirth, held vice and folly up to reprobation. He created great works of fiction, but their ndifferent bridegroom and the unwilling bride, the further estranged young people, their gradual deterioration, the gaming, the maze of fashionable dissipation, the



"FALSTAFF FEIGNING DEATH ON THE BATTLEFIELD IN ORDER TO SAVE HIMSELF." BY EDUARD GRÜTZNER.

Reproduced by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New Bond Street, W.

humour was covert and in subservience to satire, since he attacked fashionable vices with invective truth. His "Rake's Progress" and his "Marriage à la Mode," with its six scenes — the marriage contract, with the

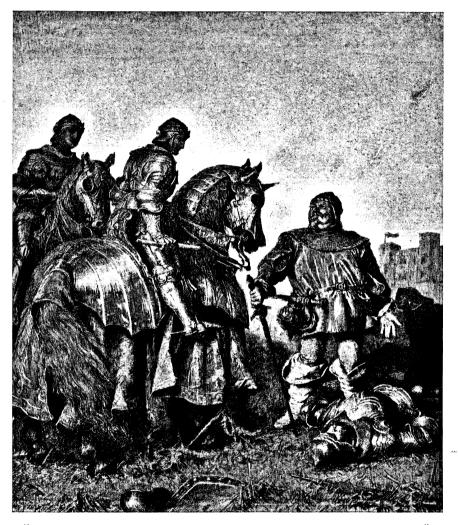
duel, the death, first of the husband and then of the wife—have long, by means of lithography, been "sermons in stones."

That Hogarth remains our greatest

exponent of human emotion in paint is, perhaps, to be accounted for by the fact that our modern men, of anything like the same kind of talent, in varying degrees, have had their art diverted from colour into black-and-white.

Charles Keene, one of the most brilliant

Museum ; and we certainly never think of John Leech as a painter, yet in 1862 there was an exhibition of his sketches in oils in the Egyptian Hall, chiefly remembered, if remembered at all, by the remark of the huntsman who was taken by his master to see them : "Ah, my lord, nothin' but a



"THE BATTLE OF SHREWSBURY: FALSTAFF PRETENDING TO HAVE KILLED HOTSPUR." BY EDUARD GRÜTZNER.

Reproduced by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New Bond Street, W.

of the artists of the nineteenth century, confined his real power of artistic expression entirely to this medium. Tenniel lives in our memories by his cartoon of "Dropping the Pilot," in *Punch*, rather than by the one in the Palace of Westminster, or his mosaic in the South Court of the Victoria and Albert

party as knows 'osses cu'd 'ave draw'd them 'ere 'unters."

Randolph Caldecott, although a student of the Slade School, was diverted by his own popularity as a prolific and original illustrator of great and humorous faculty from the more serious paths of art. A close follower of his, Mr. Cecil Aldin, has shown that he, too, has little time to spare for the spirited and promising humorous work in paint that preceded his varied record of delightfully entertaining work done as illustration, either for books or for the anecdotal kind of print for household decoration. And who can tell what manner of an artist in oils is lost to the picture galleries of the future in the wholly admirable wealth of illustration that stands to the credit of Mr. Hugh Thomson? "Twelfth Night"; and C. R. Leslie, in his "Sancho Panza in the Apartment of the Duchess," conveys to us no idea of the wit of Cervantes. Even his famous picture of "Uncle Toby and Widow Wadman in the Sentry Box" needs, to make it comprehensible, the Tristram Shandy words: "'I protest, madam,' said my Uncle Toby, 'I can see nothing whatever in your eye.' 'It is not in the white,' said Mrs. Wadman. My Uncle



"THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR, MRS. FORD AND MRS. PAGE, HIDING FALSTAFF IN THE CLOTHES-BASKET." BY MARGARET LÖWE.

Reproduced by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New Bond Street, W.

Many painters have sought in the humour of great writers subject-matter for their works, thinking, perhaps humbly, that the fame at which they aim

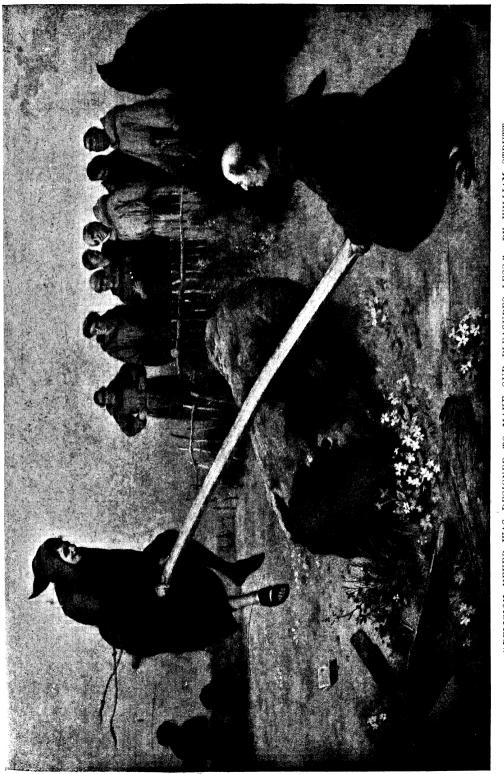
> Better be held nor more attained than by A place below the first.

But seldom, if ever, has result equalled the source of inspiration.

Maclise, in his "Malvolio and the Countess," gives us little of the amusement to be gained by reading the Third Act of Toby looked with might and main into the pupil."

Augustus Egg painted several of those scenes which, when we read them, are humorous. All such pictures as his and Leslie's and Maclise's presuppose, indeed, the connoisseur in paint to be well read. He must, if he is to find pleasure in such presentments, have a nodding and a smiling acquaintance with the pompous and conceited steward or major-domo of the Countess Olivia; he must remember the child-like

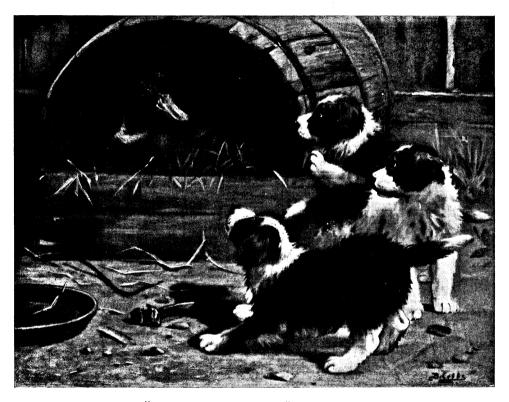
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Reproduced by permission of Messrs. Louis Wolf & Co., Tottenham Court Road, owners of the copyright and publishers of the large plate. "RELIGION NEVER WAS DESIGNED TO MAKE OUR PLEASURES LESS." BY WILLIAM STRUTT.

simplicity and all-embracing humanity that are portrayed in one of the finest and most genuinely humorous characters in literature, and remember, too, that Uncle Toby, in spite of his valour in the army in Flanders, was no match for the Widow Wadman in strategy; and he must have enjoyed the adventures of that knight-errant and crazy Castilian gentleman before he can enjoy the depicted humour of incongruity that places the ignorant, credulous, gluttonous and selfish peasant Sancho Panza at Court. comic character, and all that the stage of later times can show.

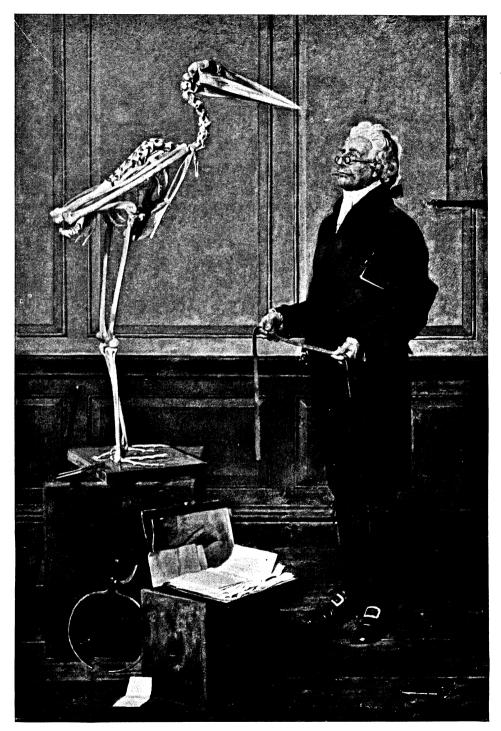
"There is in him something of the old Greek Silenus, swag-bellied and infinitely jovial, and something of the *Vidushakas* of the old Indian drama, half Court fool, half friend and comrade to the hero. He unites in himself the two comic types of the old Roman comedy, Artotrogus and Pyrgo Polinices, the parasite and the boastful soldier. Like the Roman *scurra*, he leaves his patron to pay the



"POSSESSION IS NINE POINTS." BY B. COBBE. Reproduced by permission of Messrs. Hildesheimer & Co., Clerkenwell Road, E.C., owners of the copyright and publishers of the large plate.

Greatest loss of all, perhaps, in the transference of such famous comic characters from literature to canvas is that which has in most cases occurred in the many attempts of accomplished artists to realise in paint that "old tun of flesh," the inimitable Falstaff of Shakespeare. "In his closewoven and unflagging mirthfulness," as George Brandes says, "in the inexhaustible wealth of drollery concentrated in his person, Falstaff surpasses all that antiquity and the Middle Ages have produced in the way of reckoning, and in return entertains him with his jests, and, like the *Miles Gloriosus*, he is a braggart above all braggarts, a liar above all liars. Yet he is in his single person richer and more entertaining than all the ancient Silenuses and Court fools and braggarts and parasites put together."

How, then, can the most accomplished painter convey a tithe of the humour with which this comic masterpiece of Shakespeare's is compact? Some have gone astray in



"SCIENCE IS MEASUREMENT." BY H. STACY MARKS, R.A. The Artist's "Diploma" work at the Royal Academy, reproduced from a photograph by F. Hollyer, Pembroke Square, W. making him merely a bibulous old fool, and others, like Sir John Gilbert, in their feeling for what is fine and strenuous in the two chronicle plays, in which Falstaff affords the

humorous relief. have made only a rather grim old gentleman, such as one would assume to " joke with difficulty," despite the horseplay of some of the action in which he takes part. Perhaps the nearest approach to success in the realising of the broad humours of some of these scenes has been found by that elever German artist, Eduard Grützner, three of whose pictures are here reproduced. illustrating the moment in the battle near Shrewsbury in which Falstaff, who, apart from any question of essential cowardice, has no mind to lose his life if he can possibly keep it, falls down as though killed, after crossing swords with Douglas, who leaves him on the field for dead. Then comes the pathetic greeting of the supposed corpse of his old * comrade by Prince Hal-



"HIS FIRST OFFENCE." BY L. R. GARRIDO. From the original in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, reproduced, by permission of the Corporation, from a photograph by W. A. Marsell & Co.

What! old acquaintance! could not all this flesh Keep in a little life? Poor Jack, farewell! I could have better spared a better man.

Then, after the Prince's exit, Falstaff,

slowly rising from the ground, and finding the dead body of Hotspur beside him, soliloquises :—

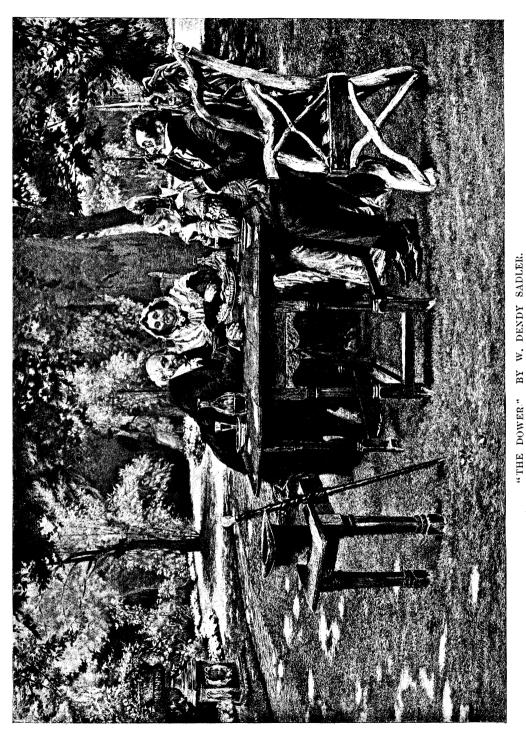
Counterfeit ! I lie, I am no counterfeit : To die is

to be a counterfeit; for he is but the counterfeit of a man who hath not the life of a man : but to counterfeit dying, when a man thereby liveth, is to be no counterfeit, but the perfect true and image of life indeed. The better part of valour is discretion ; in the which better part I have saved my life. 'Zounds, I am afraid of this Percy, gunpowder though he be dead : How, if he should counterfeit, too, and rise? I am afraid he would prove the better counterfeit. Therefore I'll make him sure: yea, and I'll swear I killed him

Grützner's rendering of this moment of soliloguy beside the dead body of Percy, for the slaying of whom the fat knight now proceeds to claim the credit, is happier, perhaps, than the companion picture in which Falstaff actually tries to brazen out his claim to this deed of valour to Prince Henry and Prince John, not knowing that the former has himself killed Percy and left him lying by the side of Falstaff as he lay feigning death. Of this

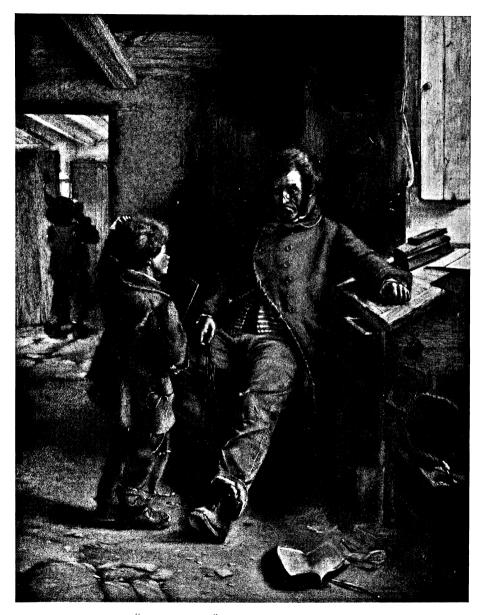
artist's other scenes from Falstaff's career, the best is that which shows him recruiting his ragged regiment of Gloucestershire rustics at Justice Shallow's country house.

The later Falstaff of "The Merry Wives



of Windsor" has proved an easier subject for straightforward mirth than the more complex character of these historical plays,

on canvas is, of course, a large one, and we have here but introduced it as forming a part of the general theme of the present



"BOTH PUZZLED," BY ERSKINE NICOL, A.R.A.

"But, sir, if wanst nought be nothing, then twice nought must be something, because it's double what wanst nought is."

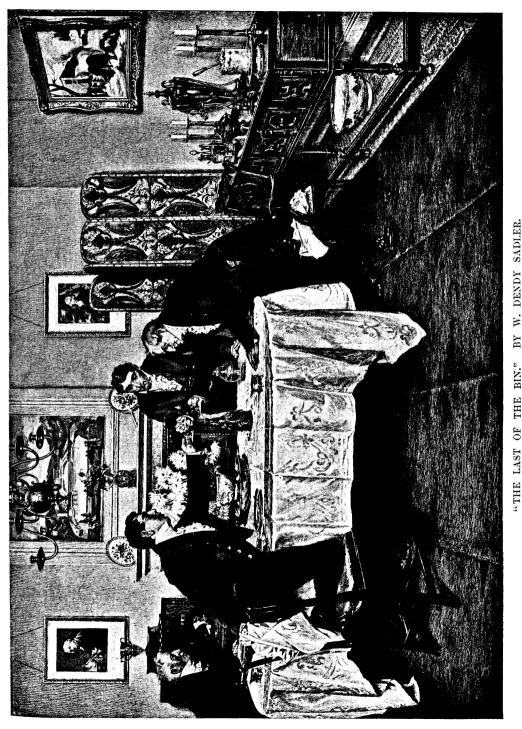
Reproduced from the large plate published by Messrs. Henry Graves & Co., Pall Mall, S.W.

especially in scenes where the artist has been helped by the vivacious charm of the two Merry Wives.

The subject of Shakespearian illustration

article, but hope to return to it in more detail at a future date.

Apart from the illustrating of other men's creations, it would seem that a great number



of natural story-tellers have, as it were by accident, deviated into paint. A spirit akin to that which inspires the novelist is theirs. The late Mr. F. D. Millet was of these. His "Between Two Fires" is as the opening chapter of a story in which the Puritan, engaged perhaps in some Parliamentarian intrigue, falls victim to the charms of masquerading damsels of comely aspect, or we can translate the scene by the help of "The Beggar's Opera" through the words of the song "How happy could I be with either." subjects chiefly in scenes of village schoollife and naming them "The Truant," "The Dame School," "The Last In," and "Idle Boys," and painting mild, homely humour into these and similar subjects. Lady Stanley (Dorothy Tennant) has sought and found some humour in similar paths, for boys are still truants, and still find in a game of marbles or a ride on a gate, a street fight, or somersaults over bars, admirable reason and excuse for abstention from Alma Mater.

Animals figure very largely as vehicles of



"BETWEEN TWO FIRES." BY F. D. MILLET.

From the original purchased for the Nation by the Trustees of the Chantrey Bequest, and now in the National Gallery of British Art. Reproduced from the large plate published by the Autotype Company, New Oxford Street, W.C.

A picture such as the "Religion Never Was Designed to Make Our Pleasures Less" of Mr. William Strutt takes us *in medias res* of its own comedy, and familiar to the readers of THE WINDSOR, through our several articles on his work, is the art of that popular artist Mr. Dendy Sadler, who also has found the origin of some of his most successful pictorial humour in monastic life.

Thomas Webster and Mulready were by way of being humorists, finding their humour in being, as it were, humanised by the painter. Landseer first popularised this type of work, and very ingenious and suggestive of story is the art of many of his followers, such as William Weekes, W. H. Trood, Yates Carrington, and many another favourite of the printshop window and the smoking-room wall.

Landseer depended upon their titles for his pictures' humour. He survives, as Henley says, not as an artist in paint, but as the author of "a vast amount of graphic



"VENUS AND NEPTUNE." BY G. H. BOUGHTON, R.A.

literature. In its way that literature is capital: it is full of emotion and humour, it is brilliant with invention, it is often moving, it is commonly ingenious and suggestive. But it is essentially popular, and it is mostly innocent of style." Take, for instance, his picture of two squirrels enjoying their meal of nuts. It is nothing but a picture of two admirably painted squirrels without its title, but when Landseer's fancy played round the subject and he affixed to the squirrels the suggestion that they were "A Pair of Nutcrackers," it becomes humorous. His "Alexander and Diogenes" places us under the perverted spell of historical allusion; his "High Life and Low Life," "Catspaw," and especially his "Dignity and Impudence," each show how vividly he mentally visualised the stories that his brush told.

With many of the pictures of Landseer's followers in the treatment of animal life the humour is portrayed chiefly by word-quibbling in the titles. The puppy dragging a scalding cloth out of a washing-tub is entitled "Warm Work "; and another puppy wrestling with a housemaid's broom is aptly termed "A Brush With the Enemy"; and "Old Man's Darling "depicts the fatuous delight of an old bull-terrier at the endearments of his young friend the kitten. It is the titles which make humorous many a picture of this school; but keen observation of animal life is also required to make the work really humorous, because it is true to Nature. We are an animal-loving people, and we like to raise our pets to our own level by endowing them with human characteristics.

Stacy Marks's picture of a boy with his face tied up would have been no more than an excellent representation of a suffering boy with his face encircled with a handkerchief had it not been labelled "Toothache in the Middle Ages." With its title it becomes a picture of great humour, owing much to its artistry, but even more to the fancy that plays round the subject. It is this clean and clear blazonry of a first bizarre inception of the incongruous similitude to be found to exist between men and birds that makes many of Marks's pictures of cranes so inimitably funny, and in the subtler suggestion of the incongruous his "Science is Measurement" is a good illustration of his peculiar and original talent.

Of a different *genre*, inasmuch as it had no element of caricature, was the humour of another distinguished Victorian artist, G. H. Boughton, many of whose pictures have an attractive natural gaiety, which is charmingly dainty in such pictures as "An Advancing Enemy," or "Izaak Walton and the Milkmaids," and achieves a broader effect in more bucolic characters, such as his English rustic in "A Winter's Tale," or the quaint Dutch types of "Left in Charge" and "Venus and Neptune." The lastnamed, again, owes a good deal to the modern incongruity of its classical title, as do other works to which allusion has already been made. The same genuine spirit of comedy inspires some of his quasi-historical pictures.

In Boughton's pictures the humour is essential to the theme, as it is in Mr. Dendy Sadler's, or in many of the works of Thomas Faed and Erskine Nicol, or in such pictures as John Philip's "A Chat Round the Brasero," or John Pettie's "Two Strings to Her Bow," but it is curious how many themes require primarily that the humour should be in the eye of the beholder, who must laugh at the expense of some fellow-creature's discomfort. The dilemma, which is annoying to the protagonist of a picture, is often supposed to amuse the onlooker; and even in the animal world the troubles of many a puppy or kitten are tragedies, for the moment, to that too-adventurous animal, yet amusing to the onlooker's sense of the incongruous.

Another instance to the point is afforded by Mr. Dollman's clever painting "During the Time of the Sermonses." In this picture, two reprobates are wickedly seeking to enjoy themselves on the "Sawbath" in a surreptitious game of golf; but the meenister is abroad, and catches them in their impious work. The portentous glare in his eye, the dropping jaw of his attendant, and the guilty consternation betrayed in the look and shaky knees of the younger player, bode ill for the unlucky pair of culprits.

Here one may suppose that it is not only the amusement of the spectator that is evoked, but his sense of superiority in not having been just discovered in any similar iniquity himself—a situation well realised in the famous lines of Horace about the satisfaction of watching the troubles of those very much at sea from a coign of comfortable vantage on shore. In this class of subject fall the many pictures of school life intended to amuse the onlooker by showing the punishments which, however well merited, are by no means humorous to the youthful recipients.

THE CIGARETTE CASE

By EDEN PHILLPOTTS

Illustrated by Gunning King



IS a funny old place to the new-comer, yet us, that have lived and worked all our lives there, can't see nothing strange about it. Out on the coast of North Cornwall lies St. Tid—and who St. Tid was

I'm not scholar enough to say; but if I mind rightly, he came over from Ireland with the Bible in his pocket, to do for our heathen forbears, in the ancient times, what the Reverend Wesley did for our greatgrandfathers a hundred years ago.

St. Tid is a village that lives for one thing alone, and that thing be slate. A hugeous hole opens out in the midst of the hamlet, and round about it lie the cottages and chapels and the church ; and the railway comes, too. But 'tis the slate that have got to be thanked for such a busy, important place. You'll see it everywhere round about, advertising St. Tid. The roofs and sides of the houses, of course, be covered with it, and 'tis set up all the land over, to divide field from field. And the stiles be slate and the launders, to carry our sweet water, be slate; and the pigsties and the garden paths, and the very clothes-poles be slate likewise.

Since the times of Henry VIII. the quarry has been worked, so Ned Cowling tells me, and no doubt 'tis true; and by the same token, you may call it a very curious thing to think upon that our far-away ancestors in Henry's time rose up so fierce and fought so brave against the King's men for pulling down the monasteries and turning out the monks; while nowadays we be Nonconformist members of all persuasions and join together in one thing if no more. For in the light of Wesley's teaching, we take the contrary view to them as went before us, and should have helped the King over them monasteries and not hindered him. St. Tid, and there hangs to this day a stout rowan on the cliff in the north gallery of the quarry that be called "Wesley's ash," because the saint preached to the men thrice in their dinner hour from that spot.

The quarry opens like a vast pit in the midst of the earth and sinks down six hundred feet below the level of St. Tid. Tram-lines run down into it, and the stone goes aloft another way beside, for from the poppet-head, as we call it, there drop down steel ropes to the bottom, and you'll see a stone of a couple of hundredweight floating up through the air, like a thistledown 'Tis like a great cup, you might sometimes. say, and the sides be a very brave sight of colour along of the iron waters that filter through 'em and turn the naked rock to red and brown and scarlet. In the disused places also, where the galleries be cut by dead men and the marks of their tools still stand sharp on the rocks, many waters get into the works and tumble down the precipices in proper torrents at autumn time. And green things follow after them, and live seeds be washed down to find foothold in all manner of strange places. So there's the flash of flowers there, too, and in high summer, where the water sheets over the empty workings at the south face, I've known a proper blaze of monkey-flower, like a great splash of gold, on the front of the cliff ir June.

Looking down, 'tis as if you were casting your eyes into a mighty Stilton. The slate, in its seams and floors, be the blue-vinnied cheese, you see; and the quarrymen be the mites busy upon it. Four hundred men and boys got their living in the quarry at the time of this adventure; and half work down below—" rockmen," they be called, because they work the rock and chain up the blocks and fill the waggons that run up and down the tram-lines. Above worked the "splitters" and "dressers," who handle the marketable slate; and beside them, of course, there's men in the engine-houses and men who saw and load and pack. Then there's special

Wesley himself knew the quarrymen of

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skilled men for cisterns and gravestones and billiard-tables, and such-like fine things all made of slate; while the boys be a good sprinkling also. "Hollobobbers," we call 'em. They pick up the rubbish and do odd jobs, and run errands, and learn their business, and get into mischief, according to their nature, when the chance offers.

Over all be set foremen, and of these Ned If you was to look Cowling was chief. across the quarry mouth, you'd see perched on the west face, midway between the top 'Twill be and bottom, a white cottage. swept away some day for the slate on which it stands; but for the moment it is Ned's home, and it was his father's home before him. He lives there along with his mother, and such is the trust and faith that the manager puts in him, that Ned be often left in command of the works for a fortnight at He stands high in the good books a time. of them in authority, for no living man understands slate better than him, and though but two-and-thirty year old, is a very great power at St. Tid. What he advises to be done is done, as a rule, and what he sets his face against be put aside and condemned.

A very modest dark man, with a small moustache and restless brown eyes; a thin man, too, with a spirit in him, and a tower of strength among the United Methodists. To them he belonged, though there was no narrowness in him, and he was always ready to help the other persuasions if he could. A very fine singer, with a voice like a bell, was Ned; and a local preacher of such high standing that he'd be asked to take the services round about so far off as Bodmin or Launceston sometimes.

He followed his father at St. Tid, and was actually born in the white cottage in the quarry; but he was a better man than his father, and nobody denied it, which be a thing worth noting in itself, for to find a man better than his father be rare in history. By all accounts, the race goes down in this matter, and you'll seldom hear a man's own generation grant his children are cleverer and usefuller than him. Still, there's a few good young men about.

But so it happened. And when Arthur Cowling was taken in his prime, owing to a blasting charge that went off too soon and tore his leg and arm from his body, the directors put Ned up into his place over the heads of a score of men; and little enough his elders liked it, you may be sure. But such was the young fellow's modesty and proper feeling and religious influence, that they soon grew reconciled to it, and he hadn't got an enemy in St. Tid, unless 'twas William Harding. And he, come to think on it, was a foreigner now, though reared at St. Tid. Their difference was over a girl, and had nought to do with the business of the quarry, but the business of their future lives.

For though you'd never think such a busy man as Ned could find time to fall in love, he'd managed to do so, that being an affair as won't wait any man's convenience. But Ned was masterful even in love-making, and went his way, and didn't let Selina Pengelly interfere with his duty to his masters or what he thought was his duty to God. In fact, he felt under a new and lasting obligation to his Maker, and, if the truth was known, thanked Heaven in secret for sending Selina to him, before he'd made quite sure whether Selina wanted to come. She lived at Lanteglos, a few mile from St. Tid, and she and her parents worshipped at the United Wesleyans, where Cowling was one of the local preachers. A good few from the quarry went there, too.

For a long time the only hours whenever Ned met Selina was at choir practice of an evening, for the music at the United was a famous feature, and to be in the choir argued a clever voice, whether you was man or maid. But after a while Selina, who loved Ned so well as ever he loved her, began to be a bit restless. She knew, of course, that he treated her very different from every other maiden, and when he found time to offer marriage, she accepted him; but afterwards she didn't like the line Ned took at all, for courting in the high sense was an art beyond him. He didn't seem to think there was any call for it, and he saw far less of Selina than she thought was respectful and right; and when they did meet, he was so terrible full of the future, and so little interested in the present, that sometimes he'd keep her waiting an hour at a tryst, and sometimes he'd look at his watch when he ought to have been kissing her, and sometimes he'd tell her of another ten-pound note in the bank, when by all right and reason he ought to have fetched along a bit of the money in the shape of a keepsake for her.

Even then it might have been all right, for she was as sensible as she was pretty, and knew a bit about young men. The chaps made in a sentimental and gaudy pattern often wear through, like cheap linoleum, and leave nought; but Ned, though not a showy or poetical sort of stuff, was the same to the

bottom, and though his pattern might be plain, it went deep, and she knew he'd never change. All the same, they like a bit of worship and some pretty words, however sensible they may be; and when Bill Harding, who'd been an old flame, came back from the slate quarries in Pennsylvania, where he'd worked for two year, he found out how it was, and set himself very steadfast to unsettle Selina and get her to chuck Ned and go back with him presently to America. He was a big, fine chap, and making a pot of money, and full of ideas. He sneered at the home-staying sort, and said such a bowerly creature as Selina was a fool to waste herself in a hole like St. Tid, when she might shine in Pennsylvania, and rise up to be as good and fine as any lady in the land. So he soon had Selina in two minds, which is a very dangerous case for a girl that's promised to marry anybody. She made a bit of a fight single-handed, you see, because Ned was far too busy to be jealous, and he fancied, poor silly man, because the girl was always in his thoughts, and he was saving for her, and reckoned he'd begin building a new house for her next year, and so on, that it must be all right, and that she was setting practical things like that against silly things, like mooning about in country lanes, and lovemaking, and going to revels, and nonsense in general.

Then came a bit of an eye-opener from a man that wished Ned well. Old Simon Pearn, the splitter, it was, and once, when Ned, as foreman, was bustling through the sheds, Simon took off his knee-leather and laid down his beetle and chisel and walked outside with young Cowling.

"You ought to know as Selina Pengelly be seeing a great deal too much of that fine chap, Bill Harding," he said bluntly. "I'm no mischief-maker, Cowling, so you'll not misunderstand, and I've no grudge against Bill, nor any other man. But he's holidaymaking, with all his time on his hands and plenty of money in his pocket, and it ain't vitty as he should dance your girl about and fetch her home at all sorts of hours. And if you don't mind, you ought to mind."

"Harding's an old flame," said Ned. "But when a girl's tokened to a man, she's so good as married, surely?"

Tother laughed at his ignorance and told him to look sharper after Selina, and Ned, knowing the worth of old Simon, thanked him and went his way. But after choir practice next Wednesday evening, he saw his girl home, much to the disappointment of William, who was waiting round the corner to do so; and then Ned talked to Selina, and heard a thing or two as surprised him a good bit. In fact, he was properly knocked off his pins, you may say, for the chap from America had got a good bit of the way with Selina, and she'd contrasted his jolly, freehanded way and his idea of making love with Ned's, greatly much to Ned's disadvantage. Besides, Bill had poked a good bit of fun at Ned in his talks, and hinted to the girl that a lover who treated her so uncommon cool as Cowling would be a pretty poor substitute for a husband when the time came.

"I'd so soon marry a frog in a pond as him," said William. "If this be his idea of courting, Heaven help you when you're married to the man. He's only got room in his little mind for Number One," says Bill. " and a very poor look in you'll have, Sally. All work and no play-that's what you'll have to reckon with. You don't get speech with the chap but twice a week, and then he's at you for singing out of tune at choir practice; and on Sunday you say he spends all his time talking about the next world. when you'd think his proper care ought to be this one-till he's married, anyway. But I'm different, and if you'll take me, you'll be first always, and your joy and happiness will be my joy and happiness, and I'll never worry you to sing hymns nor nothing like that.

So he went on at her in season and out ; and the result was that when Ned Cowling began advising Selina to see less of William, she told him to mind his own business and not take the little fun she had in her life out of it. In fact, she praised Bill to the skies, and after she'd said everything she could think of to get Ned in a rage and failed, she got in a rage herself, and felt to have no more use for him, and bade him leave her and let her walk home alone.

It interested Ned something tremendous. and he was a good deal put about by it. In fact, the next morning he couldn't eat his meat, and his mother was frightened and begged to know if his innards had failed him. For the man's days were as regular as any other machine's, and to find him off his victuals was as surprising as if a steam-engine refused to take in water and coals. He wouldn't say what was wrong, however, but left the white cottage as usual and went up over, to see about fixing some ropes where they were going to break into an old gallery. And then more trouble fell upon him, and

so terrible shattering was it that it made him quite forget all about Selina. You'd think such a thing couldn't have happened; but it did, because the second trouble didn't hit Ned directly. It hit the Company, and his habit of mind was always to put the good of his masters first and highest.

To the untrained eye the thing he saw up on the top of the northern face of the quarry was no great matter, but to Ned it meant a calamity the size of which not a living man might measure.

You see, under the north face at that time was the big workings, and we'd got into as fine a sample of slate as St. Tid ever opened. Deep and true it ran, with strong floors above and below, easy to work, too, and of the very best quality. "Twas making St. Tid, and we all thought to be millionaires in a few years' time. There was even talk of tunnelling for it, because so busy were we cutting out the stuff, to the tune of many hundredweight a day, that presently we began to get home into the cliff. But our work was all open, and to tunnel, as they do in Wales, would have been a new thing to us; and we Cornish quarrymen don't like new things if they can be avoided.

Well, crossing the north corner, ten yards or more from the edge of the cliff, with his eyes on the ground, thinking what to do about Selina Pengelly, Ned suddenly saw something that brought him to as if he was shot. Robinson Crusoe weren't more thrown out of his stride, I warrant, when he came on the naked footprint in the sand. If you'd seen it—and 'tis any odds you wouldn't, for 'twas a very little thing you'd have took no count of it whatever; but Ned knew its meaning.

It was just a tiny line in the solid earth, and to sharp eyes it might have looked like And others there a hair and no more. were in the line of the first, just like a few strands from a horse's tail thrown there by the wind. But hairs they were not. Ned traced 'em with a troubled brow and staring eyes, and measured their length and the run of 'em. Then he stepped the distance that divided them from the front of the precipice; and then he stood for a long while like a stone man, without moving, looking down at the workers in the famous slate seam underneath, as busy as bees on a honeycomb.

After that he had a look at the hair lines again, and then he went round to the manager's office with his news.

Mr. Salter, the manager, was in fine

spirits when Ned came along, for that morning's post had brought a brave order for the roof of the new cathedral at Truro ; but the man didn't smile long.

"Good news, Ned !" says Salter.

"Bad news, sir," says Ned. "I be cruel sorry to say the overburden's coming down on the north face."

That was it, you see. The hair lines were cracks in the solid earth, and they meant that in a doubtful space of time—perhaps six months, perhaps six weeks—the cliff was going to drop on top of the great seam and bury it under a fall, the size of which no man could tell. And, mind you, not a power on earth could have stopped it. If all the wittiest brains in the world had been called upon to keep up the cliff, the task was beyond their power. It had to come down on the seam, and it might mean the end of all things, or, again, it might not.

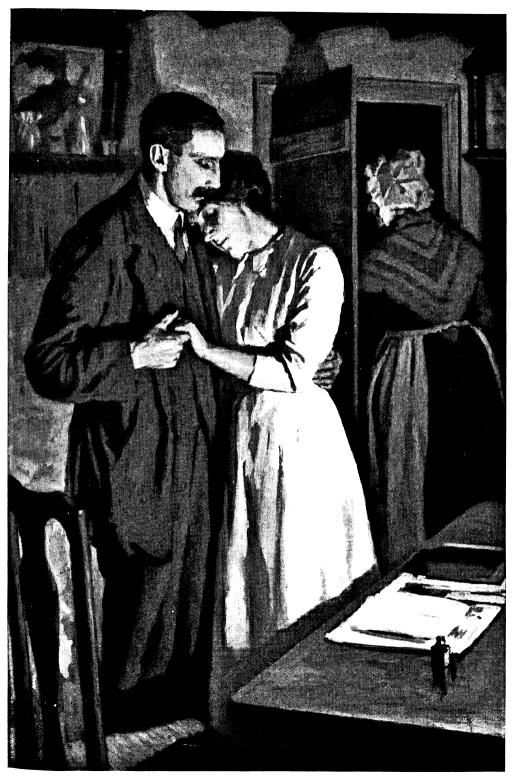
None expected such a catastrophe, and a period of very fearful suspense lay afore St. Tid, because when the earth begins to move, none can tell when it will stop moving.

The last fall—a small matter of a hundred thousand tons—had happened twenty years ago on the west face; and there it was still—a great grey cone on the side of the quarry—but it had only scotched St. Tid, not killed it, and though there was plenty of good slate buried underneath it, as good and better remained to be worked elsewhere in the pit.

So there it stood, and, of course, it couldn't be hid, because the cracks that Ned had seen were soon an inch broad, and then the quarry knew about 'em; and presently they gaped six inches, and then—a month after the discovery—they were a foot across.

There was deep consternation in every soul, and many prayers put up in the chapels and cusses in the pubs; but Nature had to have her way, for when she starts on a big job, she sees it through. The air was full of rumour and fear, and most folk judged that it would soon be all up with the quarry. Indeed, Bill Harding got a good few of the younger men to throw up the sponge there and then, and give notice, and prepare to sail with him when he returned to America.

But the one he wanted most couldn't make up her mind now, and the threatened trouble, instead of deciding her once for all against Ned, as it might have some maidens under a like temptation, inclined her a bit his way again. For it seemed a mean thing to drop him at such a moment, and she had her own self-respect to consider. So she



[&]quot;With that she was in his arms."

bided in two minds still, expecting every day that Ned would come along, with his tail between his legs, to say he was sorry for neglecting her so shameful, and offer to mend his ways and make the peace.

But he didn't, because all his energy and soul and strength was devoted to St. Tid. It meant so much, you see. First, there was the adventurers* in the quarry-people as had their money there, and, for all Ned knew, all their money-and then there was the board of directors; and last, but not least, four hundred men and boys, with about three hundred wives and families depending to them. He couldn't do much ; but what he could do he did, and he racked his brains, I do assure you, night and day, to find if there was any way out of the coming trouble, or any chance of saving the quarry from being shut down. The directors sat in committee, as a matter of course, and they had Ned before them; but he said nothing was any use, and they might so well have saved themselves the trouble of coming together. "In fact, gentlemen," he said in his quiet way, " a committee of angels might see a way out; but 'tis very sure a committee of humans can't."

And the time went on, and the cracks on the top of the north face gaped a yard across.

'Twas then that Selina Pengelly made up her mind, for there's no doubt just now that Ned had pretty well forgot her existence, and she had William at her, too; and so the girl walked down to the quarry one evening, and stood afore Ned in his mother's presence and threw him over.

"It didn't ought to make no difference to you if the stars was going to fall out of the sky, let alone a bank of earth," she said, "and I've done with it; and if you intend to put your work above your wife, even afore we'm married, wisht as a winnard † should I be afterwards. I've changed my mind, Mr. Cowling, and I want to be free; and I'll thank you for thicky eigarette case what I gave you on your birthday. It cost four shillings and sixpence, and money's money; and, as you've never used it once to my knowledge, no doubt 'tis so good as new, and they'll take it back to the shop at Launceston, where I went all the way to buy it."

⁵Twas a great speech, and Ned even listened to it in a sort of way; but his ears were always strained for one thing only now, and his mother told afterwards how he never seemed to follow what was going on round him, but lived in a world of his own, and hardly ate, or drank, or slept, or heard what was spoke to him. At any rate, if Selina thought he was going to make a stir and a scene, or even ax her to think better of her resolve, she was mistaken, for he only took notice of the end of her speech. His eyes were on her face, but his mind was far ways off. However, he heard her request and answered it.

"The cigarette case? Right. I'll look it up and let you have it again. I can't put my hand on it for the minute; but no doubt 'tis safe somewhere. I mind you gave it to me back along."

"Well, that let's me out," said Selina. "You cold-blooded devil ! I—I—"

Then she pushed her way past Ned's mother, who tried to stop her, and was gone. As for Ned, he admitted after that 'twas not the way a man should take such a piece of news; but he explained it in a very curious manner.

"Just the very instant moment you threw me over, I got a thought," he said to Selina herself, later on. "It was a pretty big thought about the quarry, and it flashed to me, no doubt, at the very second you said 'twas all over between us. And so the one thing counterbalanced t'other, and all that was left in my mind for the moment was that you wanted back the little cigarette case you gave me on my birthday."

But that wasn't spoke yet awhile, and meantime Ned worked out his thought and was as busy as any of the quarry rats. He went round and round the galleries by day, and spent his time looking through the quarry books and papers by night. For these went back for hundreds of years, and no living man had read 'em all, I'm sure, till Ned tried to do so. He kept his thoughts to himself, however, and then, when the cracks was a yard wide, and Selina had given it out she was going to marry Bill Harding, Ned and the manager, Mr. Salter, had a difference of opinion. For one morning Ned declared the over-burden would fall in two days, and was just ready to do so; but Mr. Salter flouted the thought, and said the rock was good for a week yet. To show what he felt, he went away for four days on the business of the Company; but the moment his back was turned, Ned drew off the two steam cranes out of harm's way and stopped work, and wouldn't let a soul go near the north face no more till Nature had done her worst.

^{*} Adventurers—shareholders. † Winnard = lapwing.

A very anxious and fearful time for St. Tid, as you'll believe. The gravity of the case got worse as it came nearer, and people, sheep-like, drifted in flocks and called for someone to lead. The quarrymen haunted the works and thronged the little streets, or crept in gangs to look at the cracks; and Ned Cowling, because he was strong and secret, got to be run after a good bit, and even the old men would walk down to the white cottage of a night to hear his opinion and try and get a crumb of hope from him. But them last two days he was seldom seen. The men above would note him far below in the quarry, where he'd forbidden anybody else to go; but none could get speech with him, or find what was in his mind. They knew, however, he couldn't hide his ideas for long, and guessed that when the blow fell, he'd be struck like the rest.

"He bides alone and keeps away, because he don't know no more than the rest of us; and when the cliff comes down, he'll be in the same fix as me and you," said old Simon Pearn to my son; and my son told me.

Then came the morning of the fall, and all St. Tid was out on the banks of the quarry---two thousand men, women, and children, I should say. There'd been droppings and noises all night, and a feeling of unrest and fear, as if an earthquake was upon us. But the cliff held till very nearly noon, and then, afore the eyes of St. Tid assembled, the solemn thing began. First the whole quarry side shuddered and bulged, and then fell a good few thousand tons. The precipice flung itself out and gave at the bottom, and toppled over with a pretty good roar; but when the dust sank, what was revealed was a great mass of huge rocks and rubbish lumped down in the green pool at the bottom of the quarry, and fifty yards of fine fresh slate staring out of the north face. If it had stopped there, it would have meant five thousand pounds in the pockets of the Company, I dare say, instead of twenty thousand out of 'em.

A very moving scene followed, for us quarrymen do often carry our hearts on our sleeves, and can't hide good fortune no easier than bad.

"Good fall!" "Good fall!" "Praise God for His blessings!" "The best fall as ever fell!" "Three cheers for St. Tid!"

Things like that they bawled out, and some began to sing a Wesley hymn, and some of the younger men took arms and danced. And then a woman here and there joined the hymn-singing. For a woman will often sing, if 'tis only to save herself crying.

But a lot of them kept their eyes on Ned Cowling, where he stood on a knoll of slates with his mother and Simon Pearn and other ancient men; and they saw he didn't sing nor yet dance. His eyes were on the north face, and, ten minutes after the first fall, the great fall began. Slow and solemn and awful it was-a thing that properly curdled your blood to watch, and made you call home Judgment and the Last Day. For the whole mighty cliff rose up as if it was alive; and then it just sat down againin the bottom of the quarry. It looked as if the railway up over, and the church, and the houses and the whole of St. Tid was going down ; and the noises weren't fierce and sharp, like cannons or blasting, but just a deep-throated long-drawn growl-a sound like the sea when there's a gale from the north-east - a dreadful strange, rasping sound-a sound as I never heard before and never wish to hear again. The great cone of the fall settled and spread out fan-shaped and swallowed the whole foot of the north face and bulged over into the quarry bottom and stretched out in a great river of hugeous boulders and rocks to the foot of the steam cranes, where they stood seventy yards distant.

That was all we saw for a space. The steady hissing of it hushed, and a heavy cloud of dust filled the quarry; then, thin as a robin twittering after thunder, came the wailing of the women folk, for the fall that swallowed the slate, swallowed the bread of their childer and the work of their men. Long before the dust was thinned and we could see again, a lot of the boys began running down the tram-lines into the quarry; but most of us stood up on top with our feet fastened to the earth and our eyes to Ned Cowling.

It was then, when we saw the worst, and the quarry appeared from under the dust, as if it was a new, strange place—a place that none of us had ever seen in our lives—that Ned came out like the sun from the cloud. He knew, of course, that the whole of St. Tid was watching him, and that if he'd been cast down and chop-fallen, he'd have struck a knife into many bosoms; but he didn't seem to see us. He looked to right and left, marked the tragedy in all its bearings, then nodded, careless-like, and drew forth Selina's cigarette case, took a cigarette, and lighted it !

It sounds nought to tell, but it went home into the hearts of that throng like warm milk to the stomach of a starving man. The folk gulped and gurgled and stared and kept their eyes on Ned, as if he'd been a creature from another world instead of one of themselves. And presently the women and children thinned away home and the men poured down into the quarry.

Over half a million tons of overburden went in that day, and the steam shovels have been working at it ever since, though the fall was three year ago; but to look at that great hill of stuff, you'd think the end of the world would come afore 'tis cleared and the slate hid there can be reached again. But St. Tid be St. Tid still, because Ned had found on the south face pretty hopeful signs, and his own skill and the old documents told him there was plenty of good slate there, forgot for a hundred year, that would well pay the working. Some of the directors were for shutting down and cutting a loss, but others stood for Ned and took into account the question of the people. The adventurers decided for St. Tid also; so the upshot was that we be going on steady as ever and living in hope that, come ten years hence, or less, us'll get back to the precious hidden stuff and our children will handle it. if we do not.

And as for Ned, the very night of the fall, while all was still doubt and confusion in his mind, if Selina didn't come back again under cover of darkness and stand before him and his mother ! He was busy writing a report, but he laid down his pen and kissed her.

And that fluttered her above a bit, be sure, for she reckoned that, after their last meeting, he wouldn't be kissing-kind, or anything like it.

But the truth was that, what with one

worry and another, Ned had forgot his own little affairs altogether, and had overlooked Selina and the cigarette case and every mortal thing. So when she stood there penitent, all he felt was he'd been 'a bit unloverlike of late, and might very well be in her black books for the moment, but no more than that.

With that she was in his arms, so his mother told me, and Mrs. Cowling went out of the room and left them to calm down. No doubt it astonished Ned a good bit to hear that she'd thrown him over to his face a week afore, and he'd never understood the gravity of the situation. But so it was, and, having grasped it, he took the matter as serious as need be. But then he dried her tears and forgave her, and they was to chapel hanging on to one hymn-book as usual next Sunday.

And William Harding, he went back to Pennsylvania a bachelor as he came, but not before he'd said a few hard things against women in general, and especially Selina Pengelly.

Her and Ned was married the very next year, when he'd got his house up. 'Tis made of overburden from the north face, for enough good building stone fell that great day to make a church town as large again as St. Tid.

DAFFODILS.

G^{OD} save you, darling daffodils That dance beside the dancing rills!

Folks say the fairies all are dead, The elfin holds untenanted; But I am wiser, I who see The splendour of your pageantry.

The fairies only sleep. Then comes March with clamour of horns and drums, And, as the wild wood hearkens and thrills, They wake and foot it---daffodils.

God save you, every gold-heart one! God give you joy of wind and sun! W. A. MACKENZIE.

A DESPERATE GAME

By BARRY PAIN

Illustrated by A. Wallis Mills



SAT down in an easy-chair in the library of my club with a copy of a monthly review, which contained an extremely interesting article on something which I have forgotten. I was just becoming

absorbed in it, when-----

Suddenly I was in the card-room. I stood by one of the tables with Dawes, Simpson, and Colonel Stocker, and we were on the point of cutting for partners. I knew I had merely been brought in to make up a four. These three men do not think that my bridge is quite their class. There may be two opinions as to that, but they think I hoped, of course, that I should cut 80. with Dawes. Without being absolutely courteous, he was still, as a rule, more sympathetic than the other two. Simpson has a nasty tongue. But the worst of the three—the man whom I most hate to have as partner—was unquestionably Stocker.

Do not for one moment think that I am afraid of him. I am afraid of nothing. Nervousness is not the same thing as fear, or anything like it. Now, Colonel Stocker makes me nervous. He is admitted to be a good player, but no player on earth is quite so good as Colonel Stocker thinks he is. He is a big man, three times my size, and his voice is loud and penetrating. He always lectures his partner, and to me he is invariably and persistently rude. I have often thought, after a game of bridge, that I simply should not have permitted Colonel Stocker to speak as he did. As I loathe the man and detest having him as a partner, it naturally follows that I cut with him. But I am thankful to say that I know how to behave myself, and I did not permit even the expression of my face to show my annoyance. The Colonel himself was less tactful.

"Got you again!" he groaned. "If there's a fool in the room, I always get him for a partner!"

"So does your partner," said Simpson cheerfully. It sometimes happens that Simpson says things that I wish I had said myself.

"Try to be a shade less absurd in your declarations than you were yesterday," said the Colonel to me. And then the game began.

Simpson dealt and declared a diamond with his usual amazing rapidity. I wiped my spectacles, carefully adjusted them, and examined my hand. I had nothing better than two unprotected knaves, and I passed. The others also passed, and it became my turn to lead.

I examined my hand again before leading, and to my horror found that it had completely changed. Its principal feature now was eight spades, including all the honours. There were no diamonds at all. The game proceeded, my partner writhing with every card I played, and my opponents looking wonderingly at one another. Not one of my spades made, as the declarer had none, and the other side made thirty-five below the line and twenty-eight above.

"If you'll kindly allow me to explain——" I began.

But Colonel Stocker interrupted me, as I knew he would. He said that he had never expected me to play bridge, or to be able to count, but he had hoped that I now knew the difference between the suits. It would be better in the future if I kept out of the card-room. My place was in the nursery, where I might play "snap" with the babies, who would certainly beat me at it. Was I aware that, if I had declared royals, we should have made the game and scored ninety above the line? Was I aware of anything? Could I blow my own nose? Did I know what my name was?

"There is really no occasion to take that tone," I said. "My mistake—which I have never made before, and shall never make

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again—was purely one of eyesight. The light is not good, and I think I have my wrong glasses. I assure you that, when I first looked at my hand, it was worthless. No one could have been more surprised than I was to find all those spades there."

"I have always noticed," said the Colonel, "that the fools who make the worst mistakes always invent the worst excuses for them."

"Oh, let's get on with this alleged game," said Simpson wearily.

It was now my deal, and on picking up my hand I received another surprise. It was, card for card, exactly the same hand that I had just held—one of those extraordinary coincidences that do sometimes happen. Naturally I was determined that there should be no mistake this time. Without hesitation I declared two royals and was left to play it. Dawes, on my left, led the king of diamonds. The Colonel and Simpson played under it, and I took the trick with a small trump.

"Not having a diamond," said the Colonel fiercely. "Diamonds, you will observe, are coloured red and are diamond-shaped. Hence the name. Look through your hand again."

I looked through my hand with the utmost care. "Not having a diamond," I repeated icily.

I then led the ace of spades. I looked at it twice before I drew it out. I am as certain as any man can be of anything that it was the ace of spades. But it turned into the ace of diamonds when it fell on the table. In absolute agony I examined my hand again. I found that the spades had now all vanished, and that I held five more small diamonds. It was not really my fault. Nobody can play a hand when the cards are doing conjuring tricks on their own and changing suits under your very eyes.

My opponents scored above the line for that game nine hundred and thirty-six. Colonel Stocker did not say a word. His lips were pressed tightly together, and his eyes seemed to be bulging out of his head. For a few awful moments nobody spoke. Then Dawes stood up.

"Look here, Simpson," he said, "we can't take money for this kind of thing."

"Of course not," said Simpson. "I must apologise to you, Colonel. When I brought this man down to make up a four, I did not notice that he was drunk. Another time I'll consent to play three-handed."

"It may be simply some form of brain mischief," said Dawes, who is always more polite than the other two. Then he and his partner walked out of the room and, to my amazement, locked the door behind them. I heard the click of the lock distinctly, and wondered why they had done it.

I looked up at the Colonel. He no longer appeared angry, but his expression was one of marked gravity. It was the kind of expression that I should imagine he would wear for a complimentary attendance at the funeral of a man in whom he was not greatly interested.

"I'm exceedingly sorry, Colonel," I began. "Nothing of this kind has ever happened to me in my life before, and I should have said it was impossible. The cards actually seemed to change their suits before my eyes. As for the insinuation that Simpson chose to make, I shall certainly write to the committee. I have put up with a good deal in this club, but there are limits. "Simpson knows as well as I do that I never take anything before dinner-time. But, still, of course, the fact remains that I have been the victim of some kind of optical illusion, and that may be serious."

"Very serious," said the Colonel quietly.

"Really, I think the best thing I can do is to go and consult a doctor at once."

"I'm afraid that is impossible," said the Colonel, with a horrible and unnatural politeness. "The door is locked."

"One of Simpson's silly jokes," I said. "I'll just ring, and the waiter will unlock it."

"Have you," asked the Colonel, "observed the notice affixed to that bell?"

I had not, but I looked at it now. It was an official intimation that the bell was out of order.

"Then," I said, "the only thing to be done is to bang on the door. Somebody is bound to hear us and let us out."

"What makes you think you are going to be let out?" said the Colonel. He suddenly whipped out a revolver from his hip pocket and covered me with it. "Sit very still," he said. His voice was sepulchral.

"Look here, Colonel," I said, "you had better put that thing away. You had, really. One is always hearing of accidents."

I admit that I felt-well, distinctly nervous.

"There will be no accident," said the Colonel. "You may depend upon it that anything I do will be quite intentional. And now, charming though your conversation is, I think we will begin the game."

"But the other two men have gone. We have abandoned it."

"This is a different game. It is called duel-bridge."

"Afraid I don't know it."

"You will soon pick it up. It is quite simple. To begin with, you think of a card and tell me what it is. As you probably have a natural desire to live as long as possible, you will be quick about it."

The man had evidently gone mad, and I was still covered by his revolver. It seemed

He lowered his revolver.

"In that case," I said, trying to smile, "I think I should prefer not to deal the pack at all."

"That, of course," said the Colonel, "must be just as you please. If you don't begin to deal at once, I fire now. You have got to die, because your bridge has now



"'You may depend upon it that anything I do will be quite intentional."

best to humour him. "Nine of diamonds," I said.

"Nine of diamonds," herepeated. "Known, I believe, as the Curse of Scotland. It's curious that you should have chosen that card. You now take the pack, which I have cut to you, and deal the cards out face upwards. When you come to the nine of diamonds, I fire and you die. What could be simpler?" constituted itself a public danger, and it is only a question of when you will die. You may as well take the few moments that are left you."

I picked up the pack. As he said, I should be able to gain a few moments, and much might happen in a few moments. Somebody might come into the room. It was unusual for the card-room to be deserted at that time of the day. I began to deal as slowly as I dared, so as to gain all the time I could. I wondered whereabouts in the pack the nine of diamonds would be. At each card I turned I expected it. I sweated with nervousness. The room was so quiet that the fall of every card could be heard. I had dealt half-way through the pack now, and taken over it a minute that was like a compressed lifetime, and still the nine of diamonds had not turned up.

"A little quicker, now," said the Colonel. "Just a little quicker."

I looked at him and saw that he had changed. His face had got much bigger and was still swelling. Its colour, ordinarily rubicund, had changed to a deep purple. Here was another faint chance for me. Before the nine of diamonds was reached, the brute might drop in an apoplectic fit. I dealt a very little quicker, fumbling with the cards as much as possible. I went on and on, until there was only one card left in my hand, and I knew it must be the nine of diamonds. The Colonel raised his revolver. I prepared to drop on the floor as I turned the card, but he was too quick for me. There was a click and a loud report.

* * * *

Yes, and then I woke up. I had fallen asleep in my chair in the library, and that ponderous review had dropped to the floor. By my side stood one of the club waiters.

"Colonel Stocker's compliments, sir," said the man, " and he will be glad if you will make a four at bridge."

"Tell him," I said, "that I am extremely sorry, but that I am busy just now."



"ON THE RIBBLE." BY HENRY DAWSON. From the original in the Public Art Gallery, Leicester.

THE-WHITE-HORSES BY-HALLIWELL-SUTCLIFFE



ILLUSTRATED · BY A · J · GOUGH



IV. HOW THEY SOUGHT RUPERT



OTHING happened along the road as Michael and his brother rode forward on their haphazard errand of finding Prince Rupert. All was made up of an English April primroses in the

hedgerows, bleating of lambs and fussy ewes, wayfaring farmer-folk about their lands.

They had decided to seek Rupert in Lancashire, and their best road westward lay through Knaresborough, and so forward by way of Skipton and the good town of Colne.

"The game grows dull," grumbled Michael. "We had primroses and lambs in Yoredale till I wearied of them. I thought Blake promised war and blows when he rode out to Nappa."

"The swim into York and the returnwas not yesterday enough for you?"

"I yawned so much in Yoredale," said the other, with his careless laugh. "There's much leeway to make up, babe Christopher."

As they neared Knaresborough, Michael felt his heart beat again. The sun was free of clouds, and shone full on a town beautiful as a man's dreams of fairyland. At the foot, Nidd River swirled; and from the stream, tier on tier, the comely houses climbed the steep cliff-face, with trees and gardens softening all its outline. It was a town to live at ease in and dream high dreams, thought Kit, until the wind of a cannon-ball lifted his hat.

"Ah, we begin to live," said Michael carelessly.

At the turn of the road they found a sortie from the garrison hemmed in by fifty

odd of Fairfax's dour Otley men. So Michael raised a shout of "A Mecca for the King!" and Kit bellowed the same cry. The Fairfax men thought an attack in force had come; the sortie party—twenty of them, and all wounded—found new hope, and, when that affair was done, the Metcalfes rode with their new friends through the gateway of the town.

"I give you great thanks, gentlemen," said young Phil Amory, the leader of the sortie, as the drawbridge clashed behind them. "But for you, there'd have been no Knaresborough for us again."

"Oh, we happened to ride this way," laughed Michael. "Life is like that. And I'm devilish hungry, since you remind me of it."

"Sir, I did not remind you. We are trying to forget our stomachs."

"You have tobacco in the town?" asked Michael anxiously. "Good! It's better than a meal. I smoked my last pipeful yesterday."

"Good at the fight and the pipe," said Amory. "I like you, sir."

So they came in great content-save for three of the company, whose wounds bade them grumble—to the slope that led them to the Castle gateway, and were met here by a handful of friends who were riding to relieve them. The ladies of the garrison ran down from the battlements, and Kit was dizzied by the adulation shown him by the women. They had bright eyes, these ladies, and a great longing for hero-worship in and between the tiresome hardships of the siege. Michael was at home on the instant : battle and ladies' favours had always been his hobbies. But Kit drew apart and remembered Mistress Joan, and a mantle of surprising gravity was draped about him.

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There was food of a kind in the dininghall, with its chimney wide enough to roast an ox. Something that was named beef though the garrison knew it for cold roast dog—was on the table. There was a steaming bowl of hot-pot, and none inquired what went to strengthening the stew of honest peas and lentils. But there was wine left, and across the board hale good fellows, and good fellows who were not hale, but weak with wounds, pledged Christopher and Michael.

It was a moment of sheer triumph for these two, for no healthy man can resist the praise of soldiers approving tried soldiers in their midst. When the toasting was done, a man in sober garments rose, lifting his glass with a queer contralto chuckle.

"To the King, gentlemen, and to all good sorties on His Majesty's behalf. For myself, as Vicar of the parish, I have no part in politics. I take no sides in this vexed question of the King and Parliament." He let the ripple of mirth go past him, and maintained his gravity. "As a man, the case is different. As a man, you understand, I drink to His Majesty, and confusion to all Cropheads!"

When the toasts were ended, there was much chatter of what was doing in the outer world. The Metcalfes, coming from the open country, were like a news-sheet to these prisoned loyalists. They had to tell all that was doing in the north, so far as they had learned the to-and-froing during their last months of adventure in the saddle, till at last Christopher remembered the errand they were riding on to-day.

"Gentlemen, it is time we took horse again," he said, with all the Metcalfe downrightness. "York is a bigger town than yours, and we've her safety in our keeping."

He glanced up, sure that his brother. would back up the protest. He saw Michael at the far end of the room, preening his feathers under the kind eyes of a lady who palpably admired him. And a little chill took him unawares, as if the season were midwinter, and some fool had let the wind in through an open door.

"So two men keep the safety of all York !" laughed one of the garrison. "There's a fine Biblical sound about it, Vicar."

"So much to the good, then," said the Vicar quietly. "To my mind, those days are here again, and King Charles fighting the good fight. Hey, my masters, you're deaf and blind to the meaning of this trouble." He turned to Christopher with a touch of deference that came pleasantly from an old man to a young. "How do you hold York's safety?" he asked. "What is your errand?"

"To find Rupert for them."

"And you're riding, two of you, to search England for him ?"

"That is our errand, sir."

"Ah, that is faith ! I wish good luck to your horses' feet."

"We need Rupert as much as York needs him," said Phil Amory. "It's a far cry, though, from here to Oxford."

"To Oxford?" echoed Kit, with sharp dismay. "We thought to find him in Lancashire."

"The last news we had," said the Vicar— "true, it is a month old by now—was that they kept Rupert in Oxford, making peace between the rival factions, attending councils —playing maid-of-all-work there, while the North is hungry for his coming. Why, his name alone is meat and drink to us."

"So they said in York, sir."

"Ay, and so they say wherever men have heard his record. Without fear, with a head on his shoulders and a heart in the right place—undoubtedly you ride on a fine errand. If I were younger, and if my cloth permitted, I would join you in the venture."

Christopher, seeing his brother still intent on dalliance, went down the room and tapped him on the shoulder. "We get to saddle, Michael," he said.

Michael, for his part, was astounded at the lad's air of mastery. He was aware, in some vague way, that dalliance of any kind was a fool's game, and that the man with a single purpose assumes command by a law of Nature.

"I dandled you on my knee, li'le Christopher, not long ago," he said, with his easy laugh.

"My thanks, Michael. I stand higher than your stirrup now, and York needs us."

Michael had an easy-going heart and a head that was apt to forget important matters; but he rose now, obedient to the baby of the Metcalfe clan. He paused to kiss the lady's hand, to murmur a wish that he might live to see again the only eyes worth looking into; and then he was a man of action once again, keen for the ride.

Miss Bingham rose and swept them a grave curtsey. Then she glanced at Christopher. "If you have a fault, sir—and all paragous have—it is a seriousness that reminds one of the Puritan." She had drawn blood. It flamed in his cheeks for a moment, then died down. "I'm neither paragon nor Puritan—and no ladies' man," he added, with a touch of downright malice.

"So much is obvious. You lack practice in the art, but you will learn in time."

Kit, in some odd way, felt youthful and ashamed. This girl, little older than himself, disdained his singleness of purpose, his fervour for the cause. "Oh, I leave that to Michael," he said, clumsily enough.

She was tired of warfare and the siege, and bore Kit a grudge because he had interrupted the diverting game of hearts that she and Michael had been playing. "You are riding to find Rupert?" she asked, her voice like velvet. "He's the Prince to you—a paragon indeed —no ladies' man. Sir, when you find him, ask how it fares with the Duchess of Richmond, and see if his eyes change colour."

" It is not true !" said Kit passionately.

"How downright and fatiguing boys are ! What is not true, sir ?"

" All that you left unsaid."

Michael clapped him on the shoulder. "Good for you, li'le Kit! All that women say is enough to drown us; but what they leave unsaid would sink a navy."

"Go, find your Prince," said Miss Bingham, with the same dangerous gentleness, "but, on your honour, promise to remind him of the Duchess. I should grieve to picture such a gallant without—oh, without the grace women lend a man."

"Michael, we're wasting a good deal of time," said Kit, disliking this girl a little more. "There'll be time enough for nonsense when we've brought Rupert into York."

Michael stood irresolute for a moment, divided, as his way was, between the separate calls of heart and head. And into the midst of his irresolution a guest intruded rudely. There had been a steady cannonading of the town, as reprisal after the sortie, and one among the lumbering, ill-aimed balls crashed through the wall of the diningchamber, near the roof, passed forward and brought down a heavy frame-known as a " bread-creel" in the North here—on which oat-cakes were hanging to dry. With fuel scarce, they had learned to make kitchen and dining-chamber one. The cannon-ball buried itself in the masonry beyond. The bread-creel missed Miss Bingham's pretty head by a foot One end of it struck Kit on the or so. shoulder, reopening a new wound ; the other tapped Michael on the skull and put dreams of Rupert out of mind for many a day.

The men at the far end of the hall ran forward. They found Michael lying prone. One cross-piece of the creel was broken, where it had encountered his tough head, and all about the floor was a drift of the brittle oat-cakes that had been drying overhead a moment since.

"A queer beginning for their ride," said young Phil Amory.

Michael opened two devil-may-care eyes between one forgetting and the next. "Life's like that, my lad. One never knows."

They carried him to an inner room, and Miss Bingham watched Amory and another trying to stanch Kit's wound.

"You're clumsy at the business," she said, putting them aside. With deft hands she fastened a tourniquet above the wound, and dressed it afterwards. Then she brought him wine; and, when a tinge of colour returned to his face, she crossed to the window and stood there, watching the red flare of cannonry that crossed the April sunlight.

"My thanks, Miss Bingham," said Kit, following her.

"Oh, none are needed. I am a little proud of my nursing skill, learned here in Knaresborough. Believe me, I would have done as much for any trooper."

"Still, any trooper would find grace to thank you."

Her eyes met his. There was blandishment in them, withdrawal, enmity. Men were a game to her. Spoiled and flattered, accustomed to homage that had never found her heart, she thought men heartless, too, and the game a fair one.

"Thanks mean so little. Would you have had me watch you bleed to death? Is there no one in the world who would have missed you?"

"I do not know," said Kit, with a thought of Yorcdale and the light in Ripley Castle.

"Ah, there's another secret out ! She has flouted my dear Puritan."

"I will not have that name! There was never a Metcalfe but stood for the King."

The cannonade outside grew louder, and Miss Bingham looked out again at the red spurts of flame. "A painter should be here," she said, turning at last. "My six-foot Puritan, what a picture it would make—the blue April sky, and the little tufts of cloud, fleecy like a lamb's wool, and the outrageous crimson flaring from the guns ! Will they contrive to hit the Castle again, think you? It is time their marksmanship improved."

^{*} I was thinking of Rupert," he said stubbornly. "If Michael cannot ride with me, I must go alone."

Miss Bingham's heart was touched at last. This man, who could scarce stand from loss of blood, disdained her coquetry, and had one purpose—to find Rupert for the raising of the siege at York. Selfless, reliant in the midst of weakness, he saw the one goal only.

He bade her farewell, asked Amory to find his horse for him. "But, sir, it is death to sit a saddle," protested the other. "Your wound—"

"It must heal or break again. That is the wound's concern. Mine is to find Rupert, as I promised."

Amory glanced quietly at him and wondered at the hardness of the man. "How will you get through the besiegers? Their cannon are pretty busy, as you hear."

"I had forgotten the besiegers. I must leave my horse, then, and find a way out on foot."

He got half-way to the outer gate, his weakness palpable at every step. Then his foot tripped against a cannon-ball that had fallen yesterday. He fell on his right shoulder, and the wound reopened in grim earnest.

Miss Bingham was the most troubled, maybe, of all the Knaresborough garrison during the week that followed. By all past knowledge of herself, Michael should have been her chief concern. He was so gay and likeable, as he recovered slowly from his head-wound; his tongue was so smooth, his heart so bendable to the lightest breeze of a woman's skirts. Yet she found herself constantly at Kit's bedside, fighting the evil temper that had mastered him. He was consumed with rebellion against this weakness that kept him abed, and his persistent cry was that Rupert needed him, and would know that he had failed. He was still so young to the world that he believed all England knew what the Riding Metcalfes were doing for their King.

On the fourth day, to ease his trouble, Miss Bingham lied. She said that Michael was hale and well again, and had gone out in search of Rupert. Kit took the news quietly, and she slipped away to see that his noon-day meal was ready. When she returned with the tray, she found Christopher up and dressed. He was fumbling at the buckle of his sword-belt with all a sick man's impatience.

"What are you doing, sir?" she cried, in frank dismay.

"Getting ready for the road. Michael is too easy-going to be trusted single-handed; and York, I tell you, needs the Prince."

"It will see him none the sooner if you die by the roadside now, instead of waiting till you're healed."

"But Michael—you do not know him. He means so well and dares so much; but the first pretty face that looks out o' window draws him."

"To be frank, he is in no danger of that kind," said Miss Bingham demurely. "He lies in the next room and talks to me as Colonel Lovelace might—deft flattery and homage and what not. I thought all Cavaliers were smooth of tongue, as he is —until I met my Puritan."

"You said that he had gone to seek Rupert."

"Oh, I said. What will not women say? Their tongues are wayward."

"For my part, give me men," said Kit, with blunt challenge.

The end of that escapade was a high fever, that taxed Miss Bingham's skill and the patience that was foreign to her. Michael, too, in spite of all his gaiety, saw death come very close to his bedside. It was not the blows they had taken here in Knaresborough that had knocked their strength to bits. In the months that had passed since the riding out from Yoredale, each had taken wounds, time and time again, had tied any sort of bandage round them, and gone forward to the next sharp attack. They were proud of their hardness, bred of hard stock, and had taken liberties with a strength that was only human, after And now they were laid by in a all. backwater of life, like riddled battleships in need of overhauling.

It was when Kit was in that odd half-way land between great weakness and returning strength that a sudden turmoil came to the thing he called his soul. His memory of Joan Grant grew weak and fugitive. With him day by day was Miss Bingham, who had forgotten long since how to quarrel with him. The beauty of an experience new to her spoiled life gave warmth and colour to a face that had once been merely pretty.

On one of these afternoons, a spurt of rain against the windows, and the sullen roar of guns outside, he lay watching her as she sat by the bedside, busy with a foolish piece of embroidery. She was very near, had nursed him with devotion, had smoothed his pillow many times for him.

"Agnes," he said, "what will you say to me when my strength comes back, and I've brought Rupert into York?"

So then she knew that battle is not only for the men. She met her trouble with a courage that surprised her. "I—I should bid my Puritan go seek the lady who once flouted him. Oh, boy, you're in a dream ! When you wake, remember that I nursed you back to health."

Two days later Kit was so far recovered that he was allowed to move abroad; and, while his strength was returning, the Vicar was his close companion. Something in Kit's bearing—dour hardihood half concealing some spiritual fire that burned beneath it had attracted this parish priest since the lad's first coming. He showed him the comely parsonage, with its garden sloping to the wide bosom of the Nidd; talked of the town's beauty and antiquity—topics dear to him. Then, one afternoon near gloaming, he led him up the steep face of the cliff to St. Robert's cell.

What is sown in the time between great sickness and recovery—good or ill—is apt to abide with a man, like impressions of the earlier childhood. And Kit, until he died, would not forget this hermitage, carved out of the solid rock that bottomed the whole town of Knaresborough. Without, facing the world that St. Robert had known, was his coat-of-arms, as if daring gossip to deny his record in the stress of battle. Within was a narrow chamber, roofed and floored by rock; at one end an altar, at the side a bed of stone—that, and water dripping from the walls, and a strange sense of peace and holiness, as if a spirit brooded round about the place.

"Here is peace, sir," said Kit, a quiet fire glowing in his eyes.

"Ah, yes. You would feel it, I was sure. I bring few guests to this sanctuary."

Kit glanced at him. The kindly smile, the trust and friendship of the parson's voice, brought back Yoredale and a flood of memories. When they went out into the dusk again, a red flare spurted from the Castle battlements, and in return there came the din of Roundhead cannon, and Kit's face hardened suddenly.

"True," said the Vicar, touching his arm. "Such as you must go through blare and gunshot before they tame their bodies. Good luck to you, lad, and strike shrewdly for the King ! "

The next day Kit was so far recovered that he would not stay under the same roof with Miss Bingham. Memories of Joan, who was far away, warred with his liking for this maid, who came less often to cajole and tease him back to health. It was easier to go out and rough it in the honest open. He was haunted, moreover, by the mystery and calm of that stone cell, where a dead man had left his living presence.

Michael had been fit for the road three days before, but would not leave his brother, since he had promised him the venture. And, moreover, Miss Bingham was kind again, after a season of indifference and neglect.

The old question was revived—by what means they should get through the besieging force. "There is only one way, obviously," said Michael, with his rollicking laugh. "We *must* go horsed. Will not Phil Amory lead a sortie?"

"Phil Amory will," agreed the youngster cheerily. "These rogues have been pelting us long enough with cannon-balls."

The Governor assented willingly. Hazard in the open was healthy for these highmettled lads, who were pining under the inaction of the siege. "You shall go as you came, gentlemen," he said, with his grave smile. "One good turn deserves another."

They waited till one of the sentries on the battlements sent word that the besiegers were at their mid-day meal. He added that words had passed between himself and three of their men, who had shouted that pluck was dead in Knaresborough.

"Åh ! " said Phil Amory.

They mounted—forty of the garrison and the two Metcalfes—and the gate opened for them. It was Kit—a free man again, with the enemy close in front—who lifted the first battle-crv.

"A Mecca for the King !" he roared, and his horse went light under him, as if it trode on air.

The besiegers ran hurriedly to their horses. Some mounted, others had no time. Into the thick of them crashed the sortie, and the work was swift and headlong in the doing. Through the steam and odours of the interrupted meal the attack crashed forward, till the sortie party, breathless, with a queer glee fluting at their hearts, found themselves at the far side of the town.

"You made a lane for us once," said Phil Amory. "Now we've made a lane for you. 2 M There's no time for farewells, friends—put spurs to your horses and gallop."

He gave Michael no time for the protest ready to his lips, but turned about, and, with a bugle-cry of "Knaresborough for the King !" dashed through the enemy again. The Metcalfes waited till they saw the gate close on the forty who had hacked a way to liberty for them, and Michael half hoped they would be needed, because Miss Bingham was sheltered by the Castle walls.

"We have the road to Rupert now," said Kit.

"So we have, lad."

"Then why look back at Knaresborough? You're in a dream, Michael."

"The prettiest eyes in England set me dreaming. I've good excuse."

So Kit, a little sore on his own account, and with a heartache hidden somewhere, grew serious as only the very young can do. "There is Rupert waiting for us." he snapped.

"There is Rupert waiting for us," he snapped. "Ah, true, grave brother. Let's get to Oxford, and the Duchess of Richmond will cure me of this folly, maybe. There, lad, not so fiery ! It's no crime that a duchess should have pleasant eyes. Even princes must warm themselves at the hearth just now and then."

"What route to take?" asked Kit by and by, coming down from his pedestal of high, romantic gravity.

"We'll go by the sun, so far as the winding roads will let us. Oxford lies south-west. Chance and the sun, between them, shall decide; but we had best keep free of towns and garrisons."

free of towns and garrisons." "Undoubtedly," growled Christopher. "There would be the finest eyes in England glancing at you through the lattices."

In this odd way the brothers, different in experience and outlook, but bound together by some deep tie of affection, took up the hazard of a ride that was to end, they hoped, at Oxford. There was a fine, heedless simplicity about it all, a trust in open country and the sun's guidance, that was bred in the Metcalfe men.

They had not gone seven miles before they heard, wide on their bridle-hand, the braying of a donkey. It was not a casual braying, but a persistent, wild appeal that would not be denied.

"Brother calls to brother," said Michael, with his diverting obedience to superstition. "One of his kind helped me into York. We'll see what ails him."

They crossed a strip of barren moor, came to a hollow where some storm of wind and lightning had long since broken a fir coppice into matchwood. And here, at the edge of the dead trunks and the greening bracken, they found five of their kinsmen hemmed in by fourteen stiff-built rascals who carried pikes. On the outskirts of the battle a donkey was lifting her head in wild appeal.

With speed and certainty, Michael and his brother crashed down into the fight. The surprise, the fury of assault, though two horsemen only formed the rescue-party, settled the issue. And in this, had they known it, the Metcalfes were but proving that they had learned amid country peace what Rupert had needed years of soldiery to discover—the reality of a cavalry attack that is swift and tempestuous in the going.

"We thought you far on the road to Prince Rupert," said the Squire of Nappa, cleaning his sword-blade on a tuft of grass.

"So we should have been, sir, but we happened into Knaresborough. Kit here swooned for love of a lady—on my faith, the daintiest lass from this to Yoredale and I could not drag him out until—until, you understand, the elder brother stepped in and made havoc of a heart that Kit could only scratch."

"Is this true, Christopher?"

"As true as most of Michael's tales. We fell ill of our wounds, sir, that was all."

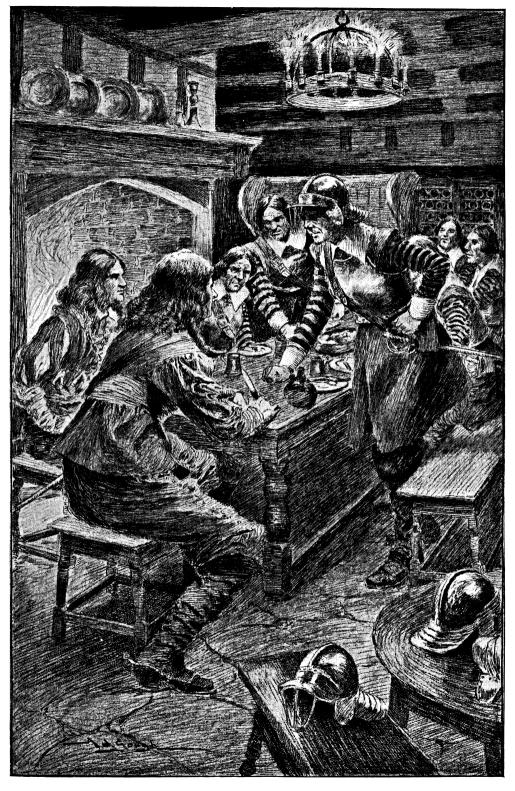
The donkey had ceased braying now, and was rubbing a cool snout against Michael's hand. "Good lass!" he said. "If it hadn't been for your gift of sing, and my own luck, there'd have been five Metcalfes less to serve His Majesty."

The old Squire pondered a while, between wrath and laughter. "That is true," he said, in his big, gusty voice. "I always said there was room in the world, and a welcome, for even the donkey tribe. Kit, you look lean and harassed. Tell us what happened yonder in Knaresborough."

Kit told them, in a brief, soldierly fashion that found gruff approval from the Squire; but Michael, rubbing the donkey's snout, must needs intrude his levity.

"He forgets the better half of the story, sir. When we got inside the Castle, the prettiest eyes seen out of Yoredale smiled at him. And the lad went daft and swooned, as I told you—on my honour, he did—and the lady bound his shoulder-wound for him. A poor nurse, she; it was his heart that needed doctoring."

"And it was *your* head that needed it. She made no mistake there, Michael," said Squire Metcalfe dryly.



When the laughter ceased, Kit asked how they fell into this ambush; and the Squire explained that a company of Roundheads had come in force to Ripley, that this had roused a busy hive of Metcalfes there, that in the wild pursuit he and four of his clan had outdistanced their fellows and had found themselves hemmed in. And in this, had he known it, there was a foreshadowing of the knowledge Rupert was to learn later on that with the strength of headlong cavalry attack, there went the corresponding weakness. It was hard to refrain from undue pursuit, once the wine of speed had got into the veins of men and horses both.

"We're here at the end of it all," laughed the old Squire, "and that's the test of any venture."

"Our gospel, sister," said Michael, fondling the donkey's ears, "though, by the look of your sleek sides, you've thrived the better on it."

The Squire took Kit aside, drew the whole story from him of what he hoped to do in this search for Rupert. And he saw in the boy's face what the parish priest of Knaresborough had seen—the light that knows no counterfeit.

"So, Kit, you're for the high crusade! Hold your dream fast. I've had many of them in my time, and lost them by the way."

"But the light is so clear," said Kit, tempted into open confidence.

"Storms brew up, and the light is there, but somehow sleet o' the world comes drifting thick about it. You go to seek Rupert?"

"Just that, sir."

"What route do you take?"

"Michael's—to follow the sun and our luck."

"That may be enough for Michael; but you sleep in Ripley to-night, you two. You need older heads to counsel you."

"Is Joan in the Castle still?" he asked, forgetting Knaresborough and Miss Bingham.

"Oh, yes. She has wings undoubtedly under her trim gown, but she has not flown away as yet. We'll just ride back and find you quarters for the night."

Michael, for his part, was nothing loth to have another day of ease. There was a dizzying pain in his head, a slackness of the muscles, that disturbed him, because he had scarce known an hour's sickness until he left Yoredale to accept shrewd hazard on King Charles's highway.

"How did my friend the donkey come to be with you in the fight?" he asked, as they rode soberly for home. "She would not be denied," laughed Squire Mecca. "She made friends with all our horses, and where the swiftest of them goes she goes, however long it takes to catch us up. No bullet ever seems to find her."

"Donkeys seldom die," assented Michael. "For myself, sir, I've had the most astonishing escapes."

When they came to Ripley, and the Squire brought his two sons into the courtyard, Lady Ingilby was crossing from the stables. She looked them up and down in her brisk, imperative way, and tapped Christopher on the shoulder—the wounded shoulder, as it happened.

^{**}Fie, sir, to wince at a woman's touch ! I must find Joan for you. Ah, there, you've taken wounds, the two of you. It is no time for jesting. The Squire told me you were galloping in search of Rupert."

were galloping in search of Rupert." "So we are," said Christopher. "This is just a check in our stride."

"As it happens, you were wise to draw rein. A messenger came in an hour ago. The Prince is not in Lancashire, as we had hoped. He is still in Oxford, fighting small jealousies and worries. Rupert, a man to his finger-tips, is fighting indoor worries, as if he were a household drudge. The pity of it, gentlemen !"

It was easy to understand how this woman had been a magnet who drew good Cavaliers to Ripley. Heart and soul she was for the King. The fire leaped out to warm all true soldiers of His Majesty, to consume all halfway men. She stood there now, her eyes full of wonder and dismay that they could keep Rupert yonder in Oxford when England was listening for the thunder of his cavalry.

Joan Grant had not heard the incoming of the Metcalfes. She had been ill and shaken, after a vivid dream that had wakened her last night and changed sleep to purgatory. And now, weary of herself, prisoned by the stifled air indoors, she came out through the Castle gate. There might be battle in the open, as there had been earlier in the day, but at least there would be fresh air.

Michael saw her step into the sunlight, and he gave no sign that his heart was beating furiously. Deep under his levity was the knowledge that his life from this moment forward was to be settled by the direction of a single glance.

Joan halted, seeing the press of men that filled the street. Then, among the many faces, she saw two only—Michael's and his brother's. And then, because all reticence had left her, she went straight to Christopher's side.

"Sir, you are wounded," she said, simple as any cottage-maid.

For the rest of the day Michael was obsessed by gaiety. Whenever the Squire began to talk of Rupert, to map out their route to Oxford, Michael interposed some senseless jest that set the round-table conference in a roar.

"Best go groom the donkey," snapped the Squire at last. "If ever the Prince gets York's message, it will be Kit who takes it."

"Kit has the better head. By your leave, sir, I'll withdraw."

"No, I was hasty. Stay, Michael, but keep your lightness under."

That night, when the Castle gate was closed, and few lights showed about the windows, Christopher met Miss Grant on the stairway. He was tired of wounds that, nagged him, and he needed bed. She was intent on drowning sleeplessness among the old tomes in the library—a volume of sermons would serve best, she thought.

They met; and, because the times were full of speed and battle, she was the cottage maid again. All women are when the tempest batters down the frail curtains that hide the gentle from the lowly-born. "Was she very good to see?" she asked, remembering her last night's vision—it had been more than a dream, she knew.

So Kit, a rustic lad in his turn, flushed and asked what she meant. And she set the quibble aside, and told him what her dream was. She pictured Knaresborough though her waking eyes had never seen the town—spoke of the gun-flare that had crossed the window-panes sometimes, while a girl watched beside his pillow.

"I was weak with my wounds," said Kit, not questioning the nearness of this overworld that had intruded into the everyday affairs of siege and battle.

"How direct you Metcalfes are ! And the next time you are wounded there will be a nurse, and you'll grow weak again, till your heart is broken in every town that holds a garrison."

"I leave that to Michael," he said quietly.

All that he had done—for the King, and for the light he had watched so often in her room at Ripley here—went for nothing, so it seemed, because he had blundered once, mistaking dreams for substance.

"I thought you were made of better stuff than Michael."

"There's no better stuff than Michael.

Ask any Metcalfe how he stands in our regard—easy-going when he's not needed, but an angel on a fiery horse when the brunt of it comes up. He's worth two of me, Miss Grant."

Again Joan was aware that soldiery had taught this youngster much worth the knowing during the past months. He was master of himself, not wayward to the call of any woman.

"We're bidding farewell," she said.

"Yes," said Christopher. "To-morrow we set out for Oxford. Do you remember Yoredale? Your heart was at the top of a high tree, you said."

"So it is still, sir—a little higher than before."

"By an odd chance, so is mine. I chose a neighbouring tree."

She was silent for a while, then passed by him and down the stair. He would have called her back if pride had let him.

Then he went slowly up to bed, wondering that some freak of temper had bidden him speak so wide at random. For an hour it was doubtful whether tiredness or the fret of his healing wounds would claim the mastery; then sleep had its way.

"What have I said ?" he muttered, with his last conscious thought.

He had said the one right thing, as it happened. Knaresborough had taught him, willy-nilly, that there are more ways than one of winning a spoiled lass for bride.

Next day he woke with a sense of freshness and returning vigour. It was pleasant to see the steaming dishes ready for Michael and himself before their riding out, good to take horse and hear the Squire bidding them God-speed, with a sharp injunction to follow the route he had mapped out for them. But Joan had not come to say farewell.

Just as they started, Lady Ingilby summoned Kit to her side, and behind her, in the shadow of the doorway, stood Joan.

"She insists that you return the borrowed kerchief," said the older woman, with a gravity that wished to smile, it seemed.

Kit fumbled for a moment, then brought out a battered bit of cambric that had been through much snow and rain and tumult. The girl took it, saw dark spots of crimson in among the weather-stains, and the whole story of the last few months was there for her to read. The tears were so ready to fall that she flouted him again.

"It was white when I gave it into your keeping."

Kit, not knowing why, thought of St. Robert's cell, of Knaresborough's parish priest, and the man's kindly hold on this world and the next. "It is whiter now," he said, with a surety that sat well on him.

The truth of things closed round Lady Ingilby. Her big heart had been mothering these wounded gentry who came into Ripley, growing week by week in charity and knowledge. It had needed faith and pluck to play man and woman both, in her husband's absence, and now the full reward had come.

Quietly, with a royal sort of dignity, she touched Kit on the shoulder. "The man who can say that deserves to go and find Rupert."

While Kit wondered just what he had said, as men do when their hearts have spoken, not their lips only, Joan Grant put the kerchief in his hand again. "I should not have asked for it, had I known it was so soiled. No, on second thoughts, I want it back again."

She touched it with her lips, and gave him one glance that was to go with him like an unanswered riddle for weeks to come. Then she was gone; but he had the kerchief in the palm of his right hand.

"Women are queer cattle," said Michael thoughtfully, after they had covered a league of the journey south.

"They've a trick of asking riddles," asserted Kit. "For our part, we've the road in front of us."

So then the elder brother knew that this baby of the flock had learned life's alphabet. The lad no longer carried his heart on his sleeve, but hid it from the beaks of passing daws.

They had a journey so free of trouble that Michael began to yawn, missing the excitement that was life to him, and it was only Kit's steady purpose that held him from seeking some trouble by the way. They skirted towns and even villages, save when their horses and themselves needed rest and shelter for the night. Spring was soft about the land, and their track lay over pastureland and moor, with the plover flapping overhead, until they came into the lush country nearer south.

When they neared Oxford—their journey as good as ended, said Michael, with a heedless yawn—Kit's horse fell lame. It was within an hour of dark, and, ahead of them, the lights of a little town began to peep out one by one.

"Best lodge yonder for the night," said Michael.

They had planned to bivouac in the open, and be up betimes for the forward journey; but even Kit agreed that his horse needed looking to.

Through the warm night they made their way between hedgerows fragrant with young leafage. All was more forward here than in the northland they had left, without that yap of the north-easter which is winter's dying bark in Yoredale. Peace went beside them down the lane, and, in front, the sleepy lights reached out an invitation to them through the dusk.

On the outskirts of the town they met a farmer jogging home.

"What do they call the place?" asked Michael.

"Banbury," said the farmer, with a jolly laugh, "where they keep good ale."

"So it seems, friend. You're mellow as October."

"Just that. Exchange was never robbery. First the ale was mellowed; then I swallowed ale, I did, and now I'm mellow, too."

With a lurch in the saddle and a cheery "Good night," he went his way, and Michael laughed suddenly after they had gone half a mile. "We forgot to ask him where the good ale was housed," he explained.

In the middle of the town they found a hostelry, and their first concern was with Kit's horse. The ostler, an ancient fellow, whose face alone was warranty for his judgment of all horseflesh, said that the lame leg would be roadworthy again in three days, "but not a moment sooner." So Kit at once went the round of the stable, picked out the best horse there, and said he must be saddled ready for the dawn.

"Oh, lad, you're thorough !" chuckled Michael, as they went indoors.

"One needs be, with Rupert only a day's ride away."

There was only one man in the "snug" of the tavern when they entered. By the look of him, he, too, had found good ale in Banbury. Squat of body, unlovely of face, there was yet a twinkle in his eye, a gay indifference to his own infirmities, that appealed to Michael.

²" Give you good e'en, gentlemen. What are your politics?" asked the stranger.

"We have none," said Kit sharply.

"That shows your wisdom. For my part --close the door, I pray-I'm a King's man, and have flown to drink-so much is obvious-for solace. Believe me, I was never in a town that smelt so strongly of Roundheads as does Banbury. They meet one in the streets at every turn, and in the taverns. One might think there was no Royalist alive to-day in England." The man's bombast, his easy flow of speech, the intonation now and then that proclaimed him one of life's might-havebeens, arrested Michael more and more.

"Tell us more, friend," he said lazily.

"Gladly. I need help. I am making a tour, you understand, of the chief towns of England, staying a day or more in each, until the Muse arrives. I was ever one to hope; and, gentlemen, by the froth on my pewter-mug, I swear that many noblemen and gentry will buy my book of verses when it's completed."

"So you need our help?" asked Michael, humouring him.

"Most urgently. I have a most diverting ditty in my head, about this town of Banbury. It runs in this way—

> Here I found a Puritan one Hanging of his cat on a Monday For killing of a mouse on a Sunday."

"Good !" laughed Michael. "It's a fine conceit."

"Ah, you've taste, sir. But the trouble is, I find no rhyme to 'Puritan one.' To find no rhyme, to a poet, is like journeying through a country that brews no ale. Believe me, it is heartache, this search for a good rhyme."

"Puritane one—the lilt running that way—"

"I have tried that, too," said the other, with sorrow, "and still find no rhyme."

The door opened sharply and the landlord bustled in. "Supper is served, gentlemen. I trust you will not mind sharing it with some officers of the Parliament quartered here?"

"Nothing would please us better," assented Michael. "Will our friend here join us, host?"

"Oh, we none of us heed Drunken Barnaby. Leave him to his rhymes, sir."

Yet Michael turned at the door. "I have it, Barnaby," he chuckled. "'Here I found a Puritane one: bid him turn and grow a sane one '—that's the way of it, man."

"It rhymes," said Barnaby sadly, "but the true poetic fire is lacking. Leave me to it, gentlemen."

As they crossed the passage, Kit drew his brother aside. "Remember what the Squire said, Michael. We need quiet tongues and a cool head if we're to win to Rupert."

"Youngster, I remember. That was why I played the fool to Barnaby's good lead. All men trust a fool."

When they came to the parlour, they found a well-filled board, and round it six men, big in the beam, with big cropped heads and an air of great aloofness from this world's concerns; but they were doing very well with knife and fork. The two Metcalfes answered all questions guardedly; and all went well until Kit saw a great pie brought in, a long, flat-shaped affair with pastry under and over, and inside, when its crust was tapped, a wealth of mincemeat, of the kind housewives make at Christmas.

"Michael, this is all like Yoredale," said Kit unguardedly. "Here's a Christmas pie."

To his astonishment, the Puritans half rose in their seats and glanced at him as if he had the plague. "There are Royalists among us," said one.

"What is all this nonsense, friends?" asked Michael, with imperturbable good temper.

"We call it mince-pie now. None of your Christmases for us, or any other Masses. None of Red Rome for us, I say. Banbury kills any man who talks of Masses."

"We've blundered somehow, Kit," whispered Michael nonchalantly.

"Ŝay, do you stand for the King?" asked the Roundhead. "Yes or no—do you stand for the King?"

"Why, yes," said Kit. "Come on, you six crop-headed louts."

This was the end of Kit's solemnity, his over-serious attention to Prince Rupert's needs. And then they were in the thick of it, and the weight of the onset bore them down. When the battle ended—the table overturned and three of the Roundheads under it—when Kit and Michael could do no more, and found themselves prisoners in the hands of the remaining three, the landlord, sleek and comfortable, bustled in.

"I trust there is no quarrel, gentlemen?" he entreated.

"None, as you see," said Michael airily. "We had a jest, host, about your Christmas pie. They tell me none says Mass in Banbury because the town is altogether heathen."

So then a blow took him unawares, and when Kit and he awoke next day, they found themselves in the town's prison.

Michael touched his brother with a playful foot. "You blundered, Kit, about that Christmas pie."

"Yes," said Christopher; "so now it's my affair, Michael, to find a way out of prison."

But Michael only laughed. "I wish we could find a rhyme to *Puritane one*," he said. "It would help that rogue we met last night."

THE KING'S CHAMPIONS.

THE RECORDS OF AN ANCIENT FAMILY AND ITS HISTORIC OFFICE.

BY G. F. MOWBRAY.

NOT every visitor to the pleasant district of Lincolnshire which lies north-east of Woodhall Spa has always fully realised what an unique point of interest is attached to the Gothic mansion of Scrivelsby Court, which stands in its wooded

deer-park about two and a half miles south of Horncastle, or is approached from Woodhall, some eight miles away, through Kirkby - on - Bain, Haltham, and Wood Enderby. Here, from the Norman Conquest down to the present day, has remained the home of the most rerelic of markable feudalism that has survived into our own times from the age of chivalry, for the manor and estate of Scrivelsby were presented by William the Conqueror to Robert Marmion, to be held by "grand or knight sergeanty" on condition that the lord of the manor, or some person representing him, should thenceforth appear at the coronation of a new English monarch as his "Champion." For that purpose he must "come well

body the right of the King and kingdom against him, and all other whatsoever."

This form of Championship to the Dukes of Normandy was held by the family of Marmion, as lords of Fontenay, long before William the Conqueror invaded England, and as the Robert

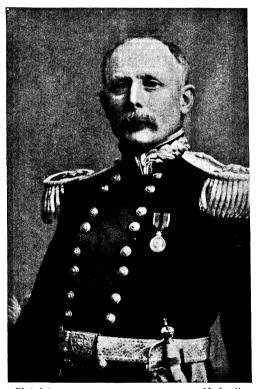


Photo by] [Lafayette. CHAMPION TO KING GEORGE V.: MR. FRANK SCAMAN DYMOKE, D.L., J.P. The Honourable the King's Champion and Standard.

The Honourable the King's Champion, and Slandard-Bearer of England.

armed for war upon a good war-horse into the presence of our lord the King, and then and there cause it to be proclaimed that 'if anyone shall say that our lord the King has no right to his crown and kingdom, he shall be ready and prepared to defend with his Treasurer and Controller of the Household, are persons of high degree and often of the Ministry. In mediæval times the king's officers of State were usually his boon companions, although they were actually his servants. This man's duty was to hold

Marmion who accompanied him was thus his Champion in Norman territory, it was natural that any similar office, if established at all as an English custom, should be likewise bestowed upon him. And so the first King's Champion of whom we have record in English history was Robert Marmion. House Steward, or Dispensator, of William the Conqueror.

The position of Dispensator was equivalent to that of Lord Steward. In the Royal Household the Lord Steward is the first dignitary of the Court, a peer, and often a Privv Councillor; and he presides over a board of green cloth at which sit, as his subordinates, men severally who, as

a stirrup-leather; that, with napkin over arm, served him at table, or held a basin in which the royal fingers might be washed; another portioned out the royal drink, or was responsible for the condition of the larder, the kitchen, and the "ewry"; but, addition, they formed his personal in

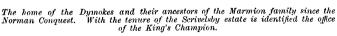
following. and were the real administrators of his allpowerful will. And in return for feudal services of various kinds they weregranted their estates.

So we may suppose, under one of the peculiar and nominal tenures of the time. Scrivelsby in Lincolnshire came into the possession of the Marmion family, and the office of Champion, not in itself hereditary. but identified with the legal inheritance of the manor of Scrivelsby, wasattached to the possession of the estate.

An old ballad which

Robert Marmion was cousin to his monarch, for he was descended from their common ancestor, Rollo the Ganger, and Fontenay-le-Marmion, his Norman home. neighboured Falaise.

Great gifts were showered upon Robert after his master's memorable invasion of



describes the prowess of the Barons Marmion and their successors, the Dymokes, who achieved the right to act in this capacity, says :--

> And ever since when England's kings Are diadem'd-no matter where-The Champion, Dymoke, boldly flings His glove, should treason venture there.

Marmion, or his son, or his Robert son's son, actually performed the office of Champion at the coronations of William the Conqueror and his immediate successors on the throne, we have no specific record. The office is not mentioned in the accounts of the coronation ceremonies, and from this it has

Hewasmade Governor of Tamworth Castle, in Warwickshire, and received grants of vast lands in the counties of Gloucester. Warwick, Hereford, and Lincoln, in which last "Paradise of the Fens." as William of Malmesbury calls the marshes of Lincolnshire, Scrivelsby is situated. As the old ballad alreadyquoted

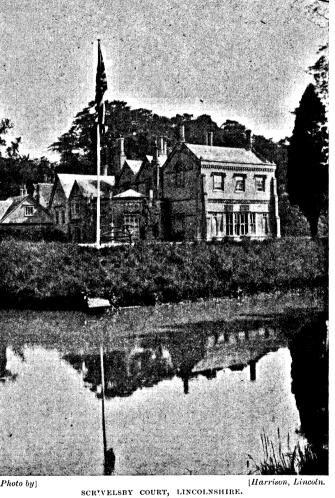
- These Lincoln lands the Conqueror
- gave, That England's glove glove they should convev
- To Knight renowned among the
- brave, The Baron bold of Fontenay.

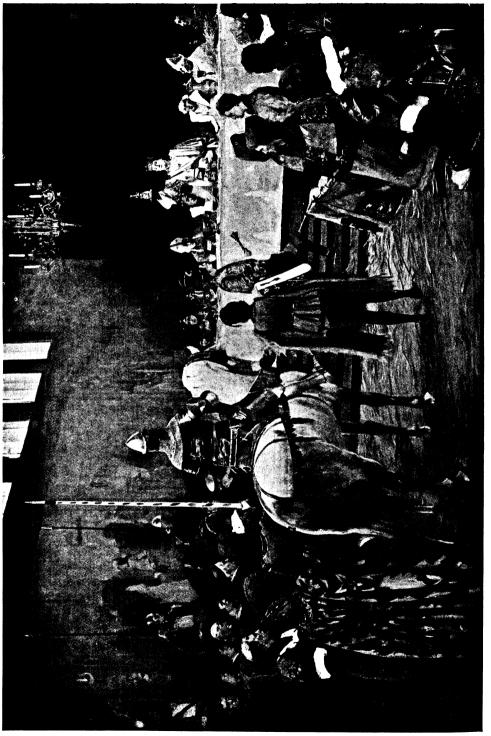
Whether

has it :-



England.





SIR THOMAS DYMOKE, THE KING'S CHAMPION, AT THE CORONATION BANQUET OF HENRY V., 1413. BY ALLAN STEWART.

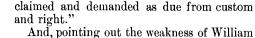
been argued that it was dropped from the ritual because it was perhaps wise not publicly to challenge investigation into Norman claims.

Discussing this point in his history of the Family of Marmion, published in 1817, T. C. Banks says :---

"Though historians, in describing the

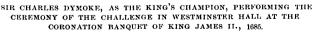
ceremonies performed at the coronations of our ancient kings, have several on occasions also mentioned the honorary offices which have been exercised on those days by particular individuals, yet until the coronation of King Richard II., no notice appears \mathbf{to} have been taken of the King's Champion, who is then for the first time introduced as a high and distinguished officiating character.

"Forwhat reason this s i l e n c e should have b e e n o bs e r v e d, seems rather e x t r a o rd i n a r y,



of Normandy's claim to the throne of England, the same historian continues :---

"Champions were never employed but in some case of dispute, and consequently it



Reproduced from the official record of the coronation of James II., by Francis Sandford, Lancaster Herald.

inasmuch as the public records bear ample testimony that this very peculiar service had been long attached to the baronial tenure of the manor of Scrivelsby, in the county of Lincoln; and, indeed, had not the service been of very antecedent date, the fees and privileges appertaining to its performance could not have been the same opinion as to the prudence of his appearance at those times when they assumed or were invested with the regal authority. The taciturnity of historians may therefore arise from the circumstance that the services of the Champion might not be required by the successive usurpers William Rufus, Henry I., or Stephen, and probably by



may be sup-

posed that n o king would have retained a Champion to hector at his coronation unless he was conscious of having no good right to the crown which was to be put upon his head.... It, however, does not follow that because the Conqueror, either for pageantry orlegal defiance. thought fit to introduce his Norman Champion into this country, and to constitute him a n hereditary appanage to the ceremony of an English coronation, that his immediate successors might be of reason that till the accession of Richard II. there was no controversy or competitorship to the right of executing this ancient office."

There nevertheless seems ground to believe, though no public records are extant to prove the fact, that the Champion duly performed his office at the coronation of Edward I., for Philip, the last Lord Marmion of Scrivelsby, inheritances of Scrivelsby and Tamworth Castle, is proved to have been enjoyed by the said Philip, Lord Marmion, inasmuch as both parties, though claiming on different pretexts, derived their pretensions from his holding of the office in question.

At this point it becomes desirable, in the interests of historical accuracy, to interpolate



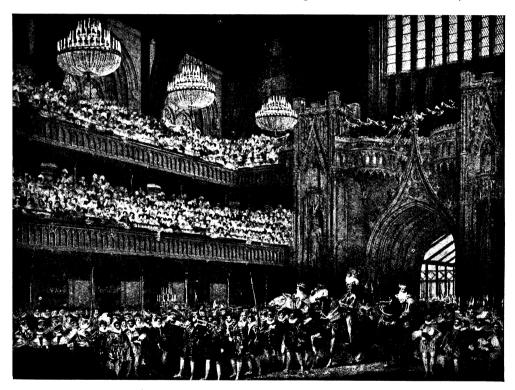
LEWIS DYMOKE, THE KING'S CHAMPION, AT THE CORONATION BANQUET OF GEORGE 11., 1727.

who died in that reign, is asserted by Ralph Brook, York Herald, to have borne "Sable, an arming Sword, the point in chief Argent," in allusion to the office of King's Champion, which office, by the incontrovertible evidence of the two petitions of Dymoke and Freville before the Court of Claims, to execute the same at the coronation of Richard II., by virtue of their respective the fact that the most famous Marmion of all, the hero of Sir Walter Scott's wellknown poem, is only an imagined character, placed in a later period of history for the poet's own reasons, for since the line ended with Sir Philip Marmion's death in 1259, there was no such lord of Scrivelsby to figure under the name of Marmion at Flodden Field. Sir Walter Scott acknowledged this from the first in an interesting note, but none the less endowed his hero with some of the property of his ancestors, and connected him with the domain of Scrivelsby and so with the King's Championship in the stanza:—

> Two pursuivants, whom tabarts deck, With silver soutcheon round their neck, Stood on the steps of stone, By which you reach the doujon gate, And there, with herald pomp and state, They hail'd Lord Marmion: They hail'd him Lord of Fontenaye, Of Lutterward, and Scrivalbaye, Of Tamworth tower and town

much poetical chronicle, for Philip Marmion left four daughters, co-heiresses, with two of whom this history only has to deal, for Jane, the eldest, dying childless, her share of the property, which was Tamworth, fell to the second daughter, Margaret (or Mazera), whilst the fourth daughter, named, like the eldest, Jane or Joan—a child by a second wife—became the inheritor of the Scrivelsby and Lincolnshire estates.

Margaret (or Mazera) married Ralph Cromwell, and their daughter, by her marriage with Alexander Freville, became



HENRY DYMOKE, THE KING'S CHAMPION, ENTERING WESTMINSTER HALL AT THE CORONATION BANQUET OF GEORGE IV., 1821, THE LAST OCCASION ON WHICH THE CEREMONY OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP WAS PERFORMED.

From a drawing by C. Wild in the South Kensington Museum.

It was by the death of the last Lord Marmion that the name of Dymoke was thenceforth to be associated with the Championship, for the family of Marmion in the male line became extinct on the death of Sir Philip in 1259.

> The royal grant from sire to son Devolved direct in capite, Until deceased Phil Marmyon, When rose fair Joan of Scrivelsby.

So continues the old ballad in the sequence of its narrative, and quite accurately, unlike the mother of that Sir Baldwin Freville who, in the third generation, was to lay claim to the Champion's office by reason of his descent from the elder line of the Marmion family.

The youngest of Sir Philip's daughters, Joan, married Sir Thomas Ludlow, and their grand-daughter became the wife of Sir John Dymoke, of an old Gloucestershire family, who opposed, on behalf of his wife, the claim of her young cousin, Sir Baldwin Freville, for the right to act as King's Champion at the coronation of Richard II. in 1377. If the Championship had been a question of seniority, Sir Baldwin's claim must have been allowed, but it was decided that the possession of the manor of Scrivelsby outweighed that of primogeniture, and the adjudication was made by the Court of Claims, presided over by John of Gaunt, in favour of Sir John Dymoke, the right of office being held as an adjunct to the manor of Scrivelsby. It is recorded by Speed that King Edward III. coronation festivities of Richard II. Before taking part in the ceremonies, Sir John, anxious perhaps to comport himself well, had a rehearsal of part of the performance, at which, however, he was not allowed to go through his $r\hat{o}le$ of Champion to the end. An old chronicle gives the following version of the affair : "In the meane time Sir John Dimmocke had been to the King's armorie and stable." Here,



THE LAST CHAMPION TO PERFORM HIS OFFICE: HENRY DYMOKE, CHAMPION TO GEORGE IV. From a portrait-study by Abraham Cooper, R.A., published at the time of the coronation.

and his son, the Black Prince, had often been heard to declare that the right of the Championship was the inheritance of the Dymokes. Again to quote the old ballad—

> Sir John de Dymoke claimed the right, The Championship, through Marjorie; And 'gainst Sir Baldwin Frevel, Knight, Prevail'd as lord of Scrivelsby.

Armed *cap-à-pie*, as deputy of his wife, Sir John Dymoke took his part in the with an eye to the value of articles which, according to precedent, were to become his perquisites, he chose "the best armour, save one, and the best steed, save one."

Then, having arrayed himself in the armour, and having mounted, he "came to the Abbie gates, with two (esquires) riding before him, the one carrying his speare and the other his shield, staieing there till Mass



THE LAST OCCASION ON WHICH THE CHAMPION PERFORMED HIS OFFICE, AT THE CORONATION OF GEORGE IV., HENRY DYMOKE, CHAMPION. BY SHELDON WILLIAMS.

should be ended." Sir John had apparently selected the wrong hour for this demonstration, for the Lord Marshall rebuked him, telling him he "ought not to come at that time, but when the King was at dinner, and therefore it should be good for him to unarme himself for a while . . . till the appointed time were come." So, we are told, "the Knight did as the Marshall willed him."

Thomas, the son of John and Margaret,

officiated for his mother at the coronations of Henry IV. and Henry V., so that Margaret was the feminine representative of the Championship for no fewer than three coronations. There came a knight, wrote Froissart, recording the coronation of Bolingbroke as Henry IV., called Dymoke, "all armed, richly apparelled, on a good horse, with a knight before him bearing his spear... The knight took the King a scroll, the which was read: that if there was present any knight, squire, or other gentleman who dared say King Henry was not rightful king, he, Dymoke, was there to fight him in that quarrel," or was "redy," as Fabian expresses it, "to wage with him battle."

The son of Thomas, Philip Dymoke, appeared as Champion at the coronation of the infant Henry VI., and it was his son Thomas who was ruling at Scrivelsby in the agitating times which followed. He married a daughter of the Lord Welles, who was a strong supporter of the Lancastrian having predeceased his father. Possibly Robert erected the brass to his brother's memory, which is one of the interesting features of Horncastle Church. Robert Dymoke attended three coronations, viz., those of Richard III., Henry VII., and Henry VIII. The coronation of Crookback Richard was, we know, a particularly gorgeous ceremonial, and despite the doubtfulness of Richard's claim to the throne, the office of the Champion played its fullest part in the occasion. In one of the Ashmole MSS. in the Bodleian Library we read of this



HENRY DYMOKE, AS THE KING'S CHAMPION, AT THE CORONATION BANQUET OF GEORGE IV. From the official record of the coronation of George IV., compiled by George Nayler, Garter King-at-Arms.

cause, and he sided, unfortunately, with his wife's people. With his father-in-law, he was executed at Stamford immediately after the battle at Empingham.

King Edward IV. appears to have regretted the severity which made a martyr of his Champion, for when Robert, the son of Thomas Dymoke, came of age, he was made Knight-Banneret and reinstated by the monarch in that inheritance which had been taken from his father on his treasonable attainder and consequent execution. Robert Dymoke was the second son of the ill-fated Thomas, the eldest son, Lionel, coronation :—" At the second course came into ye hall S^r Robert Dinmock, the King's Champion, making Proclamacion that whosoever would say that King Richard was not lawfull King he would fight with him at the utterance and threwe downe his Gauntlett, and then all the hall cryed King Richard. And then one brought him a Cupp of wine covered, and when he had drunke he cast out the Drinke and departed with the Cupp." And in one of the Harleian MSS. we find the further details that the Champion's horse was "trapped with white silk and red," and that the Champion himself was in "white

harness." Sir Robert Dymoke was able to revert to his Lancastrian sympathies at the crowning of Henry VII. We cannot, however, trace the authority for the statement of a recent chronicler of the Championship's scattered records which says that he acted as Henry Tudor's Champion "at that grim coronation on Bosworth Field," although that informal ceremony did precede the actual coronation in Westminster Under Henry VIII. he enjoyed Abbey. favourable notice, acting as Treasurer as well as Champion. He died in 1545. There is a monument erected to his memory in Scrivelsby Church.

The son of Sir Robert, Edward, threw down the gauntlet for Edward VI., for Mary, and for Elizabeth. We find him making—after this third performance of his office—an appeal to Sir William Cecil by letter, to the effect that he has not been yielded the fee for his services, the coronation cup. "At the coronation of King Edward," wrote he, "I had such delivered to me by your father."

It was unlucky for his son Robert, who, later in Elizabeth's reign, succeeded to the Championship — which office, however, he never exercised—that he lived in the diocese of Lincoln at a time when Bishop Cooper held sway there. The puritanical bias of that Churchman brought him to Scrivelsby to subject Robert Dymoke to an investigation with regard to religious practices which were considered so heretically Roman Catholic that

ESCUTCHEON OF THE ARMS AND QUARTERINGS OF THE DYMOKE FAMILY, WITH THEIR MOTTO "I FIGHT FOR THE KING."

the Champion, already in ill-health, was taken to Lincoln Gaol, where his death soon afterwards elevated him, in the opinion of Catholics, into a martyr.

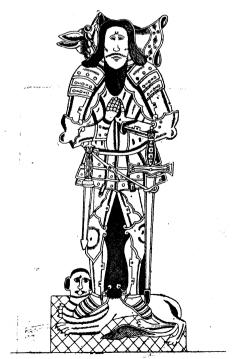
The Champion who performed his office



EFFIGIES OF SIR PHILIP MARMION AND HIS WIFE ON THEIR TOMB IN SCRIVELSBY CHURCH. 2 N

in the curtailed coronation ceremonies of James I. was a son of the Sir Robert who died in Lincoln prison for his religion, named Edward, and there is a story that when he claimed to take his part in the ceremonial, while the plans for it were being made, James, newly arrived from Scotland, interviewed him on the subject and said that he might be Champion of England, but asked by what right he could claim to be Champion of Scotland, to which Edward Dymoke answered that the purpose of the ceremony was to crown James King of England, since he was already King of Scotland. Thereupon James decided that there was no need for "one hole for the cat and another for the kitten," and so recognised the first Dymoke to be Champion of Great Britain.

A son of this Sir Edward Dymoke, named Charles, officiated in due course at the coronation of Charles I. He died without issue during the Civil War, in which he loyally supported the King. He was succeeded at Scrivelsby and in office by a cousin, another Edward, who was the son of his uncle Nicholas, the great-grandson of the Sir Robert who was Champion to Richard III., Henry VII., and Henry VIII. Nicholas never acted in the capacity of Champion, although



MONUMENT IN SCRIVELSBY CHURCH OF SIR ROBERT DYMOKF, BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN BURIED IN HALTHAM CHURCH.



SIR ROBERT DYMOKE, KING'S CHAMPION TO RICHARD III., HENRY VII., AND HENRY VIII., KNIGHT-BANNERET AND TREASURER OF TOURNEY. From a contemporary drawing preserved at the College of Heralds, described as "The King's Champion, Mounted, Armed, and Caparisoned, All Proper."

he was called upon by the Commonwealth to pay very heavy fines for his "delinquency" in being known as such. His son Edward did duty at the Restoration, when Samuel Pepys wrote of his part in the day's ritual :—

"And many fine ceremonies there was . . . But above all was these three Lords Northumberland and Suffolk and the Duke of Ormonde, coming before the courses on horseback, and staying so all dinner-time, and at last bringing up (Dymock), the King's Champion all in armour on horseback with his speare and targett carried before him. And a Herald proclaims 'That if any dare deny Charles Stewart to be lawful King of England, here was a Champion that would fight with him,' and with these words, the Champion flings down his gauntlett and all this he do three times in his going up towards the King's table. To which when he is come, the King drinks to him, and then sends him the cup which is of gold, and he drinks it off, and then rides back again with the cup in his hand." Edward Dymoke's son Charles distinguished himself, according to Prynne's Diary, at the coronation of James II. by falling down "all his length," when alighting from his horse to kiss the royal hand, an accident which drew from the Queen a facetious "See you, love, what a weak Champion you have !"

This Sir Charles left a son, Charles Dymoke, who took upon himself a double Championship at the coronation of William and Mary, and so earned two gold or gilt cups as his perquisites. He also officiated at the coronation of Anne.

Lewis Dymoke, his younger brother, was the family's representative at the coronation of George I. and George II., and when he died without issue, in his ninety-second vear. his second cousin. Edward Dymoke. succeeded to Scrivelsby and the office of the Championship under his will, but, dying before there was a coronation, was followed by his son John, who was Champion at the coronation of George III. John's son Lewis was the next to hold the office, but died unmarried before the coronation of George IV. At that ceremonial, therefore, the office being represented by his younger brother, who was a clergyman, John Dymoke, Rector of Scrivelsby, that gentleman deputed his son, Henry Dymoke, created a baronet in 1841, to act as Champion in his stead. Henry Dymoke, according to Sir Walter Scott's description of him at the coronation of George IV., was "a fine-looking youth, but bearing too much, perhaps, the appearance of a maiden knight to be the challenger of the world on a king's behalf. He threw down his gauntlet with becoming

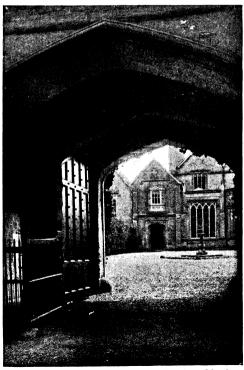


 Photo by]
 [Harrison, Lincoln.

 THE ARCHWAY ENTRANCE TO SCRIVELSBY COURT.



A DYMOKE CHAMPION.

A portrait reproduced in "The Family of Marmion" as that of the Champion of Henry VIII., but now assumed to be that of his descendant of the Restoration period, to which the costume and mode of wearing the hair seem to belong.

manhood, however, and showed as much horsemanship as the crowd of knights and squires about him would permit to be exhibited."

In addition to these actual observations of Sir Walter Scott's, it is interesting to recall that in his novel "Redgauntlet" he introduces the coronation preceding his own period, at which tradition told of a strange episode in connection with the challenge of Explaining this the King's Champion. passage in a note, Scott added : "In excuse of what may be considered as a violent infraction of probability, the author is under the necessity of quoting a tradition which many persons may recollect having heard. It was always said, though with very little appearance of truth, that upon the coronation of the late George III., when the Champion of England, Dymoke, or his representative, appeared in Westminster Hall, and in the language of chivalry solemnly wagered his body to defend in single combat the right of the young King to the crown of these realms, at the moment when he flung down his gauntlet as the gage of battle, an unknown female stepped from the crowd and lifted the pledge, leaving another gage in room of it, with a paper expressing that if a fair field of combat should be allowed, a champion of rank and birth would appear with equal arms to dispute the claim of King George to the British kingdoms. The story is probably one of the numerous fictions which were circulated to keep up the spirits of a sinking faction. The incident was, however, possible if it could be supposed to be attended by any motive adequate to the risk, and might be imagined to occur to a person of Redgauntlet's enthusiastic character."

The parsimony of the Whig ministry curtailed the expenses at the coronation of William IV. in sundry ways, and so a Championship, the challenge of which had never been accepted, fell into disuse. Thus, although he lived until 1865, Sir Henry Dymoke did not have the privilege of acting as the Champion of the youthful Queen The Championship has, however, Victoria. remained an official dignity, in which Sir Henry, who left only one daughter, the wife of Sir Francis Hartwell, Bart., was succeeded by his younger brother, the Rev. John Dymoke, who had followed his father as Rector of Scrivelsby. This second Champion of Queen Victoria's reign died eight years later, and was succeeded by his son, Henry Lionel Dymoke, who died in 1875, leaving no issue.

When the veteran Lewis Dymoke, who was Champion to both George I. and George II., died a bachelor in 1760, he bequeathed the family estates, and with them the right of Championship, to his second cousin, Edward Dymoke, who was the great-grandson of his own grandfather, the Sir Edward Dymoke who was Champion to Charles II.; but in doing this he, for some reason not recorded, entirely passed over the claims of the descendants of an older son of that Sir Edward, who was next in age to his own father, whereas the kinsman whom he made his heir was the grandson of Sir Edward's youngest son. The children of that senior branch of the family lived at Grebby Hall and at Tetford, and in the next generation were resident at Lincoln, at Brinkhill, and at Tetford, while the line at Scrivelsby remained the descendants of the youngest son of the Restoration Champion.

Therefore, when Henry Lionel Dymoke found himself the last of his line, with no child to succeed him, he bequeathed the family estates, subject to a life-interest to his widow, to "the heir-at-law of John Dymoke who died at Tetford in 1782," thus stepping back to the date of the kinsman who would naturally have inherited the property if Lewis Dymoke had not in 1760 passed over the two grandsons of his father's second brother, and willed everything to the grandson of his father's third brother instead. And the eldest male descendant of the Dymoke who, but for that will of 1760, would have been heir-at-law to the nonagenarian Champion of George I. and George II., proved, on the death of Henry Lionel Dymoke's widow, to be Francis Scaman Dymoke, seventh direct descendant from the Sir Edward Dymoke who was Champion to Charles II. at the Restoration. Thus, after six intervening generations, the elder branch of the family came back into the possession of Scrivelsby and the Championship, which to-day belong to Mr. Frank Scaman Dymoke, son of the Francis Scaman Dymoke who succeeded to the property on the death of Henry Lionel Dymoke's widow.

For sundry interesting facts and authentic information concerning them incorporated in this article, we are indebted, by courtesy of the author's representatives, to the interesting volume on "Scrivelsby, the Home of the Champions," by the Rev. Samuel Lodge, Canon of Lincoln and formerly Rector of Scrivelsby, issued by Mr. W. K. Morton, of Horncastle, and published also by the London house of Elliot Stock.

[In a recent number of the WINDSOR there was reproduced as representing Colonel Ivor Philipps, D.S.O., M.P., a photograph which was not his portrait, but was erroneously supplied as such by the photographer. The Editor much regrets the mistake.]





"REBECCA." BY HENRY RYLAND. Reproduced by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New Bond Street, W.

BRANNIGAN'S MARY

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS

Author of "Hoof and Claw," "The Feet of the Furtive," "Neighbours Unknown," "Kings in Exile," "More Kindred of the Wild," etc.

Illustrated by Paul Bransom



RANNIGAN was wanting fresh meat, red meat. Both he and his partner, Long Jackson, were sick to death of trout, stewed apples, and tea. Even fat bacon, that faithful standby, was beginning

to lose its charm, and to sizzle at them with an unsympathetic note when the trout were frying in it. And when a backwoodsman gets at odds with his bacon, then something has got to be done.

Going noiselessly as a cat in his cowhide larrigans, Brannigan made his way down the narrow trail between the stiff dark ranks of the spruce timber toward the lake. As the trail dipped to the shore, he caught a sound of splashing, and stopped abruptly, motionless as a stump, to listen. His trained ears interpreted the sound at once.

"Moose pullin' up water-lily roots!" he muttered to himself with satisfaction. Edging in among the trunks beside the trail, to be the better hidden, he crept forward with redoubled caution.

A few moments more and a sparkle of sunlight flashed into his eyes, and through the screening spruce branches he caught sight of the quiet water. There, straight before him, was a dark young moose cow, with a two-months calf at her side, wading ashore through the shadows.

Brannigan raised his rifle and waited till the pair should come within easier range. Cartridges are precious when one lives a five days' tramp from the nearest settlement, and he was not going to risk the wasting of a single shot. The game was coming his way, and it was the pot, not sport, that he was considering.

Now, no one knew better than Brannigan

that it was against the law of New Brunswick to shoot a moose at this season, or a cow moose at any season. He knew, also, that to shoot a cow moose was not only illegal, but apt to be extremely expensive. For New Brunswick enforces her game laws with a brusque and uncompromising rigour; and she values a cow moose at something like a hundred pounds. Brannigan had no stomach for a steak at such price. But he had every reason to believe that at this moment there was not a game-warden within at least a hundred miles of this unimportant and lonely lake at the head of the Ottanoonsis. He was prepared to gamble on this supposition. Without any serious misgivings, he drew a bead on the ungainly animal, as she emerged with streaming flanks from the water and strode up toward the thickets which fringed the white beach. But the calf by her side kept getting in the way, and Brannigan's finger lingered on the trigger, awaiting a clearer shot.

Suddenly a dense thicket, half a dozen yards or so distant from the leisurely cow, burst open as with an explosion, and a towering black form shot out from the heart of it. It seemed to overhang the cow for a fraction of a second, and then fell forward as if to crush her to the earth. Brannigan lowered his gun, a look of humorous satisfaction flitting over his craggy features.

"Thank you kindly, Mr. B'ar," he muttered. "Ther' ain't no game-warden on 'arth as kin blame me fer that !"

But the matter was not yet as near conclusion as he imagined. The cow, apparently so heedless, had been wideawake enough, and had caught sight of her assailant from the tail of her eye, just in time to avoid the full force of the attack. She leapt aside, and the blow of those armed paws, instead of breaking her back, merely ripped a long scarlet furrow down her flank.

At the same instant she wheeled and struck

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out savagely with one razor-edged fore-hoof. The stroke caught the bear glancingly on the shoulder, laying it open to the bone.

Had the bear been a young one, the battle thus inauspiciously begun might have gone against him, and those lightning hoofs, with their far-reaching stroke, might have driven him in blood and ignominy to refuge in a tree. But this bear was old and of ripe experience. As if daunted by the terrific buffet, he drew back upon his haunches, seeming to shrink to half his size.

The outraged cow came on again, furious and triumphant, thinking to end the matter with a rush. The bear, a wily boxer, parried her next stroke with a blow that broke her leg at the hock. Then his long body shot out again and upward to its full height, and crashed down upon her neck with a sick twist that snapped the vertebræ like chalk. She collapsed like a sack of shavings, her long dark muzzle, with red tongue protruding, turned upward and backward, as if she stared in horror at her doom.

The bear set his teeth into her throat with a windy grunt of satisfaction.

At that moment Brannigan fired. The heavy soft-nosed bullet crashed home. The bear lifted himself straight up on his hind legs, convulsively pawing at the air, then dropped on all fours, ran round in a circle with his head bent inwards, and fell over on his side. The calf, which had stood watching the fight in petrified amazement, had recovered the use of its legs with a bound at the shock of the report, and shambled off into the woods with a hoarse bleat of terror.

Hugely satisfied with himself, Brannigan strode forth from his hiding and examined his double prize. The bear, being an old one, he had no use for it as food, now that he was assured of a supply of choice moosevenison, for he knew by experience the coarseness and rankness of bear-meat, except when taken young.

Touching up the edge of his hunting knife on the sole of his larrigan, he skinned the bear deftly, rolled up the heavy pelt and tied it with osier-withes for convenience in the lugging. Then, after a wash in the lake, he turned back to fetch his partner and the drag, that they might haul the dead moose to the camp and cut it up conveniently at home. Glancing back as he vanished up the trail, he saw the orphaned calf stick its head out from behind a bush and stare after him pathetically.

"Mebbe I'd oughter shoot the little beggar, too," he mused, "or the bears'll jest get it !" But being rather tender-hearted where all young things were concerned, he decided that it might be big enough to look after itself, and so should have its chance.

A half hour later, when Brannigan and his partner, hauling the drag behind them briskly, got back to the lake, they found the calf standing with drooped head beside the body of its mother. At their approach it backed off a dozen yards or so to the edge of the bushes, and stood gazing at them with soft, anxious eyes.

"Best knock the calf on the head, too, while we're about it," said Long Jackson practically. "It looks fat an' juicy."

But Brannigan, his own first impulse in regard to the poor youngster now quite forgotten, protested with fervour.

"Fool!" he grunted good-naturedly. "Ain't yer got enough fresh meat in this 'ere cow I've foraged fer ye? I've kinder promised that there unfortunate orphant she shouldn't be bothered none."

"She's too young yet to fend fer herself. The b'ars'll git her, if we don't," argued Long Jackson.

But Brannigan's sympathies, warm if illogical, had begun to assert themselves with emphasis.

"This 'ere's my shindy, Long," he answered doggedly, "an' I say the poor little critter 'd oughter have her chance. She may pull through. An' good luck to her, ses I! We got all the fresh meat we want."

"Oh, if ye're feeling *that* way about the orphant, Tom, I ain't kickin' none," answered Jackson, spitting accurate tobacco juice upon a small white boulder some ten or twelve feet distant. "I was only thinkin' we'd save the youngster a heap of trouble if we'd jest help her go the way of her ma right now."

"You ax her fer *her* opinion on that p'int!" grunted Brannigan, tugging the carcase of the moose on to the drag.

Long Jackson turned gravely to the calf.

"Do ye want to be left to the b'ars in the big black woods, all by yer lonesome?" he demanded.

The calf, thus pointedly addressed, backed further into the bush and stared in mournful bewilderment.

"Or would ye rather be et, good an' decent, an' save ye a heap o' frettin'?" continued Long Jackson persuasively.

A bar-winged moose-fly, that vicious biter, chancing to alight at that moment on the calf's ear, she shook her lank head vehemently. "What did I tell ye?" demanded Brannigan dryly. "She knows what she wants!"

"Kinder guess that settles it," agreed Long Jackson with a grin, spitting once more on the inviting white boulder. Then the two men set the rope traces of the drag over the homespun of their shoulders, and, grunting at the first tug, started up the trail with their load.

The calf took several steps forward from the thicket and stared in distraction after them. She could not understand this strange departure of her mother. She bleated several times hoarsely, appealingly, but all to no effect. Then just as the drag, with its dark, pathetic burden, was disappearing around a turn of the trail, she started after it, and quickly overtook it with her ungainly, shambling run. All the way to the cabin she followed closely, nosing from time to time at the unresponsive figure on the drag.

Brannigan, glancing back over his shoulder from time to time, concluded that the calf was hungry. Unconsciously he had come to accept the responsibility for its orphaned helplessness, though he might easily have put all the blame upon the bear. But Brannigan was no shirker. He would have scorned any such sophistry. He was worrying now over the question of what he could give the inconveniently confiding little animal to eat. He decided at length upon a thin lukewarm gruel of corn-meal, slightly salted, and trusted that the sturdiness of the moose stomach might survive such a violent change His shaggy eyebrows knitted of diet. themselves over the problem till Long Jackson, trudging at his side, demanded to know if he'd "got the belly-ache."

This being just the affliction which he was dreading for the calf, Brannigan felt a pang of guilt and vouchsafed no reply.

Arriving at the cabin, Jackson got out his knife, and was for setting to work at once on the skinning and cutting up. But Brannigan intervened with prompt decision.

"Don't ye be so brash, Long," said he. "This 'ere's Mary. Hain't yer got no consideration for Mary's feelings? She's comin' to stop with us; an' it wouldn't be decent to go cuttin' up her ma right afore her eyes! Ye wait till I git her tied up 'round behind the camp. Then I'll go an' fix her some corn-meal gruel, seein's we haven't got no proper milk for her." And he proceeded to unhitch the rope from the drag.

Jackson heaved a sigh of resignation,

seated himself on the body of the slain cow, and fished up his stumpy black clay pipe from the depths of his breeches pocket.

"So ye're goin' to be Mary's ma, eh?" he drawled, with amiable sarcasm. "If ye'd jest shave that long Irish lip o' yourn, Tom, she'd take ye fer one o' her family right enough."

He ducked his head and hoisted an elbow to ward off the expected retort: but Brannigan was too busy just then for any fooling. Having rubbed his hands and sleeves across the hide of the dead mother, he was gently approaching the calf, with soft words of caress and reassurance. It is improbable that the calf had any clear comprehension of the English tongue, or even of Brannigan's backwoods variant of it. But she seemed to feel that his tones, at least, were not hostile. She slightly backed away, shrinking and snorting, but at length allowed Brannigan's outstretched fingers to approach her dewy muzzle. The smell of her mother on those fingers reassured her mightily. Being very hungry, she seized them in her mouth and fell to sucking them as hard as she could.

"Pore little eejut," said Brannigan, much moved by this mark of confidence, "ye shall have some gruel quick as I kin make it." With two fingers between her greedy lips and a firm hand on the back of her neck, he had no difficulty in leading her around behind the cabin, where he tied her up securely, out of sight of the work of Long Jackson's industrious knife.

* * *

On Brannigan's gruel Mary made shift to survive, and even to grow, and soon she was able to discard it in favour of her natural forage of leaves and twigs. From the first she took Brannigan in loco parentis, and, except when tied up, was ever dutifully at his heels. But she had a friendly spirit toward all the world, and met Long Jackson's advances graciously. By the end of autumn she was amazingly long-legged and lank and awkward, with an unmatched talent for getting in the way and knocking things over. But she was on a secure footing as member of the household, petted extravagantly by Brannigan and cordially accepted by Long Jackson as an all-round good partner. As Jackson was wont to say, she was not beautiful, but she had a great head when it came to choosing her friends.

As would naturally be supposed, Mary, being a member of the firm, had the free run of the cabin, and spent much of her time therein, especially at meals or in bad weather.

But she was not allowed to sleep indoors, because Brannigan was convinced that such a practice would not be good for her health. At the same time she could not be left outdoors at night, the night air of the wilderness being sometimes infected with bears, lynxes, and wild-cats. A strong pen, therefore, was built for her against the end wall of the cabin, very open and airy, but roofed against the rain and impervious to predatory claws. In this pen she was safe, but not always quite happy; for sometimes in the still dark of the night, when Brannigan and Long Jackson were snoring in their hot bunks within the cabin, she would see an obscure black shape prowling stealthily around the pen, and hungry eyes would glare in upon her through the bars. Then she would bawl frantically in her terror. Brannigan would tumble from his bunk and rush out to the rescue, and the dread black shadow would fade away into the gloom.

When winter settled down upon the wilderness, it did so with a rigour intended to make up for several mild seasons.

The snow came down, and drove and drifted till Mary's pen was buried so deep that a tunnel had to be dug to her doorway. Then set in the long, steady, dry cold, tonic and sparkling, but so intense that the great trees would crack under it with reports like pistol-shots upon the death-like stillness of the night. But all was warmth and plenty at the snow-draped cabin; and Mary, though she had no means of knowing it, was without doubt the most comfortable and contented young moose in all Eastern Canada. She was sometimes a bit lonely, to be sure, when Brannigan and Jackson were away on their snow-shoes, tending their wide circuit of traps, and she was shut up in her pen. At such times, doubtless, her inherited instincts hankered after the companionship of the trodden mazes of the "moose yard." But when her partners were at home, and she was admitted to the cabin with them, such faint stirrings of ancestral memory were clean forgotten. There was no companionship for Mary like that of Brannigan and Long Jackson, who knew so consummately how to scratch her long, waggling ears.

But Fate, the hag, growing jealous, no doubt, of Mary's popularity, now turned without so much as a snarl of warning and clawed the happy little household to the bone. In some inexplicable, underhanded way she managed to set fire to the cabin in the night, when Brannigan and Jackson were snoring heavily. They slept, of course, well clad. They awoke choking, from a nightmare. With unprintable remarks, they leapt from their bunks into a scorching smother of smoke, snatched up instinctively their thick coats and well-greased larrigans, fumbled frantically for the latch, and burst out into the icy, blessed air. Mary was bawling with terror, and bouncing about in her pen as if all the furies were after her.

Brannigan snatched her door open, and she lumbered out with a rush, knocking him into the snow, and went floundering off toward the woods. But in a couple of minutes she was back again and stood trembling behind Long Jackson.

At first both woodsmen had toiled like demons, dashing the snow in armfuls upon the blazing camp; but the fire, now well established, seemed actually to regard the fluffy snow as so much more congenial fuel. Knowing themselves beaten, they drew back with scorched faces and smarting eyes, and stood watching disconsolately the ruin of their home. Mary thrust her long-muzzled head around from behind her partners, and wagged her ears, and stared.

In the face of real catastrophe the New Brunswick backwoodsman does not rave and tear his hair. He sets his teeth and he does a good deal of thinking. Presently Brannigan spoke.

"I noticed ye come away in a hurry, Long," he remarked dryly. "Did ye think to bring anything to eat with ye?"

to bring anything to eat with ye?" "Nary bite!" responded Jackson. "I've brung along me belt—it was kind of tangled up wi' the coat—an' me knife's in it, all right." He felt in the pockets of his coat, "Here's baccy, an' me pipe, an' a bit o' string, an' a crooked nail! Wish't I'd know'd enough to eat a bigger supper last night! I hadn't no sort of an appetite."

"I've got me old *dudheen*," said Brannigan, holding up his stubby black clay. "An' I've got two matches, *jest two*, mind yer! An' that's all I *hev* got."

They filled their pipes thoughtfully and lit them frugally with a blazing splinter from the wood pile.

"Which is nearest," queried Jackson, "Conroy's Upper Camp, or Gillespie's, over to Red Brook?"

"Conroy's, sure," said Brannigan.

"How fur, would ye say?" insisted Jackson, who really knew quite as much about it as his partner.

"In four foot o' soft snow, an' no snowshoes, about ten thousan' mile !" replied Brannigan consolingly. "Then we'd better git a move on," said Jackson.

"I'm *thinkin*' we ain't got no time to waste starin' at bonfires," agreed Brannigan.

They turned their backs resolutely and headed off through the night and the snow toward Conroy's Camp, many frozen leagues to the south-eastward. Mary, bewildered and daunted, followed close at Brannigan's heels. And they left their blazing home to roar and fume and vomit sparks and flare itself out in the unheeding solitude.

Accustomed as they were to moving everywhere on snow-shoes in the winter, the two woodsmen found it infinitely laborious and exhausting to flounder their way through a four-foot depth of light snow. They took half-mile turns, as near as they could guess, at going ahead to break the way.

Once they thought of putting this job upon Mary. But it was not a success. Mary didn't want to go ahead. Only with assiduous propulsion could they induce her to lead; and then her idea of the direction of Conroy's Camp seemed quite unformed. Sometimes she would insist upon being propelled sideways. So they soon gave up the plan, and let her take her place in the rear which her humility seemed to demand.

Both men were in good condition, powerful and enduring. But in that savage cold their toil ate up their vitality with amazing speed. With plenty of food to supply the drain, they might have fought on almost indefinitely, defying frost and fatigue in the soundness of their physique. But the very efficiency of their bodily machinery made the demand for fuel come all the sooner. They smoked incessantly to fool their craving stomachs, till their pipes chanced to go out at the same time. Much too provident to use one of their two matches, which might, later on, mean life or death to them, they chewed tobacco till their emptiness revolted at it.

Then, envious of Mary, who browsed with satisfaction on such twigs and saplings as came in her way, they cut young fir branches, peeled them, scraped the white inner bark, and chewed moutlifuls of the shavings. But it was too early for the sap to be working up, and the stuff was no more eatable than sawdust. They speedily dropped this unprofitable foraging, pulled their belts tighter, and pushed on with the calm stoicism of their breed.

Long Jackson was first to call for a halt. The pallid midwinter dawn was spreading up a sky of icy opal when he stopped and muttered abruptly—

"If we can't eat, we must rest a spell."

Brannigan was for pushing on, but a glance at Jackson's face persuaded him.

"Give us one o' them two matches o' yourn, Long," said he. "If we don't hev' a fire, we'll freeze, with nothin' in our stommicks."

" Nary match yet," said Jackson doggedly. "We'll need 'em worse later on."

"Then we'll have to warm ourselves huggin' Mary," laughed Brannigan. It was a sound proposition. They scooped and burrowed a deep pit, made Mary lie down, and snuggled close against her warm flanks, embracing her firmly. Mary had been for some time hankering after a chance to rest her long legs and chew her cud, so she was in no way loth. With head uplifted above her reclining partners, she lay there very contentedly, ears alert and eyes half closed. The only sound on the intense stillness was the slow grind of her ruminating jaws and the deep breathing of the two exhausted men.

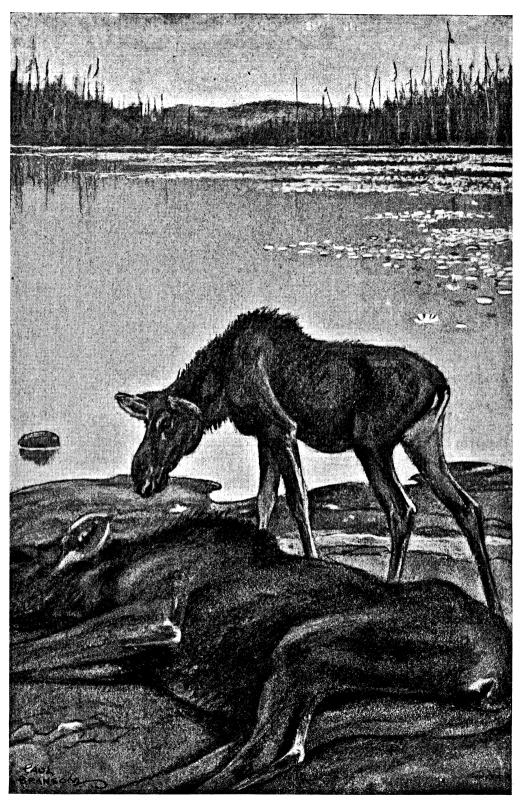
Both men slept. But, though Mary's vital warmth was abounding and inexhaustible, the still ferocity of the cold made it perilous for them to sleep long. In a half-hour Brannigan's vigilant subconsciousness woke him up with a start. He roused Jackson with some difficulty. They shook themselves and started on again, considerably refreshed, but ravenously hungry.

"Whatever would we have done without Mary?" commented Brannigan.

"Aye, aye !" agreed Jackson.

All the interminable day they pushed on stoically through the soft, implacable snowdepths, but stopping ever more and more frequently to rest, as the cold and the toil together devoured their forces.

At night they decided that one of the precious matches must be used. They must have a real fire and a real sleep, if they were to have any chance of winning through to. Conroy's Camp. They made their preparations with meticulous care, taking no risk. After the deep trench was dug, they made a sound foundation for their fire at one end of They gathered birch bark and withered it. pine shavings and kindlings of dead wood, and gathered a store of branches, cursing Then grimly over their lack of an axe. Jackson scratched one match cautiously. It lit; the dry bark curled, cracked, caught; the clear young flame climbed lithely through the shavings and twigs. Just then an



"Standing with drooped head beside the body of its mother."

owl, astonished, flew hurriedly through the branches far overhead. He stirred a branch heavily snow-laden. With a soft swish a tiny avalanche slid down, fell upon the fire and blotted it out. Indignantly the two men pounced upon it and cleared it off, hoping to find a few sparks still surviving. But it was as dead as a last year's mullein stalk.

Comment was superfluous, discussion un-Fire that night they must have. necessary. They scooped a new trench, clear in the They used the last match, and they open. built a fire so generous that for a while they could hardly endure its company in the trench. Mary, indeed, could not endure it, so she stayed outside. They smoked and they talked a little, not of their chances of making Conroy's Camp, but of baked pork and beans, fried steak and onions, and enormous boiled puddings smothered in Then they slept butter and brown sugar. for some hours. When the fire died down, Mary came floundering in and lay down beside them, so they did not feel the growing cold as soon as they should.

When they woke, they were half frozen and savage with hunger. There were still red coals under the ashes, so they revived the fire, smoked, and got themselves thoroughly warm. Then, with belts deeply drawn in, they resumed their journey in dogged silence. According to the silent calculation of each, the camp was still so far ahead that the odds were all against their But they did not trouble to gaining it. compare their calculations or their hopes. Toward evening Long Jackson began to go to pieces badly. He had a great frame and immense muscular power, but, being gaunt and stringy, he had no reserves of fat in his hard tissues to draw upon in such an In warm weather his emergency as this. endurance would have been, no doubt, equal to Brannigan's. Now the need of fuel for the inner fire was destroying him. The enforced rests became more and more frequent. At last he grunted-

"I'm the lame duck o' this here outfit, Tom. Ye'd better push on, bein' so much fresher'n me, an' git the boys from the camp to come back for me."

Brannigan laughed derisively.

"An' find ye in cold storage, Long! Ye'd be no manner o' use to yer friends *that* way. Ye wouldn't be worth comin' back fer." Jackson chuckled feebly and dropped the subject, knowing he was a fool to have raised it. He felt it was good of Brannigan not to have resented the suggestion as an insult.

"Reach me a bunch o' them birch twigs o' Mary's," he said. Having chewed a few mouthfuls and spat them out, he got up out of the snow and plunged on with a burst of new determination.

"That's where Mary's got the bulge on us," remarked Brannigan. "Ef we could live on birch-browse, now, I'd be so proud I wouldn't call the King my uncle."

"If Mary wasn't our pard, now," said Jackson, "we'd be all right. I'm that hungry I'd eat her as she stands, hair an' all."

Responding to a certain yearning note in Jackson's voice, Mary rubbed her long muzzle against him affectionately and nibbled softly at his sleeve.

Brannigan flushed. He was angry because his partner had voiced a thought which he had been at pains to banish from his own consciousness.

"Ef it hadn't a' been fer Mary, we wouldn't be alive now," said he sternly. "She's kep' us from freezin'."

"Oh, ye needn't git crusty over what I've said, Tom," replied Jackson, rubbing the long brown ears tenderly. "Mary's jest as much my pardner as she is yourn, an' I ain't no cannibal. We'll see this thing through with Mary on the square, you bet. But—ef 'twasn't Mary—that's all I say !"

"Right ye are, Long," said Brannigan, quite mollified. But later in the day, as he glanced at his partner's drawn, sallow-white face, Brannigan's heart misgave him. He loved the confiding Mary quite absurdly; but, after all, as he reminded himself, she was only a little cow-moose, while Long Jackson was a Christian and his partner. His perspective straightened itself out.

At last, with a heavy heart, he returned to the subject.

"Ye was right, Long," said he. "Ef we don't make Conroy's Camp purty soon, we'll hev to—well, it'll be up to Mary! Poor Mary! But, after all, she's only a little moose-cow. An' I'm sure she'd be proud, ef she could understand!"

But Jackson was indignant, as he went labouring on, leaning upon Mary's powerful shoulder.

"Not much," he snorted feebly. "Ther' ain't goin' to be no killin' of Mary on my account, an' don't ye forgit it! 'Twouldn't do good, fer I wouldn't tech a sliver of her, not ef I was dyin'. An' it would jest be onpleasant fer Mary."

Brannigan drew a breath of relief, for this

meant at least a postponement of the unhappy hour. "Jest as ye like, Long!" he grunted. But he clenched his teeth on the resolution that, the moment his partner should become too weak for effective protest, Mary should come promptly to the rescue. After all, whatever Mary's own opinion on the subject, it would be an end altogether worthy of her. He drove a whole rabble of whimsical fancies through his mind, as he laboured resolutely onward through the snow. But his mittened hand went out continuously to caress Mary's ears, pleading pardon for the treason which it planned.

The midwinter dark fell early, and fell with peculiar blackness on Jackson's halffainting eyes. He was leaning now on Mary's shoulders with a heaviness which that young person began to find irksome. She grunted complainingly at times, and made goodnatured attempts to shake him off. But she had been well trained, and Brannigan's voice from time to time kept her from revolt. Brannigan was now watching his partner narrowly in the gloom, noting his movements and the droop of his head, since he could no longer make much of his He was beginning to feel, with a face. heavy heart, that the end of poor Mary's simple and blameless career was very close at hand.

He was busily hardening his heart with forced frivolities. He felt his long knife. He slipped his mittens into his pocket that his stroke might be sure, swift, and painless, but his fingers shook a little with strong distaste. Then his eyes, glancing ahead, caught a gleam of yellow light through the tree-trunks. He looked again, to assure himself, and calmly pulled on his inittens.

"Mary," said he, "you've lost the chance o' yer life. Ye ain't goin' to be no hero, after all !"

"What're ye gruntin' about, Tom?" demanded Jackson dully, aroused by the ring in his partner's voice.

"There's Conroy's Camp right ahead!" cried Brannigan. Then he fell to shouting and yelling for help. Jackson straightened himself, opened his eyes wide, saw the light, and the sudden increase of it as the camp door was flung open, heard answering shouts, and collapsed sprawling on Mary's back. He had kept going for the last few hours on his naked nerve.

It was food Long Jackson wanted—food and sleep. And on the following day he was himself again. At dinner, beside the long plank table built down the middle of the camp, he and Brannigan devoured boiled beans and salt pork and stewed dried apples. gulped down tins of black tea, and jointly narrated their experience to the interested choppers and teamsters, while Mary, shut up in the stables, munched hay comfortably and wondered what had become of her partners. They were big-boned, big-hearted children, these men of the New Brunswick lumber camps, quick in quarrel, quick in sentiment, but cool and close-lipped in the face of The "boss" of the camp. emergency. however, was of a different type—a driving, hard-eved Westerner, accustomed to the control of lumber gangs of mixed races, and his heart was as rough as his tongue. In a lull in the talk he said suddenly to the visitors-

"We're about sick o' salt pork in this camp, mates, an' the fresh beef ain't been sent out from the Settlement yit. Coin's been too heavy. That fat young moose critter o' yourn'll come in mighty handy jest now. What d'ye want fer her as she stands?"

Long Jackson set down his tin of tea with a bump and looked at the speaker curiously. But Brannigan thought it was a joke, and laughed.

"Cow moose comes high in New Brunswick, Mr. Clancy," said he pleasantly, "as ye must a' been here long enough to know."

"Oh, that's all right," answered the boss; "but there ain't a game-warden within a hundred miles o' this camp, an' I'd risk it if there was. What'll ye take?"

Brannigan saw that the proposal was a serious one, and his face stiffened.

"Where Mary's concerned," said he, speaking with slow precision, "I guess me an' my pardner here's all the game-wardens that's required. It's close season all year round fer Mary, an' she ain't fer sale at any price."

There was a moment's silence, broken only by a shuffle of tin plates on the table. Then Long Jackson said—

"An' that's a fact, Mr. Clancy."

The boss made a noise of impatience between his teeth. He was not used to being opposed, but he could not instantly forget that these visitors were his guests.

"Well," said he, "there ain't no property right in a moose, anyhow !"

"We think ther' be," replied Brannigan, "an' we know that there little moose cow's our'n, an' not fer sale at no price, what-soever!" The boss was beginning to get angry at this incomprehensible attitude of his guests.

"Ther' ain't no property rights, I tell ye, in any wild critter o' these here woods. This critter's in my stables, an' I could jest *take* her, seein' as my hands needs her, without no talk o' payin' fer the privilege. But you two boys has been burnt out an' in hard luck, so I'll give ye the price o' good beef fer the critter. Ye kin take it or leave it, but I'm going to kinder requisition the critter."

As he spoke, he rose from his seat as if to go and carry out his purpose on the instant. There had been already growls of protest from the men of the camp, who understood, as he could not, the sentiment of their guests; but he gave no heed to them. His seat was furthest from the door. But before he had taken two strides, Long Jackson was at the door, and had snatched up a heavy steel-shod "peevy." Having not yet quite recovered, he was still a bit excitable for a woodsman.

"Hang you, Jim Clancy, none o' yer butcherin'!" he shouted. Clancy sprang forward with an oath, but right in his path rose Brannigan, quiet and cold.

"Ye'd better hold on, Mr. Clancy," said he, "an' think it over. It's that little moose critter what's jest seen us through, an' I guess we'll see her through, too, Jackson an' me !"

His tone and manner were civility itself, but his big lean fist was clenched till the knuckles went white.

Clancy paused. He was entirely fearless, whether it were in a fight or a log-jam. But he was no fool, and his vocation forced him to think quickly. He realised suddenly that in the temper of his visitors was a resolution which would baulk at nothing. It would do him no good to have killing in the camp, even if he were not himself the victim. All this he saw at one thought, in the fraction of a flash. He saw also that his men would be against him. He choked back his wrath and cast about for words to save his face. And here one of his choppers came tactfully to his aid.

"We ain't wantin' fresh meat so bad as all that, Mr. Claucy," he suggested, with a grin. "Guess we'd rather wait for the beef." "Aye, aye !" chimed in several voices pacifically.

Clancy pulled himself together and spoke lightly. "I s'pose ye're right, lads, an' it was yer own feed I was thinking of. If ye're satisfied, I must be. An' I was wrong, o' course, to treat our visitors so rough, an' try force *any* kind o' a bargain on them. I ax their pardon."

Taking the pardon for granted, he went back to his seat.

Brannigan, who had never lost grip of himself for a moment, sat down again with a good-natured grin. A murmur of satisfaction went round the table, and knives once more clattered on tin plates.

Long Jackson, by the door, hesitated and glared piercingly at the boss, who refrained from noticing.

At length he set down his weapon and came back to the table. In a minute or two his appetite returned, and he could resume his meal.

Out in the barn, in the smell of hay and horses, Mary lay tranquilly waving her ears, staring at her unfamiliar company and chewing her comfortable cud, untroubled with any intuitions of the fate which had twice within the last few hours so narrowly passed her by.

LONGING.

A^S in dark earth the flowers burn To break the silence of the clay, Waiting till April shine and turn

Their long night into golden day; Or as the thrush essays to trill

In Winter with Spring's wilder note, But fails beneath the sudden chill.

And the song freezes in his throat—

So burns my spirit for the Spring,

When song and beauty shall awake;

When April shall fair flowers bring, And music from the covert break.

When my life shall attain to her

For whom I yearn with soul and sense: O Time, thy laggard moments spur,

And the dark days drive swiftly hence!

EDGAR VINE HALL.

THE MORALS OF DAVIE-DEAR

By AGNES GROZIER HERBERTSON

Illustrated by Charles Pears



NCLE EDWARD! Uncle Edward! Oh, dear, I wish he'd wake up, just for a wee minute!"

I struggled back to consciousness, gripping after the sofa cushion which I felt was slipping from my head. The

room had surely grown very dark. I raised myself on one elbow.

"I haven't really been asleep, you know," I said.

"I think you must have been," Davie-Dear said doubtfully, "'cause of the funny noises you were making from your nose."

I said : "Nonsense ! I haven't been snoring."

"Here's your shoe, that felled off," said Davie-Dear. He picked my slipper from the rug and began to push it on to my foot. "What's 'snorin'?" he asked presently.

"You know quite well what it is," said I.

Davie-Dear shook his head. "No, I don't. I thought it was that—what you were doin' when your eyes was shut, you know. I thought—"

"I think we'll quit that subject, Davie-Dear," said I; "it grows wearisome. You've got the edge of that shoe tucked down, that's why you can't get it on. Here, take your fingers away, old chap."

I adjusted the slipper.

"You can't see anything, hardly," said Davie-Dear. "The tongs an' the poker aren't shining, an' the shovel is only shining a wee, wee bit; he's going to stop in a minute."

I yawned. "Yes, I haven't lighted the lamp, and I've almost let the fire out. I suppose I must have been asleep."

Davie-Dear said nothing.

I lighted the lamp, poked up the fire and replenished it, and a little flame leapt up.

"That's a little Cinder-Man runnin' up his ladder," said Davie-Dear.

He has those flights of fancy. I agreed.

"Well, is there anything else you want?" I asked. I looked at my small nephew. His nose was red. I hoped the little chap hadn't been freezing for long. The afternoon was a cold one. It was silly of me to fall asleep and let the fire go down. Davie-Dear is not allowed to meddle with the fire.

Davie-Dear must have read contrition in my eye. "Would a *rather* short train go to Exeter, Uncle Edward, or only to some place quite near?"

"I suppose it might go to Exeter. It would have to be rather short, you know, if not many people were travelling."

"It's got four carriages an' an engine," said Davie-Dear, casting his eye along his line of chairs.

"I dare say it would go to Exeter."

Davie-Dear wasted no time. Getting up on the stool that constituted his engine, he build lustily: "Any passengers goin' to Exeter? Any passengers goin' to Exeter? The arm-chair is the best carriage, Uncle Edward. It's for the King an' Queen."

"Do you think Their Majesties will be travelling to-day?" I asked.

Davie-Dear wrinkled up his brows. "You never know. Sometimes they're very late. P'r'aps we'd better wait another minute."

"Ah, then I think I'll travel in the next best carriage, in case they should come at the last minute," said I.

"The next best one is the one with the handkerchief spread on the seat," said Davie-Dear importantly.

I was about to squeeze myself into the chair indicated—it is Celia's pet chair, and a tight fit for me—when my eye was caught.

I had hung my watch on the back of a chair by the couch before falling asleep. Davie-Dear had not annexed that chair, and it still stood by the couch. I crossed the room to repossess myself of my watch. Davie-Dear, who is nothing if not inquisitive, followed at my heels.

By the merest chance I glanced at the face of the watch before placing it in my pocket. An exclamation broke from my lips. "Well, I'm——"

Davie-Dear pushed his chin against my arm to stare with me. "Why, it's window's gone an' broke !" he cried.

"Yes, it has," said I grimly ; "that's just the point." I looked at the broken glass of the watch. "Or, rather, it isn't the point, for it didn't break itself, Davie-Dear !"

"Somebody broked it?" queried Davie-Dear in a troubled tone.

"Yes, somebody did," said I, "and you know best who that somebody is, my son !"

Davie-Dear looked away; he grew pink; he stared at the watch; he looked away again.

"I never broked it," he said.

"Davie-Dear !" I said, a little shocked.

Davie-Dear shifted from one foot to the other.

After a pause, "I never broked it," he said again.

Now, Davie-Dear is only a little chap, but I felt rather sorry. Even while I found excuse, I felt sorry.

He caught my hand. "Let's go an' play trains again."

I thought he was going to cry; his tone sounded like it.

I said : "All right."

Seated in the second best carriage, a thought struck me. "Perhaps you moved the chair, Davie-Dear, and the watch banged without your knowing it?"

Davie - Dear shot out his lip with a tremulous stubbornness. "I never moved the chair."

I sighed. "Very well, Davie-Dear. Of. course, I'll take your word for it."

I remembered perfectly hanging the watch on the chair, and I remembered quite as perfectly the face of it as I dozed off—the glass had not been broken.

Davie-Dear was again mounted on the engine. "We're startin' off now; the engine's goin' to give a shriek !"

The engine did. I heard it while I cogitated.

"Did you hear it, Uncle Edward?"

"Yes," I responded absently.

Davie-Dear was silent for a moment. Presently it dawned on me that I ought to be proffering the name of the first station on the way to Exeter. As recollection touched me, Davie-Dear evidently came to an understanding with himself that I was not intending to give the necessary information.

"This train's goin' to stop now," he "It's the first station, an' all the shouted. boards is bein' painted, and the lamps, so you can't tell the name."

Davie-Dear peeped round. Despite myself, I had to laugh. "Not bad, Davie-Dear."

"Anyone can get out for five minutes," announced the engine-driver.

I got out, for Davie-Dear's satisfaction. After a stroll about the platform, I got in I glanced across at Davie-Dear again. where he knelt, performing some magic on the engine. How I wished the little fellow would own up !

It was as if he responded to my thoughts. Davie-Dear rose and drew himself up. His

"Well, Davie-Dear ?" I said cheerfully.

"I'm sorry I broked it."

I pitied the poor little beggar. I saw that his mouth trembled. I said gently : "Aren't you sorry that you said you didn't, Davie-Dear?"

Davie-Dear nodded.

"Well, then, that's all right and finished with. We'll say no more about it."

Davie-Dear stared at me for a moment hopefully; then his face darkened.

I remembered that Davie-Dear was being brought up rather strictly, and that he was in the habit of suggesting his own punishments. I was not surprised when he said : "I'll give my new puzzle to poor Teddy." "Poor Teddy" is, I believe, the washer-

woman's son.

" Do you think you need be punished this time?" I asked weakly. "Your new puzzle, Davie-Dear !"

Davie-Dear turned his face away, but said stoically: "I'll give it him—I've gotter be punished."

"All right, old man," I said cheerfully. "I say, suppose this train goes straight for Exeter now? Then it can run back and begin over again."

"Hurroo!" Davie-Dear clambered on to the engine. "Way there for the train to Exeter! Is there a *big* tunnel, Uncle Edward? I say, I nearly runned over that little boy !"

"Little boys never go anywhere near railway lines," said I.

"I thought it was a little boy, but presently I see'd it was a big man," said Davie-Dear. "I dessay he was mendin' the railway."

One doesn't easily get ahead of Davie-Dear.

The train was again steaming down to Exeter, and I was supplying the necessary stopping-places, when the door opened and Celia came in.

"You seem to be making a great deal of noise," she said cheerfully. She was wearing a hat, and looked as beautiful and as careless as she always does.

"It's a specially slow train goin' to Exeter," Davie-Dear told her. "I'm the driver. Would you like to get in? We're goin' to stop in a minute."

"No, thank you," said Celia. "I'm going upstairs to take my things off. Oh, Edward, gruffly: "You've broken the glass, that's all !"

"Oh, I'm so sorry ! But the room was so dark, I just had to *feel* my way about, and I had no idea the watch was there. I believe Davie-Dear was asleep, too, over his toys."



"'I never broked it."

I hope I didn't hurt your watch when I came in an hour ago. I was looking for my handkerchief, and I gave your watch rather a bang. I didn't know it was hanging there. *You* were sound asleep."

She paused, and I said-I fear rather

"No, I wasn't. I was talkin' to the shadders," said Davie-Dear.

"Shadows, Davie-Dear! How do you manage to pick up such a way of talking? Why, there's my handkerchief!"

Celia crossed the room rapidly. "Edward," 2 o she cried indignantly, "you're sitting on it!"

She seized the covering of the seat of second-best Davie-Dear's carriage and, without a word of apology, snatched it away and withdrew.

When the door had closed, there was a short silence. Davie-Dear brought his own handkerchief from his pocket, gazed at its griminess, then replaced it.

"It's all right," said I; "I'll spread my own."

Davie-Dear blew out his cheeks. I knew that he was going to shriek, and that the slow train to Exeter was going on its way.

"Oh, Davie-Dear, why did you do it?" I asked softly.

Davie-Dear gazed at me innocently, his cheeks distended.

"Why did you say you broke it when you knew you didn't ? "

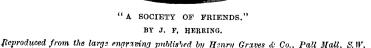
Davie-Dear slowly and reluctantly let the air escape from his mouth.

"Why did you say you'd broken my watch, Davie-Dear, when you hadn't touched it?"

"You wanted me to say it, Uncle Edward." "But, Davie-Dear-"

"I wanted you to be not angry an' to play real trains," said Davie-Dear.

"A SOCIETY OF FRIENDS." BY J. F. HERRING. Reproduced from the large engraving published by Henry Graves & Co., Pall Mall, S.W.





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LOW DOWN.

"Bah! Ze Englieshe, zey ar vile! Ze bad sixpence I gif in ze change he gif to me for ze tip!"

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

WANTED-THE IDEAL NURSE.

Oyez!

Wanted a Nurse with a temper seraphic! Must in telling of stories be vivid and graphic,

Yet charm away fear,

She must be an adept in the art of persuading, And skilful, of course, in judicious upbraiding, A lovable tyrant when daylight is fading And bed-time is near! D'ye hear?

Oyez !

Wanted a Nurse with a hatred of tattle, With unlimited patience for infantile prattle

At every meal:

She must view with indulgence the family fadder, Must hold in abhorrence the masculine gadder, And her eyes (when he meets her) should never grow

gladder:

In short, the ideal

Reveal

Arthur Compton-Rickett.

"DID you kill the moths with the moth-balls I recommended?" asked the chemist.

"No I didn't," said the customer truculently. "I sat up all night and didn't hit a single moth."



A SMALL boy had been vaccinated, and after the operation the doctor prepared to bandage the sore arm, but the boy objected.

"Put it on the other arm, doctor."

"Why, no," said the doctor; "I want to put the bandage on your sore arm, so that the boys at school won't hit you on it."

"Put it on the other arm, doc.," reiterated the small boy; "you don't know the fellows at our school,"



A young hopeful approached his father with the question—

"Îs it true that marriage is, as they say, a failure ? "

Well, Isaac," was the reply, "if you get a rich wife, it is almost as good as a failure."

A TRAVELLER on a South of England railway recently asked the guard whether, considering the speed of the train, he might be allowed to alight and gather some flowers.

The guard, however, had heard it before, and replied that flowers were not yet out, it being early in the year.

But the passenger was quite unabashed. "It's all right, guard," said he; "I've got a few packets of seeds!"

LITTLE Jimmy had spent his first day at school.

"What did you learn?" he was asked on his return home.

" Didn't learn anythin'."

"Well, what did you do?"

"Didn't do anythin'."

"Well, what happened?"

"Oh, a woman wanted to know how to spell 'cat,' and I told her."



THE CONTRAST.

SOCIALISTIC WORKMAN: There goes one of them bloated aristocrats.

TOMMY started his third helping of pudding with delight.

"Once upon a time, Tommy," admonished his mother, "there was a little boy who ate too much pudding, and he burst!" Tommy considered. "There isn't such a

thing as too much pudding," he decided. "There must be," contended his mother,

" otherwise why did the little boy burst?"

Tommy passed his plate for the fourth time, saying: "I suppose because there was not enough boy,"

"SAY, meenister, whyfor dae ye ca' your donkey ' Maxwelton ' ? '

"Because his brays are bonny," was the reply.

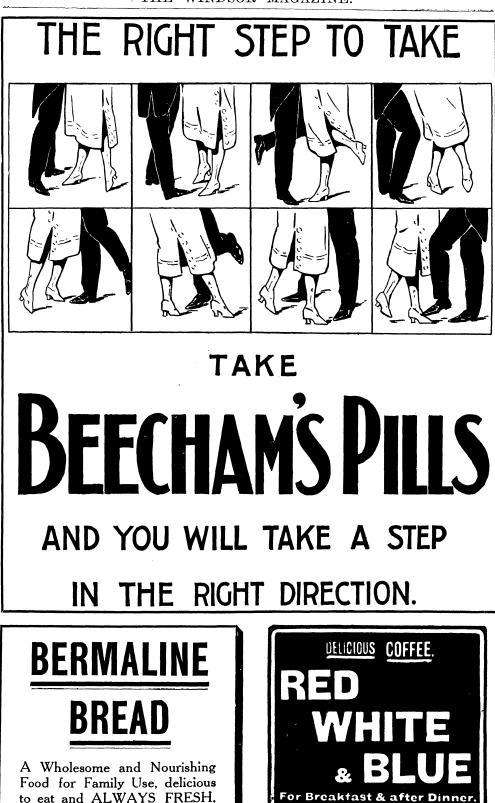


CRITICALLY surveying a bony cab-horse, a young hopeful inquired of the driver: "Are you getting in a new hoss?"

"What d'yer mean ?" asked the Jehu.

"I see yer got the framework up already."

THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE.



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MACLURE'S MEDICINE. By Dorothy Marsh.

In the office Maclure was not popular. He was, firstly, a Scotchman, which explains itself, and, secondly, as a candid junior once put it, "the biggest liar that ever lied." He romanced for the pleasure of the game, and to bring low his fellows, so there were several in the downstairs office who bore him a deadly grudge.

But one day he fell ill of some complaint affecting his inner man, and after a week's

An hour later the office telephone bell rang, and on Maclure's name being called, the line was switched downstairs.

"Hullo! Is that Mr. Maclure?" came the tinkling voice, as Maclure answered the summons.

"Yes," answered that worthy, very much annoyed at being disturbed at his work. "What do you want?"

"I am Parrott, the chemist," the voice went on. "Mr. Vanhurst has just been in and ordered a bottle of his sedative mixture to be sent up to



TRUE PATRIOTISM.

BROWN: Did you go to the Coliseum when you were in Rome? JONES (who hasn't really been farther than Southend): Yes, rather! But not one of the turns was a patch on any of our own halls.

absence returned to the office looking still wan and lemon-coloured, but bumptious as ever.

"Hullo, Maclure," said the senior partner, who also posed as consulting physician to the firm in general, "you look pretty sickly. Had a doctor? What did he give you?"

"I never take doctor's stuff, sir," retorted the Scotchman with dignity. "I don't believe in it."

"I've got a very good sedative mixture myself," went on the other, quite unheedful of the answer; "you should get a bottle of that made up." And he went on his way whistling. you, with instructions that you are to take a dose at once. I have made it up and am sending it along immediately."

Maclure rang off abruptly and remarked to the office at large that he wished the senior partner would mind his own business.

He was still grumbling when the cheerful office boy sauntered downstairs with the bottle of medicine, which had just arrived from Parrott's.

"You've got to take a dose at once, Maclure, you know," said one of the staff, known to his fellows as the Nut.

"Someone fetch a glass," put in another

THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE.

THE CURE OF CONSUMPTION ASTHMA, BRONCHITIS, AND NASAL CATARRH.

DR. EDWIN W. ALABONE'S TREATMENT,

It is only right that anyone who claims to have discovered a cure for Consumption should give irrefutable proof of its efficacy. The best and, indeed, the only real proof is the testimony of patients who have been treated in all stages of the malady, and who have not only had the disease arrested in its course, but have been permanently cured.

Too much emphasis cannot be laid on the fact that the results are lasting, for it is in this essential feature that the Alabone Treatment differs from the so-called cures which have been introduced with a flourish of trumpets from time to time. It has undergone the test of 40 years and has emerged triumphant.

A great responsibility rests on those papers, both lay and medical, which are continually announcing, without any real basis for their statements, that a cure for Consumption has been discovered. A few years ago the Press was an ardent advocate of injections; hundreds of patients were supposed to have been cured. But, unfortunately, that was merely supposition. Eventually it was admitted that the injection treatment had caused many deaths, but not one single instance of cure could be produced. The same remarks apply to the more recent injections.

Then came the "Open Air Treatment" specialists, who declared that they were effecting so many cures that in a few years the disease would be stamped out. A more ghastly failure it would be impossible to conceive; thousands of pounds have been spent on sanatoria, and the expenditure has utterly failed to achieve its object. Those best able to judge physicians, nurses, medical officers of health, and patients themselves—are unanimous in their condemnation of the futility of sanatoria.

Dr. E. W. Alabone has dealt fully with the matter in a book which constitutes a scathing indictment of the open-air treatment. It sets forth, not his own personal opinion, but a mass of evidence collected from the best sources—letters, speeches, and articles by experts—all going to show that sanatoria do not permanently cure Consumption.

It may naturally be asked what good can it do to the sufferers from Consumption to be told of these ineffectual methods of dealing with the disease? Well, it may do good in two ways—first, by preventing the patient from throwing away money and wasting valuable time in following out a course which must inevitably end in failure; and, secondly, by introducing them to the Alabone Treatment, which undoubtedly offers the best possible chance of cure. It has been put to the severest tests, and its success has been phenomenal, especially in view of the fact that so many of the patients cured have not commenced the treatment until the eleventh hour, after their cases had been given up as hopeless in other quarters.

There is a host of witnesses to the success of the Alabone Treatment.

First, one may take the experience of those who had been given up to die of Consumption by our best-known specialists. Their name is legion, and they come from all classes of society. Dukes and other peers and persons of title, bishops, and men eminent in the legal and other professions have given their written and verbal statements, not only that they have been cured themselves, but that

they have seen many cases similar to their own treated with equal success.

Secondly, there is the verdict of matrons, nurses, and those in charge of patients at our sanatoria. It is exactly the same as the one already quoted, with the addition that they declare the "open-air treatment" claim to be a fallacy.

Thirdly, there is what must be considered the most weighty evidence—that of the physicians themselves, for at last medical men are finding that they must bow to the facts and admit that a system which has been so successful cannot be ignored or scoffed at. Many of them, indeed, have proved its efficacy themselves. A large number of physicians and members of their families have been successfully treated by Dr. Alabone, and as they had naturally received the very best advice before resorting to him, the last vestige of doubt—if any existed—vanishes.

One Navy surgeon was invalided from the Navy as "incurable," but after undergoing the "Alabone Treatment" gave the following evidence :---

Treatment" gave the following evidence :---"Sir,--I was under the professional treatment of Dr. Alabone, and during that time received the greatest benefit from it. I was placed on the retired list as 'unfit for further service owing to phthisis.' Thanks to Dr. E. W. Alabone's treatment I have been able to resume the practice of my profession, and have now been actively engaged in practice for six months in good health."-Yours faithfully, J. C., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., London.

Another physician states :---

"Dr. Alabone's Treatment for Consumption has proved a great success in my own case, after having been given up by several eminent physicians. I am convinced, not only by my own experience, but from the evidence of other cases I have seen, that it is the remedy so long sought after."—T. Y., L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S.

Case after case could be quoted, but these are sufficient to prove to the most sceptical that a cure for Consumption does exist.

In the books mentioned below full particulars will be found of cases which have been successfully treated after having been pronounced incurable.

THE CURE OF CONSUMPTION, ASTHMA, CHRONIC BRONCHITIS, AND CATARRH.

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THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE.



THE BITER BIT.

HEAD OF DETECTIVE AGENCY: Why didn't you report at eleven o'clock, as I told you? It is after twelve now.

DETECTIVE: Very sorry, sir, but one of those pickpockets I was shadowing has stolen my watch.

gentleman, called Simpkin, as a general rule.

"Shall I go out and buy you some sweets to It's sure to be nasty," added take after it? the cheerful office boy.

Maclure glared daggers at them all, but the senior partner was a man not wise to offend, so he hastily unfastened the bottle, measured out two tablespoonfuls of the unpleasant brownish mixture it contained, gulped it down, and then aggressively turned his back.

Silence was broken by the voice of the Nut, who had possessed himself of the bottle laid aside.

"I say, Maclure," he said, "this seems funny stuff. Looks something like tea." And he poured the rest of it out into the tumbler.

"Give it here," snapped Maclure, "and don't play the fool."

" Tastes like tea," went on the other gently, as he sipped at the glass-"tea and perhaps a dash of arrowroot.'

"You know there are two telephones upstairs," put in Simpkin, while the office listened breathless with interest, "and it is possible to ring through from one to the other.'

"I rather like cold tea, although the arrowroot spoils it," said the Nut, as he drained the glass with relish.

At that moment the senior partner came bustling in.

"What's all this, Maclure?" he shouted. "I never ordered any medicine to be sent to you.'

" If you please, sir, I am afraid I took your name in vain," said the Nut, and his voice was weak, "but Mr. Maclure has taken a dose, and he said it did him a lot of good."

There was a tense silence in the office.

Then the senior partner smiled, and Maclure's cup of bitterness was full,

THE lady was very stout and was learning roller-skating, when she had the misfortune to fall. Several attendants rushed to her side, but were unable to raise her at once. One said soothingly-

"We'll get you up all right, madam. Do not be alarmed."

"Oh, I'm not alarmed at all, but your floor is so terribly lumpy."

And then from underneath came a small voice which said; "I am not a 1mmp; I am an attendant."



A MAN who kept a small shop was waiting on a single customer early one morning. His little boy and he were alone at the time, and the shopkeeper was obliged to go upstairs for some change. Before doing so he whispered to the little chap to watch the customer, to see that he didn't steal anything.

Very soon the proprietor returned with the necessary change, and the boy sang out : "He didn't steal anything, daddy; I watched him."



THEY had just become engaged.

"Oh, Dick," she said, moving a trifle closer to him, "I am so glad you are not rich! They say that some of those millionaires receive threatening letters saying that something dreadful will happen to them if they don't pay the writers vast sums of money." "Oh, is that all?" replied Dick. "Why, I

get plenty of such letters."



THE OTHER WAY ROUND.

OWNER: Here, what are you doing? Don't you know you're not allowed to take fish out of this water ? ANGLER (three hours without a bite) : I'm not taking them out; I'm feeding them !



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A WOULD-BE smart student thus accosted a Jap recently in London—

"What sort of a 'nese' are you—Chinese or Japanese?"

But the Jap was not to be caught napping.

"Well, what sort of a 'key' are you—a Yankee, a monkey, or a donkey?"



A NEW minister was complaining of the very small collection of the previous Sunday, whereupon one of the elders remarked that the previous minister had always put a shilling A STREET-CORNER orator was recently holding forth as follows :---

"I want land reform! I want education reform! I want Army reform! I want-"" "Chloroform!" interjected a bored voice.

"Does the baby talk yet?" asked a friend of the family of the little brother.

"No," replied the little brother disgustedly; "he doesn't need to talk. All he has to do is to yell, and he gets everything in the house worth having."



JUST SO.

Boy Scour (initiating recruit into the scouting art): See, he's placing his ear to the ground to hear if his horse is following him.

or two in the plate, "to gie them a guid start," adding that he took the shillings back again after service.

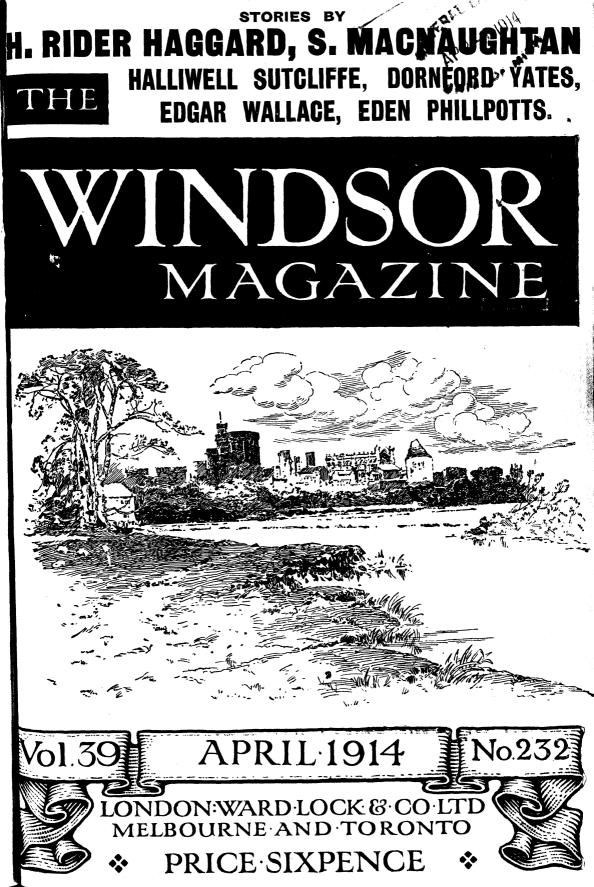
So next Sunday the new minister placed a shining half-crown in the plate. What was his astonishment, however, to find later that the collection was lower than ever, and, worse still, his half-crown was gone.

Sorrowfully he confided his loss to the elder.

"Aye, mon," cried that worthy, "ye've no knowledge of the world! Ye should ha' glued the money to the plate, as the auld meenister did !" ARISTIPPUS was once sailing in a boat with a large sum of money. Discovering that the crew were in reality pirates, he took out his money, counted it before them, and dropped it into the sea, as though by accident. "Oh, dear!" he exclaimed. "There's all my money gone! Oh!"

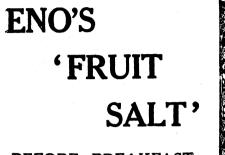
"Why did you do that?" asked a friend afterwards.

"Why," said he, "surely it was better that the money should be lost through Aristippus, than that Aristippus should be lost through the money."



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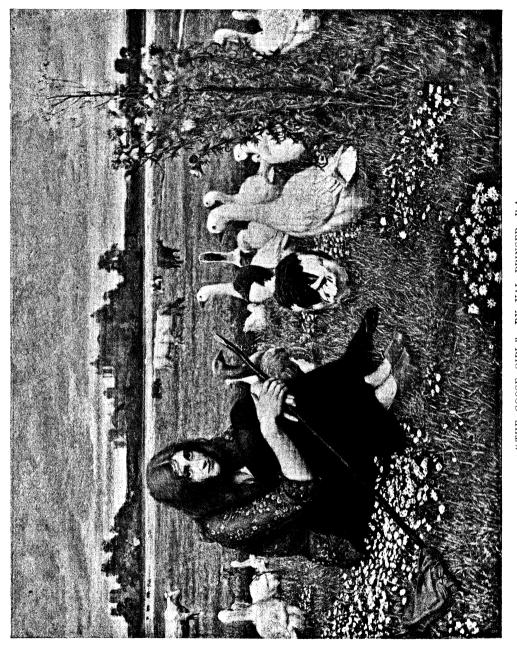
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"THE GOOSE GIRL." BY VAL PRINSEP, R.A. From the original in the Watker Art Gallery, Liverpool, by permission of the Corporation.



"Miss Martin looked up into the face of the man before her dumbly and helplessly."

THE HOAX by S. MACNAUGHTAN

Illustrated by Charles Pears

ISS DORA MARTIN spent last Easter with the Chesneys. It was very kind of the Chesneys to have her, and they knew it to be so. Miss Martin was neither young nor fair, nor particularly amusing, and, far worse than all besides, she was an old maid. Some people said that she had been born an old maid. Certainly she had all the attributes and characteristics which seem to predestine some women for a single life. Miss Martin was gentle, inconspicuous, with a sensitive conscience and an overdone sense of duty. To count up her many virtues would have taken a long time, while her vices, poor darling, appeared to be very few. But even her virtues were a little colourless, and were too negative to merit praise or reward. She had never been heard to say an ill-natured word

of anyone, but then, on the other hand, and perhaps for that very reason, her conversation was not particularly interesting. She was never late for anything, and generally spent a good part of her time waiting for other people with her gloves on. Throughout life she had always been waiting, not from her own fault, but because other people were late. Her disposition was sweet and uncomplaining ; did anything occur to vex her, she might feel perplexed, a little plaintive, but in her long waiting life she had learned not to grumble.

virtues would have taken her vices, poor darling, ery few. But even her e colourless, and were too raise or reward. She had to say an ill-natured word Copyright, 1914, by S. Macnaughtan, in the United States of America.

1914. No. 232.

she was scrupulous to a fault, and would sometimes at breakfast-time, with difficulty and a painful flush, contradict or make right an unimportant statement which she had made the evening before, and which no one but herself remembered or deemed of consequence. By nature methodical, she yet often had her plans upset, for it was a popular belief that she enjoyed helping everyone, and was glad to be of use. She wrote notes in her pretty hand for busy women, and answered her own letters punctually. When she borrowed a stamp, she always laid a penny on the table whence she took it. She remembered mail days, and wrote to nephews in India and on the China stations and to a niece in America The letters were legible everv week. and quite uninteresting. They were so that they altogether lacked charitable A piece of gossip, which might colour. have been retailed with zest by a more acid pen, glided off Miss Martin's gilt "J" in an innocuous pale flow of ink and kind words.

She loved reading, but hardly thought it right to open a novel until she had heard that it was quite nice, and when her generous little purse—heliotrope leather with silver corners—was opened to pay for theatre tickets for young friends, she never failed to inquire of the man at the box office whether the piece which she proposed seeing had a good tone about it. She drank barley water and loved babies, and generally dressed in neat grey tweed and a black hat.

When the young Chesneys heard that she was coming to them for Easter, they expressed their dissatisfaction in no measured terms. Children are so proverbially charming nowadays that it is with a feeling of apology that one writes of those lamentable exceptions who are not altogether delightful. The Chesneys had been "understood" ever since they were born. And "understanding" had meant, with Mrs. Chesney, giving them everything they asked for, ascribing their ill-temper to nervous temperaments, and believing in their high mental development in opposition to the views held by their governesses and teachers. Mrs. Chesney found an excuse in the fact of her widowhood for her indulgent treatment of her boys and girls. "Petted but not spoiled," she used to say of them, and believed that this pithy observation put the scheme of their upbringing in a nutshell.

The young Chesneys, for their part, knew themselves to be all-important in the world, and they ruled their mother and the house with perfect satisfaction to themselves. It was this, perhaps, which made them resent the fact that Miss Martin had been asked to stav at Upton Holt without their wishes having been consulted on the subject. The boys, newly home from school, could not see why mother wanted to be bothered with a dull old thing with her during their holidays, and Hilda and Laura gave it as their opinion that "little old maids had far better stop at home." But Mrs. Chesney had sent the invitation and received the acceptance before she even broke it to her children that her guest had been invited. Mrs. Chesney was in mourning for an aunt at present, and feeling, as many people do, that an enforced quiet time might be filled up profitably by good deeds, and feeling also that Dora's gentle sympathy was just what she wanted at the present dull moment, she bore the storm of her children's disapproval and merely tried to explain to them gently and kindly that "we must try to think of others," and that Aunt Susan being so-lately dead, they would have to remember that they were in mourning and not expect parties.

"Blow relations!" said Hilda; and her mother thought her remark so amusing and so apt that she repeated it to her friends for days afterwards, and Hilda herself felt that she had said something rather witty and to the point.

When Miss Martin arrived, she was met at the station by Mrs. Chesney, who said, "Tell me all about your dear self," and then occupied the whole of the long drive to the house by giving the little grey spinster a full account of all her real and imaginary troubles. The country during Lent was simply odious, the weather had been wet, and poor Aunt Susan's death was very sad; the butler who had been at Upton for ten years was going to be married and keep a registry office for servants, and Mrs. Chesney hated herself in black.

Miss Martin sympathised as she was expected to do. Perhaps she dwelt a little too long on Lady Susan's death, and gave less attention than it deserved to the butler's departure. But on the whole she was, as usual, an excellent listener, and, moreover, she promised to look out for a new butler in London for Mrs. Chesney.

"It is too kind of you, dear," said the lady. "I would not bother you, but you know how busy I am."

"Oh, but I love to be of use," said her humble friend.

In the evening she trimmed lamp-shades

for the bazaar, and Mrs. Chesney showed her how to do it, and the whole of Good Friday after church time was devoted to sticking small white paper stars, gummed at the back and with prices written in ink upon them, on to the various articles placed in readiness for Mrs. Chesney's stall. Dora was very clever at that sort of thing. She had, indeed, done much of it. She seemed to know by instinct what would fetch five shillings and what had better be marked three and sixpence rather than it should be left unsold to lumber up the house. In her neat way she brought writing materials and paintbrushes to a spare bedroom where the bazaar things were stored, and while Mrs. Chesney advised, she wrote prices and stuck on labels. It was a very fair division of labour, for Mrs. Chesney's advice was always given at some length, and, moreover, it varied so often that it took a considerable time to deliver. When she had altered her mind about one half of the goods arranged on the bed and sofa, she rose and, shaking out some morsels of paper from her black dress, she said half laughingly, half in despair : "Well, I am sick of the whole thing, darling. I believe I will leave you to wreak your wicked will upon the prices; only don't forget to make a list of everything."

Miss Martin got on much more quickly after her friend had left the room, and she could hardly believe it was five o'clock when Hilda came and told her that tea was ready.

"Goodness me, what a lot you have done!" said Miss Hilda.

"Oh, but I have not nearly finished yet," Miss Martin cried.

"I would chuck it, if I were you," quoth Hilda, who had a limited sense of duty.

"Oh, I intend to finish it before I sleep," cried the spinster. Duty was a genuine enthusiasm with her, and most people allowed it to have full sway. She finished sticking on labels at half-past eleven that night, and went to bed triumphant.

"She really is not a bad old thing," said Hilda.

"No, but she loves fussing and being important," said her sister.

The next day there were church decorations to attend to. Mrs. Chesney always spoke reverently of having beautified the sacred building for Easter Day, and she looked pretty and sumptuous when she glanced in at the busy workers on Easter Eve, and said to the Vicar in her graceful, pleasant way: "I hope the gardener has sent you all that you require." Miss Martin, being town bred, genuinely loved the mere handling of flowers, and she tied up great bunches of Lent lilies, and embedded primroses in moss, and glued texts on strips of white cotton in a very helpful manner. She girded herself in a holland apron, pinned up her dress behind, and wore deep holland cuffs round the sleeves of her grey silk blouse. She had visions of a design in white flowers for the pulpit, but was given instead the windows to do.

"I hope you are coming back in the afternoon, Miss Martin," said the Vicar. "I am giving my wife a little rest to-day, as you have joined our band of workers."

Miss Martin had for years found that men liked to rest their wives at her expense.

"I believe I am chaperoning the girls to a party this afternoon," she said. "Colonel Fairfax, who has asked them over to tea, is, I believe, a great friend of theirs."

"Is Colonel Fairfax back?" said the Vicar. "I did not know he had returned from abroad yet. He forsakes us too much in our dull winter-time, but what can you expect?" said the Vicar broad-mindedly. "A man with a large fortune and no ties—" He spread out his hands and let his sentence remain unfinished. "But Filmers is a lovely place," he said; "you will enjoy seeing it. Don't miss the white peacocks." He began to move off down the aisle as he spoke.

"Is there not a Mrs. Fairfax?" questioned the spinster nervously. Most people believed that she was older than her actual number of years, and now and then she became aware of this when, as in this instance, she was asked to chaperon girls to a bachelor's house.

She dressed scrupulously quietly for her afternoon expedition, and put on her black hat.

Colonel Fairfax was delighted to see his young friends and their companion. He would probably have been as delighted to see a company of Choctaw Indians, had they arrived at his house, and would have made them feel perfectly at home amongst his treasures of art and in his beautiful rooms.

Mrs. Chesney had once said of him, feigning a cryptic manner of speaking which had gained for her the character of being more clever than she was : "Colonel Fairfax's manners are too good."

She had been a widow for seven years

now, and Colonel Fairfax had never proposed to her. This was an omission which Mrs. Chesney found difficult to excuse, although she told herself and overyone else that she did not intend to marry again. It may have been a certain universality of courtesy about the tardy lover which piqued his neighbour at Upton Holt. A woman like Mrs. Chesney loves best a bear with a shaggy exterior and one vulnerable white spot just over his heart which only she knows how to touch; but the Colonel, although so charming, lacked in his attentions the touch of individuality which she required.

of individuality which she required. "Who else," she used to say with a pretty woman's frankness and assurance, "would have lived within five miles of me, and have seen me so constantly as he has done, and yet have remained merely courteous and polite?

"He would be charming to a cat!" she said impatiently, and decided to allow the children to go to Filmers without her.

"Well, how did you get on?" she asked them, when they returned in the motor-car.

They professed themselves satisfied with the treatment they had received, and Mrs. Chesney then turned to her guest and said : "How did you like our attractive neighbour, Dora?"

"I do not think I ever met such a man before," said Miss Martin.

The unguarded statement was a mistake. Hilda said : "Miss Martin is struck all of a heap." And Mrs. Chesney, with a good nature which strove to mask her amusement, exclaimed : "Oh, we must ask him to lunch ; but I must warn you, dear, that you are one of a crowd of worshippers."

Miss Martin blushed in a manner all too juvenile, and said painfully: "Perhaps I do not move about in the world a great deal, or see charming men very often, but I think it must spoil one for anyone else to have for a friend a man like Colonel Fairfax."

"He is a very hard-hearted person really," said the widow vivaciously.

Perhaps she was glad of an excuse to ask the Colonel over to lunch—the afternoon when the children had gone to tea at Filmers had been very dull—but she put the invitation on the score of her friend's presence in the house, and wrote a pathetic pale-grey note to say: "Do come and cheer up two lonely women." And the Colonel replied that he would be delighted to come on Easter Monday.

Children always regard romance as a

comedy. The young Chesneys advised Miss Martin to put on her best dress in honour of Colonel Fairfax's visit, and were full of little jokes which were difficult to parry. Harold, with clumsy, schoolboy humour, asked, "When it was to be?" and Phil said he had no money for wedding presents.

"Oh, children, please stop," said Miss Martin.

When Easter Monday came, and she knew that her appearance in the dining-room was inevitable, this poor spinster found herself in an agony of shyness which she could not control. To appear in the drawing-room before luncheon was an impossibility, and she waited till everyone had gone into the dining-room, and then, opening the door a very little way so as to escape observation, she crept to her seat, and felt that she was providing exquisite amusement for her young friends. Colonel Fairfax was seated with his back to the door, and she had a moment of painful embarrassment, wondering if he had seen her, and whether she should bow to him across the table or stop at his place and shake hands.

She bowed, and had time to realise that his cordiality so far exceeded her own that it gave her reason for shame. Even the servants must have noticed how awkwardly she had behaved.

Coffee was always served in the conservatory—flower-filled, smelling richly of hyacinths and fragrant—which opened off the drawing-room. Thither the two ladies and the Colonel went and sat until the children mysteriously appeared at the doorway and requested their mother to come at once and look at something in the garden.

"Are we all to come?" said Miss Martin, rising nervously.

"No, no, it is something quite private," said the giggling young people, as they linked arms with their mother and led her down the garden path.

One terrible sentence was borne in on Miss Martin's ears: "Let us leave them together."

She covered her face with her hands for one brief awful moment.

"Do you take an interest in engravings?" said the Colonel.

Perhaps he had not heard, perhaps he was only feigning not to hear. She would never know. Language might seem exaggerated which would attempt to describe Miss Martin's feelings.

"I am very fond of them," she said, in a low voice.

"It is my chief hobby," said the Colonel.

Would he be chivalrous enough to believe that this *tête-à-tête* had not been planned by her ?.

"Do not mistake me; I do not possess a single engraving," she said, in a headlong way, "but I study them when I can, and I read about them."

He spoke of some recent purchases of his, and particularly of a Miss Penelope Martin. lately acquired, who most romantically proved to be Dora's great-grandmother.

When would the children come back? Miss Martin would like them to see her sitting composedly talking of engravings. She sat bolt upright in her chair, and hoped that the dignity of her position would convince them of her perfect ease, did they happen to look through the glass of the conservatory.

"I shall send you that print, if you will allow me," Colonel Fairfax was saying. believe such things ought to be in the family to which they belong.'

Miss Martin, who rarely got a present, and whose gratitude was notorious, hardly unbent even to say "Thank you."

The engraving, a valuable one, arrived that very evening and was handed to her as she sat at meat." "How too exciting !" the children said, ready with knives and offers of help to undo knots. Miss Martin would have given much to have opened the parcel in secret. She knew her fingers trembled a little as she said, with well-disguised indifference: "I believe it is an engraving of my great-grandmother's picture that Colonel Fairfax said something to me about."

Her pride was up now. She attempted, very badly, a casual manner, put the picture on one side, and said : "Very civil of him." "Hullo," said Harold, coming in late for

dinner, " is that from the admirer ? "

"Harold ! Harold !" said Mrs. Chesney reprovingly, while she shook her head. will not have Miss Martin teased."

Miss Martin choked a little, and was handed some water by Harold.

Phil said at bed-time : "Shall I carry the picture up to your room, Miss Martin?" And he put it elaborately upon a chintzcovered chair and told her she would be able . to see it the first thing in the morning.

"What does it feel like, having an admirer?" he asked.

"It feels as if it were time little boys were in bed," replied Miss Martin playfully, and wished she could have thought of a better retort.

In the morning she found Miss Penelope smiling at her from the chair on which Phil had placed her, her back against the chintz back of the chair, and the beautiful face looking out from the frame. The chief difficulty, when duty and sacrifice had decided to have it their own way, as they invariably did so decide it with Dora Martin, was to get the picture returned to Filmers. She was afraid to let the servants take it. in case of an accident to it, and because, moreover, the return of the picture would then be made public; and, having no maid or messenger of her own to employ, Miss Martin secretly stepped forth very soon after breakfast, and long before Mrs. Chesney was down, and rapidly covering the distance between her present abode and Colonel Fairfax's park, she left the engraving and an incoherent little message with it, at the lodge, and then almost fled from the place straight into the arms of Colonel Fairfax, who was walking home through the wood.

"I hope you have been to call upon me," he said in his notoriously charming way.

"No, no, indeed," exclaimed Miss Martin.

"Can I do anything for you?" he said. The sight of a young lady at his park gates made him perhaps wonder what it was that had brought her thither.

"Nothing, nothing, indeed," said Miss Martin earnestly.

The lodge-keeper came out of her little house, picture in hand, soap-suds on arm, and having curtsied to the Colonel and excused herself to Miss Martin, she remarked that "Lizzie" was such a one for taking messages all wrong, and was the picture to be sent to the house or kept at the lodge to be called for ?

Miss Martin looked up into the face of the man before her dumbly and helplessly.

"I hoped you would keep it," he said-"that is, if she is worthy of a place on your walls."

Despair filled the spinster's heart. How could she take back the picture to Upton Holt? What would be said if she was found returning with it? How could she explain her absence this morning? Worse still, how could she explain to Colonel Fairfax her reasons for returning his gift? Through sheer bewilderment she stood where she was

in the road, just outside the park gates. "It is far too valuable," she said at last, hanging her head like a child.

"Shall we take it up to the house and get it wrapped up in paper and string?"

"Oh, thank you, thank you, yes," said Miss Martin nervously. "No one will know what it is if we wrap it up in paper."

"You must come in and see my sister," he said.

Miss Martin became calmer. She began to feel the ground beneath her feet once more. Colonel Fairfax carried the picture, talking all the time until the hall-door was reached.

"I have come only for a piece of brown paper and string," said Miss Martin to the butler, before even his master could get in a word. "I won't come in, thank you."

"You cannot tie up a picture with brown paper and string on the doorstep," said the Colonel, smiling slightly.

"It really does not matter a bit about the string," Miss Martin went on, stumbling badly and feeling that she was making enormous concessions. "Please don't let him trouble about the string. I can hold it like this. Look."

He took it out of her fluttering hands and handed it to the butler. Then Mrs. Manners appeared and proposed lunch, and a telephone message was sent to Mrs. Chesney to explain the cause of her guest's delay. Dora never knew how it happened or what she ate for luncheon. Personal consciousness was restored when she found herself in the motor-car driving home, and had time to wonder what the children would say.

"I believe the old thing is positively smitten," said Harold to his mother that night. "Do ask him to dinner and let us see them together."

She yielded and sent him a note, and when he rode over himself the next day, on his way to the last meet of the season, she entered into the spirit of the fun that was going on, and asked Dora if she would be a dear and go down and speak to the Colonel for a moment, as she was busy.

Miss Martin, having probably been sent on many messages in her life, never dreamed of the possibility of declining one. She fluttered out on to the doorstep, apologised elaborately for Mrs. Chesney's absence, said that she was quite sure that lady would be delighted that Colonel Fairfax was able to come to dinner, and asked if there was any other message which she could convey upstairs for Colonel Fairfax.

"But I have brought you out into the cold already," he said, "and I am half afraid that I may have interrupted your breakfast."

"No, no." Miss Martin had finished long ago. Could she be of service ?

"Mrs. Chesney had a letter from my sister, a little while ago, about a butler." (Mrs. Chesney always asked half a score of people to do the same errand for her, and if, in the language of the Charity Organisation, "their ministrations overlapped," the widow's thanks were sufficiently pretty to repay the trouble which had been taken in vain.) "My sister has asked me to retrieve her letter, as it contains the man's written credentials, which are now required by him in pursuit of another engagement. But I have no business to trouble you with my errand," said the Colonel. He had dismounted from his He had dismounted from his horse, and now stood with its bridle through his arm by the broad stone steps in front of the hall-door at Upton Holt. He looked at his horse as if to say: "I cannot lead him But here is William." he said. upstairs. "William shall take my sister's note to Mrs. Chesney, and that will explain everything."

The footman ran down the steps to take the missive, and disappeared with it into the interior of the house, and Mrs. Chesney, who was quite determined to punish her neighbour, kept him waiting a full twenty minutes before she sent the required reply.

Miss Martin, descending to the gravel, patted the hunter's soft nose and would like to have given him a bit of sugar, but was not quite sure if that was fit treatment for hunters, said he had a nice head, and ought he to be kept waiting in the cold ? Finally, she strolled to the lodge gates and back with Colonel Fairfax, engaging in brilliant conversation with him, while he listened, asked questions, and bent his head sometimes to catch her replies.

The children came out in a body to meet them on their return to the house. They had their mother's note with them, and were only too evidently acting a scene which they had prepared beforehand.

"Ôh, Colonel Fairfax, mother is so sorry to have kept you waiting so long, and she hopes you won't be late for the meet, and here is Mrs. Manners's note, and she trusts Miss Martin has entertained you properly."

"Miss Martin has entertained me most charmingly," said the soldier gravely.

"... And poor little Martin blushed up to her eyes again," they said; in retailing the incident to their mother. "It was the funniest thing you ever saw."

"Dora must not make herself ridiculous," said Mrs. Chesney.

It happened that the first of April fell that year in Easter week, on the following Friday, in fact, that being the day after Mrs. Chesney's little dinner-party, to which Colonel Fairfax, the Vicar and his wife, and a young subaltern from the depôt at Brossingham were invited. The subaltern took Miss Martin in to dinner, and felt aggrieved thereby; but as he talked of nothing but his own interests, his hunting, his cricket, his home, his prospects, his ambitions, and his ponies, and she listened, he almost forgave her before the end of the meal for being a little old maid with pathetic eyes.

The young Chesneys dined downstairs with their mother, as a rule, but they did not appear when guests were present. Guests were a grievance with them, and when they were cross at being kept outside, they sometimes perpetrated clever little practical jokes upon the opera cloaks and overcoats left downstairs, and as their mother believed that all high-spirited children played practical jokes, they seldom received the correction which their guests believed they deserved. To-night, as they sat in the schoolroom, they concocted one of the most splendid hoaxes that had ever been thought of. But it was to be a great secret; not even their mother was to know anything about it.

Harold was the first to make the suggestion, but it was Hilda who elaborated upon it. Harold said : "Let's get that photograph of Colonel Fairfax in the drawing-room and send it to Miss Martin as an April hoax."

The idea was received with enthusiasm until Hilda's more daring scheme threw it into the shade.

"To-morrow's All Fools' Day," she said ; "let's write her a letter pretending to be from Colonel Fairfax, asking her to marry him."

"I am perfectly certain I could copy his writing," said Harold.

Children are not far-sighted. Beyond Miss Martin's surprise when the mid-day post came in, and their own shouts of "All Fools' Day," they saw nothing and imagined nothing. It was a joke, and jokes must be played on people like Miss Martin.

Her sensitiveness was in itself an excuse for joking. The old idea of torture as a form of amusement is still strong in many immature minds. It is, perhaps, not intentionally cruel. Someone must caper and make them laugh.

"I do not believe she ever got a proposal in her life," quoth Hilda, pretty, and with already a small collection of juvenile scalps at her girdle.

"We must be in the room when she reads it," cried Laura, a lover of sensation. They wished with all their hearts they could have got their letter off by the early post, but it was too late to send it now. But stop ! Mr. Levitt, from the barracks at Brossingham, would be motoring back after dinner and would post their letter for them. They must quickly avail themselves of every moment that was in hand. Some correspondence of the Colonel's must be produced in order to copy his neat handwriting. "But I don't suppose she has ever seen a line of his in her life, so we need not be too particular," said the children.

"Yes, there was the address on that parcel which came for her."

"I should not wonder a bit if she had kissed his handwriting," said Laura, "and tied up the brown paper with a bit of pink ribbon."

Their labours took them till nearly ten o'clock. Unstamped notepaper had to be procured from the housekeeper, a quill pen such as the Colonel always wrote with, and some sealing-wax to show the privacy of the epistle. Each one of the children had his or her own opinion of what a love-letter ought to be. Harold said : "We must make it exactly like himself, and it must be frightfully kind and sort of tender of other people's feelings."

"Oh, and it must *grovel*," said Laura, who was a young person of observation. "Colonel Fairfax would be sure to write a kind of 'Deign-to-accept,' 'Empty-hands' proposal."

"And he must see the seriousness of it," quoth Hilda. "I am not at all sure that the Colonel is not like one of the heroes of Miss Yonge's books"—Hilda had never been favourably impressed by Miss Yonge—"and would advise her to think very gravely of the step she was going to take."

step she was going to take." "Capital !" The phrase was adopted by Harold, the penman of the letter.

When it was finished, Hilda was still certain that it was not humble enough, and a postscript was added: "I am sure I am not good enough for you, but I love you with all my heart."

Other remarks were suggested, but time was getting on. The handwriting, at least, was extraordinarily well done; the idea of posting the letter at Brossingham was a chance piece of good luck which they could never have designed for themselves. Brossingham was the post town for Filmers. Had it been sent to the village, Miss Martin might have suspected something. There was a midnight post out from the larger centre. Colonel Fairfax, returning from the dinner-party, having spent the evening in Miss Martin's society, would just have had time to write his letter and despatch it after getting home.

Of course there was some difficulty in getting an interview with Mr. Levitt without being seen by anyone else. All depended upon that. Suppose Colonel Fairfax and he were to come into the hall together, how would they get a chance of asking him to post their letter? Suppose even a footman were present! Might he not tell tales afterwards? The girls agreed to watch the stairs, and Harold had a device for engaging the footman's attention while Phil made his request.

These deep-laid plans were, however, unnecessary, as it turned out; for Mrs. Chesney forgot to ring the bell when the young soldier rose to go, and the children descended in a body to the hall. He wished them "Good evening" and asked why they had not appeared in the drawing-room.

"We hate visitors," said Harold frankly.

"It is a pity you have come to see me," said the young man grimly.

"We have come to ask you a favour," said Harold.

"It probably won't be granted," he said, grinning.

Mrs. Chesney might understand her children; Mr. Levitt did not attempt to do so, and disliked them cordially.

"Would you mind posting a letter for us in Brossingham?" said Hilda. "We will never forget it afterwards, if you do."

"You put sawdust in my coat pockets, the last time I was here," said Mr. Levitt, "and I am not at all sure I am going to do anything for you."

"Harold put it in," said Phil.

"Well, don't snivel and tell tales," said this severe young man. "I dare say you wanted to do it all the time."

The step of a footman could be heard, and Miss Hilda Chesney, proving herself a woman of action, thrust the envelope into the pocket of the young man's motor-coat and said entreatingly: "Do post it for us; it is most important."

^{*} I don't mind posting it, if I don't forget," the hard-hearted young man replied. And Phil ran down the front-door steps to where the chauffeur sat behind two flashing acetylene lamps, and said : " Don't forget to stop at the post-office, Bryant; there is a letter to post." And Bryant touched his peaked cap and promised that it should not be forgotten.

Now, on the morrow, a piece of very hard luck overtook the young conspirators, for Miss Martin's letters were sent up to her room. They could have cried with disappointment. It was almost solely with the view to seeing her face as she read the letter that they had laid their deep designs. But some interfering busybody had placed Dora's morning post on her early breakfast tray, and in the privacy of her own room there was no one to witness her blushes or to laugh when the full point of the joke was made known to her.

Miss Martin, as a matter of fact, did not appear at breakfast. Mrs. Chesney never came down till eleven o'clock.

"Look here," said Phil, "don't let us leave the thing too long. I mean, we ought to let her know it is a hoax soon, or she may be getting idiotic ideas into her head."

For the first time it struck them that an explanation might be difficult.

"You cut along up to her room and explain," said Harold to Laura.

^{*} I do not see why I should go," said Laura.

"Always disobliging," snapped her brother. "Well, Hilda, you go."

"But—I don't know what to say," said the girl.

Phil suggested that she should go up behind the door and say, "Pooh! April fool, April fool!" and then run away.

"Well, I am not going," said Hilda.

Then Phil must go. Phil was the youngest, and little brothers must be obedient, and he had better do what he was told— "Cheeky little beast!"

" I had not more to do with it than you had," said Phil vigorously.

"You had better tell tales as you did last night," said his brother.

The gibe stung the boy, who sought the bedroom quarters of the house, and returned to say that Miss Martin was not in her room.

Goodness gracious, where could she be?

The housemaid was able to inform them that their guest had received her letters, had written one, and then, the housemaid believed, had walked to the post with it herself.

"Good Heavens alive!" cried the dear children.

It was going to be more serious than they had supposed.

They stayed in the play-room and held an



"He had taken both her hands in his and kissed them."

informal meeting to decide what had better be done. Suppose Miss Martin, in her haste to secure the Colonel without a moment's delay, had answered his letter at once and had taken it to the post herself, what would happen ?

"If he gets her letter, we are done for !" said the children.

It was impossible to intercept it. The ten o'clock mail from the village must ere now have gone out, and would be taken to Brossingham and from thence, by the early morning delivery, to Filmers. In the name of goodness, what was to be done? The Colonel was an indulgent friend, but he had queer ideas. A good chap, but not a mild one when you really knew him, and Filmers was not very far removed from Paradise ! Would he ever ask them over there again? It was all too horrible to think of. Harold had a wild idea of riding over on his pony, interviewing the butler, and begging that Miss Martin's letter might not be handed to his master. But the Colonel got piles of letters, and how could Miss Martin's be distinguished from the others? Also it was one of his peculiarities to be very particular about letters. Laura had an idea that they should write a joint epistle and throw themselves on his mercy.

"Mercy !" quoth Hilda. "I don't believe he would be merciful in a case like this."

"Besides," said Phil, "he has always been frightfully nice to Miss Martin, and would probably think we ought not to rag her."

Mrs. Chesney had never known her children more quiet than they were that Once she almost thought they must day. be ill, and she begged for Dora's sympathy on the subject, and found that Dora's sympathy was not forthcoming. Dora also appeared to be ill, or else the whole household was dull and stupid, and Mrs. Chesney longed for Easter to be over to get back to London again. Miss Martin had been asked to prolong her visit till the following Wednesday, but if she was not going to be sympathic and useful, there did not seem much object in her remaining at Upton Holt.

"Dora is becoming self-centred," said the lady to herself.

The evening that followed was in every sense a miserable one. Mrs. Chesney accused her two girls of sitting like little white heaps without saying anything, and she tried to beguile her boys into their usual good spirits by suggesting a game of cards. This was declined, and they went to bed early. Their departure was made an excuse by Miss Martin for going to her room also. She said "Good night," and murmured something incoherent about being overtired, and then, standing in the middle of the room, she said awkwardly: "Could you—may I it would be so kind of you if you would let me have a few white flowers to-morrow."

"For a wreath?" said Mrs. Chesney, putting the right tone of sympathy into her voice, and waiting to see if it would be appropriated, without, however, caring to hear particularly of a bereavement.

"No, no," said the agitated lady, "just a few to put in vases, you understand."

Mrs. Chesney, left alone in her drawingroom, felt very justly that she was an ill-used woman, and wondered what was coming over everybody.

Meanwhile Colonel Fairfax, having called by chance at Brossingham for his letters, was scratching his head over a missive which said : "Please come and see me; it will be so much easier to talk than to write. I shall be in the garden-room all the morning."

He was a magistrate, and had meant to sit on the Bench the following day; but he went instead to see a lady who was evidently in trouble of some sort, and found her in the garden-room, a place detached from the rest of the house and seldom entered by anyone. He rode round by the stable-yard, gave his horse to a groom, and without going through the formality of ringing the front-door bell, he went by a familiar path across the garden and knocked at the door of the pretty room, half summer-house, half studio, which was built there.

The first thing which he noticed when he entered was the profusion of white flowers which decorated the place. As he appeared to be alone, he wandered from hyacinth to narcissus, and admired a tub of flowering orange-blossom that stood in the window. Having made his little tour of the plants, he sat down, running his fingers through his hair, laid smooth through the pressure of his hat, and then, glancing round, he became aware of little Miss Martin, half hidden by the curtains of the window.

"Ah, I see you are here before me," he said, with a certain studied cheerfulness in his voice, which a small lady in trouble might find encouraging.

And then a very unexpected thing happened, for the lady came forward and, taking both his hands in hers, she said : "I could not write; I had to see you."

"And I," he said, "was more than glad to come.'

"You have not thought better of it?"

"Indeed, I have not," he said, smiling; "I am altogether at your service."

"I cannot believe it, I cannot believe it !" said Miss Martin. Her eyes were brimming with tears, and even her smile was uncertain. He believed that she was overstrung, and laid a kind hand upon her shoulder.

"But you know there is nothing I would not do for you," he said reassuringly.

"I have been unloved all my life," said Miss Martin.

Colonel Fairfax sat down. He had frequently been consulted about love affairs before, and now he knew that, in spite of the tears welling up into brown eyes, the story was to be a happy one. He found himself moved by a large tenderness towards the woman who had at last found love, and he sat down beside her on a small settee and took her hand in his.

"Always I have thought what a good gift it would be, always I have hoped-I don't mind telling you-that someone, someone whom perhaps no one else wanted would come to care for me, and that he and I might be happy together; but I never dreamed, I never could have dreamed that anything like this would have happened."

The Colonel waited to hear more, and kept her hand where it lay in his. The smell of spring flowers made the whole room fragrant, and now the sun shone full in at the windows, and a pair of starlings busy nest-building chattered and chuckled beneath the eaves. Miss Martin sat close beside him on the little sofa, and the confidence and simplicity of the action touched him. He did not seek to press her trembling confidences, but waited for her to speak again.

"You will think, perhaps, that I am too humble," she began, "and that a woman who is asked for her love should not show how deeply she esteems the favour. But, indeed, I have nothing to offer-nothing to match what you have given me."

Colonel Fairfax sat upon the sofa quite still and upright, with his fingers still locked He did not seek to disturb her in hers. hand, but waited, while the clock ticked loudly on the mantelpiece, and the starlings chuckled over some little joke of their own. The Colonel had blue-grey eyes such as all colonels of romance possess. Their expression was so puzzled that he kept them turned away from the woman beside him. He fixed them instead upon the flowers in the room

and on the bright patch of sunlight on the carpet.

"You do not know what a bad bargain you are making," the eager, gentle voice went on. "Just think of it! You have never had a rival! Nobody has ever wanted to marry me before."

He raised his disengaged hand and passed it over his forehead. The fingers which Miss Martin held in her warm and ardent grasp remained undisturbed.

"I am poor and quite plain, although I believe I used once to be pretty," she went "Mrs. Chesney calls me her little grey on. spinster, and I have sometimes thought that was a very good name for me. All my life has been a little grey," she said.

"You have been very brave," he murmured. Ah, but brave !" she cried. "It is easy enough to be brave, perhaps, when someone is looking on. No one, I think, but you, could ever have seen that it requires a little courage to live through dull years."

"I sometimes think," he said gently, "that that is where a woman's courage shows itself."

He spoke to gain time, and absently, and the lady by his side went on happily : "When I saw you first, it seemed to me that you were like those heroes that one reads of in books, and I thought that all my life would be better and perhaps braver for having known you. One has one's ideals," she went on a little incoherently.

"And then," he said, still more gently, " what happened ?"

"Then I loved you with all my heart, but how could I think you would love me? When your letter came—"

"When my letter came," he repeated.

"And you told me that you cared for me -well, then I think Heaven opened. That phrase seems always a very foolish one," she said simply, "until Heaven does indeed open, and then one knows what it means."

There was a long pause, until from a heart too full for silence, the words bubbled forth again. "Always I have felt that love was there-I mean in my heart-and it was like some great reservoir which no one ever drew from, until at last you came and unlocked the gates of it, and all the pent-up waters rushed forth." Miss Martin broke down suddenly and said : "I do not know why it has happened to me. Since I got your letter yesterday morning, I do not think I have been on earth at all." She began to smile, and said : "I do not think my feet touch the ground properly."

She drew out a letter from her pocket and kissed it gravely, as a Crusader may have kissed the hilt of his sword.

"You got my letter yesterday?" he asked. "Yes," she said eagerly. "You think, perhaps, that you were too late in posting it at Brossingham; but if so, there must have been a special delivery for this precious letter."

He took it and looked gravely at the post-mark. "I see," he said, "that it caught the late post."

It may be that something in his steady voice awoke some trembling fear within her. The eyes that swam with happiness before looked blankly at the world for a minute, and then Dora Martin slipped from the sofa and kneeled at Colonel Fairfax's feet. " T have something to pray of you," she said, " and I pray it more earnestly than anything that I have ever prayed before. If it was an impulse, if you have changed your mind, or ever should change your mind, will you promise to tell me? I do entreat this of you. Do not think of the pain that you would be causing me. I should still have to-day and yesterday to look back upon. I should still have it as a blessed remembrance that you once loved me, and all that I should then ask you would be that you should forgive me for having loved you first and for loving you so much." Probably, if time were reckoned properly,

Probably, if time were reckoned properly, it would be true to observe that years passed in the silence of the room. The chuckling starlings flew away, and the white flowers, which Dora had placed on the windowledges and tables, filled the room with their almost plaintive fragrance. Outside in the garden every leaf was aburst, yellow crocuses lay like golden weddingrings round the flower-beds, and Lent lilies, kept back by some cold March winds, were unfolding their yellow petals to the sun. The joyousness of the day was a palpable thing, the blue of the sky came down to the very edge of the garden. Quite suddenly a lark rose from a copse near by and, fluttering heavenward, burst into a rapture of song. Inside the room Dora Martin still kneeled with bent head and with bridal flowers all about her.

The Colonel bent over her for a moment; she found that he had taken both her hands in his and kissed them. Then he raised her up from where she kneeled, and the two stood side by side for a minute without speaking.

"You are too good to me," he said at last, "and I thank you for loving me so much."

He was just as humble as the children said he would be.

The marriage, which astonished half the county, never found an explanation. The Chesneys still continue to go to Filmers, but there has passed away a glory from their visits. The children almost sneak into the house now, and there is a certain library where, last first of April, they sat on four chairs during one awful afternoon, which place has been avoided by them ever since.

Her high-spirited children are, Mrs. Chesney thinks, a little bit afraid of Dora since she married. "Had it been the Colonel," she says, "I could have understood it, for he is often rather severe, but poor little Dora—"





THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

By J. G. BLACK

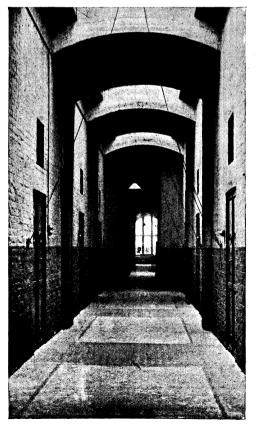
Photographs by the Sport and General Press Agency.

THE spacious building at the Fleet Street end of Chancery Lane, which has been recently discovered to the public eye by the removal of Serjeant's Inn, is the Record Office. In this vast repository there are over twenty-six miles of shelves tightly packed with documents, mostly written on parchment, and a large extension of the building is already in contemplation. This mass of documents represents the accumulations of about seven centuries. Starting as a very small snowball in the reign of King John, it has reached its present gigantic proportions in a comparatively short period.

With the exception of a few Saxon Charters, Domesday Book (1086), and one or two Pipe Rolls of the Exchequer, there are few records earlier than the time of John. John was the first of our monarchs to inaugurate a system of recording every public transaction, from the gift of a tun of wine to a treaty with France, from the delivery of a petty gaol to the inquisition into a vast inheritance. As nothing is so annoying as the enumeration of a man's possessions, especially when ill-gotten, it is not unlikely that the irritation which grew between King John and the Barons, and ultimately ended in war, was fostered, amongst other things, by the King's system of record. Anyhow, it should be remembered that King John, whose memory is not one of much honour, was practically the founder of our records, of which we boast as the finest collection in the world.

It is difficult to realise that these very rolls and parchments, which now repose permanently in the Record Office in Chancery Lane, once accompanied the restless John wherever he went. As he scarcely ever slept three nights together in the same bed, they travelled with him all over England and Normandy, and there is little doubt that a large number were lost, towards the end of his reign, in the Wash.

It had been the same in the time of John's



THE OLD ARCHWAY INCORPORATED IN THE NEW FRONTAGE.

father, Henry II. The King gave his personal attention to every detail; every document of importance was viewed by him before the King's seal was attached. It is related of Henry II. that once, in Normandy, a charter was read in his Court of Frenchspeaking barons and others who accompanied the King wherever he went, and this charter contained strange English terms which the courtiers could not understand, such as tol and team, infangthef, tenmantale, and flitwite, and King Henry II. took the document and expounded these strange terms to his astonished Court.

In the reign of Henry II. the Courts of Common Pleas, King's Bench, and Exchequer began to have a permanent residence at Westminster; still a quantity of records travelled about with the King in the company of the judges, treasurers, and state secretaries, and this continued in a much larger measure, as we have seen, in the reigns of John and of his son, Henry III., so that the Court was never at a loss for precedents as occasion arose.

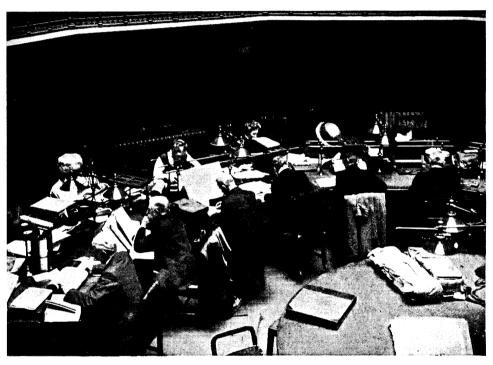
As business accumulated, the personal superintendence of the King necessarily diminished. In the reign of Henry III., when the political murder of the Earl

A CORRIDOR.

Marshal was accomplished, the King burst into tears at the news of his death. "By what authority," he exclaimed, "has this been done?" "You sealed the warrants yourself," said the Prime Minister's son, Peter de Rivallis, one of the conspirators. "Sealed !" exclaimed the King. "How do I know what I seal? Out of my sight, lest with these hands I pluck your eyes from your head !"

At other times, however, the King "remembers" that certain things were done in his Court, and his memory is verified by reference to the records. removed again. There they have remained, and been tabulated and arranged by Keepers of the Rolls, chamberlains, and other officials, ransacked by writers such as Prynne and Clarendon, Rushworth, Dodsworth, and Dugdale, until they were brought together under one roof in the present Record Office in the year 1852.

in the year 1852. As each Department of State gets overburdened with an accumulation of records which it can no longer use, the surplus is removed to the Record Office, and although many tons of duplicates and formal and useless documents are destroyed there every



THE PUBLIC SEARCH ROOM.

In the course of time, as the accumulation of records went on, it became more and more necessary to find permanent homes for them —in the Palace of Westminster, the Chapter House of the Abbey, the Tower of London and they ceased to be carted about the country—at any rate, in bulk. When, however, Edward I., at the time of the Scotch Wars, took up his abode for more than two years at York, the whole of the records, as well as the Courts of Westminster, were transported thither, and the same thing happened in the reign of Edward III.

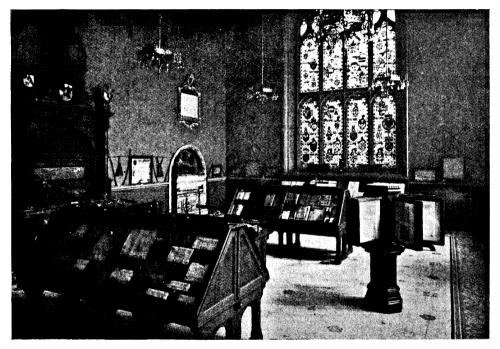
After the Scotch Wars, they were returned to Westminster and the Tower, and never year, the accumulation naturally goes on at an alarming rate.

The arrangement, tabulation, and indexing of the ancient records went on continuously through the centuries by Ayloffe, Palmer, and others, but no attempt was made to deal with the bulk systematically until the Record Commission of 1800, which published over a hundred ponderous folio volumes.

Since the establishment of the present Record Office, the work has gone on apace, especially during the reign of the present Deputy Keeper, Sir Henry Maxwell Lyte. Nevertheless, an enormous amount remains to be done. Writers like Carlyle, Macaulay, Freeman, Froude, and Stubbs have wailed and especially Carlyle—over these monstrous piles of documents which are practically inaccessible until they have been arranged and indexed, and a Royal Commission is at present sitting to consider, amongst other things, means of expediting the work. The work is bound to accumulate, for the simple reason that for every year of the past dealt with, two years' documents have accumulated, which will require to be dealt with in the future.

But there is another aspect of the question. The Record Office does not exist for its own erudition, but it is already fifty years old, and new material has been unearthed since. The fact is, that the tremendous labour cannot be done by mere journeymen. Freeman was ever repining that he was not an expert at palaeography, and the expert at the Record Office is ever repining that he has not the time and energy to work into historic value the piles of material which he has prepared. That can never be effectively done except by men of genius, and it is obvious that men of genius are as rare now as ever they were.

Nevertheless, progress can be made and



THE MUSEUM. Formerly the Chapel of the House of Converts.

ends; it is only preparing the way for historians, economists, and other writers. The Record Office may pipe to its heart's content, but if these do not dance, what avails their piping. There is already fully prepared a mass of documents which have not been utilised. The same feeble traditional histories are still taught in our schools and colleges—the same erroneous or partial views echoed by one writer and another.

Now and then adequate use is made of the already existing mass of available records by such men as Maitland, Pollock, and Pike, but such men are rare. Stubbs's Constitutional History remains a work of monumental

County histories, once so is being made. largely monuments of human folly, are now being written with larger views and more scientific intention. A great undertaking was begun, some years ago, in the Victoria County Histories of England. In this, an attempt has been made at a uniform treatment of all the counties by the hands of a large number of collaborators, who, in addition to expert knowledge of their special subjects, possess local knowledge of their particular county. The geology, botany, and natural history of every county is treated separately-a plan which involves a good deal of repetition. It is not very illuminating

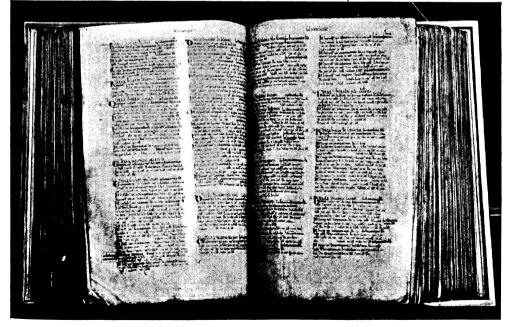


CHEST USED TO HOLD DOMESDAY BOOK.

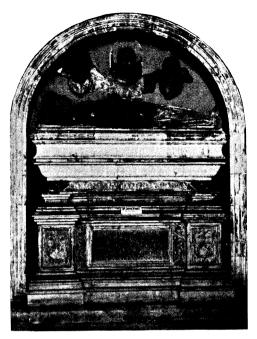
to find chronicled in several counties that the common or garden cabbage is cultivated there, and that the common yellow butterfly has its habitat in that cabbage. Nevertheless, the results of scientific investigations in these subjects are adequately summed up in these histories, often with deep appreciation of the special local conditions. After these subjects have been dealt with, there follow disquisitions on prehistoric man, Roman, British, and Saxon remains, with excellent maps and plans of the spots in each county where such remains have been discovered. Next, they proceed to attack the period when records first commence; and each county contains a studious analysis of the first great record, the Domesday Book, relating to the particular county, with a full translation, and in some cases an index, which together make no inconsiderable bulk of these volumes.

During the last twenty years the Domesday Book has received an enormous amount of study, especially at the hands of Dr. J. Horace Round, who has not only embodied the results of all his patient study to the account of his own county, Essex, but also exercises supervision over the rest of the counties. Then follow histories of the church, the religious houses, the schools and education, industries and trades, sports and games, public and domestic architecture for every county, and the whole work concludes with a complete topography of the county. Already about sixty large volumes have been published.

In all this, countless references are made to the records, and no statement is made without the quotation of some record in



DOMESDAY BOOK.



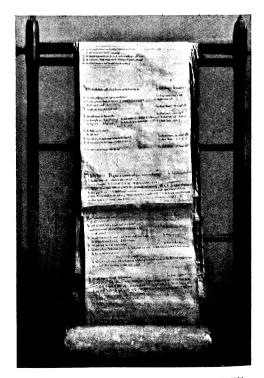
MONUMENT TO DR. JOHN YONG, MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

proof. Thus a mass of evidence has been collected and arranged which will form a permanent source of reference for more general and scientific works of the future.

It may be objected by some that all this labour has little bearing on the great questions of our day, that all these people and institutions have been long dead and might well be forgotten, and that many of us are tired of these eternal precedents, which are, after all, mostly obstacles in the way of progress. But the spirit of the past overshadows the present, as well in cultured as in barbarous races, and works for good as well as for evil. The longer you live, the dearer grow the memories of your early days; and the further you have wandered, the more touching are the thoughts of home. You never forget the fields, the woods, the brooks, or the shore of your childhood, and the race does not want to forget the home of its forefathers. The Americans, so much more removed than ourselves from Old England, are perhaps keener to know of these things for that reason. Again, it is human association which adds a special charm to every spot, even to those which are lovely in themselves. Just as Stevenson notes with. distress that in the beautiful Polynesian Islands you can scarcely move because every spot is taboo for some reason or other, so we

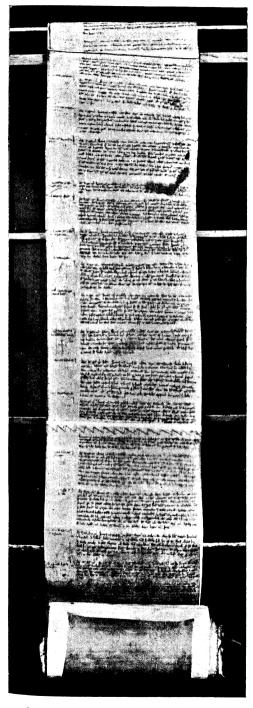
note with very different feelings that there is not a spot in England which is not made more interesting and charming by numerous associations with the past.

As the knowledge of these things increases, interest grows keener. Pageants and ceremonials excite popular attention. The coronation ceremony of our kings is watched with unwonted interest; people even want to know the meaning of the installation of a bishop, and are willing to revive the bygone games and simple morality plays of our ancient villages. The opening of Parliament excites the keenest curiosity; people want to know the symbolic meaning of the quaint ceremonial. The history of the two Houses of Parliament is becoming a matter of the keenest interest. People want to know how the one High Court of They see Parliament ever became two. pictures of the one House of Parliament as it assembled together in 1337, and a few years afterwards they see the Lords and Commons sitting separately in two different chambers, the Lords sometimes sitting in the Painted Chamber, and sometimes the Commons occupying the Painted Chamber. while the Lords take the White Hall; at another time, the Commons sitting in the



PIPE ROLL OF THE EXCHEQUER, DATED 1155-1156.

Chapter House at the Abbey, or, again, in St. Stephen's Chapel. Then they see a further development — the Lords sitting



ROLL OF THE REIGN OF JOHN, DATED 1199.

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ISSUE ROLL OF. THE REIGN OF HENRY III., DATED 1240.

permanently in the White Hall, the Commons in St. Stephen's Chapel, and the Painted Chamber reserved as a common ground for the King to meet both Houses in. Further, people want to know the origin of the Veto; they are anxious to make proper distinctions, and wish to judge what is growth, and what is usurpation in the history of the two Houses. The truth of these things can be learned at the Record Office, not out of the mouths of Cabinet Ministers or party leaders.

Claims and proceedings at the Coronation of His Most Sacred Majesty dward the severth led migdowi of B.

THE CORONATION ROLL OF EDWARD VII.

Thousands of other questions are waiting for elucidation in the same way—land tenure, common rights, taxation, and so forth. Every parson in the country is interested in the history of his parish, and especially of his church. In every county there is an archæological society studying the thousand and one points of local history with the same bland affection as the late Mr. Pickwick, and with ten times his knowledge. The people in general roam the country more than they used to do, on the bicycle, the motor-car, and the railway. Sensible railway companies meet the demand, and issue circular tours and day tickets with alternative stations to alight at. The most ordinary pedestrian goes out with an eye to historical and antiquarian associations, and his needs are met by books on highways and byways. Peers, baronial and knightly families are keener than ever to know their histories, however frequently it ends in the discovery of very humble origins.

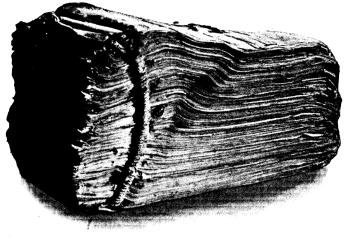
No wonder, then, that over three thousand volumes on these subjects have been added to our libraries during the last five years, many of them of permanent value. And this will go on increasing in the future. Professors of history in every university of Europe and America are making original investigations into the past, verifying and correcting the

I polemaly promise and swear to grown the Pople of this United Kingdom of Grat Britain and Ireland , and the Dominions there to blonging , according to the Statutes in Parliament agreed on , and the respective Laws and bustoms of the same I will to my power cause Law and fustice, in Morey , to be executed in all my Judgments . I will so the atmast of my power maintain the Laws of God, the true Profession of the Groupel, and the Protestant By Religion stallished by Law. And I will maintain and preserve invisibility the Sattlement of the Starch of England , ino, Housing, Discipline, and Government thereof, as by Les established in England . And I will preserve and the Ric nd thingy of England, and to the blunch therein committed to their change, all such Rights und Privileges why Law do as tion to them, or any of the The things which I have have before promised , I , In help my God . august 9, 1902 Chunrille ?.

EXTRACT FROM THE CORONATION ROLL OF EDWARD VII.

already written, works investigating new subjects, and writing new works for the future. And for all this, even in the oldest universities of Europe, they come, as pre-eminently above their own records. to the Record Office in Chancery Lane. France, Germany, Italy, and even remote Russia, seek their material first with us. Bémont, Vinegradoff. Ashley, and hosts of others are writing works of the finest quality out of our records, and their pupils will be more numerous still.

The work of the Record Office will have to be more gigantic than ever in the future,



COMMON ROLL OF THE REIGN OF JAMES L, 1608. HILARY, PART 3.



THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, EAST FRONTAGE.

if we are to have truer knowledge of the past. One cannot imagine that interest in

the past will ever flag : even Rome in its decline studied its own history, though it had to wait for Gibbon to write it. The quality of mind and the labour of investigation required for the history of England may be judged by the statement made by Gibbon that he first intended to write the history of Simon de Montfort and the Barons' War, but found the task too great, and so took up the history of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire.

A great future is before the Record Office, and yet I once sat by a bus-driver going up Chancery Lane, and he pointed his whip at the spacious edifice and said: "Once thought that a blessed was cathedral." And he added, as we reached the top of the Lane: "It's wot they call the Record Office; better burnt, I should say !"

THE SAILOR'S GARDEN.

By C. Fox Smith.

THERE'S a soft wind singing in the idle rigging, High tide splashing, and a young pale moon, Lights in a window and a fiddle jigging Over and over there the same short tune.

Oh, was it the tide along the ship's side sighing,

Or was it the singing wind that breathes and blows, Came like a voice across the deep seas crying,

Set my heart a-thinking how my garden grows?

Five years ago it was I planted roses,

Five years ago (the bush is grown a tree!) Five years ago—and once I've seen my posies,

Five years ago-and once they've bloomed for me.

I was home in Spring: the bloom was on the may then, Birds all were building, and buds on the tree;

When the birds were flown—oh, I was far away then, When the rose was open, I was long at sea.

I was home in Autumn; winds of cold November Shaking the leaf that shivered on the tree.

Brown leaves that sighed for sorrow to remember Flowers that had fallen and I far at sea.

Oh, many are the roads that lead you here and yonder, Oh, many are the ways about the world that go;

But the longest way of all's the sailor's way to wander To the old North Country and an isle I know.

Oh, many are the winds about the seas a-singing,

Oh, many are the songs they sing both night and noon, And whether it be good or ill that they come bringing,

The best of all's the wind that blows us home in June.

Home, home in June, and soon to be a-going,

Home, home in June, we may not long remain,

Home, home in June, for to see the garden growing, And then fare ye well till you greet us home again!



THE-HOLY-FLOWER by-h-rider-haggard

ILLUSTRATED-BY MAURICE-GREIFFENHAGEN

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.—This is the story of the strange adventure of the famous hunter and explorer, Allan Quatermain, on his perilous expedition into an unknown region of Africa in the days before the experiences which are recorded in "King Solomon's Mines." At the opening of the present narrative, Hunter Quatermain, while shooting big game, met an American doctor, who for some years had wandered about South and Eastern Africa collecting butterflies and flowers. To the natives he was known as "Dogeetah," but white people called him "Brother John." From him Allan Quatermain heard of a wonderful plant with bloons of extraordinary size and marvellous beauty, with a monkey's head outlined on every bloom. A healthy root of this plant, he maintained, would be worth twenty thousand pounds; but all he could show was a single bloom, without any root. This had come into his possession in the country of the Mazitu, a warlike race, beyond the western boundary of whose territory was a large and fertile land, supposed to be an island in the midst of a great lake. The name of both this territory and its inhabitants was Pongo, which was also the native name for a gorilla, and the god of the Pongo people was said to be a gorilla, whose worship was combined with that of the wonderful orchid. One night, while camping near the Pongo border, the Doctor was awakened by a solitary visitor, Kalubi, the Chief of the Pongo, who had come to the famous master of medicine to have his hand cured of a wond made by the bite of a terrible monkey, of which he declared they all went in fear in his native land. He suggested that he would help the white man to riches if he would go and kill the monstrous gorilla with his magic weapons. The Doctor asked for a piece of the Holy Flower instead of any fee for his medical help, but found by his tent, a week later, only a single bloon, the native not having understood that he wanted a root, or reise not having dared to send one. In a later conversation with Brother John, the explorer's curiosi

CHAPTER IX.

BAUSI THE KING.

ABOUT midday we made a start for Beza Town, where King Bausi lived, which we understood we ought to reach on the following evening. For some hours the regiment marched in front, or, rather, round us, but as we complained to Babemba of the noise and dust, with a confidence that was quite touching, he sent it on ahead. First, however, he asked us to pass our word "by our mothers," which is the most sacred of oaths among many African peoples, that we would not attempt to escape. I confess that I hesitated before giving an answer, not being entirely enamoured of the Mazitu and our prospects among them, especially as I had discovered through Jerry that the discomfited Imbozwi had departed from the soldiers on some business of his own. Had the matter been left to me, indeed, I should have tried to slip back into the bush over the border, and there put in a few months' shooting during the dry season, while working my way southwards. This, too, was the wish of the Zulu hunters,

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of Hans, and, I need not add, of Sammy. But when I mentioned the matter to Stephen, he implored me to abandon the idea.

"Look here, Quatermain," he said, "I have come to this God-forsaken country to get that great cypripedium, and get it I will, or die in the attempt. Still," he added, after surveying our rather blank faces, "I have no right to play with your lives; so if you think the thing too dangerous, I will go on alone with this old boy, Babemba. Putting everything else aside, I think that one of us ought to visit Bausi's kraal in case the gentleman you call Brother John should turn up there. In short, I have made up my mind, so it is no use talking."

I lit my pipe, and for quite a time contemplated this obstinate young man while considering the matter from every point of Finally I came to the conclusion view. that he was right and I was wrong. It was true that by bribing Babemba, or otherwise, there was still an excellent prospect of effecting a masterly retreat and of avoiding many perils. On the other hand, we had not come to this wild place in order to Further, at whose expense had we retreat. come here? At that of Stephen Somers, who wished to proceed. Lastly, to say nothing of the chance of meeting Brother John, to whom I felt no obligation since he had given us the slip at Durban, I did not like the idea of being beaten. We had started out to visit some mysterious savages who worshipped a monkey and a flower, and we might as well go on till circumstances were too much for us. After all, dangers are everywhere; those who turn back because of dangers will never succeed in any life that we can imagine.

"Mavovo," I said presently, pointing to Stephen with my pipe, "the *inkoosi* Wazela does not wish to try to escape. He wishes to go on to the country of the Pongo people if we can get there. And, Mavovo, remember that he has paid for everything; we are his hired servants. Also that he says that, if we run back, he will walk forward alone with these Mazitus. Still, if any of you hunters desire to slip off, he will not look your way, nor shall I. What say you?"

"I say, Macumazahn, that, though young, Wazela is a chief with a great heart, and that where you and he go, I shall go also, as I think will the rest of us. I do not like these Mazitu, for if their fathers were Zulus, their mothers were low people. They are bastards, and of the Pongo I hear nothing but what is evil. Still, no good ox ever turns in the yoke because of a mud-hole. Let us go on, for if we sink in the swamp, what does it matter? Moreover, my Snake tells m_3 that we shall not sink—at least, not all of us."

So it was arranged that no effort should be made to return. Sammy, it is true, wished to do so, but when it came to the point, and he was offered one of the remaining donkeys and as much food and ammunition as he could carry, he changed his mind.

"I think it better, Mr. Quatermain," he said, "to meet my end in the company of high-born, lofty souls than to pursue a lonely career towards the inevitable in unknown circumstances."

"Very well put, Sammy," I answered; so, while waiting for your end, please go and cook the dinner."

Having laid aside our doubts, we proceeded on the journey comfortably enough, being well provided with bearers to take the place of those who had run away. Babemba, accompanied by a single orderly, travelled with us, and from him we collected much information. It seemed that the Mazitu were a large people who could muster five to seven thousand spears. Their tradition was that they came from the south and were of the same stock as the Zulus, of whom they had heard vaguely. Indeed, many of their customs, to say nothing of their language, resembled those of that country. Their military organisation, however, was not so thorough, and in other ways they struck me as a lower race. In one particular, it is true—that of their houses—they were more advanced, for these, as we saw in the many kraals that we passed, were better built, with doorways through which one could walk upright, instead of the Kaffir bee-holes.

We slept in one of these houses on our march, and should have found it very comfortable had it not been for the innumerable fleas, which at length drove us out into the courtyard. For the rest, these Mazitu much resembled the Zulus. They had kraals and were breeders of cattle; they were ruled by headmen under the command of a supreme chief or king; they believed in witchcraft and offered sacrifice to the spirits of their ancestors, also in some kind of a vague and mighty god who dominated the affairs of the world and declared his will through the Lastly, they were, and I dare say doctors. still are, a race of fighting men, who loved war and raided the neighbouring peoples upon any and every pretext, killing their men and stealing their women and cattle. They had their virtues, too, being kindly and hospitable by nature, though cruel enough to their enemies. Moreover, they detested dealing in slaves and those who practised it, saying that it was better to kill a man than to deprive him of his freedom. Also they had a horror of the cannibalism which is so common in the dark regions of Africa, and for this reason, more than any other, loathed the Pongo folk, who were supposed to be eaters of men.

On the evening of the second day of our march, during which we had passed through a beautiful and fertile upland country, very well watered and, except in the valleys, free from bush, we arrived at Beza. This town was situated on a wide plain, surrounded by low hills and encircled by a belt of cultivated land made beautiful by the crops of maize and other cereals, which were then ripe to harvest. It was fortified in a way. That is, a tall unclimbable palisade of timber surrounded the entire town, which fence was strengthened by prickly pears and cacti planted on its either side.

Within this palisade the town was divided into quarters more or less devoted to various trades. Thus one part of it was called the ironsmiths' quarter; another the soldiers' quarter; another the quarter of the landtillers; another that of the skin-dressers, and so on. The king's dwelling and those of his women and dependents were near the north gate, and in front of these, surrounded by semicircles of huts, was a wide space into which cattle could be driven if necessary. This, however, at the time of our visit, was used as a market and a drilling ground.

We entered the town, that must, in all, have contained a great number of inhabitants, by the south gate, a strong log structure facing a wooded slope through which ran a road. Just as the sun was setting, we marched to the guest-huts up a central street lined with the population of the place, who had gathered to stare at us. These huts were situated in the soldiers' quarter, not far from the king's house, and surrounded by an inner fence to keep them private.

None of the people spoke as we passed them, for the Mazitu are polite by nature; also it seemed to me that they regarded us with awe tempered by curiosity. They only stared, and occasionally those of them who were soldiers saluted us by lifting their spears. The huts into which we were introduced by Babemba, with whom we had grown very friendly, were good and clean. Here all our belongings, including the guns which we had collected just before the slaves ran away, were placed in one of the huts, over which a Mazitu mounted guard, the donkeys being tied to the fence at a little distance. Outside this fence stood other armed Mazitu, also on guard.

"Are we prisoners here?" I asked of Babemba.

"The king watches over his guests," he answered enigmatically. "Have the white lords any message for the king, whom I am summoned to see this night?"

"Yes," I answered. "Tell the king that we are the brethren of him who, more than a year ago, cut a swelling from his body, whom we have arranged to meet here. I mean the white lord with a long beard who among you black people is called Dogeetah."

Babemba started. "You the brethren of Dogeetah! How comes it, then, that you never mentioned his name before, and when is he going to meet you here? Know that Dogeetah is a great man among us, for with him alone of all men the king has made blood-brotherhood. As the king is, so is Dogeetah among the Mazitu."

"We never mentioned him because we do not talk about everything at once, Babemba. As to when Dogeetah will meet us, I am not sure; I am only sure that he is coming."

"Yes, lord Macumazahn, but when, when? That is what the king will want to know, and that is what you must tell him. Lord," he added, dropping his voice, "you are in danger here, where you have many enemies, for it is not lawful for white men to enter this land. If you would save your lives, be advised by me, and be ready to tell the king to-morrow when Dogeetah, whom he loves, will appear here to vouch for you, and see that he does appear very soon and upon the day you name. Since, otherwise, when he comes, if come he does, he may not find you able to talk to him. Now I, your friend, have spoken, and the rest is with you."

Then without another word he rose, slipped through the door of the hut and out by the gateway of the fence, from which the sentry moved aside to let him pass. I, too, rose from the stool on which I sat and danced about the hut in a perfect fury.

"Do you understand what that infernal" —I am afraid I used a stronger word—"old fool told me?" I said to Stephen. "He says that we must be prepared to state exactly when that other infernal old fool, Brother John, will turn up at Beza Town, and that, if we don't, we shall have our throats cut, as, indeed, has already been arranged."

"Rather awkward," replied Stephen. "There are no express trains to Beza, and if there were, we couldn't be sure that Brother John would take one of them. I suppose there is a Brother John?" he added reflectively. "To me he seems to be intimately connected with Mrs. Harris."

"Oh, there is, or there was," I explained. "Why couldn't the confounded ass wait quietly for us at Durban, instead of fooling off butterfly hunting to the north of Zululand and breaking his leg or his neck there, if he has done anything of the sort?"

"Don't know, I am sure. It's hard enough to understand one's own motives, let alone Brother John's."

Then we sat down on our stools again and stared at each other.

At this moment Hans crept into the hut and squatted down in front of us. He might have walked in, as there was a doorway, but he preferred to creep on his hands and knees, I don't know why.

"What is it, you ugly little toad?" I asked viciously, for that was just what he looked like; even the skin under his jaw moved like a toad's.

"The Baas is in trouble?" remarked Hans.

"I should think he was," I answered, "and so will you be presently when you are wriggling on the point of a Mazitu spear."

"They are broad spears that would make a big hole," remarked Hans again, whereupon I rose to kick him out, for his ideas were, as usual, unpleasant.

"Baas," he went on, "I have been listening. There is a very good hole in this hut for listening, if one lies against the wall and pretends to be asleep. I have heard all and understood most of your talk with that one-eyed savage and the Baas Stephen."

"Well, you little sneak, what of it?"

"Only, Baas, that if we do not want to be killed in this place, from which there is no escape, it is necessary that you should find out exactly on what day and at what hour Dogeetah is going to arrive."

"Look here, you yellow idiot," I exclaimed, "if you are beginning that game, too, I'll—" Then I stopped, reflecting that my temper was getting the better of me, and that I had better hear what Hans had got to say before I vented it on him.

"Baas, Mavovo is a great doctor; it is said that his Snake is the straightest and the strongest in all Zululand, save that of his master, Zikali, the old, alone. He told you that Dogeetah was laid up somewhere with a hurt leg, and that he was coming to meet you here; no doubt, therefore, he can tell you also *when* he is coming. I would ask him, but he won't set his Snake to work for me. So you must ask him, Baas, and perhaps he will forget that you laughed at his magic and that he swore you should never see it again."

"Oh, blind one," I answered, "how do I know that Mavovo's story about Dogeetah was not all nonsense?"

Hans stared at me amazed.

"Mavovo's story nonsense! Mayovo's Oh, Baas, that is what Snake a liar! comes of being too much a Christian ! Now, thanks to your father, the Predikant, I am a Christian, too, but not so much that I have forgotten how to know good magic from bad. Mavovo's Snake a liar, and after he whom we buried yonder was the first of the hunters whom the feathers named to him at Durban !" And he began to chuckle in intense amusement, then added : "Well, Baas, there it is. You must either ask Mavovo, and very nicely, or we shall all be killed. I don't mind much, for I should rather like to begin again a little younger somewhere else, but just think what a noise Sammy will make!" And. turning, he crept out as he had crept in.

"Here's a nice position !" I groaned to Stephen, when he had gone. "I, a white man, who, in spite of some coincidences with which I am acquainted, know that all this Kaffir magic is bosh, am to beg a savage to tell me something of which he *must* be ignorant—that is, unless we educated people have got hold of the wrong end of the stick altogether. It is humiliating, it isn't Christian, and I'm hanged if I'll do it !"

"I dare say you will be—hanged, I mean whether you do it or whether you don't," replied Stephen, with his sweet smile. "But I say, old fellow, how do you know it is all bosh? We are told about lots of miracles which weren't bosh, and if miracles ever existed, why can't they exist now? But, there, I know what you mean, and it is no use arguing. Still, if you're proud, I ain't. I'll try to soften the stony heart of Mavovo we are rather pals, you know—and get him to unroll the book of his occult wisdom." And he went.

A few minutes later I was called out to receive a sheep, which, with milk, native beer, some corn and other things, including green forage for the donkeys, Bausi had sent for us to eat. Here I may remark that while we were among the Mazitu, we lived like fighting cocks. There was none of that starvation which is, or was, so common in East Africa, where the traveller often cannot get food for love or money—generally because there is none.

When this business was settled by my sending a message of thanks to the king, with an intimation that we hoped to wait upon him on the morrow with a few presents, I went to seek Sammy in order to tell him to kill and cook the sheep. After some search I found, or rather heard, him beyond a reed fence which divided two of the huts. He was acting as interpreter between Stephen Somers and Mavovo.

"This Zulu man declares, Mr. Somers," he said, "that he quite understands everything you have been explaining, and that it is · probable that we shall all be butchered by this savage Bausi if we cannot tell him when the white man Dogeetah, whom he loves, will arrive here. He says also that he thinks that by his magic he could learn when this will happen, if it is to happen at all-which of course, Mr. Somers, for your private information only, is a mighty lie of the ignorant heathen. He adds, however, that he does not care one brass farthing-his actual expression, Mr. Somers, is one grain of corn on a mealie-cob-about his or anybody else's life, which, from all I have heard of his proceedings, I can well believe to be true. He says in his vulgar language that there is no difference between the belly of a Mazituland hyena and that of any other hyena, and that the earth of Mazituland is as welcome to his bones as any other earth, since the earth is the wickedest of all hyenas, in that he has observed that soon or late it devours everlastingly everything which You must forgive me for once it bore. reproducing his empty and childish talk, Mr. Somers, but you bade me to render the words of this savage with exactitude. In fact, Mr. Somers, this reckless person intimates, in short, that some power with which he is not acquainted—he calls it the 'strength that makes the sun to shine and broiders the blanket of the night with stars ' (forgive me for repeating his silly words)—caused him ' to be born into this world, and, at an hour already appointed, will draw him from this world back into its dark, eternal bosom, there to be rocked in sleep, or nursed to life again, according to its unknown will '--I translate exactly, Mr. Somers, although I do not know what it all means-and that he does not care a curse when this happens. Still, he says that whereas he is growing old,

and has known many sorrows-he alludes here, I gather, to some nigger wives of his whom another savage knocked on the head; also to a child to whom he appears to have been attached—you are young, with all your days and, he hopes, joys before you. Therefore he would gladly do anything in his power to save your life, because although you are white and he is black, he has conceived an affection for you and looks on you as his child. Yes, Mr. Somers, although I blush to repeat it, this black fellow says he looks upon you as his child. He adds, indeed, that if the opportunity arises, he will gladly give his life to save your life, and that it cuts his heart in two to refuse you anything. Still, he must refuse this request of yours that he will ask the creature he calls his Snake -what he means by that, I don't know, Mr. Somers-to declare when the white man named Dogeetah will arrive in this place. For this reason, that he told Mr. Quatermain, when he laughed at him about his divinations, that he would make no more magic for him or any of you, and that he will die rather than break his word. That's all, Mr. Somers, and I dare say you will think-quite enough, too."

"I understand," replied Stephen. "Tell the Chief Mavovo"—I observed he laid an emphasis on the word *chief*—"that I *quite* understand, and that I thank him very much for explaining things to me so fully. Then ask him whether, as the matter is so important, there is no way out of this trouble."

Sammy translated into Zulu, which he spoke perfectly, as I noted, without interpolations or additions.

"Only one way," answered Mavovo, in the intervals of taking snuff. "It is that Macumazahn himself shall ask me to do this thing. Macumazahn is my old chief and friend, and for his sake I will forget what, in the case of others, I should always remember. If he will come and ask me, without mockery, to exercise my skill on behalf of all of us, I will try to exercise it, although I know very well that he believes it to be but as an idle little whirlwind that stirs the dust, that raises the dust and lets it fall again without purpose or meaning, forgetting, as the wise white men forget, that even the wind which blows the dust is the same that breathes in our nostrils and that, to it, we also are as is the dust."

Now, I, the listener, thought for a moment or two. The words of this fighting savage, Mavovo, even those of them of which I had only heard the translation, garbled and beslavered by the mean comments of the unutterable Sammy, stirred my imagination. Who was I that I should dare to judge of him and his wild, unknown gifts? Who was I that I should mock at him and by my mockery intimate that I believed him to be a fraud?

Stepping through the gateway of the fence, I confronted him.

"Mavovo," I said, "I have overheard your talk. I am sorry if I laughed at you yonder in Durban. I do not understand what you call your magic. It is beyond me, and may be true or may be false. Still, I shall be grateful to you if you will use your power to discover, if you can, whether Dogeetah is coming here, and, if so, when. Now, do as it may please you; I have spoken."

"And I have heard, Macumazahn, my father. To night I will call upon my Snake. Whether it will answer or what it will answer, I cannot say."

Well, he did call upon his Snake with due and portentous ceremony, and according to Stephen, who was present, which I declined to be, that mystic reptile declared that Dogeetah, alias Brother John, would arrive in Beza Town precisely at sunset on the third day from that night. Now, as he had divined on Friday according to our almanac, this meant that we might hope to see him hope exactly described my state of mind on the matter—on the Monday evening in time for supper.

"All right," I said briefly. "Please do not talk to me any more about this impious rubbish, for I want to go to sleep."

Next morning early we unpacked our boxes and made a handsome selection of gifts for the king, Bausi, hoping thus to soften his royal heart. It included a bale of calico, several knives, a musical box, a cheap American revolver, and a bundle of toothpicks; also several pounds of the best and most fashionable beads for his wives. This truly noble present we sent to the king by our two Mazitu servants, Tom and Jerry, who were marched off in the charge of several sentries, for I hoped that these men would talk to their compatriots and tell them what good fellows we were. Indeed, I instructed them to do so.

Imagine our horror, therefore, when about an hour later, just as we were tidying ourselves up after breakfast, there appeared through the gate, not Tom and Jerry, for they had vanished, but a long line of Mazitu soldiers, each of whom carried one of the articles that we had sent. Indeed, the last of them held the bundle of toothpicks on his fuzzy head as though it were a huge faggot of wood. One by one they set them down upon the lime flooring of the verandah of the largest hut. Then their captain said solemnly—

"Bausi, the Great Black One, has no need of the white men's gifts."

"Indeed !" I replied, for my dander was up. "Then he won't get another chance at them."

The men went away without more words, and presently Babemba turned up with a company of about fifty soldiers.

"The king is waiting to see you, white lords," he said in a voice of very forced jollity, "and I have come to conduct you to him."

"Why would he not accept our presents?" I asked, pointing to the row of them.

"Oh, that is because of Imbozwi's story of the magic shield. He said he wanted no gifts to burn his hair off. But come, come. He will explain for himself. If the Elephant is kept waiting, he grows angry and trumpets."

"Does he?" I said. "And how many of us are to come?"

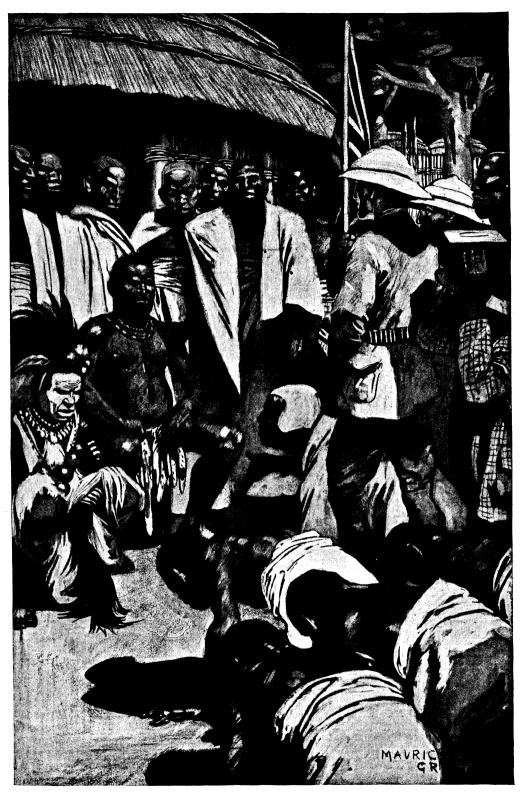
"All, all, white lord. He wishes to see every one of you."

"Not me, I suppose," said Sammy, who was standing close by. "I must stop to make ready the food."

"Yes, you, too," replied Babemba. "The king would look on the mixer of the holy drink."

Well, there was no way out of it, so off we marched, all well armed, as I need not say, and were instantly surrounded by the soldiers. To give an unusual note to the proceedings, I made Hans walk first, carrying on his head the rejected musical box, from which flowed the touching melody of "Home, Sweet Home." Then came Stephen, bearing the Union Jack on a pole, then I in the midst of the hunters and accompanied by Babemba, then the reluctant Sammy, and last of all the two donkeys led by Mazitus, for it seemed that the king had especially ordered that these should be brought also.

It was a truly striking cavalcade, the sight of which, under any other circumstances, would have made me laugh. Nor did it fail in its effect, for even the silent Mazitu people through whom we wended our way were moved to something like enthusiasm. "Home, Sweet Home," they evidently



"In the august presence of Bausi."

thought heavenly, though perhaps the two donkeys attracted them most, especially when these brayed.

"Where are Tom and Jerry?" I asked of Babemba.

"I don't know," he answered ; "I think they have been given leave to go to see their friends."

Imbozwi is suppressing evidence in our favour, I thought to myself, and said no more.

Presently we reached the gate of the royal enclosure. Here, to my dismay, the soldiers insisted on disarming us, taking away our rifles, our revolvers, and even our sheath In vain did I remonstrate, saving knives. that we were not accustomed to part with these weapons. The answer was that it was not lawful for any man to appear before the king armed even with so much as a dancing stick. Mavovo and the Zulus showed signs of resisting, and for a minute I thought there was going to be a row, which, of course, would have ended in our massacre, for although the Mazitus feared guns very much, what could we have done against hundreds of them? Ι ordered Mavovo to give way, but for once he was on the point of disobeying me. Then, by a happy thought, I reminded him that, according to his Snake, Dogeetah was coming, and that therefore all would be well. So he submitted with an ill grace, and we saw our precious guns borne off we knew not where.

Then the Mazitu soldiers piled their spears and bows at the gate of the kraal, and we proceeded with only the Union Jack and the musical box, which was now discoursing "Britannia Rules the Waves."

Across the open space we marched to where several broad-leaved trees grew in front of a large native house. Not far from the door of this house a fat, middle-aged, and angry-looking man was seated on a stool, naked except for a moocha of catskins about his loins and a string of large blue beads round his neck.

"Bausi the King," whispered Babemba.

At his side squatted a little hunchbacked figure, in whom I had no difficulty in recognising Imbozwi, although he had painted his scorched scalp white, with vermilion spots, and adorned his snub nose with a purple tip his dress of ceremony, I presume. Round and behind there were a number of silent councillors. At some signal, or on reaching a given spot, all the soldiers, including old Babemba, fell upon their hands and knees and began to crawl. They wanted us to do the same, but here I drew the line, feeling that, if once we crawled, we must always crawl.

So at my word we advanced upright, but with slow steps, in the midst of all this wriggling humanity, and at length found ourselves in the august presence of Bausi, "The Beautiful Black One," King of the Mazitu.

CHAPTER X.

THE SENTENCE.

WE stared at Bausi, and Bausi stared at us.

"I am the Black Elephant Bausi," he exclaimed at last, worn out by our stolid silence, "and I trumpet, I trumpet, I trumpet!" (It appeared that this was the ancient and hallowed formula with which a Mazitu king was wont to open a conversation with strangers.)

After a suitable pause, I replied in a cold voice—

"We are the white lions, Macumazana and Wazela, and we roar, we roar, we roar !"

"I can trample," said Bausi.

"And we can bite," I said haughtily, though how we were to bite or do anything else effectual with nothing but a Union Jack, I did not in the least know.

"What is that thing?" asked Bausi, pointing to the flag.

"That which shadows the whole earth," I answered proudly—a remark that seemed to impress him, although he did not at all understand it, for he ordered a soldier to hold a palm leaf umbrella over him to prevent it from shadowing *him*.

"And that," he asked again, pointing to the musical box, "which is not alive and yet makes a noise?"

"That sings the war-song of our people," I said. "We sent it to you as a present, and you returned it. Why do you return our presents, O Bausi?"

Then of a sudden this potentate grew furious.

"Why do you come here, white men," he asked, "uninvited and against the law of my land, where only one white man is welcome, my brother Dogeetah, who cured me of sickness with a knife? I know who you are. You are dealers in men. You come here to steal my people and sell them into slavery. You had many slaves with you on the borders of my country, but you sent them away. You shall die, you shall die, you who call yourselves lions, and the painted rag which you say shadows the world shall rot with your bones. As for that box which sings a war-song, I will smash it; it shall not bewitch me as your magic shield bewitched my great doctor, Imbozwi, burning off his hair."

Then, springing up with wonderful agility for one so fat, he knocked the musical box from Hans's head, so that it fell to the ground, and, after a little whirring, grew silent.

"That is right," squeaked Imbozwi. "Trample on their magic, O Elephant. Kill them, O Black One; burn them as they burned my hair !"

Now, things were, I felt, very serious, for already Bausi was looking about him as though to order his soldiers to make an end of us. So I said in desperation—

"O King, you mentioned a certain white man—Dogeetah, a doctor of doctors—who cured you of sickness with a knife, and called him your brother. Well, he is our brother also, and it was by his invitation that we have come to visit you here, where he will meet us presently."

"If Dogeetah is your friend, then you are my friends," answered Bausi, "for in this land he rules as I rule—he whose blood flows in my veins, as my blood flows in his veins. But you lie. Dogeetah is no brother of slave-dealers—his heart is good, and yours are evil. You say that he will meet you here. When will he meet you? Tell me, and, if it is soon, I will hold my hand and wait to hear his report of you before I put you to death, for if he speaks well of you, you shall not die."

Now I hesitated, as well I might, for I felt that, looking at our case from his point of view, Bausi, believing us to be slavetraders, was not angry without cause. While I was racking my brains for a reply that might be acceptable to him and would not commit us too deeply, to my astonishment Mavovo stepped forward and confronted the king.

"Who are you, fellow?" shouted Bausi.

"I am a warrior, O King, as my scars show." And he pointed to the assegai wounds upon his breast and to his cut nostril. "I am a chief of a people from whom your people sprang, and my name is Mavovo— Mavovo who is ready to fight you or any man whom you may name, and to kill him or you, if you will. Is there one here who wishes to be killed?"

No one answered, for the mighty-chested Zulu looked very formidable.

"I am a doctor also," went on Mavovo,

"one of the greatest of doctors who can open the 'Gates of Distance' and read that which is hid in the womb of the Future. Therefore I will answer your questions which you put to the lord Macumazana, the great and wise white man whom I serve, because we have fought together in many battles. Yes, I will be his mouth, I will answer. The white man Dogeetah, who is your blood-brother, and whose word is as your word among the Mazitu, will arrive here at sunset on the second day from now. I have spoken."

Bausi looked at me in question.

"Yes," I exclaimed, feeling that 1 must say something, and that it did not much matter what I said, "Dogeetah will arrive here on the second day from now within half an hour after sunset."

Something—I know not what—prompted me to allow that extra half-hour, which, in the event, saved all our lives. Now Bausi consulted a while with the execrable Imbozwi and also with the old one-eyed General Babemba, while we watched, knowing that our fate hung upon the issue.

At length he spoke.

"White men," he said, "Imbozwi, the head of the witch-finders here, whose hair you burnt off by your evil magic, says that it would be better to kill you at once, as your hearts are bad and you are planning mischief against my people. So I think also. But Babemba, my General, with whom I am angry because he did not obey my orders and put you to death on the borders of my country, when he met you there with your caravan of slaves, thinks otherwise. prays me to hold my hand, first, because you have bewitched him into liking you, and, secondly, because if you should happen to be speaking the truth—which we do not believe -and to have come here at the invitation of my brother, Dogeetah, he, Dogeetah, would be pained if he arrived and found you dead, nor could even he bring you to life again. This being so, since it matters little whether you die now or later, my command is that you be kept prisoners till sunset of the second day from this, and that then you be led out and tied to stakes in the marketplace, there to wait till the approach of darkness, by when you say Dogeetah will be here. If he arrives and owns you as his brethren, well and good; if he does not arrive, or disowns you, better still, for then you shall be shot to death with arrows as a warning to all other stealers of men not to cross the borders of the Mazitu."

I listened to this atrocious sentence with horror, then gasped out—

"We are not stealers of men, O King! We are freers of men, as Tom and Jerry, of your own people, could tell you."

"Who are Tom and Jerry?" he asked indifferently. "Well, it does not matter, for doubtless they are liars, like the rest of you. I have spoken. Take them away, feed them well, and keep them safe till within an hour of sunset on the second day from this."

Then, without giving us any further opportunity of speaking, Bausi rose and, followed by Imbozwi and his councillors, marched off into his big hut. We, too, were marched off, this time under a double guard commanded by someone whom I had not seen before. At the gate of the kraal we halted and asked for the arms that had been taken from us. No answer was given ; only the soldiers put their hands upon our shoulders and thrust us along.

"This is a nice business," I whispered to Stephen.

"Oh, it doesn't matter," he answered. "There are lots more guns in the huts. I am told that these Mazitus are dreadfully afraid of bullets. So all we shall have to do is just to break out and shoot our way through them, for, of course, they will run when we begin to fire."

I looked at him, but did not answer, for, to tell the truth, I felt in no mood for argument.

Presently we arrived at our quarters, where the soldiers left us, to camp outside. Full of his warlike plan, Stephen went at once to the hut in which the slavers' guns had been stored, with our own spare rifles and all the ammunition. I saw him emerge looking very blank indeed, and asked him what was the matter.

"Matter !" he answered in a voice that for once really was full of dismay. "The matter is that those Mazitu have stolen all the guns and all the ammunition ! There's not enough powder left to make a blue devil !"

"Well," I replied, with the kind of joke one perpetrates under such circumstances, "we shall have plenty of blue devils without making any more."

Truly ours was a dreadful situation. Let the reader imagine it. Within a little more than forty-eight hours we were to be shot to death with arrows if an erratic old gentleman, who, for aught I knew, might be dead, did not turn up at what was then one of the remotest and most inaccessible spots in Central Africa. Moreover, our only hope that such a thing would happen, if hope it could be called, was the prophecy of a Kaffir witch-doctor.

To rely on this in any way was so absurd that I gave up thinking of it, and set my mind to considering if there were any possible means of escape. After hours of reflection I could find none. Even Hans, with all his experience and nearly superhuman cunning, could suggest none. We were unarmed and surrounded by thousands of savages, all of whom, save, perhaps, Babemba, believed us to be slave-traders-a race that very properly they held in abhorrence-who had visited the country with the object of stealing their women and children. The king, Bausi, a very prejudiced fellow, was dead against us. Also by a piece of foolishness, which I now bitterly regretted—as, indeed, I regretted the whole expedition, or, at any rate, entering on it in the absence of Brother John-we had made an implacable enemy of the head medicine-man, who to these folk was a sort of Archbishop of Canterbury. Short of a miracle, there was no hope for us. All that we could do was to say our prayers and prepare for the end.

Mavovo, it is true, remained cheerful. His faith in his "Snake" was really touching. He offered to go through the divination process again in our presence and demonstrate that there was no mistake. I declined because I had no faith in divinations, and Stephen also declined, for another reason, namely, that the results might prove to be different, which, he held, would be depressing. The other Zulus oscillated between belief and scepticism, as do the unstable who set to work to study the evidences of Christianity. But Sammy did not oscillate; he literally howled, and prepared the food which poured in upon us so badly that I had to turn on Hans to do the cooking, for however little appetite we might have, it was necessary that we should keep up our strength by eating.

"What, Mr. Quatermain," asked Sammy between his tears, "is the use of dressing viands that our systems will never have time to thoroughly assimilate?"

The first night passed somehow, and so did the next day and the next night, which heralded our last morning. I got up quite early and watched the sunrise. Never, I think, had I realised before what a beautiful thing the sunrise is—at least, not to the extent I did now, when I was saying "Good-bye" to it for ever—unless, indeed, there should prove to be still lovelier sunrises beyond the dark of death. Then I went into our hut, and as Stephen, who had the nerves of a rhinoceros, was still sleeping like a tortoise in winter, I said my prayers earnestly enough, mourned over my sins, which proved to be so many that at last I gave up the job in despair, and then tried to occupy myself by reading the Old Testament, a book to which I have always been extremely attached.

As a passage that I lit on described how the prophet Samuel, for whom I could not help reading "Imbozwi," hewed Agag in pieces after Bausi — I mean Saul — had relented and spared his life, I cannot say that it consoled me very much. Doubtless, I reflected, these people believe that I, like Agag, had "made women childless" by my sword, so there remained nothing save to follow the example of that unhappy king and walk "delicately" to doom.

Then, as Stephen was still sleeping—how could he do it? I wondered—I set to work to make up the accounts of the expedition to date. It had already cost one thousand four hundred and twenty-three pounds. Just fancy expending one thousand four hundred and twenty-three pounds in order to be tied to a post and shot to death with arrows ! And all to get a rare orchid ! Oh, I reflected to myself, if by some marvel I should escape, or if I should live again in any land where these particular flowers flourish, I would never even look at them. And, as a matter of fact, I never have.

At length Stephen did wake up, and, as criminals are reported to do in the papers before execution, made an excellent breakfast.

"What's the good of worrying?" he said presently. "I shouldn't if it weren't for my poor old father. It must have come to this one day, and the sooner it is over, the sooner to sleep, as the song says. When one comes to think of it, there are enormous advantages in sleep, for that's the only time one is quite happy. Still, I should have liked to see that cypripedium first."

"Oh, drat the cypripedium !" I exclaimed, and blundered from the hut to tell Sammy that, if he didn't stop his groaning, I would punch his head.

"Jumps! Regular jumps! Who'd have thought it of Quatermain?" I heard Stephen mutter in the intervals of lighting his pipe.

The morning went "like lightning that is greased," as Sammy remarked. Three o'clock came, and Mavovo and his following sacrificed a kid to the spirits of their ancestors, which, as Sammy remarked again, was "a horrible heathen ceremony, much calculated to prejudice our cause with Powers Above."

When it was over, to my delight, Babemba appeared. He looked so pleasant that I jumped to the conclusion that he brought the best of news with him—perhaps that the king had pardoned us, or perhaps blessed thought !—that Brother John had really arrived before his time.

But not a bit of it! All he had to say was that he had caused inquiries to be made along the route that ran to the coast, and that certainly for a hundred miles there was at present no sign of Dogeetah. So as the Black Elephant was growing more and more enraged under the stirrings up of Imbozwi, it was obvious that that evening's ceremony must be performed. Indeed, as it was part of his duty to superintend the erection of the posts to which we were to be tied, and the digging of our graves at their bases, he had just come to count us again, to be sure that he had not made any mistake as to the Also, if there were any articles number. that we would like buried with us, would we be so kind as to point them out, and he would be sure to see to the matter. It would be soon over and not painful, he added, as he had selected the very best archers in Beza Town, who rarely missed and could, most of them, send an arrow up to the feather into a buffalo.

Then he chatted a little about other matters, as to where he should find the magic shield I had given him, which he would always value as a souvenir, etc., took a pinch of snuff with Mavovo, and departed, saying that he would be sure to return again at the proper time.

It was now four o'clock, and, as Sammy was quite beyond it, Stephen made himself some tea. It was very good tea, especially as we had milk to put in it, although I did not remember what it tasted like till afterwards.

Now, having abandoned hope, I went into a hut alone to compose myself to meet my end like a gentleman, and, seated there in silence and semi-darkness, my spirit grew much calmer. After all, I reflected, why should I cling to life? In the country whither I travelled, as the reader who has followed my adventures will know, were some whom I dearly longed to see again, notably my father and my mother, and two noble women who were even more to me. My boy, it is true, remained—he was alive then—but I knew that he would find friends, and as I was not so badly off at that time, I had been able to make a proper provision for him. Perhaps it was better that I should go, seeing that, if I lived on, it would only mean more troubles and more partings.

What was about to befall me, of course, I could not tell, but I knew then, as I know now, that it was not extinction or even that sleep of which Stephen had spoken. Perhaps I was passing to some place where at length the clouds would roll away and I should understand; whence, too, I should see all the landscape of the past and future, as an eagle does, watching from the skies, and be no longer like one struggling through dense bush, wild beast and serpent haunted, beat upon by the storms of heaven and terrified with its lightnings, nor knowing whither I hewed my path. Perhaps in that place there would no longer be what St. Paul describes as another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin. Perhaps there the past would be forgiven me by the Power which knows whereof we are made, and I should become what I have always longed to be-good in every sense, and even find open to me new and better roads of service. I take these thoughts from a note that I made in my pocket-book at the time.

Thus I reflected, and then wrote a few lines of farewell in the fond and foolish hope that somehow they might find those to whom they were addressed. (I have those letters still, and very oddly they read to-day.) This done, I tried to throw out my mind towards Brother John, if he still lived, as, indeed, I had done for days past, so that I might inform him of our plight and, I am afraid, reproach him for having brought us to such an end by his insane carelessness or want of faith.

Whilst I was still engaged thus, Babemba arrived with his soldiers to lead us off to execution. It was Hans who came to tell me that he was there. The poor old Hottentot shook me by the hand and wiped his eyes with his ragged coat-sleeve.

"Oh, Baas, this is our last journey," he said, "and you are going to be killed, Baas, and it is all my fault, Baas, because I ought to have found a way out of the trouble, which is what I was hired to do. But I can't—my head grows so stupid. Oh, if only I could come even with Imbozwi, I shouldn't mind, and I will, I will, if I have to return as a ghost to do it ! Well, Baas, you know the Predikant, your father, told us that we don't go out like a fire, but burn again for always, elsewhere—"

"I hope not," I thought to myself.

—"and that quite easily, without anything to pay for the wood. So I hope that we shall always burn together, Baas. And meanwhile, Baas, I have brought you a little something." And he produced what looked like a peculiarly obnoxious horseball. "You swallow this now, and you will never feel anything; it is a very good medicine that my grandfather's grandfather got from the Spirit of his tribe. You will just go to sleep as nicely as though you were very drunk, and wake up in the beautiful fire which burns without any wood and never goes out for ever and ever, Amen."

"No, Hans," I said ; "I prefer to die with my eyes open."

"Ånd so would I, Baas, if I thought there was any good in keeping them open, but I don't, for I can't believe any more in the Snake of that black fool Mavovo. If it had been a good Snake, it would have told him to keep clear of Beza Town, so I will swallow one of these pills and give the other to the Baas Stephen." And he crammed the filthy mess into his mouth and with an effort got it down, as a young turkey does a ball of meal that is too big for its throat.

Then, as I heard Stephen calling me, I left him invoking a most comprehensive and polyglot curse upon the head of Imbozwi, to whom he rightly attributed all our woes.

"Our friend here says it is time to start," said Stephen rather shakily, for the situation seemed to have got a hold of him at last, and nodding towards old Babemba, who stood there with a cheerful smile, looking as though he were going to conduct us to a wedding.

"Yes, white lord," said Babemba, "it is time, and I have hurried so as not to keep you waiting. It will be a very fine show, for the Black Elephant himself is going to do you the honour to be present, as will all the people of Beza Town and those for many miles round."

"Hold your tongue, you old idiot," I said, "and stop your grinning! If you had been a man and not a false friend, you would have got us out of this trouble, knowing, as you do very well, that we are no sellers of men, but rather the enemy of those who do such things."

"Oh, white lord," said Babemba, in a changed voice, "believe me I only smile to make you happy up to the end. My lips smile, but I am crying inside. I know that you are good, and have told Bausi so, but he will not believe me, and thinks that I have been bribed by you. What can I do against that evil-hearted Imbozwi, the head of the witch-doctors, who hates you because he thinks you have better magic than he has, and who whispers day and night into the king's ear, telling him that if he does not kill you, all our people will be slain or sold for slaves, as you are only the scouts of a big army that is coming. Only last night Imbozwi held a great divination indaba, and read this and a great deal more in the enchanted water, making the king think he saw it in pictures, whereas I, looking over his shoulder, could see nothing at all, except the ugly face of Imbozwi reflected in the Also he swore that his spirit told water. him that Dogeetah, the king's blood-brother, being dead, would never come to Beza Town again. I have done my best. Keep your heart white towards me, O Macumazana, and do not haunt me, for I tell you I have done my best; and if ever I should get a chance against Imbozwi, which I am afraid I shan't, as he will poison me first, I will pay him back. Oh, he shall not die quickly as you will ! "

"I wish I could get a chance at him," I muttered, for even in this solemn moment I could cultivate no Christian spirit towards Imbozwi.

Feeling that he was honest, after all, I shook old Babemba's hand and gave him the letters I had written, asking him to try and get them to the coast. Then we started on our last walk.

The Zulu hunters were already outside the fence, seated on the ground, chatting and taking snuff. I wondered if this was because they really believed in Mavovo's confounded Snake, or from bravado, inspired by the innate courage of their race. When they saw me, they sprang to their feet and, lifting their right hands, gave me a loud and hearty salute of "Inkoosi! Baba! Inkoosi ! Macumazana ! " Then, at a signal from Mavovo, they broke into some Zulu war chant, which they kept up till we reached the stakes. Sammy, too, broke into a chant, but one of quite a different nature.

"Be quiet ! " I said to him. "Can't you die like a man ? "

"No, indeed, I cannot, Mr. Quatermain," he answered, and went on howling for pity in about twenty different languages.

Stephen and I walked together, he still carrying the Union Jack, of which no one tried to deprive him. I think the Mazitu believed it was his fetich. We didn't talk much, though once he said—

"Well, the love of orchids has brought many a man to a bad end. I wonder whether the governor will keep my collection or sell it."

After this he relapsed into silence, and, not knowing and indeed not caring what would happen to his collection, I made no answer.

We had not far to go; personally I could have preferred a longer walk. Passing with our guards down a kind of by-street, we emerged suddenly at the head of the market-place, to find that it was packed with thousands of people gathered there to see our execution. I noticed that they were arranged in orderly companies, and that a broad open roadway was left between them, running to the southern gate of the market— I suppose to facilitate the movements of so large a crowd.

All this multitude received us in respectful silence, though Sammy's howls caused some of them to smile, while the Zulu war chant appeared to excite their wonder or admiration. At the head of the market-place, not far from the king's enclosure, fifteen stout posts had been planted on as many mounds. These mounds were provided so that everyone might see the show, and, in part, at any rate, were made of soil hollowed from fifteen deep graves dug almost at the foot of the mounds. Or, rather, there were seventeen posts, an extra large one being set at each end of the line in order to accommodate the two donkeys, which it appeared were also to be shot to death. A great number of soldiers kept a space clear in front of the posts. On this space were gathered Bausi, his councillors, some of his head wives, Imbozwi, more hideously painted than usual, and perhaps fifty or sixty picked archers with strong bows and an ample supply of arrows, whose part in the ceremony it was not difficult for us to guess.

"King Bausi," I said, as I was led past that potentate, "you are a murderer, and Heaven Above will be avenged upon you for this crime. If our blood is shed, soon you shall die and come to meet us where *ive* have power, and your people shall be destroyed."

My words seemed to frighten the man, for he answered—

"I am no murderer. I kill you because you are robbers of men. Moreover, it is not I who have passed sentence on you. It is Imbozwi here, the chief of the doctors, who has told me all about you, and whose Spirit says you must die unless my brother Dogeetah appears to save you. If Dogeetah comes—which he cannot do, because he is dead—and vouches for you, then I shall know that Imbozwi is a wicked liar, and as you were to die, so he shall die."

"Yes, yes!" screeched Imbozwi. "If Dogeetah comes, as that false wizard prophesies"—and he pointed to Mavovo— "then I shall be ready to die in your place, white slave-dealers. Yes, yes, then you may shoot me with arrows!"

"King, take note of those words, and, people, take note of those words, that they may be fulfilled if Dogeetah comes," said Mavovo, in a great deep voice.

"I take note of them," answered Bausi, "and I swear by my mother, on behalf of all the people, that they shall be fulfilled—if Dogeetah comes."

"Good !" exclaimed Mavovo, and stalked on to the stake which had been pointed out to him.

As he went, he whispered something into Imbozwi's ear that seemed to frighten that limb of Satan, for I saw him start and shiver. However, he soon recovered, for in another minute he was engaged in superintending those whose business it was to lash us to the posts.

This was done simply and effectively by tying our wrists with a grass rope behind the posts, each of which was fitted with two projecting pieces of wood that passed under our arms and practically prevented us from moving. Stephen and I were given the places of honour in the middle, the Union Jack being fixed, by his own request, to the top of Stephen's stake. Mavovo was on my right, and the other Zulus were ranged on either side of us. Hans and Sammy occupied the end posts respectively, except those to which the poor jackasses were bound. I noted that Hans was already very sleepy, and that, shortly after he was fixed up, his head dropped forward on his breast. Evidently his medicine was working, and almost I regretted that I had not taken some while I had the chance.

When we were all fastened, Imbozwi came round to inspect. Moreover, with a piece of white chalk he made a round mark on the breast of each of us—a kind of bull's-eye for the archers to aim at.

"Ah, white man," he said to me, as he chalked away at my shooting-coat, "you will never burn anyone's hair again with your magic shield—never, never, for presently I shall be treading down the earth upon you in that hole, and your goods will belong to me."

I did not answer, for what was the use of talking to this vile brute when my time was so short? So he passed on to Stephen and began to chalk him. Stephen, however, in whom the natural man still prevailed, shouted, "Take your filthy hands.off me!" and, lifting his leg which was unfettered, gave the painted witch-doctor such an awful kick in the stomach that he vanished backwards into the grave behind him.

"Ow ! Well done, Wazela !" said the Zulus. "We hope that you have killed him."

"I hope so, too," said Stephen, and the multitude of spectators gasped to see the sacred person of the head witch-doctor, of whom they evidently went in much fear, treated in such a way. Only Babemba grinned, and even the king Bausi did not seem displeased.

But Imbozwi was not to be disposed of so easily, for presently, with the help of sundry myrmidons, minor witch-doctors, he scrambled out of the grave, cursing and covered with mud, for it was wet down there. After that I took no more heed of him or much else. Seeing that I had only half an hour to live, as may be imagined, I was otherwise engaged.

and the set

(To be continued.)



KINGDOM'S CONTRABAND By G. B. LANCASTER

Illustrated by Cyrus Cuneo



KNOT of men stood on the steps of one of the chief hotels in Suva. Their white clothes glimmered in the blue murky dusk which is made up of smoke from cooking-fires in the native quarters and

the afterglow from the quick-set tropical Dinner was over, and the smell sun. of cigars mixed with the heavy rich scent from guavas and lemon trees and from the slanting banana-palms along the esplanade. From the upper step Grace looked across the section of pale sea to the wharves, where a big Vancouver boat was noisily backing out and sending ripples of light far on either side.

"Aye, Kingdom," he said, "if that old tub of yours was only as seaworthy as she is rotten, she could show a clean pair of heels to the most of us."

Kingdom was chewing a guava-stick. He seldom smoked.

"I guess she could do that, anyway," he said imperturbably.

"She what?"

Hill struck a match at this moment, and the light flickered over the buttons and shoulder-straps which introduced Grace where he went as third officer on His Majesty's gunboat Rook, detailed on patrol duty in the South Seas for the added safety of His Majesty's subjects.

"Going to run some Chesson laughed. more goods without benefit of Customs, Kingdom ? " he asked.

Kingdom continued to chew. He was the good-looking square-faced American type, with a mouth like a steel trap and steady eyes that saw more of what went on behind and around him than many a roving pair could do.

"What percentage did Hill offer you to ask that?" he said.

Hill was head of the Customs in Suva. But more spirits had been drunk there lately than had paid legitimate duty, and Hill was sore.

"I could ask questions myself, if that

would do any good," he retorted. "Exactly," returned Kingdom. "But it wouldn't." He came down three steps and stood on the pavement. "You pull out for Sydney in the morning, don't you, Grace ?" he asked. "Well, I start to-night, and I'll meet you inside the Heads next week. So long! So long, you fellows! I'll be around again soon, for sure."

Chesson watched the square of his shoulders cut sharply against the sea-line for a moment. Then he turned along the esplanade, and the ring of his feet died out on the hard coral track.

"I wonder if there's any truth in it," said Chesson.

"Truth in what? In the yarn that he's smuggling liquor? I wouldn't put it past him. That chap would smuggle his mother-in-law for a lark."

"He hasn't got one," said Hill peevishly. "But if he is running crook, I'll take it out of him when I catch him. Why did I ask him to dine, I wonder? Grace, can't you get the old man to shadow that blessed little lugger of his for a while ? It would really give you something to do for once."

"Bedad," said the outraged Grace, "if we had to take over all the jobs that the men they belong to can't do, we'd have our hands overfull ! Kingdom is as right as the He likes to raise a man out on a bank. bluff now and then, but he's all right."

"He takes care that we shan't find out if he isn't," said another man, and laughed unpleasantly.

Kingdom never appeared to care whether men knew his affairs or not. He whistled now, sweet and shrilly, as he turned up from the wharf and threaded through the native quarters, which lay along the left of a narrow road cut deep in the hill. A couple of

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stalwart Fijian policemen passed him, with their foot-high shocks of hair uncovered and their white drawers and shirts faint in the dusk. Kingdom nodded to them with a curt greeting. But when they had passed, he halted, peering into an open house-front where something lay wrapped on a string bed.

"Looti!" he said sharply. Then: "Alole, is he drunk again?"

A Hindoo girl came out from under the slatted verandah, bare-footed on the dust. Silver bangles tinkled on her slender ankles and wrists, and the timbre of her voice was as lightly soft.

"He is waiting for you, sahib. He did but sleep a little while he waited."

"Well, tell him to quit waiting now and get down to the boat. Has Charlie been here?"

"But for a while, sahib. I do not know where he went."

"I wish he'd occasionally take a notion to stay where he belongs. It isn't going to happen again, this game, I can tell you. Looti, where's Charlie?"

The little 'Hindoo steward stood up, swaying uncertainly as he rubbed his eyes. He denied knowledge of Charlie or anyone else, and Kingdom ordered him down to the boat, and proceeded on his way.

It was midnight before he had the crew together and the little steam-cutter snoring smoothly through the warm sea, with phosphorescence streaming in her wake. Then he called his officers into the mess-cabin and shut the door, standing up against it.

"I have just a few words to say to you, gentlemen," he said. "The next time you give my crew liquor, you will do it with my permission, and that will be a long day. If I knew which man it was, I'd sack him. As I don't, I'll sack the lot if I find a sailor of mine drunk in Suva again. I am running all the risks I care about taking, and I'm not going to have treachery on top of it."

Kingdom's words were no softer than himself, nor than the men whom he faced. There was a sharp silence, tingling with dislike and suspicion and defiance. Then the first mate spoke, with his heavy, dark face darker.

"You're allays on to as about suthin'. What'd we gain by makin' 'em drunk ?"

"You know best. That doesn't concern me. I won't have it, that's all. And I guess you'd just best make a note of that, or you'll find yourselves out of a billet. I'm speaking more in your interest than mine. You won't get such a soft thing again in a hurry, but I can get another crew."

He left them abruptly and went up the companion to the deck-house. But the men stood where he left them. The engineer sprang forward and shut the door. He was a long Australian, with the hot temper of the tropics.

"He is suspecting something," he said. "I told you he would. I told you we'd make a mess of it."

"Speak for yourself, Potts." The first mate lit his pipe with deliberation, puffing out his sentences brokenly. "I tell you we're all right. They'll stand by us to a man. They'll stand by us, let us do as we like with the cap'n. I reckon as we're bound for more'n ten per cent. on the cargo next trip."

⁴ Oh, you're always reckoning on something," said Potts sullenly, " but none of us can ever reckon on what he'll do or won't do."

Kingdom usually knew himself. He had said that he would be in Sydney before the *Rook*, and he was.

"But it's true I was at the wheel most of the time," he admitted. "Sail her or steam her, there's not another can get out of her half that I can. The beggars know that."

"But, taking it by an' large, I wouldn't advise you to run contraband," said Grace in half-jesting warning.

Kingdom looked at him through narrowed eyes.

"Why doesn't your old man ever chase me to find out?" he asked. "Afraid of being laughed at, eh?"

being laughed at, eh?" "I suppose that's about it," admitted Grace. "But there's some fine lad going to be hilt up for it one of these days, sure."

Grace might have been less sure if he had seen the neat little layers of two-gallon casks that were stowed in the *Deva's* hold that night, with Kingdom directing arrangement in curt undertones. For they lay close beneath the barrels of tar and cement that were going down for the new pier extension, and the *Deva* slipped down harbour and away through the Heads with her farewell whistle shrilling out in jaunty carelessness.

This was heavier contraband than Kingdom had dared before. But there was danger in the air, and it behoved him to make what he could while there was yet time. He held her up the coast himself until the long light on North Head had gone down the horizon and the purple tropic sea slumbered under the stars. And then he went to bed. That night he dreamed strange dreams. He thought that he was packed with the barrels in the hold, where the heat melted the tar above him so that it dripped incessantly on his face. He wanted to wipe it off, but he could not raise his hand. He could not turn on his face to get away from it. In a fury of struggle he awoke, and still he found that he could not raise his hand—that he could not turn himself on his face. He lay in absolute dark, swathed from heel to neck in a sheet or blanket, and in the motionless, close heat the perspiration ran off him like water.

After the first few moments of mad rebellion he lay still, controlling himself and listening. The steady surge of sea alongside his ear told that the *Deva* was drawing fast through the night. He was aboard still, then, and the men did not mean to kill him, or they would have done it already. The evil taste in his mouth and his blinding headache suggested the use of chloroform or something of the sort. He lay there grimly, with no doubt concerning the future in his mind. They were going to maroon him--probably on one of the myriad little ragged islets of the Great Barrier Reef, which no ship cared to sail over-near. They could run the contraband through in Suva by the ways that he had opened, and it would be easy to explain his absence-sickness in Sydney, a sprained ankle, anything would do.

Despite his danger and his helpless wrath, Kingdom almost laughed. It was a bold stroke, such as he himself loved. For a moment he hoped that the *Rook* would be on their heels. Again he hoped that it would not. They deserved to win through when they had had the wit to get the better of him.

The door was pushed open. Mole, the first mate, struck a light and came forward, with Potts and Dessin at his shoulder. Even in his pain and sickness, Kingdom realised that they were half afraid of him yet, bound though he was. He looked at them silently, and Mole's words were half in apology.

"You brought it on yerself, cap'n. You wouldn't give us a bigger share o' the profits. Now we'll have all. Do you understand that? All !"

"Or none," said Kingdom placidly.

"W-what d'you mean by that?" said Potts sharply.

"The \hat{Rook} is watching out. You won't get away from her without me at the helm, if she comes."

He spoke carelessly, but his pulses were

throbbing. He was playing for his life and for his credit. If he went to those coral specks on the Barrier, he would die. If the *Rook* caught that cargo, he would have died dishonoured. Very many times in his life he had been in a tight place, but the odds had never been so heavily against him as now. Dessin laughed. His was a like spirit to Kingdom's own, and Kingdom sorrowed now that he had chosen him because of it.

"Oh, if she comes, she comes. We'll be in Suva first, once we've fixed you. And that won't be long now. There—I told you."

A sharp whistle shrilled, and Mole turned hurriedly and went out. Presently the engines shuddered, stopped, and the *Deva* lay in the wash. Instead of the rattle and throb of machinery and the rush of the cutwater, Kingdom heard another sound, as familiar and more infinitely terrible. It was the low, restless thunder of waves along a reef.

He kept an indifferent silence as they dragged him on deck, slid him down by ropes into the waiting boat, and began to pull through the opal dawn towards the Barrier. Mole kicked him with a rough oath. Now that the thing was near done, his courage had come back. One of the sailors—an ear-ringed Portuguese with one eye—flung salt water over Kingdom's face, and the other men laughed. They had hated and feared him long enough, and now, though their innings was short, they made it a merry one.

The red rim of the sun was pushing above the sea when the boat slid into the path it made, leaving the captain behind. Kingdom stood on the patch of earth whither he had waded when they left him knee-deep on the coral shoal, and his eyes were strained as he watched them go. With care he had food and water for perhaps four days. But in all this desolation of jagged rock and shallow earth and glittering coral and limitless blue sea there was no shade, and Kingdom knew what a tropical sun could do with a man's unsheltered brain.

When the *Deva*, with white sails spread and funnel smoking, slipped down that track of dazzling light, Kingdom turned and hunted for a cleft in the coral rock where he could hide his food. Then he collected driftwood with a steady desperation, wading to the reefs and coral patches around and building his pile, stick by stick, with unswerving haste. If there was a chance, it lay there. But he knew the slightness of it very fully. The real Barrier was many miles away to leftward. Ships skirting that might see the smoke if he damped and blackened it with seaweed. But they were more likely to think that it came from the stack of some other vessel. No, he dared not risk that. He must wait till night, and take his chance with a fire on the highest peak of his islet.

It was a tropical night, motionless, purple, and full of great stars. Kingdom had gathered all the driftwood within reach and stacked it carefully. He was giddy and sick with the chloroform and the merciless heat, but his firm mouth and steady eyes had not weakened, and they had not weakened when the *Rook*, prowling up the coast on the watch for unusual symptoms on sky or sea or land, bore down on his islet and picked him up.

Kingdom had five minutes in which to make his plan, and when he went before the captain, he did not tell him that he would sooner have been salvaged by any other boat that tramped the seas. He asked a little thing only. Would this gold-laced and stately captain put him back aboard the *Deva* with a loaded revolver in his hand and leave him to settle matters alone with his crew?

The captain had heard of Kingdom throughout all the South Seas, but he gasped a little.

"Do you fully realise what you are saying?" he asked. "Supposing we catch her—and as she is only going to Fiji, that is doubtful—what frame of mind do you expect to find those men in?"

"They'll be poison-mad," drawled Kingdom, "but then, you see, so will I."

The captain settled his collar rather nervously. There was something in the utter quiet unmalleability of the man which impressed him, from the square sun-blackened face, with its signs of suffering, to the way in which he stood on his feet. But there was something behind the steady eyes which made him anxious.

"You are asking a great deal," he said. "I don't know if I'd be justified. It is possible that it may mean murder to someone."

"I guess not," said Kingdom composedly. "They know me."

They did know him. But he knew them —knew the reckless Dessin, and the wildtempered Potts, and the sullen, savage Mole. He had defied them and his riff-raff of a crew too often not to know them. The risk was tremendous—far greater than the captain of the gunboat guessed. But Kingdom had to take it. He had to save his contraband and his name and his hold on men.

"You have unusual pluck," said the goldlaced captain. "But—I don't know. They can't expect friendly treatment from you after this, and they are not likely to give it."

"I reckon there was never mighty much of that, anyway. You must let me do it, I guess, sir. I'll be laughed at good and plenty over this as it is, but I'd lose my hold for ever if I had to have marines to protect me aboard my own ship."

"There's reason in that. But—well, wait till we catch her, at any rate. You think she's bound for Fiji?"

"Sure, sir. She's bound to deliver her cargo. And she isn't expecting to be chased."

"Well, we'll see what we can do," said the great man. But it was not his orders alone which sent the *Rook* forward under the last pound of pressure she dared bear. Kingdom spent the most of the day lounging round the engine-rooms and dropping occasional friendly words to the stokers.

Day by day they bowled on with a following wind, and Kingdom grew anxious. That wind would aid the *Deva* more than the gunboat, and once the cargo was ashore and through, he could whistle for his money. For he dared take no public course of action, and the men would know it. It was the eighth night, with Molokai due to be lifted before dawn, when the lookont reported the lights of a little tramp to starboard. Kingdom went on deck, and on the edge of the sweeping searchlight he caught a moment's sight of her rig.

"We have her," he said, and went down to smoke a pipe in the engineers' mess, for there were some last details to be thought out. Mole might possibly turn King's evidence out of sheer spite.

Here Grace came with a troubled face in search of him.

"You won't really go aboard alone, will you?" he asked.

"Sure." Kingdom poked down his pipe with a deliberate finger.

"There'll be the devil to pay if you do, bedad."

"Likely. It's not me who will pay him, though."

"Kingdom, they can't let you boss them again. They'll have to kick for their credit's sake."

"And what about mine?" Kingdom sat up slowly, with his steady eyes burning on the younger man. "Can't you see where I stand? I don't handle the kind of crew you do. Mine is drawn from all the wrack and the refuse of the South Seas, and you know something of what that means. You me. How long do you think I would hold it if I once consented to protection on my own ship? If I can't bluff that lot on the *Deva*, I'm a dead man, anyhow. I've lost



"He looked into the mouth of Kingdom's revolver and halted."

know the men we rake out of the back streets of Papeete and Upolu and Suva—yes, and Honolulu. How do I hold my own with those sort? Because they are afraid of me. I've taught them to be afraid of my kudos. Men will get back on me for little affairs they owe me for. I'll be knifed in a Sydney slum or a Tongan drinking-hell. No, once I show my hand I'm done. I've got to bluff it out to the last inch, Grace."

He spoke no more than the truth, but he also spoke less. Those barrels in the hold of the Deva kept his tongue tied and brought the vertical lines deeper in his forehead as the Rook slipped up beside her, knot by knot, and hailed her. She replied at once, swung round, and hung in stays with sails flapping. Kingdom followed the first officer into the boat which dropped from the gunboat's davits, and there was white beneath the wind-burn on his face as the men pulled through the quiet sea to the Deva. Fear had never had any part in him, but he knew that one of the sharpest moments of his life was on the edge of being.

The first officer did not come aboard. Kingdom had requested that he should make his entrance alone, and he came up the side and into the flare of the *Deva's* lights unheralded. Mole was at the gangway, and he fell back with an oath of sheer terror. Kingdom laughed, lounging forward.

"Pass the word that the captain has come aboard, Mr. Mole," he said, "and make ready to get under way."

Mole did not speak. All along the deck men were staring. The cabin-boy, passing with a bucket of water, dropped it and fled, howling with terror. The water doused Mole's shins, and he started forward with his hand on his knife and incoherent curses on his lips. But he looked into the mouth of Kingdom's revolver and halted.

"Did you hear my order?" suggested Kingdom. And, dazed and cowed for the moment, Mole went forward to obey.

Kingdom strolled forward and scared the cook in his galley. He strolled aft and roused the sleeping Potts to inarticulate terror and wrath. He did not sleep that night. But when it passed, and he still lived, he called his officers together as he had done on one night before.

"I could have had you all imprisoned and punished for mutiny on the high seas," he said. "You know why I didn't, I guess. It wasn't any love for you. But I'm going to run my cargo. What I'll do to you, you'll find out later on, likely."

Dessin moistened his lips and spoke. Mole seemed dazed still.

"Why, man," said Dessin, "you've played the biggest joke on yourself that you've played in all your days! You won't run your cargo, and now you can't get square with us."

"I guess I will run my cargo," said Kingdom sharply. He was exhausted with the long nerve-strain and the watching, and his eyes looked cruel. "Who says I won't?" he demanded.

"Why, anybody could, I suppose," said Dessin. "We shot it overboard when the *Rook* overhauled us, and every round barrel of it is at the bottom of the sea, and that's truth, Captain Kingdom Come."



THE AWAKENING.

N^{OW} from her long Winter sleep Mother Earth turns to awake: Stir of new life in the woods, green of young grass o'er the brake, Movement through covert and copse, rise of the sap in the tree, Red shine elm boughs in the sun, bourgeoning life there to be: Quick beats the pulse of all life: one are we—Nature and man, Flow follows ebb in the wave, so is the seasons' wise plan.

After quiescence and sleep, come again effort and zest: Good is life's urgent desire, springing from torpor and rest. Roused from stupor now Earth smiles in young vigour and strife; As from man's dreams are evoked ever fresh visions of life.

EDITH DART,

CARFEW PRODUCES

By EDGAR WALLACE

Author of "Sanders of the River," "Private Selby," "The Council of Justice," "Grey Timothy," "The People of the River," etc.

Illustrated by Dudley Hardy



HERE is an uninteresting part to every theatre—a part which is so isolated from the luxury of the auditorium and from the glamour and mystery of the stage as to be associated with neither. It

is usually reached from a frowsy little sidestreet through an ugly narrow entrance. The stone stairs are steep, and the flagged landings are restricted to the accommodation of one portly tenor and a large soprano. As many as four juvenile "leads" have passed one another on these dismal gas-lit spaces; but then juvenile "leads" are notoriously thin and willowy and supple, and it is possible, by flexion and an adroit manipulation of bodies, for quite a number of juvenile "leads" of both sexes to pass and repass in the most confined spaces with no other misadventure than the catching of a loose hook in an astrachan collar or the mysterious whitening of a politelyraised sleeve, due probably to the brushing against a damask cheek in passing.

No doors lead from stairway or landing. The walls are solid and unpromising. They are dull yellow, and have a make-believe dado of dull red, with an inch-deep black line to mark where wall and dado meet.

You climb and climb till you reach a door which ungraciously says "Manager, Private." Other information is occasionally displayed on a hanging card or on type-written notices recklessly pasted upon the panels of the door. These are to the effect that callers can only be seen by appointment, that silence is to be regarded as a polite form of refusal, that artistes will be kept to the strict terms of their contracts, and that no gagging of a political character will be permitted. The particular theatre which is dealt with here is in Wraybourn Street, London, West Central. It is the Gorgon, and the inevitable flight of stairs from the inevitable side-street leads to an office which, in addition to the announcements of which an assortment is given above, bore at the time covered by this narrative the magic words "Mr. Felix Carfew."

His office was a small one. It conveyed the impression to anyone who had mounted the breathless stairs that it was hardly worth while. It had been papered daringly, by an earlier occupant, with a pattern which was unnecessarily busy.

That this was the well-head of Art was indicated by the ceiling decorations, for a chromographic Cupid lounged on a couple of convenient clouds and amused himself, as boys will, by aiming a pink dart at Carfew's blue tobacco jar.

Carfew himself was an impresario.

He wore a tall shiny hat on the back of his head, and lavender spats. The walls and the mantelshelf—on which reposed the tobacco jar aforesaid—were covered with unframed photographs.

Carfew had emerged from the chrysalis of management. A young man of sanguine temperament who finds a three hundred night success at the first time of asking may be excused the conviction that "failure" is a word which Fate has obligingly expunged from the lexicon of life.

Carfew had taken the Gorgon Theatre without one single doubt as to the wisdom of his proceedings. Parker, who was his broker, broke the habits of a lifetime and came westward in the forenoon, at Carfew's earnest request.

He climbed the interminable stairs, examined with great earnestness the notices pasted to Carfew's door, and found his client in his important occupation.

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"Sit down, Parker," said the young man. "I'm frightfully busy, but I can give you ten minutes."

Parker, who knew his Carfew, ignored the impertinence.

"Well," he asked, "have you quarrelled with your leading lady yet?"

Carfew's smile exactly blended the qualities of pity and superiority which is calculated to reduce the person to whose subjugation it is directed to a condition of pulp.

"There's a lot of nonsense talked about the stage," he said. "The manager of the Œdipus told me to-day that he'd been two months casting a play. I cast mine in four hours."

"Perhaps he isn't as clever as you," reflected the unimpressed Parker, rubbing his chin with the gold head of his walking-stick.

Carfew eyed him severely.

"There is no 'perhaps 'about it," he said ; "it's a question of instinct and intuition. I was born with the stage sense, Parker ; it's a gift—you can't cultivate it. It grows with you."

"With you," corrected Parker, "not with me, I am happy to say."

"I cast the play in four hours," said Carfew complacently. "I took a trip from London to Margate by steamer, and did the whole thing between Old Swan Pier and the Pavilion."

"Who is your producer?" said Parker.

"I am producing 'Wastepaper' myself," said Carfew, with an assumption of carelessness. "After all, as I say, the stage sense is born with one; it is a divine gift."

Parker made a disrespectful noise.

"I've always thought you were a born something," he said crudely.

Carfew had chosen his play with some care. It was a problem play. It was the sort of play which, in book form, would have been barred at the libraries. "It dealt with life," explained Carfew enthusiastically—" real life that ordinarily is never touched upon save by daring Sunday newspapers with a large and decadent reading public."

The author was unknown.

"Theophilus Grudge," said Carfew impressively. "Have you ever heard of him?"

"No," confessed Parker. "Is it a man?"

"The name of Theo Grudge," said Carfew, in a voice shaken by emotion, "will ring through London. He has the original view. This play may not be popular. I do not aim at popularity. My object is to raise the theatrical art."

Parker yawned insolently.

The play, went on Carfew, was about two women and a man. One of the women loved the man, and the other was married to him. It was very sad. Then came another man who had heard that the first man was a convict, and told his wife. The wife said "Ah!" and clutched her throat. Then the second man went to the lady who loved the first man, and told her, and she said "Ah!" too, but clutched his throat. Then the first man came in and said, "What does this mean ?" to his wife, and she said, "I know all-all-all !"

"Ah !" said Parker thoughtfully. "Then it's not a musical comedy ?"

Carfew choked.

"It's a play," he said shortly, "which will pull all London."

Parker maintained his attitude of studied politeness.

"In the meantime," he said, "I am not sure whether you're pulling my leg or not. I think the best thing you can do is to get a little humour into it. Who is rehearsing it, by the way?"

"I am," said Carfew, with a cough.

"Ah, yes," said Parker offensively.

It is the easiest thing in the world to produce a play for a London audience, and "Wastepaper" was no exception. You simply assemble your company, hand the members their parts, and there you are. The responsibility thereafter lies very largely with Providence.

Carfew's view of life was that all the past had been ordered for his comfort.

Thus Edison had been born on a certain day in order that he might have his many electric appliances ready against Carfew reaching maturity. Stephenson had worked with no other object in view than that he should have railways shipshape by the time Carfew could afford to travel first-class. Marconi— But why enumerate the folk who owed their existence and their fame to the fact that they were necessary to Carfew's well-being?

Carfew was a theatrical manager by accident. He had produced a play which had fluked a success. Carfew took credit for the joyful result, for the division of responsibility as between Carfew and Providence was so arranged that, if things turned out well, Carfew had succeeded in spite of Providence, and if they failed, they had failed in spite of Carfew.

He walked down the stone stairs after Parker had left, passed through a narrow passage, through innumerable iron-guarded doorways, and came to a large open space of flooring which sloped gradually down to a congested border of electric bulbs. Beyond this was a dark and cheerless auditorium sheeted with holland.

The stage—for such it was, and it will serve no useful purpose to deceive you—was occupied by some dozen ladies and gentlemen. They wore ordinary clothing. The ladies wore furs and veils, and such as were on speaking terms with one another were discussing their former triumphs, each taking no notice whatever of anything the other said, but waiting for an opening which would allow them to continue their own stories, which the other had so meanly interrupted.

"... I couldn't find my make-up anywhere, so I just dibbed a bit of powder on my nose and walked on. The play was going badly till then, but from the moment I stepped on to the stage it just woke up. There were three curtains after the first act. ..."

"Of course I had to gag. She was fluffing all over the shop—didn't know a line, my dear. If it hadn't been for me, the play would have been a dead failure. They called me in front six times, and naturally *she* was as wild ——"

"I had to take on the part at ten minutes' notice, and learn my lines during the waits. I don't know how it is, but I seem to have the gift of acting . . . The papers were full of it the next morning."

Carfew heard the scraps with growing irritation. Nothing annoyed him more than egotism in people. His ideas on the stage had undergone an extraordinary revolution since his first association with the men and women who claimed it as their profession. They were so stupid; they listened to him with such evident boredom; they had so few interests, and knew so little about the world.

They had received his story of how he had saved Europe from war, by his dexterous handling of the German Ambassador, with polite "Oh, yeses !" and "How wonderfuls !" They had listened with patent weariness to his account of how he preserved the Spanish succession, and it was only when he spoke of the immense sums of money which he had made by the exercise of his qualities that they regarded him with the admiring interest which a small and select gathering of the Munchausen Lodge might have displayed toward Past Grand Master Ananias.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," said Carfew briskly, "we will run through the first act. Clear the stage, please. Enter the Duke of Bulberry."

The Duke of Bulberry, a pale young man in a straw hat, took farewell of his friends in one comprehensive glance and retired to the wings. Here he rid himself of his inertia and came back briskly.

"Nine o'clock !" he said, addressing the melancholy stalls. "She promised to be 'ere by eight. Well, you can never trust a woman to keep an appointment."

Carfew raised his hand.

"Where did you get that line from?" he demanded.

The Duke looked across at him with a pained expression.

"I put that in, Mr. Carfew," he said patiently. "It's a line that always gets a laugh."

Carfew breathed heavily.

"You're not supposed to get a laugh," he said. "You are a tragic duke. You have lost money—you don't joke about such things. Please speak the lines that the gods—that the author has given you. And be careful about your h's."

The duke stiffened.

"I 'ope," he said, with a touch of hauteur, "that I can speak the King's English, Mr. Carfew. I 'aven't been told durin' my eight years' experience on the stage, both legitimate and the 'alls, that I've trangressed the bounds, so to speak. I've played with the leading artistes of the day. I've been a top liner on the bill at the leadin' vaudeville......"

"Go on with the part, please," said Carfew.

The young man drew a long breath.

" It is now nine o'clock," he said, " and she 'as not come ! What can keep 'er ? Ah, 'ere she is ! "

"Come on, Miss Tilby," said Carfew. But Miss Tilby at that moment was explaining to an envious small-part lady the extraordinary fascination which she wielded over provincial audiences.

"Miss Tilby-Miss Tilby !"

In various tones, from the indignant one of Carfew to the gentler admonitory of her dearest friend, the presence of Miss Tilby was demanded.

She came on the stage a little flurried.

"Sorry," she said.

"Ah, 'ere she is !" said the duke encouragingly.

"Why, duke," said Miss Tilby, coming down stage and offering a gloved hand, "I have kept you waiting! But I've been to visit a poor woman, and it is better that dukes should wait than that the poor should suffer." "In the name of Heaven," said Carfew, pale but determined, "who told you to say that? It's not in the play, and it's nothing whatever to do with the play."

"I put it in, Mr. Carfew," said the lady coldly. "It seems to me that this play wants strengthening up a bit, and it's a line that always gets the hand in the provinces."

"Cut it out," said Carfew.

Miss Tilbyshrugged her beautiful shoulders. "If I don't know what makes a play——" she began.

"You don't," said Carfew brutally.

"I know a great deal more than you," flamed the girl. "Mr. Carfew, let me tell you that I am the idol of the provinces. I play to more money than any other lady in the business. When I was in Wolverhampton, they ran special trains to bring the people into the town to hear me. And I'm not going to be spoken to as if I was the dust beneath your feet !"

" I----" said Carfew.

"I am the idol of the provinces!" she went on, with an angry sob in her voice. "I've played in America, South Africa, and Australia. Merciful Heavens, that I should have come to this!"

"You can say this," said Carfew to the representative of *The Dramatic News*, "that the idea of 'Wastepaper' being a problem play is quite erroneous. It is a forceful drama—in fact, by certain standards it is a melodrama. After all, is not melodrama the very essence of dramatic presentation? The scene where the duke throws the heroine into the Seine, and she is rescued by the hero disguised as a gendarme, is going to be the thrill of London."

The reporter went away, and Carfew returned thoughtfully to the stage. It wanted a fortnight to the opening, and his leading lady had thrown up her part, and, so far, no other leading lady had pleased him. Unless, of course—

A girl who was sitting on the angry waves which distinguished the second act, rose as he walked on to the stage. She showed her even white teeth in a smile.

"Hullo!" said Carfew, brightening up. "You're Miss Carrington, aren't you?"

"That's me," she said brightly. "I got your 'phone message. What do you want?" He explained that Miss Tilby had left him. She was quite unsuitable for the part; she hadn't the voice or the presence or the manner. She couldn't "get it over the footlights." He did not say that Miss Tilby had thrown up the part. He was representing the managerial side of the business, and from that aspect a leading lady never throws up—she is just unsuitable and cannot "get it over."

The girl stared at him seriously as he outlined the plot, then shook her head regretfully.

"Drama isn't in my line," she said. "I'm straight comedy. Why don't you make it straight comedy? Cut out the murder in the second act and take them to Paris. I could do a solo dance that would bring the house down. Really, even straight comedy is a bit out of my line."

"My dear girl——" began Carfew, but she stopped him.

"Listen to me, Bright Eyes," she said kindly, laying her hand on his arm. "Your old play won't run two weeks. The public doesn't want murder; it wants amusement. Try it as a straight comedy—a foreign nobleman courting an American heiress, and all that sort of thing."

Carfew sent for his business manager.

"Have you put out the billing?" he asked.

His business manager, who was known as Frank, and had apparently no other name, nodded familiarly.

"What have you called 'Wastepaper'?" asked Carfew.

Frank looked round the room for inspiration.

"We've called it 'Wastepaper,'" he said cautiously.

"Don't get funny with me!" roared Carfew. "Is it a tragedy, a drama, or a farce?"

Frank drew himself up.

"It is called a 'play,' Mr. Carfew," he said stiffly, "and I'd like to say that I'm not used to being addressed in this manner you employ. I've been managing houses now for twenty years, and I'm supposed to be the very best man in the profession. I've refused good offers to come to you. Every proprietor in London is after me."

"They've got you," said Carfew bitterly.

A pale and haggard Carfew sat in the stalls a week before the opening. His hands were pushed into his trousers pockets, his silk hat was on the back of his head.

A weary orchestra glared back at him with malice and resentment, but Carfew did not care.

The leading lady stood by the footlights, her hand on her hips, and scowled at him, and the remainder of the company stood around,



"'Your old play won't run two weeks. The public doesn't want murder; it wants amusement."

looking at each other with significant smiles.

"Say," said the lady by the footlights, "you don't expect me to come on after the comedy scene?"

Carfew nodded.

"Well, you can have your part," said the lady. "I don't wonder Miss Carrington threw it up."

She spoke excitedly, and with an accent which told of a youth spent in an exclusive seminary in Fortland, Maine.

"You understand, Mr. Care-few, that I star in my country. I was the idol o' Broadway and the best-known actress in the Eastern States. An' if you think I'm going to stand for having my entrance killed......"

Carfew rose slowly to his feet.

"Miss van Ryan," he said, "to please you I've turned this play into a musical comedy, to please you I've engaged a ragtime chorus and dressed the play regardless of expense. If there is any other suggestion you care to make, just slip it across."

"Say," she cried, and leant across the footlights, "can't I make my entrance from the orchestra?"

Carfew laughed long and wildly.

"Make it from the roof, Amelia," he said.

The dress rehearsal of "The Wastepaper Girl" was not an immense success. Ever and anon the new American producer would say from the stage—

"How did it go?"

And as ever, Carfew would reply hollowly : "Rotten !"

The Duke of Bulberry was out of voice. His entrance song—

> Though I am a duke, It is only a fluke That I managed the title to snaffle. My young Cousin Fred Fell out of bed, And I won the rank in a raffle,

did not "get over."

Then the new beauty chorus went all agley. Carfew distinctly saw three girls pointing their right toes when they should have been jiggling their left toes. And the leading comedian forgot his lines about Home Rule, and the second comedian said : "Why, who is coming this way? By Jove, it is Lydia Kinsella !" (Chord.)

The latest leading lady—she was English —was annoyed.

"You don't expect me to drift on to the stage like a piece o' paper, do you?" she asked wrathfully. "I want people to know who I am. I've played in the best theatres in England ——."

"And you're the idol of Birmingham," said Carfew savagely, "and the police stop the traffic when you start singing. I know all about it. Give her a chord, Aleck."

This to the weary conductor, the only friend Carfew had by this time.

The first act proceeded, the second act was worse.

In the end Carfew made a little speech.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "after this play has been produced, I hope you will all keep in touch with me. I am particularly anxious to mail you a verbatim account of my bankruptcy proceedings. In my evidence before the Official Receiver, I shall mention you all by name, and explain how much acting, singing, and dancing each one of you contributed to my failure. Good night!"

"The Wastepaper Girl" was obviously a success. Carfew knew that he was in for a long run before the curtain finally fell, before the frantic calls for "Author!" brought him to the footlights.

He supped with Parker that night.

"What I like about your play," said Parker, "is its uplifting quality. Never, in one play, have I seen anything so moving. Seriously, Carfew, you are rather a wonder. How do you do these things ?"

"Parker," said Carfew solemnly, "I am the best producer in Europe. I've got Reinhardt lashed to the mast. I'm the idol of the profession, and the people will do anything for me. I just know what the public want, and I go for it. Do you get me, Steve?"

"I get you," said Parker, without exactly comprehending what he was getting.





"HOW BIANCA CAPELLO SOUGHT TO POISON HER BROTHER-IN-LAW, CARDINAL DE MEDICI, AT FLORENCE, 1587." BY VAL C. PRINSEP, R.A. Reproduced from a photograph by F. Hollyer.

THE ART OF VAL C. PRINSEP, R.A.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

"AL" PRINSEP was a man immensely favoured by Nature and by fortune. He was of fine physique, nearly six feet three in his stockinged feet; of assured position-his father and grandfather were highly-esteemed servants of the East India Company in the days when there were plums to be plucked from the pagoda tree; of a charm of manner which first attracted and then retained the friendship of the men and women with whom he was brought into contact; of an intelligence and with cultivated tastes which proclaimed him of a high order of mental power and endowed with the kindliest disposition. Valentine Cameron Prinsep was born on St. Valentine's Day, 1838, in Calcutta. He was the second son of Henry Thoby Prinsep, who became a Director of the East India Company, and in course of time a Member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India. Since he. like his father, had helped in the making of our Indian Empire, this last honour was the snitable crown set on a successful career.

It was natural that Mr. Henry Thoby

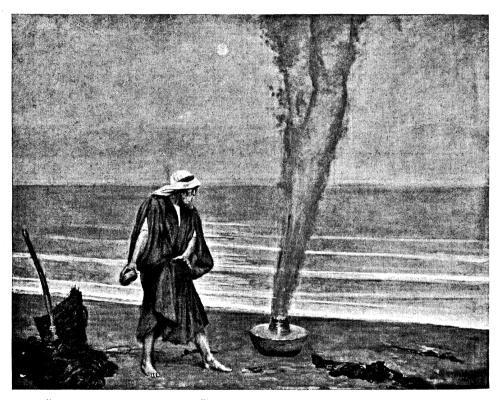
Prinsep should intend his sons for the Indian Civil Service. The boys, indeed, received nominations for it, and in 1855, after a preliminary education at Exmouth and at Elstree, the young Valentine Prinsep was sent to Haileybury College, then the trainingground of young Indian civilians.

It is proverbial that the schemes of mice and men "gang aft agley," and they do so quite as frequently through the effects of good fortune as of ill. It was the good fortune of Val Prinsep's surroundings which was responsible for his leaving the easy official path which he was destined to pursue for the rugged one of Art.

At the time when he was sent to Haileybury, the Prinsep family was living at Little Holland House, Kensington, and George Frederick Watts, who made one of the household, had a studio within the precincts of the large garden. Leighton, who came over from Italy in 1855, at the end of his student days, brought a letter of introduction to Watts, and through the friendship thus begun he, too, was soon a familiar figure in Mr. Prinsep's hospitable house.

George Watts was then a man of thirtyeight, who had already made a reputation. His "Caractacus Led in Triumph Through the Streets of Rome" had won for him three hundred pounds in the cartoon competition at Westminster Hall, and his "Alfred Inciting His Subjects to Prevent the Landing of the Danes" had been purchased by the Government. He had from school-days at Haileybury into the artistic atmosphere permeating Little Holland House, should have chosen the artistic rather than the official life.

If the fine craftmanship of Watts and the youthful success of Leighton were the immediate influences which worked this change in the impressionable mind of eighteen, it was his father's sympathy with his son's artistic ambitions and his generosity which enabled the youthful painter to follow his bent.



"THE FISHERMAN AND THE JIN"—THE ARABIAN NIGHTS. BY VAL C. PRINSEP, R.A. Reproduced from a photograph by Dixon & Son.

painted, too, his "Good Samaritan" and "Life's Illusions."

Leighton was but twenty-five, but he had made his precocious mark in Art with his "Cimabue's Madonna Carried in Procession Through the Streets of Florence," and great things were prophesied of him. Thackeray, who had fallen under the influence of his attractive personality in Rome, had already written his prophetic words to Millais, "Here is a versatile young dog who will run you close for the Presidency one day." and it is scarcely to be wondered at that the young Prinsep, brought in vacation "Look here," he said, "Watts tells me you have talent and that sort of thing. If you should like to go in for the study of Art, I will make it possible for you to do so, and will give you an income that will enable you to live and work for ten years." This was the way in which Valentine Prinsep began an artistic training under Watts. By 1857 he was a sufficiently advanced draughtsman to be permitted to assist in the decoration of the Debating Hall of the Oxford Union Society.

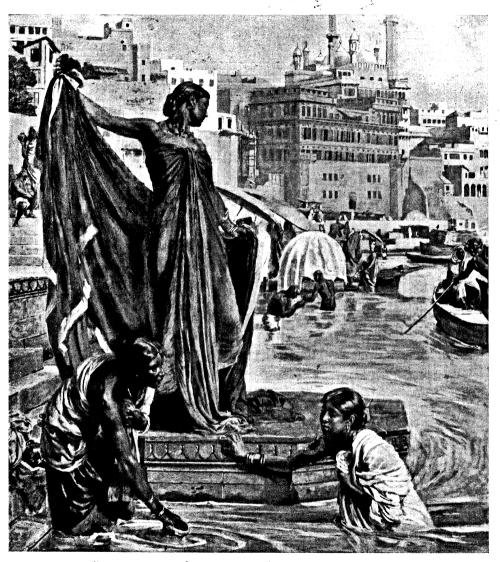
The proposal to decorate the hall emanated from Rossetti, and the carrying through of



"AT THE GOLDEN GATE." BY VAL C. PRINSEP, R.A. From the original in the City Art Gallery, Manchester, reproduced, by permission of the Corporation, from a photograph by Eyre & Spottiswoode.

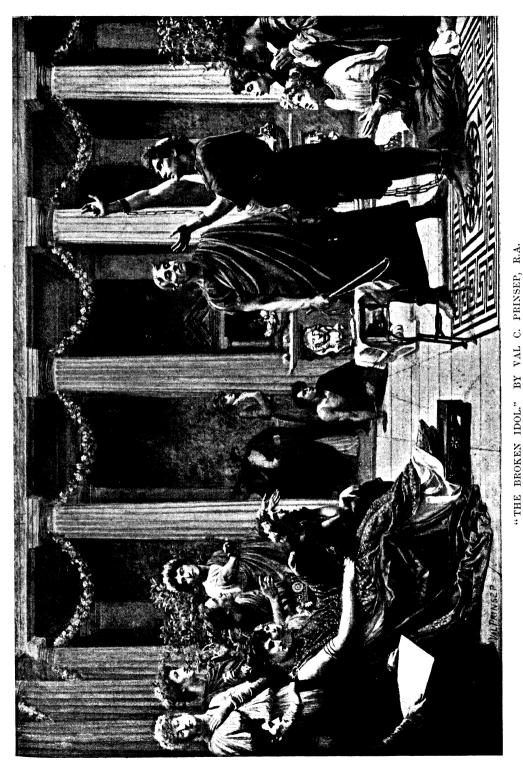
it under his direction was made feasible by the approval and help of Sir Charles Bowen, then the President of the Union. Rossetti chose Hungerford Pollen, Burne-Jones, William Morris, Arthur Hughes, Spencer Stanhope, and Valentine Prinsep to Prinsep's panel was representative of the courtship of Sir Pelleas of the Lady Ettarde.

The immediate result of Prinsep's association with Rossetti was that for a time he felt the other's art influence, but only for a time. He was of too robust a type to be for long a



"THE BATHING GHÂTS AT BENARES." BY VAL C. PRINSEP, R.A. Reproduced from a photograph by F. Hollyer.

aid him in a task which was a labour of love for all concerned, since the funds of the Union would not allow for more than the defraying of the incidental expenses. The themes of the Tempera designs which it was decided to depict were all taken from the "Morte d'Arthur." Val follower, nor had he that wish to embody vague ideas in permanent form which made of Rossetti a mystic and romantic artist. He was also innately a man of many parts, and early in life he had the opportunity of seeing something of the wonders of the world. Mr. C. E. Newton, C.B.,



Reproduced from a photograph by Dixon & Son.

was a friend of the Prinseps, and when in the early 'sixties he went to Halicarnassus, bent on discovery, he was accompanied by both Watts and young Prinsep. In the close association of travelling and exploring with men of Newton's and Watts's intellectual calibre, Prinsep came to understand something of that delicacy of thought and of feeling which lurks like an atmosphere round Greek art.

It was upon his return from Halicarnassus



THE THIRD SON OF THE MAHARAJAH OF KASHMIR. BY VAL C. PRINSEP, R.A. Reproduced from photographs by F. Hollyer.



THE GAEKWAR OF BARODA. BY VAL C. PRINSEP, R.A.

that he decided yet further to expand his ideas of Art. Perhaps talk of the French school of painting came to his ears— Rousseau, Dupré, Millet, Daubigny, Frere, the giants of the modern days, were doing glorious work—and induced him to turn his steps toward Paris. He entered the studio of Gleyre, than whom he could not have found a better master.

That he was desirous to see yet more of the artistic treasures of the world we gather from the fact that, when he left Paris, he went to Rome. Here he shared a studio with Edouard Brandon. The winter of 1860–1861, which he passed in Rome, must have been socially a most enjoyable time, for later he wrote his reminiscences of it and of the friendship he cemented there with the Brownings.

In 1862 he commenced to exhibit at the Royal Academy. His "Bianca Capello," which shows the influence of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, in which he had played so youthful a part, was very promising work for a young man of twenty-four. It was followed by "Whispering Tongues" and "Berenice." In 1865,



"THE DEATH OF SIWARD THE STRONG." BY VAL C. PRINSEP, R.A. Reproduced from a photograph by F. Hollyer.

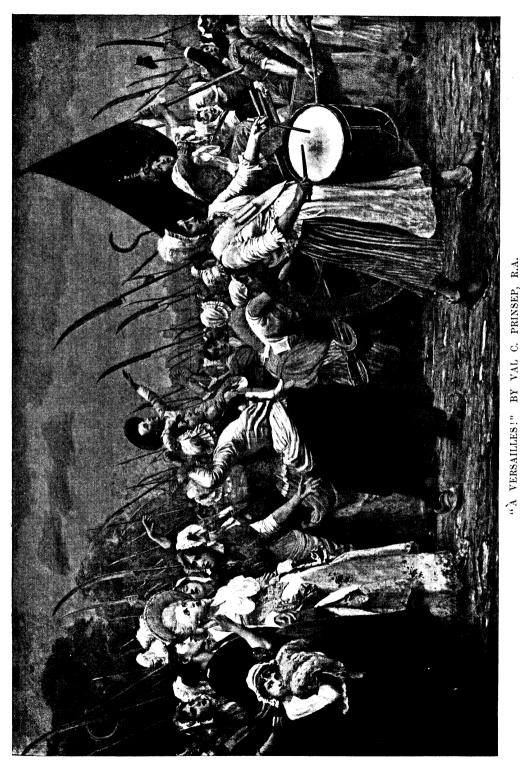
with "Jane Shore," he made his *début* as an English historical painter ; but "The Dish of Tea," "The Village Violinist," "Reading Sir Charles Grandison," reveal him as a *genre*

to in "The Death of Siward the Strong," that Siward who, in the play of "Macbeth," figures as the General of the English forces. Siward, undoubtedly, was one of the great



"AT THE WINDOW." BY VAL C. PRINSEP, R.A. Reproduced from a photograph by F. Hollyer.

painter rather than an historic. although his "Cleopatra" and his "Jane Shore" stand out from amongst this lesser work as indicating the wider range of his ambition, which, historically, he must be said to have attained warriors of the North, and his daughter's marriage to Duncan, and the accession of their son, Malcolm Canmore, to the Scottish throne, was the means of joining Celtic and Saxon blood and interests. It was the fact

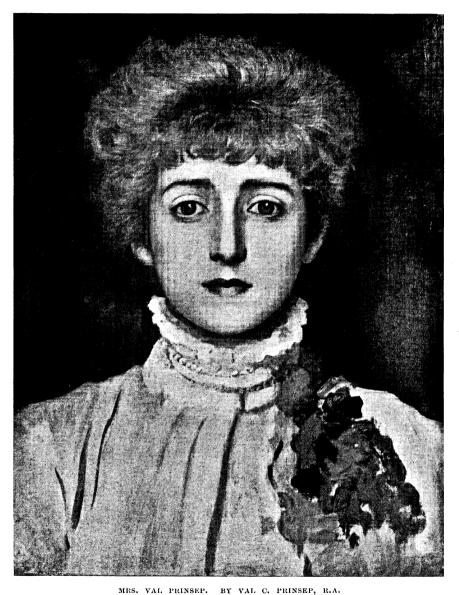


Reproduced from a photograph by Dizon & Son.

that the sons of Duncan had taken refuge with Siward that brought about the invasion of Scotland in 1054, and the fall of Macbeth at Dunsinane three years later.

Shakespeare's history, assumed to have

Strong " is dramatically effective, for, by the time it was painted, Prinsep had learnt by arduous work the grouping of many figures upon a stage, for "Siward the Strong" was not painted until 1882, two years after the



Reproduced from a photograph by F. Hollyer.

Holinshed's Chronicles as its source, is, perhaps, not very accurate, but the old Siward represented in the play of "Macbeth" as General of the English forces, is revealed as a courageous philosopher. The picture "The Death of Siward the

completion of a very arduous work representing the Durbar at Delhi, when Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India. This authoritative recognition of the

position Val Prinsep was thus proclaimed to have attained in his art was justified by



"CARMEN." BY VAL C. PRINSEP, R.A. Reproduced from a photograph by F. Hollyer.

the large painting exhibited in the Academy of 1880 under the title of "The Imperial Assembly Held at Delhi by Lord Lytton." It was a present to Queen Victoria from her Indian subjects. It was fitting that Val Prinsep, as the bearer of a name associated for many years with the conduct of Imperial affairs in India, should have been chosen for the execution of this work.

Among other subjects for which this journey to India was responsible were "The Handmaids of Siva Preparing the Saered Bull at Tanjore for a Festival," and "The Bathing Ghâts at Benares"—ghâts being those passways or landing-stages from water which are either natural granite ranges of hundreds of feet in height, or artificial elevations of but a few steps. In this particular picture the ghâts are a flight of shallow stairs which allow bathers easy access to a pool; but it was probably the natural ghât which induced Prinsep to paint the subject of "The Herd of Swine."

His "At the Golden Gate," the outcome of his Indian visit, must be counted as

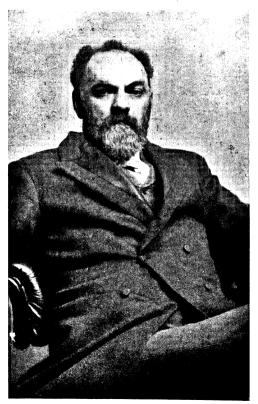


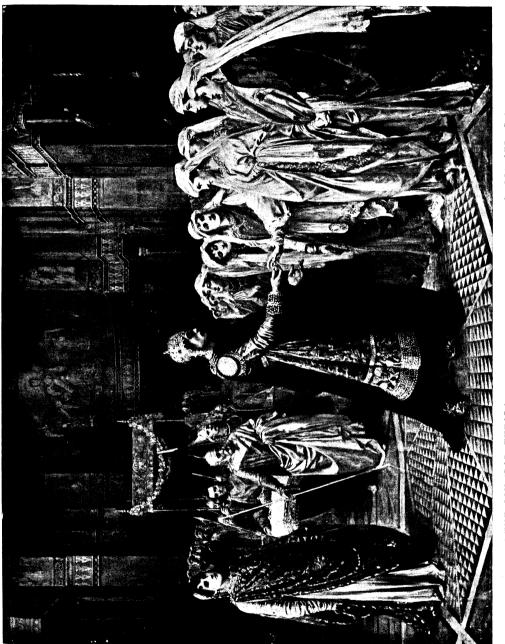
Photo by] [Elliott & Fry. VALENTINE CAMERON PRINSEP, R.A.



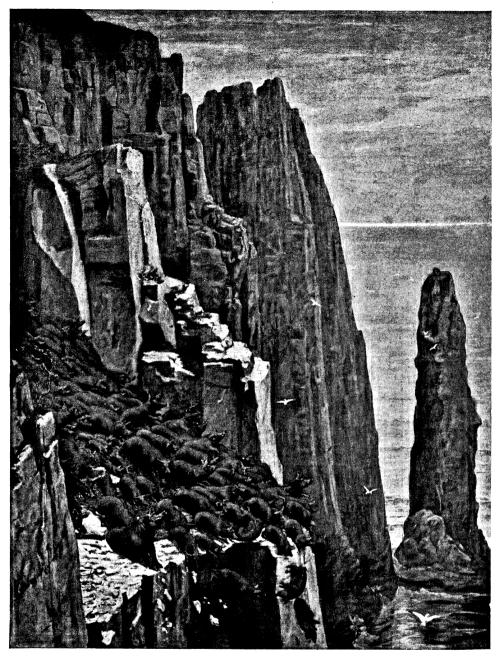
LEONORA DI MANTUA. BY VAL C. PRINSEP, R.A. From the original in the Walker Art Gallery, reproduced, by permission of the Corporation of Liverpool, from a photograph by Eyre & Spottiswoode.

amongst his best work. The Chantrey purchase, "Ayesha" (1887), a three-quarter length canvas of an Eastern girl swathed in a shawl and holding a large copper vase in her arms, although not one of his more elaborate works, may also be accounted eharacteristic of his style.

India enthralled him from the first, and he experienced, in revisiting it, that tug of heartstrings which is like to that of filial love. In a delightful book, entitled "Imperial India," the story of his wanderings through the Imperial Provinces is told. His impressions were jotted down as he went from place place, painting portraits of rajahs. to We go with him, as we read the book, to Bombay, to Delhi, to Allahabad, to Lahore, to the Valley of Kashmir, which, with its We cross deodars, he found disappointing. the Pir Punjal with him; we stop in front of mud-walled villages to admire them; we see the palaces as collections of pavilions in gardens; we rush through Bangalore, Mysore, Madras, and Seringapatam, and a few pertinent remarks remain indelibly on If our mind after the perusal of the book. he is bitter over the vicious taste which has controlled the restoration of some of India's



"THE EMPEROR THEODORE CHOOSING A WIFE." BY VAL C. PRINSEP, R.A. Reproduced from a photograph by Dixon & Son.



"THE HERD OF SWINE." BY VAL C. PRINSEP, R.A.

beautiful buildings, heaping, as he says, enormity on enormity, the Ossa of bad style on the Pelion of shrieking colour, he leaves us with the impression that India is, above all other lands, the one to provide an inexhaustible field for the painter.

He liked the jewelled, scintillating, palpitating, and scorching sunshine, the glare, the colour, the pomp and circumstance, the luscious emotional silences of the dreamy nights. He was awake to the grace, more beautiful than beauty of feature, of the women; the colour holding the violence of a set palette appealed to his gorgeous coloursense, the flaming scarlet of the poinsettias, the violet and amethyst hills silhouetted against the sapphire sky, the gold on the buildings which reflects back to the sun the



"VENETIAN WOMEN AFTER THEIR DAT'S WORK." BY VAL C. PRINSEP, R.A. Reproduced from a photograph by Dixon & Son. colour which seemingly it filches from it. The vividity of the land made an appeal to something native in his nature, and, in looking at his Indian pictures, we seem not only to see the scenes which he was attracted to paint, but the indescribable Oriental scents -a potpourri of musk, spice, and garliccome to our nostrils, whilst the cry of the camel-driver, the jingle of bells, the poignant twang of the gittern, the dull throb of the tom-tom, the piteous plaint of the reed, and the brazen blast of the temple's gong sound in our ears. •Several of the Indian pictures less grandiose than his Durbar canvas are somehow mysteriously suggestive of Val Prinsep's feeling for India. For the interests of Art are opposed to pageants. Pageants, indeed, are the prose of painting, and prose, as we know, is not amongst the Muses. Yet such work is not done without great labour : few people realise the ardnous application which is demanded from a painter who essays to place upon canvas semblance of such a scene as the Durbar. Prinsep. however, was a sturdy student, and he had that strenuous purpose to accomplish to which a fine physique gives from its vitality such magnificent aid. In thinking of Prinsep the artist, it is very difficult not to think of Prinsep the man. To him we can almost apply the oft-quoted phrase of Michael Angelo : "That man would have had no equal had Art done as much for him as Nature.'

"The Durbar at Delhi," "La Révolution" -which was placed in the Diploma Gallery in 1894, when Prinsep was made a full Member of the august body of which he had for fifteen years been an Associate-"A Versailles," depicting the occasion when the crowd first took up and made a national hymn of Rouget de L'Isle's now famous Marseillaise; and "The Death of Siward the Strong," to which we have already alluded --these are the best of his pictures which are crowded with figures. In others he preferred to present large single figures against some highly-wrought background and with a wealth of decorative treatment in the setting. He found the chief of his subjects in the pages of books, as was natural to a man who had learning and literary taste. Thus we get "Penelope," "Medea," "The Diva, Theodora Imperatrix," whose fortunes, character, and deeds have been the subjects of so many pens. Now and again the sheer beauty of a woman's face or form tempted him to portray it, and he entitled the presentment "Cinderella," "Ayesha," "The Goose Girl," "Titian's Niece," "Punjaubee Girl," "Phyllida," or "Carmen," as the case might be.

Now and again, too, some aspect of Nature or life commended itself to his facile brush, and so he gave us "Autumn," "The Harvest of Spring," "Five O'Clock Tea," "The Return From the Honeymoon," "Venetian Women After Their Day's Work."

Val Prinsep's art included a very happy gift for portraiture. He painted portraits of Lord Lawrence, by order of the Secretary of State for India. In "The Durbar at Delhi," all the faces were portraits. Viscount Ingestre, Lady Theresa Talbot, Mrs. Kendal, and Gordon Pasha sat to him, but possibly the most speaking likenesses, to use a colloquial phrase, were that of Mr. Frederick Leyland, whose daughter he married, and those of Mrs. Prinsep herself, whose qualities as hostess made their house in Holland Park Road one of the most attractive places of social interest in that peculiarly attractive quarter.

Val Prinsep essayed literature as well as paint. He pleased himself with writing, perhaps, rather than took it as seriously as he did paint, but the fact that he wrote two novels, "Virginie" and "Abibal the Tsourian," a book of reminiscences entitled "Imperial India : An Artist's Journal," and two successful small plays, "Cousin Dick" and "Monsieur le Duc," shows how discursive he was in his pursuit of Art.

He died in the November of the year 1904, and few men have been more sincerely regretted, nor by a larger number of friends; for, outside an intimate circle and even beyond the Academic walls and those acquaintances with whom his art brought him in contact, there was that large body known as the Artists' Volunteer Corps, who were very sincerely grieved by the loss of their major.



THE TEST

By ADAM SQUIRE

Illustrated by A. C. Michael



T was at Anstruther's that the thing happened. People, I'm afraid, blamed Anstruther, but it is difficult to see how he could have acted differently.

There were four of us staying with him at the time. It

was only a month or two before that he had come into Condon Abbey, through his uncle's death, and he had thought it worth while to go up to superintend personally some alterations on which he had decided. He had bribed me to come and keep him company by promising me a shot at the pheasants, and his nephew, on leave from his regiment, insisted on coming also, bent on the same murderous mission. Young Reggie generally had his way with Anstruther, who, having neither wife nor chick of his own, watched over the boy's career with as much affection as if he were his own son. Reggie was a careless, happy-go-lucky youth, full of the prejudices that so often cling to a public-school boy, but warm-hearted, generous, and brave. He and I were old friends, as I had seen much of him, being so frequently in his uncle's company. Anstruther and I had done most things together for a good many years. It was, I remember, our love for climbing that brought us first together, and the pilgrimage to Switzerland had become almost an annual The fourth member of the party was affair. a man named Carruthers, who somehow did not blend satisfactorily. He was young, not more than twenty-six, I should say. He had good manners and talked well, but he had a knack of rubbing all three of us up the wrong way. He did not seem able to choose his subjects with discretion; he would strike a serious note in a conversation at the wrong moment, or would, even more frequently, make some satirical witticism on a theme which one of us was perhaps treating seriously. I think it really was just want of tact, for the man was a gentleman. He was a well-set-up young fellow, and his features were good, but his colour was bad and gave him rather an unhealthy appearance. I rather wondered how he had found his way among us, till Anstruther told me that Carruthers had just come up to London from his people in the country, and had brought a letter of introduction. He was going to read for the Bar, but appeared to attach small importance to the opening of Term, so that Anstruther, anxious to show him some little attention, had suggested his coming down to Condon for a week.

I remember we finished our shooting rather late that day, because the workmen had knocked off, much to Anstruther's annoyance, as he had wished particularly to see the foreman who was in charge of the alterations. I recollect very well our standing outside the wall of what had once been the chapel, and Anstruther explaining to us his ideas of what he was going to do. The wall was some forty feet long, and about six feet from the top-which would make it, I suppose, about fifteen feet from the ground -there ran a plank the whole of its length. At one end there was a ladder reaching to the grass below. The other end led straight on to the platform of the belfry. Anstruther explained to us that the "pointing" of the wall was to be begun on the morrow.

"I hope the men will fix up a cradle or something," he said. "I walked across the plank this morning, and it made me quite jumpy."

"What made you do a silly thing like that ?" I asked.

"I really don't know," he laughed. "I wanted to rig up a rope on the belfry to hear the old bell ring, and could have got the key of the stairs by walking as far as the gun-room. Perhaps I wanted to keep in trim for our climbing expeditions, Jack."

"Well, you take care," I rejoined, "or a broken leg will put you out of court altogether."

"Yes, I suppose a fall would break one's leg. That's about the worst that could 2 T happen." And Anstruther looked at the long lush grass, out of which grew the walls of the old chapel.

As we moved away to return to the house, I happened to look at Carruthers. The moon was already up, and his face was clearly visible. He seemed to me even paler than usual. No doubt the moonlight would have the effect of enhancing his natural pallor, but what struck me still more forcibly was the expression on his face as he looked at Anstruther. It betokened very clearly admiration, and even an envious sort of admiration. This fact, and the pallid look on Carruthers's face, must have combined to form the idea that flashed through my brain. I remember very distinctly saying to myself: "This fellow is wanting in courage." I was angry with myself afterwards, while dressing for dinner, for formulating such a I don't pose as a particularly thought. charitable man, but I hope that I should wait for more evidence before passing such a verdict on any man.

Anstruther was a charming host besides being a charming fellow, and dinner was generally a pleasant meal at Condon. Unfortunately it was then that Carruthers's less pleasing traits were most frequently exhibited. Among four people the con-versation is bound to be general, and it is in such a conversation that imperfect sympathies are apt to make themselves felt. overbearing argument, or want of Any reasonable deference to another's point of view, inevitably spoils the symmetry of the entertainment, and it was here precisely that Carruthers sinned most grievously. He was not overbearing in his manner—his voice was always quiet-but his arguments were overbearing in their nature, and appeared to allow no room for anything to be said on the other side. He would tread upon corns without a moment's hesitation, seemingly ignorant of the inconvenience he was causing to his unfortunate victim. Reggie, in particular, was apt to wince, and Anstruther was hard put to it, at times, to keep the peace between him and Carruthers.

The time of which I am speaking was that of the Boer War, and our talk at dinner was, not unnaturally, often concerned with the news that came from the front. On this particular evening we were discussing the heroic conduct of one of our officers, who, by a signal act of daring courage, had rescued the guns from what appeared to be certain capture. The press was full of the incident, and Anstruther had been recounting to us some of the details as given in the evening He was particularly enthusiastic paper. about the matter, as the officer in question was an old friend of his. He estimated eagerly the chances of his obtaining the V.C., and Reggie was joining in the talk, full of boyish enthusiasm and admiration, proud, too, in the knowledge that he had once met the brave fellow in his uncle's rooms. Tt pleased me to see my two friends rejoicing together in the glory that had come to the old comrade of one of them, and I felt more than particularly angry with Carruthers when I heard him say in his quiet, well-bred voice-

"I've often wondered whether the institution of the V.C. has not, as a whole, worked out badly in its effect on the Army."

Reggie flushed up and would, I think, have said something hasty, had Anstruther not answered rather hurriedly—

"Quite a fair proposition to argue, Carruthers, but to argue it properly would require dispassionate arguers, and Reggie and I are rather too elated over Maitland's performance to conduct such a debate temperately."

"That exactly illustrates a point I had in my mind," returned Carruthers. "The false glamour that surrounds the Victoria Cross blinds people to the fact that this competition for it may be disastrous to the Army itself. Like you and your nephew, they are too elated to view the question dispassionately."

"I think our elation was due to the gallant performance itself," said Anstruther.

"But you covet the V.C. for him?" said the other.

"Oh, yes," answered Anstruther; "but isn't that only because the bestowal of it recognises the merit of the performance?"

"Exactly. You want his action recognised —hall-marked, so to speak. He—I mean the hero himself—wants it no less. They all want their gallant achievements to be labelled, and so there ensues a competition for gallantry. You offer them a price for their courage."

I was getting more and more annoyed with the man. I was astounded that he could not see he had chosen a bad moment to open this subject. To my eye Anstruther was seriously annoyed, and nothing but his good manners prevented him giving his guest a setting down. Reggie was not so temperate.

"What a rotten way to put it !" he burst out. "Do you suppose the tinpot medal has anything to do with it?" "Sir James will understand what I mean," answered Carruthers, setting Reggie aside as if his contribution was valueless, which, indeed, it was.

"Yes, yes. Of course I see your point," said Anstruther, hoping vainly that the conversation would die for want of encouragement.

"Is it a good thing to encourage individual deeds of daring? That is the whole point," went on Carruthers. "It seems to me to do so is to direct men's thoughts to such deeds, instead of guiding them into other channels—to make them use their bodies instead of their brains."

"Oh, come !" I broke in. "A deed such as we have been discussing requires brains as well as courage."

"It's not for the brains the V.C. is given, but for the so-called courage," was the quick answer.

"What the deuce do you mean by 'socalled courage'?" asked Reggie, in an irritated voice.

"Ah," exclaimed Carruthers, "if it comes to that, what do you mean by 'courage'?"

Reggie is not very good at definitions.

"Courage?" he repeated. "I think if a chap rushes in and pulls somebody or something out of a mess, and doesn't care a hang what happens to himself, I should say that fellow had courage."

"That fellow, as you call him," said Carruthers, "was probably a big, strong chap with a good digestion and very few brains. Besides, he *was* caring a hang what happened to himself—he hoped the V.C. was going to happen to him."

"Come, I say, Carruthers, steady on ! You know you can't guess what was in Maitland's mind." Anstruther's voice showed he was nettled.

"I give you my word, Sir James, your friend wasn't in my mind at all," answered Carruthers hastily. "I was merely taking your nephew's illustration."

"Do you mean to say that no one will do a courageous action without thinking of himself?" asked Reggie hotly. Reggie always "did himself well," as he expressed it, at dinner, and the champagne made him no calmer in debate.

"I never said that. I never meant that. I never meant more than to say that the competition for the V.C. may have a tendency to breed such a race of men."

"Rot!" said Reggie shortly.

"Order, Reggie 1" said Anstruther laughingly, but we all understood the rebuke that lay beneath the tone of voice. "You mustn't take it so personally," Carruthers went on. "I believe what I have suggested to be a real danger."

"You know, Carruthers," I couldn't help saying, "your argument would logically lead you to this—that you can always get heroes for a price."

"Why not?" he answered. "I would frame the proposition in even wider terms. I would say that any man will do a courageous action if the price offered is big enough."

"May I ask," broke in Reggie, "what amount you have fixed as sufficient to induce you to do something in that line?"

This was getting to rather close quarters, and so Anstruther seemed to think, for he joined in by saying—

"Come, Reggie, there's no use making such a personal matter about it."

Reggie, however, was getting more and more heated. "What else is *he* doing but making the discussion personal? The whole effect of his remarks is to crab Maitland's performance. According to him, Maitland had his price for doing what he did."

"I don't think that quite fairly represents what I said," answered Carruthers, who had looked up angrily at Reggie's taunt, but was now quite calm again.

"Besides," went on Reggie, without heeding, "take, for instance, my uncle's walking across that plank this morning. What price did he get for doing that, eh? Answer me that."

"I don't call that courage at all," said Carruthers.

"You'd do it, perhaps?" returned Reggie.

I looked at Carruthers. He showed a little less of the judicial calmness with which he had hitherto pursued the discussion, and he answered with rather more heat in his manner—

"Yes, I would do it if I thought it worth while."

"What price?" asked Reggie rudely. "Besides," he went on irrelevantly, "I thought you said it didn't require courage."

"Not on Sir James's part. It would on mine, or on yours, too, I suppose, for the matter of that."

"Well, what price would induce you?" asked Reggie again.

Anstruther looked as if he wished to put an end to this discussion, but Reggie was too much out of hand to be restrained without something of a scene having to be made.

"Well?" He waited for an answer. Carruthers visibly resented the persistence of Reggie, who, for his part, was too angry not to press the advantage he had gained.

"I'll bet you twenty pounds," he went on, "you don't cross that plank to-night—now. Will you take it?"

Carruthers's pale face reddened up to the eyes, and then, the blood receding, it seemed even paler than before.

"No !" he said abruptly, rapping the word out like a pistol-shot.

Reggie looked at him a moment, then reached for a pear, which he commenced leisurely to peel, humming softly to himself. His manner was insulting in the highest degree, and it was evident that Carruthers felt it as such. Anstruther thought it time to interfere.

"Reggie, don't be an ass! Pass the port, help yourself, and we'll go and have a game of pool."

"Your nephew thinks me a coward, Sir James," said Carruthers, now quite agitated. "I don't choose to have him tell me so—so plainly."

"Nothing of the sort," expostulated Anstruther. "The boy has drunk too much champagne—that's all."

Reggie remained silent.

"He offers to bet me twenty pounds," Carruthers went on ; "I won't take his bet. That is not my price. If I did the silly thing he suggests, it would be to gain more than that—to free myself from a charge which he has made so plainly. I say this to him : I will cross that plank at once, if he will undertake to do the same."

"Done with you !" cried Reggie, springing to his feet excitedly.

My eyes met those of Anstruther. We were telling each other that this had gone far enough, and must be stopped.

"You're a pair of young idiots," said Anstruther good-humouredly. "Let's stop this foolery and get to our billiards."

Neither Carruthers nor Reggie made a sign of moving.

"Come along, Carruthers," I said, rising from my seat and making to follow Anstruther to the door.

"I'm perfectly willing to drop the whole thing," Carruthers answered, "if an apology is made to me."

"I'm hanged if I make it!" said Reggie. Anstruther turned and came back to the table.

"Now, look here, Reggie," he said, "make an end of this. Tell Carruthers you never meant to insult him, and let's all get back to something rational." "I'll apologise to him when he has crossed the plank," replied Reggie doggedly, "not before."

"I'm not going to have any of this tomfooling plank-walking business, understand that," Anstruther said.

"Good Heavens, uncle, you don't suppose I'm going to run away from that fellow's challenge? Here he has been crabbing Maitland all the evening. I'm not going to give him the chance of doing the same to me."

"But you can't go about doing these acrobatic performances in the dark; it's too dangerous," expostulated Anstruther.

"It's bright moonlight; you can see as clearly as in the day," answered Reggie, "and as for danger, you said yourself before dinner there was none."

"None for me, perhaps," returned Anstruther; "I'm accustomed to that sort of thing; it's different with you youngsters."

"One of us may take a fine toss," his nephew said; "that is about all that can happen."

Anstruther looked at me, as if asking my help to settle this silly business. I wasn't sure, however, that it wasn't better to let the thing go on. As regards the danger, Reggie really had stated the case very fairly, and I couldn't help feeling that, if this settlement of the quarrel were prevented, bad blood would exist for a long time. On the other hand, Reggie was just the sort of fellow to make the handsomest of apologies after the incident was over, and he and Carruthers might become all the better friends.

I took Anstruther aside and told him something of what was in my mind, and, although he hated the whole thing, he understood what I meant, and finally gave his consent to the silly performance taking place.

I was pleased to see that, once this decision was taken, Reggie's manner showed a decided improvement. The sporting aspect of the thing appealed to him, and he seemed almost to have forgotten the origin of the matter in his interest in making the arrangements.

"I can't say that tight-rope walking before a crowd appeals to me," he said. "I shall be watching you fellows on the ground, instead of paying strict attention to business."

"If that worries you, we can soon arrange it," answered Anstruther. He was glad to see that the strain of the situation was slightly relaxed, and took his cue from



[&]quot;He came along at a more reasonable pace."

Reggie, treating the matter in a more lighthearted fashion than previously.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," he went on. "I'll give you boys a lead over and wait for you on the belfry platform. Jack, here, can join me there by coming up the stairs; and, if you do look at us—well, it's exactly where you ought to be looking, instead of down at your feet."

"You don't suppose I'm going to be the only one to sneak up the belfry stairs," I expostulated. "No, thank you! I'll join the tight-rope party, too."

Anstruther looked gratefully at me. It was altogether wiser that the proceedings should take this shape. It was a foolish enough business at the best, but it was better that we should all be involved in the foolishness than that we two older men should stand idly by, seeing two youngsters make fools of themselves.

Carruthers had taken no part in the conversation. He looked very grave, and, if he were excited at all, his demeanour did not show it; but I noticed he gripped his napkin so tightly that the veins were standing out on the back of his hand. Anstruther turned to him.

"What do you think, Carruthers, of our idea?"

"I am quite agreeable to anything that's arranged," he answered. "I think it would be better, as your nephew suggests, that there should be no spectators below."

"Very good. Now, how should we arrange it? I think, perhaps, the best thing would be for me to go first—by the by, I mustn't forget the key of the stairs then Jack might come next, and then, I suppose, you boys ought to draw lots. Or should we all draw lots, do you think?"

"" Would you care to go before me?" Reggie asked of Carruthers.

"I think, perhaps, it would be better to draw lots, thanks," Carruthers answered.

Matters were accordingly so arranged. Reggie went off to fetch the key, which Anstruther placed in his pocket. I saw that a few words passed between the two men, and, from the sudden change in Reggie's manner and the decided shake of his head, I guessed that Anstruther was making a final effort to dissuade him. Two pieces of paper were torn to different lengths. He who drew the longer piece was to follow me. As I presented the two slips to Carruthers for him to take his choice, I looked him full in the face, and for the first time I had real apprehensions as to the issue of this

adventure. His mouth was working in a way which showed how his nervousness had gained ground, and in his eyes there was a look which suggested almost physical pain. His hand was firm enough, however, as he made his choice. He drew the shorter of the two slips, and something in his manner of throwing the piece of paper on to the table gave me the impression that he would have preferred to have drawn the other.

Anstruther walked to the long French window, which opened on to a stone loggia running nearly the whole length of the house at that side. It was at the end of this loggia, in an angle of the wall, that the ladder was placed. Anstruther paused a moment before going out.

"How much time do you allow before Jack follows me?" he asked. We looked at one another. The point had not occurred to us.

"Would three minutes be enough?" I suggested.

"Oh, ample," he replied. "Or could each man give a signal as he arrived ?"

"Why not pull the bell-rope?" said Reggie.

The suggestion seemed a simple one, and we agreed that that should be the arrangement.

Anstruther opened the window, and the moonlight streamed across the threshold. We could hear his footsteps on the stone floor, and noted the pause as they ceased for a second. He had reached the spot from which to ascend to the plank, and a moment later we could distinctly catch the sound of the shuffling tread as his feet sought the steps of the ladder. The noise became fainter and ceased altogether before we could be sure that he had reached the top.

In spite of our attempt to treat the matter lightly, there was an atmosphere of tension I was sitting at the bottom of in the room. the table, and the younger men were facing each other, one on either side of me. None of us broke the silence that followed the dying away of the footsteps. I glanced at Reggie; he was playing with a spoon, twisting it round in one direction and then I looked at Carruthers, and in the other. was shocked at the appearance of the man. He was positively ghastly. His face was livid and his eyes were strained as with some He had taken up the glass great agony. stopper of one of the decanters and was grasping it as though he meant to crush it I remember how white his to atoms. knuckles stood out.

No one spoke, and the silence became oppressive. I felt it ought to be broken. I searched my wits for something to say when—clang !—the sound of the bell came to us clear through the crispness of the frosty night.

Reggie shoved his chair away with a jarring noise and prepared to light a cigarette. Carruthers did not appear to change his attitude in any degree. I rose to carry out the part allotted to me.

"Well, Anstruther wasn't long about it," I said. "At this rate we shall all be back here in ten minutes." My voice sounded strange in the room, so long it seemed since anyone had spoken.

It was cold outside, and I stepped along briskly. I felt unaccountably depressed, and wondered whether I was losing my nerve. No personal fear for myself formed part of my sensations—they appeared quite impersonal and detached—but I had the consciousness that I was meddling with things I had better leave alone, that I was doing something I should regret hereafter.

I found my task much what I had expected. It required some caution, but was in no sense a difficult enterprise. The plank, being rather long, moved up and down in a manner that was a little disconcerting. It was close to the wall, however, and it was possible to steady the motion if care were exercised.

"It's beastly cold here," was Anstruther's greeting. "I hope those youngsters won't keep us waiting."

Reggie was out of the room before the sound of the bell had ceased. He scaled the ladder as nimbly as a seaman and started on to the plank without a moment's pause. He was going too quick. He had no right to go so fast, and saw his mistake when he felt the board begin to move under him. I had a moment of sickening dread, but he steadied himself against the wall and gradually the motion of the plank lessened. He came along at a more reasonable pace for the rest of the journey, and joined us without any further difficulty on the belfry platform.

"You young idiot," said Anstruther, "you gave us a rare fright! You ought to have more sense than to tackle a job like that as if you were a schoolboy."

"All right, uncle; all's well that ends well," he replied, laughing a little noisily.

"It has not ended yet," I couldn't help saying. "I wish to Heaven it had, and that Carruthers were standing here along with the rest of us." Try as I might, I could not shake off the horrible feeling of coming disaster that oppressed me. It was no use saying to myself that the danger was small. There was no arguing with that sensation of dread, and I turned to Anstruther to see whether, even at the last moment, something could not be done to prevent Carruthers from making this experiment. Just then I felt Reggie's arm brush against me, and almost simultaneously rang out the boom of the bell.

Reggie had left the window of the diningroom slightly ajar, and the eyes of all of us turned to the spot where the yellow light merged itself into the whiter beams of the moon. We knew that band of light would broaden when the window was opened wider, and we watched to see this happen and the form of Carruthers step into the night. We waited. No sign appeared of what we expected. We looked at one another in amazement. Was it possible that he should have missed hearing the bell ?

"I believe the beggar's funking, after all." It was Reggie who spoke.

"Ring the bell again," said Anstruther shortly.

The bell clanged out once more. It sounded harsher, I thought, and the jarring noise seemed to emphasise the silence that followed. This time there could be no mistake. That reverberating peal must infallibly have reached his ears. Still no sign. A minute passed—perhaps two. It was difficult to keep count of time at such a moment. My nerves were on the rack.

"Heavens, I can't stand this!" I exclaimed. "Cry the whole thing off, Anstruther."

"I think, indeed, there's no use staying here any longer," answered Anstruther. "It's evident that Mr. Carruthers has no intention of keeping his appointment."

The sound of our own voices was a relief to the situation, and action of any sort, even the mere descending the stone steps of the belfry, relaxed the strain of the last few minutes. We went along the gravel path which led directly on to the stone-flagged walk. The window was exactly as we had seen it from the tower of the belfry. Anstruther gave it a push and stepped into the room, closely followed by Reggie and me. Carruthers was still seated in the chair he was occupying when I left him; he still grasped the glass stopper of the decanter, but the hand that held it was thrown across the table, and his head and shoulders had fallen forward, resting partly on the arm and partly on the table itself. A glass had been upset, and on the cloth was the dark red stain of the wine.

I think we all knew what had happened, from the first moment of entering the room; to me it came almost as something expected. We raised him up gently, but one glance told us that he was past all aid, and that we looked on the face of a dead man. A shudder seized me as I thought of our standing in the belfry, clanging out our summons to that poor silent figure. Our tolling from the chapel tower had become a funeral knell, and he whom, in our foolishness, we had called upon, had journeyed forth to keep the Great Appointment.

* * * * *

Those are the facts concerning that night at Condon Abbey.

At the inquest the evidence of the family doctor made it quite clear that Carruthers had suffered from his heart for years. It was impossible, of course, for us to have known that; nevertheless, Anstruther was greatly blamed, and felt the censure acutely. Perhaps we were all three to blame, and yet —I am not sure.



O WINDS THAT WAIL.

A RONDEAU.

O WINDS that wail in sombre skies, When day has closed his weary eyes! What shadow thoughts do you suggest With your perpetual unrest, Moaning nocturnal mysteries?

Dim faces, ancient memories, Deeds we had fashioned otherwise, Words we had stifled unexpressed; O winds that wail!

Past strivings and futilities, And half-forgotten agonies; Such are the messages you bring, With your insistent whispering And indeterminable sighs,

O winds that wail!

ARTHUR COMPTON-RICKETT.



"Ducks rose on all sides with loud cries, and fled screeching right and left."

SAVING THE SITUATION

By A. E. JAMES

Illustrated by Balliol Salmon

Y way to the City lay through St. James's Park. To be strictly accurate, it lay along the Mall; but it was a lovely day, and the park looked sunny and green. And what are five minutes, anyway? I turned aside down a lakeward bound path, thinking artistic thoughts. I had just reached the point at which one commences to declaim aloud, when a solitary boat lying motionless in the middle of the lake came into my field of vision, and instantly aroused my curiosity. But a lovely day in the early spring does not generally suggest to the adult mind the sort of weather in which one lies basking in the sun in an open boat in the middle of a lake. Yet this was actually the case with the curious little occupant of the boat in question. She had neither hat nor coat, she lay upon her front, with her chin in her hands, and her feet betrayed, by their wild waving in the air at the more thrilling moments, the exciting nature of the mighty tome which she was absorbing so eagerly. The boat rocked from side to side the while in reckless

Now, as I have said, it was a lovely day.

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abandon. Any lingering doubt which I may have entertained as to the identity of the young lady was instantly dispelled by the sudden appearance in the bows of a small black dog, which barked at me furiously.

"Dinah !" I exclaimed, horrified.

The figure raised a black and scowling face.

"Go away!" it said laconically, and became immersed in its book again. I stood doubtfully on the bank and considered my next move.

Presently I coughed gently. Dinah looked up again, closed her book with a patient sigh, and said wearily: "Well, Boney, what is it?"

"What are you doing there?" I asked fatuously. "Won't you catch cold?"

Dinah sighed again. "Surely, Boney, you must see that I want to be quiet. I came here to get away from everybody else, and 'cos I wanted to finish this. It belongs to Donald, and—er—h'm—ha——." Here she had the grace to redden slightly, as our elder brother Donald has more than once forbidden us to appropriate his books. She covered her confusion, however, by demanding defiantly: "Anyway, what do you want?"

"Will you row me across?" I asked, with a flash of inspiration. Perhaps, on the journey across, I could persuade her to abandon the boat. In my mind's eye I saw her mother's, nurse's, sisters' faces deathly white at the thought of the child alone upon the waters.

"No," said Dinah carelessly. "I can't row, you see."

"Čan't ! " I gasped, turning a livid green.

"No," explained Dinah cheerfully. "I made the man push me off with a pole, and then I drifted."

"Holy Solomon !" I ejaculated. "And how do you hope to get back ?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Dinah comfortably. "I might *try*," she added as an after-thought, and, seizing the oars, began a perilous splashing.

Ducks rose on all sides with loud cries, and fled screeching right and left. "Don't!" I shouted. "Don't, for Heaven's sake! You'll upset the boat! Wait a minute and don't move!"

With these words, I dashed off towards the boat-house, and in less than five minutes had reached Dinah's side and transferred that indignant little person into my own boat. It was only then that I felt at liberty to heave a sigh of relief and mop my brow. Dinah gave me a look in which pity and amusement were equally blended. "Poor Boney!" she observed. "Poor old Boney! What a fright!"

"If you allude to my personal appearance——"I began in pardonable annoyance.

"Of course not," said Dinah, "though you *are* a little hot and untidy, now you mention it. But, Boney, how well you row!" This she added as a sop.

"Ah," I said, leaning back with a modest smile, "I haven't rowed for Cambridge three years running for nothing."

"Did you?" said Dinah in breathless awe. As a matter of fact, I didn't; but it is so important that the young should respect their elders in these decadent days that we should surely be pardoned if we sometimes provide extempore reasons for that same respect. Dinah looked at me in an admiring silence, and I basked in her admiration. Then, "Do row a little more, Mr. Bones, and let me see. Let's leave the other boat at the boat-house, and go on to the bridge."

In the distance I heard Big Ben booming the hour. I was already half an hour late, and the difference between being a half and a whole hour late is infinitesimal. I decided to gratify Dinah's desire to see my prowess in the athletic line.

Thus it happened that ten minutes later found me energetically pulling at the oars and observing reminiscently: "Ah, how this takes me back! I remember when I was rowing for the Leander against Sweden in 'sixty-six-----"

"Look out for your head!" should Dinah suddenly. I discovered that we were within a stroke of the bridge, between which and the surface of the water there was perhaps a foot. "Lie flat in the boat," suggested Dinah, suiting the action to the word. I followed her example, and we worked our way under and out hand over hand.

"This is disgracefully managed !" I grumbled angrily, as I rose into the sun and air again. "Why can't they have some proper arrangement? If the water rises too high, they ought to have some way of getting rid of it !" I propelled the craft with furious strokes towards an island. "It's disgraceful," I continued, "making people crawl under bridges like insects ! Christopher Columbus ! What is that ?"

Within two yards of us there towered an appalling caricature of a bird, pale pink of hue, lank of leg, preposterous of beak, a nightmare-like eye rolling melancholy in our direction. Dinah clutched my arm convulsively, and I began with fearparalysed limbs to push off from the island.

A hoarse voice greeted us. "Nah, then, none o' them tricks, young sir ! Back you come ! 'Urry up, nah ! "

Upon the bridge there stood a park-keeper in a threatening attitude; a small crowd, originally gathered with a view to seeing seagulls fed, pressed forward expectantly. It was a painful situation. I realised that we were on forbidden ground, and prepared to return as inconspicuously and as speedily as possible.

Å hundred pairs of hostile eyes watched my embarrassed efforts as I bent low over the oars to hide my painfully blushing face, a hundred heads craned over the bridge to watch our hurried repetition of the undignified hand over hand business; and when, as, lying flat in the boat we crept out on the other side, the keeper's voice was heard explaining in contemptuous aside, "One of them there Sufferyjecks after the pellikins, most probable !" our humiliation was complete.

With swift and skilful strokes I urged the boat along, pursued by many an offensive smile and jeer; not a word passed between us until, reaching the boat-house, we had discarded the silent witness of our discomfiture and were thoughtfully treading the pavement on the way home.

Then Dinah remarked artlessly: "It must have been quite like old times, all those people watching you."

I glanced at her sharply. Reassured, I replied : "Ah, but in the excitement of the moment one hardly notices the onlookers." "The creature !" Dinah darkly muttered,

"The creature !" Dinah darkly muttered, grinding her teeth. "And all those silly grinning idiots, too ! 'Sides, why should we want to disturb his silly pelicans? He must have known it was a mistake. And it was all my fault, Mr. Bones," she continued penitently, "'cos I suggested going under the bridge, and I'm fearfully sorry; but, you see, I didn't know. You're not cross, are you, Boney? Anyway, I'll see what I can do to make up for it. What d'you specially want just now, Boney, dear?"

I smiled sadly.

"Nothing," I said, scorning facetious "bromides" about motor-cars and dukedoms. "Nothing, except, perhaps—yes, I should like to see the Boat Race this year."

Dinah clapped her hands and leapt twice into the air after the manner of Nijinsky.

"Why not?" she asked in a shrill staccato. "Why not, Boney? And take me!" "Conscience, Dinah, conscience," I replied regretfully. "Duty calls elsewhere."

"Let it call, then," said Dinah pugnaciously. "You always pretend to be so busy, but what were you doing in St. James's Park instead of at the office?"

I coughed severely and did some rapid thinking.

"You can't expect me to see my friends in peril, Dinah, without going out of my way to help them. What would your mother have said if you had come home drowned? And, anyway," I continued hastily, seeing by the child's expression that she had some inconvenient reply ready, "and, anyway, the afternoon is a totally different matter. I should meet everyone I knew."

"Well?" insisted Dinah, as who should add "Craven!" "Well?"

"My dear Dinah," I protested lazily, "do you imagine that my kind relations, after having at great personal inconvenience secured me a job in the City—a kind of last chance, as it were, before they ship me out to the Colonies to a shovel or a plough—do you expect, I say, those simple, kindly folk to be *pleased* to meet me in the very act of deliberately inviting the sack by absenting myself on a busy afternoon? No, Dinah, no, no ! You err."

Dinah stared absently in front of her. Her brows were knit. Some inward conflict was taking place.

I babbled on, more to myself than to my unsympathetic audience. "And the only reason they did as much as that was because, when Uncle John dies, he'll probably leave me his money. A hard world, Dinah, an uncommonly hard world !"

"Ah !" said Dinah, suddenly all attention. "And do you really swear, Boney, that if it wasn't for meeting relations, you'd go to the Boat Race, *and* take me? Do you honestly? S'posing I thought of a way?"

"Ah," I said easily, "if you can guarantee to keep everybody out of the way for the afternoon— But even you, O Djinn of the Brass Bottle, would find it a difficult job, I fancy !"

Dinah appeared to come to some tremendous decision.

"I will," she announced briskly. "Don't worry any more about it; we'll do it, Boney!" And we did.

I am a weak character—weak but lovable and I find it almost impossible to settle down to work on a fine day. Circumstances combined to force me to vacate the office stool upon that particular afternoon. The day dawned bright and mild, for one thing; Cambridge looked remarkably like winning, for another; Dinah wrote me a cheerfully expectant letter, and, as a deciding factor, Dinah's elder sister rang me up half-way through the morning and implored me to take the child off her hands.

"She's such an extraordinary girl," complained the voice on the telephone. "D'you know, she spent the whole morning the other day lying on the drawing-room floor, reading 'Who's Who' and 'The Red Book'!"

"'The Red Book'?" I asked quickly. "Good Heavens! Under what letter?"

Could she be poisoning off my entire family?

"I don't know," replied the voice wearily. "But don't disappoint her this afternoon; she's been talking of nothing else for weeks."

"All right," I said, trying to put a little decent hesitation into my voice. "All right, Joan; for your sake I will do this thing. But my bankruptcy will be on your head, mind!"

"Far better than Dinah on my hands," retorted the impudent Joan with a laugh, as she rang off. So what could I do?

I went round to fetch Dinah.

Dinah was radiant. She danced into the hall, carrying Budge under one arm. Budge is an enormous black plush cat, with eyes like saucers, which can be moved independently to all points of the compass. At the moment they were squinting most horribly.

"Must Budge come?" I asked doubtfully. "Budge must come," said Dinah firmly.

(As I have said, I am lovable but weak. Budge came.)

We then settled down to the usual argument as to ways and means. Before we go anywhere we always waste half an hour first in making arrangements.

"Where shall we watch it from?" began Dinah, sitting on the umbrella stand. I had some tickets which admitted us to some works overlooking the course.

Dinah denounced them as dull.

"If you like," I said, "we'll take tickets for the railway bridge."

"Oh, yes," agreed Dinah eagerly, "and then we can drop things on to the heads of the crews as they come underneath !"

"Ah," I said nervously, "but that is no longer done in the better circles, Dinah." Dinah's face set determinedly. "On second thoughts," I added, "I don't think we'll try the bridge. You can't see much. Besides, there's the awful expense."

Dinah's face softened. She always sympathises with me in my poverty.

"Poor Boney!" she said. "We won't, then. What else is there? I know! Let's hire a canoe and row alongside! You say you're an awful good rower!"

"'M--ye-es," I said doubtfully. A loophole presented itself. "I'm not properly dressed for that," I explained airily. Naturally I could have beaten both crews with one hand if necessary.

"There doesn't seem much left to do," observed Dinah, with some gloom, "'less we just go and stand by the side and watch."

"No," I said decidedly. "Repeat that suggestion, and I go straight back to the 'orfice.'"

"Well," said Dinah, after prolonged meditation, "I know. You wait!" I waited, and she tore off into the upper regions.

Presently she returned, with bright eyes and flushed cheeks, and pressed five sixpences and a threepenny-bit into my astonished palm. "We'll go on the railway bridge," she announced triumphantly, "and I'll pay !"

I really could not hurt her feelings by refusing, so I took the money with every expression of intense excitement and admiration, and, after a brief discussion of the respective merits of the Underground and the penny bus, at the end of which we were obliged, by pressure of time, to take a taxi, we started off. Subsequently I returned three of the sixpences and the threepenny-bit, explaining that the tickets on this occasion were reduced to sixpence each. This, as a matter of fact, was faulty diplomacy, as Dinah's consequent affluence placed me in a dilemma almost immediately.

"Are you Oxford or Cambridge, Boney?" inquired Dinah, as we dismounted from the train.

"Cambridge, of course," I replied, my eyes fixed on the distant crowd.

Dinah stepped aside mysteriously.

"Don't wait," she said, with an affectation of carelessness. "I shan't be a minute." When, after a minute, I glanced back and beheld her in earnest consultation with an evil-looking man, I turned in horror, and, as I did so, she came up smiling magnanimously.

"There !" she exclaimed in triumph,

producing something suddenly from behind her back and waving it aloft. It was a large pale blue paper cabbage, and it bore in its hideous centre a gross caricature of one of

the leading Cambridge lights.

I looked from the monstrosity to Dinah's smiling, eager face, then to the grubby little hand which now clasped but two hot sixpences, and I made up my mind.

Swallowing hard, I said quietly—

"Thank you, Dinah. Believe me," I added, "I value it not only for its intrinsic value, but for the kind thought that prompted it."

So saying, I allowed her to stick it in my buttonhole and stepped forward to social suicide, my face alight with the calm, heroic smile of martyrdom.

I think even Dinah must have wondered why one after another of my friends, advancing upon us with outstretched h and, stopped suddenly in midcareer, blanched, wavered, and, after one more fearful glance, hurried uncomfortably away. We met a great many people. As we picked our way



"I allowed her to stick it in my buttonhole."

along the lines, this fact gradually began to force itself unpleasantly upon us. After a few steps we halted. I stole an uneasy glance at Dinah; Dinah stole an uneasy glance at the river, black with boats. Her face fell. "Boney," said Dinah, "d'you think—I wonder—it isn't over, is it, Boney?"

"Dinah," I said sadly, "I rather think it is." To make absolutely certain, we stopped

about six elderly and portly persons, anxious to get home to their teas, and asked them to tell us the truth. One and all they confirmed the horrid supposition. The race was over. Dinah and I looked at each other reproachfully.

"Who wasted time arguing about a bus? Who wasted time arguing about the Underground?" we demanded in chorus.

Dinah was the first to recover. Her spirits suddenly rose. "Who wants to see a stupid race?" she remarked cynically. "We'll have a bun tea with eggs at a shop, and go home on a Number Nine bus! Cheer up, Boney!"

And that, in fact, is what we did. Furthermore, we bought postcards of the winning crew, tied a large blue bow round Budge's neck, added to our burdens a large paper bag full of in describable peppermints, and, having had our "buntea," mounted

our Number Nine and sped homewards, quite as cheerily as if we had not been done out of our star turn.

[•] I took Dinah home first, and as we neared the end of our journey, I noticed she did not appear quite comfortable. She grew silent and preoccupied, and at last she said—

"You have enjoyed it, anyway, Boney, haven't you?"

"Rather !" I replied enthusiastically.

"It's been worth a little "—she scrutinised me from under puckered brows—"a little well, unpleasantness ?"

"My dear Dinah," I said heartily, "don't worry about me! I never was particularly keen to see the race, and if it's what I said about my relations that's troubling youwell, I exaggerate a little sometimes, you know, and if I *have* been spotted by an aunt or cousin, it won't really matter. They may be a bit stuffy about it, but I shan't get the sack or anything, so you can make yourself quite easy about that."

Dinah seemed more or less reassured by this, but I could see, when I left her at Eaton Square, that she was still brooding over her possible remorse at hearing that I had been compelled, on account of that afternoon's work, to fly the country.

As I neared my own primitive little home, I was startled to hear a noise resembling the angry hum of a hive coming apparently from straight ahead. I had some little difficulty in locating it, but finally, to my extraordinary surprise, traced it to my own humble dwelling.

A gramophone, perhaps, or a servants' party?

In tackling my domestics, I confess I am a physical coward, so I paused in the hall to screw myself up to the necessary pitch and to think out a really cutting speech. Standing thus, I discovered, first, that the noise came from the drawing-room, and, second, that I could distinctly detect an occasional female voice.

I rang the bell.

"What is this, Watson?" I demanded sternly.

"Well, sir," said Watson, with an anxious and rather hunted manner, "I don't rightly know, sir. They came at about four, sir. Very curious, it do seem to me, beggin' your pardon, sir, seeing as you said nothing to me. About four, and getting a little restive by now, sir, as you 'ear."

"Pull yourself together, my good man," I said severely. "Who came, and what are you talking about?"

Watson put a hand to a dazed brow.

"Well, there's Lady Beckenham, sir, and Sir George Winters, and Mrs. Barker-Brown." The man ran through a string of all my nearest and most distant relations. Not one was omitted. The list was complete except for one aunt, who, I knew, was down with double pneumonia.

"Stop!" I cried. "For Heaven's sake, stop! Am I mad, Watson, or are you?"

Watson shook his head with the unconquerable gloom of one who counts confidently on the end of the world arriving within the next half-hour. Presently he produced a note.

"One of them dropped this," he said lugubriously.

"It was written in a quite passable imitation of my own hand, and ran thus :----

"DEAR AUNT ELLEN, — I have an announcement of the greatest importance which I wish to make to you and to the other members of the family who have taken so kind an interest in my career. Will you call at about four o'clock on Friday? I may be a little late, but will keep you waiting as short a time as possible.

"Your affec. nephew."

I glanced at the clock.

"And curiosity has kept them here already an hour !" I murmured.

"Yes, sir," said Watson.

The truth flashed upon me.

"Dinah ! " I shouted. "Ye gods ! Dinah ! "

"No, sir," said Watson, "Miss Dinah is not here."

I slipped quietly upstairs, opened the drawing-room door half an inch, and looked in. Yes, they were all there, seething and bridling now with indignation. Snatches of conversation reached me.

"... Not even to offer us tea, either! It's disgraceful!"

". . . Announcement or no announcement, I shall go in ten minutes !"

". . . It'll have to be something quite stupendous if it's to make up for the abominable way he has treated us, keeping us waiting like this, without even—"

I closed the door softly, sped downstairs into the library, sank into a chair with a despairing groan, and hid my face in my hands.

And at this point an almost incredible thing occurred.

I do not hope to be believed. I know it is the sort of thing that only happens at the end of a really melodramatic melodrama. I know that it is too remarkable a coincidence to be received with anything but scoffing incredulity, but I can't help that. All I know is that it actually happened. There was a ring at the bell. Then Watson entered with a letter. It was from my uncle's solicitors; it stated that he had died suddenly at his house in Tasmania, and that I was his sole heir.

I simply could not believe it. The relief was almost too much for me. Not only were all my pecuniary troubles at an end for ever, but here to my hand was an announcement of such magnificence that it would more than pacify that angry hive which was still humming in the room above—an announcement which would send them away steeped in the most Christian feelings of kindliness towards me, and with that warm appreciation of my undoubted talents which had been so singularly lacking of late. I bounded up the stairs two at a time.

An ominous silence greeted my entry.

"Ladies and gentlemen," I began, with a winning but nervous smile, "I have here a letter from Messrs. ——" I then proceeded to read the letter, and the effect was electric. The afternoon ended pleasantly in hearty congratulations, and the uninvited guests went off beaming, leaving me alone with this tremendous turn in my fortunes. In that first delirious hour I hardly know what I did. I know I dismissed Watson. His gloomy demeanour was altogether too much for me in my altered frame of mind. I gave orders that I should be called the following morning punctually at 10.30 a.m. No more office for me! I rang up my tobacconist and ordered a hundred boxes of my favourite cigars. I rang up Cook's and made arrangements for a tour round the world. I rang up Hewitt's and told them to send their biggest box of chocolates round to Dinah, and was just ordering a young tree of a bouquet for the fair Joan, when there

was another ring at the bell, and Watson brought me another note.

It was from Dinah. It ran thus :---

"DEAR MR. BONES,-I got rid of the relations beautifully, didn't I? Were they awfully hot and angry, all herded in that little room ? I hope you didn't mind about the 'Uncle John' twit. I thought, as you haven't ever seen him, that you wouldn't be really upset at hearing he was dead. Donald and me did it together. It was a lovely get-out, wasn't it? Donald roared over it. To-morrow you can write little notes to them all, saying you find there's been a mistake. I'm sure the holiday did you gooddon't you think so ?-but I wish we'd seen the race, all the same. Good-bye, Boney dear. I should like to see their faces when they get your notes to-morrow.

"Yours, DINAH."

I rushed to the telephone, countermanded a dozen orders; hesitated, receiver in hand, about Hewitt's, and eventually let the order stand; then noted Watson, impassive, awaiting commands.

"Don't go, Watson," I said dully.

Watson looked at me inquiringly.

"I mean go now. No, stay, idiot, till I've finished speaking. Go now, but don't go for good. I mean, don't take anything I may have said on the spur of the moment seriously, Watson. I don't want you to go."

Watson looked at me doubtfully, hesitated, evidently grasped the general drift of what I was saying, and prepared to withdraw.

"And, Watson," I said wearily, "call me at half-past seven to-morrow, as usual."

"Seven-thirty, sir," said Watson, with a grim smile.



PROVIDENCE AND TOMMY CAUNTER By EDEN PHILLPOTTS

Illustrated by Gunning King



VE told 'e a good few tales about one person and another —men and women, maidens and childer —but I can't call to mind as ever I told 'e a story about myself. You mightn't think, of course, that such

a terrible everyday sort of old blade as me could have anything happen to him worth mentioning; but 'tis my steadfast opinion that there ain't a human creature up home eighty year old, as can't remember an adventure, one time or another. And very oft things so happen with us that we don't know the truth about 'em at the time, and just go struggling on, and-so blind we be-not seldom cuss the luck when it be good, and bless the luck when it be For as I've always maintained—and bad. not only me, for that matter, but many wiser than me-we don't know our luck, and we don't know our danger, and we don't know our fortune, till time have passed and the good or bad thing lies behind us. Then we look back and the scales fall from our eves. and we see what we've lost or won. Life's a difficult thing at best, and so's Death; but the secret of facing 'em both is not to be frightened. In fact, nothing much matters, so long as you can keep your nerve about it.

But you want a high pitch of understanding to do that, and when trouble overtook me at twenty-seven years of age, I didn't keep my nerve, nor yet my temper, and I said things about Providence—at "The Jolly Welcome" and also in my Aunt Sarah's cottage—that I'd blush for now, if I could remember 'em. However, that's more than fifty year ago, and me and Providence have made it up, I hope, since then.

Of course, 'tis a very safe rule generally to speak of other people as you find 'em, and not take the opinion of second parties, but rely on your own experience.

If a man cheats you, you ain't going to believe somebody else who yows the rascal's honest. But that rule don't hold with Providence, and only a very rash and reckless chap will say rude things against Providence, just because he's under the weather himself, and life ain't turning out to his liking. 'Tis a narrow way to look at it, and very improper, I'm sure, to throw the blame on Providence, when so like as not the blood in our veins and the brains in our own heads be making all the trouble, and Providence so innocent as the babe unborn. In fact, Providence can't do impossibilities, no more than any other creation, and 'tis just vanity to judge it from our own little standpoint.

Not but when young Betty Blades said she'd marry me, I wasn't grateful enough to Providence, I'm sure. I'd courted the toad for three year, and her corn-coloured hair was the light of my life, and her blue eyes —so hard as heaven—had gone through my soul ever since first I saw them. But all the fret and trouble and all the jealousy and sleepless nights that belonged to the waiting time were forgotten when she said "Yes" at last, and I felt that life was come to be a bountiful and blessed thing, and no man so lucky as me.

And very heartily I thanked Providence and grandfather—one so much as t'other, because without grandfather the luck would never have come. Of course, if I hadn't been love-blind, I should have seen another side to it, and even as I stood—an accepted man and very near light-headed with joy-I felt a bit of a stab now and again when I realised that my dead grandfather had a lot more to do with my good fortune than what I had; but there's nobody can convince a man like he can convince himself, and I very soon put that side of the subject away as a thing of no account. You see, my mother's father left her all his money-two thousand pounds and a wee bit over-and it was set down in his will that if she, his only daughter, died afore him, I, his eldest

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grandson, was to have the cash. And that's what happened. Mother died a good few year afore grandfather, and as he'd got no use for anybody but me, and never took any account of my sister and brother, I inherited his fortune.

And the day we buried him I met Betty by accident as I was walking home alone from the funeral. She was going back along, too, from gleaning, and even in that gloomy moment I couldn't help feeling what a proper picture she made, with her hair breaking from under her sun-bonnet and the cornsheaf she'd got in her fine arms. Of course I carried it for her, and she comforted me a good bit about grandfather, and I comforted her also about a little matter. To tell truth, I could only pretend I was sorry for her, because Betty's bother had to do with a young farmer, by name of Gregory Dench, who'd also been courting her, and who had suddenly cooled off, for private reasons. And of course Betty could only pretend she was sorry for me, because grandfather had been well stricken in years and his death was natural, and Betty, who belonged to a family of labouring people poor as church mice, knew very well that two thousand pounds means eighty pounds a year or more, all honestly come by and not a stroke of work to do for it.

So she wasn't sorry for me really, and very soon dropped the subject of grandfather and began to talk about herself.

"Us have always been very good friends," she said, "and I've got to thank your sense and good advice for more than you know. Time and again you've said the word in season, Tommy Caunter, and time and again I've followed your advice, to my profit."

That was news to me, and I said so.

"I've given you one bit of advice, I know," I answered her, "and that's to marry me, and I wish you would take it."

"'Twas only father stood in the way," she answered, and her bright eyes didn't wink at the lie. Not that it was more than half a lie, for Ben Blades couldn't be said to have liked the thought of me as a son-inlaw; but he was dough in his daughter's hands, and if she had wanted me, not twenty fathers would have kept her out of my arms. Yet, on that eventful forenoon, after I had put away my kind old man, Betty was gentler than I'd known her for a twelvemonth—full of human nature, you might say, and tender as a wood-dove. For two pins I'd have axed her again—a thing I'd got in the habit of doing every three or four months—but I felt that coming hotfoot from grandfather's grave, with the smell of it in my nostrils and the mournful fall of the clods on my ear, I couldn't offer just then.

She said the world was hard for a maiden without anybody to stand up for her, and I took the line of cussing Gregory Dench, and reminded her what I'd always said and thought of the shiftless creature.

"'Tis his mother have got him away from you, Bet," I said, "and a bad day's work for him, I grant, because you'd have been a tower of strength to such a feeble man; but a good day's work for you. You'd have had to make bricks without straw in that quarter, and money's not everything; and, anyway, 'twould have taken more than he's got, or Nine Trees Farm be worth, to gild the pill of Gregory Dench and his mother combined."

And then I warmed to my work, and told her there was better and more promising men than Gregory round about, and so was just coming to myself again, when I smelled grandfather's grave and heard the earth fall on his bit of oak, and sighed and changed the subject.

We'd got to the village by then, and chanced to meet Benjamin Blades, her He was gracious, too, and being a father. keen chap in my way and not easily hoodwinked, I instanter thought as he must have heard how grandfather had left me his money. We'd kept it to ourselves, my Aunt Sarah and me, and didn't know a soul had wind of it as yet; but these things fly out of keyholes and up chimneys—the Dowl only knows how they get out. Certain it was that Ben knew somehow that I had been uplifted, else he wouldn't have looked at me; but he showed himself as friendly as you please, and even axed me to call in that evening and have a drop and a tell along with him.

I hesitated, and then Betty said ditto.

"Us be all alone," she said, "for Jane's to work again, now her bad leg can hold her up, and mother's nursing Mrs. Cozens, and Samuel and Billy be both harvesting along with Noah Bassett at Little Sherberton."

Then I said I'd look round; and, come nightfall, I did so.

Ben weren't to home when I'd got there ; but Betty was, and she explained that her father had gone round to "The Jolly Welcome" for a bottle of strong waters.

"He don't touch it often," she told me, but now and then he've a fancy for a drop, and to-night, along of the drouthy weather and the day's work, he wants it, and hope's you'll help him."

Well, I used the time to good purpose, you may be sure, and Betty was that oncoming I had much ado to believe it was real; for she met me half-way this time, and before her father come back with his bottle. be gormed if we weren't tokened ! She was careful to say it weren't the money; but, with my arms around her, and my lips on hers—those lips I'd longed to kiss for three years-you may be sure I didn't want no details. She'd got to love me well enough to wed me, and that was all I cared a button about, of course. Nothing else mattered then, and, when Ben Blades came along, the first thing he see'd was his girl on my lap, and well content to be there. Ben weren't so much surprised as I expected; but he showed great pleasure at the event, and said that, though Betty had looked to the right and to the left, yet, in her heart of hearts, 'twas me she always meant to take, sooner or later.

"And you mustn't, on any account, think it was this here dollop of money," explained my future father-in-law to me. "Far from it. Indeed, long before your old gaffer died, my girl said to me that the very next time you asked her, she was going to say 'Yes,' and have done with it. And as to Farmer Dench to Nine Trees, think no more of him," he continued. "I never would have accepted him for Betty. He's a slack-twisted, know-nought fool, and no husband for my fine girl."

Well, I didn't want to go into all that, and we just turned to the whisky and drank good luck to ourselves, and so on; and when we was markey-merry—or I was; for, to do him justice, I fancy Ben kept pretty wide awake—then he axed me about my money, and how it was invested, and other questions which I was powerless to answer at the time.

However, it all promised well, and I stood a marked man in a week, for then 'twas out that Ben's maiden had took me, and that I'd got grandfather's money. Everybody was wondrous kind, except Farmer Dench, for, though a slight sort of man, he proved a bit obstinate, and wouldn't say "Good-bye" to Betty without a struggle. The trouble there was his mother, for Dench had a tidy place, and made both ends meet, year by year, with a few pounds put away to goody as well; but his mother had took a fierce dislike to Betty's character, and so she managed to get Gregory Dench off her,

though at some cost. Because, too often them that do their duty by us, and strive to help us, even though they succeed, don't get no thanks, and Gregory cussed his mother for an obstinate and jealous fool, and said she was a silly creature as couldn't make up her mind to have another woman come to reign at Nine Trees, and so on. But his mother didn't mind much what he said and thought of her, so long as she kept him from marrying Betty. And no doubt she thought I was an angel sent from Heaven to help her son out of his fix.

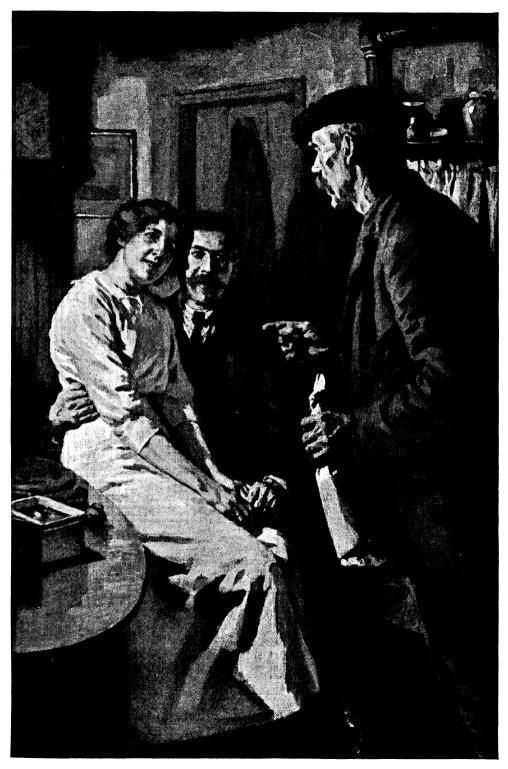
So I got her, and then, as if that weren't enough fortune, grandfather's lawyer was able to tell me my money was good for much more than eighty pounds a year. Sharp as a needle in such matters was Lawyer Coode, of Ashburton, and he very soon showed me that I might have a safe hundred a year instead of eighty.

"You can't take less than five per centum nowadays," he said, "and there's some reason to expect even more than that. You're fortunate, Tom Caunter, to get this triffe just now, because such an investment as I can offer you don't go begging long, and only a bit of pure luck sends it to you."

"This trifle," he called my two thousand pounds ! But, no doubt, to Nicholas Coode, with all the uppermost people's business in his hands, it seemed a sum of no account. An old firm of good renown, you see, and Nicholas had followed his father and his grandfather before him in the business, and was as well thought upon as they had been.

So he did me that good service, and transferred my money from some silly, old stuff, where grandfather had put it, to a modern business—china clay works on Dartymoor, it was, and within a ride from Princetown. In fact, on a Sunday morning, a month later, I took my pony and went up over to see the place, and felt, of course, 'twas mine in a manner of speaking. But as yet the ground weren't much more than scratched, though any seeing eye could tell there was going to be fine beds of china clay turned over presently.

The banns was up, and me and Betty had heard 'em given out for the first time of axing, when two terrible awkward things fell upon me in one and the same night. In fact, I don't know which of they two events hit hardest. As for the first, Betty explained the mystery away, so I had to let it go on her word, liking it little, however; but the second, nobody explained away, for 'twas beyond the power of man so to do.



"'You mustn't, on any account, think it was this here dollop of money,' explained my future father-in-law."

I was going over to Ashburton to see Lawyer Coode, and sign some documents and take up my shares in the King Tor China Clay Company, when, walking on the grassside by New Bridge over Dart, who should I find but my Betty and Farmer Dench ! They was sitting on the bridge, a lot closer together than there was any need, and if his arm weren't round her waist, then I can't see by moonlight. At any rate, there was no mistaking the parties, and I drew up and got a bit sarcastic about it.

But Betty had a tongue like a razor, and I very soon found that it was me began to look the fool, not them.

"You ban't the only man in the world, Tom, my dear," she said. "And because I'm tokened to you, that's no reason why I shouldn't take a walk with anybody else. "Tis a free country," she said, "and if me and Greg here can't exchange opinions and watch the moonlight on the river without getting your shirt out, then I reckon I shall have to think twice, my darling Tom, though the banns be up; because I'm a large-minded woman, and Greg's a large-minded man, and you cut a very poor figure afore us, goggling your eyes and trying to say nasty things, and only saying silly ones."

"Evil be to him who evil thinks," put in Farmer Dench; and then I'm sorry to say I lost my temper and swore that for two pins I'd knock 'em both in the river.

They laughed at that, and Betty told me to run about my business and not make a show of myself.

"The very owls be laughing at you, you dear creature," she said. "So just cool down and trot off to Ashburton; and if we don't grow tired of waiting, we'll bide here and all walk home together."

"Respect yourself and then others will respect you, Tom Caunter," added Gregory ; and with that I left 'em—in a proper temper. I heard 'em laughing before I was out of earshot, and I didn't calm down again till I lifted the knocker at Lawyer Coode's. Then another strange thing overtook me, for his housekeeper came out with a bit of puzzling news. Nicholas Coode weren't home, and he hadn't been home for a week. Nobody, high or low, could tell what had befallen him, and the general opinion was that he'd been drowned in Dart, or else lost his memory, and forgot his name. and been locked up in a hospital, as happens sometimes with busy people. But, anyway, he had-disappeared into thin air, as the saying is, and nought was to be done but

trapse home again a good bit down-daunted. Not that I troubled overmuch about the lawyer, because I doubted not a famous man like him couldn't be hid long; but when I got back to New Bridge, and found Dench and Betty had gone, I did feel a lot put about. In fact, I got terrible melancholy, and to finish up with, when I reached home, my Aunt Sarah, who kept house for me in them days, had the toothache and was quotted over the fire, and much too sorry for herself to be any comfort to me.

So I just hid my feelings and went to bed, though, if I'd been a proper nephy, I did ought to have forgot my own troubles and gone out to the chemist for the poor woman.

But next day it was all right with Betty, because she come round before breakfast in great humility. She begged me to forgive her; and a man like me, that never harboured vengeance against a mouse, soon did so. She said as Dench had given her a drop of sloe gin before they started on their walk, and that it had got in her head and made her upsome and saucy, and she vowed as she'd never go out with him or any other man again—except me. And Aunt Sarah went off and had her tooth drawed the first minute she could, so she was all right, too. But it weren't till ten days later that we found that Lawyer Coode was all right also; and, at the same time, me and a good few other unfortunate people found we was all wrong. In a word, he'd bolted, and when his affairs was looked into, they found proper ruination. The best part of twenty thousand pounds that anointed scamp had got off with, and such was his cleverness that, though they hunted to the ends of the earth for him, he was never seen nor heard about again. A terrible comealong-of-it, and not a few widows and orphans left with nought afore them but the workhouse. And my little lot was gone along with the rest; for the King Tor China Clay folk had never heard of me, or seen a penny of the cash. In fact, the wily dog took every penny he could claw together, including his own old housekeeper's savings. And him a regular churchgoer, if you can believe it, and vicar's churchwarden as well!

They said that he'd gone to America, or maybe Australia, if not South Africa, under a false name; but they never took him, and I never saw my two thousand pounds no more.

When the murder was out, I went up the

next evening to Ben Blades for a bit of consolation; but only to be flummoxed again when I found his view of the catastrophe.

He said the world was divided into two sort of folk, fools and knaves, and, so far as he could see, an honest man was as rare as a November swallow. In fact, he was properly angry with me, and not sorry for me at all; and he said a thing or two that made my head spin. And there wasn't no more whisky going nor nothing like that. He talked a lot about the trouble that fools make in the world, and said he never guessed I could be such a zany; then, sudden as a crisshawk striking, he told me I mustn't expect to marry Betty now all my money was gone.

"Not at once—I know that," I said. "Tis a difference of a hundred a year, not to name a bit over for furniture; and as I get but a pound a week and ten bob at Christmas, I quite understand we can't join yet, though the banns have been cried and everything done right and regular. I'm a very reasonable sort of man," I told Benjamin Blades, "and don't ask for impossibilities."

He grumbled and used a bit of bad language, and left it at that; and then, deadly slow, but sure, Betty began to cool off me. There was always a chance the lawyer would be catched, of course, so she didn't hurry; but as time went on, and nothing turned up, she drifted slowly away, and, though I could ill believe my senses, the fearful truth soon stared me in the face. 'Twas then, as it seemed, Providence, that had hit me such a cruel knock, did Gregory Dench a proper good turn; for his mother dropped—an ailing woman always, and only her pluck had kept her going so long. But she went to her grave; and so there was nothing left to keep Gregory in two minds about Betty; and, before you could blow your nose, she'd thrown me over for good and all, and gone to him.

Yes, she could do that and face the countryside as if it was an everyday sort of adventure for an honest woman; and her father backed her up, of course, saying that you never know when you've got to cut a loss, and explaining that his fine girl mustn't be suffered to grow into an old maid just because my luck was out and I couldn't afford to wed her. And a good few agreed with Ben Blades, though most of my neighbours felt sorry for me and thought it terrible hard lines. Yet all, somehow, agreed that Betty couldn't in reason be asked to wait till my wages went to twenty-five bob—a thing that didn't promise to happen in a minute by any means.

So I lost her, and I began talking pretty loud against Providence, and saying strong things that would have been better not uttered afore the people.

In fact, life looked so black as a thundercloud, turn which way I could, and such was the nature of my misfortunes that they had a funny side for other people, as our misfortunes often have, for many folk who never laugh at anything else can always manage to squeeze a bit of a smile out of a friend in trouble.

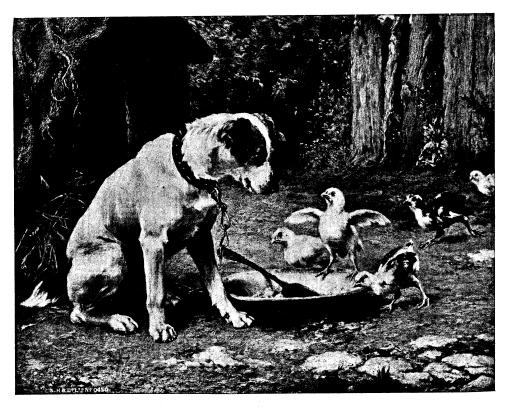
I dare say it took me ten year to live that adventure down, and even then I shouldn't have done so but for Betty Blades herself. She took Dench, of course, as soon as Gregory's mother went underground; and then, little by little, the dead woman was proved right, and the living man found himself terribly mistaken. And I, dwelling almost at their door, you may say, was in the very peculiar position of watching happen to Gregory Dench all the things that would have happened to me. 'Tis too painful a subject to go over year by year, but, in a word, Betty turned out a proper she-devil as a wife, and Greg talked about her openly as "the terror that flieth by night," and other such-like names, before he'd been wedded two years. She was far too clever for him. and had him under her heel from the first, and I knew enough of my own character to be fatal sure my position as her husband would have been just the same. She spent his money with both hands, and soon tore the heart out of his savings. She was a great gadabout also. She scolded and bullied him and kept him awake of nights; she fed him ill and spoke scornfully of him afore the people; she made him a figure of fun and broke his heart. Such treatment soon left its mark on the man, and, my eyes being sharp to note every turn of the tragedy, I watched how the grey began to come into Gregory's hair, and his back to get round, and his head to droop, like a tree that's forced to fight the fierce, unsleeping wind. He lost his old smart look, and was a lot oftener in "The Jolly Welcome" than what he used to be; and it shook him off his churchgoing a bit also, and spoiled his usefulness in a good many directions. Ten year he had of it, and all that time I used to say, as I watched the man, "There, but for the mercy of God, goes Tommy Caunter ! "

And, as for me, in fulness of time I took

Jane White-one of the Postbridge Whites she was, and a happy and fortunate match we made. She died last year, having lived just one month over our golden wedding; and never a man was more blessed in his wife and childer than me; but, of course, a fierce and reckless creature like Betty couldn't be expected to come to no golden wedding. Women must take a bit of thought for their men if they want luxuries of that kind. In fact, Gregory Dench died, a worn-out, broken creature, in his late fifties, and them who ministered to him at the last, of which his wife wasn't one, heard him say that Death was the only friend he'd got left. A very sad downfall, for among other things that the woman took from him was his selfrespect; and no man can go far without thatexcept downhill.

So, looking at it all round, I felt my two thousand pounds was terrible well spent, and the way of God was justified afore my eyes, and His mercy and lovingkindness made clear to me. And nowadays, when I hear impatient, rude people crying out and saying things disrespectful to Providence, I say: "Wait, wait, you silly creatures, and give Heaven its own time." Yet, even so, life's all a mystery, and the way of it hidden beyond our sharpest sight. For why was Dench delivered bound to the lions, in Bible phrase, and why was I saved? Who can answer that deep question?

Yes, and Betty's still living. She's a huckster down to Plymouth now. Married again, she did—of course, a man who hadn't heard her history with her first. And yet, by all accounts, she's quite successful with the second. I hear they get on and make money; so no doubt the devil have died down out of her in her old age. Human nature's like that. You can't make no hard and fast rules for it, or argue from one case to another. 'Tis just a nest of astonishments, with about one pleasant surprise to every ten of the other sort.



"A PUSHING FAMILY." BY G. A. HOLMES.

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THE-WHITE-HORSES BY-HALLIWELL-SUTCLIFFE



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V. THE LOYAL CITY



HE grey of early dawn stole through the window of Banbury gaol and brightened to a frosty red as Michael and his brother sat looking at each other with grim pleasantry. Charged with an errand to bring

Prince Rupert to the North without delay, they had won as far as this Roundheadridden town, a score miles or so from their goal, and a moment's indiscretion had laid them by the heels.

"Life's diverting, lad. I always told you so," said Michael. "It would have been a dull affair, after all, if we had got to Oxford without more ado."

"They need Rupert, yonder in York," growled Kit.

"Ah, not so serious, lest they mistake you for a Puritan !"

"It is all so urgent, Michael."

"True. The more need to take it lightly. Life, I tell you, runs that way, and I know something of women by this time. Flout life, Kit, toss it aside and jest at it, and all you want comes tumbling into your hands." "I brought you into this. I'll find some

"I brought you into this. I'll find some way out of gaol," said the other, following his own stubborn line of thought.

The window was narrow, and three stout bars were morticed into the walls. Moreover, their hands were double-tied behind them. All that occurred to them for the moment was to throw themselves against the door, each in turn, on the forlorn chance that their weight would break it down.

"Well?" asked Michael lazily, after their

second useless assault on the door. "High gravity and a long face do not get us out of gaol. We'll just sit on the wet floor, Kit, and whistle for the little imp men call chance."

Michael tried to whistle, but broke down at sight of Kit's lugubrious, unhumorous face. While he was still laughing, there was a shuffle of footsteps outside, a grating of the rusty door-lock, and, without word of any kind, a third prisoner was thrown against them. Then the door closed again, the key turned in the lock, and they heard the gaoler grumbling to himself as he passed into the street.

The new-comer picked himself up. He was dripping from head to foot; his face, so far as the green ooze of a horse-pond let them see it, was unlovely; but his eyes were twinkling with a merriment that won Michael's heart.

"Sirs, I warned you that Banbury was no good place for Cavaliers. I am pained to see you here."

Michael remembered the man now—a fellow who had jested pleasantly with them in the tavern just before they were taken by the Roundheads. "We forgot your warning, Mr. Barnaby," he said drily, "so we're here."

Mr. Barnaby," he said drily, "so we're here." "I thank you, sir. Drunken Barnaby is all the address they give me nowadays. Perhaps you would name me Mr. Barnaby again; it brings one's pride out of hiding." So then they laughed together; and friend-

So then they laughed together; and friendship lies along that road. And after that they asked each other what had brought them to the town gaol.

"You spoke of Christmas pie, with Puritans about you?" said Drunken Barnaby. "I could have warned you, gentlemen, and did not. I was always a

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day behind the fair. They loathe all words that are connected with the Mass."

"We have learned as much," said Michael. "For your part, Mr. Barnaby, how came you here?"

"Oh, a trifle of ale-drinking. My heart was warm, you understand, and I roved down Banbury street with some song of glory coming for King Charles. I'm not warm now, but the cool o' the horse-pond has brought me an astonishing sobriety."

"Then tell us how to be quit of these four walls," snapped Kit, thinking ever of York and the need the city had of Prince Rupert.

"Give me time," said Drunken Barnaby, "and a little sleep. Between the forgetting and the waking, some gift o' luck will run my way."

"Luck !" laughed Michael. "She's a good mare to ride."

Barnaby, with his little body and the traces of the horse-pond about him, had seemed to the gaoler of mean account, not worth the trouble of tying by the wrists. The rogue sat up suddenly, just as he was falling off to sleep.

"It is a mistake, my gentles, to disdain an adversary," he said, with that curious air of his, roystering, pedantic in the choice of phrases, not knowing whether he were ashamed of himself and all men, or filled with charitable laughter at their infirmities. "Our friend with the blue-bottle nose left my hands free, you observe, while yours are bound. Much water has gone into my pockets—believe me, I shall dislike all horse-ponds in the future—but the knifeblade there will not have rusted yet."

With a great show of strategy, still laughing at himself and them, he drew a clasp-knife from his breeches' pocket, opened it, and cut their thongs.

"That's half-way on the road to Oxford," laughed Kit, rubbing the weals about his wrists. "It was kind of you to drink too much ale, Barnaby, and join us here."

Michael glanced at this young brother. "Humour returns to you," he said, with an approving nod. "I told you life was not half as serious as you thought it."

They tried the window-bars, the three of them, but found them sturdy. They battered the doorway again with their shoulders; it did not give. Barnaby drew a piece of wire from his pocket, and used great skill to pick the lock; he might as well have tried to pierce steel armour with a needle. "There's nothing to be done to-night, gentles," he said, with a noisy yawn, "and, when there's nothing to be done, I've found a safe and gallant rule of conduct—one sleeps. Some day, if I find the Muse propitious, I shall write an ode to sleep. It is the fabled elixir of life. It defies all fevers of the daytime; it is the coverlet that Nature spreads about her tired children. But, gentlemen, I weary you."

"You make me laugh," asserted Michael. "Since I left Yoredale, I've met none who had your grasp of life."

They settled themselves by and by to sleep, as best they could, on a wet floor, with the warmth of the new day rousing queer odours from their prison-house. There was the stealthy tread of rats about their bodies. It was Barnaby, after all, who was false to his gospel of deep slumber. At the end of half an hour he reached over and woke Michael from a thrifty dream of Yoredale and corn yellowing to harvest.

"What is it?" growled Michael.

"I cannot sleep, sir. You recall that, in the tavern yesterday, I confessed myself a poet. The rhymes I have made, sir, are like the sands of the sea for multitude. I was never troubled till I came to Banbury."

"Then journey forward. There are other towns."

"You do not understand me. Towns to be taken by assault, by any rhymes that offer, do not entice me. It is the hardship of attack that tempts your true soldier. You will grant me that?"

"I'll grant you anything, Barnaby, so long as you let me sleep on this wet floor. I dreamed I was asleep on a feather bed."

"But the rhyme? You remember how the poem went: 'Here I found a Puritan one, hanging of his cat on a Monday, for killing of a mouse on a Sunday.' A fine conceit, sir, but I can find no rhyme for *Puritan one*, as I told you."

Kit, for his part, was awake, too, and some jingle of a poem, in praise of his mistress at Ripley in the North, was heating his brain. But the lad was learning wisdom these days, and held his peace; there was no need to bring other men to Joan Grant by undue singing of her praises.

"Believe me, this verse-making is a fever in the blood," protested Barnaby. "Naught serves until the rhyme is found. It is a madness, like love of a lad for a maid. There is no rhyme to Puritan."

"Friend," said Michael, "I need sleep. if you do not. Remember what I said last night. Puritane one-try it that way. Get your man round to the King's cause, and he becomes a *sane one*." "But, sir-----"

Michael smiled happily. "We have a saying in Yoredale: 'I canna help your troubles, friend; I've enough of my own.' Take it or leave it at Puritane one. For myself, I'm going to sleep."

Barnaby sat wrestling with the Muse. His mind, like all men's, was full of hidden byways, and the most secret of them all was this lane that led into the garden of what, to him, was poetry. A tramp on life's highway, a drinker at taverns and what not, it was his foible that he would be remembered by his jingling verses-as, indeed, he was, centuries after the mould had settled over his unknown grave.

It might be five minutes later, or ten, that Kit stirred in sleep, then sat bolt upright. He heard steps on the cobbled street outside, the turning of a rusty key in the lock. Then the door opened, and he saw the squat figure of the gaoler, framed by a glimpse of Banbury street, grey and crimson in the clean light of the new day. Without haste he got to his feet, stretched himself to the top of his great height, then wen't and picked the gaoler up and swung him to and fro lightly, as if he were a child.

"Michael," he said, "what shall we do with this fellow? Michael, wake, I tell you ! "

When Michael came out of his sleep, and Drunken Barnaby out of his rhyming, they sat in judgment on the gaoler. They tried him for high treason to King Charles. They sentenced him to detention in His Majesty's gaol sine die, and went into the street, locking the door behind them.

"You shall have the key, Mr. Barnaby," said Michael. "Release him when and how you like. For ourselves, we ride to Oxford." "Nay, you walk," said Barnaby, with

great solemnity. "Oh, I know your breed ! You're all for going to the tavern for your horses. It will not do, gentles. The town is thick with Roundheads."

"How can we walk twenty miles, with our errand a day too old already?" said Kit.

"Beggars must foot it when need asks. Do you want to sing 'Christmas Pie' again all down Banbury street, and have your errand spoiled ? Listen, sirs. This town does not suit my health just now; it does not suit yours. Permit me to guide you out of it along a byway that I know."

Kit was impatient for the risk, so long as

they found horses; but Michael saw the wisdom underlying Barnaby's counsel. The three of them set out, along a cart-track first, that led between labourers' cottages on one hand and a trim farmstead on the other, then into the open fields. A league further on they struck into the Oxford highway, an empty riband of road, with little eddies of dust blown about by the fingers of the quiet breeze.

"Here we part, gentles," said Barnaby, with his air of humorous pedantry. "Oxford is for kings and prelates. I know my station, and my thirst for a brew of ale they have four miles over yonder hill."

They could not persuade him that, drunk or sober, he had rescued them from Banbury. that they would be glad of his further company. He turned once, after bidding them farewell, and glanced at Kit with his merry hazel eyes. "I've got that song of Banbury," he said. "It all came to me when I saw you dandling the gaoler with the blue-bottle nose. Strife and battle always helped the poets of a country, sir, since Shakespeare's time."

"There goes a rogue," laughed Michael, listening to the man's song of Banbury as he went chanting it up the rise. "Well, I've known worse folk, and he untied our hands."

They jogged forward on the road, and the day grew hot with thunder. The slowness of a walking pace, after months in the saddle, the heat to which they were unused as yet, after the more chilly North, seemed to make a league of every mile. Then the storm burst, and out of nowhere a fierce wind leaped at them, driving the rain The lightning played so in sheets before it. near at times that they seemed to be walking through arrows of barbed fire.

"A pleasant way of reaching Oxford, after all one's dreams !" grumbled Kit.

"Oh, it will lift. I'm always gayest in a storm, my lad-the end on't is so near."

The din and rain passed overhead. league further on they stepped into clear sunlight and the song of soaring larks. Here, too, their walking ended, for a carrier overtook them. He had a light load and a strong, fast horse in the shafts; and, if their way of entry into the city of his dreams jarred on Kit's sense of fitness, he was glad to have the journey shortened.

The carrier pulled up at the gateway of St. John's, and the wonder of their day began. Oxford, to men acquainted with her charm by daily intercourse, is constantly the City Beautiful; to these men of Yoredale,

reared in country spaces, roughened by campaigning on the King's behalf, it was like a town built high as heaven in the midst of fairyland. As they passed along the street, the confusion of so many streams of life, meeting and eddying back and mixing in one great swirling river, dizzied them for a while. Then their eyes grew clearer, and they saw it all with the freshness of a child's vision. There were students, absurdly youthful and ridiculously light-hearted, so Kit thought in his mood of high seriousness. There were clergy, and market-women with their vegetables, hawkers, quack doctors, fortune-tellers, gentry and their ladies, prosperous, well-fed, and nicely clothed. A bishop and a dean rubbed shoulders with them as they passed. And, above the seemly hubbub of it all, the mellow sun shone high in an over-world of blue sky streaked with amethyst and pearl.

"Was the dream worth while?" asked Michael, with his easy laugh.

"A hundred times worth while. "Twould have been no penance to walk every mile from Yoredale hither-to, for such an ending to the journey."

They went into the High, and here anew the magic of the town met them face to face. Oxford, from of old, had been the cathedral city, the University, the pleasant harbourage of well-found gentry, who made their homes within sound of its many bells. Now it was harbouring the Court as well.

Along the High—so long as they lived, Christopher and Michael would remember the vision, as of knighthood palpable and in full flower—a stream of Cavaliers came riding. At their head, guarded jealously on either side, was a horseman so sad and resolute of face, so marked by a grace and dignity that seemed to halo him, that Kit turned to a butcher who stood nearest to him in the crowd.

"Why do they cheer so lustily? Who goes there?" he asked.

"The King, sir. Who else ?"

So then a great tumult came to Christopher. When he was a baby in the old homestead, the Squire had woven loyalty into the bones and tissues of him. Through the years it had grown with him, this honouring of the King as a man who took his sceptre direct from the hands of the good God. Let none pry into the soul of any man so reared who sees his King for the first time in the flesh.

With Michael it was the same. He did not cheer, as the crowd did; his heart

was too deeply touched for that. And by and by, when the townsfolk had followed the cavalcade toward Christ Church, the brothers found themselves alone.

"It was worth while," said Kit, seeking yet half evading Michael's glance.

They shook themselves out of their dreams by and by, and, for lack of other guidance, followed the route taken by the King. The Cavaliers had dispersed. The King had already gone into the Deanery. So they left the front of Christ Church and wandered aimlessly into the lane that bordered Merton, and so through the grove, where the late rains and the glowing sun had made the lilacs and the sweet-briars a sanctuary of beaded, fragrant incense.

From Merton, as they dallied in the grove—not knowing where to seek Rupert, and not caring much, until the wine of Oxford grew less heady—a woman came between the lilacs. Her walk, her vivacious body, and her air of loving laughter wherever she could find it, were at variance with the tiredness of her face. She seemed like sunlight prisoned in a vase of clouded porcelain.

Perhaps something of their inborn, romantic sense of womanhood showed in the faces of the Metcalfes as they stepped back to make a way for her. One never knows what impulse guides a woman; one is only sure that she will follow it.

However that might be, the little lady halted; an impulsive smile broke through her weariness. "Gentlemen," she said, with a pretty, foreign lilt of speech, "you are very—what you call it ?—so very high. There are few men with the King in Oxford who are so broad and high. I love big men, if they are broad of shoulder. Are you for the King ?"

"We are Metcalfes of Nappa," said Kit. "Our loyalty is current coin in the North."

The little lady glanced shrewdly at them both, her head a little on one side, like a bird's. "Are you of the company they call the Riding Metcalfes? Then the South knows you, too, and the West Country, wherever men are fighting for the King. Gentlemen, you have a battle-cry before you charge—what is it?"

"A Mecca for the King!"

She laughed infectiously. "It is not like me to ask for passwords. I was so gay and full of trust in all men until the war came. The times are *difficile*, *n'est pas*, and you were unknown to me. What is your errand here?"

"We came to find Prince Rupert," said

Kit, blurting his whole tale out because a woman happened to be pretty and be kind. "The North is needing him. That is our sole business here."

"Ah, then, I can help you. There's a little gate here—one goes through the gardens, and so into the Deanery. My husband lodges there. He will tell you where Rupert finds himself."

Michael, because he knew himself to be devil-may-care, had a hankering after prudence now and then, and always picked the wrong moment for it. If this unknown lady had chosen to doubt them, and ask for a password, he would show the like caution. Moreover, he felt himself in charge just now of this impulsive younger brother.

"Madam," he answered, his smile returning, "our errand carries with it the whole safety of the North. In all courtesy, we cannot let ourselves be trapped within the four walls of a house. Your husband's name?"

"In all courtesy," she broke in, "it is permitted that I laugh! The days have been so *triste*—so *triste*. It is like Picardy and apple orchards to find oneself laughing. You shall know my husband's name, sir —oh, soon! Is it that two men so big and high are afraid to cross an unknown threshold?"

Michael thrust prudence aside, glad to be rid of the jade. "I've seldom encountered fear," he said carelessly.

"Ah, so ! Then you have not loved." Her face was grave, yet mocking. "To live one must love, and to love—that is to know fear."

She unlocked the gate with a key she carried at her girdle, and passed through. They followed her into gardens lush, sweetsmelling, full of the pomp and eager riot of the spring. Then they passed into the Deanery, and the man-servant who opened to them bowed with some added hint of ceremony that puzzled Michael. The little lady bade them wait, went forward into an inner room, then returned.

"My husband will receive you, gentlemen," she said, with the smile that was like a child's, yet with a spice of woman's malice in it.

The sun was playing up and down the gloomy panels of the chamber, making a morris dance of light and shade. At the far end a man was seated at a table. He looked up from finishing a letter, and Christopher felt 'again that rush of blood to the heart, that deep, impulsive stirring of the soul, which he had known not long ago in the High Street of the city.

They were country born and bred, these Yoredale men, but the old Squire had taught them how to meet all sharp emergencies, and especially this of standing in the Presence. Their obeisance was faultless in outward ceremony, and the King, who had learned from suffering the way to read men's hearts, was aware that the loyalty of these two the inner loyalty—was a thing spiritual and alive.

The Queen, for her part, stood aside, diverted by the welcome comedy. These giants with the simple hearts had learned her husband's name.

"I am told that you seek Prince Rupert that you are lately come from York?" said the King.

He had the gift—one not altogether free from peril—that he accepted or disdained men by instinct; there were no half measures in his greetings. Little by little Christopher and Michael found themselves at ease. The King asked greedily for news of York. They had news to give. Every word they spoke rang true to the shifting issues of the warfare in the northern county. It was plain, moreover, that they had a single purpose—to find Rupert and to bring him into the thick of tumult where men were crying for this happy firebrand.

The King glanced across at Henrietta Maria. They did not know, these Metcalfes what jealousies and slanders and pin-pricks of women's tongues were keeping Rupert here in Oxford. They did not know that Charles himself, wearied by long iteration of gossip dinned into his ears, was doubting the good faith of his nephew, that he would give him no commission to raise forces and ride The King and Queen got little solace out. from their glance of question; both were so overstrained with the trouble of the times, so set about by wagging tongues that ought to have been cut out by the common hangman, that they could not rid themselves at once of doubt. And the pity of it was that both loved Rupert, warmed to the pluck of his exploits in the field, knew him for a gentleman proved through and through,

"Speak of York again," said the King. "London is nothing to me, save an overgrown, dull town whose people do not know their minds. Next to Oxford, in my heart, lies York. If that goes, gentlemen, I'm widowed of a bride." He was tired, and the stimulus of this hale, red-blooded loyalty from Yoredale moved him from the grave reticence that was eating his strength away. "It is music to me to hear of York. From of old it was turbulent and chivalrous. It rears strong men, and ladies with the smell of lavender about them. Talk to me of the good city."

So then Michael, forgetting where he stood, told the full tale of his journeying to York. And the Queen laughed—the pleasant, easy laughter of the French—when he explained the share a camp-follower's donkey had had in the wild escapade.

"You will present the donkey to me," she said. "When all is well again, and we come to praise York for the part it took in holding Yorkshire for the King, you will present that donkey to me."

And then the King laughed, suddenly, infectiously; and his Queen was glad, for she knew that he, too, had had too little recreation of this sort. They went apart, these two, like any usual couple who were mated happily and had no secrets from each other.

"How they bring the clean breath of the country to one !" said Charles. "Before they came, it seemed so sure that Rupert was all they said of him."

"It was I who made you credit rumours," she broke in, pretty and desolate in the midst of her French contrition. "I was so weary, and gossip laid siege to me hour by hour, and I yielded. And all the while I knew it false. I tell you, I love the sound of Rupert's feet across the floor. He treads so firmly and he holds his head so high."

The King touched her on the arm with a deference and a friendship that in themselves were praise of this good wife of his. Then he went to the writing-table, wrote and sealed a letter, and put it into Michael's hands.

"Go, find Prince Rupert," he said, "and give him this. He is to be found at this hour, I believe, in the tennis-court. And, when you next see the Squire of Nappa, tell him the King knows what the Riding Metcalfes venture for the cause."

Seeing Kit hesitate and glance at him with boyish candour, the King asked if he had some favour to request. And the lad explained that he wished only to understand how it came that the Riding Metcalfes were so well known to His Majesty.

"We have done so little," he finished, and the North lies so far away."

The King paced up and down the room. The fresh air these men had brought into the confinement of his days at Oxford seemed again to put restlessness, the need of hard gallops, into his soul.

"No land lies far away," he said sharply, "that breeds honest men, with arms to strike shrewd blows. Did you fancy that a company of horsemen could light the North with battle, could put superstitious terror into the hearts of malcontents, and not be known? Gentlemen, are you so simple that you think we do not know what you did at Otley Bridge, at Ripley, when the moon shone on the greening corn, at Bingley, where you slew them in the moorland wood? It is not only ill news that travels fast, and the Prince, my nephew, never lets me rest for talk of you."

To their credit, the Metcalfes bore it well. Bewildered by this royal knowledge of their deeds, ashamed and diffident because they had done so little in the North, save ride at constant hazard, they let no sign escape them that their hearts were beating with a sharp gladness that in itself was pain.

The King asked too much of himself and others, maybe, stood head and shoulders above his kingdom of barter and give-andtake, and the cold common-sense of everyday. The Metcalfe spirit was his own, and through the dust and strife he talked with them, as if he met friends in a garden where no eavesdroppers were busy.

They went out by and by, the Queen insisting, with her gay, French laugh, that the donkey should be presented to her later on. They found themselves in the street, with its pageantry of busy folk.

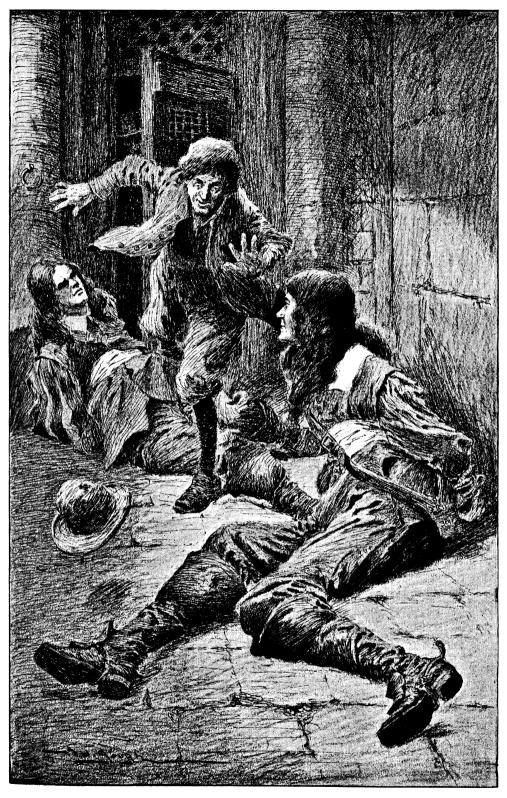
with its pageantry of busy folk. "Well, Kit?" asked Michael. "We've fought for the King, and taken a wound or so. Now we've seen him in the flesh. How big is he, when dreams end?"

"As big as dawn over Yoredale pastures. I never thought to meet his like."

"So! You're impulsive, lad, and always were, but I half believe you."

They came again into the High. It was not long, so far as time went, since these Nappa men had fancied, in their innocence, that because a messenger rode out to summon them to Skipton, the King and all England Now the King must also know of them. did know of them, it seemed. Six months of skirmish, ambush, headlong gallops against odds, had put their names in all men's mouths. Quietly, with a sense of wonder, they tasted the wine known as fame, and the flavour of it had a sweetness as of spring before the languor of full summer comes.

"We were strangers here an hour since,"



"Without word of any kind, a third prisoner was thrown against them."

said Kit, watching the folk pass, "and now we come from Court."

"What did I tell you, babe Christopher, when I tried in Yoredale to lick your dreaming into shape? Life's the most diverting muddle. One hour going on foot, the next riding a high horse. We'd best find the tennis-court before the King's message cools."

A passer-by told them where to find the place. The door was open to the May sunlight, and, without ceremony or thought of it, they passed inside. Prince Rupert was playing a hard game with his brother Maurice. Neither heard the Metcalfes enter; in the blood of each was the crying need for day-long activity—in the open, if possible, and, failing that, within the closed walls of the tennis-court. The sweat dripped from the players as they fought a wellmatched game; then Rupert tossed his racquet up.

"I win, Maurice," he said, as if he had conquered a whole Roundhead army.

"It is all we do in these dull times, Rupert—to win aces from each other. We're tied here by the heels. There's the width of England to go fighting in, and they will not let us."

Rupert, turning to find the big surcoat that should hide his frivolous attire between the street and his lodging, saw the two Metcalfes standing there. He liked their bigness, liked the tan of weather and great hardship that had dyed their faces to the likeness of a mellowed wall of brick. Yet suspicion came easily to him, after long association with the intrigues of the Court at Oxford, and instinctively he reached down for the sword that was not there, just as Michael had done when he came dripping from Ouse river into York.

"You are Prince Rupert?" said Michael. "The King sends this letter to you."

Rupert broke the seal. When he had read the few lines written carelessly and at speed, his face cleared. "Maurice," he said, "we need play no more tennis. Here's our commission to raise forces for the relief of York."

He was a changed man: Since boyhood, war had been work and recreation both to him. In his youth there had been the Winter Queen, his widowed mother, beset by intrigue and disaster, with only one knightly man about her, the grave Earl of Craven, who was watch-dog and worshipper. Craven, hard-bitten, knowledgeable, with the strength of the grey Burnsall fells in the bone and muscle of him, had taught Rupert the beginnings of the need for warfare, had sown the first seeds of that instinct for cavalry attack which had made Rupert's horsemanship a living fear wherever the Roundheads met them. First, he had had the dream of fighting for his mother's honour; when that was denied him, he had come into the thick of trouble here in England, to fight for King Charles and the Faith. And then had come the cold suspicion of these days at Oxford, the eating inward of a consuming fire. the playing at tennis because life offered no diversion otherwise. It is not easy to be denied full service to one's King because the tongues of interlopers are barbed with venom, and these weeks of inaction here had been eating into his soul like rust.

The first glow of surprise over, Rupert's face showed the underlying gravity that was seldom far from it. The grace of the man was rooted in a rugged strength, and even the charm of person which none denied was the charm of a hillside pasture field, flowers and green grass above, but underneath the unyielding rock.

"Maurice, these gentlemen are two of Squire Metcalfe's lambs," he said, "so the King's letter says. For that matter, they carry their credentials in their faces."

"Tell us just how the fight went at Otley Bridge," said Maurice, with young enthusiasm. "We have heard so many versions of the tale."

"It was nothing," asserted Kit, astonished to find their exploits known wherever they met Cavaliers. "Sir Thomas Fairfax came back one evening from a skirmish to find we held the bridge. He had five-score men, and we had fifty. It was a good fight while it lasted. Forty of our men brought back wounds to Ripley; but we come of a healthy stock, and not a limb was lost."

Rupert had no easy-going outlook on his fellows; his way of life did not permit such luxury. He was aware that rumour had not lied for once—that the magic of the Metcalfe name, filtering down from Yorkshire through many runnels and side-channels, was no will-o'-the-wisp. Two of the clan were here, and one of them had told a soldier's tale in a soldier's way, not boasting of the thirty men of Fairfax's they had left for dead at Otley Bridge.

"I shall be for ever in your debt," he said impassively, "if you will answer me a riddle that has long been troubling me. Who taught you Metcalfes the strength of cavalry, lightly horsed and attacking at the gallop?" "Faith, we were never taught it," laughed Michael. "It just came to us, as the corn sprouts or the lark sings. The old grey kirk had something to do with it, maybe, though I yawned through many a sermon about serving God and honouring the King. One remembers these little matters afterwards."

"One does, undoubtedly," said Rupert. "Now, sir," he went on, after a grave silence, "I have a great desire. I'm commissioned to raise forces for the relief of York, and I want your men of Yoredale for my first recruits. They are already busy in the North, you'll say. Yes, but I need them here. Six-score of your breed here among us, or as many as their wounds permit to ride, would bring the laggards in." "With you here?" said Kit impulsively.

"With you here?" said Kit impulsively. "The laggards should be stirred without our help."

"By your leave, they are tiring of me here in Oxford. The tales of your doings in the North are whetting jaded appetites. Bring your big men south on their white horses, and show the city what it covets. I'll send a horseman to York within the hour."

"That need not be," said Michael, with his trick of laughing in the midst of grave affairs. "We wasted a whole night in Banbury, and your messenger need ride no further than that town, I fancy. The first of our outposts should be there by now."

"You will explain, sir," put in Rupert, with grave question.

"It is simple enough. Six-score menand I think all of them will ride, wounded or no-cover a good deal of country, set two miles apart. That was my father's planning of our journey south—a horseman playing sentry, on a fresh horse, at every stage, until we sent news that you were coming to the relief of York."

"Thorough !" said Rupert. "Strafford should be here, and Archbishop Laud they understand that watchword."

The Prince was housed at St. John's, where Rupert had known light-heartedness in his student days. That evening the Metcalfes supped there—just the four of them, with little ceremony about the crude affair of eating—and afterwards they talked, soldiers proven in many battles, and men who, by instinctive knowledge of each other, had the self-same outlook on this dizzy world of battle, intrigue, and small-minded folk that heumed them in. To them the King was England, Faith, and constancy. No effort was too hard on his behalf; no east wind of disaster, such as Rupert had suffered lately, could chill their steady hope.

"There's one perplexity I have," said Rupert, passing the wine across. "Why are your men so sure that they can find fresh horses for the asking at each two-miles stage? Horses are rare to come by since the war broke out."

So Michael explained, with his daft laugh, that a Yorkshireman had some occult gift of scenting a horse leagues away, and a stubborn purpose to acquire him—by purchase if he had the money, but otherwise if Providence ordained it so.

"Has the rider gone to Banbury?" he asked.

"Yes, two hours since, by a messenger I trust. He is from Yorkshire, too—one Nicholas Blake, who never seems to tire."

Kit's eagerness, blunted a little by good fare and ease after months of hardship, was awake again. "Blake?" he asked. "Is he a little man, made up of nerves and whipcord?"

"That, and a pluck that would serve three usual men."

"I'm glad he has the ride to Banbury. It was he who first brought us out of Yoredale into this big fight for the King. When last I saw him, he was limping in the middle of Skipton High Street, with blood running down his coat—I thought he had done his last errand."

"Blake does not die, somehow. Sometimes, looking at him, I think he longs to die and cannot. At any rate, he rode south last autumn with a letter for mc, and I kept him for my own private errands. One does not let rare birds escape."

The next moment Rupert, the gay, impulsive Cavalier, as his enemies accounted him, the man with grace and foolhardiness, they said, but little wit, thrust the *débris* of their supper aside and spread out a map upon the table. It was a good map, drawn in detail by himself, and it covered the whole country from London to the Scottish border.

"I am impatient for the coming of your clan, gentlemen," he said. "Let us get to figures. Mr. Blake is at Banbury already, we'll say, and has found your first outpost. *He* covers two miles at the gallop, and the next man covers two, and so to Knaresborough. How soon can they win into Oxford?"

"In five days," said Michael, with his rose-coloured view of detail.

Prince Rupert challenged his reckoning, and the puzzle of the calculation grew more bewildering as the four men argued about it. They had another bottle to help them, but the only result was that each clung more tenaciously to his opinion. Maurice said the journey, allowing for mischances and the scarcity of horses, would take eight days at least; Kit Metcalfe hazarded a guess that seven was nearer the mark; and at last they agreed to wager each a guinea on the matter, and parted with a pleasant sense of expectation, as if a horse race were in the running. Soldiers must take their recreations this way; for they travel on a road that is set thick with hazard, and a gamble round about the winning chance is part of the day's work.

"I give you welcome here to Oxford," said Rupert, as he bade them good night. "Since the tale of your exploits blew about our sleepy climate, I knew that in the North I had a company of friends. When the Squire of Nappa rides in, I shall tell him that he and I, alone in England, know what light cavalry can do against these men of Cromwell's."

The Metcalfes, when they said farewell, and he asked where they were lodging for the night, did not explain that they had come in a carrier's cart to Oxford, without ceremony and entirely without change of They just went out into the street, gear. wandered for an hour among the scent of lilacs, then found a little tavern that seemed in keeping with their own simplicity. The host asked proof of their respectability, and they showed him many guineas, convincing him that they were righteous men. Thereafter they slept as tired men do, without back reckonings or fear of the insistent morrow. Once only Kit awoke and tapped his brother on the shoulder.

"They'll be here in seven days, Michael," he said, and immediately began to snore.

A further episode in this series will appear in the next number.



SPRING SONG.

THE sunlight glows on the wilds of heather, The gorse is in full bloom, And, oh, for the rain-splashed April weather,

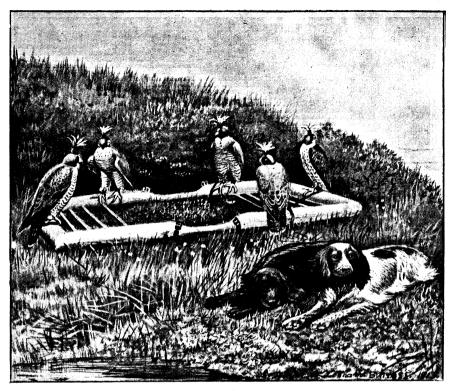
Now past is December's gloom.

Let us mount the steeps of the purple brae And bring to life those dreams When in thought we tramped through the livelong day To the lilt of the laughing streams.

Oh, Life is fine on the lifting way, Where the Upland voices ring; This is the call of an April day, This is the call of Spring!

So let each who wills seek the sunlit hills, And with his choice be proud, For the wind and sky are his company, And the Legion of the cloud.

R. M. PEEL.



FALCONS ON THE "CADGE," WAITING THEIR TURN.

MODERN FALCONRY.

BY A. H. VALENTINE AND LEONARD BUTTRESS.

O NE of the remarkable features of modern life, looked at from a sportsman's point of view, is a steadily growing inclination to revive those old English games and sports which were once famous in this country. This assertion applies equally to croquet, archery, and falconry, each of which, having been allowed to remain in almost complete obscurity for many decades, is now gradually asserting itself and taking its proper position in our already imposing list of national sports. In no sport in which a revival has taken place has the theory of "the survival of the fittest" more completely asserted itself than in falconry.

It would, of course, be wrong to suppose that the sport has ever been anything like extinct in the British Isles; but its devotees have kept it up without any of the pomp and show which once distinguished it. There are probably, at the present moment, at least a dozen private establishments in England alone. In Scotland falconry has always been kept up, and before the end of the ninth century hawking was familiar to the Saxons in England; and from that time until the introduction of shot-guns, the sport may be said to have been at its height. Its popularity, however, began to wane when it was discovered that game of all kinds could be captured much more easily and cheaply by the aid of "vile saltpetre." The outbreak of the great Civil War also-interrupting, as it did, all peaceful sports-was another deadly blow at the popularity of hawking. However, the famous old pastime is now followed by a select few with a zeal and enthusiasm that only those who have experienced its delights can appreciate. Curiously enough, this awakening activity is not confined to these shores, for a similar revival of hawking is noticeable on the Continent. In fact, a few seasons ago a

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competition amongst falconers for the championship of Europe was held at Spa, the first prize being divided by Captain C. Eustace Radclyffe and a French gentleman; but British supremacy was asserted by Captain Radclyffe carrying off the second, third, and fourth prizes of the tournament.

It is to Captain Radclyffe, who formerly

hawking produces four brace of birds, falconers consider they have had a fine return; but what would four brace mean to a man with a gun? Now, it so happens that Captain Eustace Radclyffe is considered to be one of the finest shots in the world; and yet, with all his prowess, he prefers a day with the hawks to all the guns, or, as he has himself graphically put it: "Such sentiments



A FALCON CHAINED.

owned the largest falconry establishment in the kingdom, that we are indebted for much of the material in this article. No man has done more to encourage the revival than he, and the success he has achieved with his hawks bears convincing testimony to the extraordinary care and attention he has devoted to the sport. This is somewhat curious, as hawking might be termed a slow sport by the hypercritical if the size of the bag is any indication of a day's sport. If a day's will doubtless not appeal to all sportsmen, but there is a peculiar fascination and charm to every falconer in the fact that he has, as the result of his own teaching, made one of the wildest of creatures obedient to his will, and always ready to afford him amusement and sport when the opportunity presents itself."

No descriptive writing can in any way give the reader an adequate idea of the excitement that the sport produces; but as at present falconry is not widely known to



HOODED FALCONS CARRIED ON THE CADGE TO THE SCENE OF ACTION BY MR. T. ALLEN, WHEN HEAD FALCONER TO CAPTAIN RADCLYFFE.

the general public, we will endeavour to give an idea of the training of the birds and of the sport itself.

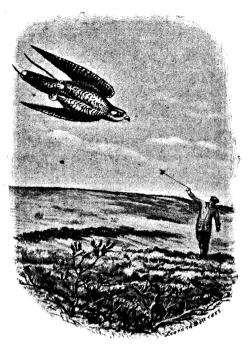
The day we went a hawking was a cold, windy, and cheerless day in September,

enough to damp the spirits of any sportsman. Our hawking party met about twelve noon on the extensive grounds of Captain Radelyffe's estate at Hyde, near Wareham, Dorsetshire, which extends over several thousand acres of fine sporting country. The ground itself that we had to traverse was open heatherclad moorland. Scattered over the uneven and unbroken ground were small patches of gorse bushes, furze, and plentiful supplies of red and brown heather, the latter closely resembling the Scotch grouse heather. The party, including the two falconers and the beaters, and accompanied by six dogs—a black retriever, two pointers, two spaniels, and the ubiquitous fox-terrier—presented a picturesque group, the most pleasing feature being the hawks, with their variegatedcoloured hoods, which were carried on a frame called the cadge.

The hoods are kept on the birds till the "cast-off"—that is, when the hawk leaves the wrist to go after the quarry. The hawk is also attached to the falconer's hand by a leash, or leather thong, which passes through a band or "jess" tied to the bird's leg, and is adroitly slipped before "casting off" the hawk from the fist. One of our party was allocated to a position in the fields particular place partridges might have flown to after we had beaten the adjoining fields. The object of the falconer was to drive the game into the open heath, where the hawks have a better chance of killing than in the enclosures, for the partridges are cunning enough to take shelter in the ditches and bushes. After a tedious journey over hills, bogs, and ditches-for we had to beat round into the valley---the dogs startled a covey of birds, which flew to some neighbouring cover and were promptly "marked down." The weather was all against us. A fierce wind blew all the time over the moors, and



FALCONS ON THEIR BLOCKS. Two photographs by C. Pilkington.



FALCON TURNING TO STOOP TO THE LURE.

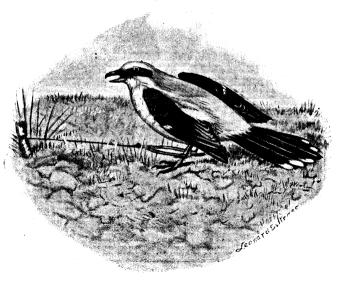
Captain Radclyffe confidently anticipated that we should not get a kill at all. Ideal hawking weather should be a bright autumn morning, without a gust of wind to disturb the hawks in their flight; and if it rains, the chances of a kill are discounted, as the hawk's wings suffer materially from the wet.

We then startled another covey of part-

ridges, and it was decided to cast off one of the hawks. Swiftly and gracefully the bird selected first took the air, and in a moment she was "waitingon," which is the technical expression when the hawk is soaring in circles above the head of the falconer in expectation of the game to be sprung. In the meantime the dogs are assisting by pointing and finding the game, when sud-denly a bird is sighted, and then the game begins. The party tear off at breakneck speed to see the "stoop," or swoop of the hawk on to its The falconers and prev. beaters meanwhile are shouting "Yo-hup! Yo-hup!" and "Helaw-helaw-helope !" at the top of their voices to the hawk,

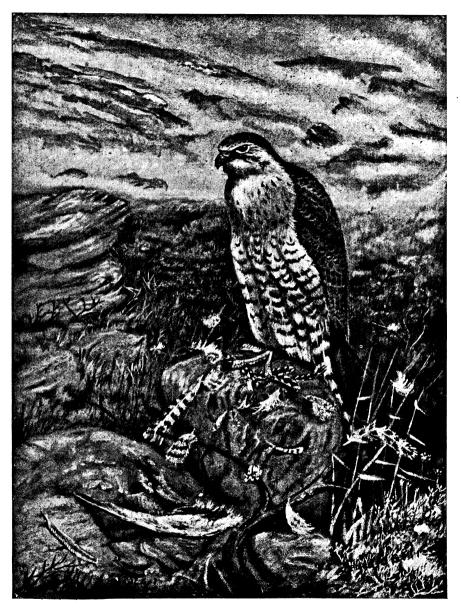
to encourage her in her stoop; but she wants no encouragement, for she has already sighted the game from high up aloft, and the poor quarry's fate is sealed. The startled bird, which turns out to be a landrail, intuitively knows that the hawk is on the wing, and prepares for flight. You. almost wish that the landrail will escape that swift and terrible stoop. The falcon has seen the landrail from above, and like lightning she sweeps down in a rush that the eye can scarcely follow. You think for the moment that she must miss the quarry on the wing, for the first "stoop" is by no means invariably successful, and the falcon will "throw up," *i.e.*, regain her point of vantage above the quarry, and "stoop" again repeatedly until she strikes or "binds." But in this case she struck and "footed" the landrail at the first lightning-like "stoop."

As a reward for her performance, she is sometimes allowed to eat the bird she has. taken, for it must be mentioned that the quarry is killed almost the instant that the falcon captures it. Instances are known of a falcon missing to take the quarry, although it has struck it in the flight, and the birds have been picked up minus the head, such has been the force and velocity with which the hawk accomplished the stoop. James Rutford, the best and most experienced falconer of his day in England, who was one of our party, informed me that it is computed that a hawk travels at the rate of one hundred and fifty miles an hour when effecting a stoop. Nevertheless,



SHRIKE "POINTING" AT THE APPROACH OF A PASSAGE-HAWK.

one cannot conceive any way of measuring the speed. All one can say is that it is the fastest movement made by any living thing in the world. It must be seen to be believed. and an exciting chase commenced, which ended in the escape of the blackbird, which flies low and gets into the bushes, where the falcon has no chance. As the party was



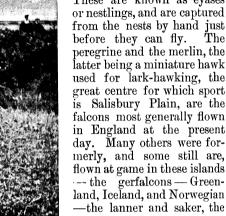
A LITTLE TELL-TALE HEAP OF FEATHERS.

Our party was disappointed at the bird only footing a landrail, and another falcon was cast off, in the hopes of a partridge being sighted. This falcon, after waiting-on for a little time, was soon busy, as she sighted a bird which turned out to be a blackbird, getting hungry, it was necessary to get the falcon on the cadge again, and for this purpose a "lure" was thrown out—*i.e.*, a dead pigeon attached by a piece of string, which is twirled in the air by the falconer. By this means the hawk is induced to come to the ground and allow herself to be hooded and leashed.

It was hoped that we should not go unrewarded without seeing a partridge taken, though the probability was against it, considering the unpropitious state of the But the falconers were not to be elements.

six o'clock, and we started out at noon-was a bag of two partridges and a landrail, which seems a poor return to the man with the gun; but the paucity in comparison is considered one of the beauties of the sport, from a hawking point of view.

Of the training of hawks there is a great deal to be said. The best kind of falcons for English game-hawking are those caught when very young. These are known as eyases



The

CASTING OFF FOR A FLIGHT.

beaten. Tramping a few miles over hill and dale, over ditches and bog, and forcing your way through furze-bush and stingingnettles, are unconsidered trifles with hawking men, and we presently forgot everything in the excitement produced when the dogs startled a partridge. One of the hawks had been cast off, and then there was a mad rush down a steep hill to see the stoop; and a fine stoop it was, as the falcon took the partridge in full flight. although for a moment it seemed that the game would escape.

The ardour of the falconers was not yet satisfied, and, like Oliver Twist, they asked for more. Another field was beaten, and another partridge fell a prey to the hawka cunning old cock partridge, that appeared to know every move on the board. The result of the day's sport—it was then just



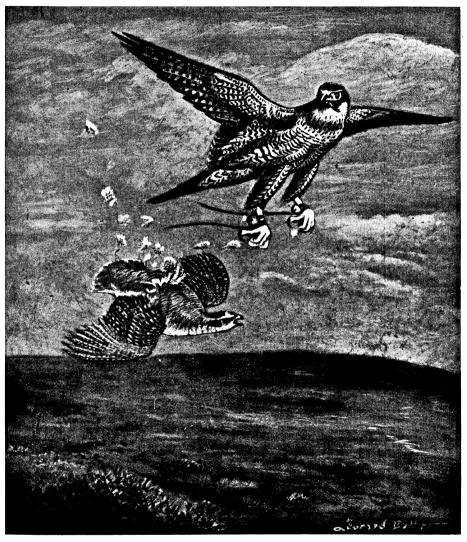
THE FALCON ON HER QUARRY, A PARTRIDGE, A FEW MOMENTS LATER. Two photographs by C. Pilkington.

Barbary falcon, the goshawk and sparrowhawk, the hobby, and the shaheen.

Falconry, curiously enough, takes its name from the female bird, the male bird being known as a tiercel, which is a third smaller in size than the female. Various theories have been suggested as

reasons for this, but Captain Radclyffe, who is one of the best of authorities, believes that it possibly arises from some curious form of evolution brought about owing to the peculiarities of the incubation and rearing of young hawks. When a falcon is sitting, she is extremely savage, and liable falconry is that whereas nestlings are now principally trained to the sport, wild-caught birds or passage-hawks were formerly caught and trained, but they were naturally not so tractable to training as the young eyases.

The training requires great care and patience. When the hawks are taken from



A PEREGRINE FALCON KILLING A PARTRIDGE.

to fight anything, and it is the duty of the henpecked tiercel to go on the prowl for food for the falcon and her young. The falcon, being the stronger, is generally used at the larger quarry, such as herons, rooks, grouse, etc., but for partridge-hawking most falconers prefer the tiercel. The great difference between modern and ancient the nest, they are allowed to fly loose and at liberty for several weeks, until they are full-grown and have attained complete use of their wings. This is termed "flying at hack." They are fed each day with fresh meat tied to blocks of wood outside the hack house. This latter is usually some rough shed erected for the purpose. After 668

four or five weeks thus flying at liberty, the young hawks attain their full power of flight, and when sufficiently advanced in this, they naturally become almost wild, and have to be caught up by means of snaring lines placed over the meat on which they feed each day. The falconer, being hidden from sight inside hawk. When they get older, the colour of the wings and feathers changes from brown to a bluish-grey. Two moults are necessary for a hawk to be perfectly moulted, the period of moulting usually being from March to September. A hawk in captivity is not a long-lived bird, although in a wild state

the hack house, captures the hawk by means of pulling a noose tight around the legs of the young bird when it comes in to feed. When once they are thus captured, the hawks are taken back to the hawk house, which is more properly known as the "mews," and there they are hooded and placed on a pole, to which they are tied by night and day, and then their training commences. It takes many weeks before they are sufficiently trained to be flown at liberty in search of game. The whole process of training is much too lengthy to describe in a short article such as this. In their first



Photo by]

[C. Pilkington.

CAPTAIN RADCLYFFE WITH HIS FIVE-YEAR-OLD FALCON "BLACK LADY."

season peregrines are dark brown in colour as regards the feathers on the head, back, wings, and tail, the breast being nearly white with vertical dark marks on the feathers. When the hawk is moulting, these dark markings on the breast feathers entirely change, and run transversely across the feathers instead of vertically, as is the case in the young

not a profitable game, and Captain Radclyffe has known them to be at work for a whole week without one passage-hawk being caught. These two men—who, by the way, are cobblers by trade, and named Möllen are patience personified, and their method of snaring is somewhat curious. They rig up a little hut, in which they are concealed.

in a wild state they have been known to live to a great age, and a tiercel belonging to Mr. Blaine, which had seen twelve summers, was at that time the oldest known hawk in England.

Most of the passage - hawks come from Holland, where they fly from all directions at one particular period of the year, namely, that of their autumn migration; and the particular spot upon which they have fixed for their line of flight is known as Valkenswaard. so that it has long taken its name from the Two birds. brothers devote their energies there to capturing the birds, which work requires great tact and patience. It is In front of the hut, at some distance from it, a bow-net, with an iron frame in the shape of a bow, is fixed in the ground, and a long line passes from this net to the men concealed inside the hut. In the centre of the net a live pigeon is secured by means of an iron peg with a ring in the top, through which another long line passes to the falconers. To aid them in their work, the men have a small bird, known as a



"GNOME," A FOUR-YEAR-OLD TIERCEL OWNED BY MR. G. BLAINE.



"ANNA," A YOUNG FALCON OWNED BY MR. G. BLAINE.

shrike, or butcher-bird, also tied to a small perch near the outside of the hut. This bird gives warning of the approach of a hawk by raising shrill cries, on hearing which the hawk-catcher draws the line which is tied to the pigeon. The latter begins to flutter and thus attracts the attention of the passing hawk, which generally swoops down upon the pigeon and kills it. The dead pigeon and the hawk holding on to it are then gradually drawn by means of the line until they are underneath the bow-net. The falconer then pulls the line of this net, which flies up and entraps the hawk, which is then captured and immediately hooded and taken home by the falconers to be trained.

The natural habitation of the English peregrine is the high eliffs, whence they come down into the moorlands or downlands in search of food; but they nearly always avoid trees, where the game is likely to settle when attacked. The price of hawks varies considerably. Young passagehawks can be bought for two or three pounds, and

good nestlings, just taken from the nest, for about one to two pounds. A trained hawk may fetch a fancy price, according to its quality, and Captain Radclyffe informs us that he has owned one or two for which he



THE MEET.

would not accept as much as one hundred pounds apiece.

That falconry as a general sport is reviving, there is no doubt. Öne of the great obstacles in the way is the heavy expense incurred in

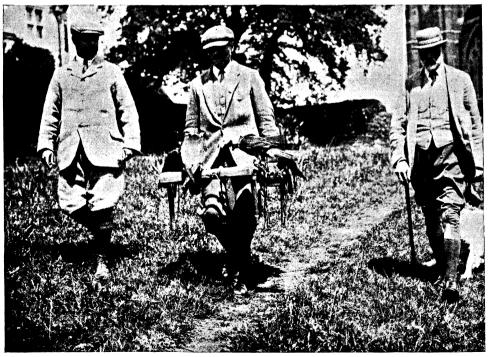


Photo by]

CAPTAIN RADCLYFFE.

GEORGE OXER. Falconer of the Old Hawking Club.

The World's Graphic Press

THE HON. G. LASCELLES, Head of the Old Hawking Club. the training. A professional falconer is retained, who usually requires a heavy fee, for there are very few of them who thoroughly understand their art. Mr. James Rutford, falconer to the late Major Fisher, and Mr. T. Allen, who at the time this article was written was Captain Radclyffe's head falconer, have proved themselves skilful experts. Rutford was apprenticed to old John Barr, one of the most famous falconers of the last century, and in Major Fisher had a master who was one of the greatest authorities on falconry then living. A very large space of open country in which to fly the hawks is required. The falconer generally needs one or more assistants for game-hawking, and a certain number of dogs are necessary. Also the feeding of the hawks is another heavy incidental expense if a large number of them are kept.

The largest establishment of trained hawks in England to-day is that maintained by The Old Hawking Club, Lyndhurst, Hants. This club has been for many years under the management of the Hon. G. Lascelles, who is one of the greatest authorities on the ancient sport of falconry. The club falconer is Mr. George Oxer, who can also lay claim to being at the head of the professional falconers in England.

The largest private establishment of hawks

is now owned by Mr. G. Blaine, whose excellent falconer, R. Best, was trained as a pupil by Captain Radclyffe's falconer, T. Allen. Of late years Mr. Blaine has made some wonderful bags of grouse and partridges with his game hawks.

The office of Hereditary Grand Falconer of England is still in existence, as a sinecure which is held by the Duke of St. Albans, whose duties are light, and the late Duke occasionally followed the sport with The Old Hawking Club on Salisbury Plain. No recognised tournament or championship meeting is held in England, as was done in the one at Spa, referred to already, but one might be organised in the future, which would give an immense impetus to the revival of a famous old English sport. But a steady and gradual awakening has been noticeable in recent years, and not long ago Captain Radclyffe was approached by a wealthy American gentleman with the idea of introducing falconry into America; and he has also been instrumental in reviving this old-fashioned sport in Hungary, where a well-known prince has taken it up very extensively, together with one or two of his Unfortunately, for the last few friends. seasons Captain Radclyffe has had to give up keeping an establishment of trained hawks, chiefly owing to the fact of his long and repeated absences from England.



PRIDE GOETH BEFORE

By DORNFORD YATES

Illustrated by G. C. Wilmshurst

"Who is Silvia? What is she? That all our swains commend her? Holy, fair, and wise is she; The heavens such grace did lend her, That she might admired be."

The song and its melody floated out into the night, away and over the sleeping countryside. In no way breaking the silence, rising up out of it, rather. It was as if Nature dreamed as she lay sleeping, a dream clear-cut, melodious. Over all, the moon hung full, turning the world to silver. Never had music so fairy a setting.

> "Then to Silvia let us sing, That Silvia is excelling; She excels each mortal thing Upon the dull earth dwelling; To her let us garlands bring."

Half-past eleven o'clock of a fine moonlit night, and I was alone with the car all among the Carinthian Alps. It was for Fladstadt that I was making. That was the Bairlings' nearest town. Their place, St. Martin, lay twenty odd miles from Fladstadt. But in the town people would show me the way. At St. Martin I should find Daphne and the others, newly come from Vienna this afternoon. Friends of Jonah's, the Bairlings. None of us others knew them.

At ten o'clock in the morning I had slid out of Trieste, reckoning to reach Fladstadt in twelve hours. And, till I lost my way, I had come well. I had lost it at half-past nine, and only discovered that I had lost it an hour later. It was too late to turn back then. I tried to get on and across by by-roads—always a dangerous game. Just when I was getting desperate, I had chanced on a signpost, pointing to the town I sought. The next moment one of the tyres had gone.

The puncture I did not mind. The car had detachable wheels, and one was all ready, waiting to be used. But when I found that I had no jack... Better men than I would have sworn. The imperturbable Jonah would have stamped about the road. As for Berry, with no one there to suffer his satire, suppressed enmity would have brought about a collapse. He would probably have lost his memory.

There was nothing for it but to drive slowly forward on the flat tyre. When I came to a village, I could rouse an innkeeper, and if the place did not boast a jack, at least sturdy peasants should raise the car with a stout pole. Accordingly I had gone on.

For the first five miles I had not lighted on so much as a barn. Then suddenly I had swung round a bend of the road to see a great white mansion right ahead of me. The house stood solitary by the roadside, dark woods rising steep behind. No light came from its windows. Turreted, whitewalled, dark-roofed in the moonlight, it might have been the outpost of some fairy town. The building stood upon the lefthand side of the way, and, as I drew slowly alongside, wondering if I dared knock upon its gates for assistance, I found that house and road curled to the left together. Round the bend I had crept, close to the white facade. As I turned, I saw a light above me, shining out over a low balcony of stone. I had stopped the car and the engine, and stepped a-tiptoe to the other side of the road. From there I could see the ceiling of a tall first-floor room, whose wide, open windows led on to the balcony. I saw no figure, no shadow. For a minute or two I had heard no sound. Then, with no warning, had come an exquisite touching of keys, and a girl's voice . . .

"To her let us garlands bring."

The melody faded and ceased. The refrain melted into the silence. For a moment I stood still, my eyes on the balcony above. Then I slipped noiselessly to the car, picked up a rug from the back seat and laid it, folded small, on the edge of the car's back. Half on the padded leather and half on the cape hood, strapped tight, I laid it. Standing upon this perilous perch, I was just able to lay my fingers upon the cold edge of the balcony's floor. With an effort I could grasp one of the stone

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balusters. An idea occurred to me, and I got carefully down. One of the luggage carrier's straps was six feet long. I had it loose in a moment. A minute later and I had wheedled it round the baluster I could clutch. Buckled, it made a loop three feet in length that would have supported a bullock. I was about to soar, when I remembered the car. I jumped down once more, turned the key of the magneto and slipped it into my pocket. No one could steal her now. The next second I had my foot in the thong...

I sat on the coping, looking into the Broad and lofty it was, its walls room. hung with a fair blue paper. A handsome tapestry, looped up a little on one side, masked the tall double doors, and in the far corner stood a great tiled stove for burning wood. From the ceiling was hanging a basin of alabaster—an electric fitting, really. The powerful light of its hidden lamps spread, softened, all about the chamber. The blue walls bore a few reproductions of famous pictures. Meissonier seemed in high favour, while Sir Joshua's "Nellie O'Brien" surveyed the salon with her quiet, steady gaze. A great bowl of fresh flowers stood on the grand piano.

The girl herself was sitting half on the edge of an old gate-table in the middle of The toe of one rosy slipper the room. touched the polished boards, and her other foot swung gently to and fro. One of her short sleeves she had pushed up to the shoulder, and was looking critically at a scratch, which showed red, high up on her round white arm. A simple evening frock of old-rose colour, dainty slippers, and silk stockings to match. Her skin was wonderfully white, her hair dark and brown. This was cut straight across her forehead in French fashion, and then brought down and away over the ears. Her face was towards me as she examined her arm. I could see she was very pretty.

"Don't you think you ought to apologise?" she said suddenly.

Her words took me by surprise. For a moment I did not answer.

"Eh?" she said, looking up.

"Yes," I said, "I do. Fact is, I haven't any, and the gardens are all shut now."

"Any what ?" she said, letting the sleeve slip back into its place.

"Garlands, Silvia."

She smiled for an instant. Then-

"How dare you come up like this?"

"I wanted to see what Silvia was like."

She stifled a little yawn.

"You heard me say she was holy, fair, and wise."

"And excelling, I know. But the second verse asks : 'Is she kind as she is fair ?'"

"Well?"

" I came up to see if she was."

"And is she?"

"I don't think she is guite."

"Can you get down all right?"

"In fact, I'm sure she isn't," I said ; " but then-

" What ? "

"She'd have to be most awfully kind to be that, Silvia. Good-bye."

"I say," said Silvia. "Yes," I said, with one leg over the balustrade.

"As you're here, if you would like to come in and sit down for a little-I mean, I don't want to seem inhospitable."

"I knew it," said I. "I knew she was, really. Good-bye, Silvia. Thank you very, very much, all the same. I've found out what I wanted to know."

I slipped over the coping and set my foot in the thong. There was a rustle of silk and a quick step on the balcony. Then two soft hands took hold of my wrists. I looked up at the big eyes, the face white in the moonlight, the dark straight-cut hair.

"Wait," she said. "Who are you, and where do you come from ? "

"My name's Valentine," said I. "I am a gentleman of Verona."

The small mouth twitched.

"Be serious," she said.

I told her my name, and spoke of my run from Trieste, adding that I sought Fladstadt and St. Martin. She heard me in silence. Then-

"Are you tired ?" she said quietly.

"A little."

"Then I tell you that you may come in and rest for a while. Yes, and talk to me. Presently you can go on. I will show you the way.

She let go my wrists and stood up, clasping her hands behind her head.

"You're very hospit-----"

"It isn't a question of hospitality or anything else," she said slowly. "I just tell you that you may come in if you want to."

I gazed at the slim straight figure, the bare bent arms, the soft white throat. Then I drew myself up and bestrode the coping.

"Of course," I said, "this is a dream. In reality I am fast asleep in the car. Possibly I have met with an accident, and am still unconscious. Yet your hands felt warm——"

"And your wrists very cold, sir. Come along in and sit down. Even if you are dreaming, I suppose you'll be able to drink some coffee if I give it to you?"

" If you give it me."

I drew up the thong and followed her into the room. She motioned me to sit in a deep chair, and put cigarettes by my side. Then she lighted, the lamps that were set beneath two little silver coffee-pots standing on a tray on the gate-table. I watched her in silence. When the lamps were burning, she turned and seated herself on the table as I had seen her first. She regarded me curiously, swinging that little right foot.

"I shouldn't have liked you to think me unkind," she said, with a grave smile.

I rose to my feet.

""Silvia," I said.

: " Sir."

"I do not know what to say. Yet I want to say something. I think you are very gentle, Silvia. If I were old, I think the sight of you would make me feel young again, and if Shakespeare had known you, I think he would have written more sonnets and fewer plays."

Silvia spread out deprecating white arms and bowed low.

would have given me a cigarette."

"I beg your pardon," said I, handing her. the box.

When I had given her a light, she turned again to the coffee.

"It ought to be hot enough now, I think. D'you mind using my cup? I don't take sugar."

" It will be a privilege, Silvia."

" Milk ? "

" Please."

The hot *café-au-lait* was very grateful. Despite the season, my long drive through the mountain air had left me a little cold. I took my seat on an arm of the deep chair. Outside, somewhere close at hand, a clock struck twelve.

"The witching hour," said I. "How is it you're not in bed and asleep, Silvia?"

"Sleep? What with the noise of passing cars_____"

"I forgot," said I. "The continuous roar of the traffic here must be very trying. The congestion between here and Villach is a disgrace. I met three carts in the last forty odd miles myself. Can't something be done about it?"

"And the curiosity of cold-wristed burglars—by the way, I can't get over your climbing up like that, you know. It's all right, as it happens, and I'm rather glad you did, but this might have been a bedroom or—"

"Or a bathroom. Of course it might. But then, you see, you very seldom find a piano in the bathroom nowadays, Silvia. Incidentally, what a sweet room this is !"

"Do you like my pictures?"

"Awfully. Especially the one on the gate-table."

My lady blew smoke out of a faint smile. Then—

" If it comes to that, there's rather a good one on the arm of your chair," she said.

"Yes. By the same artist, too. But the one on the table knocks it. That'll be hung on the line year after year."

"What line?"

"At the Academy of Hearts. I beg your pardon, my dear. It slipped out."

Silvia threw back her dainty head and laughed merrily. Presently—

"But the one on the table's damaged," she said. "Didn't you see the scratch?"

"And the one on the chair wants cleaning badly. In its present state they wouldn't hang it anywhere except at Pentonville. But the scratch—how did you get it?"

"Ah, that was the Marquis. We were by the window, and when you slipped that strap round, he jumped like anything. He was in my arms, you see."

"I'm awfully sorry; but do you often embrace nobles, and how do you say goodbye to Dukes? I mean to say, I haven't got my patent with me, and my coronet's in the store—I mean strong-room, but anyone who doesn't know me will tell you—besides, I never scratch."

"The Marquis is a Blue Persian."

"These foreign titles," I murmured scornfully.

"Don't be patronising," said Silvia. "You know where pride goes. Besides, I've met some very nice Counts."

I leaned forward.

"I know. So've I. Barons, too. The last I struck's doing seven years now. But you're English, Silvia. English, d'you hear? I'll bet they're all over you out here. I know them. I'm a fool, but I don't like to think of your—I mean, I'd rather be an English—er——"

" Burglar ? "



"I opened my near eye and turned my head."

We both laughed, and I got up.

"Silvia," I said, "tell me the best way to Fladstadt, and turn me out while there is yet time."

"What do you mean?"

"This. I've already been in love with you for a quarter of an hour. In another ten minutes I shall be sitting at your feet. Half an hour later-

"You will be just running into Fladstadt. It's straight on. You can't miss the way."

"And St. Martin? Have you ever heard of it?"

She puckered her brows.

"Isn't that where some English people have a place? People called—er—Waring, is it?"

" Bairling," said I. "Bairling. That's it. I'm Let's see. afraid it's some miles from Fladstadt."

"Twenty, I'm told."

"About that."

"And this is how far?"

"From Fladstadt ? About twenty-three." I groaned.

"Forty-three miles to go, and a flat tyre," said I. "How far's the next village?"

"Why?"

"I want to get another wheel on."

"If you like to wait here a little longer, my brother'll be back with the car. He's on the way from Fladstadt now. That's why I'm sitting up. He'll give you a jack."

"You're awfully good, Silvia. But have you forgotten what I said?"

"About sitting at my feet? No, but I don't think you meant it. If I did, I should have rung long ago."

"Thank you," said I.

"Of course," she went on, "you're only a burglar, but you are-English."

"Yes, Silvia. I mightn't have been, though.'

"You mean, I didn't know whether you were English or not, till after you'd climbed Nor I did. But one of the men's up, up? and there's a bell-push under the flap of the table." She slipped a hand behind her. "I'm touching it now," she added.

"I wondered why you didn't sit in a chair," I said, with a slow smile.

A deep flush stole over the girl's features. For a moment she looked at me with no laughter in her eyes. Then she slipped off the table and moved across the room to an open bureau. She seemed to look for something. Then she strolled back to the table and took her seat on its edge once more.

"Is that a car coming?" she said suddenly, her dark eyes on the floor.

I listened.

"I don't think so," I said, and stepped out on to the balcony.

There was no sound at all. It was the dead of night, indeed. I glanced over the balustrade at the car. Her headlights burned steadily, making the moonlit road ahead more bright.

"I can hear nothing," I said, coming back into the boudoir.

"Look," said Silvia, pointing over my shoulder.

As I turned, something struck me on the cheek. I stooped and picked it up. A piece of flexible cord about five inches long. swung round and looked at the girl. On the table a pair of scissors lay by her side.

"Why have you done this?" I demanded. She raised her eyebrows by way of answer and reached for a cigarette. \mathbf{As} she lighted it, I saw that her hand was trembling.

"Silvia, dear, surely you don't think-

" Must you go?"

"It was a poor joke of mine, I know, ,, but-

"It was. I don't think a Count or a Baron would have said such a rotten thing."

Her eyes flashed and she was trembling all over. From being pretty, she had become beautiful.

"Perhaps not," said I steadily. "But if they had, they would have meant it, Silvia." "As you did."

I coiled the flexible cord about a finger, loosed it, and thrust it into my pocket.

"I'll go now," I said, "as I came." "Like a thief."

"Like a thief. You have been wonderfully kind, and I—I have spoiled everything. Let's try and forget this evening. For you, a car passed in the night, the hum of its engine swelling up, only to fade again into the silence. For me, I lingered to listen to the words of a song, and when it was done, sped on into the shadows. I wish you hadn't cut that bell, lass."

"Why?"

I walked out on to the balcony and swung myself over the coping.

"Because then I should have asked if I might kiss you."

When I had lowered myself on to the seat of the car, I unbuckled the strap and started to pull it down. But the buckle caught on the baluster, and I had to stand on my old perch to reach and loosen it. I did so,

balancing myself with one hand on the balcony's floor. As the strap slipped free, there was a burning pain in my fingers. With a cry I tore them away, lost my balance, and fell sideways into the car on to the back of the front seat. I stood up unsteadily. It hurt me to breather rather, and there was a stabbing pain in my right side.

"Are you hurt?" soid a quick voice above me.

Dazedly I raised my head. Silvia was leaning over the balcony, one hand to her white throat. I could hear her quick-coming breath.

"No," I said slowly, "I'm not. But until you tell me that you know I did not mean what I said, I will not believe that you did not mean to stand upon my fingers."

"Are you hurt, lad ?"

"No. Did you hear what I said ?"

Silvia stood up, her hands before her on the coping.

"You know I didn't."

Without a word I stepped carefully out of the car. The pain was intense. It was as if my side was being seared with a hot iron. How I started the car I shall never know. The effort brought me to my knees. Somehow I crept into my seat, took out the clutch, and put in the first speed. I was moving. Mechanically I changed into second, third, and top. We were going now, but the trees by the wayside seemed to be closing in on me. The road was really ridiculously narrow. could see a corner coming. The pain was awful. My head began to swim, and I felt the near wheel rise on the bank. wrenched the car round, took out the clutch, and dragged the lever into neutral. As I jammed on the hand-brake, I seemed to see many lights. Then came the noise of a horn, cries, and the sound of tyres tearing at the road. I fell forward and fainted.

I could smell Daphne. Somewhere at hand was my sister's faint perfume. I opened my eyes.

"Hullo, Boy," said Jill, her small cool hand on my forehead.

"Better, darling ?" said Daphne, brushing my cheek with soft lips.

"I'm all right," I said, raising myself on my left elbow, still the stabbing pain in my right side. "Where are we?"

"In the hall at St. Martin, dear. How did it all happen?"

"How did I get here?" I asked. "And you-I don't understand."

"We nearly ran you down, old chap."

Berry's voice. "About a quarter of a mile from here, towards Fladstadt. "But why were you driving away?"

I stared at him.

"Driving away?" I said slowly.

There were quick steps and the rustling of a dress. Then Silvia spoke.

"What is it, Bill? Tell me. Who's hurt?"

"It's all right, m'dear," said a man's voice. "Mrs. Pleydell's brother's met with an accident. We found him in the road. Don't make a noise. This is my sister, Mrs. Pleydell."

"How d'you do?" said Daphne. "My brother seems-"

"I'm all right!" I said suddenly. "I'd lost my way—see? And one of the tyres went just as I was passing a big white house on the left. I stopped under a balcony, I think."

"That's right," said Bill Bairling. "Balcony of Silvia's room."

"I never knew it was St. Martin, though. I must have cut across country, somehow. Still—well, there was no jack on the car, so I couldn't do anything. Just as I was getting in again, I heard a noise above me and turned. My foot slipped on the step, and I fell on my side. Couple of ribs gone, I think. I tried to get on to Fladstadt. Is the car all right?"

"And you said you weren't hurt," cried Silvia, sinking on her knees by Jill.

"Was it you who asked me?" I spoke steadily, looking her full in the eyes.

"Yes," said Silvia.

"I know I did. But then, you know, I don't always mean what I say."

Then the pain surged up once more, and I fainted.

* * * * * * * * "Is she kind as she is fair? For beauty lives with kindness. Love doth to her eyes repair, To help him of his blindness, And, being helped, inhabits there."

The singing was very gentle. Overnight the song had floated into the air, rich, full, vibrant; but now a tender note had crept into the rendering, giving the melody a rare sweetness. I listened pleasedly. My side was very sore and stiff, also my head ached rather.

"Priceless voice that little girl's got," said Berry in a low voice.

"Isn't she a dear, too?" said Daphne. "Fancy giving up her own bedroom, so that we could have the salon next door."

2 Y

"I know; but I wish she wouldn't keep on reproaching herself so. If a girl likes to step on to her own balcony, it's not her fault if some fellow underneath falls over himself and breaks a couple of ribs. However. When's the comic leech coming back?"

"This afternoon," said my sister; "but he'll wake before then. I don't expect he'll remember much about last night. I'm so thankful it's not more serious."

"How soon did he say he'd be up?"

"Inside a week. It's a clean fracture. Of course he'll be strapped up for some time. Fancy his going on, though."

"Must have been temporarily deranged," said my brother-in-law airily. "Shock of the fall, I expect."

"Rubbish!" said his wife. "Just because you'd have lain there, giving directions about your funeral and saying you forgave people, you think anybody's mad for trying to go on. Boy has courage."

"Only that of his convictions," said Berry. "You forget I've got a clean sheet. My discharge from the Navy was marked 'Amazing.' The only stain upon my character is my marriage. As for my escutcheon, I've shaved in it for years."

"Fool ! " said his wife.

"I shall turn my face to the wall if you're not careful."

"Don't," said Daphne. "Remember it's not our house."

There was a tap at the door. Then-

"May I come in ?" said Silvia.

"Of course you may, dear. No. He's still asleep."

"It's nearly twelve," said Silvia. "Won't you go and rest a little, and let me stay here? You must be so tired. I'll call'you the moment he wakes."

Daphne hesitated.

"It's awfully good of you-""

"But it isn't. I'd love to."

"The truth is, she's afraid to trust you," Miss Bairling," said Berry. "She thinks you're going to steal his sock-suspenders."

" "Will you leave the room ?" said my sister.

"After you, beloved."

I could hear Silvia's gentle laughter. Then—

"I shall come back about one, dear, if you don't send for me before," said Daphne.

The next moment I heard the door close, and Silvia seated herself on my left by the side of the bed.

I opened my off eye.

I lay in a fair, grey-papered chamber; darkened, for the green shutters were drawn close about the open windows. Some of their slides were ajar, letting the bright sunshine slant into the room.

"There was once," I said, "a fool." A smothered exclamation close to my left ear. "A fool, who did everything wrong. He lost his way, his heart, his head, and, last of all, his balance. In that order. Yet he was proud. But then he was only a fool."

"But he was—English," she murmured.

"Yes," I said.

"And there was another fool," said Silvia. "A much bigger one, really, because although she never lost her way or her head or her balance, she lost something much more precious. She lost her temper."

"But not her voice," said I. "And the fools went together to Scotland Yard, and there they found the way and the head and the balance and the temper. But not the heart, Silvia."

"-s. Plural," said Silvia softly.

I opened my near eye and turned my head. The first thing I saw was a rosy arm lying on the edge of my pillow. Within reach.

"I say," I whispered. "Is the bell in this room all right?"

Another story in this series will appear in the next number.





THE ENTHUSIAST.

JONES has had his car slightly altered to enable him to pursue his favourite game while still suffering from the after-effects of influenza.

EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK. THE

OWED TO INFLUENZA.

Here as I lie immured in bed, The thrall of influenza, The frying fishes in my head Perform a neat cadenza.

And so I sniffle and inhale Beneath a towel by stealth; That towel's a veil of much avail, Let's hope a vale of health.

My temperature distempers me, My medicine lifts my hair; But like a schoolboy, over-knee, I have to grin and-bare!

But yet I have my compensation, Oh, yes! Oh, oh! Oh, ah! At influenza's inspiration

I twang the gay catarrh!

Wallace Bertram Nichols.

A CERTAIN reigning monarch was being entertained at a private luncheon recently, when the tiny daughter of the hostess, being spoken to by His Majesty, responded politely and lisped : "I think Your Majesty ith a very remarkable man."

The King smiled and asked kindly: "Why do you say that, my dear?"

"Becauth mamma told me to," was the unexpected reply.



THE young girl was visiting her old school friend for the first time after her marriage.

"And does your husband give you all the money you want?" she asked. "Why, no, dear. But then I don't suppose

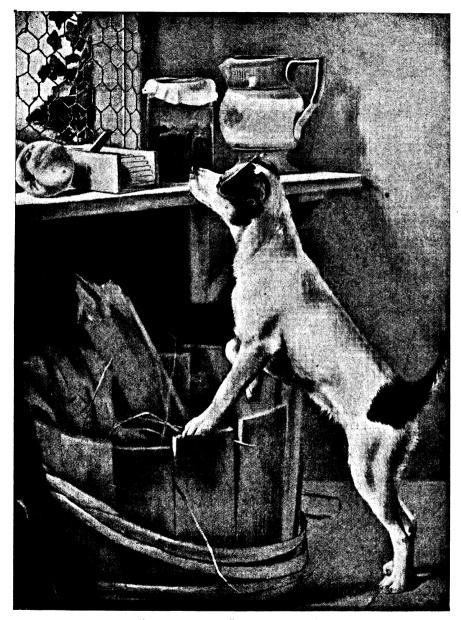
there is as much money as that."

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A DARK STORY. By Dorothy Marsh.

THEOPHILUS PRATT was an Anti—an Anti of Anti's long before Upper Trapton groaned under broken window-panes and burnt letters. and the police, formed diabolical plans for circumventing these female fiends — as he called them — and altogether 'made himself rather more of a nuisance than usual.

"Mark my words," he said to his house-



"A WARM CORNER." BY C. H. BLAIR.

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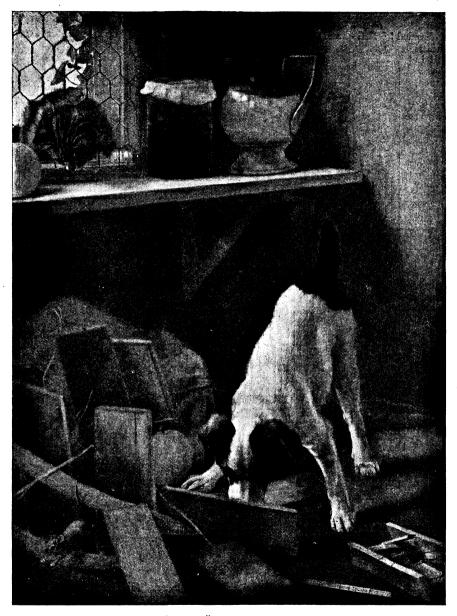
Therefore his frame of mind can be imagined by the time these outrages were acknowledged facts.

He fumed and swore, wrote to the papers

keeper one morning, "they'll do it once too often. Let them try my pillar-box, that's all!" And he scowled darkly.

The box thus honoured by his patronage

stood just outside his front gate, and on it at all suspicious hours he kept a close watch. Each white-capped maid, each elderly dowager, each girl-child in short frocks, he viewed with a deep distrust. He was, by the way, employed whole thing, and would have turned his attention to the protection of golf greens, only he hated golfers almost as much as Suffragettes, when one dark night things began to move.



"FOILED." BY C. H. BLAIR.

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in a Government office, so had plenty of time to spare for his operations. Nothing happened.

He was beginning to get rather sick of the

From his post under the laurel bush, where, his feet muffled in bed socks to induce a snakelike tread, he was rather uncomfortably crouched, he saw two females approaching. They loitered, threw glances up and down the road, hurriedly scuttled up a side street when a policeman came round the corner, but a few minutes later cautiously reappeared. They came up to the pillar-box, and under the gas-lamp stood revealed—two women muffled to the eyes and carrying several mysterious parcels.

"Red - handed ! Red - handed !" breathed The ophilus Theophilus almost wept, but to the station he went, and spent the night there.

Curiously enough, the next day his accuser failed to appear, nor was his name and address to be found in the local directory; but it may be noted that Theophilus Pratt was an unpopular man in Upper Trapton. He was acquitted, but his reputation as an Anti was gone for ever.

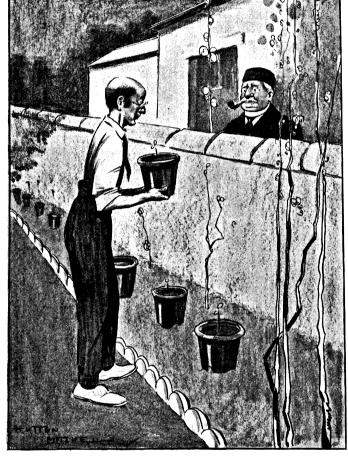
Theophilus to himself in an ecstasy. "But I must take them in the very act." "Have you

The watches and the petrol?" The low voice came distinctly through the hedge.

"Yes, and the ink, and the little flag," answered an other deeper one, and almost instantaneously came a sudden fizz and splutter.

"I have caught you, you contemptible miscreants!" roared Theophilus, bursting through the hedge, handcuffs in one hand and dog-whip in the other.

The next moment he was lying on the ground, handcuffed and helpless, and listening to the sound of a policewhistle.



SUBURBAN AMENITIES.

JONES: Well, you and I won't be neighbours much longer. I'm going to live in a better locality.

SMITH: So am I. JONES: What—are you going to move, too? SMITH: No, I'm going to stay here!

"It's a clear case," said the man who was sitting on him when the constable arrived; "I just caught him. Why, he's even wearing a 'Votes for Women' badge! You had better take him along with you, and I'll make the charge in the morning. I can't wait now, but here's my card."

Theophilus foamed, Theophilus shouted,

us one week, and we are satisfied."



"EFFIE," said Margery, who was poring over her first "reader," "how can I tell which is a 'd' and which is a 'b'?"

"That's easy," said Effic wisely. "The 'd' has its stomach on its back."

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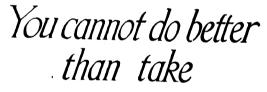
"AND so," said the man who lived in a flat in town, to his friend who had gone to dwell in a certain pleasant suburb, "your next-door neighbour, you say, is a real philanthropist."

"You bet he is," said the suburban enthusiastically. "Why, he's bought ten shillings' worth of flower seeds f or my chickens this spring."

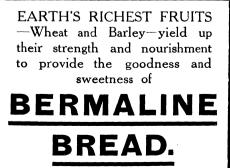
BRIDGET was applying for a place as cook, and, when asked for a reference, presented this note—

"To whom it may concern: This is to certify that Bridget Foley has worked for

Sound Advice.



BEECHAM'S PILLS



Make your daily bread-BERMALINE.



UNLIKELY INTERVIEWS.

By Edgar Vinc Hall.

I. A SCHOOLBOY AND HIS MASTER.

Dear Sir, when I deserved the cane Last night, you let me off again: And though 1 do not love the smart. And your compunction melts my heart. I do not think it good to be Treated with so much leniency. I've read in Juvenal or Martial That punishment must be impartial. And retribution swift and sure. If its effects are to endure. Have I a dozen times inflected Habere wrong? To be corrected Is my desert. If I won't give To potior the genitive, 'Tis only just to your profession To make a permanent impression By sparing not the rod. How oft I've seen a grown man spoiled and soft, Without an ounce of grit or weight, All fluffy and effeminate, Because he never underwent At school his proper punishment. Dear Sir, let me not grow that way, But flog me rather every day; So I shall not be dubbed a fool. But rise an honour to the school.

11. A SCHOOLGIRL AND HER MISTRESS.

Dear Mistress, in a day or two Our annual prize-giving's due, And I these terms have done my best To win more marks than all the rest, So that, not reckoning surprises, I ought to gain at least three prizes. But oh, dear Mistress, 'twill not be At all a happy day for me, If I so many prizes take While others unrewarded ache. Nor should a girl monopolise, However clever, every prize; Both for her own good and her school's, She must not make her fellows fools, Or rob fond parents of the rapture Of seeing their dear children capture Some trophies; therefore, Mistress dear, Give me one prize, and I shall clear Of conscience be, and the hurt pride Of others shall be satisfied; While all in heart and voice agree On our glad anniversary.

III. A MISTRESS AND HER MAID,

Lizzie, how many times a week Must 1 be forced my mind to speak? Was it not only Monday morning 1 gave you full and ample warning That you must really mend your ways, Nor turn your precious nights to days By rising every morn at four? You must not do so any more. If you will rise at 6.15, You'll have sufficient time to clean The kitchen grate, and when it's dirty, To scrub the step, and by 8.30 (You need not work a minute faster) Have breakfast ready for your Master. And when you clean the flues on Friday, I'll help you set the kitchen tidy, And dust the dining-room myself, For I can reach the upper shelf. So do not let me speak again; You know it always gives me pain In any wise to cross your wishes: Now, just run down and wash the dishes.



THE FACTS OF THE CASE.

LADY: What time does the next train go? CLERK: 2.30, mum. LADY: Does it stop at Mugford? CLERK: Yes, mum. LADY: Do I have to change? CLERK: No, mum. LADY: How much is the fare? CLERK: Three-and-nine, mum, and the enginedriver's name is Bill Smith.



SHE was a pretty young schoolmistress, and was reading sentences to her class, letting them supply the last word.

"The sphinx," she read, "has eyes, but it cannot-----"

- "See!" cried the children.
- "Has ears, but it cannot----"
- "Hear!" they responded.
- "Has a mouth, but it cannot-----"
- "Eat!" came the chorus.
- "Has a nose, but it cannot-
- "Wipe it!" thundered the class.

THE CURE OF CONSUMPTION ASTHMA, BRONCHITIS, AND NASAL CATARRH. DR. EDWIN W. ALABONE'S TREATMENT.

EVIDENCE OF ITS SUCCESS.

An abundance of proof exists to show that, by the use of the special inhalation treatment promulgated by Dr. Edwin W. Alabone, it is possible to effect an absolute cure in the great majority of cases of persons suffering from that terrible disease consumption, which makes such appalling ravages throughout the kingdom. Unsolicited testimonials have been received from hundreds of restored patients, residing in all parts of the country, and they have gladly furnished particulars of the remarkable cures effected in their own cases by its means, thus establishing beyond every possibility of doubt the fact that consumption—the great national scourge—is capable of being overcome.

Owing to the numerous unsuccessful attempts which have been made in the past to discover an effectual remedy for tuberculosis, the dogma of the incurability of phthisis still remains deeply rooted in the minds of the public, but, as we are glad to see, there are unmistakable signs that knowledge in regard to the curative value of the treatment under consideration is steadily increasing, and there is at the present time hardly any part of the civilised world where the results of Dr. Alabone's treatment have not been attested to. This is shown by the letters which have been received from cured patients dwelling *outside* the United Kingdom.

One of the chief means by which the knowledge of the intrinsic value of this treatment is scattered broadcast is through those persons who were formerly consumptive, and who fully realise that their lives were saved by its adoption, telling others so that they, too, might experience the same permanent benefits. Relatives and friends who have seen patients before and after the use of the treatment have been able to fully appreciate the great change for the better; the patients have in a most remarkable manner been transformed from a state of living death into sound health, and, upon careful examination, both by Dr. Alabone and other consultants, it has been found that all traces of the disease had disappeared.

It was never claimed by Dr. Alabone that his treatment for consumption is infallible; some cases may not recover, and this is not to be wondered at seeing that most of his patients start the treatment at a point in their illness when, after having tried every other, including the open air, their cases have been pronounced as hopeless. There should be no procrastination in cases of consumption; it is always wise to act promptly, as the disease is a particularly deceptive one, and not infrequently when patients are thought to be improving they are in reality becoming worse.

As a matter of fact, thousands of persons who were formerly victims of the disease owe their complete return to good health to this treatment, and any sufferer from phthisis who elects to try it may rest assured that he has wisely chosen, and that he will have the best possible chance at present known of completely recovering from the malady.

There are to-day a large number of physicians who possess the fullest confidence in it, and who regard it as their bounden duty to recommend it to their consumptive patients. The following letters constitute further proof, if more be needed, of its immense value to sufferers :--

Herts, November 21st, 1913.

Dear Sir,—It is with great pleasure I am able to write and thank you for the great benefit I have received from your treatment.

After being ill for two months I entered a sanatorium for three months, and at the end of that period I was discharged as incurable, and only given three weeks to live, having lost considerable weight and having a high temperature, respectively 102 and 103, and night sweats, and being unable to walk without help.

As a final resource I adopted your treatment, and was surprised what benefit I derived from the first. I began to gradually put on weight and get stronger each week, till I was able to walk about anywhere, and am now feeling my old self again, and have been married and still enjoy good health.

I think your treatment marvellous when I think of the condition I was in when I left the sanatorium, and it will give me great pleasure to recommend your treatment whenever an opportunity occurs.

Again thanking you for the benefits I have received.—Believeme, I remain, yours truly, E.L.

Bristol, November 24th, 1913.

Dear Sir,--I am writing to thank you for the benefit I have received from your treatment. When I came to you I was suffering from catarrh of the lungs following upon laryngitis. After persevering with the treatment for six months my doctor has declared, upon examination, that no symptoms of any chest trouble remain, and that as far as can be ascertained I am completely cured. It will give me great pleasure to recommend your splendid treatment.—I am, yours truly, (Signed) A. G.

An immense number of similar cases could be mentioned did the space at our disposal admit of our doing so, but our readers will find any particulars they wish to obtain in the following works by Dr. Alabone :

"The Cure of Consumption, Asthma, Bronchitis, and Other Diseases of the Chest," by Edwin W. Alabone, M.D.Phil., D.Sc., ex-M.R.C.S. Eng., illustrated by numerous cases pronounced INCURABLE by the most eminent physicians, 47th edition, 171st thousand. Price 2s. 6d., post free. Obtainable from Lynton House, Highbury Quadrant, London, N. Other works by the same author: "Testimonies of Patients, with Comments on Open-Air Treatment," price 1s.; "Facts Regarding the Open-Air Treatment," price 1s.

THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE.



PUTTING IT OFF.

"Don'r go yet, auntie."

"But, dear, I must. I am sure it is very nice of you to want me to stop.'

"Oh, it isn't that, but father said he was going to give me a good hiding as soon as you had gone.

THE HUSBAND'S FRIEND.

By Charles D. Leslie,

I was exercising Toto in Kensington Gardens. A sulky handful of long silky hair, with a black nose protruding from one end, he trailed after me at the extremity of the lead. He looked even smaller than usual, and he hadn't barked once since we came out. Toto and I were in unison on one point—that the present pro-ceeding was a huge bore; but while I was borne up by the knowledge I was obliging a relative, he had no such consolation.

" That's a nice little Yorkshire, sir."

A sleek, clean-shaven man of indeterminate age ranged up to me and cast an appraising eye on my canine charge.

"He's not for sale," I said.

"I quite understand that, sir. 'E's a lady's pet, I ken see. Your good lady's, sir?"

With an irony that was quite wasted, I told him I was not married, that Toto's mistress was my first cousin on my mother's side. "'As she an 'usband?" he asked eagerly and

earnestly.

"No, con-found your impudence!"

"No offence, sir, no offence. If she 'ad, I could 'ave done 'im a good turn, that's all. Do you 'appen to have a married gentleman friend whose wife keeps a lap dog? If you 'ave, you might give 'im my card. 'E'll thank you.''

Curiosity quenching resentment, I took the pasteboard he proffered and read-

Mr. Henry Hawkins,

The Mews.

Porthos Crescent, S.W.

"I'm known as the 'usband's friend, sir," its owner stated.

"Well?" I asked, looking inquiringly at him. "Well," he repeated, "'aven't you noticed the number o' ladies what keeps lap dogs nowadays? It's a fashion. It uster be only old maids what kept lap dogs an' spoiled 'em; now it's old ladies an' young ladies an' married ladies also, them as 'as children and them as 'asn't. They will 'ave a little dog, an' they call it 'muvver's darling,' an' make fools o' themselves over it, an' their 'usbands can't stick it—the dog, I mean--an' they'd pay good money, lots of 'em, to get it out o' the ouse. That's where I comes in."

"You don't poison them?" I said, shocked. "Bless you, no, sir. Why, I'd as soon poison my old woman as a dog! No, I steals the dog with the 'usband's conwivance, an' finds an 'appy 'ome for it with an old maid 'oo can fuss over it without upsetting 'er 'usband, 'cos she 'asn't got one,'

"I see. What are your terms?"

"Oh, a mere trifle, sir. 'Bout a couple o' quid down, 'alf-a-crown a week to follow. Gents don't like to be stuck for a fiver or so, with the dog coming back, maybe, in the end. Sometimes the new owner reads the advertisement an' guesses she's got the lost dog. No. I takes the dog away for a trifle, an' once a month I meets the 'usband accidental like an' touches me 'at, an' 'e 'and's me 'alf a thick 'un. It's worth it to 'im to be rid o' the dog -ladies is usually very faithful, an' don't replace 'em for months an' months, if ever-an'



"JUST FANCY !"

"Yus, 'e might as well say 'Fancy Tom Evans draper.' I remember the time when 'e used to 'elp 'is father sell whelks on a barrow !"



SK YOUR GROCER for the Coupon that counts as five white squares and explains how you can get a Free Cooker at once. It also gives full details of Cash Prizes.

There is yet time to go in for the great Quaker Oats Cash Prize Competition and also to secure one of the Famous Quaker Oats Quick-heating Cookers FREE. Particulars in every packet of



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14/3

to me it's a small annooity. I've got ten gents on my list at present, an' I've only been six months at the job, an' reckon to double 'em by the end o' the year."

" And if they don't pay?"

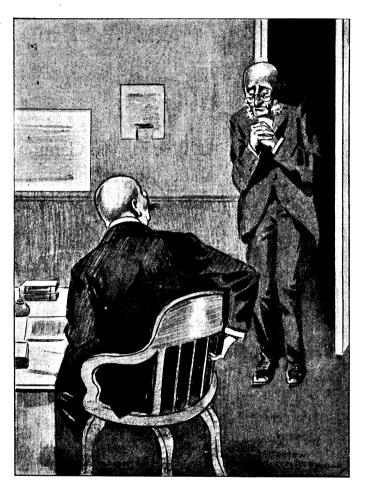
"Then the dog comes back, sir, an' I pockets the reward. Excuse me, sir.

He sidled up to an elderly gentleman evidently straight from the City, and walking the last stage home. I saw his eyebrows go

"Clara? Yes, and two children. She was devoted to Mignon. . . . You must know her husband—he's the K.C."

"Oh, that Casselis," I said. "He's frightfully rich," I mused aloud. "I wonder if he'd pay me also half a thick 'un to keep my mouth

shut? It might be worth trying." But, fortunately, Toto, recognising I was leaving, set up so furious a barking that I was not asked to explain what I meant.



TOO LONG.

BOOK-KEEPER: Smithsons refuse to forward the goods until the last consignment is paid for, sir. Тне FIRM: We can't wait that long; cancel the order and give

some other firm the preference.

up; and a slight smile crease his cheeks as he recognised Mr. Hawkins. His fingers went to his waistcoat pocket. I caught the gleam of gold changing hands.

"I'm quite relieved to see Toto safely back," said my cousin; "there are dog-stealers about. Clara Časselis has been calling, and she tells me her darling little Pom was stolen last week.'

"'As she—I mean, has she a husband?" I asked.

"I HEARD that you were going to marry Gerald Wilkins. Is it true?" asked one young woman of another.

"Marry him! I should say not! Why, I wouldn't know what to do with him! He can't ride, play tennis, golf, or drive a motor-car!"

"Well," said the friend, "he can swim beautifully, you know."

" But you wouldn't want a husband that you had to keep in an aquarium, would you?'

The Vanity Box

INTERESTING SELECTIONS FROM THE WORLD'S SMARTEST BEAUTY ARTICLES.—SIMPLE RECIPES MOST EFFECTIVE.

HENERE CONTRACTOR

HOW many women exclaim as they behold their ugly complexion in the mirror, "If I could only tear off this old skin!" And, do you know, it is now possible to do that very thing? Not to actually remove the entire skin all of a sudden; that would be too heroic a method, and painful, too, I imagine. The worn-out cuticle comes off in such tiny particles, and so gradually-requiring about ten days to complete the transformation-it doesn't hurt a bit. Day by day the beautiful complexion underneath comes forth. Marvellous ! No matter how muddy, rough, blotchy, or aged your complexion, you can surely discard it by this simple process. Just get some ordinary mercolised wax at your chemists, apply nightly like cold cream, washing it off in the mornings.

* * *

T is easy to remove superfluous hair temporarily, but to remove it permanently is quite another matter. Not many women know that for this purpose such a simple substance as powdered pheminol may be used, applied directly to the hair. The recommended treatment is designed not merely to instantly remove the hair, but also to eventually kill the roots entirely. Almost any chemist could supply an ounce of pheminol, which quantity should be sufficient.

A simple way to quickly neutralize disagreeable body odours is to dust the armpits occasionally with powdered (white) pergol.

* * *

 Υ WAS much interested to learn from this young woman with the beautiful glossy hair that she never washes it with soap or artificial shampoo powders. Instead she makes her own shampoo by dissolving a teaspoonful of stallax granules in a cup of hot water. "I make my chemist get the stallax for me," said she. "It comes only in $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. sealed packages, enough to make up twenty-five or thirty individual shampoos, and it smells so good I could almost eat it." Certainly this little lady's hair did look wonderful, even if she has strange ideas of a shampoo. I am tempted to try the plan myself.

HOW often one hears the lament, "I have tried everything on the market, and my hair comes out in handfuls." Not so surprising either when you come to think it over. Hair tonics to be effective must be fresh, and there is no earthly reason why every woman should not make her own lotion at home. The finest vegetable tonic I know of is made by mixing a packet of boranium with $\frac{1}{4}$ pint of bay rum, and adding sufficient water to fill a half-pint bottle. This lotion rubbed briskly into the scalp sets the hair roots tingling with new life, and will, if persevered with, give you back your "crowning glory."

 ΥS powder_necessary ? I say emphatically, No! There is a simple lotion which can be easily and cheaply made at home; and it is at the same time both effective and beneficial to the complexion. Cleminite is a splendid substitute for face powder, which is at the bottom of many complexion troubles. Get about an ounce from the chemists and dissolve in four tablespoonfuls of water. The result is a fine, clear liquid, which instantly gives the face, neck, or arms that peach-like bloom of perfect health. There is nothing to equal it for greasy skins, and the result lasts all day long under the most trying conditions. Try it for the next dance.

THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE.

WITHOUT PURE BLOOD HEALTH IS IMPOSSIBLE. BLOOD MEDICINE

Never before was there anything like it, nor are its marvellous properties likely ever to be equalled in all cases of poorness, impurity, or other imperfection of the blood, from whatever cause arising. No sooner is it imbibed into the system than it permeates and penetrates to the minutest capillaries, overcoming and expelling disease, wheresoever and in whatsoever form met with; removing all blotches, pimples, scurf, scury, scrofulous and glandular swellings, discolorations, roughness, and unsightly patches, &c. Its effects are almost magical in the treatment of gout, rheumatism, sciatica, lumbago, pains and swellings of the joints, blood poison, eczema, lepra, psoriasis, bad legs, bad breasts, abscesses, ulcers, wounds, sores, goitre or Derbyshire neck; it inproves the general health, and quickly removes long-standing bronchitis, asthma, and hacking, straining, spasmodic cough, too often the precursor of consumption.

BRAIN AND NERVE FOOD. VETARZO

fuller particulars.

Send stamped addressed envelope for FREE Booklet, or P.O. 2/9 for Trial Bottle of either remedy, to THE VETARZO REMEDIES CO., GOSPEL OAK, LONDON. Unprincipled vendors may try to sell you something else for extra profit-do not accept it, but insist on having VETARZO. The genuine has the words "VETARZO REMEDIES" on Government Stamp. Registered Trade Mark, "VETARZO." VETARZO REMEDIES ARE SOLD BY BOOTS', AND LEADING CASH CHEMISTS.

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supero ngares, perfect nearth, and matchless to "Diano." Do you feel yourself deficient as to a plump, well-rounded figure? Is your bust measurement all that you desire? Are there hollow places above and below your collarbone? Whatever you may lack in the way of perfect form or figure Nature will supply for you if you use the "Diano" method. A new beauty book, showing photos from life of many prominent society ladies who have used this safe, sure, and rapid method, sent free in plain sealed wrapper. Write to-day, enclosing stamp to pay postage, to Lady Manager, S. E. Espanola Medicine Co. (Dept. 237), 205, Regent Street, London, W.

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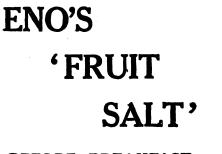
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Reproduced from the original in the Guildhall Art Gallery, by permission of the Corporation of London. "A CHAT ROUND THE BRASERO." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A.



THE ORDER OF THE BATH

By DORNFORD YATES

Illustrated by G. C. Wilmshurst

BERRY blotted the letter with maddening precision. Then he picked it up tenderly and handed it to me.

" How will that do?"

"Read it aloud," said Daphne.

I did so.

"Dear Sir,—In the interests of personal cleanliness we have—not without considerable hesitation—decided to instal a third bathroom at our historic home, White Ladies. This decision will necessitate the loss or conversion of one of the dressing-rooms—a fact which fills us with the gravest misgivings, since there are only eleven in the whole mansion. At the same time the conventions of a prudish age make it undesirable that a second bath should be installed in one of the rooms already existing for that purpose. We think the fourth room on your right, as you leave the back stairs, going south. This is locally known as the Green Room, and takes its name, not, as you may imagine, from the fact that the late Mr. Garrick once slept there, but from the hue of the rodents said there frequently to have been observed by the fourth Earl. Please execute the work

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1914. No. 233.

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with your customary diligence. We should like to pay on the hire system—*i.e.*, so much a month, extending over a period of two years. The great strides recently made in the perilous att of aviation suggest to us that the windows should be of ground glass. Yours faithfully, etc. P.S.—If your men drop the bath on the stairs, the second footman will at once apply for a warrant for their arrest."

Jill buried her face in the sofa cushions and gave way to 'unrestrained merriment. Jonah laughed openly. I set my teeth and tried not to smile. For an instant the corners of Daphne's mouth twitched; then—

"Wretched ass !" she said.

"The truth is," said her husband, "you don't know literature when you see it. Now, that letter_____"

"I suppose I shall have to write to the man," said I.

"There you are," said Berry; "insults at every turn. I was about to say that I regarded that letter as one of the brightest jewels in an already crowded diadem."

"Give me the writing-block," I said shortly, producing my fountain pen. I turned to Daphne. "What sort of a bath d'you want?"

"Porcelain enamel they call it, don't they?" she replied vaguely, subjecting a box of chocolates to a searching crossexamination.

Berry rose to his feet and cleared his throat; then he sang lustily—

"What of the bath? The bath was made of porcelain, Of true ware, of good ware— The ware that won't come off."

A large cushion sailed into his face. As it fell to the ground, Berry seized it and held it at arm's length.

"Ha!" he said rapturously. "A floral tribute; they recognise my talent."

"Not at all," said Jonah. "I only threw that because the dead cats haven't come."

"Exactly," said I. "We all know you ought to be understudying at the Hoxton Empire, but that's no reason why we should be subjected ——."

"Did you notice the remarkable compass of my voice?" said Berry, sinking into a chair.

"I did," said I. "I should box it if I were you, brother; bottle it, if you prefer." "Poor fool!" said my brother-in-law.

"Poor fool!" said my brother-in-law. "For the trumpet notes to which it has just been your privilege to listen, there is a great future ; in short, my voice is futurist. The moment they hear it, the few who have paid for their seats will realise what the box office will say when they demand the return of their money."

"And those who have not paid ?" said I.

"Oh, they will understand why they were given tickets."

"Suppose you write that letter?" said Daphne wearily

I bent over the writing-block.

"You know," said Berry, "I don't think this bath's at all necessary."

At this there was a great uproar. At length—

"Besides," said my sister, "we all decided that we must have another bath ages ago. The only question there's ever been was where to put it."

" Of course," said I. " If we don't, where are we going to dip the sheep?"

"Well, I think it's a shame to pull the old place about like this. If we're so awfully dirty, we'd better find another house that's got three bathrooms already, and sell White Ladies."

"Sell White Ladies?" cried Jill.

Berry nodded.

"Not only lock and stock, but barrel too. Yes," he added bitterly, "the old water-butt must go."

"Look here," said I. "It occurs to me that this isn't a case for a letter. We ought to go and choose a bath properly."

"That's rather an idea," said Daphne.

"Simply sparkling," said her husband. "Personally, I've got something better to do than to burst down to South London, and stagger round floor after floor staring at baths."

"You needn't worry," said Daphne coolly. "I wouldn't go with you for a hundred pounds."

Berry turned to us others.

"Yet we love one another," he said, with a leer in his wife's direction. "In reality I am the light of her eyes. The acetylene gas, as it were, of her existence. Well, well." He rose and stretched himself. "I wash my hands of the whole matter. Note the appropriate simile. Instal what cistern you please. If approached properly, I may consent to test the work when complete. Mind you spare no expense."

"We don't propose to," said Daphne.

Berry regarded her sorrowfully.

"I suppose," he said, "I suppose you know what word will be found at the postmortem graven upon my heart?" "What?" said Daphne, stifling a yawn. "'Plunge.'"

It was quite a good day to choose a bath. True, it was winter. But then the sun was shining out of a clear blue sky, there was a rare freshness in the London air, and beneath me-for I was crossing Westminster Bridge -old Thames marched all a-glitter. watched his passage gratefully. It was that of a never-ending band. Playing all the way, too, but silently. Yet the music was The pity was that one could not there. hear it. The pomp, the swagger, the swing of the Guards, the shifting movement, the bright array—all these were unmistakable. The very lilt of the air made itself felt. Very cheery. Certainly the river was en fête.

It had been arranged that the selection of an appropriate bath should be made by Daphne, Jonah, and me. When I came down to breakfast to find that Jonah had already left for Huntercombe, I was more hurt than surprised. But when Daphne appeared during the marmalade clad in a new riding habit, I made haste to empty my mouth.

"You can't ride there," I said. "The traffic's too heavy. Besides, the tramlines......"

"You don't want me, old chap," said my sister, stooping to lay her soft cheek against mine as she passed to her place.

I drank some coffee with an injured air. Then---

"This," I said, "is low down, not nice. I don't like it in you. It argues——"

"The confidence we repose in your judgment," said Daphne.

"Yes, brother,"said Berry, looking up from a newspaper. "The bath dressing-gown has fallen upon your rounded shoulders. Ill though it becomes you, I trust that——"

"Enough," said I. "Alone I will select a bath. Doubtless you will all deplore my choice as bitterly as you will fight with one another for the privilege of using it. However, when I am dead, you will regret—"

"No, we shan't," said my brother-in-law. "We shall just bury you under another name and try to keep the obituary notices out of the papers."

I sat back in my chair and frowned.

"Be good enough to pass the rolls," said I. "You've only had four," said Berry, pushing them across. "Mind you get a good lunch at Lambeth. I'm told they do you very well at 'The Three Balls.'" "When I'm choosing a bath," said I, "I always lunch at 'The Rising Spray.""

And now, here I was, afoot upon Westminster Bridge, bound for the warehouse of the firm we proposed to honour with our patronage.

I passed on into the roar of the crowded streets, and a quarter of an hour later I reached the place I sought.

Almost immediately the office-boy took me for a commercial traveller and refused point-blank to announce my arrival. I told him that I had an appointment.

"Yes," he said pleasantly. "They all as."

"Friend," said I, "I see that you are bent on gaining the feathered fowl. In other words, if I am kept waiting much longer, you'll get the bird."

"I don't think," he replied somewhat uneasily.

"That," said I, "is what I complain of."

I seated myself on a table and lighted a cigarette. Then, "I wonder how he'll like his new place," I said, apostrophising the skylight.

A pause. Then, " Of co'rse the guv'nor might be in," said the youth. "Yer never knows."

"Speak for yourself," said I. "At the same time you appear to be doing what you conceive to be your duty. And for those who do their duty there is always a shilling in the left-hand trouser pock——"

But the boy was half-way upstairs. I had proved my identity.

Five minutes later one of the partners was conducting me in the direction of the baths.

Now, he had twice begged me to be careful not to hit my head, for he had led me through divers dark, low-pitched corridors, especially divers. I remembered his warning about a fifth of a second too late.

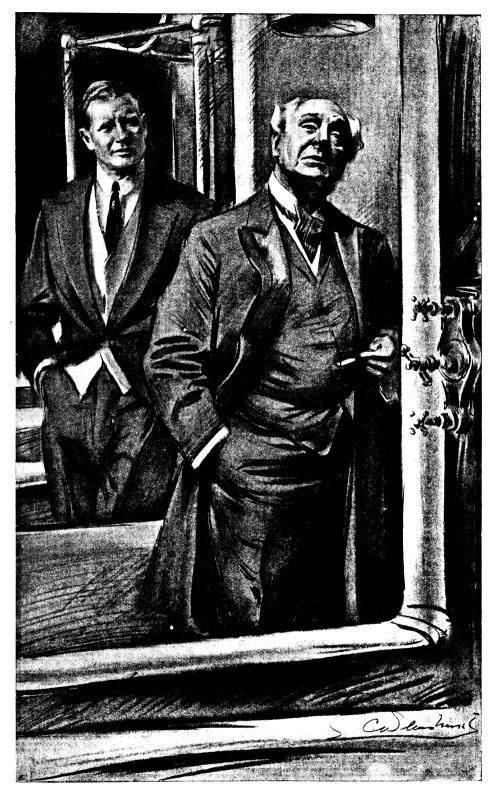
When we at length emerged again into the broad light of day, I contemplated my new bowler in some annoyance. It was bashed in properly. A large dent—in shape somewhat resembling the Empire of India leered at me, its edges generously defined with whitewash. Very trying.

My good host was greatly concerned, and begged to be allowed to take the damaged headgear away and have it brushed. After a little I consented, promising to walk round and look at the baths while he was gone. The next moment he had disappeared.

I laid my stick and gloves on a glasstopped table and looked about me. Never before had I seen so many baths gathered



"To our great joy, the excellent partner actually climbed into



a bath, the more satisfactorily to emphasise its advantages."

together. Large and small, deep and shallow, normal and abnormal, they stood orderly in long lines. The more elaborate ones, fitted with screens and showers, douches, etc., stood a little apart upon a baize-covered dais, bright with their glistening pipes and rows of taps. And in an alcove, all glorious, electric light burning above its gold-lacquered fittings, reposed the bath of baths, a veritable monarch, with his attendant basin, marbletopped table, gilded towel-rails, etc., etc.

Attracted by the aristocracy upon the dais, I was proceeding to stroll humbly in their direction when I heard the sound of footsteps. The next moment a girl stepped lightly between great sliding iron doors, which led obviously from an adjoining chamber on the same floor.

Very smart she was, in a blue cloth dress, with a fine ermine stole about her neck, and a great muff. The rake of her bent straw hat was exquisite. Save that she was fair, and that her feet flashed as she walked, I could see little more.

For a moment the new-comer hesitated, looking about her. Then she came towards me.

"Oh," she said, "I want to choose a bath."

For an instant I looked at her. Then I remembered that I was hatless, stickless, gloveless.

I bowed.

"Certainly, madam. What sort of bath do you require ?"

She was looking at me now—narrowly, rather. Quickly she swung round and glanced about the great hall. Then she spoke, somewhat uneasily.

"Er—if you would show me some baths with showers and things, please."

"With pleasure, madam. Will you come this way?"

I preceded her in the direction of the great ones.

"Now, this," I said, laying my hand familiarly on the smooth edge of one of the grandes dames, "this is 'The Duchess.' Very popular, madam. She may not exactly figure in Society, but I can assure you that every morning half Society figures in her." I glanced at the girl to see an amused smile struggling with grave suspicion in her eyes. I went on hurriedly. "We've been selling a great number lately."

"Have you?" she said slowly.

"Yes, indeed, madam. Only this morning we received an order for fourteen from Madagascar." I turned to another patrician. "Here, again, is a first-class bath—'The Nobleman.' A great feature is the glass screen. The enamel, too, is of the very best quality. Nickel-plated fittings, stream line body, detachable whee—er—that is, the waste also is constructed on a most ingenious principle; we call it the 'Want Not' pattern."

"Ah," she said quietly. "And what's the price of this—er—paragon?"

I glanced at the ticket, knitting my brows.

"Well, it's listed at 'AWK/-,' but to you, madam, the price is____"

I looked at her, smiling.

"Yes?" she said, with her grey eyes on mine. Her eyebrows were raised a little, and the soft lips had taken on the curve that tells of laughter hardly controlled.

"Another look like that," said I, "and I'll give it you and pay the carriage."

She broke into a long ripple of delight. Then she took her seat upon "The Nobleman's" broad edge and regarded me mischievously.

"I think you ought to apologise," she said severely.

"Who took me for a salesman?" said I.

"I never did that. You see, I've been looking at basins over there "—she pointed in the direction of the iron doors—"and they said if I came through here, I should find one of the partners. Besides, I wasn't a bit sure when I first spoke, but as you had no hat . . . And then you led me on. Still, I beg your pardon."

"Not at all. The partner's a very nice chap. And the mischief is reparable. I mean------"

"Where is the partner?"

"At the present moment I believe he's engaged in trying to efface the Indian Empire. Bit of a Socialist, you know," I added. "May I smoke?"

"What do you mean?"

"Doesn't she know the word? Smoke, my dear. Draw into and expel from the mouth the fumes of burning tobac----"

"Idiot! About the Little Englander."

I explained.

"And now," I said, with a wave of my cigarette, "behold me once more at your service. The gentle art of bathing, madam, is of considerable antiquity. In classical times the bath played a very prominent part in the everyday existence of the cleanly nut. Then came a dead period in the history of personal irrigation. Recently, however, the bath-rate has once more gone up, immersion is again in vogue, and to-day in the best circles scarcely a month passes without----"

"And these"—she swept the nobility with a glance—"are the upper ten?"

"Precisely. You can tell that from their polish."

"Rather exclusive, aren't they?"

"Collectively, yes, madam. Individually, they will receive you with open arms. Only last night an order arrived from—"

"I know. Madagascar. You're no good as a salesman."

I drew myself up.

"-from Honolulu, for twenty - two 'Godsends,'" I said icily. "Madagascar's request was for 'Duchesses.' That over there is a 'Wallsen-'I mean 'Godsend.'"

"And I suppose you've supplied Cochin China for years?"

"One of our oldest clients," said I.

"You know," said she, "when I look round, I feel as if I had never seen a bath before."

"I know. I felt just like that at first. And yet I have," I added thoughtfully. "They had one at a hotel I stayed at last Easter. At Biarritz that was."

"I wish you'd be serious," she said, laughing, "Then you might be of some use."

"I don't think you're at all kind," said I, leaning against the screen of "The Duchess" with a dejected air.

"Excuse me," she said, "but is that the Slinker Slouch I've heard of? Your attitude, I mean."

"No," I said shortly. "It's the Leicester Lounge. But to return to your unkindness. I want a bath just as much as you do." She recoiled. "You know what I mean. I'm a customer, like you. We're both in the same ba—boat. And I have been doing my best to indicate the merits of—er—of—___"

"The idle rich," she said, smiling. "Yes, but you see you shouldn't have. When you saw me coming, you ought to have——."

"Dodged behind a pillar, picked up my stick and gloves, and kept about ten bathlengths away, until the partner reappeared? No doubt. But then you shouldn't have looked so priceless, or worn your sense of humour on your sleeve. You shouldn't have had a small straight nose or a mouth like a red flower. You shouldn't have walked like a thoroughbred, or carried your clothes as if they were worth wearing. You shouldn't have had eyes I could see to read by if the light failed."

" Finished ? "

"No. But listen. I think I hear the partner coming—the genuine article this time." There was no sound. "Anyway," I went on, "he'll be back in a moment; and so, as I'm afraid I didn't consider you just now, I'll try and make up for it. Good-bye."

"But what about your bath? Have you seen one you like?"

"Yes," said I, "I have. One. Not a bath, though. But I can easily come another day."

I turned resolutely away.

"I say," said the girl quietly.

I swung round and looked at her. She still sat upon the edge of "The Nobleman," her little gloved hands gripping the rim on either side of her. Her face was raised a little, but she was looking down. One slight foot thrust out from under her blue frock, its dainty instep gleaming under the silk stocking. The ankle above it, very slender; the buckled shoe literally beaming with pride.

"Yes?" I said.

"I haven't seen a *bath* I like, either," she said simply.

At this moment the partner came bustling back, full of apologies. Stifling a desire to strangle him, I congratulated the good man upon the condition of my hat, and turned to the girl.

"Then, as we both want to see some baths, perhaps we might look at some together?" I said.

"I think so."

"If you please, madam," said the partner, He turned to "The Duchess." "Now, this is a first-class bath. One of our very latest models. Only this morning we received an order from Ceylon——"

Fortunately we were both a little behind him.

* *

No one can say that we did not weigh the merits of the various baths carefully. We passed from one to another, asking questions, receiving information, examining, criticising, discussing for over an hour. Four times, to our great joy, the excellent partner actually climbed into a bath, the more satisfactorily to emphasise its advantages. As he sat there, faithfully reproducing the various movements of the arms, universally, I suppose, employed in the process of ablution, the living picture which he presented put an obviously severe strain upon the gravity of my companion. And when, in response to a daringly ingenuous thirst for intelligence on my part, he proceeded to demonstrate the comparative ease with which a left-handed bather suffering from sciatica could manipulate the taps from the wrong end of the bath, the girl hurriedly sought the shelter of a convenient pillar to hide her open merriment. We had a great time.

Finally, we each gave an order for a "Pompadour," which seemed, on the whole, to merit the palm. It was certainly the last word in the bath line.

While she was giving her name and the address of the home which her new bath was to adorn, I strolled a little apart, thinking. When she had finished, the partner turned to me.

"I think I have the address, sir. The same as before?"

"That's right," said I. "I'm going down there on Tuesday. Could you send a man down that day to see the room and take the measurements? I'd like to be there myself."

" Certainly, sir."

"Very well. He'd better come by the nine-thirty, which'll get him down in two hours. I'll send to meet him. I'm going down by car myself."

He broke off. She and I were staring at one another. Then—

"How awfully strange!" we said in unison. The partner being there, there was no more to be said.

"Tuesday will do very well," she said, turning to him.

Together he conducted us to the street. Then, might he send for a taxi? There was a rank... The idea of sending for two taxis never seemed to enter his head. A good fellow, that partner. But, no, thank you, my lady would walk, would pick up a cab presently.

"May I have the pleasure of seeing you to a taxi?" said I, naturally enough.

"Thank you very much."

We bade the partner good-bye and turned in the direction of Westminster.

"You're sure it's not taking you out of your way?" said my companion, with an innocent look.

"Out of my way," said I. "D'you think I live at Tooting?"

She broke into a little laugh. I went on-"And if I did-if I lived at Hither Green, and was just going to miss the last tram, don't you think I'd—er—miss it?"

"You're very kind," she said quietly.

"Not at all," said I, with a glance downward; "the small bright shoe is on the other priceless—er—foot. It's very good of you to let me walk with you, especially in view of my recent scandalous behaviour all among the baths."

"Which reminds me, you were awful. I thought I should die when you asked that poor man----"

"A wholesome thirst for knowledge, my dear. Talking of which, d'you know it's getting on for half-past one?"

" Is it, really ?"

"It is, indeed. Time tears away sometimes, doesn't he?"

"Sometimes."

"You are sweet," said I. "However, about Time. He's a mocker of men, you know—very contrary. When he can serve, not he; when he cannot, he is willing enough. Beg him to hasten, he'll cock his hat and stroll with an air of leisure that makes us dance. Cry him to tarry, he is already gone, the wind panting behind him. Bid him return, he is at once all sympathy grave sympathy. 'He may not; otherwise he would have been so pleased. . . . Sorry.' Rather like my brother-in-law; you'll meet him at White Ladies."

" Is that where the bath's going ?"

"Certainly. We shall be there in the spring. Will you come to our bathwarming?"

" Perhaps."

We came to the bridge and the sunshine and the marching river, and beyond these to Bridge Street and the green square. At the corner she hesitated.

"I think I'd better say good-bye now."

"I'm going to see a fellow," said I. "I wish you'd come with me."

A quick look of surprise ; then --

"Do I know him?"

"I think so; he's one of the Times. Lunch Time he's called; brother of Half Time. Both sons of the Old Man."

She smiled.

"Ah," she said, "I've an appointment with him, too. Only mine's at home. I must be going; I'm keeping him waiting now."

She held out her hand; I looked at it.

"You've made a mistake," I said. "I know for a fact he's going to be at the Carlton."

"No good. I know the family. The father taught them all the trick of being able to be in more than one place at the same time."

"All of them?"

" Yes."

"My dear, you're wrong. You've forgotten Mean. He's got a place at Greenwich, you know, and never leaves it. Well, I won't bother her, for she's been awfully sweet. Shall I call her a taxi?" She nodded. "I don't think we ought to stand here any longer : the atmospheric pressure of the Irish Party is already affecting my breathing. Besides, any moment I might be mistaken for a Cabinet Minister. I know a salesman's pretty bad, but I must draw the line somewhere."

With that I hailed a taxi; as it was coming to the kerb—

"You're a dear C.B.," I said. "But I would have loved to give you lunch."

She smiled gently.

"Would you ?"

"You know I would, lass. Well, I shall look forward to you and the spring."

The cab drew up and I opened the door. She stepped in.

"Where shall I tell him to go?"

For a moment she hesitated. Then she spoke slowly.

"Was it the Carlton you said?"

* * * *

An hour later I stood once more at a taxi's door. Our luncheon was over and I was saying farewell.

"You've been awfully kind," said the girl.

"Good-bye," said I. "I shall look forward to you at White Ladies."

"And to the spring."

I bowed.

"My dear, the terms are synonymous."

The smile deepened.

" If this wasn't the Haymarket ——— " said I.

She was gone, her eyes full of laughter.

I turned to see Berry three paces away.

"Helping the porter?" he said pleasantly. "I wondered where you got that two shillings from last week. But oughtn't you to be in uniform? I should have thought Nathan's_____"

"I've chosen a bath," I said, seeking to divert his thoughts. After all, he might not have seen. "Fine big place. Stacks of baths, you know. By the way, the officeboy took me for a commercial traveller," I added.

"Naturally. And the girl, whom did she take you for?"

I drew myself up.

"She's a C.B., too," I said loftily. "What more natural than that we should——"

"C.B.," said Berry scornfully; "now, if you had said K.G.—."

I cut him short.

"You needn't tell the others," I said.

A fat grin stole into his face. He sighed.

"The call of duty, brother, however distasteful-----"

"Look here," said I. "You know those new cigars at the club?"

"Yes," he said eagerly; "the half-a-crown ones."

"They're not new," I said uneasily.

"Never mind," he said airily, taking my arm. "I feel sure a half-a-crown cigar would affect my memory, and a dry Martini would probably finish it."

I groaned.

"This is sheer blackmail," said I.

"Take it or leave it," said Berry, with the air of one who has the whip-hand.

"All right," I said wearily.

"I should think so, my son; and cheap at the price, too."

On the whole, I think it was.

SHADOW-PLAY.

THE songs of birds, the scents of flowers,

The lustre shimmering in the dew,

These, in how many radiant hours,

Have cleansed the world's worn soul anew!

There is no teaching in these things,

Careless they are, and fair and free,

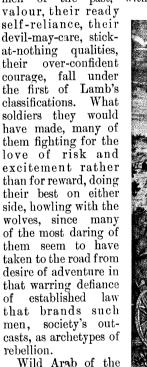
Being neither dreamers, slaves nor kings,

But symbol-puppets . . . just as we.

THE HIGHWAYMAN IN TRADITION AND IN FACT

By G. F. MOWBRAY.

C HARLES LAMB asserted that the human species was composed of two distinct races—the men who borrow and the men who lend. The highwaymen of the past, with their distorted of hero. But this transition was made the easier for him by the class-hatred of the poor for the rich, which delighted to see pluck triumph over property, and by consequently perverted ideas as to the rights of property, such as have survived



Wild Arab of the road, the robber has existed from all time. We have record of him hundreds of years before the Christian Era. Since then, India, Palestine, Hungary,

Tuscany, Greece, Germany, Spain, Italy, and France have rung with stories of his exploits; yet in England, with, perhaps, the exception of that traditional prince of outlaws, Robin Hood, it was not until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that the daring of the deeds of the mere roadside robber lifted him from the position of malefactor to that in it gave him support from the humbler folk which often enabled him to escape capture and to cover up his tracks when evading the many dangers incidental to his lawless career. By cultivating popularity with the classes which were not worth despoiling, he practically enrolled valuable allies for his marauding attacks on their wealthier neighbours.



into our own time more definitely in the domain of poaching, and the widespread resentment of all legal measures against it. At any rate, from the days identified with the traditional heroism of Robin Hood, the highwayman who was bold enough to become a hero of the road, as distinct from a mere sordid robber. did so largely by realising the qualities ascribed by an old ballad to John Nevison, of whom it declared :---

He maintained himself like _ a gentleman ;

Besides, he was good to the poor; He rode about like a bold

hero, And gained himself

favour therefor.

And it is easy to see how well it paid the highway robber who had sufficient resource and address to adopt such a $r \delta l_{\theta}$, for success

CAPTAIN HIND (1618-1652), WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY ATTACKED OLIVER CROMWELL, "THE LORD PRO-

TECTOR," ROBBING COLONEL HARRISON IN MAIDENHEAD

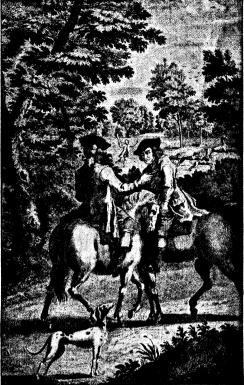
THICKET

To-day, when we can travel from John o' Groat's to Land's End, on a monoplane or in a motor-car, in a few hours, it is difficult to realise that as recently as the early part of the last century people made their wills before undertaking the journey from London to Bath, or how favourable were the conditions of life to such dubious "knight-errantry" as was exampled at its most picturesque in Claude Du Vall, in the reign of Charles II.

And it was not only on the lonely country roads that the daring highwayman successfully plied his trade, although they afforded him some of his finest booty. Well-to-do travellers, however, who journeyed long distances with much of value in their pockets or beside them in their coaches were not as numerous in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as the highway robber could wish, and he therefore became increasingly bolder in frequenting the outskirts of the larger towns, whose inhabitants and visitors must frequently carry money needed for their business or their pleasures; and the approaches to the metropolis, in particular, offered sundry wide areas for highway robbery.



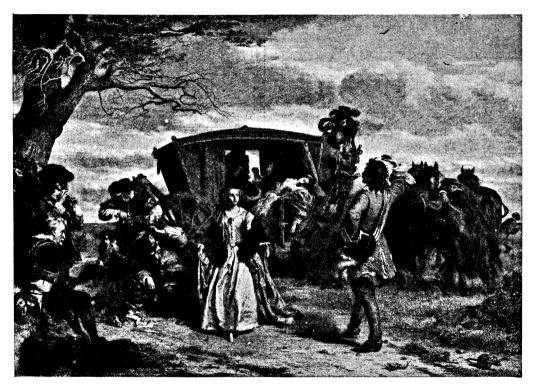
THE ENGLISH "PADDER" OR HIGHWAY ROBBER OF THE REIGN OF CHARLES II.



CLAUDE DU VALL (EXECUTED 1669) ROBBING SQUIRE ROPER, MASTER OF THE BUCKHOUNDS TO CHARLES II., IN WINDSOR FOREST.

Many an amazed roysterer, who played for swingeing stakes at one or another of London's gambling hells, relinquished his winnings to the persuasion of the gentlemen of the road. But it was not only in and near London that pockets were rifled, nor was it only those of the reckless that suffered, for many a farmer, who to-day pays his money into the bank of the town in which he sells his produce, then carried his guineas home in a wallet. The Bank of England, now a great engine of State, was not founded until the very end of the seventeenth century, and it was probably not till within the last century or so that people had any real confidence in that system of banking which was so long known as "the mystery of the new-fashioned goldsmiths." Alarm as to the stability of those smaller banks which, at the end of the eighteenth century, were opened in country towns, caused many a man to abstain from paying in his money to them, and to prefer facing the dangers of the highway with his guineas in his pocket.

When one turns to the earlier records of these so-called "knights of the road," one finds that their chroniclers trace their evolution from very early times, going even farther back than the period assigned to Robin Hood and his Merry Men, and pointing to a certain Thomas Dun, whose lawless career can be traced back to the reign of Henry I., nearly a century earlier than the period with which tradition associates the name of Robin Hood. Dun was a Bedfordshire man, and devoted his predatory activities chiefly to his native county, so that, after his robbery and come to the personalities of whom more authentic biographical facts are ascertainable. One of the first of these was Captain Philip Stafford, who, when the Civil War broke out, "was one of the first who joined the royal standard," and after the beheading of Charles I., found his own small estate sequestrated, and "formed the resolution of making depredations upon the enemies of his late king." Such a resolution, it may be interpolated, seems to have been considered a good enough reason for turning highwaymen by quite a number of adventurers, who found



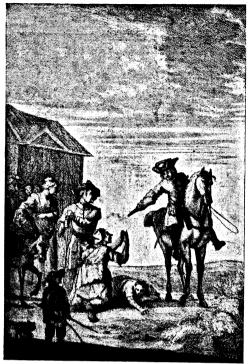
CLAUDE DU VALL COMPELLING A LADY TO DANCE AFTER HOLDING UP A COACH. BY W. P. FRITH, R.A. Reproduced from the plate published by the Art Union of London.

execution at Bedford, it is stated in Captain Charles Johnson's "Lives of the Highwaymen" (first published in 1742), his body was dismembered and the various parts "were fixed up in the principal places of Bedfordshire, as a warning to his companions."

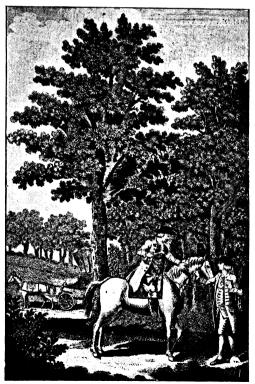
Both Johnson and his forerunner in the earlier part of the eighteenth century, Captain Alexander Smith, rejoice in recording as actualities many incidents which must be nowadays regarded as only traditional.

It is therefore of more interest to pass quickly over the older annals of highway it as popular a pretext as the older one of being kind to the poor and plundering only their natural enemies, the rich. Stafford amassed a considerable sum of money by his violent robberies, but ended his audacious career on the scaffold at Reading.

One of the most famous highwaymen who followed the Cavalier Captain Stafford was James Hind, born in 1616, and known as Captain Hind, a kindly, courteous man with witty tongue and diverting ways, says his eighteenth-century chronicler. A great parader of his partisanship of Charles I.,



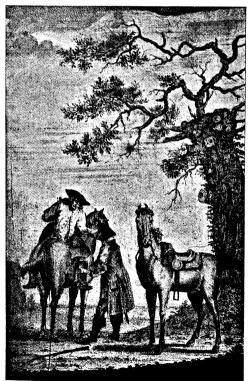
THOMAS WATERS (1665-1691) ROBBING A COMPANY OF GIPSIES.



WILLIAM PAGE (1725-1758) LEAVING HIS PHAETON WHILE HE ROBS A GENTLEMAN NEAR PUTNEY.



JOHN COTTINGTON (1611-1656), ALIAS MULSACK, ROBBING THE OXFORD WAGON OF £4,000.



WHITNEY (EXECUTED 1603) TYING AN USURER'S HANDS BEHIND HIM, WITH HIS FACE TO THE HORSE'S TAIL.

THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE.



WILLIAM DAVIS, "THE GOLDEN FARMER" (1627-1690), ROBBING A TINKER.

he and his ally, Thomas Allen, decided to spare none of the regicides who came in their way. It is on record that they met "the grand usurper, Cromwell," on his way from Huntingdon to London, and the story of the Protectorate might have been altered had Cromwell not happened to have seven men in his train, who overpowered their two assailants, and, although Hind managed to make his escape, captured Tom Allen, who paid for his temerity at Tyburn.

Yet another of the leading Parliamentarians did Captain Hind "hold up" in the person of Hugh Peters, whom he waylaid in Enfield Chase. Thirty broad pieces of gold were transferred from Peters's pocket to that of Hind, and even then the victim was not free to go his ways until he had surrendered both cloak and coat.

Sergeant Bradshaw, another of the Parliamentarians, encountered Hind on the road between Sherborne and Shaftesbury, in Dorsetshire. Bradshaw, sensible that the case was against him, "put his trembling hand into his pocket and pulled out about forty shillings in silver," then "to save a miserable life, pulled out that which he valued next to it, and presented the Captain with a purse full of Jacobuses." The most famous incident, however, of Hind's career, which ended at the age of thirty-four, when he was hanged, drawn, and quartered for high treason, was his stopping Colonel Harrison's coach in Maidenhead Thicket and relieving that famous commander of seventy odd pounds.

Of Hind it was written :---

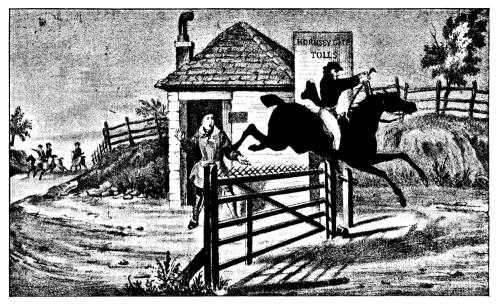
- .He robbed the rich to feed the poor: What did immortal Cæsar more?
- Nay, 'twere not difficult to prove That meaner views did Cæsar move: His was ambition; Hind's was love.

Our English hero sought no crown, Nor that more pleasing bait, renown, But just to keep off Fortune's frown. Yet when his country's cause invites, See him assert a nation's rights! A robber for a monarch fights! If in due light his deeds we scan, As Nature points us out the plan, Hind was an honourable man.

John Cottington, known as "Mulsack," was famous from the fact that he acquired more money by his robberies than any other highwayman of his time. No man was less suspected than he by his acquaintances in



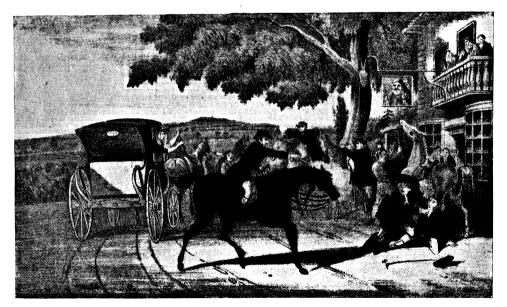
DICK TURPIN (1706-1739) SHOOTING A MAN NEAR HIS CAVE IN EPPING FOREST.



DICK TURPIN BILKING THE TOLL AT HORNSEY GATE.

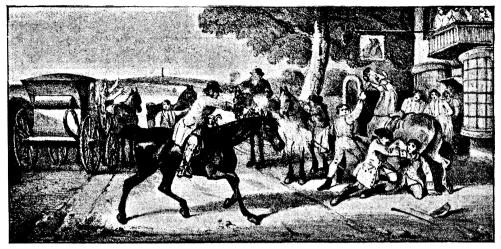
Town. When not practising his calling, he appeared like a merchant, talked always about business, and was seen often on 'Change. He made, however, one of the biggest hauls that ever fell to highwaymen. In those days money was hawked like flour about the country. Cottington, gaining

information that four thousand pounds was being conveyed from London to pay the regiments quartered at Oxford and Gloucester, resolved to venture his life for so considerable a sum. "Just at the close of day, when the wagon was past Wheatley and at the foot of a hill, he bade

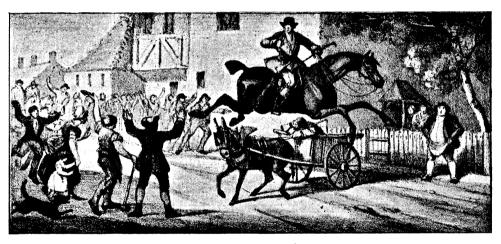


THE DEATH OF TOM KING, UNINTENTIONALLY SHOT BY HIS PARTNER, DICK TURPIN, THROUGH THE SUDDEN MOVEMENT OF THE CONSTABLE AT WHOM HE AIMED.

The above two reproductions are from the once popular coloured versions of theatrical and other prints, the superiority of which gave rise to the phrase "penny plain and twopence coloured." The darker tint of horse and costumes here shows where the bright colours were laid on. The first block on the next page represents the humbler version of a "plain" engraving. Robert Louis Steenson gave the title "Skeltery" to this variegated fashion because it was introduced by a publisher named Skett.



DICK TURPIN UNINTENTIONALLY SHOOTING TOM KING, OWING TO THE MOVEMENT OF THE CONSTABLE.



DICK TURPIN LEAPING THE COUNTRYMAN'S CART IN EDMONTON.



THE HIGHWAYMAN'S GHOSTLY COMPANY.



DICK TURPIN STOPPING THE YORK COACH.



THE HIGHWAYMAN'S FRIENDS.



THE DEATH OF BLACK BESS.

the carrier stand. And," says the chronicler, "he had certainly now gone to pot if the guard had not thought it impossible he should attempt such an action without company; but the apprehension of more the verses of Joseph Butler, Bishop of Durham :---

He, like a pious man, some Years before Th' arrival of this fatal Hour, Made every Day he had to live, To his last minute a Preparative,

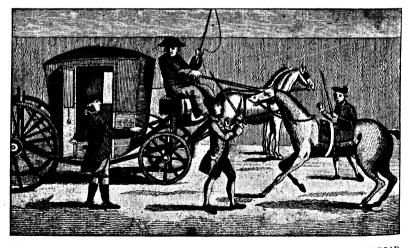


EMBASSY TO MACLEAN (1724-1750) WITH THE LADIES' SUBSCRIPTION PURSE FOR HIS DEFENCE.

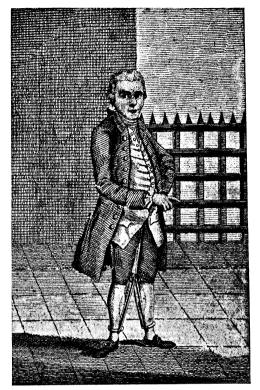
behind the hedge made these sturdy fellows ride for their lives, and leave our adventurer to secure the booty, which he spent with as much mirth as he had Taught the wild Arabs on the Road To act in a more genteel Mode. * * * * * And how to hang in a more graceful Fashion Than e'er was known before to the dull English Nation.

obtained it with danger." At the Restora-

tion of the Monarchy in 1660 many adventurers flocked into England in the retinue of exiled Royalists. In the capacity of footman to a person of quality came the man Claude du Vall, who was to become so famous that, after his execution in 1669, his memory was to be embalmed in



WILLIAM HAWKE ROBBING CAPTAIN CUNNINGHAM AND MR. HART ON THE HIGH-ROAD NEAR KNIGHTSBRIDGE 1774.



HAWKE IN THE YARD AT NEWGATE BEFORE HIS EXECUTION IN 1774.

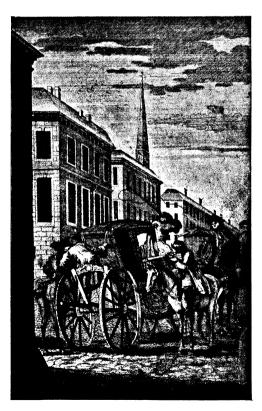
The most famous of his exploits were his robbing of fifty guineas Mr. Roper, Master of the Buckhounds to King Charles II., when hunting in Windsor Forest, and leaving him tied neck and heels in a thicket, where he lay until accidentally discovered by a forester, and his dancing a minuet with the lady of a knight whose coach he knew to contain four hundred pounds, and then, out of compliment to the lady's dancing, accepting only one hundred pounds instead of the total sum.

Joyous, handsome, reckless, Claude du Vall made, indeed, quite a brilliant impression on his generation by his audacity and gallantry, and the Lydia Languishes of the day found his manners irresistible. Many a lady of the first quality interceded, but fruitlessly, for his pardon, visited him in his prison, and attended his interment in the churchyard of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, in mourning and in tears.

William Davis, known as "The Golden Farmer," followed agriculture so assiduously along with his regular practice of robbing on the highway, that for many years he roused no suspicion in the hearts of his neighbours. He stopped the Duchess of Albemarle in her coach on Salisbury Plain; he took sixty pounds in gold from Sir Thomas Day, a Justice of the Peace of Bristol; he paid his landlord upwards of forty pounds for rent, and relieved him of it as he was carrying it home. But he also descended to footpad practices, and on one occasion, overtaking a tinker on Blackheath, he robbed him of the seven or eight pounds which he knew him to possess.

A far less ambitious man was Thomas Waters, who robbed for frolic, it seemed, quite as much as for gold. He once robbed a tribe of gipsies of a considerable sum sixty pounds—which they by their hullabaloo so resented as to bring several country fellows of the neighbourhood round to see what the matter was. Tom appealed to the new-comers for their help, saying that while one of the gipsies was telling his fortune, another had relieved his pocket of it. Having in this way turned the righteous rage of the countrymen upon the tawny tribe, "Tom rode laughing off."

Whitney, executed at Smithfield in 1693, appears to have been a merry rogue and a quick-witted. The most famous of his



THE MURDER OF THOMAS THYNNE, IN PALL MALL, BY CAPTAIN URATZ, 1782.

exploits was his robbing a Mr. Hull, an usurer, of twenty pounds on Hounslow Heath. Mr. Hull expostulated that he was a poor man with a large family of children. Then. letting his temper run away with him, he told Whitney he "should hope one time or another to see him ride up Holborn Hill backwards." The words irritated the highwayman, who pulled Mr. Hull off his horse, "put him up again with his face towards the horse's tail, tying his legs underneath its body, and so, giving the horse half a dozen good licks with his whip, sent him into Hounslow Town," and there, as the chronicler says, "the people made themselves a little merry with the sight before they unloosed the victim."

The story of Dick Turpin recorded by Harrison Ainsworth, in the pages of "Rookwood," is largely of the novelist's own invention, and the famous ride from London to York was probably accomplished, not by him, but by John Nevison (1639-1684), known as "Nicks," who flourished in the reign of Charles II., and was almost a contemporary of Claude du Vall. He it was. if we may believe contemporary statements. who rode from Rochester to York in record time, having ridden about one hundred and ninety miles in little more than fifteen hours, probably changing horses more than once, since there is no authority for the invention of so unique a steed as the "Black Bess" of the later Turpin story. By his rapid transit he successfully proved an alibi when arrested. This, at any rate, is the achievement attributed to John Nevison in the Memoirs of Baron de Pollnitz, published in 1733, and twenty years later re-narrated by Daniel Defoe in his account of "A Tour Through Great Britain," and neither of these almost contemporary authors ascribe any record of the kind to the highwayman of their own day, Dick Turpin, whose own generation probably saw him only as he really was - a very sordid ruffian, with nothing gallant or heroic about him.

Turpin was born at Hempstead, in Essex, in 1706. His father was a respectable publican, and the house in which he was born is to-day known as "The Crown Inn." In early youth he was sent to be apprentice to a Whitechapel butcher, but subsequently, after taking part in a cattle-lifting episode, disappeared from his home and adopted a wild life with the lawless deer-stealing fraternity which then frequented Epping Forest. Dick Turpin, indeed, the real Turpin, was, in fact, neither more nor less than a mounted thief of the most brutal kind, who committed cruel acts of robbery at isolated houses in the country and on the highways of the outer suburbs of London, sometimes alone and sometimes in company with an older highwayman, Tom King, or other associates. He went to the gallows at York in 1739, and his subsequent elevation into a hero of the highway seems to have begun with the callous bravado of his last moments, for he soon afterwards appears in the popular ballads of the day as a "knight of the road" of the pattern most approved by the illiterate admirers of his kind.

Thus, probably, it happened that Ainsworth accepted him in youth—as, indeed, he tells us in the preface to "Rookwood"—and so found no occasion for further research into the authenticity of daring exploits transferred from earlier highwaymen to the most recent malefactor of the kind in the cheapest literature of the day.

William Page made his success as a highway robber by travelling as a gentleman in a well-equipped carriage, and finding his prey the more easily because unsuspected. James Maclean moved in good society while hunting for a rich wife, and after he had been sentenced to death for many highway robberies, people of good position endeavoured to save him, but in vain. Captain Uratz came to England with Count Konigsmark, who sought the hand of the widowed Lady Ogle, and after that lady had married instead Mr. Thomas Thynne, Uratz, who was now an adventurer of the road, killed Thynne in Pall Mall, and for this murder was hung at Tyburn with his accomplices, Count Konigsmark having fled the country. A man of humbler birth who went to the gallows some eight years earlier was William Hawke, originally a potman on Saffron Hill, who, after deportation to America, returned to England to renew his successes on the king's highway, but was convicted and hanged in 1774.

With the installation of police, in 1772, and the growing custom of banking money and using cheques instead of carrying about large sums in coin on long journeys, the number of men who made their living by highway robbery decreased, and with the lighting of the roads of suburban districts with gas, in the nineteenth century, even those less adventurous knaves who had been incited by the slenderness of their fortune to betake themselves to the highways nearer home ceased to ply their trade to anything like its former extent.

THE-HOLY-FLOWER by-h-rider-haggard

ILLUSTRATED·BY MAURICE·GREIFFENHAGEN

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.—This is the story of the strange adventure of the famous hundre and explorer, Allan Quatermain, on his perilous expedition into an unknown region of Africa in the days here the experiences which are recorded in "King Solomons Mines." At the opening of the present arandered about South and Eastern Africa collecting butterflies and flowers. To the natives he was known as "Dogetah," but while beople called him "Brother John." From him Allan Quatermain heard of a wonderful plant with blooms of extraordinary size and marvellous beauty, with a monkey's head outlined on every bloom. A healthy root of this plant, he maintained, would be worth twenty thousand pounds; but all he could show was a single bloom, without any root. This had come into his possession in the country of the Mazita, a warlike race, beyond the western boundary of whose territory was a large and fertile land. supposed to be an island in the midst of a great lake. The name of both this territory and its inhabitants was Pongo, which was also the native name for a gorilla, and the god of the Pongo, who had come to the famous master of medicine to have his hand cured of a wound made by the bite of a terrible morkey, of which he declared they all went in fear in his native land. He suggested that he would help the white man to riches if he would go and kill went in fear in his native land. He suggested that he would help the white man to riches if he would go and kill went in fear in his native land. He suggested that he would help the white man to riches if he would go and kill went in fear in his native land. He suggested that he would help the white man to riches if he would go and kill went in fear in his native land. He suggested that he would prove a side to hear arrative of the report hat "a white goddess" was said to preside over the HOy Flower. The famous hunter returned to England for the unique flower, and enlisted the enthusiasm of a young man named Somers. Arrived in South Africa, the two men organised their e

CHAPTER XI.

THE COMING OF DOGEETAH.

THE sunset that day was like the sunrise, particularly fine, although, as in the case of the taste of the tea, I remembered little of it till afterwards. In fact, thunder was about, which always produces grand cloud effects in Africa.

The sun went down like a great red eye, over which there dropped suddenly a black eyelid of cloud with a fringe of purple lashes. "There's the last I shall see of you, my old friend," thought I to myself, "unless I catch you up presently."

The gloom began to gather. The king looked about him, also at the sky overhead, as though he feared rain, then whispered something to Babemba, who nodded and strolled up to my post.

strolled up to my post. "White lord," he said, "the Elephant wishes to know if you are ready, as presently the light will be very bad for shooting?"

"No," I answered with decision, "not

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till half an hour after sundown, as was agreed."

Babemba went to the king and returned to me.

"White lord, the king says that a bargain is a bargain, and he will keep to his word. Only you must not then blame him if the shooting is bad, since, of course, he did not know that the night would be so cloudy, which is not usual at this time of year."

It grew darker and darker, till at length we might have been lost in a London fog. The dense masses of the people looked like banks, and the archers, flitting to and fro as they made ready, might have been shadows in Hades. Once or twice lightning flashed and was followed after a pause by the distant growling of thunder. The air, too, grew very oppressive. Dense silence reigned. In all those multitudes no one spoke or stirred; even Sammy ceased his howling—I suppose because he had become exhausted and fainted away, as people often do just before they are hanged. It was a most solemn time. Nature seemed to be adapting herself to the mood of sacrifice and making ready for us a mighty pall.

At length I heard the sound of arrows being drawn from their quivers, and then the squeaky voice of Imbozwi saying—

"Wait a little; the cloud will lift. There is light behind it, and it will be nicer if they can see the arrows coming."

The cloud did begin to lift, very slowly, and from beneath it flowed a green light like that in a cat's eye.

"Shall we shoot, Imbozwi?" asked the voice of the captain of the archers.

"Not yet, not yet. Not till the people can watch them die."

The edge of cloud lifted a little more; the green light turned to a fiery red thrown by the sunk sun and reflected back upon the earth from the dense black cloud above. It was as though all the landscape had burst into flames, while the heaven over us remained of the hue of ink. Again the lightning flashed, showing the faces and staring eyes of the thousands who watched, and even the white teeth of a great bat that flittered That flash seemed to burn off an past. edge of the lowering cloud, and the light grew stronger and stronger, and redder and redder.

Imbozwi uttered a hiss like a snake, I heard a bowstring twang, and almost at the same moment the thud of an arrow striking my post just above my head. Indeed, by lifting myself I could touch it. I shut my

eyes and began to see all sorts of queer things that I had forgotten for years and years. My brain swam and seemed to melt into a kind of confusion. Through the intense silence I thought I heard the sound of some animal running heavily, much as a fat bull eland does when it is suddenly disturbed. Someone uttered a startled exclamation, which caused me to open my eyes again. The first thing I saw was the squad of savage archers lifting their bows—evidently that first arrow had been a kind of trial shot. The next. looking absolutely unearthly in that terrible and ominous light, was a tall figure seated on a white ox shambling rapidly towards us along the open roadway that ran from the southern gate of the market-place.

Of course I knew that I dreamed, for this figure exactly resembled Brother John. There was his long, snowy beard. There in his hand was his butterfly net, with the handle of which he seemed to be prodding the ox. Only he was wound about with wreaths of flowers, as were the great horns of the ox, and on either side of him and before and behind him ran girls, also wreathed with flowers. It was a vision, nothing else, and I shut my eyes again, awaiting the fatal arrow.

"Shoot!" screamed Imbozwi.

"Nay, shoot not!" shouted Babemba. "Dogeetah is come !"

A moment's pause, during which I heard arrows falling to the ground, then from all those thousands of throats a roar that shaped itself to the words—

"Dogeetah ! Dogeetah is come to save the white lords !"

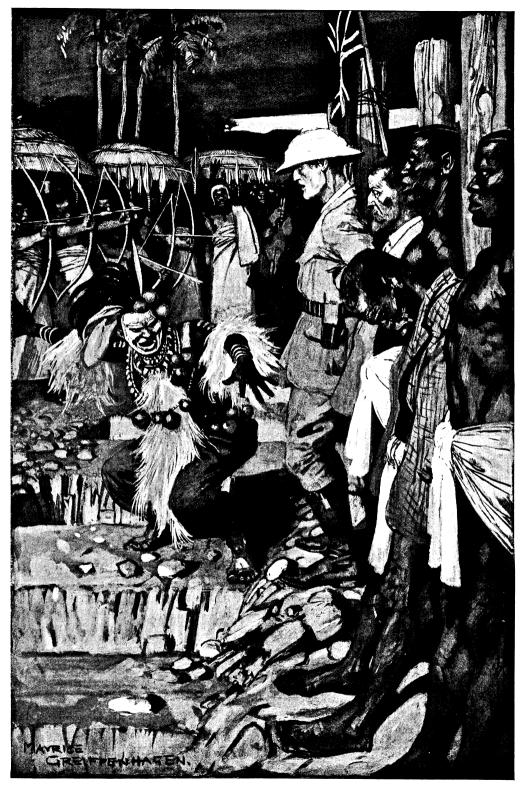
I must confess that after this my nerve, which is generally pretty good, gave out to such an extent that I think I fainted for a few minutes. During that faint I seemed to be carrying on a conversation with Mavovo, though whether it ever took place or I only imagined it, I am not sure, since I always forgot to ask him.

He said, or I thought he said, to me-

"And now, Macumazahn, my father, what have you to say? Does my Snake stand upon its tail or does it not? Answer—I am listening."

To which I replied, or seemed to reply-

"Mavovo, my child, certainly it appears as though your Snake *does* stand upon its tail. Still, I hold that all this is a phantasy; that we live in a land of dream in which nothing is real except those things which we cannot see or touch or hear. That there is no me and no you and no Snake at all,



"' Wait a little; the cloud will lift.'"

nothing but a Power in which we move, that shows us pictures and laughs when we think them real."

Whereon Mavovo said, or seemed to say-

"Ah, at last you touch the truth, O Macumazana, my father. All things are a shadow, and we are shadows in a shadow. But what throws the shadow, O Macumazana, my father? Why does Dogeetah appear to come hither riding on a white ox, and why do all these thousands think that my Snake stands so very stiff upon its tail?" "I'm hanged if I know!" I replied, and woke up.

There, without doubt, was old Brother John with a wreath of flowers—I noted in disgust that they were orchids—hanging in a bacchanalian fashion from his dinted sunhelmet over his left eye. He was in a furious rage and reviling Bausi, who literally crouched before him, and I was in a furious rage and reviling him. What I said I do not remember, but he said, his white beard bristling with indignation, while he threatened Bausi with the handle of the butterfly net—

"You dog! You savage, whom I saved from death and called brother! What were you doing to these white men, who are in truth my brothers, and to their followers? Were you about to kill them? Oh, if so, I will forget my vow, I will forget the bond that binds us, and —..."

"Don't—pray don't !" said Bausi. "It is all a horrible mistake; I am not to be blamed at all. It is that witch-doctor, Imbozwi, whom by the ancient law of the land I must obey in such matters. He consulted his Spirit and declared that you were dead; also that these white lords were the most wicked of men, slave-traders with spotted hearts, who came hither to spy out the Mazitu people and to destroy them with magic and bullets."

"Then he lied," thundered Brother John, "and he knew that he lied !"

"Yes, yes, it is evident that he lied," answered Bausi. "Bring him here, and, with him, those who serve him."

Now, by the light of the moon, which was shining brightly in the heavens, for the thunder-clouds had departed with the last glow of sunset, soldiers began an active search for Imbozwi and his confederates. Of these they caught eight or ten, all wicked-looking fellows, hideously painted and adorned like their master, but Imbozwi himself they could not find.

I began to think that in the confusion he had given us the slip, when presently, from the far end of the line—for we were still all tied to our stakes—I heard the voice of Sammy, hoarse, it is true, but quite cheerful now, saying—

"Mr. Quatermain, in the interests of justice, will you inform His Majesty that the treacherous wizard for whom he is seeking is now peeping and muttering at the bottom of the grave which was dug to receive my mortal remnants."

I did inform His Majesty, and in double quick time our friend Imbozwi was once more fished out of a grave by the strong arms of Babemba and his soldiers, and dragged into the presence of the irate Bausi.

"Loose the white lords and their followers," said Bausi, "and let them come here."

So our bonds were undone, and we walked to where the king and Brother John stood, the miserable Imbozwi and his attendant doctors huddled in a heap before them.

"Who is this?" said Bausi to him, pointing at Brother John. "Is it not he whom you vowed was dead?"

Imbozwi did not seem to think that the question required an answer, so Bausi continued—

"What was the song that you sang in our ears just now—that if Dogeetah came, you would be ready to be shot to death with arrows in the place of these white lords, whose lives you swore away, was it not?"

Again Imbozwi made no answer, although Babemba called his attention to the king's query with a vigorous kick. Then Bausi shouted—

"By your own mouth are you condemned, O liar, and that shall be done to you which you have yourself decreed," adding almost in the words of Elijah after he had triumphed over the priests of Baal, "Take away these false prophets. Let none of them escape. Say you not so, O people?"

"Aye," roared the multitude fiercely, take them away !"

"Not a popular character, Imbozwi," Stephen remarked to me in a reflective voice. "Well, he is going to be served hot on his own toast now, and serve the brute right."

"Who is the false doctor now?" mocked Mavovo in the silence that followed. "Who is about to sup on arrow-heads, O Painter of white spots?" And he pointed to the mark that Imbozwi had so gleefully chalked over his heart as a guide to the arrows of the archers.

Now, seeing that all was lost, the little humpbacked villain, with a sudden twist, caught me by the legs and began to plead for mercy. So piteously did he plead that, being already softened by the fact of our wonderful escape from those black graves, my heart was melted in me. I turned to ask the king to spare his life, though with little hope that the prayer would be granted, for I saw that Bausi feared and hated the man, and was only too glad of the opportunity to be rid of him. Imbozwi, however, interpreted my movement differently, since among savages the turning of the back always means that a petition is refused. Then, in his rage and despair, the venom of his wicked heart boiled over. He leapt to his feet and, drawing a big, curved knife from among his witch-doctor's trappings, sprang at me like a wild cat, shouting-

"At least you shall come, too, white dog !"

Most mercifully Mavovo was watching him, for that is a good Zulu saying which declares that "wizard is wizard's fate." With one bound he was on him. Just as the knife touched me—it actually pricked my skin, though without drawing blood, which was fortunate, as probably it was poisoned—he gripped Imbozwi's arm in his grasp of iron and hurled him to the ground as though he were but a child.

After this, of course, all was over.

"Come away," I said to Stephen and Brother John; "this is no place for us."

So we went and gained our huts without molestation and indeed quite unobserved, for the attention of everyone in Beza Town was fully occupied elsewhere. From the marketplace behind us rose so hideous a clamour that we rushed into my hut and shut the door to escape or lessen the sound. It was dark in the hut, for which I was really thankful, for the darkness seemed to soothe my nerves. Especially was this so when Brother John said—

"Friend Allan Quatermain, and you, young gentleman, whose name I don't know, I will tell you what I think I never mentioned to you before—that, in addition to being a doctor, I am a clergyman of the American Episcopalian Church. Well, as a clergyman, I will ask your leave to return thanks for your very remarkable deliverance from a cruel death."

"By all means," I muttered for both of us, and he did so in a most earnest and beautiful prayer. Brother John may or may not have been a little touched in his head at this time of his life, but he was certainly an able and a good man. Afterwards, as the shrieks and shouting had now died down to a confused murmur of many voices, we went and sat outside under the projecting eaves of the hut, where I introduced Stephen Somers to Brother John.

"And now," I said, "in the name of goodness, where do you come from, tied up in flowers like a Roman priest at sacrifice, and riding on a bull like the lady called Europa? And what on earth do you mean by playing us such a scurvy trick down there in Durban, leaving us without a word after you had agreed to guide us to this hellish hole?"

Brother John stroked his long beard and looked at me reproachfully.

"I guess, Allan," he said in his American fashion, "there is a mistake somewhere. To answer the last part of your question first, I did not leave you without a word; I gave a letter to that lame old Griqua gardener of yours, Jack, to be handed to you when you arrived."

"Then the idiot either lost it and lied to me, as Griquas will, or he forgot all about it."

"That is likely. I ought to have thought of that, Allan, but I didn't. Well, in that letter I said that I would meet you here, where I should have been six weeks ago awaiting you. Also I sent a message to Bausi to warn him of your coming, in case I should be delayed, but I suppose that something happened to it on the road."

"Why did you not wait and come with us, like a sensible man?"

"Allan, as you ask me straight out, I will tell you, although the subject is one of which I do not care to speak. I knew that you were going to journey by Kilwa; indeed, it was your only route, with a lot of people and so much baggage, and I did not wish to visit Kilwa." He paused, then went on : "A long while ago-nearly twenty-three years, to be accurate-I went to live at Kilwa as a missionary with my young wife. I built a mission station and a church there, and we were very happy and fairly successful in our Then on one evil day the Swaheli and work. other Arabs came in dhows to establish a slave-dealing station. I resisted them, and the end of it was that they attacked us, killed most of my people and enslaved the In that attack I received a cut from a rest. sword on the head. Look, here is the mark of it." And, drawing his white hair apart, he showed us a long scar that was plainly visible in the moonlight.

"The blow knocked me senseless just about sunset one evening. When I came to myself again, it was broad daylight and everybody was gone, except one old woman who was tending me. She was half-crazed with grief because her husband and two sons had been killed, and another son, a boy, and a daughter being taken away. T asked her where my young wife was. She answered that she, too, had been taken away eight or ten hours before, because the Arabs had seen the lights of a ship out at sea, and thought they might be those of a British man-of-war that was known to be cruising on the coast. On seeing these they had fled inland in a hurry, leaving me for dead, but killing the wounded before they went. The old woman herself had escaped by hiding among some rocks on the seashore, and after the Arabs had gone, had crept back to the house and found me still alive.

"I asked her where my wife had been taken. She said she did not know, but some others of our people told her that they had heard the Arabs say they were going to some place a hundred miles inland, to join their leader, a half-bred villain named Hassan-ben-Mohammed, to whom they were carrying my wife as a present.

"Now, we knew this wretch, for after the Arabs landed at Kilwa, but before actual hostilities broke out between us, he had fallen sick of small-pox, and my wife had helped to nurse him. Had it not been for her, indeed, he would have died. However, although the leader of the band, he was not present at the attack, being engaged in some slaveraiding business in the interior.

"When I had learned this terrible news, the shock of it, or the loss of blood, brought on a return of insensibility, from which I only awoke two days later to find myself on board a Dutch trading vessel that was sailing for Zanzibar. It was the lights of this ship that the Arabs had seen and mistaken for those of an English man-of-war. She had put into Kilwa for water, and the sailors, finding me on the verandah of the house and still living, in the goodness of their hearts had carried me on board. Of the old woman they had seen nothing; I suppose that at their approach she ran away.

"At Zanzibar, in an almost dying condition, I was handed over to a clergyman of our mission, in whose house I lay desperately ill for a long while. Indeed, six months went by before I fully recovered my right mind. Some people say that I have never recovered it; perhaps you are one of them, Allan.

"At last the wound in my skull healed,

after a clever English naval surgeon had removed some bits of splintered bone, and my strength came back to me. I was, and still am, an American subject, and in those days we had no consul at Zanzibar, if there is one there now, of which I am not sure, and, of course, no warship. The English made what inquiries they could for me, but could find out little or nothing, since all the country about Kilwa was in possession of the Arab slave-traders, who were supported by a ruffian who called himself the Sultan of Zanzibar."

Again he paused, as though overcome by the sadness of his recollections.

"Did you never hear any more of your wife?" asked Stephen.

"Yes, Mr. Somers; I heard at Zanzibar from a slave, whom our mission bought and freed, that he had seen a white woman who answered to her description, alive and apparently well, at some place I was unable to identify. He could only tell me that it was fifteen days' journey from the coast. She was then in charge of some black people-he did not know of what tribe—who he believed had found her wandering in the bush. noted that the black people seemed to treat her with the greatest reverence, although they could not understand what she said. On the following day, whilst searching for six lost goats, he was captured by Arabs, who, he heard afterwards, were out looking for this white woman. The day after the man had told me this, he was seized with inflammation of the lungs, of which, being in a weak state from his sufferings in the slave gang, he quickly died. Now you will understand why I was not particularly anxious to revisit Kilwa."

"Yes," I said, "we understand that, and a good deal more, of which we will talk later. But, to change the subject, where do you come from now, and how did you happen to turn up just in the nick of time?"

"I was journeying here across country by a route I will show you on my map," he answered, "when I met with an accident to my leg"—here Stephen and I looked at each other—"which kept me laid up in a Kaffir hut for six weeks. When I got better, as I could not walk very well, I rode upon oxen that I had trained. That white beast you saw is the last of them; the others died of the bite of the tsetse fly. A fear which I could not define caused me to press forward as fast as possible; for the last twenty-four hours I have scarcely stopped to eat or sleep. When I got into the Mazitu country this morning, I found the kraals empty, except for some women and girls, who knew me again, and threw these wreaths of flowers over me. They told me that all the men had gone to Beza Town for a great feast, but what the feast was, they either did not know or would not reveal. So I hurried on and arrived in time—thank God, in time! It is a long story; I will tell you the details afterwards. Now we are all too tired. What's that noise?"

I listened and recognised the triumphant song of the Zulu hunters, who were returning from the savage scene on the market-place. Presently they arrived, headed by Sammy, a very different Sammy from the wailing creature who had gone out to execution an hour or two before. Now he was the gayest of the gay, and about his neck were strung certain weird ornaments, which I identified as the personal property of Imbozwi.

"Virtue is victorious, and justice has been done, Mr. Quatermain. These are the spoils of war," he said, pointing to the trappings of the late witch-doctor.

"Oh, get out, you little cur! We want to know nothing more," I said. "Go, cook us some supper." And he went, not in the least abashed.

The hunters were carrying between them what appeared to be the body of Hans. At first I was frightened, thinking that he must be dead, but examination showed that he was only in a state of insensibility, such as might be induced by laudanum. Brother John ordered him to be wrapped up in a blanket and laid by the fire, and this was done.

Presently Mavovo approached and squatted down in front of us.

"Macumazahn, my father," he said quietly, "what words have you for me?"

"Words of thanks, Mavovo. If you had not been so quick, Imbozwi would have finished me. As it is, the knife only touched my skin without breaking it, for Dogeetah has looked to see."

Mavovo waved his hand as though to sweep this little matter aside, and asked, looking me straight in the eyes—

"And what other words, Macumazahn as to my Snake, I mean?"

"Only that you were right and I was wrong," I answered shamefacedly. "Things have happened as you foretold, how or why, I do not understand."

"No, my father, because you white men are so vain"—" blown out" was his word— "that you think you have all wisdom. Now you have learned that this is not so. I am content. The false doctors are all dead, my father, and I think that Imbozwi——"

I held up my hand, not wishing to hear details. Mavovo rose and, with a little smile, went about his business.

"What does he mean about his Snake?" inquired Brother John curiously.

I told him as briefly as I could, and asked him if he could explain the matter. He shook his head.

"The strangest example of native vision that I have ever heard of," he answered, "and the most useful. Explain ! There is no explanation, except the old one that there are more things in heaven and earth, etc., and that God gives different gifts to different men."

Then we ate our supper—I think one of the most joyful meals of which I have ever partaken. It is wonderful how good food tastes when one never expected to swallow another mouthful. After it was finished, the others went to bed; but, with the still unconscious Hans for my only companion, I sat for a while smoking by the fire, for on this high tableland the air was chilly. I felt that as yet I could not sleep, if for no other reason, because of the noise that the Mazitu were making in the town—I suppose in celebration of the execution of the terrible witch-doctors and of the return of Dogeetah.

Suddenly Hans awoke and, sitting up, stared at me through the bright flame, which I had recently fed with dry wood.

"Baas," he said in a hollow voice, "there you are, and here I am, and there is the fire which never goes out, a very good fire. But, Baas, why are we not inside of it, as your father, the Predikant, promised, instead of outside here in the cold?"

"Because you are still in the world, you old fool, and not where you deserve to be," I answered. "Because Mavovo's Snake was a snake with a true tongue, after all, and Dogeetah came as it foretold. Because we are all alive and well, and it is Imbozwi with his spawn who are dead upon the posts. That is why, Hans, as you would have seen for yourself if you had kept awake, instead of swallowing filthy medicine like a frightened woman, just because you were afraid of death, which at your age you ought to have welcomed."

"Oh, Baas," broke in Hans, "don't tell me that things are so, and that we are really alive in what your honoured father used to call this gourd full of tears. Don't tell me, Baas, that I made a coward of myself and swallowed that beastliness—if you knew what it was made of, you would understand, Baas—for nothing but a bad headache! Don't tell me that Dogeetah came when my eyes were not open to see him, and, worst of all, that Imbozwi and his children were tied to those poles when I was not able to help them out of the bottle of tears into the fire that burns for ever and ever ! Oh, it is too much, and I swear, Baas, that however often I have to die, henceforth it shall always be with my eyes open." And, holding his aching head between his hands, he rocked himself to and fro in bitter grief.

Well might Hans be sad, seeing that he never heard the last of that incident. The hunters invented a new and gigantic name for him, which meant "The-little-yellowmouse-who-feeds-on-sleep-while-the-blackrats-eat-up-their-enemies." Even Sammy made a mock of him, showing him the spoils which he declared he had wrenched unaided from the mighty master of magic, Imbozwi —as, indeed, he had, after the said Imbozwi was stone dead at the stake.

It was very amusing, until things grew so bad that I feared Hans would kill Sammy, and had to put a stop to the joke.

CHAPTER XII.

BROTHER JOHN'S STORY.

ALTHOUGH I went to bed late, I was up before sunrise, chiefly because I wished to have some private conversation with Brother John, whom I knew to be a very early riser. Indeed, he slept less than any man I ever met.

As I expected, I found him astir in his hut; he was engaged in pressing flowers by candlelight.

"John," I said, "I have brought you some property which I think you have lost." And I handed him the morocco-bound "Christian Year" and the water-colour drawing which we had found in the sacked mission house at Kilwa.

He looked first at the picture and then at the book—at least, I suppose he did, for I went outside the hut for a while, to observe the sunrise. In a few minutes he called me, and when the door was shut, said in an unsteady voice—

"How did you come by these relics, Allan?"

I told him the story from beginning to end. He listened without a word, and when I had finished, said—

"I may as well tell you what perhaps you have guessed—that the picture is that of my wife, and the book is her book." " Is ! " I exclaimed.

"Yes, Allan. I say is because I do not believe that she is dead. I cannot explain why, any more than I could explain last night how that great Zulu savage was able to prophesy my coming. But sometimes we can wring secrets from the Unknown, and I believe that I have won this truth in answer to my prayers—that my wife still lives."

"After twenty years, John ?"

"Yes, after twenty years. Why do you suppose," he asked almost fiercely, "that for two-thirds of a generation I have wandered about among African savages, pretending to be crazy, because these wild people revere the mad and always let them pass unharmed?"

"I thought it was to collect butterflies and botanical specimens."

"Butterflies and botanical specimens! These were the pretext. I have been and am searching for my wife. You may think it a folly, especially considering what was her condition when we were separated—she was expecting a child, Allan—but I do not. I believe that she is hidden away among some of these wild peoples."

"Then perhaps it would be as well not to find her," I answered, bethinking me of the fate which had overtaken sundry white women in the old days, who had escaped from shipwrecks on the coast and become the wives of Kaffirs.

"Not so, Allan. On that point I fear nothing. If God has preserved my wife, He has also protected her from every harm. And now," he went on, "you will understand why I wish to visit these Pongo---the Pongo who worship a white goddess."

"I understand," I said and left him, for, having learned all there was to know, I thought it best not to prolong a painful To me it seemed incredible conversation. that this lady should still live, and I feared the effect upon him of the discovery that she was no more. How full of romance is this poor little world of ours ! Think of Brother John-Eversley was his real name, as I discovered afterwards—and what his life had A high-minded, educated man trying been. to serve his Faith in the dark places of the earth, and taking his young wife with him, which, for my part, I have never considered a right thing to do. Neither tradition nor Holy Writ record that the Apostles dragged their wives and families into the heathen lands where they went to preach, although I believe that some of them were married. But this is by the way.

Then falls the blow. The mission-house is

sacked, the husband escapes by a miracle and the poor young lady is torn away to be the prev of a vile slave-trader. Lastly, according to the quite unreliable evidence of some savage already in the shadow of death, she is seen in the charge of other unknown savages. On the strength of this the husband, playing the part of a mad botanist, hunts for her for a score of years, enduring incredible hardships and yet buoyed up by a high and holy trust. To my mind, it was a beautiful and pathetic story. Still, for reasons which I have suggested, I confess that I hoped that long ago she had returned into the hands of the Power which made her, for what would be the state of a young white lady who for two decades had been at the mercy of these black brutes?

And yet—and yet, after my experience of Mavovo and his Snake, I did not feel inclined to dogmatise about anything. Who and what was I that I should venture not only to form opinions, but to thrust them down the throats of others ? After all, how narrow are the limits of the knowledge upon which we base our judgments ! Perhaps the great sea of intuition that surrounds us is safer to float on than are these little islets of individual experience whereon we are so wont to take our stand.

Meanwhile my duty was not to speculate on the dreams and mental attitude of others. but, like a practical hunter and trader, to carry to a successful issue an expedition that I was well paid to manage, and to dig up a certain rare flower root, if I could find it, in the marketable value of which I had an interest. I have always prided myself upon my entire lack of imagination and all such mental phantasies, and upon an aptitude for hard business and an appreciation of the facts of life, that; after all, are the things This is the with which we have to do. truth—at least, I hope it is. For if I were to be *quite* honest, which no one ever has been, except a gentleman named Mr. Pepys, who, I think, lived in the reign of Charles II., and who, to judge from his memoirs, which I have read lately, did not write for publication, I should have to admit that there is another side to my nature. T sternly suppress it, however, at any rate, for the present.

While we were at breakfast, Hans, who, still suffering from headache and remorse, was lurking outside the gateway far from the madding crowd of critics, crept in like a beaten dog and announced that Babemba was approaching, followed by a number of laden soldiers. I was about to advance to receive him. Then I remembered that, owing to a queer native custom, such as that which caused Sir Theophilus Shepstone, whom I used to know very well, to be recognised as the holder of the spirit of the great Chaka, and therefore as the equal of the Zulu monarchs, Brother John was the really important man in our company. So I gave way and asked him to be good enough to take my place, and to live up to that station in savage life to which it had pleased God to call him.

I am bound to say he rose to the occasion very well, being by nature and appearance a dignified old man. Swallowing his coffee in a hurry, he took his place at a little distance from us, and stood there in a statuesque pose. To him enter Babemba, crawling on his hands and knees, and other native gentlemen likewise crawling, also the burdened soldiers in as obsequious an attitude as their loads would allow.

"O King Dogeetah," said Babemba, "your brother-king, Bausi, returns the guns and fire-goods of the white men, your children, and sends certain gifts."

"Glad to hear it, General Babemba," said Brother John, "although it would be better if he had never taken them away. Put them down and get on to your feet. I do not like to see men wriggling on their stomachs like monkeys."

The order was obeyed, and we checked the guns and ammunition, also our revolvers and the other articles that had been taken away from us. Nothing was missing or damaged, and in addition there were four fine elephants' tusks—an offering to Stephen and myself, which, as a business man, I promptly accepted — some karosses and Mazitu weapons, presents to Mavovo and the hunters, a beautiful native bedstead with ivory legs and mats of finely-woven grass, a gift to Hans, in testimony to his powers of sleep under trying circumstances-the Zulus roared when they heard this, and Hans vanished cursing behind the huts-and for Sammy a weird musical instrument with a request that in future he would use it in public instead of his voice.

Sammy, I may add, did not see the joke any more than Hans had done, but the rest of us appreciated the Mazitu sense of humour very much.

"It is very well, Mr. Quatermain," he said, "for those black babes and sucklings to sit in the seat of the scornful. On such an occasion silent prayers would have been of little use, but i am certain that my loud crying to Heaven delivered you all from the bites of the heathen arrows."

"O Dogeetah and white lords," said Babemba, "the king invites your presence that he may ask your forgiveness for what has happened, and this time there will be no need for you to bring arms, since henceforward no hurt can come to you from the Mazitu people."

So presently we set out once more, taking with us the gifts that had been refused. Our march to the royal quarters was a veritable triumphal progress. The people prostrated themselves and clapped their hands slowly in salutation as we passed, while the girls and children pelted us with flowers as though we were brides going to be married. Our road ran by the place of execution, where the stakes—at which I confess I looked with a shiver—were still standing, though the graves had been filled in.

On our arrival, Bausi and his councillors rose and bowed to us. Indeed, the king did more, for, coming forward, he seized Brother John by the hand and insisted upon rubbing his ugly black nose against that of this revered guest. This, it appeared, was the Mazitu method of embracing, an honour which Brother John did not seem at all to appreciate. Then followed long speeches, washed down with draughts of thick native beer. Bausi explained that his evil proceedings were entirely due to the wickedness of the deceased Imbozwi and his disciples, under whose tyranny the land had groaned for long, since the people believed them to speak "with the voice of 'Heaven above.'"

Brother John, on our behalf, accepted the apology, and then read a lecture, or, rather, preached a sermon, that took exactly twentyfive minutes to deliver—he is rather long in the wind—in which he demonstrated the evils of superstition and pointed to a higher and a better path. Bausi replied that he would like to hear more of that path another time, which, as he presumed that we were going to spend the rest of our lives in his company, could easily be found—say, during the next spring, when the crops had been sown and the people had leisure on their hands.

After this we presented our gifts, which now were eagerly accepted. Then I took up my parable and explained to Bausi that, so far from stopping in Beza Town for the rest of our lives, we were anxious to press forward at once to Pongoland. The king's face fell, as did those of his councillors.

"Listen, O Lord Macumazana and all of you," he said. "These Pongo are horrible wizards, a great and powerful people, who live by themselves amidst the swamps and mix with none. If the Pongo catch Mazitu or folk of any other tribe, either they kill them or take them as prisoners to their own land, where they enslave them or sometimes sacrifice them to the devils they worship."

"That is so," broke in Babemba, "for when I was a lad, I was a slave to the Pongo and doomed to be sacrificed to the White Devil. It was in escaping from them that I lost this eye."

Needless to say, I made a note of this remark, though I did not think the moment opportune to follow the matter up. If Babemba has once been to Pongoland, I reflected to myself, Babemba can go again or show us the way there.

"And if we catch any of the Pongo," went on Bausi, "as sometimes we do when they come to hunt for slaves, we kill them. Ever since the Mazitu have been in this place, there have been hate and war between them and the Pongo, and if I could wipe out those evil ones, then I should die happily."

"That you will never do, O King, while the White Devil lives," said Babemba. "Have you not heard the Pongo prophecy that while the White Devil lives and the Holy Flower blooms, they will live? But when the White Devil dies and the Holy Flower ceases to bloom, then their women will become barren and their end will be upon them."

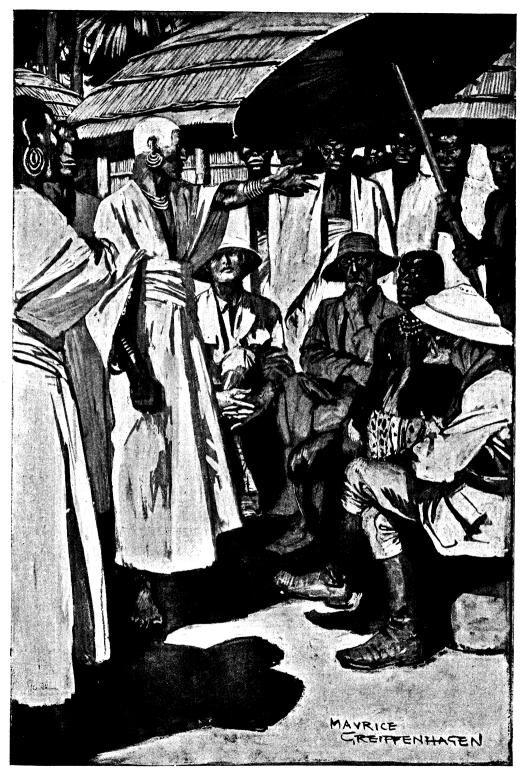
"Well, I suppose that this White Devil will die some day," I said.

"Not so, Macumazahn. It will never die of itself. Like its wicked Priest, it has been there from the beginning, and will always be there, unless it is killed. But who is there that can kill the White Devil?"

I thought to myself that I would not mind trying, but again I did not pursue the point.

"My brother Dogeetah and lords," exclaimed Bausi, "it is not possible that you should visit these wizards except at the head of an army. But how can I send an army with you, seeing that the Mazitu are a land people, and have no canoes in which to cross the great lake, and no trees whereof to make them?"

We answered that we did not know, but would think the matter over, as we had come from our own place for this purpose and meant to carry it out.



"'I am Komba, the Accepted-of-the-gods."

Then the audience came to an end, and we returned to our huts, leaving Dogeetah to converse with his "brother Bausi" on matters connected with the latter's health. As I passed Babemba, I told him that I should like to see him alone, and he said that he would visit me that evening after supper. The rest of the day passed quietly, for we had asked that people might be kept away from our encampment.

We found Hans, who had not accompanied us, being a little shy of appearing in public just then, engaged in cleaning the rifles, and this reminded me of something. Taking the double-barrelled gun of which I have spoken, I called Mayovo and handed it to him. saying-

" It is yours, O true prophet."

"Yes, my father," he answered, "it is mine for a little while, then perhaps it will be yours again."

The words struck me, but I did not care to ask their meaning. Somehow I wanted to hear no more of Mavovo's prophecies.

Then we dined, and for the rest of that afternoon slept, for all of us, including Brother John, needed rest badly. In the evening Babemba came, and we three white men saw him alone.

" Tell us about the Pongo and this White

Devil they worship," I said. "Macumazahn," he answered, "fifty years have gone by since I was in that land, and I see things that happened to me there as through a mist. I went to fish amongst the reeds when I was a boy of twelve, and tall men robed in white came in a canoe and seized me. They led me to a town where there were many other such men, and treated me very well, giving me sweet things to eat till I grew fat and my skin shone. Then in the evening I was taken away, and we marched all night to the mouth of a great cave. In this cave sat a horrible old man about whom danced robed people, performing the rites of the White Devil.

"The old man told me that on the following morning I was to be cooked and eaten, for which reason I had been made so There was a canoe at the mouth of the fat. cave, beyond which lay water. While all were asleep, I crept to the canoe. As I loosed the rope, one of the priests woke up and ran at me. But I hit him on the head with the paddle, for, though only a boy, I was bold and strong, and he fell into the water. He came up again and gripped the edge of the canoe, but I struck his fingers with the paddle till he let go. A great wind was blowing that night, tearing off boughs from the trees which grew upon the other shore of the water. It whirled the canoe round and round, and one of the boughs struck me in the eve. I scarcely felt it at the time, but afterwards the eye withered. Or perhaps it was a spear or a knife that struck me in the eye; I do not know. I paddled till I lost my senses, and always that wind blew. The last thing that I remember was the sound of the canoe being driven by the gale through reeds. When I woke up again, I found myself near a shore, to which I waded through the mud, scaring great crocodiles. But this must have been some days later, for now I was quite thin. I fell down upon the shore, and there some of our people found me and nursed me till I recovered. That is all."

"And quite enough, too," I said. "Now How far was the town from answer me. the place where you were captured in Mazituland ? "

"A whole day's journey in the canoe, Macumazahn. I was captured in the morning early, and we reached the harbour in the evening at a place where many canoes were tied up, perhaps fifty of them, some of which would hold forty men."

"And how far was the town from this harbour?"

"Quite close, Macumazahn."

Now Brother John asked a question.

"Did you hear anything about the land beyond the water by the cave?"

"Yes, Dogeetah. I heard then or afterwards—for from time to time rumours reach us concerning these Pongo-that it is an island where grows the Holy Flower, of which you know, for when last you were here, you had one of its blooms. I heard, too, that this Holy Flower was tended by a priestess named Mother of the Flower, and her servants, all of whom were virgins.'

"Who was the priestess?"

"I do not know, but I have heard that she was one of those people who, although their parents are black, are born white, and that if any females among the Pongo are born white, or with pink eyes, or deaf and dumb, they are set apart to be the servants of the priestess. But this priestess must now be dead, seeing that, when I was a boy, she was already old, very, very old, and the Pongo were much concerned because there was no one of white skin who could be appointed to succeed her. Indeed, she is dead, since many years ago there was a great feast in Pongoland, and numbers of slaves were eaten, because the priests had found a

beautiful new priestess who was white, with yellow hair and had finger nails of the right shape."

Now I bethought me that this finding of the priestess named "Mother of the Flower," who must be distinguished by certain personal peculiarities, resembled not a little that of the finding of the Apis bull-god, which also must have certain prescribed and holy markings, by the old Egyptians, as narrated by Herodotus. However, I said nothing about it at the time, because Brother John asked sharply—

"And is this priestess also dead?"

"I do not know, Dogeetah, but I think not. If she were dead, I think that we should have heard some rumour of the feast of the eating of the dead Mother."

"Eating the dead Mother !" I exclaimed.

"Yes, Macumazahn. It is the law among the Pongo that, for a certain sacred reason, the body of the Mother of the Flower, when she dies, must be partaken of by those who are privileged to the holy food."

"But the White Devil neither dies nor is eaten ?" I said.

"No, as I have told you, he never dies. It is he who causes others to die, as, if you go to Pongoland, doubtless you will find out," Babemba added grimly.

Upon my word, thought I to myself, as the meeting broke up because Babemba had nothing more to say, if I had my way, I would leave Pongoland and its White Devil alone. Then I remembered how Brother John stood in reference to this matter, and with a sigh resigned myself to Fate. As it proved, it—I mean Fate—was quite equal to the occasion. The very next morning, early, Babemba turned up again.

"Lords, lords," he said, "a wonderful thing has happened ! Last night we spoke of the Pongo, and now, behold, an embassy from the Pongo is here; it arrived at sunrise."

"What for?" I asked.

"To propose peace between their people and the Mazitu. Yes, they ask that Bausi should send envoys to their town to arrange a lasting peace. As if anyone would go !" he added.

"Perhaps some might dare to," I answered, for an idea occurred to me; "but let us go to see Bausi."

Half an hour later we were seated in the king's enclosure—that is, Stephen and I were, for Brother John was already in the royal hut, talking to Bausi. As we went, a few words had passed between us. "Has it occurred to you, John," I asked, "that if you really wish to visit Pongoland, here is perhaps what you would call Providential opportunity. Certainly none of these Mazitu will go, since they fear lest they should find a permanent peace—inside of the Pongo. Well, you are blood-brother to Bausi, and can offer to play the part of envoy extraordinary, with us as the members of your staff."

"I have already thought of it, Allan," he replied, stroking his long beard.

We sat down among a few of the leading councillors, and presently Bausi came out of his hut, accompanied by Brother John, and, having greeted us, ordered the Pongo envoys to be admitted. They were led in at once, tall, light-coloured men with regular and Semitic features, who were clothed in white linen like Arabs, and wore circlets of gold or copper upon their necks and wrists.

In short, they were imposing persons, quite different from ordinary Central African natives, though there was something about their appearance which chilled and repelled me. I should add that their spears had been left outside, and that they saluted the king by folding their arms upon their breasts and bowing in a dignified fashion.

"Who are you," asked Bausi, "and what do you want?"

"I am Komba," answered their spokesman, quite a young man with flashing eyes, "the Accepted-of-the-gods, who, in a day to come that perhaps is near, will be the Kalubi of the Pongo people, and these are my servants. I have come here bearing gifts of friendship, which are without, by the desire of the holy Motombo, the High Priest of the gods____"

"I thought that the Kalubi was the priest of your gods?" interrupted Bausi.

"Not so. The Kalubi is the King of the Pongo, as you are the King of the Mazitu. The Motombo, who is seldom seen, is King of the Spirits and the Mouth of the Gods."

Bausi nodded in the African fashion—that is, by raising the chin, not depressing it—and Komba went on—

"I have placed myself in your power, trusting to your honour. You can kill me, if you wish, though that will avail nothing, since there are others waiting to become Kalubi in my place."

"Am I a Pongo that I should wish to kill messengers and eat them ?" asked Bausi with sarcasm, a speech at which I noticed the Pongo envoys winced a little.

"King, you are mistaken. The Pongo only eat those whom the White God has 3 B chosen. It is a religious rite. Why should they who have cattle in plenty desire to devour men?"

"I don't know," grunted Bausi, "but there is one here who can tell a different story." And he looked at Babemba, who wriggled uncomfortably.

Komba also looked at him with his fierce eyes.

"It is not conceivable," he said, "that anybody should wish to eat one so old and bony, but let that pass. I thank you, King, for your promise of safety. I have come here to ask that you should send envoys to confer with the Kalubi and the Motombo, that a lasting peace may be arranged between our peoples."

"Why do not the Kalubi and the Motombo come here to confer?" asked Bausi.

"Because it is not lawful that they should leave their land, O King. Therefore they have sent me, who am the Kalubi-to-come. Hearken. There has been war between us for generations. It began so long ago that only the Motombo knows of its beginning, which he has from the gods. Once the Pongo people owned all this land, and only had their sacred places beyond the water. Then your forefathers came and fell on them, killing many, enslaving many, and taking their women to wife. Now, say the Motombo and the Kalubi, in the place of war let there be peace; where there is but barren sand, there let corn and flowers grow; let the darkness, wherein men lose their way and die, be changed to pleasant light, in which they can sit in the sun holding each other's hands."

"Hear, hear!" I muttered, quite moved by this eloquence. But Bausi was not at all moved; indeed, he seemed to view these poetic proposals with the darkest suspicion.

"Give up killing our people or capturing them to be sacrificed to your White Devil, and then in a year or two we may listen to your words that are smeared with honey," he said. "As it is, we think that they are but a trap to catch flies. Still, if there are any of our councillors willing to visit your Motombo and your Kalubi, and hear what they have to propose, taking the risk of whatever may happen to them there, I do not forbid it. Now, O my councillors, speak, not altogether, but one by one, and be swift, since to the first that speaks shall be given this honour."

I think I never heard a denser silence than that which followed this invitation. Each of the *indunas* looked at his neighbour, but not one of them uttered a single word.

"What !" exclaimed Bausi in affected surprise. "Do none speak? Well, well, you are lawyers and men of peace. What says the great general, Babemba?"

"I say, O King, that I went once to Pongoland when I was young, taken by the hair of my head, to leave an eye there, and that I do not wish to visit it again walking on the soles of my feet."

"It seems, O Komba, that since none of my people are willing to act as envoys, if there is to be talk of peace between us, the Motombo and the Kalubi must come here under safe-conduct."

"I have said that cannot be, O King."

"If so, all is finished, O Komba." Rest, eat of our food, and return to your own land."

Then Brother John rose and said-

"We are blood-brethren, Bausi, and therefore I can speak for you. If you and your councillors are willing, and these Pongos are willing, I and my friends do not fear to visit the Motombo and the Kalubi, to talk with them of peace on behalf of your peoples, since we love to see new lands and new races of mankind. Say, Komba, if the king allows, will you accept us as ambassadors?"

"It is for the king to name his own ambassadors," answered Komba. "Yet the Kalubi has heard of the presence of you white lords in Mazituland, and bade me say that if it should be your pleasure to accompany the embassy and visit him, he would give you welcome. Only when the matter was laid before the Motombo, the oracle spoke thus—

"'Let the white men come, if come they will, or let them stay away. But if they come, let them bring with them none of those iron tubes, great or small, whereof the land has heard, that vomit smoke with a noise and cause death from afar. They will not need them to kill meat, for meat shall be given to them in plenty; moreover, among the Pongo they will be safe, unless they offer insult to the god.'"

These words Komba spoke very slowly and with much emphasis, his piercing eyes fixed upon my face as though to read the thoughts it hid. As I heard them, my courage sank into my boots. Well, I knew that the Kalubi was asking us to Pongoland that we might kill this great White Devil that threatened his life, which, I took it, was a monstrous ape. And how could we face that or some other frightful brute without firearms? My mind was made up in a minute.

"O Komba," I said, "my gun is my father, my mother, my wife, and all my other relatives. I do not stir from here without it."

"Then, white lord," answered Komba, "you will do well to stop in this place in the midst of your family, since, if you try to bring it with you to Pongoland, you will be killed as you set foot upon the shore."

Before I could find an answer, Brother John spoke, saying-

"It is natural that the great hunter, Macumazana, should not wish to be parted from that which to him is as a stick to a lame man. But with me it is different. For years I have used no gun, who kill nothing that God made, except a few brightwinged insects. I am ready to visit your country with naught save this in my hand." And he pointed to the butterfly net that leaned against the fence behind him.

"Good! You are welcome," said Komba, and I thought that I saw his eyes gleam with unholy joy. There followed a pause, during which I explained everything to Stephen, showing that the thing was madness. But here, to my horror, that young man's mulish obstinacy came in.

"I say, you know, Quatermain," he said, "we can't let the old boy go alone, or, at least, I can't. It's another matter for you, who have a son dependent on you. But. putting aside the fact that I mean to get-----" He was about to add, "the orchid," when I nudged him. Of course, it was ridiculous, but an uneasy fear took me lest this Komba should in some mysterious way understand what he was saying. "What's Oh, I see, but the beggar can't up? understand English. Well, putting aside everything else, it isn't the game, and there you are, you know. If Mr. Brother John goes, I'll go, too, and, indeed, if he doesn't go, I'll go alone."

"You unutterable young ass !" I muttered in a stage aside.

"What is it the young white lord says he wishes in our country?" asked the cold Komba, who with diabolical acuteness had read some of Stephen's meaning in his face.

"He says that he is a harmless traveller who would like to study the scenery and to find out if you have any gold there," I answered.

"Indeed! Well, he shall study the scenery, and we have gold "—and he touched the bracelets on his arm—" of which he shall be given as much as he can carry away. But perchance, white lords, you would wish to talk this matter over alone. Have we your leave to withdraw a while, O King?"

Five minutes later we were seated in the king's "great house," with Bausi himself and Babemba. Here there was a mighty Bausi implored Brother John argument. not to go, and so did I. Babemba said that to go would be madness, as he smelt witchcraft and murder in the air, he who knew the Pongo. Brother John replied sweetly that he certainly intended to avail himself of this heaven-sent opportunity to visit one of the few remaining districts in this part of Africa through which he had not yet wandered. Stephen yawned and fanned himself with a pocket-handkerchief, for the hut was hot, and remarked that, having come so far after a certain rare flower, he did not mean to return empty-handed.

"I perceive, Dogeetah," said Bausi at last, "that you have some reason for this journey which you are hiding from me. Still, I am minded to hold you here by force."

"If you do, it will break our brotherhood," answered Brother John. "Seek not to know what I would hide, Bausi, but wait till the future shall declare it."

Bausi groaned and gave in. Babemba said that Dogeetah and Wazela were bewitched, and that I, Macumazahn, alone retained my senses.

"Then that's settled," exclaimed Stephen. "John and I are to go as envoys to the Pongo, and you, Quatermain, will stop here to look after the hunters and the stores."

"Young man," I replied, "do you wish to insult me? After your father put you in my charge, too! If you two are going, I shall come also, if I have to do so mother-But let me tell you once and for naked. all, in the most emphatic language I can command, that I consider you a brace of confounded lunatics, and that if the Pongo don't eat you, it will be more than you To think that at my age I should deserve. be dragged among a lot of cannibal savages without even a pistol, to fight some unknown brute with my bare hands! Well, we can only die once-that is, so far as we know at present."

"How true !" remarked Stephen. "How strangely and profoundly true !"

Oh, I could have boxed his ears !

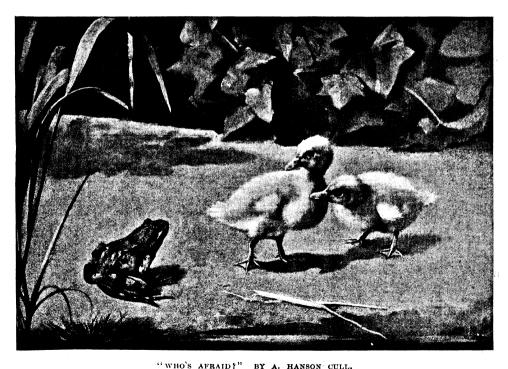
We went into the courtyard again, whither Komba was summoned with his attendants. This time they came bearing gifts, or having them borne for them. These consisted, I remember, of two fine tusks of ivory, which suggested to me that their country could not be entirely surrounded by water, since elephants would scarcely live upon an island; gold dust in a gourd, and copper bracelets, which showed that it was mineralised; white native linen very well woven, and some really beautifully decorated pots, indicating that the people had artistic tastes. Where did they get them from, I wonder, and what was the origin of their race? I cannot answer the question, for I never found out with any certainty. Nor do I think they knew themselves.

The *indaba* was resumed. Bausi announced that we three white men with a servant apiece—I stipulated for this—would visit Pongoland as his envoys, taking no firearms with us, there to discuss terms of peace between the two peoples, and especially the questions of trade and intermarriage. Komba

was very insistent that this should be included-at the time I wondered why. He, Komba, on behalf of the Motombo and the Kalubi, the spiritual and temporal rulers of his land, guaranteed us safe-conduct on the understanding that we attempted no insult or violence to the gods, a stipulation from which there was no escape, though I liked it little. He swore also that we should be delivered safe and sound in the Mazitu country within six days of our having left its shores. Bausi said that it was good, adding that he would send five hundred armed men to escort us to the place where we were to embark, and to receive us on our return ; also that if any hurt came to us, he would wage war upon the Pongo people for ever until he found means to destroy them.

So we parted, it being agreed that we were to start upon our journey on the following morning.

(To be continued.)



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CARFEW & THE "MARY Q"

By EDGAR WALLACE

Author of "Sanders of the River," "Private Selby," "The Council of Justice," "Grey Timothy," "The People of the River," etc.

Illustrated by Dudley Hardy



HAT kindness of heart was concealed behind the seemingly unsympathetic exterior of Mr. Gustav Bahl nobody knows.

Carfew certainly does not.

I say "was concealed," having

caught the habit from Carfew, who always speaks of Mr. Bahl as if he were dead.

When Carfew talks of his whilom enemy, it is in that tone of good-natured contempt which one reserves for the foolish people who die in their prime as a result of matching their wits against yours.

Thus he would say that this or that was "enough to make poor old Bahl turn in his grave," or "when old Bahl was alive" an attitude of mind offensive to Bahl, who very properly hates and loathes Carfew, and would, but for the disgusting restrictions which the law imposes, do him grievous bodily harm.

Gustav Bahl, as all the world knows, is an exceedingly wealthy man. He is a director of an Assurance Company, chairman of the Grey Funnel West Coast Line, and sole stockholder of the South Atlantic Steam Packet Company, Limited.

He is a short man, in stature and speech, and he is oppressed with the fretful fear that all the money in the world which is not circulated $vi\hat{a}$ Bahl is being misapplied.

Carfew met Mr. Bahl at the dinner of the Mariners' Benevolent Fund. Our friend received an invitation in the form of a letter, written and signed by Mr. Bahl himself, and the letter was accompanied by a ticket.

Too late—it was when he was sitting down to dinner—he discovered that the letter was a lithographed one, artfully circulated amongst the moneyed classes, and that so far from the ticket being gratuitously bestowed, some five guineas were extracted from the too-confident diner who had been lured to the function.

The suave secretary, who made the round of the diners during the meal, had a little difficulty in extracting a subscription from Carfew. Had the unwilling guest—for unwilling he was at the price—tumbled to the swindle a little earlier, he would have been seized with a timely illness which necessitated a hasty withdrawal; but the ghastly realisation of the plot only came to him when he had finished the second course, and had consequently incurred some thirty shillings' worth of liability.

"It is for a good cause," soothed the secretary.

"I already subscribe to a mariners' benevolent fund," protested Carfew, remembering the money he dropped into the collecting boxes on Lifeboat Saturday.

"It is for a good cause," said the secretary monotonously.

"I haven't a cheque with me," said Carfew hopefully.

The secretary, with diabolical ingenuity, produced an assortment of blank cheques.

"It is rather an act of brigandage," the unhappy donor said, as he signed the cheque with a savage flourish.

"It's for a good cause," said the secretary.

Mr. Bahl himself gave nothing. On behalf of the companies he represented he presented a cheque for a hundred guineas, which had been collected from the various office staffs he controlled, and since the collection had been taken up on the principle that every name on the subscription list would be submitted to Mr. Bahl when the summer holiday arrangements were under consideration, the sums donated had been amazingly and uniformly generous.

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Carfew did not enjoy his dinner. He had never met Bahl in his life, but his instinct told him that the shipowner was a man who had too much money, and a complementary instinct informed him that he (Carfew) was the one man in the world who might deal with this tight-fisted millionaire.

After dinner there was an interval, to enable the guests to express their views to one another on the socialistic tendencies of the Government, and Carfew, with the easy confidence of one who has nothing to lose, made his way to Mr. Bahl.

That gentleman was the centre of a sycophantic circle, and through the ragged end of a cigar he was conveying his conviction that the country was going to the devil, when Carfew, bright and smiling, dawned upon him.

"Glad to meet you again, Mr. Bahl," he said.

"Glad to meet you, Mr.-er-"

"Carfew. Don't say that you've forgotten me," smiled Carfew.

"To be sure," said Mr. Bahl, comprehending the other in one swift glance, which appraised the standing, the bank balance, and the habits of life of his guest.

"I wanted to see you," said Carfew easily, "if you could give me an hour any day next week, except on Thursday. On Thursday," he continued, with a hint of severity, "I am attending a meeting of my board, and, since we are expected to pass a dividend——"

His expressive hands told the remainder of the story.

Mr. Bahl looked at him curiously. He had heard of Mr. Carfew, and recollected that fact in a dim way. Whether Mr. Carfew was a shipper or only a Life Governor of the Bank of England, he could not recall.

"Come and see me on Wednesday," he said, and Carfew nodded. It would have embarrassed him considerably had Mr. Bahl displayed any curiosity as to the object of the forthcoming visit.

Carfew acted on his impulses, and his main impulse had been to get back a portion of the five guineas which, as he chose to think, had been stolen from him by a trick. Before he had left the awe-stricken circle which surrounded Mr. Bahl, he had decided that the five guineas was too small game, and he walked back to his flat in Jermyn Street that night weaving highly improbable dreams of "deals" from which he might derive future sustenance.

As for Mr. Bahl, he promptly forgot all

about the forward young man who had forced his conversation upon him, and turned to a more important question which was at that moment obsessing him.

Now, Mr. Bahr was fabulously rich, and was therefore extremely mean, for it seems that the souls of the very rich are invariably those which leave it easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle.

At the moment there was exercising Mr. Bahl's mind the question of the tugboat Mary Q. He prided himself that he had never spent so much as a brass farthing more than was necessary, either domestically or commercially, and here he was saddled with a dead loss of three thousand golden clinking sovereigns, and, moreover, such were the unpleasant circumstances, was personally liable for this sum.

He had purchased the Mary Q from a syndicate because he had received an inquiry from a South American port of authority, which offered four thousand pounds for a sea-going craft of a certain capacity.

Unfortunately, the inquiry had been addressed to him personally, so that there was no necessity for passing the transaction through the books of his firm, and there was an immediate profit to be had for his own enrichment. He cabled to his buyer, only to discover that the need had been supplied, and thus it came about that he found himself with a tug on his hands for which he had no use whatever.

Worse than this, he had purchased the boat without a proper survey, and it would seem that the *Mary* Q suffered from certain engine infirmities, on the subject of which her previous owners had been discreetly silent.

The Mary Q from that day became a ghostly nightmare with Mr. Bahl, and might, indeed, have brought him to an early end, only that Carfew happened along.

Čarfew came into the Bahl sanctum as the twenty-third possible purchaser of the Mary Q took his leave.

"You'll never have another chance," Mr. Bahl was remarking, a little heatedly.

"We are willing to give two thousand, and put her into repair," said the agent, "and, of course----"

"Good morning," said Mr. Bahl briefly. Then to Carfew, and in another tone : "Ah, good morning, good morning, Mr. Carfew! Sit down and have a cigar," he said, pointing to a chair. "Fact is, Mr. Carfew, I am annoyed. I was making an offer to Tangree, Smilson & Company—you saw that fellow going out ?—a splendid offer. I have got a tug—___"

And he unburdened himself of his trouble, yet in such a manner as to convey the idea that the main worry lay rather in the short-sightedness of people to whom he wished to act benevolently than in any desire on his part to carry through a profitable deal.

He spoke of the *Mary* Q, that splendid sea-going tug, built regardless of cost, fitted without parsimony—a tug capable of earning her owner a fortune, and now lying idle off Gravesend.

He was quick to seize an advantage, and when Carfew, with undisguised enthusiasm, questioned him on the point, he showed just how ownership of the *Mary Q* might lead an ambitious young man from comparative obscurity to a shining pinnacle of fame and affluence.

There was haulage—so much per ton burthen—salvage, tender work. One could get a Board of Trade certificate and use her in the summer months for a pleasure steamer —a yacht even. (This idea appealed immensely to Carfew.)

A tin of white enamel and a bit of polished brass, a few deck-chairs and a slip of carpet under the awning aft—awning aft and all accessories included in the sale price and a man might go swaggering round to Cowes and take anchorage under the very nose of the Royal yacht.

"I must say it seems an idea," said Carfew thoughtfully.

Then, pursued the tempter, suppose the owner wanted a holiday, he might work her down to Ushant, Bordeaux, Bilbao, Vigo, Lisbon, Cadiz, Gib, and by way of the Moorish ports to the Coast. Think of the pickings for a man of spirit—and the adventure !

A sea-going boat, she could carry deck cargo cut and home—Manchester goods to the Coast, and copal, rubber, and bananas back to England. Likely as not, she would be saleable in one of those African ports, and the fortunate owner might return with a thousand or so profit. And he would sell this boat for three thousand, exactly the sum he had given for her. He produced a receipt as proof of his statements.

It happened that Carfew at that moment was weary of all the ordinary channels of speculation. There was in his bosom a sense of restlessness and oppression which comes to the man who eats too much and hails taxicabs automatically. He left the office of the Grey Funnel Line, his brain whirling with the splendid possibilities which lay ahead of him.

The very next day he went to Gravesend with Mr. Bahl's confidential man, and inspected the boat from stem to stern. She seemed big and solid, the brass telegraph on the bridge was very substantial and imposing. Carfew had an insane desire to pull the steam syren—a desire he obeyed, to the embarrassment of another tug's skipper, for the signal he made was "Going to Port," when, as a matter of fact, he was crossing the up-river tug to starboard.

He went down the river to the open sea, and came back to Gravesend on the tiny bridge.

Altogether, Carfew spent a delightful day, and on the Saturday following his trial trip, the Mary Q changed hands, and Carfew added to the list of his vocations, which were inscribed on his office door, that of "Shipowner."

* * *

Parker, who was Carfew's best friend and most fluent critic, listened in silence to a recital of Carfew's grievances.

"Of course," he was saying—this was a month after the purchase—"I never realised that the hands on the *Mary Q* were all Bahl's men, and that they were alternately sitting on the cylinder head—or whatever they call the infernal thing—and praying, whilst we were doing the trip. I thought it curious that the skipper had a life-belt within reach, but I imagined that it was a Board of Trade regulation. It has cost me twelve hundred pounds to put her into working order."

Parker nodded.

"In fact," he said, "you've been had. What does Bahl say?"

"He says, if I call again, he'll send for the police," said the gloomy Carfew.

Mr. Parker smiled sympathetically, but whether his sympathy was directed towards the disgruntled Carfew or the outraged Bahl, is a point for discussion.

"You've done the only wise thing," he said; "without the repairs she was worthless, according to your surveyor. What can you sell her for?"

Carfew shook his head.

"Whatever happens, I lose a thousand," he said, with a catch in his throat, for he hated to lose a thousand.

"I've got a crew, and a man I know has given me a few haulage jobs; it will just about pay the coal and wages bill. I'm sick, Parker. What can I do?" he demanded.

"Æquam memento rebus in arduis servare mentem," said Parker oracularly.

Carfew groaned.

"For Heaven's sake, chuck Latin and talk English !" he pleaded. "What do you mean ?"

"Keep your wool on," translated Parker, "and wait till you find a purchaser who is as big an ass as you are."

"Good afternoon," said Carfew.

For three weary months the Mary Q patrolled the river, a veritable nobody's child, a tramp amongst tugs. Other boats were regularly employed, had snug homes and regular hours, were even distinguished by a cert.in uniformity of funnel. They had slipways for their moments of disorder, quays where they might drowse in the shade of tall warehouses; but the Mary Q loafed away from Tilbury to Lambeth Bridge, doing odd jobs in her humble way, earning the scorn which is due to the unattached.

Carfew had offers for his floating white elephant, but they were ridiculous offers.

The Mary Q became as much a nuisance to him as she had been to her former owner, until there came to him an offer through an agent—an offer much nearer Carfew's conception of equity than any other. This was a tender made on behalf of the Monrovian Municipal Authorities, and, in the argot of the times, Carfew fell for it.

For the first time since the tug had been on his hands, a spark of the old enthusiasm glimmered, and he made his hasty preparations for departure in quite the holiday spirit which he had anticipated would accompany all his associations with his new profession.

"I have had a cabin rigged up pretty cosily," he explained to Parker. "I shall navigate her down to Vigo and re-coal, then on to Gib. I shall put in a day or two at Tangier, then work her along the Moorish ports."

"I suppose you are taking somebody who understands navigation," asked the sceptical Parker—"somebody who knows that the east is opposite to the west, and all that sort of thing ?"

Carfew had engaged a captain, a mate, four hands, and a cook. The captain was a man of many attainments, for he combined his extensive knowledge of seamanship with a perfect execution of concertina solos. His cook had been recommended by the chef of the Witz Hotel, and two of the hands were lifelong abstainers. "You should have an interesting voyage," said Parker. "I can picture your cook preparing soles delices bonne femme, with the captain encouraging him with a selection from Grieg, and at least two of your crew weeping into their lemonade."

But Carfew was in too cheery a mood to be annoyed. So elated was he, that he must needs call upon Mr. Bahl. He might have been denied admission, but the clerk who took his card did not know him, and on the back of the card he had scribbled : "Sold the tug; want to tell you all about it."

"What did you get for her?" asked Bahl suspiciously.

"Five thousand," lied Carfew. "I am working her out to Monrovia to-morrow."

" To Monrovia ? "

Bahl's eyebrows rose.

"To Monrovia," repeated Carfew.

Bahl looked thoughtful.

"Curiously enough," he said slowly, "I was selling the Monrovian people a boat. I've got a little two thousand tonner which isn't much use to us, and would be more useful than your tug. I suppose they know all about the engine troubles?" he demanded.

"There are no engine troubles," said Carfew wrathfully.

" Of course not."

"And look here," roared Carfew, thumping the desk with his fist, "if you spoil my deal, I'll—I'll break your infernal head!"

Mr. Bahl smiled. He was a millionaire and felt safe, because people do not break the heads of millionaires. It isn't done.

"Curiously enough," he said, as though speaking to himself, "I am leaving for Monrovia the day after to-morrow; one of my boats, the *Shell King*, is leaving for the Coast. I shall probably be waiting for you in Monrovia, and we will talk this matter over."

Carfew did not trust himself to speak. He made his way to the nearest telegraph office and wired to Gravesend.

Fortunately his belongings were aboard, and there was little to do in town, save to hand over the keys of his flat to a caretaker.

He left the river that night on a falling tide, and came out of his unsteady cabin in the grey of the morning to see the white cliffs of Dover appearing and disappearing with sickening monotony over the dipping starboard gunwale. The tug was a cramped, cheerless habitation, and long before the tiny boat had bumped and shuddered its way round Ushant, Carfew had lost all the good spirits that had been his when the voyage started.

"Why the deuce does she roll?" he demanded of the captain.

and shifted his feet to give him purchase against the next heavy roll, which, with a master mariner's eye, he saw was due.

Carfew, whose eye was in no way nautical, clutched a stanchion, and gave himself up



"Why does she roll?" Captain Walter Worth was a stout man, with a trying habit of ekeing out his conversation with whole sentences stolen from the previous speaker.

"Well, sir, all tugs roll; but they are very, very safe."

He pulled away at a short and foul pipe,

for lost as the blunt nose of the tug bashed itself into the heavy waters.

"You get used to tugs after a bit," said the captain philosophically, "They ain't like ships, where you've got twenty officers messin' about—engineer this and engineer that. A tug can go where a liner can't. They look down on tugs, but what do they send for when they've got a broken shaft? Tugs! Who goes out to a ship that can't live in a sea? Tugs! You can earn more money in a week with a tug than you can earn with a—with a—a Dreadnought!"

Carfew said nothing. He was thinking principally of land—happy, motionless land; land that keeps still and doesn't fool about, throwing a chap off his feet and covering him from head to foot in dust.

"I haven't found a lot of money in tugs," he said at last, with some bitterness. "I wish I'd never seen this infernal craft."

Captain Worth pulled at his yellow-white moustache and eyed him severely.

"You've never found a lot of money in tugs, sir?" he said. "You wish you'd never seen this here tug? Come, come, sir ! I don't like to hear a gentleman talk about tugs like that. Why, in my time, I've made thousands for owners and hundreds for myself out of tugs !"

He grasped the fore-rail of the bridge as a sea rose up and hit the little vessel a horrible nerve-racking buffet on the port bow.

Carfew, clinging on to the nearest support, saw the green waters pour smoothly over the tiny well-deck, cream and swirl for a moment, then, as the stout *Mary Q* asserted herself and brought her bows to daylight, he gazed fascinated at the spectacle of the waters rushing back to the parent sea in two miniature waterfalls.

"Phew!" he said, and felt hot. "We're in the Bay now, I suppose?"

"You're in the Bay now, sir, as you suppose," agreed the skipper gravely.

Seven days out of Gravesend--seven years sliced clumsily from Carfew's life-- the Mary Q struck a storm, which made all Carfew's previous experience on the tug comparable with punting on a Crystal Palace lake.

It seemed that the horizon was alternately a dozen yards and twenty miles distant. The Mary Q did every trick in her repertoire except turn somersault. She stood on her head, she reared up, she went to sleep on her right side, and appeared unwilling to change her position; then she went to sleep on her left side, and seemed to enjoy the change. She took seas whichever way the seas happened to be running, and as they appeared to be running in all directions, she obligingly accepted service to one and all at the same moment. She lost her lifeboat; nobody thought it worth while to remark on the fact. Carfew's concern was

centred on the problem : would she also lose him ?

He had a horrible suspicion that, if she did, nobody would mention that fact, either. Perhaps, he thought, the mate might remark to the captain : "There goes Carfew—he floats very well for a landsman." And the captain might reply: "There goes Mr. Carfew —he does float very well for a landsman."

The storm passed, and the wind dropped in six hours from its rising, leaving the Mary Q afloat on a sea which it would be erring on the side of moderation to describe as mountainous.

Carfew, weary of body and—amongst other things—of soul, went to his cabin, and was strapped into his bunk by a sympathetic cook.

From sheer exhaustion he fell asleep, and when he woke, eight hours later, the seas had subsided till there was little more than a gentle swell.

He might have slept twenty hours, but he was awakened by the captain's hand on his shoulder.

"Are we going down?" he asked, and struggled to free himself of the strap with which a too faithful chef had bound him.

"Are we going down?" repeated the captain. "No, we ain't going down; we're coming up."

With deliberation he unstrapped his owner and helped him to the deck.

"We're comin' up smilin'," he went on. "Just get a cup of hot coffee for Mr. Carfew an' bring it up on the bridge."

It was a cloudless night. Overhead the stars winked and sparkled cheerfully.

"What is the time ?" asked Carfew.

"What is the time?" replied Captain Worth. "It's three o'clock in the morning, or, as we say, six bells."

"And what the dickens do you mean," demanded an irritated and sleepy Carfew, "by calling me up at three o'clock in the morning, or, as you say, six bells?"

The captain, staggered no doubt by the plagiarism, made no reply. He led the way along the slippery deck and went clanking up the tiny ladder which led to the bridge, Carfew following.

"There," he said, and pointed westward.

Carfew looked, and saw somewhere on the horizon a faint glimmer of light. As he focussed his gaze, wondering exactly what it indicated, he saw a thread of fire rise slowly into the sky, describe a reluctant curve, and burst into a ball of blue stars.

He felt the captain's big hand on his arm, and it was trembling with excitement. "Don't you go sellin' this tug to them niggers," said Captain Worth hoarsely. "You can make money out of tugs. Look at that signal!"

A Roman candle spluttered near the lights.

"Four blues, a green, an' a red. That's the *Shell King*, one of old Bahl's ships, and if I know anything about signallin', she's lost her propeller."

Carfew gasped.

In silence he watched as Captain Worth

burnt an answering flare over one side of the bridge. The nose of the tug turned toward the distressed liner.

"Lost her propeller," said the captain, and his homely face was pleasantly fiendish in the blue light of the flare. "A passenger ship! She's worth ten thousand poun' to you, sir—we'll tow her into Bilbao. What a pity old Bahl ain't aboard !"

"He is !" said Carfew, and clasped the outraged captain in his arms.

LOVE IN IDLENESS.

A SEAT on a green grass bank, In May, when green's at its newest, And no one to hinder or thank, And the speedwell blue at its bluest.

The grass for a cushion of down, As green as Ireland can make it, And a small stream golden and brown, To wake your thirst and to slake it.

The hills of Ireland forninst you,

The cowslips under your nose,

Sure, if the world be against you,

Sit down, nor think of your woes.

The feel of the Irish grass Is softer nor silk and satin, The air is clear as a glass,

And the larks sing Vespers or Matin.

Before you go on your way, Sit down, and you'll hear in a minute The call of the Spring far away, Bidding us laugh while we're in it.

Call of the heavenly weather, Hailing us out to the hill, Over the gorse and the heather,

Will not let us be still.

A seat on a green grass bank, With a thorn-tree opening above me, Cowslips, rank upon rank, Give me, Fates, an' you love me.

I would never ask fame nor money, Nor rank nor power in my dream, But a grass-bank, flowery and sunny, In May, by an Irish stream.

KATHARINE TYNAN.

OUR COLONEL NEWCOME

By B. PAUL NEUMAN

Illustrated by Steven Spurrier



HAT is what I began to call him to myself before I had been in the house a week. I don't think anyone who knew his Thackeray at all could have helped doing so, the likeness was so patent. It was a

likeness that seemed to go deeper than figure, or face, or clothes, or manners. The simple kindliness, the good heart, the oldfashioned chivalry that made you smile as well as admire—all these were reproduced in Major Roane, the bright particular star of the Bedwell House Private Boarding Establishment, Montague Street, W.C.

I was at that time serving my apprenticeship as a journalist, and I found it pretty hard to make both ends meet—at any rate, without showing where they were a little frayed. I had one regular piece of work—a column of dramatic criticism in *The Eyeopener*, a threepenny weekly run by a wealthy young M.P., who was willing to pay for the privilege of having an organ of his own. This brought me a guinea a week, and, besides this, I often got a little extra for book reviews and "notes." Then I was always pestering obdurate editors with short stories, or stories which ought to have been short, but were not, and sometimes I raked in a few shillings by very topical verse.

It was a precarious existence, but not an unhappy one. There was plenty of variety, one came in contact with a great many interesting people, and I was firmly convinced that I was travelling on the main line to Eldorado.

Bedwell House was quite a good specimen of its class. It was not showy, but it was comfortable. It was beautifully clean, the furniture and appointments were kept ingood condition, and the food and cooking, though plain, were excellent of their kind. As befitted my modest means, I had a small bed-sitting-room on the top floor. The Major had a large first-floor bedroom with a cosy little dressing-room attached, and between the two extremes of poverty and affluence there were many degrees.

Our landlady, Mrs. Staggers, was a small, brisk, cheerful woman, with plenty of energy and unusual business capacity. Her chief pride, and one of her chief difficulties, was her husband, Dr. Staggers. According to her, he was a paragon of learning and a compendium of the virtues. He certainly was a Ph.D. of Berlin, and I believe he had been Professor of Philosophy at one of the Colonial Universities; but his health had broken down, and for years he had been a helpless invalid with spinal trouble that grew slowly but steadily worse. Pain and weariness often made him sadly irritable, but his wife's reverence and devotion never flagged. A little back room on the ground floor was sacred to him, and there he received the visits of the elect whom Mrs. Staggers judged fit to profit by his conversation.

I had been in the house quite a fortnight before I was invited to what Dr. Staggers himself spoke of as his "sanctum." "I'm out of the way here," he said, in his querulous voice; "it's a little hole and very dark, but I suppose I ought to be thankful to have any place at all of my own."

Perhaps I did not make sufficient allowance for his unhappy circumstances, but I certainly was not favourably impressed by the Professor during that first visit. In addition to his complaints of the discomforts and neglect he suffered, he struck me as one of the most inquisitive people I had ever met, and the cross-examination through which he put me would have done credit to an Old Bailey barrister.

Just as my patience was beginning to give out, there came a very discreet little knock on the door.' Immediately the Professor's face brightened. "Come in, Major!" he cried, his voice as changed as his face. The

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door opened, and Major Roane walked in. He made me a formal, old-fashioneds bow, and shook hands with the invalid. (1900)

"Good evening, Professor," he said, speaking with a certain note of deference that was evidently welcome. "I asked leave to have a few minutes' audience, and Mrs. Staggers was good enough to say. I might try my luck. May I take a chair ??"

Permission was graciously accorded, and I remembered that I had taken one without asking.

The Major produced his cigar-case, a huge antique affair of tortoiseshell and gold. He held it out to Dr. Staggers.

"Some of the sort you like there, sir. Oblige me by taking one."

"Very good of you, Major; I think I could enjoy a little smoke."

Then the cigar-case was offered to me with a courtly flourish, and when I took one of the formidable-looking torpedoes, I was thanked as if I had conferred a favour. Certainly the Major's manners were not those of to-day.

For half an hour we sat there, and I marvelled at the tact with which the visitor, evidently not a very intellectual man, kept the conversation on the lines that best pleased the invalid.

When the Major rose, I got up too.

"Thank you a thousand times, Professor," he said, with another of his wonderful bows. "I never have the privilege of half an hour with you without feeling as if I were at college again."

As in the sanctum, so it was in the diningroom and drawing-room. In spite of his clothes, which, though obviously of the best materials, all seemed a few years behind the fashions, and of his manners, which ran back still further, the Major had an exquisite tact, or else it was the triumph of a simple, kindly heart, which his old-time airs and graces only reinforced. At any rate, I am quite sure that as a peacemaker he was worth far more than his board to Mrs. Staggers. When Mrs. Compton-Marsh fell out so furiously with Miss Lilley over the piano practising, it was the Colonel—I mean the Major-who in a single evening negotiated peace with honour. When Mr. Tarn, who had been ten years in the house, was beside himself at being asked to move to another room, while his own was being whitewashed and repapered, it was Major Roane who produced a couple of stall tickets for the Savoy, and brought back the lion as gentle as a lamb. And when Rose and Polly, the

parlour-maids, struck for higher wages and shorter hours, it was the Major again who saved the situation and arranged terms satisfactory to both mistress and maids.

Nor was Mrs. Staggers ungrateful. Next only to her husband, Major Roane represented to her the ideal gentleman. "Had he enjoyed the same advantages of culture——" she once began, but the sentence remained unfinished. Well might she value him. Punctual in his payments for her best rooms, sweet-tempered himself, and a begetter of sweet temper in others, the friend of every other boarder and the idol of the servants, you might have searched all Bloomsbury without finding his peer.

II.

PERHAPS it was because I had so closely associated our dear Major with Thackeray's famous Colonel that I was not more surprised when I began to hear whispers of financial trouble. Almost every day he went out about ten in the morning and returned about six. He sometimes spoke casually of having been in the City, and I remember his mentioning his stockbrokers and his solicitors. He certainly did look worried, but it was characteristic of him that, as soon as he entered into conversation, the cloud seemed to pass, and his interest in his neighbours' affairs appeared as keen as ever.

One day I heard Mrs. Staggers and Mrs. Compton-Marsh talking together in the dining-room after luncheon.

"He's too good-natured and easy-going, the dear Major," said the landlady; "I'm always afraid of his being victimised."

"Why," asked the other anxiously—we were all fond of our Major—"you don't think he's in financial difficulties, do you?"

"Oh, no; I should be very sorry to say that. But you know how kind he is, and military gentlemen are always better away from the City, I think."

That very evening, after dinner, the Major asked me into his room. The little dressingroom was fitted up as a study, with a writing-table, a bookcase, and two or three chains. I often spent half an hour in the evening with the dear old man. In his simple, friendly way he had given me a good deal of sound advice, and I was grateful for the interest he always showed in my own personal affairs

We sat smoking, I with my bull-dog briar and heavy tobacco, he with his precious Havanas. The table was littered with envelopes and papers. The Major glanced at them.

"It's wonderful what a lot of speculation goes on," he said. "Look at these! What they must spend in stamps alone!" He held up a neat little book.

I took it and looked at it with curiosity. "Prudence and Profit," it was called, and it was issued by a firm of stockbrokers named Max Egerton and Co. I skimmed a page or two, and thought it seemed all very plausible. I looked up to find the Major watching me with a smile on his kind old face.

"Put it in the wastepaper basket," he said. "It's dangerous reading for young men unless their pockets are well lined."

But it struck me as interesting.

"No," I answered. "If you don't want it, I may get some copy out of it. I suppose they're swindlers?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"I shouldn't like to say that without actual knowledge. But they make their profit out of other people's mistakes, and that's bad."

"I wonder whether anyone ever makes anything out of them?" I said.

He laughed.

"I know one man who did, but he had more strength of mind than most. He said the first deal with these gentry was generally safe enough. If they were honest, you were all right. And if they were sharks—that was his way of putting it, mind you—it was to their interest that you should make something on the first deal. Afterwards, he said, look out for squalls."

I was interested in the subject, and tried to keep the conversation on these lines, but the Major soon shunted it. I fancied he scented danger for me.

If he did, he was not far out, for Max Egerton's facts and figures would have deceived the very elect. Unluckily, my little balance at the bank was not quite so small as usual, and before I went to bed I had made up my mind to send ten pounds for a share in a "Co-operative Deal" in some American railway stock. The actual risk, the book said, was three pounds, and the probable profit seven or eight pounds, though possibly it might be much larger. I drew the cheque in favour of Max Egerton and Co., Limited, and posted it in the morning.

I felt a little uneasy at not hearing from the firm by the last post at night, and I avoided the Major as much as possible, for I had begun to feel ashamed of my plunge. I was rather dismayed, therefore, when he knocked at my door and asked if he might smoke a cigar in my company.

I could not refuse, but I felt very uncomfortable, and fervently hoped that we might steer clear of finance.

And we did. In my anxiety I took the lead, and our talk—or, rather, mine—was chiefly about my home and prospects, and the dear little girl to whom I was engaged, for I had confided this great secret to the Major not long before. After all my apprehensions, I thoroughly enjoyed the talk.

Next morning it was with mixed feelings that I received a letter from Max Egerton and Co., returning my cheque and regretting that the "Co-operative Deal" had been fully subscribed before my esteemed application reached them. I thought with a pang of the seven or eight pounds "probable profit," but, on the other hand, I remembered that I should now feel at my ease again in the Major's presence.

At dinner we all noticed that at first he looked worried; but, as usual, he soon rallied, and trotted out his ancient jokes and paid his old-fashioned compliments to the ladies. In some way he had found out that it was poor Dr. Staggers's birthday, and he had brought in a special bottle of wine, which he insisted on our drinking to the Professor's health and speedy recovery. His little speech, in spite of the flowery language, was really touching, and I saw the tears in our landlady's eyes.

After dinner the Major went in to smoke a birthday cigar with Dr. Staggers, the ladies retired upstairs, and Mr. Tarn and I were left in the dining-room. A sharp knock sounded on the hall door. The next moment Rose, the parlour-maid, put her head in. "Someone for Major Roane," she began, when a big man, with a clean-shaven face and keen eyes, almost pushed her aside.

"Beg your pardon, gentlemen, for disturbing you," he said, in a curiously low voice, " but is Major Roane here?"

"He's in the next room," I said, getting up. "I'm going in there now. I'll tell him."

"Thank you, sir," said the stranger; but when I knocked at and opened the door of Dr. Staggers's room, he was at my heels. I caught a glimpse of another man in the passage, close to the hall door.

I doubt whether Major Roane saw me at all. His eyes looked past me, and his face was transfigured. The eyes turned to steel, the complexion went ashen grey, the lips

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snapped tight together, and all the other features seemed to grow sharp and hard.

The man nodded, but he laid his hand lightly on the Major's arm.

Immediately the Professor broke out into

"What's the matter? What are they doing to the Major ? Lucy ! Lucy ! What does it all mean, Lucy ? "

And he rang his bell so furiously that in a moment, so it seemed, the hall Mrs. Staggers ran up to the

"What is all this?" she cried. "What

are you doing?" "Why, ma'am," he answered, "I'm very sorry to upset you, but I've got to do my duty. I have a warrant here to arrest this man" he took out a paper from his pocket — "Max Egerton, alias Herbert Temperley, alias Richard Roane. sometimes calls himself Major Roane."

"Max Egerton!" shrieked Mrs. Compton - Marsh. "Oh, the wretch ! He's had ever so much money out of me !"

"Herbert Temperlev !" roared Mr. Tarn, purple in " He's the face. swindled me out of more than a hundred pounds with his cursed pools !"

"Oh, Major Roane !" cried poor Mrs. Staggers, now weeping openly.

The Major had pulled himself together in a wonderful way. He looked years youngeralert, bold, and selfpossessed. Heturned to the landlady.

"I've done you no harm, anyway," he

the Major brushed past me and said to him in a low voice : "Not here ! That man on the couch is very ill; it might kill him. In the hall."

said, and now there was no hint of Colonel Newcome in voice or manner. Then he turned to his captor.



"Let's get out of this," he said.

The man nodded and beckoned to his satellite.

"here, Dick," he said, "the lady of the house will show you his room. Go up and get together all the papers and letters you can find, and bring them to the station. Now, then, please." Just as they passed the dining-room, where I was standing, the Major gave me a nod and a smile.

"You got your letter?" he asked.

"Yes," I said ; "thank you very much."

"That's all right," he answered, with another little nod. "I'm as glad as you are."

LIFE, THE SCHOOL-DAY.

I'LL breast this tide of Time, be not mere driftwood; Will dare, will do, will front the dawning sun; Will press with joyous foot the unknown pathways,

Nor pause to count the trophies I have won;

Will laugh at Fear, for Youth is crowned with courage, And on his lips is Hope's triumphant song—

For what is life to me but hopeless dreaming

If I stand idle in an eager throng?

I will not murmur though the way be weary,

Nor shun the depths where ambushed sorrows sleep; In manhood's battle I will scorn to falter,

So with my burden stagger up the steep.

Though bruised by failure, still my heart will triumph;

Hopes drenched with tears will bloom to bless again— For what is life but striving for expression

And learning lessons writ in pangs of pain?

I'll bide with love, and self will be forgotten;

Ask less and less, bestowing more and more;

Nor will I yield to either doubt or dogma,

While shadows creep toward the eastern shore, For Truth alone will now sustain my spirit,

Life grows more free, my ego is unbound— For what is life but just to test the metal

Of my own soul and shape it to the round?

I'll watch my evening star climb up the heavens;

Will see my sands run out, the shadows fall. Behold 1 as Past survives, so does the Future

Whose gates swing open to receive us all; I'll wait in peace and confidence the hour.

I hear the word of wisdom said—and lo ! I see that life, in truth, is but a school-day;

My part to learn: at last my part to know!

PAUL DERRICK.



"THE FORTUNE-TELLER." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A. Reproduced from the engraving published by Virtue & Co.

THE ART OF JOHN PHILLIP, R.A.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

JOHN PHILLIP was endowed by Nature with strenuous and rugged solemnity of purpose, and his work challenges comparison with the best which England produced during the first half of the nineteenth century, for his colour was of remarkable richness and his pictorial faculty by no means inconsiderable.

He was, however, one of the sad examples of the waste of good material which Fate so often and so capriciously makes of man, for he was born into a non-pictorial age and of parentage which put him beyond the pale of participating in the educational advantages which legislation to-day has placed within reach of those of the meanest birth.

He had probably never heard of a great picture or a great statue, nor seen examples of either at the time when, apprenticed to a painter and glazier, he determined to relinquish the laying on of flat coats of colour for manipulation of the delicate bewilderments of a varied palette.

Imprisoned as he was in the narrow cell of penury, it is only in tracing to him a natural kinship to Art that we can account for his early success. His struggles and his ambitions to express himself in colour—how interesting the story of them would have been, could we have had it from him direct. As it is, we can but guess that he was conscious of possessing a power which only required disciplining to become great, and that, as he fought his way through the baffling intricacies of Art's technique, he must have been encouraged to persevere by some consciousness that he was possessed of genius.

"It is safe to assume that had he," wrote Henley, "been born into a school, he would have been a painter from the outset." When we take into consideration the disadvantages under which he worked, it is the height to which he attained rather than the height to which he failed to attain which is the surprising element of his career.

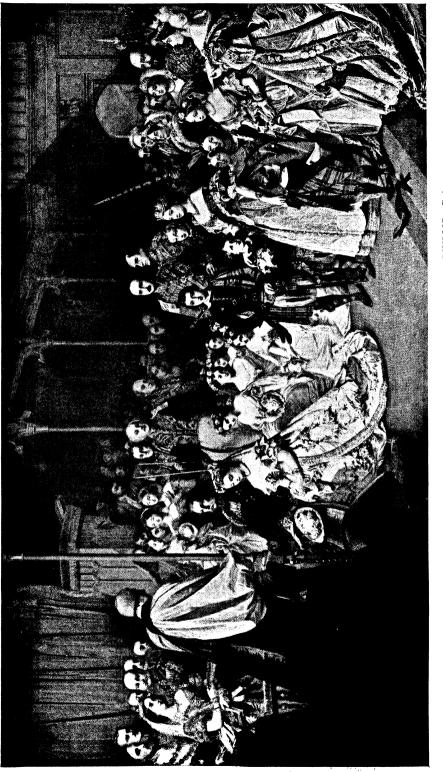
a little later was apprenticed to a painter and glazier; and now it was that he was quick enough to take advantage of such He was born in 1817 in Aberdeen. He materials as this accident of apprenticeship was the son of a soldier who had fought put in his way. The first picture which he



"THE MOUNTAIN DAISY." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A. Reproduced from a photograph by Virtue & Co.

valiantly for his country, but who, beyond the satisfaction of having done his duty, had gained no profit. John, as soon as he was of an age to leave the local school, became errand-boy to a tinsmith in that town, and essayed to paint was a copy of a signboard bearing the head of William Wallace.

It cannot be supposed that the work did more than show promise of better things, but this promise was sufficiently demonstrated



Reproduced from the large engraving published by L. H. Lefevre & Son, King Street, St. James's, S.W. "THE MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCESS ROYAL." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A.

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to attract the notice of two local artists, named respectively Mercer and Forbes, both of whom are said to have given Phillip some encouragement and a little instruction. By their help he was undoubtedly introduced into the world of paint, and we must assume that he heard from them of the wonders of the Royal Academy Exhibition, for greedy of discovery, anxious to extend the range of his nascent experiences, his fixed idea was to view that large yearly artistic market-place, and how to attain this end became a problem which he set himself to solve.

He was still in the employ of the painter and glazier, he had no money, consequently his way south had to be accomplished in a clandestine manner. In some memorial notes upon his career, his intimate friend, Thomas Barlow, the engraver, gave the following account of the adventure : "An acquaintance of young Phillip's father had often promised that he would some day take the boy to London in his brig; but whenever the old sailor was reminded of this promise, it was always the wrong time for its performance. Impatient of this hope deferred, John Phillip one day hid himself on board, and only revealed himself when the vessel was too far out to put back. The skipper at first threatened punishment with the rope's end, but, relenting, set him to work to paint the figurehead of



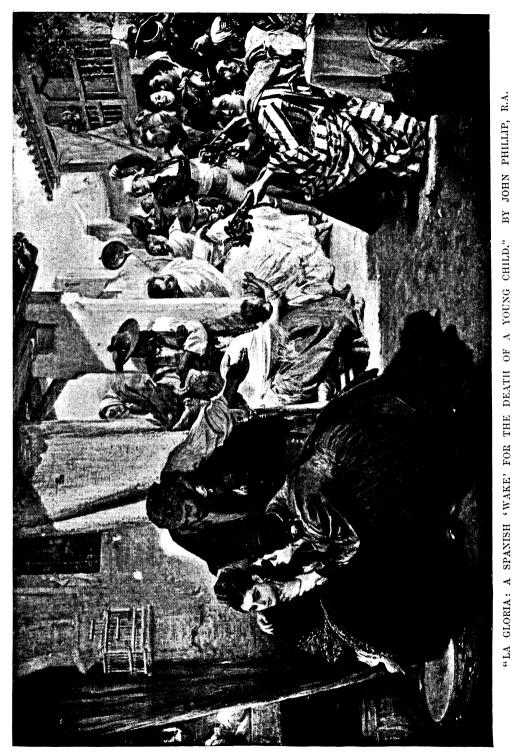
"DOLORES." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A. Reproduced from the plate published by L. H. Lefevre & Son, King Street, St. James's, S.W.



"FAITH." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A. Reproduced from the plate published by L. H. Leftvre & Son, King Street, St. James's, S.W.

On arriving in London, the lad the brig. was kept two whole days 'lifting ballast,' and was not permitted to leave the ship. Having at length been given one day's leave of absence, he was at Somerset House-where the exhibitions of the Academy were then held—by five o'clock in the morning, when he found that he had two hours to wait. As soon as the doors of the Academy were opened, to use his own words, 'I was the first in, and they swept me out with the sawdust in the evening.' The same night, to redeem his promise, he went back to the brig, and in her returned to Aberdeen. He afterwards painted an interesting picture of this ship, The Manly, and gave it to the skipper, Mr. Benzie."

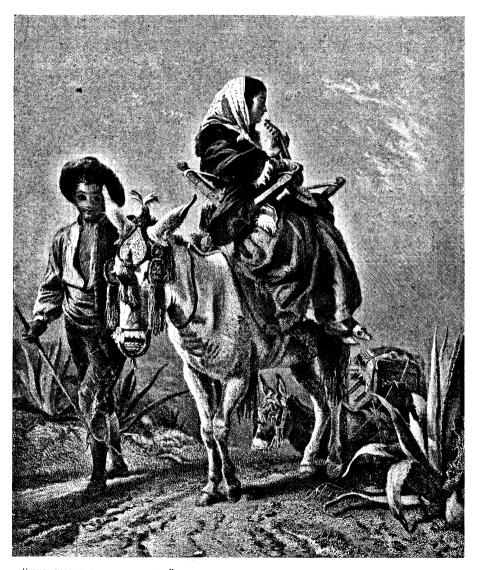
It is pathetic to think that it was the idea of seeing only the exhibition of contemporary work at the Royal Academy which attracted him to London, and that no whisper of the then recently acquired nucleus of pictures upon which our National Gallery is based should have reached his ears. Established in Pall Mall at the house of Mr. Augerstein, this had been opened to the public in May, 1824, and, at the time of Phillip's visit to London, had been largely augmented by examples of works of Rembrandt, Rubens, Hogarth, Reynolds, Gainsborough, Cuyp, It is more than probable and Murillo. that had Phillip then come in contact with



From the original in the National Gallery of Scottish Art, Edinburgh.

any of the masterpieces of great Art, he would have been influenced by them much as, in later life, when he went to Spain, he was influenced by the work of Velasquez.

It is safe to assume this, for Phillip was the possessor of that clear vision which is the stowaway expedition. He was sent one day by his master—he was still in the employ of the painter and glazier—to mend a window in the house of Major Pryse Gordon, who was the possessor of a number of fine pictures. With the window still



"THE WAYSIDE IN ANDALUSIA." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A., AND RICHARD ANSDELL, A.R.A. Reproduced from the engraving published by Virtue & Co.

conferred on those who are greatly gifted. At this time, if he were, as is probable, dissatisfied with the technical limitations of his own work, he was acutely alive to the fine qualities to be observed in that of others. We have an example of this not long after

unmended, the lad, an hour or so after his entry into the room, was discovered by Major Pryse Gordon standing upon a chair, absorbed in study of a picture. His shrewd appraisement of the picture's qualities induced its owner to bring the embryo



"GOSSIPS AT A WELL." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A. From the original in the National Gallery of British Art, Millbank, S.W. genius to the notice of Lord Panmure, in whom he gained a valuable patron. Phillip had already painted a large canvas containing no fewer than twelve figures, called "A Pedlar or Newsvendor," and this became the property of Lord Panmure, and, later, was amongst the pictures which his lordship where he worked industriously for a couple of years; and in 1838 he figures as an exhibitor at the Royal Academy, being represented by a portrait of a lady and a landscape.

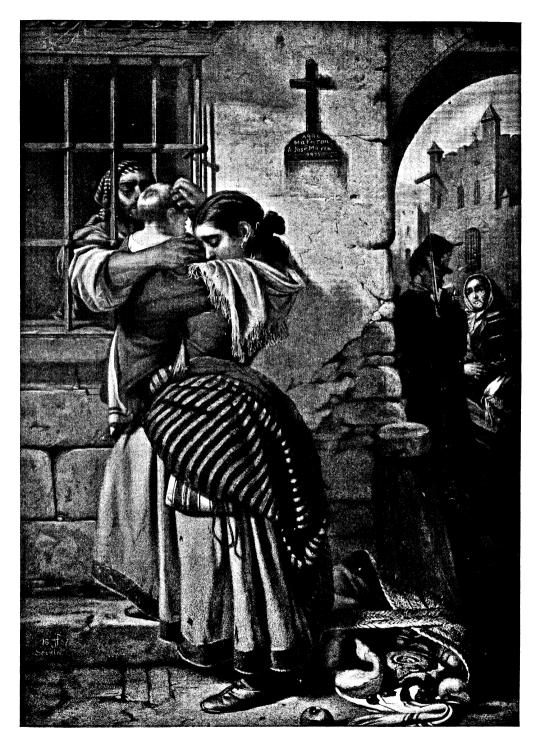
The British Institution held two of his pictures the next year, "A Piper" and "Highland Courtship." In 1840 a more



"THE BALCONY." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A. From the original in the Public Art Gallery, Leicester, reproduced by permission of the Art Committee.

presented to the Mechanics' Institution at Brechin.

In 1836 Lord Panmure sent John Phillip to London, undertaking the cost of his art education. Placed at first in the studio of Mr. T. M. Joy, he afterwards entered the schools of the Royal Academy, important subject - picture, "Tasso in Disguise, Relating His Persecutions to His Sister," was hung in the Architectural Room of the Academy; and in the autumn of this year, Phillip, giving up a studio in London, returned to Scotland, and, until 1843, painted a number of portraits



"THE PRISON WINDOW." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A. One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin. Reproduced from the large plate published by Henry Graves & Co., Pall Mall, S.W.



"A WATER-CARRIER OF SEVILLE." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A.

in his native town. Thence he sent to the Academy a picture of considerable importance, entitled "Bruce About to Receive the Sacrament on the Morning Previous to the Battle of Bannockburn. In 1845 the British Institution held two of his pictures, one a landscape painted in Mar Forest, Aberdeenshire, and the other a small subject-picture called "A Highland Home." To this same gallery he sent, in the following year, "Courtship" and "The Grandfather," and to the Academy "Presbyterian Catechising," the most ambitious of his early works. Vivid in promise as all these pictures were, they gave little earnest of what was to be the fine result of John Phillip's later years. His productions at this time are, indeed, chiefly reminiscent of the practice and methods of the popular genre painters of his country at that period.

We get from his brush similar subjects, such as "Scotch Washing," "A Scotch Fair," and "The Spae Wife of the Clachan," until the year 1854, which brought about a complete reversal of his style and marked him as a man of such astonishing temperament, energy, and strength as to enable him, at thirty-four, as Henley says, "after full seventeen years, to renew his ideals, his methods, and his style, and for the rest of his life he worked, according to his lights and in the measure of his strength, in the direction of better things."

Sir David Wilkie wrote from Madrid that he felt himself in the presence of a new power in Art as he looked at the works of Velasquez. If Wilkie, a much less impressionable man than was Phillip, felt thus, we can easily picture the extent to



"LADY WITH GUITAR." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A.

Two reproductions from the originals in the City of Nottingham Art Museum, Permanent Collection, by permission of the Trustees.



"THE RELIC SELLER." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A.

which Phillip was influenced; for, proportionately as an artist's susceptibility to the quality of beauty increases in depth, so does his education near completion. Phillip, too, was a keen student of the methods whose art hung in our dining-room. He would stand upon a chair and, after carefully dusting the picture with his handkerchief, peer close and long. He would turn away from Jackson's masterpiece with a sigh and



"SPANISH INDUSTRY." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A. From the original in the Preston Corporation Art Gallery, by permission of the Art Committee.

employed by other men. I, moi qui vous parle, can recall how, as a very small child, I watched Phillip, then to me a very old man, study the methods employed by Jackson, the famous portrait-painter, a fine example of shake of the head which meant "such work is beyond me."

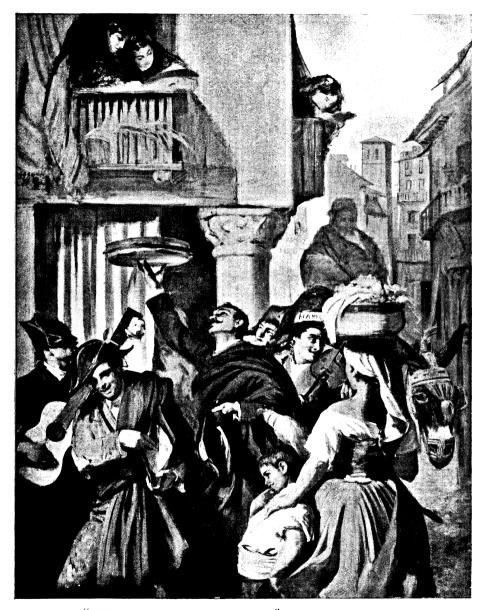
Ruskin found in Phillip's work an excess of decision and force—that he had much to subdue, much to refine, before he could represent not merely the piquancy, but the wayward, half melancholy mystery of Spanish beauty. This was in 1855, but in the following year he retracted his charge of vulgarity and found Phillip to have made the critic asserts that the artist is losing refinement, and in "The Huff," exhibited in 1859, whilst allowing it to be full of powerful and dexterous painting, and not ungraceful, he returns to his original charge of vulgarity.



"THE PROMENADE." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A. From the original in the National Gallery of British Art, Millbank, S.W.

more progress than any other painter in so short a time; and in the picture "And the Prayer of Faith Shall Save the Sick," he finds the principal head, with its opalescent earring, to be "quite beautiful." In 1858, however, Ruskin, we think, was wrong in his appraisement of Phillip's work, for it was not vulgar, it was not common either in treatment or in colour. It was bold, graceful, expressive, and natural, brilliant in colour, yet not meretricious, facile as well as strong.

Phillip was a draughtsman of singular facility and skill, and that his pictures Victorian painters—that is to say, of those whose life-work was finished in the 'sixties and one of the few whose work is safe from oblivion, but he belongs to Victorian times,



"STUDENTS OF SALAMANCA SERENADING." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A. The mule in this picture was painted by Richard Ansdell, A.R.A. From the original in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, reproduced by permission of the Corporation of Liverpool.

happen to be both interesting and attractive for other reasons than their themes, is an excellent argument of his ability.

He is, perhaps, the greatest of the mid-

although he stood out on a lofty level from amongst his contemporaries.

During the period in which Ruskin thus criticised his work, Phillip exhibited in the



"THE MUSIC LESSON." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A. Reproduced from a photograph by Virtue & Co.

Academy no less than ninetcen pictures. The year 1854 showed in the Academy his application of old standards to new work in his "A Letter-Writer, Seville," and the best-known of his ensuing works are "A Gipsy Water-Carrier of Seville," 1856, "The Prison

Window "—now in the Tate Gallery—1857, the year in which he was elected A.R.A. ; "A Portrait of the Prince Consort," painted for the City of Aberdeen, 1858; "Spanish Contrabandistas" and "Daughters of the Alhambra," of the same year, and "A Huff," 1859, in which year he was elected a full Member. There followed on, in 1860, a commanded picture of "The Marriage of the Princess Royal with the Prince Frederick William of Prussia," and "Prayer," his Diploma work. "Gossips at a Well" marked 1861: "Doubtful Fortunes" and "Water Drinkers" were, perhaps, the most popular of his pictures shown in 1862, and in 1864 he electrified people with the brilliancy of his "La Gloria," a picture of a Spanish "Wake," of dancing and festivity to mark the death of a little child, whose mother This work is refuses to be comforted. probably his highest achievement.

In 1865 came "A Scene in the Early Career of Murillo," and Phillip dates the event as happening in 1634. Murillo then was reduced to earning his daily bread by painting hasty pictures for the weekly fair, held in a broad street branching from the northern end of the Alameda in front of the old church of All Saints, Seville, remarkable for its picturesque semi-Moorish belfry. In 1866, in the last year of a life which, in all, reached but to forty-nine years, he exhibited at the Academy "A Chat Round the Brasero," a happy and characteristic specimen of his art, now in the City of London's Art Gallery at the Guildhall.

In this year (1866), the last year of his life, "Phillip of Spain," as it had become the fashion to call him, for once forsook the country of his artistic adoption in his choice of a Continental holiday, and went to Florence, accompanied by a friend. He was still zealous to learn from the best work of the past, and Mr. Barlow tells how this friend left him one day in the Pitti Palace, earnestly studying a portrait by Titian, and, returning to the gallery nearly an hour afterwards, found him still standing on the form before the picture, "trying" as he said, "to find out how Titian did it."



"THE LETTER-WRITER, SEVILLE." BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A. From the picture commissioned by Queen Victoria, and now in the Royal Collection. Reproduced from an etching published by Virtue & Co.

MARRYING JACK By OWEN OLIVER

Illustrated by Balliol Salmon



is a question of Jack," Colonel Sladen said, tugging at his long grey moustache. He meant Evangeline Christabel Jackson Sladen, but he always called her that. "As for me, I've had a good

time, and a man has to hand in his checks sooner or later. Hang it all !"

"I should see a specialist," I advised. "You don't look like handing in yet."

"I don't feel like it," he growled, "except when those beastly pains come on. I thought they were only indigestion; but Dr. Bennett says they're heart, and he generally knows what he's talking about. I shan't waste any fees on humbugging specialists. I may as well die cheap! There's little enough to leave Jack, without wasting it. I wanted to commute some of the pension to leave her. That was why I went to Bennett-to get him to fill in the confounded form. Heaven knows what the wild little monkey will do when I'm gone! I can't provide for her properly."

"She'll find someone to provide for her, I expect," I said. "She's a pretty thing, you know."

"She might have provided for herself a dozen times," he grumbled, " but she won't. I thought that she was going to fix up with Burke. Now she's quarrelled with the boy-played some of her mad tricks on him and upset his dignity. I ought to have whipped her when she was a kid. If she'd have been a boy, I would have; but a widower with one girl-chick-----It's my own fault for spoiling her. She's right out of hand. I never could do anything with the minx. I never knew anyone who could, except you sometimes."

"Sometimes," I commented. " When she was five and I was twenty, I could keep her in order. Now she's nearly twenty."

"And behaves like fifteen! Look here. Neill, I must see that kid settled before I The thought of leaving her on her own go. is breaking up what bit of sound heart I've got left. You don't know what it is to have no object in life for nearly twenty years but a bit of a child, and-and-She's a child still—a soft, innocent child, for all her mischief. I must see her settled, or on the way to it, Neill." "If you told her-"" I began; but he

cut me off.

"If I told her," he snapped, "she'd rush off and engage herself to somebody before the day was over, just to comfort me-very likely to two or three somebodys, to make sure-besides worrying herself to a shadow about 'Dad.' I've kept the child laughing for nineteen years and eight months. God bless her! I don't want to end my days with a little red-eyed mouse that I shall hardly know. Let the blow fall quick enough to stun the grief, and with somebody to wipe her eyes. Neill, you're a good chap. You ought to have been a soldier instead of a confounded lawyer. Step into the breach and see what you can do with the madcap. Turn her mind to matrimony,

without her knowing." "Well," I agreed, "I'll try. It's easy enough to turn Jack's mind, but you never know what it will turn to. It generally goes in the direction that you least expect. This is a blow to me, sir. You and Jack have always been like a father and a sister to a chap who had no home of his own. I wish you'd see a specialist."

He said that he would see a specialist hanged before he would waste his money on him. So I agreed to talk to Jack.

I went downstairs and found her. She was engaged in teaching Rover to hold a pipe in his mouth. The pipe had come from my overcoat pocket.

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"Bah !" I cried. "You great overgrown baby ! I'd like to shake you. I will !"

I did. She was very indignant and squealed, but I shook her hard.

""No wonder you can't get a sweetheart," I told her, "you—you flapper !"

"Not get a sweetheart!" she cried furiously. "You great, rude, rough *beast*! I can get dozens!"

"Pooh!" I said. "What's the good of getting what you can't keep? A nice fool you've made of me!"

"You !" she cried. "You ! Oh, if you hadn't shaken all my breath away, I'd—" She made a sudden lunge at me, but I warded her off. "I never got you, anyhow. I dare say I could, if I tried!"

"Then, for Heaven's sake, don't !" I implored. "You'll drive me to it, if you don't mind, for my own credit. I've always told people that you'd be the belle of the town, and cut all the others out. Now, there are a dozen girls engaged at eighteen or nineteen, and you are nearly twenty and haven't a beau ! You'll be an old maid, and have to keep yourself by sewing on buttons—an old maid with a tabby cat and a bad temper ! No wonder your poor father worries !"

"Father would be broken-hearted at losing me," she asserted quickly. "That's one reason why——" She paused.

"And the other reason is -----

"The other reason!" she informed me pertly. "Mr. Inquisitive! Nasty, inquisitive old lawyer!" She turned up her nose, if such a straight feature could be said to turn up. "I don't know why you're so horrid this morning. You needn't look like that. If you are going to try to lecture me, I shall go away. It's disgusting to see a grown-up man get in such a temper over a dirty old pipe. I wonder it didn't make poor Rover sick! A shilling pipe! You can charge it on father's bill."

"Poor father !" I said. I sighed more genuinely than I intended, and Jack detected the genuineness.

"Arthur," she said, "Arthur, Daddy isn't — isn't — He saw Dr. Bennett yesterday about his commutation. I thought commutation was only a—a sort of indigestion, isn't it? I'll go and have the truth out of him. Let me go. You've no right to hold me like that. I'm grown up now. I——."

"Sit down, Jack," I said quietly.

I think it was my quietness that awed her. She sat down; also she clung to my hand. I was silent for a time, considering what to do. It was no use trying to conceal the whole truth from her. She would certainly overreach her father at the game of question and answer. She is dreadfully quick-witted.

"Jack, my dear," I said, "I've always tried to be a big brother to you. Your father is just a little out of sorts. It is nothing much, if he doesn't worry; but if he does, Dr. Bennett says that worry is just poison to him. There is only one thing which can seriously worry your father. I mean you, Jack."

"Oh, Arthur !" She twisted my fingers about till she hurt them.

"You see, Jack, he has very little except his pension; nothing much to leave you, and at present no one to look after you. Of course I would, so far as I can; but I'm not old enough to adopt you for a daughter, and you want *constant* looking after, Jack. He has taken it into his head that he wants to see you settle down before—— I don't mean that it is near; but he worries himself into thinking that it is, because he's afraid of it on your account. If he saw you happily engaged, he would be content."

⁷ You mean die content !" she almost screamed.

"No, no," I said. "I mean that your wildness is a trouble to him—not so much your madcap tricks; he doesn't dislike them so much as I do—but your not settling down, or preparing to, by getting engaged to somebody whom he could trust to take care of you; somebody who was steady and reliable and fond of you, and whom you were fond enough of to give.up childishness for, Jack. You understand?"

"Yes," she said quickly. "Yes, of course I do. I think—— Here's Daddy coming. I'll tell him——"

"You must not let him know that you think he is ailing, Jack," I said quickly. "He doesn't want you to worry. His happiness depends upon seeing you bright. You won't tell him that you know."

"Of course not," she whispered. "I didn't mean that. I meant about—about the—the settling down. . . . Daddy, darling, you see a reformed character. You've no idea how prim and proper I shall be now!" She hung round his neck. "Say 'Bless you, my children!'" she told him, with a queer little whimpering laugh. She buried her face in his neck and held out a hand to me behind her.

I do not believe that, ever since Adam

began the race of men, there was a man so utterly and entirely staggered as I was. I stared and stared at her hand like a fool, till her father put it in mine.

her father put it in mine. "Bless you," he said, "my children !" His voice shook, and he did. I was afraid for the moment that the emotion would be too much for him. "This," he said, "is a happiness beyond my wildest dreams. Neill, you are the one man in the world to whom He kissed Jack and placed her in my arms. Then he went out and closed the door softly. She looked round to make sure that he was on the other side. Then she extricated herself rapidly from my arm.

"I've got even with you!" she cried, snapping her white teeth. "I've got even with you!"

She nodded her pretty head rapidly, and I gasped.



"Daddy, darling, you see a reformed character. You've no idea how prim and proper I shall be now !'"

I am content to leave this wild little girl of mine. You have always been a-well, I thought it was just brother and sister. I'm overjoyed to find that it's better stilloverjoyed, more than overjoyed. You're all right now, Jack - all right, my girl. He's doing better than he realises. Your Daddy knows you can love people. I-I wouldn't care now if I had to hand in my checks to-morrow. I---- Take her, Neill." "This," I said, "is outrageous !"

"Yes," she agreed, "it is. You were prepared to sacrifice me—all my future happiness—to comfort father; to marry me off to any donkey that I chose to rush off and engage myself to, like the little mad fool that I am. Not such a fool as you thought, Mr. Arthur ! I'd do it, if it was necessary. I'd marry a black man, if it would please Dad ! Sooner do it than marry you! You needn't be afraid I shall. It's only a pretend engagement, to delight father. I shall break it off as soon as—oh, Daddy! or you can. No, you'll let me break it off. You're a beast—*a dictatorial beast*—but you are a gentleman. Won't you feel a fool when people congratulate you? An old, old, old, sensible lawyer engaged to a—a hoyden! You can't get out of it!"

She clapped her hands and almost danced.

"I'd like to shake you," I said fiercely, "you unscrupulous, ungrateful, unfeeling hussy! There's one thing. You won't be able to be a hoyden; you've promised your father to behave."

"And I will," she said, "to other people; but I won't to you! I'll be as bad as I can be!" She laughed. "You'll have plenty of me!" she threatened. "We're engaged engaged! I shall expect my *fiancé* to take me to the opera to-night. Dad must come, too. I want every minute of him. Perhaps you'd rather have a quiet evening with him and your *fiancée*?"

She dropped me a mocking curtsey.

"I may as well have the privileges of an engaged man," I remarked. "I'll make you feel ashamed of yourself; but I suppose that's impossible !"

Her face flamed.

"You cad !" she cried.

I turned on my heel. I was at the door when she caught at my arm.

"I apologise," she cried, "I apologise. I'll go on my knees if you like, Arthur. You won't be a cad. You'll be just yourself. That's a splendid gentleman ! I didn't think of that. It takes all the triumph out of it, Arthur, dear. It won't be for very long, perhaps, and it will make father so happy. Do you very much mind pretending it? I shall insist that *you* break it off. If you give out that I did, I shall say it was because I wasn't good enough for—for the—the best man, and—and— Oh, do be a big brother again ! You always were, Arthur. I'm such a wicked, troublesome little sister."

"A troublesome little sister," I echoed. I was going to kiss her forehead, but she dodged it away and held up her face instead. I kissed her very, very sadly, for the brotherly relationship did not satisfy me, and I thought how very sisterly Jack must feel to offer the kiss.

"I feel a terribly old brother," I remarked.

I felt older when people congratulated me. They all made the same observation in different words. It was the obvious thing, they declared. Everyone had known I should marry Jack ever since she was a child. Till the last two or three years it had seemed so to me. I had not thought that Jack would grow up so young. Since she had, I had concealed my feelings from her very carefully. She would grieve greatly, I knew, to find that she had hurt me—possibly try to make me marry her by way of consolation. There was never a tenderer heart than the heart of my little madcap. When she was ten and I was ill, she used to play truant from school and come and sit on my doorstep and wait for news; and sometimes the nurse brought her in, and she sat for hours holding my fingers.

The warmth of her sisterly affection made the business harder for me. She was so anxious "to be a good girl," as she put it.

"I am not going to be a greater nuisance than I can help," she told me. "I can't help your having to take me out a lot; but you always did, and now I shall behave like a well-conducted *fiancée*! You see if I don't!" She squeezed my arm furiously.

"You have found the spell to grow Jack into a true woman, Arthur," my old Aunt Mary told me. "Some people think you will have an anxious time with the little mischief. Now, do you know, I don't. You are Jack's first grown-up toy, and she finds it very nice to be grown up !"

Jack said something of the sort herself. She "used to be "mischievous, she explained, because she had to occupy herself with something. "Now," she said, "you are Miss Othello's occupation. I believe I could quite take to solemn things-other solemn things. Why don't you teach me law? Then I could help you when---- Oh, gracious ! I forgot we weren't really engaged !" She laughed for several minutes at that, called me "an old, old owl," because I did not laugh too, then clung to my sleeve and wanted to know if she bored me very, very "It's a pity father thinks such a much. lot of you," she told me, "because I could easily get engaged to someone else, and release you; but he'd never be satisfied with anyone else, and ——." She began to cry suddenly. "It won't be for long," she "I wormed it out of Dr. Bennett. sobbed. You'll soon be free, Arthur. I'm not going to let people say that you gave me up just at that time. I shall go away, and send and say that I'm engaged to someone else. People will say it's just what they expected of me, and a lucky escape for you. It will be, of course. Well, it would be if there were a real engagement to escape from

instead of just-just a bore. A bore to you, I mean. You can put up with me for a few months, can't you, Arthur, dear? I'm not such a nuisance as you expected, am I?"

"My dear," I said, "I shall never have such charming companionship again all my life. Bless you, Jack-little sister Jack !"

I put my arm round her and tried to feel brotherly. But she was such a witchsuch a pretty witch !

Her father came in rather quickly. He was like Jack in rapidity. I was withdrawing my arm, but he caught hold of my wrist and put it back round her waist.

"Don't mind me!" he cried excitedly. "Hug her ! Hug her ! I've been to town this morning and seen the specialist. He says it's only indigestion. My heart's all right! He gives me fifteen or twenty years. Time to see you married, and-and all the rest! You didn't know, Jack, that they thought that I had a weak heart. Pack of fools ! We wouldn't let you know, Blossom !" Jack gave a wild scream and flung herself upon him. Then she almost fainted. When she had recovered, he picked her right up and put her in my arms.

"I feel like dancing at a wedding !" he "Fix it up ! Fix it up !" shouted.

He rushed out, slamming the door. Jack breathed at the rate of a hundred a minute. She lay heavily in my arms and did not stir. Presently I laid her on the sofa. I kissed her cheek first. Then I went and looked out of the window. I felt as though the world was coming to an end. There would never be any happiness for me, I felt, like my three weeks' "engagement'

to Jack-my pretty Jack. "Arthur," she called presently, "come here."

I took a chair and went and sat by the sofa. She put a hand on my knee and looked up at me.

"I don't think," she said, "I am so wild as I used to be?"

The tears ran down her cheeks. I wiped them away.

"No, Jack," I agreed. "The trouble about your father has grown you into a woman-such a sweet woman. You were always lovely, Jack."

"It was the trouble about you, too," she asserted. " I-you thought I was 'outrageous,' but-You know how I jump at things, don't you? Well, that morning, before father came in, I thought you meant me to be engaged to you. When he went out, and you didn't-didn't seem pleased,

I understood that you meant someone else. Of course, I wasn't going to let you know I'd been a fool, so I pretended that it was just-just outrageousness. I don't think I'm outrageous now." She gulped.

"Now, Jack," I said, "you have grown into just the sweetest little lady that ever was--just the very sweetest. God bless you, child I"

"I'm not a child any more," she declared. She wiped her eyes. "I'm a woman." She "To myself," sat up and leaned toward me. she explained, "not to you."

"To me, too," I said, and I gulped something down. "Oh, to me, too !"

She looked hard at me, put her hands upon my shoulders.

"No," she denied. "Not yet; but I am going to be. You are not going to settle this like you've always settled things for the child you have brothered and cared for. But you will always do that. Only-you never think of yourself. So I am going to think for you. Arthur !"

"Yes, dear ?"

"You loved me as a child, didn't you?" "My dear," I said, "I do."

" Only as a child ?"

Her hands pinched my shoulders. Presently they gave them a little shake, and then she laughed.

"I mean to know," she declared. "Hold up your hand for true, like you made me when I was a little girl. I never told you lies, Arthur, and you won't tell me one. Don't you think, Arthur, it is better that we should understand just how things are with each other?"

"Yes," I assented, "yes. You are a brave girl, Jack. I understand you. You know that I—— Yes, Jack, I love you as one loves a woman-one woman, the only one that I— I would rather you marry a man who is the one man for you-much rather. There is no sacrifice, right down to my life, Jack, which I would not make to secure your happiness; but even from my own selfish point of view, I wouldn't wish to have a wife who was only a little sister at heart. Now we understand each other, and we can consider what to do."

Jack laughed in her old mischievous way and slipped her arm through mine.

"There's nothing to do," she declared, "except just marry me! I've meant you to for fifteen years!" She held up her right hand."" I swear for true !" she said. And then I held her close to me-very, very closeand she tried to nestle closer.

AERIAL MANŒUVRES By JESSIE POPE

Illustrated by G. L. Stampa



N the morning-room of The Grange, Pudhampton, rented for the autumn by Major Rodd (retired), sat Miss Giglington, the governess, knitting; Leila, the Major's pretty elder daughter,

reading Omar; and Grubby, his pretty younger daughter, flattening her rose-leaf cheek against the window-pane.

"Beastly hole !" groaned Grubby with conviction.

"Don't use such expressions, please," remarked Miss Giglington. "How often am I to remind you that you are a lady?"

"What's the use of being a lady in the country?" retorted the flapper. "Besides, it *is* a beastly hole, Gigley, and you know it. Always raining or something !"

"It's fine now, anyhow," remarked Leila, looking up languidly from her book, "and I think it would be a relief to everybody if you would go out."

"So I would, like a shot, if there was anywhere decent to go to," replied Grubby, turning up her aristocratic little nose in a very bored and lofty manner.

"There are the woods and the moor and the river," said Leila dreamily. "What more do you want?"

"I want picture palaces and taxis and Bond Street teas," ejaculated Grubby, "but picture palaces most of all ! It's absolutely the roughest luck I ever heard of. To think they'd just opened a clinking picture palace not five minutes from us in town, when Dad bundles us all off to this benighted hole, and, what's worse, comes with us himself !"

"Don't speak so disrespectfully of your kind papa," interposed Miss Giglington, who, though she shared the general opinion that Grubby was incorrigible, still tried to do her duty.

"Kind papa be bothered !" remarked her pupil promptly. "Where's the kindness of burying us alive? You know you dream of your Bloomsbury curate every night, Gigley dear, and as for Leila, it's all very well for her to sit there reading poetry and looking saintly, but I don't believe she likes being here any more than I do."

"My dear child," said Leila, with almost an extravagant assumption of indolent apathy, "you surely don't imagine it matters what I like." Then, as she spoke, her lovely face flushed with a sudden wave of secret emotion, her lips trembled, her hazel eyes brimmed, and, dropping Omar irreverently on the floor, she hurried from the room in a passion of tears.

"Well, I'm blethered !" ejaculated Grubby, astonishment widening her sky-blue eyes.

"Oh, what a horrible expression !" cried Miss Giglington.

"Isn't it?" replied her pupil proudly. "It sounds *just* like swearing, and I made it up myself, Gigley, out of 'blowed' and 'bothered.""

"Oh, don't be so dreadful, child! I really don't know what you're coming to," said the governess, shaking her head.

"I don't know what any of us are coming to, as far as that goes," remarked Grubby with conviction, "what with Dad always fuming and fussing and fidgeting about, you always hustling me out of the room to stop me hearing things, and Leila always telephoning to the waterworks. Something's gone wrong somewhere, I know that."

"Perhaps it has," said Miss Giglington, looking gravely at her pupil over the top of her gold-rimmed glasses, "but you must learn that there are many things a little girl should not inquire into."

"Not so much of your 'little girl,' Gigley, or I shan't love you any more!" retorted

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Grubby, glancing up sideways with that whimsical smile the governess had always found irresistible. "There's one thing: if there *is* a skeleton in our cupboard, I've got a jolly sight more right to look at it than you have."

"More right to look at what, Grub?" inquired a voice from the French window from the other side of the room.

"Why, our family skeleton, Daddy," returned his daughter, wheeling round and facing the big, grey-haired florid-faced man who came in from the garden with a morning paper in his hand—"that bony old party in the cupboard that makes Leila burst out crying if you so much as look at her, as she did just now."

"Did she, though ?" said the Major ruefully. "Tut, tut ! Go and see if you can do anything for her, Miss Giglington. I thought she'd got over that nonsense by this time," he added to himself, as the governess flurried from the room.

"I was only just saying how I hated the country," remarked Grubby dismally, " and how I wished we were back again. Do tell me, Daddums, why did we leave London in such a hurry?"

The Major twisted his fierce grey moustache thoughtfully. It was the fiercest thing about him, though by fits and starts he ruled his motherless daughters with a rod of iron.

"Very well, Grub," he said, "you shall hear all about it, and I hope it may be a warning to you. You must understand that we should be in London at this moment if your sister had behaved herself."

Grubby's blue eyes opened like saucers. "Good old Leila!" she exclaimed. "What on earth did she do?"

"She encouraged the attentions of an undesirable young man, against my wishes."

"How topping !" said Grubby. "No, don't frown, Daddy. Tell me why you didn't like him."

"I neither liked nor disliked him," said the Major. "One couldn't. He was too colourless—no pluck, no backbone—a nervous, stuttering little civilian, and certainly no match for a girl of mine. When I told him so, and that I thought it a piece of impertinence on his part to suggest such a thing, he quite agreed with me—took all my insults lying down, and slunk away as soon as possible. Why, Grubby," continued the Major confidentially, "if a chap had said a quarter of the things to me I said to him, I'd have—I'd have—." "You'd have clove him to the marrowbone," suggested Grubby. "That's what the hero always does in the book I'm reading."

"Well, something of that sort," agreed her father. "I'd have wiped the floor with him, anyhow." And, so saying, he opened his newspaper and began to hunt on the mantelpiece for his eyeglasses.

"Oh, put down that rag!" pleaded his daughter. "Tell me the whole lot, now you've started. Did Leila really like him?"

"I presume so, since she went on meeting him after I had forbidden him the house."

"Well, I don't blame her for that," remarked Grubby. "I tell you frankly, Dad, when my turn comes, I don't suppose I shall worry about anybody's permission. But I promise you one thing—he'll be a sportsman."

"I know," said the Major, "I know, Grub, you'll be all right. I'm not frightened about that. I see myself in you, over and over again, and I only wish your sister was more like you."

"Oh, that wouldn't do, Dad," said Grubby reflectively. "It's best to have variety in your kids. One Grubby is all right, but two would be a nuisance."

"Perhaps so," said the Major. "Anyhow, I found I couldn't trust her, so I brought you all down here and came to look after you myself; and that's why I'm so anxious for her to take up riding or golf or any mortal thing she likes, to cure her of her infatuation for the most white-livered lover I should think a girl ever had."

"Who was he, Daddy? You haven't told me that," said Grubby.

"Little Ernest Meakins, of all people in the world."

"Well, I'm blethered!" ejaculated Grubby. "The Tame Rabbit,' I always called him, because his teeth stuck out a bit and he had big, timid-looking brown eyes."

"A very good name, too," said the Major. "He did resemble a rabbit, but I doubt if he has the pluck of one. But—s-sh !—Grub that'll do—here she comes. Now, remember, we must use tact and consideration."

"Right O! I'll remember," said Grubby.

The door opened and Miss Giglington entered, followed by Leila, whose face was pale, though her large, sad hazel eyes were a little pink round the edges. Grubby inspected her thoughtfully.

"Cheer up, Sis, you'll soon be dead !" she exclaimed, with exquisite tactfulness.

"The sooner the better," replied Leila, with a little shiver.

"Not feeling well, my girl?" said the

Major, who certainly did resemble his younger daughter in many respects.

"No, father," murmured Leila, sinking listlessly into a chair.

"Never mind, my dear," he remarked. "Follow your sister's advice, and buck up."

"Oh, father," ejaculated the lovesick maiden, "I shall never buck up again ! I feel sure I am going into a decline !"

And she looked so utterly wan and weary as she spoke, that though the Major blurted out "Ridiculous! Decline, indeed! Never heard such nonsense!" he swallowed down a lump in his throat and began to read his paper with his back turned to the company, while Grubby, equally emotional, blinked her eyes, went over to the window and sniffed, and for five miserable minutes nothing was heard but the click of the governess's knittingneedles, the crackle of the "rag," Leila's deep sighs and Grubby's doleful sniffs.

"It's a rotten time to make hay, anyhow," the flapper suddenly ejaculated plaintively.

"Who's making hay, dear?" said the governess.

"I can hear a hay-cutter at work over by the wood," repeated Grubby.

"There's no grass there," growled the Major.

"You must be mistaken, dear," added Miss Giglington, who made it a habit to second her employer's statements.

"Well, it's a wibbly-wobbly buzzy sort of sound," mused Grubby. "Can't you hear it? It isn't pompous enough for a motor-car, or twittery enough for a motor-bike. I believe somebody's playing a kettledrum on the top of the hill." There was a long pause, then all at once a loud shriek of frantic joy came from the window, and, leaping up and down in an ecstasy, the flapper shouted—

"Dad—Dad, it's an aeroplane—such a whopper ! It's coming straight through the air over the hill, and I do believe it's going to perch on the lawn !"

The Major threw down the paper and rushed to the French window as Grubby leaped through into the garden, shrieking shrilly, "Oh, top hole, top hole!" her two golden, black-bowed pigtails whipping the air behind her.

A beautiful biplane came gliding deliberately over the wooded hill, the motor droning like a hornet, and the white planes gleaming in the sunlight. It seemed to be heading straight for The Grange, and its movements were watched with astonishment, consternation, and delight, respectively, by the Major, the governess, and the flapper on the lawn, while Leila stood languidly apart, one hand holding Omar, the other pressed above her broken heart, a very proper attitude for a hopeless young lady in a rapid decline.

"He's coming down!" shrilled Grubby, dancing like an excited filly. "No, he isn't —he's going on!"

"He's stopped his engine, anyhow," cried the Major, who had had some experience of the aerial manœuvres at Aldershot; "he is going to land, I believe."

"He's falling !" cried Miss Giglington. "Oh, he'll be in the river in a minute !"

"Not he !" should Grubby at the top of her voice, though the governess was standing close to her. "He knows what he's about. He's coming down in the paddock, I'm blethered if he isn't !"

She was right. The aviator *did* know what he was about, and he did descend in the paddock, with a graceful and deliberate volplane, finishing up with a quiet little run on the wheels, as a bird might run lightly on the grassy surface before coming to a standstill.

Grubby tore herself from Miss Giglington's restraining hand, leapt the fence, and was alongside just as that spherical whirl in front of the biplane resolved itself into the slowly revolving fans of the propeller.

"How d'you do? Where d'you come from? May I have a go?" panted Grubby, her blue eyes blazing with excitement.

The flying man got down from his seat. He was a foreign-looking person with a grizzled beard. He clicked his heels together and bowed low, shrugged his shoulders, turned his palms outward with a quick gesture, and smiled benignly at his questioner.

"Oh, my aunt! It's a *Froggy*!" she ejaculated, and, turning tail, ran back to where the grey-haired, florid-faced Major was clambering over the fence into the paddock.

"Daddy, he's a Frenchman, and can't understand what I say. Do buck up!"

But the Major, like his younger daughter, was no linguist, and his hearty though somewhat short-winded welcome only elicited another click of the heels and another low bow from the apologetic intruder.

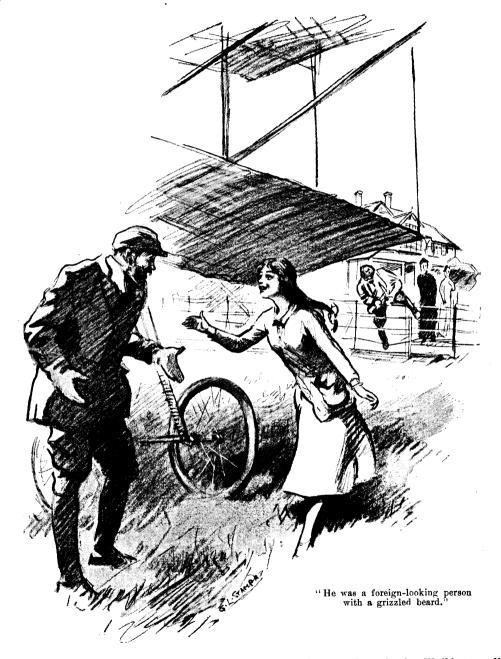
"Shall I run and fetch a dictionary?" suggested Grubby eagerly.

"No, no," said the Major, "of course not. I think he's talking Italian; it's what he looks like. But here comes Miss Giglington; she may be able to help us."

Delighted at her sudden importance, the

governess, who had sedately gone round by the gate, found that the Major was right and wrong. The flying-man was an Italian Major. "Glad to see you," adding persuasively, "Come and have a drink."

There is something about that time-worn



civilian, but he was talking very broken English, and desired to apologise for what was an unconscious act of trespass on his part.

"Not at all-not at all," exclaimed the

phrase that renders it intelligible to all races in whatever language it is spoken. The flying-man smiled intelligently, and followed his host to the house, performing another click of the heels and profound obeisance to Leila, standing languidly by the window, as he was presented to her in passing.

Under the influence of the whisky and soda, which he took very long and weak, he became quite voluble, talking a mixture of French and very broken English with a certain amount of success and evident inward pride. The party then returned to the paddock to inspect the biplane, whose friendly disposed and affable owner did his best to explain its construction and working, partly with the aid of the governess, but chiefly with such forcible gesticulation that Grubby laughed shrilly and often. But somehow the flapper's laughter never gave offence, and the grizzled Italian seemed delighted at the amusement he gave to "charming mees," and not a little disappointed to find he was not placed next to her at table, for the Major, who was delighted at this unexpected diversion, insisted on his staying for lunch, with Miss Giglington next to him to help conversation over the rough places.

"I believe old Gigley's 'gone' on him," whispered Grubby to her elder sister.

"Why?" said Leila, glancing across at the governess's flushed and rather excited face.

"Because her nose is getting so red," replied Grubby. "Don't you remember it always got red like that when the Bloomsbury curate called? I don't wonder she's *smit*. An airman can knock a curate into a cocked hat, can't he?"

Leila made no reply, nor did Grubby want one, for she was busy with a French dictionary, which she had secreted on her lap under the table, and presently, after a good deal of frowning and private muttering, she said to their guest—

"Puis-je avez une go dans votre biplane, après goutez ?"

"Ah, yes, yes," replied the Italian, "if pa-pa paremits."

"I won't promise anything," said the Major, speaking in the loud, soothing voice he always adopted in talking to foreigners, "though I should like a short flight myself, if you can guarantee a safe one," he said rather loftily.

"Right O ! Dad, you shall go first, me next!" cried Grubby. "And will you take Gigley for a ride, too?" she added to the airman.

"What it is-Gigley?" he replied, with a mystified smile.

"Why, that's Gigley sitting next to you, though she may not look it. But wait till you start tickling her, she's giggly then. I've tried it, and she's the most ticklish governess I ever had, by a long way !"

"For shame, Grubby—be silent! Curb your tongue," exclaimed the governess, her nose taking a deeper hue with the embarrassment of the suggestion.

The Major laughed explosively, but thoughtfully turned the subject back to biplanes.

"And you really intend to fly back to Italy when you have done your English tour? Will she carry you so far?"

"Ah, yes," exclaimed the aviator, "she would support two — two persons, twice there—without difficult—easy !"

"Would she? Then I'll come back with you," said Grubby. "I want to go to Italy badly."

"Sh-sh-sh !" ejaculated Miss Giglington. "Really, Grubby !"

"What's the matter *now*?" said her pupil, raising her delicate eyebrows. "Why can't I, Gigley?"

"You must understand," said Miss Giglington, in a low tone, "that ladies do not go long distances alone with gentlemen unless they are married to them."

"Right O!" cried the incorrigible, her blue eyes dancing. "I'll marry him! I should like to, and I don't believe he'd mind. I only weigh seven stone six."

"Come and have your hair brushed!" exclaimed Miss Giglington in desperation; and as lunch was fortunately finished, she swept her pupil out of the room, and during the hairdressing process informed her that she didn't know where her tongue would lead her if she did not make some effort to control it.

"I only hope it will lead me to a seat in that biplane," replied Grubby, bearing the tugs of the comb with Spartan heroism, though it taxed all the patience she possessed to wait while the pigtail bows were being carefully tied, for through the window she could see her father and his guest walking towards the biplane, which looked, Grubby declared, like "an electric tram run to seed," and round which the men-servants of the place were gathered to assist in the start.

It was a perfect day for flying; not a breath of air ruffled the dark leaves of the beech woods. So perfect was it that the Major did not take long in making up his mind, like Grubby, "to have a go," and when the motor once more began drumming and the propeller revolving—"like a thousand of bricks," as Grubby remarked—he took his place behind the flying-man and shouted to the others not to crowd round.

"Keep back, crowd !" shouted Grubby, pushing the governess unceremoniously behind her. "Oh, I do trust and pray," she continued, in a hushed, fervent voice, as the biplane ran smoothly along and then spurned the ground with a gentle upward curve—"I do trust and pray he won't drop Dad out and smash the machine, or I shan't get my turn !"

Neither of the catastrophes happened, The trip, though short, was however. entirely successful, and inspired the Major with so much delight in the experience and confidence in the aviator that he allowed Grubby to take his place. Only low flights were taken, so that the others could hear the ecstatic squeaks of delight with which Grubby punctuated her glorious progress; but she was too much of a sportsman, on her return, to ask for another "go" until Gigley and Leila had had their turns. The former, however, fluttering, refused to risk her life, in spite of Grubby's comforting assurances that she would find it clinking when she was up, and never want to come down, and, after all, if she did get killed, there were lots more governesses in the world.

"I cannot stay long," said the airman, breaking in upon the discussion. "I must far away. But the other mees—would she like to fly before I depart."

"Yes, Leila," cried the Major, "have a turn ; it'll do you good."

"Buck up, Sis! Don't be a slackster!"

cried Grubby excitedly. "You'll love it !" Leila hung back. "Shall I go?" she said, hesitating and looking nervously at her father.

"Yes," he said, "go, by all means—you'll find flying's a perfect cure for the blues."

"Not to mention 'the rabbits," added Grubby, grinning and piloting Leila to her "Hold on there, that's the style. Oh, seat. don't I envy you ! Tuck your dress. Right way !"

"Take care of her !" cried the Major.

The aviator nodded and smiled, started the motor, and, amid the usual whirring vibration and blue smoke, the biplane started once more, and up they went.

"She's going higher than we did," said Grubby jealously, as they stood watching the graceful flight, "and further, too," she added discontentedly. And, indeed, after a preliminary circle of the house and garden,

the biplane glided away in the direction of the woods. "I knew she'd love it, so I expect she's begged for a longer run. I wish I had."

"I'm very glad she's having a good time," said the Major. "She'll be a different girl when she comes down; it will wake her up and take her out of herself."

As he spoke, a sudden breeze rustled the beech woods, and he turned and looked to windward, and noticed for the first time that light shreds of grey cloud had come up unnoticed behind them.

"No doubt there's a biggish breeze higher up," he said uneasily ; and, as he spoke, the hill behind the house hid the biplane from view. "They'll be back in a minute," he said confidently, and began to hum a tune.

A minute passed, so did five more, and Grubby ran up across the garden to the hill to see if she could see them coming.

"Is it possible, Major," said Miss Giglington, "that a wind would blow them further than he intended to go?"

"Possible, but not probable," he replied. "That chap has got the biplane under perfect control. I feel absolute confidence in him," he added with emphasis, though he turned impatiently and watched the slight figure of his younger daughter climbing the green hillside.

"Oh, dear, oh, dear," Miss Giglington suddenly burst out, "I do wish they'd I'm afraid something has come back ! happened !"

"Nonsense!" returned the Major. "Run and get my glasses, please. I'll go up the hill myself, and will soon find out if they are in difficulties."

At that moment came a shout from Grubby on the hill-crest, but they could not make out what she said ; and the Major was soon toiling up the hill with his most powerful field-glasses in his pocket, while Miss Giglington hurried indoors again to overhaul the bandage drawer and the medicine chest.

The Major's climb proved fruitless, for there was no trace of the aeroplane, though Grubby said she thought she saw it disappearing over the Shillingworth ridge the very moment she reached the top.

"I expect they've come down somewhere," said the Major, sweeping the countryside with his glasses without success. "Anyhow, I'll have the car out, and go and see." He was evidently growing nervous and harassed, and even Grubby seemed silent and subdued.

The car had a flat tyre, which meant

another delay, and the October evening would soon be upon them. Then while the Major was chafing and waiting, and watching all quarters of the landscape, Grubby suggested they should telephone inquiries to Shillingworth, as the aeroplane was certainly going in that direction.

They rang up Shillingworth; no news. They rang up Ashhampton; no news. But at Rippingham the postmaster's voice informed them that an aeroplane was lying in a field close by. He had not seen it fall personally, but understood its occupants had been conveyed to "The King's Arms."

The Major, his florid face patched with white, threw down the receiver and waited to hear no more, and in a very few minutes was shamelessly breaking the speed limit. the rough country by-roads to along Rippingham, with a very anxious and tearful Grubby by his side, and a distracted Miss Giglington in the tonneau, her hat all on one side and her hair flying in the wind. To exceed the speed limit on a flat type over bumpy roads may be good for the liver, but assuredly bad for the spine. Still, the merciless jolts were as nothing compared to their mental torture, nor did Miss Giglington complain when the Major pulled up outside "The King's Arms" so suddenly that she almost took a header over the bonnet.

"I can't see any blood !" whimpered Grubby, inspecting the pavement and steps as they went in.

"Don't, Grubby !" murmured the governess, with a shudder.

The Major paid no heed, but, hurrying in at the door, he confronted the landlady. She knew him well, and quailed before his eager questioning gaze.

"My daughter "" he began, and stopped; words failed him.

"This way, sir," replied the landlady, in a choking voice. "Now, don't take on, Major dear, more than you can help," she whispered tearfully, as she opened a door and ushered them through into a dim and dusky interior.

Leila rose as they entered.

"My child," exclaimed the Major, clasping her in his arms, "are you injured ?"

"No, Daddy, only married," replied Leila, nestling her head on his breast.

"Thank Heaven!" gasped the Major, and sat down heavily on the horse-hair couch.

"Married !" cried Grubby and Miss Giglington together. "When ?"

"Half an hour ago, at Gridlington Church," replied Leila. "I married the aviator."

"Oh, that's not cricket !" said Grubby. "I asked him first."

"But he had asked me long ago, Grub," said the blushing bride. "Hadn't you, dear?"

The Italian airman came out of the shadows at the other end of the room. He clicked his heels together and bowed, then he pushed his goggles up on the top of his head, pushed his beard up after it, and stood before them a barefaced young Englishman.

before them a barefaced young Englishman. "The Tame Rabbit !" ejaculated Grubby, gazing at him, astounded.

"How the——" began the Major, but Leila slid into his arms.

"Daddy, darling, you *told* me to fly with him, so I did. Besides, you can't say he hasn't got any pluck now, can you? He's a splendid flyer ! They think any amount of him at Hendon. Oh, Daddy, do shake hands with him !" She pulled his head down and kissed his chin—all she could reach—while Grubby, ecstatically echoing, "Do, do, do !" clung to the other side, and kissed the lapel of his coat.

The Major looked from one pretty daughter to the other, and melted.

"It seems I've no option," he said, holding out his hand.



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THE-WHITE-HORSES BY-HALLIWELL-SUTCLIFFE



ILLUSTRATED \cdot BY A \cdot J \cdot GOUGH



VI. BANBURY CAKES



HROUGH the quiet lanes Blake, the messenger, rode out to Banbury. Nightingales were singing through the dusk; stars were blinking at him from a sky of blue and purple; a moth blundered now and

then against his face. He understood the beauty of the gloaming, though he seemed to have no time to spare for it. Prince Rupert had sent him spurring with a message to the big rider of a white horse, who was to be found somewhere on the road leading from the North to Banbury; and the password was, "A Mecca for the King." That was his business on the road. But, as he journeyed, a strange pain of heart went with him. The nightingales were singing, and God knew that he had forgotten love-songs long ago, or had tried to.

Spring, and the rising sap, and the soft, cool scents of eventide, are magical to those climbing up the hill o' dreams; to those who have ceased to climb, they are echoes of a fairyland once lived in, but now seen from afar. It had all been so long ago. Skirmish and wounds and lonely rides in many weathers should have dug a grave deep enough for memories to lie in; but old ghosts rose to-night, unbidden. If it had been his sinning, he could have borne the hardship better; he had the old knightly faith touched with extravagance, but haloed by the Further Light—that all women are sacrosanct. If he had failed—well, men were rough and headstrong, but it was she who had stooped to meaner issues. And it was all so long ago that it seemed absurd the nightingales should make his heart ache like a child's.

Fame was his. The Metcalfes, big on big horses, had captured the fancy of all England by their exploits in the open. Yet Blake, the messenger, riding alone, for the most part, through perils that had no music of the battle-charge about them, had his own place, his claim to quick, affectionate regard wherever Cavaliers were met together. They laughed at his high, punctilious view of life, but they warmed to the knowledge that he had gone single-handed along tracks that asked for comrades on his right hand and his left. But this was unknown to Blake, who did not ask what men thought of him. It was enough for him to go doing his journeys, carrying a heartache till the end came and he was free to understand the why and wherefore of it all.

It was a relief to see the moonlight blinking on the roofs of Banbury as he rode into the town. There were no nightingales here; instead, there was the hum and clamour of a Roundhead populace, infuriated by the news that two Cavaliers had broken prison in the early morning and had locked the gaoler in.

Blake found his bridle seized roughly, and it was doubtful for a moment whether he or his high-spirited mare, or the two of them, would come to grief.

"Would come to grief. "Well, friend?" he asked of the burly Puritan who held the bridle.

"Your business here?"

"To sell cloth. I come from Oxford, and have done much business there with the Court."

"Then why come selling wares in Banbury? Court fashions find no favour here."

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"Cloth is cloth," said Blake impassively, and I've some remnants going cheap."

A woman in the crowd pressed forward. "How much a yard?" she asked.

With his tired knowledge of the world, he named a price that made the woman ask eagerly for a sample. "I have no samples. The cloth itself will come in by carrier to-morrow. I'm tired and hungry," he said, smiling at the man who held his rein. "Perhaps you will direct me to a lodging for the night."

"Was there great stir among the sons of Belial in Oxford?" asked his captor, with a shrewd sideways glance.

"They were like bees in a busy hive," assented Blake cheerily.

"You learned something, maybe, of their plans?"

"I did, friend."

"That might be worth free lodging to you for the night, and a supper of the best. What did you learn?"

"Why, that they planned to buy a good deal of my cloth. That's how I measure a man—with the eye of a merchant who has cloth to sell. You, sir—your clothes are of the shabbiest, if you'll pardon my frankness. Will you not come to the tavern to-morrow, after the carrier has brought my bales, and let me show you some good broadcloth—cloth of a sober colour, suited to the pious habits you profess? To-day I clothe a Cavalier, to-morrow a gentleman who fights on the Parliament side—a merchant knows no niccties of party."

Blake had thrust home. This man, named gentle for the first time in his busy life as tradesman, traducer of the King's good fame, and the prime stirabout of anarchy in Banbury, was filled with a heady, spurious pride. This merchant had sold cloth to the dandies of the Court, perhaps to the King himself, and now it was his turn. There were men of this odd, cringing habit among the sterner Roundhead stuff, and Blake knew them as a harpist knows the strings he plays on.

The end of it was that he was directed to a comfortable tavern, was given, though he scarcely seemed to ask for it, the password that ensured him the freedom of the streets, and parted from his captor with an easygoing reminder that the cloth should reach Banbury about nine of the next morning.

The password was useful to him more than once. It saved much trouble with soldiery who held him up at every turn. It saved appeal to the pistol he carried in his holster; and that would have meant the rousing of the town, and odds against him that would put his whole errand into jeopardy.

He halted once only, at the front of the tavern which had been recommended to him. An ostler was standing at the door, chewing a straw and waiting for some fresh excitement to stir these strenuous days. Blake slipped a coin into his hand, and explained that, about nine of the next morning, a townsman would come asking for a merchant who had cloth to sell.

"You will explain, ostler, that I am called away on business—business connected with the two Cavaliers who broke gaol last night. Explain, too, that I hope to return to your town in a few days' time. The townsman's name was Ebenezer Fear-the-Snare— I remember it because of its consuming drollery."

With a cheery nod and a laugh that might mean anything, Blake left the other wondering "what devilment this mad fellow was bent on," and rode out into the beauty of the summer's night that lay beyond the outskirts of Banbury. Here, again, the nightingales assailed him. They could not rest for the love-songs in their throats; and ancient pain, deep where the soul beats at the prison-house of flesh, guided his left hand on the reins until, not knowing it, he was riding at a furious gallop. Then he checked to a sober trot.

The land was fragrant with the warmth of wet soil, the scent of flowers and rainwashed herbage. The moon shone blue above the keen white light of gloaming, and the road ahead stretched silver, miraculous, like some highway of the old romance that was waiting for the tread of kings and knights, of ladies fair as their own fame.

Old dreams clambered up to Blake's saddle and rode with him—wild heartaches of the long ago—the whetstone of first love, sharpening the power to feel, to dare all things—the unalterable need of youth to build a shrine about some woman made of the same clay as himself. They were good dreams, tasted again in this mellow dusk; but he put them by at last reluctantly. He had a live ambition before him—to bring a company of riders, bred in his own stiff Yorkshire county, for the Cavaliers of Oxford to appraise.

He slackened pace with some misgiving. The two Metcalfes, when he bade farewell to them in Oxford, had been so sure that one of their kinsmen would have reached the outskirts of Banbury, would be waiting for him. The horseman, they had explained, would not approach the town too closely, knowing its fame as a place of Parliament men who watched narrowly all Oxford's incoming and outgoing travellers; but Blake had travelled three miles or so already, and he grew impatient for a sight of his man.

Through the still air and the complaint of nightingales he heard the whinny of a horse. His own replied. The road made a wide swerve here through the middle of a beech wood. As he rounded it and came into the open country, he saw a broken wayside cross, and near it a horseman mounted on a white horse as big and raking in the build as its rider.

"A Mecca?" asked Blake, with the indifference of one traveller who passes the time of day with another.

"Nay, that will not serve," laughed the other. "Half a sixpence is as good as nothing at all."

"A Mecca for the King, then, and I was bred in Yorkshire, too."

The freemasonry of loyalty to one King, to the county that has reared a man, is a power that makes all roads friendly, that kills suspicion and the wary reaching down of the right hand toward a pistol-holster.

"How does Yoredale look," went on Blake, with a little eager catch in his voice, "and the slope of Whernside as you see it riding over the tops from Kettlewell?"

"Bonnie, though I've not seen either since last year's harvest. This King's affair of ride and skirmish is well enough; but there's been no time to slip away to Yoredale for a day and smell the wind up yonder. Are Kit and Michael safe?"

"They are in Oxford, accepting flattery with astounding modesty."

"They've found Prince Rupert? The Metcalfes—oh, I touch wood !—keep a beeline when they know where home lies."

"That is no boast, so why go touching wood? I tell you, the King knows what your folk have done and hope to do. The Prince is raising cavalry for the relief of York, and will not rest until you Metcalfes join him. How soon can your company get South?"

The horseman thought the matter over. "It will take five days and a half," he said at last.

"Good for you !" snapped Blake. "Even your brother Christopher, with the starry look o' dreams about his face, was sure that it would take seven days. I wager a guinea to a pinch o' snuff that you're not in Oxford in five days and a half."

"That is a wager?"

"I said as much, sir."

"Then lend me the pinch of snuff. I emptied my box in waiting for you, and was feeling lonely."

Blake laughed as he passed his box over. There was an arresting humour about the man, a streak of the mother-wit that made the Metcalfe clan at home in camp or city. "I'll see you to the next stage," he said, reining his horse about—"that is, if you care for an idle man's company. I've nothing in the world to do just now."

The other only nodded, touched his horse sharply with the spur, and Blake found himself galloping with a fury that, even to his experience of night adventures, seemed breakneck and disastrous. At the end of a mile their horses were in a lather; at the end of two they had to check a little up the rise of a hill. On the top of the hill, clear against the sky, they saw a horseman sitting quiet in saddle. They saw, too, that his sword was out and naked to the moonlight.

"A Mecca !" panted Blake's companion.

"Cousin does not slay cousin," said the man on the hill-top, rattling his sword inter the sheath again. "Have they found Rupert?" The second rider was given his errand briefly and without waste of breath. Then he flicked his horse, and Blake was tempted to follow him, too. There was something uncanny, some hint of mystery and deep, resistless strength about this picketing of the road North. Blake had a quick imagination; he saw this chain of riders, linking York with Oxfordshire, spurring through a country fast asleep—only they and the moon and the nightingales awake -until, kinsman passing the message on to kinsman at each two miles-stage, the last rider came in with his tale of "Boot and saddle."

Indeed, Blake urged his mare to follow the second horseman; but she was reluctant, and was sobbing under him after the headlong gallop.

"I had forgotten. She has carried me from Oxford already," he said, turning to his companion.

"She's a good little mare," said Metcalfe, with instinctive judgment of all horseflesh. "She will have time to rest, if you're minded to share the waiting time with me."

"Your five days and a half?" laughed the other, as they returned at a quiet pace to their first meeting-place. "Yes, I shall stay, if only to claim my wager. It is not in human power for your company to muster in the time."

"It is a game we have played often during these last months. Lord Fairfax, in the North, swears there's witchcraft in it, because we have carried news from York to Skipton, from Skipton into Lancashire, while single messengers were spurring half-way on the road."

"*I* am a messenger of the lonely sort," put in Blake—with a touch of spleen, for he was tired. "Well, I propose to see what comes of your new way of galloping."

"The first that comes"—Metcalfe yawned and stretched himself with an air of complete strength and bodily content—"will be my Cousin Ralph, who took the message on just now. When he has passed it on, he rides hitherto. We may expect him in a half-hour or so."

Blake, himself something of a mystic, who rode fine errands by help of no careful planning, but by intuition, was interested in this man, who stood for the Metcalfe thoroughness, in detail and in hot battle, that had made their name alive through He learned, here in the moon-England. light, with the jug-jug of nightingales from the thickets on their right, and the stir of moths about their faces, how carefully the old Squire had planned this venture. The clan was a line of single links from Oxford to the North, so long as the message needed to be carried swiftly; but afterwards each messenger was to ride back along the route to Banbury, until the company mustered on its outskirts grew big enough to hold attack from the town in check.

As they talked, and while Metcalfe was pushing tobacco—borrowed, like the snuff, from Blake—into the bowl of a clay pipe, there came a little sound from up the road. It was a rhythmical, recurrent sound.

"That is my Cousin Ralph," said Metcalfe unconcernedly.

The music grew louder by degrees, till the din of nightingales was lost in the rat-a-tat of hoofs.

"The first to the tryst," laughed Blake, as the new-comer dismounted and picketed his horse close to their own. "We have a wager that your folk will not be in Oxford within five days and a half."

"For my part," said Ralph, "I have a hunger that eats inwards. Have you found nothing for the larder, cousin, all this time of waiting?" Will Metcalfe had, as it happened. Near sundown he had set two traps—simple contrivances of looped wire—in a neighbouring rabbit burrow; and, a little while before Blake rode out from Banbury, he had dismounted to find a coney in each snare.

"We shall do well enough," said Will.

Again Blake was astonished by the downrightness of these people. Ralph, who had not tasted food since noon, was sure that his cousin would have made due provision. Methodically they sought for a likely hollow, screened from the rising wind, gathered brushwood and fallen branches, and made a fire. While it was burning up, they skinned and cleaned the rabbits.

"Gentlemen," said Blake, while their meal was in the cooking, "do you give no homage to the god known as chance? All is planned out, from here to York; but I've travelled the night-roads—have them by heart, as a man knows the whimsies of his wife. Suppose some of your men were thrown badly, or killed by Roundheads, how would it fare with the message up to York?"

Ralph Metcalfe turned the rabbits with nice regard for the meal overdue. Then he glanced up. "If there was a gap of four miles, instead of two, the rider would gallop four. If he found another dead man at the next stage, he would gallop six."

So then Blake laughed. "We are well met, I think. I was jealous of your clan, to be candid, when I was told their speed put us poor night-riders to shame. Yet, friends, I think we carry the same loyalty."

Their meal was scarcely ready when again there came the fret of distant hoof-beats. Another giant joined their company. In face and sturdiness he was like the rest; but he happened to be six foot four, while his kinsmen here were shorter by two inches. He, too, was hungry.

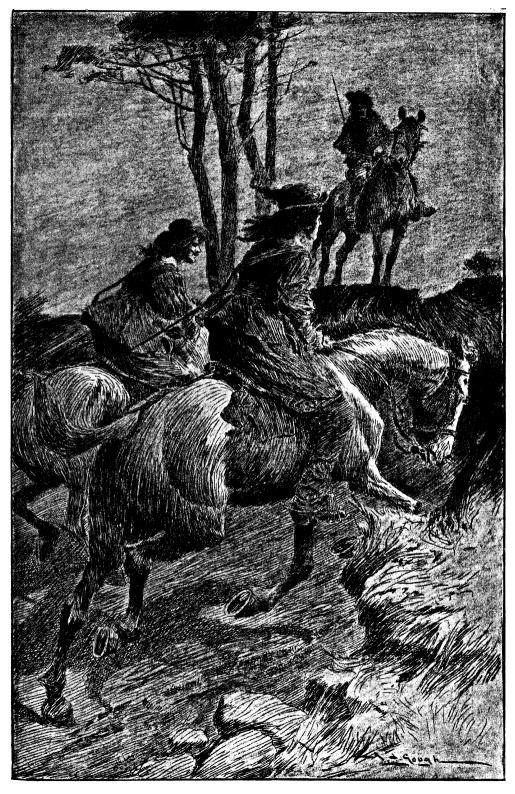
"That's good hearing," said Will. "I was puzzling how to carve two rabbits into three, but it's easy to split them into twice two."

"Half a coney to feed my sort of appetite?"

"" Be content. If it had not been for Ralph here, we'd have had no food at all."

The new-comer drew a bottle from the pocket of his riding-coat. "I forget whether I stole it or paid honest money. It's a small bottle, but it will give us the bite of the Northern winds again."

When they had ended this queer supper, and had borrowed from the store of tobacco



"They saw, too, that his sword was out, and naked to the moonlight."

that to Blake was better than a meal, they fell into silence. The languorous beauty of the night wove its spell about them ; and the fourth Metcalfe, when he rode in presently, jarred them roughly out of dreams. The new-comer, as it happened, had contrived to snatch supper while he waited, six miles further north, to take on the message. He did not ask for food ; after picketing his horse, he just wrapped himself in the blanket hastily unstrapped from saddle, turned over once or twice in a luxury of weariness, and snored a litany to the overarching heavens.

Through that night Blake did not sleep, or ask for slumber. The nightingales were tireless, as if their throats would break unless they eased them. The Metcalfe riders were tireless, too. At longer and at longer intervals they came in from the North, their horses showing signs of stress. Two miles from outpost to outpost was a trifling distance; but, before the last of that night's company joined the muster here at Banbury, he had travelled forty miles.

Blake lay, his face to the moonlight, and could not stiffe memory. The sleepy fragrance, the scent of moist earth and flowering stuff, took him, as by sorcery, to a walled garden in Knaresborough and a summer that had been, and the end of blandishment. There had been no nightingales—it lay too far north, that garden, to tempt them—but a stronger song had stirred him. And there had been the same lush smell of summer, the same hovering of bats across the moon's face.

It was as if she sat beside him again they two listening to the ripple of Nidd River far below—and her voice was low and tender as she chided him for love-making. There had been other meetings—stolen ones and brief—and all the world a-maying to Blake's view of it.

He would not let the dream go—played with it, pretended he had not learned long since what it meant to love a light-of-heart. Her face, of the kind that painters dote on when they picture maiden innocence, the shifting play of light and colour in her eyes, the trick she had of making all men long to be better than they were—surely he could rest this once from many journeyings, and snatch another stolen meeting, there in Knaresborough, with all the roses blowing kisses to them.

As he lay there, the two Metcalfes who were sentrying their little camp grew tired of pacing to and fro, each on his own short beat, and halted for a gossip. Blake did not heed them until they began to talk of Knaresborough, of Michael's dash into the Castle, of a Mistress Demaine he had met there.

"Michael met his match for once," laughed one sentry. "You know his gift of finding the finest eyes in England housed under every other woman's brows? Well, Mistress Demaine plays a good game at hearts, too, they say. Michael was touched in earnest this time. Oh, the jest of it!"

"It would be a better if they began by playing, and ended with the silken noose. Can you picture Michael wedded—Michael, with cut wings and drooping comb, seeking no more for fairest eyes?"

Blake left his dreams as if they scorched him. So Mistress Demaine had been two years ago; so she would be, doubtless, when the King had come to his own again, and had reigned long, and passed on the crown. There is a stability about inconstancy, Blake realised.

He got to his feet, crossed to where the sentries stood, and yawned. "Gentlemen," he said, "I cannot sleep for hunger; and there will be others in my case before the night ends. Can I borrow two of your company to make a forage-party?"

One of the sentries pointed to a distant belt of wood, high up against the sky. "When dawn rides over the trees yonder, our watch is ended. We'll join you, Mr. Blake, if only because you have the most diverting laugh I ever heard, except Michael's when he's seen a pair of pretty eyes."

A half-hour later they kicked the fresh sentries out of sleep. Then Blake and they went up the pasture-lands on foot. It was a good night for foraging; every pitfall of the ground, every farmstead sleeping in the bosom of its guardian trees, showed clear in the dawn-light. And none of the three men had qualms about the business, for the Banbury country, through and through, was traitorous to the King.

They returned two hours later in high spirits. Forty men ask for a good deal of feeding, after a night in the open has set a razor-edge to appetite; and the scoutingparty had commandeered a farmer's horse and gig to bring their booty into camp.

"Who goes there?" snapped the sentries, running to meet this intrusion on the night's quiet.

"A Mecca, lad," laughed the driver, "bringing fowls and cheese, and good homecured bacon—ay, and a little barrel of rum that nearly bounced out o' the gig when I came to a rutty place in the road."

"'Twould have been a pity to have lost the rum. Where are Blake and your Cousin Nicholas?"

"Oh, following ! The gig would not hold us all. As for Blake, he has few cares in life. Not one to have his heart touched by a woman—he. He laughs by habit, till you're forced to laugh with him."

At Oxford, there was expectation threading the routine of Court life. The fine light of devotion to lost causes—causes lost because they were ever too high for mean folk's understanding—had cradled this good city. Chivalry, the clean heart and the ruddy, fervid hope, had built her wonderland of colleges and groves and pleasant streets. Men of learning, of passionate fervour for the things beyond, had lived and died here ; and such men leave about the place of their bodily sojourn a living presence that no clash of arms, no mire of human jealousies, can overcome.

For this reason, all Oxford awaited the coming of the Metcalfes. They in the North -men well content, not long ago, to follow field-sports and the plough-were different in breed and habits from these folk in the comely city. But, in the matters that touch dull workaday into a living flame, they were of the same company-men who hoped, this side or the other of the veil, to see the Standard floating high above life's pettiness. And, for this reason, Oxford waited the Metcalfes' coming with an expectancy that was oddly vivid. The gamesters of the Court wagered heavily as to the hour of their arrival. Grave dons, who happened to be interested in the mathematics more in favour at the sister University, drew maps of the route from Banbury to York, calculated the speed of messengers spurring at the gallop north, and the return pace of riders coming south on horses none too fresh. These had recourse to algebra, which seemed only to entangle the argument the more.

Queen Henrietta Maria and the ladies of the Court made no calculations. Michael and Christopher were here, big, windbrowned men, who seemed unaware that they had done anything worth praise; and the Queen, with her French keenness of vision, her late-learned English view of life, knew that two gentlemen had come to Oxford, men made in the image of chivalry, ready to live or die with gallantry.

So the two brothers were spoiled outrageously, until, on the second day, Kit was despatched alone to Lathom House in Lancashire.

"Take all the quieter byways," said Rupert, as he saw him get to saddle. "Tell the Lady of Lathom to hold out a little longer. And tell her from me, *Well done*!"

Rupert sighed as he turned away. He was fretting to be at Shrewsbury, raising his company for the relief of York; but he was kept in Oxford here by one of those interminable intrigues which had hampered him for months past. The older men whose counsel the King trusted-Culpepper, Hyde, and the rest-were jealous of Rupert's conspicuous genius for warfare. The younger men were jealous of the grace-a grace foppish, resolute-which clean-cut, not endeared him to the women of the Court. He was accused of treachery at Bristol, of selling his honour for a sum of gold ; it was said that he dallied here in Oxford for reasons known to the Duchess of Richmond. No lie was too gross to put in circulation, by hint, or question, or deft innuendo. Day by day, hour by hour, men were dropping poison into the King's ear and the Queen's; and at the Councils, such as this that kept him here just now, he saw across the table the faces of men obstinately opposed to him. Whatever he suggested was wrong because he was the spokesman; whatever was in blunt contradiction to his view of the campaign was applauded. The Duke of Richmond, his friend and ally, was with him, and one or two younger men who had no gift of speech in these times of stress. For the rest, he was alone, a man of action, with his back to the wall in a battle of tongues.

He carried himself well enough even to-day, when the meeting was more stormy than usual. His dignity was not a cloak, but an inbred strength that seemed to grow by contact with adversity.

"So, gentlemen," he said, at the close of the Council, "you have had your way so far as talk goes. Now I have mine. I hold a commission from the King to raise forces for the relief of sundry garrisons. I shall relieve those garrisons in my own way. Meanwhile, you may hold Councils without number, but I would recommend tennis to you as a healthier pastime."

They watched him go. "The young thoroughbred !" spluttered Culpepper.. "We'll get a bit between his teeth, one of these days, and teach him discipline."

Rupert made his way across the High Street, a curious soreness at his heart. Discipline? He had learned it in his teens —the self-restraint, the gift of taking blows and giving them with equal zest. But this new school he was passing through was harsh, unlovely. There was York waiting for relief, there was Lathom House, defended with courage unbelievable by Lady Derby and a handful of hard-bitten men; there were twenty manors holding out in hope of the succouring cavalry who did not come; and he was kept here to attend a Council, to listen to veiled jealousy and derision, when all he asked for was a horse under him and grace to gather a few thousand men.

As he neared Christ Church, intent on seeking audience of the King, and stating frankly his own view of his enemies, he encountered Michael Metcalfe crossing hurriedly from a side-street.

"Well, sir?" he asked, with a sense of friendship at sight of a man so obviously free of guile. "Have they done wagering in Oxford as to the hour your kinsmen ride in?"

"I think the play runs even faster. Some learned dons have brought the heavy guns of algebra to bear on it, and all the town is waiting for their answer to the riddle."

"All's topsy-turvy," laughed the Prince. "If dons have taken to giving the odds on a horse race, where will Oxford end? But you were hurrying, and I detain you."

Michael explained that the King had commanded his presence at the Deanery; and the other, after a brief farewell, turned on his heel. After all, his own business with the King could wait until this reigning favourite in Oxford had had his audience.

Just across the way was Merton, where the Queen's lodging was. Rupert had had his fill of disillusion and captivity here in the loyal city; he was human, and could not hide for ever his heartache to be out and doing, lest it ate inward with corrosion. He crossed to Merton, asked for the Queen, was told that she had gone out a half-hour since to take the air. The Duchess of Richmond was within, he learned in answer to a second query.

The Duchess was stooping over a table when he was announced. She added a few quick strokes to the work she was engaged on, then rose.

"You, my Prince?" she said, with frank welcome. "You come from the Council? I hoped that you would come. Were they as always?"

"A trifle worse. My lord Cottington's gout was at its worst, and he in the same

mood as the disease. Digby's mouth was more like a Cupid's bow than ever, and he simpered well-groomed impertinences. How I loathe them, Duchess!"

"You would."

She turned for a moment to the window, looked out on the May sunlight and the dancing leaves. All the vigour of their loyalty to the King—her husband's and her own—all the dreams they had shared of monarchy secure again, and rebellion trampled underfoot, were summed up in Rupert's person. He had done so much already; he was resolute to go forward with the doing, if the curs of scandal and low intrigue would cease snapping at his heels.

She turned from the window. "My Prince," she said, touching his arm with the grace that gives knighthood to a man, "you do well to come here for sanctuary between the pauses of the battle. If you knew what my husband says of you, if you guessed the many prayers I send you—"

The keen, happy smile broke through from boyhood's days. "Duchess," he said very simply, "I am well rewarded. What were you busy about when I intruded?"

She showed him her handiwork. "One must do something these dull days," she explained, "and it was you who taught me this new art of etching. Am I a good pupil?"

Rupert looked at the work with some astonishment. The art was in its infancy, and difficult; yet she had done very well, a few crudities apart. The etching showed a kingfisher, triumphant on a rock set in midstream; at its feet lay a half-eaten grayling.

"It is not good art, because it is an allegory," she explained, with the laughter that had been oftener heard before the troubled days arrived. "You, my Prince, the kingfisher, and the grayling the dullwitted fish named Parliament."

At the Deanery Michael was in audience with the King, whose imagination had been taken captive by the exploits of the Riding Metcalfes, by the stir and wonderment there was about the city touching the exact hour of their coming. Michael, because wind and hazard in the open had bred him, carried himself with dignity, with a reverence rather hinted at than shown, with flashes of humour that peeped through the high gravity of this audience. He explained the wagering there was that York would be relieved, spoke of the magic Rupert's name had in the North. At the end of the half-hour the King's face was younger by ten years. The distrust of his nephew, wearing faith away as dropping water wears a rock, was gone. Here, by God's grace, was a gentleman who had no lies at command, no private grudge to serve. It was sure, when Michael took his farewell, that the commission to raise forces for the relief of York would not be cancelled.

The King called him back, bade him wait until he had penned a letter. The letter written with the sense that his good angel was looking over shoulder, as Charles felt always when his heart was free—was a simple message to his wife. He had not seen her for a day, and was desolate. He could not spare time to cross the little grove between this and Merton, because he had letters still unanswered, but hoped to sup there later in the day. He was a fine lover, whether of Church, or State, or the wife who was lavender and heartsease to him; and, after all, they are three kingly qualities.

He sealed the letter. "You will be so good as to deliver it into the Queen's hand, Mr. Metcalfe; there may be an answer you will bring."

Michael, when he knocked at the gate of Merton, was told the Queen was abroad. He said that he would wait for her return; and, when the janitor was disposed to question, he added that he came direct from the King, and, if he doubted it, he would pitch him neck and crop into the street. He was admitted, for the janitor, though sturdy, was six inches shorter.

When he came into the room, that would have been gloomy between its panelled walls if it had not been for the sunlight flooding it with gold and amber, he saw Rupert and the Duchess of Richmond standing near the window. Sharp, like an east wind from Knaresborough, where he had marked time by dalliance with pretty women, he heard Miss Demaine's voice as she bade him, when he came to Oxford, ask Rupert how the Duchess of Richmond fared.

Michael did not need to ask. With a clean heart and a conscience as easy as is permitted to most men, he saw these two as they were—loyal woman helping loyal man to bind the wounds that inaction and the rust of jealousy had cankered.

"By your leave," he said, "I have a letter for the Queen."

"It will be safe in my hands, Mr. Metcalfe."

The Prince was surprised by the other's gravity, his air of perplexity. "I would

trust all I have to you," said Michael, "all that is my own. But this letter is the King's, and he bade me give it to the Queen herself. I can do no less, believe me."

"Sir," said Rupert coldly, "you risk your whole advantage here at Court—make me your enemy for life, perhaps—because you stand on a punctilio the King himself would not ask from you."

The Duchess watched the faces of these men. Michael had been the laughter-maker in the midst of disastrous days; his gift of story, his odd susceptibility to the influence of twenty pairs of bright eyes in a day, had made him a prime favourite. Now he was as hard and simple-minded as his brother Christopher. She approved the man in his new guise.

"I stand on the strict command the King gave me," said Michael quietly. "Sir, how could a man do otherwise?"

Rupert turned suddenly. "Duchess," he said, "we stand in the presence of a man. I have tried him. And it always clears the air, after Councils and what not, to hear the north wind sing. I wish your clan would hurry to the muster, sir, if they're all as firm as you are for the King."

An hour later the Queen returned, read the letter, penned a hasty answer. "Ah, it is so good to see you, Monsieur Metcalfe, so good ! You have the laughter ready always —it is so good to laugh ! There is—what you call it ?--too much salt in tears, and tears, they fall so quick if one allows it. Now, you will tell me—before you take my letter—when does your big company ride in ? Some say to-day, others two, three days later. For myself, I want to see your tall men come. They will make light the King's heart—and he so triste—ah, croyez-vous that he is triste !"

With her quick play of hands and features, her pretty broken English, the air of strength and constancy that underlay her charm, the Queen touched Michael with that fire of pity, admiration, selfless love, which never afterwards can be forgotten. She had bidden him laugh, lest for her part she cried. So he made a jest of this ride of the Metcalfes south. He drew pictures, quick, ludicrous pictures, of men calculating this queer game of six-score men travelling fast as horseflesh could bring them to the loyal city. He explained that he alone had the answer to the riddle, because he was unhampered by Christopher's obstinacy on the one hand, by the grave algebra of dons on the other. All Oxford had been obsessed by the furious gallop of horsemen north between stage and stage. They could reach York in fifteen hours. It was the return journey, of units gathering into companies, of companies resting their horses when need compelled, that fixed the coming of the White Horses into Oxford. And the last of these—the one mustered nearest York—was of necessity the one that guided the hour of coming. In the north ride, speed and road-dust under the gallop; in the canny muster toward the south, a pace of tiresome slowness.

"How long since we came in, Christopher and I?" asked Michael.

"Six days," said Rupert. "They've been leaden days for me, and so I counted them."

"Then look for our folk to-morrow, somewhere between dawn and sunset."

On the northern road, beyond Banbury, there had been a steady muster of the Metcalfes day by day. Blake, the nightrider, watched the incoming of these Northern men—each day a score of them, big on their white horses—with wonder and a keen delight. Those already mustered were so sure of the next day's company; and these, when they rode in, carried the same air of buoyancy, of man-like hardihood and child-like trust.

A new, big dream was stirring round Blake's heart. Six days ago he had lain awake and heard two sentries talking of Miss Demaine, of the coquetry she practised still in Knaresborough, and his old wound had opened. He had staunched the bleeding with prompt skill; and now his heart was aching, not for fripperies over and done with, but for the thing that Oxford was to see, if all went well. He had ridden out to spur the first Metcalfe forward with his message He would bring this gallant to the North. company into the city-he, small of body, used only to the plaudits of barn-owls and farmhouse dogs as he galloped over hill and dale on lonely errands-he would come into the full sunlight of Oxford's High Street with the stalwarts he had gathered in.

There's no stimulus so fine as a dream nurtured in good soil. Blake went foraging by day, taking his share of other camp work, too; and, when his sleep was earned o' nights, he lay watching the stars instead, and pictured this good entry into Oxford.

On the sixth evening the last of the Metcalfes came in, the old Squire of Nappa at their head. And Blake put a question to the Squire, after they had known each other half an hour—a question that none of the others had known how to answer, though he had asked it often. "We have had excursions and alarms from Banbury, sir—a few skirmishes that taught them the cost of too great inquisitiveness—and I asked your folk why we gathered here, instead of skirting a town so pestilent."

"They did not tell you," chuckled the Squire, "because they could not, sir. I am used to asking for obedience. My lads learn the reason later on. But you shall know. I shall never forget, Mr. Blake, that it was you who brought me in my old age to the rarest frolic ever I took part in."

He explained, with a jollity almost boyish, that Banbury was notorious in Northern gossip as a hot-bed of disloyalty, its folk ever on the watch to vex and hinder Oxford. So he proposed to sweep the town as clean as might be before riding forward.

Soon after dawn the next day, men and horses rested, they set about the enterprise. The sentry posted furthest north of Banbury ran back to give word that the camp was astir; the soldiers and townsmen, not knowing what was in the mind of this company that had been gathering on its borders these six days past, got to arms and waited. And then they heard a roar, as it were of musketry, as the Metcalfes gave their rally-call of "A Mecca for the King !"

There was no withstanding these men. They had more than bulk and good horses at their service. The steadfastness that had brought them south, the zeal that was like wine in their veins, made them one resistless whole that swept the street. Then they turned about, swept back again, took blows and gave them. The Banbury men were stubborn. They took the footman's privilege, when matched against cavalry, of trying to stab the horses; but the Metcalfes loved the white horses a little better than themselves, and those who made an essay of the kind repented it.

At the end of it Squire Metcalfe had Banbury at command. "We can breakfast now, friends," he said, the sweat streaming from his jolly face. "I told you we could well afford to wait."

His happy-go-lucky prophecy found quick fulfilment. Not only was the place rich in the usual good food dear to the Puritans, but it happened that the wives of the town had baked overnight a plentiful supply of the cakes which were to give Banbury its enduring fame. "They're good cakes," laughed the Squire of Nappa. "Eh, lads, if only Banbury loyalty had the same crisp flavour !"

THE MIRACLE OF THE MATCHES by Herman Scheffauer

Illustrated by Cyrus Cuneo



AUNG HPYAN and his two friends, Maung Hla and Maung Gale, heard the evening gong boom from the village monastery of Daikpyet, and knew that it was time for supper. So they ceased

from their work in the wet paddy-fields, unyoked the bullocks from the wooden ploughs, and flung the yokes over their shoulders. Then, leading the brutes by the nose-ropes, they went splashing through the brimming rice-lands on their way home.

It was in one of the northern districts of Upper Burma, on the Irrawaddy, and the month was Wazo, when the rains are heavy. The silver gong rang on as they picked their way along the *bunds* and then down the maze of narrow paths through the jungle that bordered on the village. White egrets and herons flapped overhead; swarms of tiny green parrots rustled by. The three boys stuffed their pipes of bamboo root with yellow tobacco and began to smoke. The pipe-holes glowed in the darkness like the red glass eyes of the sculptured devil beasts that guard the pagoda gate—as Maung Hpyan would have said.

Maung Hpyan was their leader. He had long black hair, which he fastened in a topknot and bound up with a turban of pink cloth. He wore a loose white shirt, and his petticoat was of brilliant red cotton, tucked up between his legs for comfort while at work, and fastened at the back. On his short, sturdy legs and thighs the blue-black arabesques of tattooing showed plainly. The younger boys stood in great awe of Maung Hpyan, for his words, despite his years, were full of wisdom, and his eyes of strange dreams. They spoke of the *zat-pwe*, the rude harvest drama of Burma, the great annual event of village life, and of the girls they would court in the evening. Maung Hpyan was devoted to the sister of Maung Hla, the little Ma Shwe Ban, with her large, soft eyes. Now their voices sounded loud and clear, for the gong had ceased. The silence hung heavy; the tropic twilight gathered fast.

Suddenly there was a hissing noise, and a spurt of flame and smoke shot from the pocket of Maung Hpyan's shirt. His two comrades stood stock-still for a moment, transfixed with terror Then, with yells of "Ameley! Ameley!" they ran towards the village. Maung Hpyan smiled, beat out the flame with his hand, and pulled forth a spluttering, half - burnt box of sulphur matches which had accidentally ignited in his pocket. He threw them hissing into a puddle and followed after the other boys. He heard their cries and yells, and smiled strangely when he passed the Nal-haunted banyan tree that marked the entrance to the village thorn enclosure.

"A miracle! Flame has burst from the body of Maung Hpyan!" they shouted. "A miracle! A miracle!"

The village elders and trustees of the pagoda were at supper, squatting with their families on the verandahs of their houses. Each held in his lap a small red lacquer bowl of rice and fish-paste, which he ate with his fingers, and refilled with a wooden spoon from a large lacquer bowl that stood on a tiny table in their midst. They lifted their heads lazily as the two half-naked boys dashed shouting through the village.

"Fire has burst from the side of Maung Hpyan! A miracle!"

"We have seen it with our own eyes !"

"Five times, since I was a mere koyin in

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the monastery, have I heard that tale," said U Po Thu Daw, the oldest man in the village, "and five times it was a lie."

"What! Maung Hpyan, the *Nat*-struck one, to know such grace!" said another. "As soon might flame burst from my bullock! Soon we shall hear him say that he can dive beneath the ground and find hidden treasure."

"And here comes Maung Hpyan himself," said a third, "not a hair of him singed."

They called out to the boy as he passed, demanding to know what truth there was in the tale told by his comrades. But the lad smiled proudly and passed on without answering. He went straight to his father, U Byaw, who sat in his verandah beside his wife and brother, Ko lugyi. There was an empty place beside the lacquer bowl reserved for Maung Hpyan. Forthwith his father, mother, and uncle flung their questions at him, adopting the name which elders use towards the younger.

"What is this tale, Nga Hpyan, that we hear told of thee—that flame has burst from thy body?"

"Is it true, Nga Hpyan? Tell us, is it true?" shrilled his mother frantically.

His uncle was very calm. "You must tell us what has happened, Nga Hpyan," said he, and motioned to the boy's father to send his wife into the house. U Byaw grumbled something, and sullenly the little brown woman slunk away.

"Now tell thy tale," said the uncle.

Then the boy told of the box of matches which had suddenly caught fire in his pocket. Whilst they were speaking, neighbours came running up to see the youth who had been favoured by this sign of the god. But his father and uncle bade him enter the house and not show himself. From an inner room, crouching beside his mother, Maung Hpyan heard his uncle tell the simple villagers that the miracle was indeed a mighty and veritable one, that fire from heaven had shot from his nephew's flesh, and that, having been touched by the divine, it was meet that he withdraw himself a while from the common gaze. Perplexed, excited, and awed, the villagers and neighbours went away.

"Hark you, elder brother," then said Ko lugyi to the father of Maung Hpyan, "though this be no real miracle, yet assuredly it is a blessing sent us by God. And he that has not the wisdom to make use of such blessings is a fool whom God will refuse to help in this existence and will degrade in the next." "What use can be made of the matches that caught fire in the clothes of my son?" asked U Byaw. "It means nothing more than that I must buy a new shirt for him."

"Are we not in debt to Ko Shwe Gyi, the money-lender?" asked the uncle.

" Alas," was U Byaw's doleful reply, "we are, in truth, under his heel."

Cunningly Ko lugyi began to unfold the great plan that had sprung to life in his brain—like the matches in his nephew's pocket.

"You have seen," said he, "how the people will have it a miracle. They know well that when flame bursts from the body of a man, it is a sign of the emanation of the deity incarnate. Is not this miracle so related in the holy scriptures of Gautama the Buddha? And do not the people believe? And, believing, do they not worship? And, worshipping, will they not pay—pay much tribute? And are not land, house, and cattle mortgaged to Ko Shwe Gyi, the money-lender? And all these things being thus and so, U Byaw, is it not meet that we content these jungle folk?"

U Byaw stared before him into the darkness and grunted, but less dolefully than before.

"We must have speech," Ko lugyi went on, "with U Waranda, the village monk and guardian of the pagoda. Roundly he hates the Government, for, in truth, far greater power was his in the days of the Burmese kings. By this sign has Maung Hpyan been proved *Min laung*, a true embryo of royalty—one whose feet are fit to tread on the people's necks and mount a throne."

"It is good, younger brother," said U Byaw, shifting the quid of betel in his cheek.

His sluggish fancy began to stir like broth troubled by a fire. For three hours that night they sat smoking their great cheroots on the verandah in the moonlight, their heads nodding close together as they built up their plots and plans.

Early the next morning, when the sun was but one palm-tree high, they went to the pagoda to confer with the village monk. They found him strolling in the early sunlight in the courtyard beside the brick image-houses. The golden, bottle-shaped dome of the pagoda glowed like a living coal; beyond it, in a garden, the white stone walls of the monastery shone like silver. Here in the shadow the young school-boys sat crouched over their books. U Waranda, the monk, was clothed in bright yellow. His head was shaven. His expression was sober and ascetic, but when he spoke, a look of guile and worldliness crept into his face.

"Is there permission to enter, royal teacher?" asked Ko lugyi.

"Enter, royal givers," bade the monk. The two men made a low obeisance before him and took off their sandals. With illconcealed eagerness U Waranda listened to the tale they brought him. His twitching brown hand, which rested upon the head of one of the grinning dragons that flanked the entrance steps, opened and closed. "Ashin paya," began U Byaw, "in the

days of the Burmese kings, what power was yours ! "

At these words a livid tinge overspread the face of the monk and a spark flew from his eyes. The smouldering ambition in him was touched. Great visions of power opened before him as he listened to the story of the two men.

"My royal disciples," said he magnificently, "by the sign of fire that was given, I perceive that it is by the will of God that we spread the tidings of His embryo prince, Maung Hpyan."

He then led them before the school-boys. Their heads were shaven like his own, and they sat squatting on their heels before the monastery, saying their Pali lessons aloud. To them U Waranda made a brief speech---

"Strive to acquire merit, my disciples," said he, "by doing reverence to our new Burmese prince whom Heaven has sent us to honour and obey, and thus glorify our pagoda and the royal relics enshrined therein."

Cunningly he wrought upon their hearts and brains as they sat silent with upturned eyes. He spoke fervently of how religion had been honoured in the days when there were kings in Burma, before the Kala-pyu, the white English devils, had dispossessed them of all that their fathers had enjoyed.

Like a fire or a fever, the gospel of Maung Hpyan began to rayage the district. Peasants and pilgrims flocked to the pagoda. They brought countless alabaster images of Buddha, great and small, and laid many silver offerings in the lacquer bowl that stood near the great recumbent statue smiling Maung so benignantly towards eternity. Hpyan was seen but seldom, but when he appeared, then wild crowds followed and fell down before him.

Other miracles began to happen. Thrice, as he strolled abroad at night, under the protection of his uncle, his face was seen to

shine with a livid and luminous glow. One night a great crowd gathered before the pagoda—another miracle was taking place! A mysterious and elusive light was seen flickering about the top of the golden pagoda, and the delicate pinnacle, with its circlet of bells, smouldered and smoked strangely. It cast a pale greenish reflection into the courtyard, and threw a tinge of death over the dark, upturned faces of the The crowd bent low before village folk. the marvel, and a loud gabble of prayers went up. All day long, and often far into the night, little Ma Shwe Ban stood watching the house of Maung Hpyan's father, in order to catch a glimpse of her beloved. In her large dark eyes there now glowed a light of wild and passionate devotion, in which the fires of love mingled with the fires of faith. She was now but as dust beneath his feet. Only from afar might she still behold and worship him.

Day after day the adoration at the temple became more fervent and intense. Throughout the district discontent grew huge and rank as jungle weeds. Maung Hpyan was a prince, and his own must be given back to him, or why had the sign been sent from Heaven to single him out? Such was the question the monk first asked of the villagers, until the villagers asked it of one another. There was but one cool head in all the region-that of the wrinkled old headman. One day he stood forth, when the people went flocking towards the pagoda, and spoke thus-

"Beware," said he, "lest you arouse the suspicion of the Government, the asoyamin. Already the very trees are rustling like so many tongues, telling of your folly and In the *asoyamin* there is more madness. strength than in yourselves, or in him you The fire in their guns and call prince. cannon is more potent than the fire from his Beware, likewise, lest the township loins. officer come to pry into your houses and your hearts. He is swift to punish. Or he will come and look upon you and say nothing and go away, but in a month the thathameda (tax on families) or the legundaw (tax on land) will be raised. Be wise, sons and daughters of the village, beware !"

But the seditious monk, the uncle of Maung Hpyan, and even his father, who now no longer stood in terror of the moneylender-these three went on preaching the cause of Maung Hpyan. Maung Hpyan himself played his part well, keeping himself in all the mystery and sanctity of seclusion, save for his rare and startling appearances by night. The villagers and the jungle-folk, in obedience to U Warande, the monk, no longer brought statues of Buddha, but much tribute in coin—two rupees here, five there, eight annas here.

"For the royal prince, for the great royal palace and the realm of a true Burmese king!" the monk would cry, and the coins rattled into the lacquer bowl.

All went well, yet the fox-eyed Ko lugyi was ill at ease.

"Without arms we shall be as babes in the clutch of orang-outangs," said he to his brother. "Of what avail are long swords or short swords, axes or spears, against the spirits that go forth to kill from the iron tubes of the Sepoy *kalas*? How, without such weapons of fire, can we set our prince upon the throne?"

"Can we not purchase such arms?" asked U Byaw. "We have much money now."

"With the much copper, the little silver, and the no gold we have gathered, we could not purchase ten rusty muzzle-loaders from the hills," answered the uncle contemptuously.

They were talking thus within the house one night. Maung Hpyan, as they thought, lay asleep in the adjoining room. They were therefore startled when his voice, firm and clear, and all too humble for a prince, came through the thin wooden partition.

"Please, father and uncle, your slave knows of a place where firearms may be got, and that without payment of gold or silver."

His two relatives lifted their eyes and looked blinkingly at each other. His uncle was the first to speak.

"Hush!" said he. "Speak not so loud, but come hither, Nga Hpyan."

His nephew came and squatted down beside the smoky lamp.

"A two days' march through the jungle," said Maung Hpyan, whose round brown face was smeared with some strange substance, "there is a police-station at Tantabin, where the Sepoy *kalas* have a good store of arms. Let me go thither with a body of men, and soon we shall have weapons enough."

"'Tis well you speak thus," remarked the uncle, "for it is a sign that you have the blood of kings in you, and their valour no less."

A fortnight after, five hundred fanatic villagers and jungle-men gathered before the pagoda, where the monk bestowed his blessing upon them. Long swords and short swords, axes and spears, glittered in their hands. They bore ropes and wallets of food. Then Maung Hpyan appeared, and a great shout went up. The multitude made deep *shikos* and prostrated itself in the dust before him. He placed himself at the head of his men, and the march through the jungle began. On the first day they captured a Burman forest guard in the British service. But the man escaped the same night and flew like an arrow straight to Tantabin and raised the alarm.

There was no confusion at Tantabin. The commandant at the police-station ordered the white women to be ferried across the river to the other bank of the Irrawaddy. The men prepared the station for a siege. There were on hand a hundred Burmese and twice that number of Punjabi military police. The station, a square two-storey building of wood, stood close to the river. On the upper floor was an iron cage for the prisoners, also a room where stores of rifles were kept. This upper room was approached by an outside staircase with a drawbridge.

When Maung Hpyan and his followers appeared, the first ghastly rifts of dawn were beginning to thin the darkness. In this dim and leaden light they saw that the drawbridge was raised, but there was no sign of life. Surely the station slept. Then Maung Hpyan went among the followers he knew best and gave to each a small alabaster amulet.

"No bullet shall strike the man who wears this my amulet," said he in his sweet and gentle voice.

To each man he spoke a friendly word. To the poor among them he promised gifts of land or money, to others of higher rank, governorships and offices at his court.

"When we have secured the firearms in yonder station, we shall be mighty," said he very softly; "we shall be masters in the land."

Then he gave the order to attack. His little army yelled, flourished swords, and swarmed like ants towards the wooden building. The station still slept—slept until they were but a few yards distant. Then from the dark windows, from the barred openings of the prison on the upper floor, from the loopholes in the door, flashed sharp and crimson spurts of fire and puffs of smoke. Six or seven of Maung Hpyan's followers shrieked, floundered about, fell, and rolled down the incline towards the river.

Most of the others paused, though some five or six rushed forward and began hacking at the doors. Again the doors spat flame,

and crumpled heaps of brown legs and red cotton *longyis* lay twitching on the ground.

Then there was silence on both sides. This ominous stillness was unbroken for many moments, until a strange sound arose from within the station. It was harsh and they saw the round moon-calf face of the Burman forest guard who had escaped the night before. He grinned and shouted an insult. Suddenly, like torrents undammed, the soldiery, eager, uniformed, glittering with steel, poured from doors and windows.



"The thin-shanked soldier . . . raised his rifle at the word of command, and levelled it at the breast of Maung Hpyan, who sat immovable as bronze."

loud and awful—the white man's laugh—a sound that sent a quaking terror into the hearts of Maung Hpyan's men. It was more terrible than the rifles of the police of the *asoyamin*. With it there mingled the shriller cackle of the Sepoys. Then a window on the second storey opened, and in the ashen light Maung Hpyan and his followers turned and fled as though all the demons of earth, air, fire, and water were howling in their rear. Of the five hundred who had marched forth with the pretender two days before, less than three hundred, weary, hungry, and full of fear, slunk back to Daikpyet. Some two hundred lay cooped in the station at Tantabin, in the clutches of the *asoyamin*, and stared stupidly at the Sepoys who strolled back and forth with shouldered rifles.

Maung Hpyan disappeared. Some days afterwards, in company with his relatives, he made an attempt to go to Rangoon, and boarded a third-class carriage at Mandalay. At Mandalay there was a clever police official who had studied the description of the young rebel until he knew it by heart. His fingers were itching for the reward He seized Maung Hpyan and offered. examined the tattoo marks on his knees. But these did not tally with the description, for Maung Hpyan had been still clevererthe marks had been altered for him by the village tattooer. So Maung Hpyan was let go, though U Waranda, U Byaw, the father, and Ko lugyi, the uncle, were detained and flung into prison, where they awaited trial for treason and probable acquaintance with the hangman's noose.

"We must make an example of them," said the authorities. "Of course, it is not our wish to exterminate any of the families."

For three months Maung Hpyan lay hidden, and the asoyamin were put to immense trouble in the search. At Daikpyet they found nothing but a half-empty can of phosphorescent paint in the house of U Byaw. This, when mixed with the cunning brains of Ko lugyi, was all that was necessary to create the miracles of the shining face and the dome that gleamed by night. Then a distant report crept to the ears of the asoyamin, and a troop of Sepoys marched again towards Daikpyet. From the top of a tall teak tree little Ma Shwe Ban, Maung Hpyan's faithful love, saw them coming along the road one evening, a great square mass in a cloud of dust, shot with gleams of steel and brass. Hastily she clambered down, ran to the burnished pagoda, and vanished within.

When the Sepoys neared the village, they saw a spiral of smoke twisting from the shining top of the pagoda. A few moments after and there were flames that licked up

the golden shaft toward the circle of bells. The soldiers shouted and ran forward, bursting through the entrance where the stone dragons grinned. The lower part of the pagoda and the tops of its wooden columns were now a mass of writhing, soaring flame. Through the portals of the enclosure they saw the courtyard flooded with a glare of rose and amber. In the centre, on a golden pedestal that had once held an image, sat the naked body of Maung Hpyan in the posture of the Buddha, cross-legged and erect, his hands folded in his lap; his great dark eyes, vacant and oblivious, seemed to be gazing out into infinity.

The subadar of the Sepoys beckoned to the leanest of his men and muttered a few words. The thin-shanked soldier stepped forward, raised his rifle at the word of command, and levelled it at the breast of Maung Hpyan, who sat immovable as bronze, with a faint smile on his lips and the red light of the fire trembling over him. The officer drew his sword; the word "Fire !" was about to fall from his lips then came the fourth miracle.

There was a sudden melodious tinkling of the bells on top of the pagoda, as though they were stirred by the tongues of flame that licked them. The dome trembled like a great golden bottle on a quaking table. It quivered, then it lurched and swayed, the bells jangled loudly, then with a crash it rushed downwards like some vast extinguisher, covering the throne of Maung Hpyan, embryo of royalty, pretender to the crown, and rebel against the British rule. A burst of cinders and ashes flew into the air. The flames went roaringly to work again.

The old headman now appeared and harangued the villagers, and bade them be wise and obey their masters. That evening the hungry Sepoys quartered themselves upon the villagers and feasted royally, and the villagers served them humbly—humbly and in silence.



THE HUMOUR OF DAVIE-DEAR

By AGNES GROZIER HERBERTSON

Illustrated by Charles Pears



HE clock struck.

"Uncle Edward!"

"Yes?" I said.

"Uncle Edward !" I sighed. "It's a great pleasure to me to hear you speak again, Davie-Dear."

He had been silent for perhaps five minutes; but

Davie-Dear is impervious to any irony. He crept round the corner of the couch, scrubbed his head against my cushion, and, seizing the arm that held the newspaper, made it waggle furiously.

"Thank you, that makes a charming diversion," I said, yawning. "The first sign of life this paper has shown."

Davie-Dear ceased waggling. "What's a di-version ?" he asked.

It wasn't a question for a lazy afternoon. I pretended I hadn't heard.

Davie-Dear is sometimes simple in his tactics-direct and go-ahead. I mean to say, that he has learnt the value of repetition.

"What's a di-version?" he asked again. and a third time, and a fourth.

"Oh, Davie-Dear!" I cried. "Well, what's a----"

"It's something that takes your attention away from what you're doing," I said lamely.

Davie-Dear was silent for a moment, "You then his face became illumined. mean-me!"

I laughed. Then I frowned. "I very well might, you little----"

Davie-Dear disregarded the frown. "Uncle Edward "-he crept close-" how many diversions are there in this room?"

"Great Scott !" I said. I shut my eyes.

"Is the couch one?" asked Davie-Dear. " Is "-his eyes strayed-" the fire one ? Is -is the couch one?"

"I don't know." I repeated it firmly: "I don't know."

Davie-Dear That seemed a stopper.

considered it. "Are there many things you don't know, Uncle Edward ?"

"Not many," I said. "I wish there were."

"But you don't know how many diversions-

"No, I don't."

"You look as if you wanted to go to sleep again," said Davie-Dear, after an examination of my face; "and you've slept quite a lot. At first I thought you was reading, but then-

"I was having a sweetly peaceful dream, said piteously, "and you broke it, Ι Davie-Dear."

"Was it very interesting? Was it—was it about-"

"It wasn't about anything. That was its chief beauty."

"But-but I never heard of that kind of dream. P'r'aps you've bin and forgot what it was about. present?" Was it about a

"A present? Heavens, no!" Though it might well have been, for I've given three wedding presents in the last month; a fourth looms, and I have hardly a penny left to call my own.

Davie-Dear seemed disappointed. "Was it about -a spider?"

"It wasn't about anything. It was the kind of dream you dream when you are grown-up."

"Uncle Edward, don't you ever dream about anything when you're grown-up? Aunt Elsie said she dreamed about a kind of new hat with apples on it, an' pears, an'-

"I dare say she did! Elsie has a thoroughly frivolous and inconsequent mind," I said severely.

" What's in-con-"

"Davie-Dear," I said sharply, "I wish you'd pick my newspaper up from the floor and stop asking questions."

Davie-Dear picked it up. He gave it to "Now I've remembered! I know me. what it was I was goin' to tell you the very

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first moment I spoke. Uncle Edward, there's a spider on your hair." "What?" I raised my hand.

Davie-Dear caught it back. "Don't jump up, or p'r'aps it'll run down-----" He gave a little giggle. "It might run right down past your collar into the rest of you."

I wished I knew whether the tickling sensation round my neck was due to Davie-Dear's fingers, the spider, or both.

returned, taking his place by the end of the couch near my head.

"Don't you like spiders, Uncle Edward?"

I saw by the paper that several unknown persons with uninteresting names had returned to town. I yawned. "I am interested in them in the distance," I said, "but I don't desire a closer acquaintance."

"I like them to run over my hand," Davie-Dear sighed with rapture.



"Take it away, there's a good child. Drop it outside the window," I said uneasily.

"It isn't a big mushy one with long legs; it's a little wee quick one. Don't worry, Uncle Edward ; I'm watching him. He likes your hair best; he's goin' back-

"Catch him in your handkerchief and put him outside the window."

Davie-Dear poked at my neck, giving me a number of hard jabs. (I felt sorry for the spider.) After a journey to the window, he

"I suppose you did put him outside the window?" I asked in sudden suspicion.

Davie-Dear did not reply in words, but I gathered by a quick jerk of the couch that he nodded.

"You haven't got him there?"

My nephew chuckled gleefully. "I ain't got him, and you ain't got him. He's quite gone."

It seemed probable that he was gone-had quitted life altogether. "Don't say 'ain't,' old man," I said.

"Why not? Robert does."

"Oh, your mother wouldn't like it."

"It sounds quite a nice word," said Davie-Dear reflectively. "Ain't—ain't—." He kept on repeating it in a thoughtful fashion.

I turned my paper, and, having found a short paragraph that seemed as if it might contain some slight item of interest if read carefully, concentrated my attention upon it.

I was conscious that I read through three interruptions from Davie-Dear. The fourth got me.

"Mother wouldn't like it," said Davie-Dear.

"Wouldn't like what?"

"I spoke three times."

"Did you, Davie-Dear?" I rustled the paper. "Look here, sonny, I don't want to talk—I want to read."

"Yes, but, Uncle Edward----"

"Well, what is it?"

Davie-Dear gave a little gurgle—half giggle, half sigh. "There wasn't no spider on your hair."

"Wasn't no spider !" In my astonishment I adopted Davie-Dear's queer grammar.

He nodded. "I didn't see a spider. I said I sawed a spider, didn't I, Uncle Edward?"

"Yes, you did."

Davie-Dear gurgled again. "It was me. I was the spider."

"The deuce you were !" I began to see that there had been a practical joke, of which my nephew was half proud, half afraid.

"I tickled you—I made you jump. My, you did jump!"

"You certainly took me in, you young rascal !"

Davie-Dear burst into a gleeful laugh. It ceased suddenly.

"Uncle Edward?"

"Yes."

"I did say there was a spider?"

" Yes."

"Pr'aps—p'r'aps you didn't hear me. I said it quite small, like this." A low, muttering sound reached my ear.

"It was a little louder than that," I said. "I'm afraid I heard."

There was a short silence, then came something that sounded suspiciously like a sob.

"Uncle Edward, I've bin and told a lie !" "Oh, Heavens !" I said. I let the paper drop.

Davie-Dear retreated round the back of the couch, where I couldn't see him. I heard him snuffling against the tapestried side. "My dear child !" I said.

That evidently did it. Davie-Dear gave a little suppressed gasp. I knew that sound. It was usually the prelude to something much more lively in the way of noise.

My wits had scattered. I hastened to sweep them together. "Perhaps it wasn't quite a lie," I began uncertainly.

The remark had the desired effect. Davie-Dear is nothing if not of a speculative turn of mind.

"But-but I said-"

"Yes, I know you did. Still-"

"'Course, there might 've bin a spider. P'r'aps "—the gasps ceased—" p'r'aps there ucas a spider—just a little, wee, teeny one so small I couldn't see him."

That didn't seem the right way out, somehow. I couldn't let it go at that. Besides, Davie-Dear would see the weak point in the argument later on. "I fancy you said you saw him," I began.

Another gulp. "Yes, I did."

"Come here, Davie-Dear."

"I don't think I want to, Uncle Edward. I m—I'm tying my shoe."

I didn't press the little chap. I remember tying my own shoe in that fashion. I said : "It's like this : it was make-believe, Davie-Dear, so, you see, it doesn't—___"

But a sick little voice interposed : "Oh, Uncle Edward, didn't you *really* know it was a spider ? 'Cause I tickled your neck just the same as a spider, an'—an' I *did* think——" "Davie-Dear," I said hastily, "you had

"Davie-Dear," I said hastily, "you had better take this affair to your mother. She'll know why you said it was a spider. I—I expect you'll find it's all right."

It was mean of me, perhaps, but I really was nonplussed; I couldn't cope with the situation.

I could hear him creep cautiously out from his hiding-place.

"Hand me my paper again, there's a good chap," I said.

Davie-Dear slid it over my head. "You keep on droppin' your paper. I never saw anyone drop a paper as much as you do, Uncle Edward."

"It's a way I seem to have got into," I said.

The clock struck.

Davie-Dear stood arrested. "It's bin very quick. Don't you remember it struck just a wee minute ago? That's a very short hour. I should think it hurried. Don't you, Uncle Edward?"

"Well, I don't know. I thought it took things rather easily," I said.

" Uncle Edward !"

"Yes?"

780

"Are you sure" — pause — " mummy'll know why—why—"

"Why you said there was a spider ? I'm certain she will. She'll understand, Davie-Dear."

"Then I needn't go an' tell her now, 'cause she was goin' out at four o'clock. I heard her tell Robert. She'll be gone that last minute."

"I-yes, I suppose so."

"Yes." He gave a sudden shout of delight. "I'll—I'll stay an' have tea with you, Uncle Edward."

"Oh, will you? That will be nice," I said feebly.

Davie-Dear bent over and blew into my ear. "You ain't a wee bit sleepy now, are you, Uncle Edward? Shall we—shall we play at—at—___"

I sighed. It may have been with despair. On the other hand, it may have been with delight.



THE AWAKENING.

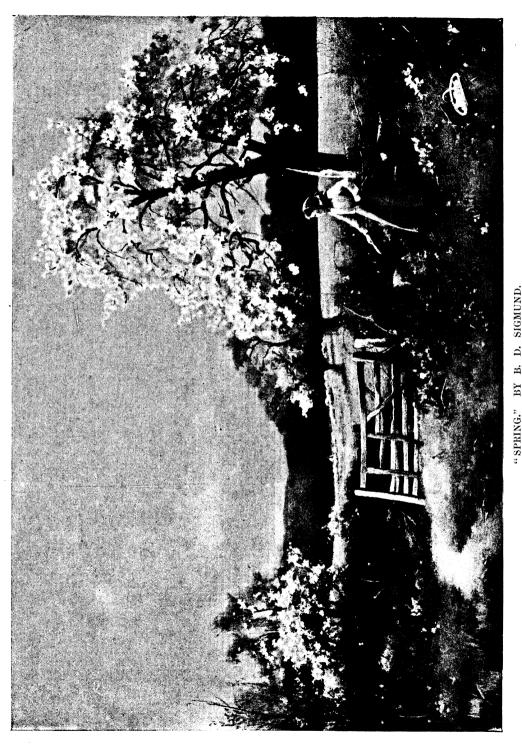
SWEET falls the thrush's first shy note Upon the light, expectant air; Shimmering dewdrops, earth's silver coat, Tremble and melt at sound so rare, And Nature stirs in her winter sleep, To rise refreshed, Spring's revels to keep.

And all the flowers asleep in her arms She flings broadcast amidst the dew— Sweet drooping violets are filled with alarms, And snowdrops frail their beauties renew, And crocus and tulip vie for the prize For colours that dazzle winter-dulled eyes.

Primrose turns up her bright, lovely face To the fleecy clouds that sail the sky, And daffodils take their graceful place In the midst of the floral galaxy; Narcissi aloof mystic petals unfold, And hyacinths stand out stately and bold.

The air is sweet with the scent of flowers, The sunbeams chase the dim, grey mist, The trees stretch their branches forth to the showers; Opening green buds their sheaths untwist. The grass spreads a carpet green and bright, Dark Winter flies before the light.

DRUSILLA MARY CHILD.



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THE WILLOW-WARBLER

AND ITS NEST

DESCRIBED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY

J. H. OWEN.

THE willow-warbler, usually called the willow - wren — probably because it builds a domed nest like a wren's—is a summer migrant, usually arriving inland during April and leaving in August and September. A few arrive in the last week of March sometimes (March 29, 1912, my earliest record), but the majority do not come until the last fortnight in April. Nests may be found in the last week in April, but eggs are seldom seen before May 7. I have always seen the earliest chiff-chaffs and willow-wrens making their way up the Chelmer. They usually follow a river and spread out from it along the tributaries, in the first instance. The first note the bird makes is a rather sweet but



INSPECTING THE EGGS.

plaintive "weet"; this note is not, as a rule, heard after the bird begins to sing, until the young are hatched, and then the cock uses it as a mild sort of alarm note. It may also be used as an alarm note during incubation under unusual circumstances. Later it may be heard, varied with "too-eet," almost everywhere before singing recommences before the autumn migration. The bird has been exceptionally common the last two summers in the country round Felstead, and it is to be hoped that it will remain so. It is, however, fairly common in most places certainly in all places I know—and generally



LINING THE NEST WITH FEATHERS.

on the increase. The nest is domed. Outwardly it is made of dried grasses, and inwardly it is lined with a good thickness of feathers—a partiality for white feathers has been indicated in all the nests I have examined carefully.

The nest is usually placed on the ground, level or sloping the latter preferred—and more or less screened by a thick tuft of long grass, bushes, or briars. Sometimes the nest is placed in

a bush, fence, ivy on wall, or similar situation, to as great a height as twelve feet from the ground. The bird is inclined to be touchy about the nest until eggs are laid, and will usually forsake it if it has been handled. After eggs have been laid, and especially after incubation has commenced, the birds show very great attachment to the nest, as the following story will show.



retired. Later I was very pleased to find that the birds resumed incubation and hatched and reared five young.

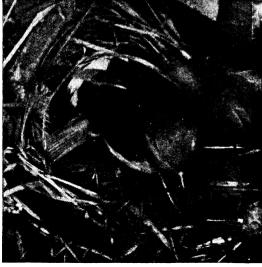
This is the only case I have known of a small bird continuing incubation after it had *seen* some of the 2ggs destroyed *in* the nest. It is also curious that the mouse did not revisit the nest.

The eggs usually number six or seven, and sometimes the bird rears two broods in a year. In such cases the second nest is made rather more than a week after the first young have left the first nest. My observations seem to indicate that the cock

BROODING.

Early in May I noticed a pair of birds greatly disturbed. They went down in turns into a small patch of grass by the roadside, and then up into a young willow; the alarm "weet" was used freely. I found the nest very quickly, and the cause of their trouble. A mouse had sucked two of the seven eggs, leaving the shells in the nest. Some of the contents of these eggs had been spilled in the nest. The other five eggs were untouched, and incubation had begun about four to five days. I cleaned the nest of shells and all signs of damage, and

THE EXIT.





TURNING TO LEAVE THE NEST.

then takes charge of the first young until that becomes unnecessary. The second broods usually have four or five eggs.

The eggs are usually of two main types; in both types the ground colour is white with a faint pink tinge. In one type the eggs are covered with many very light red spots; in the other type the spots are very much darker and fewer, and mostly at the large end.

The incubation period is almost exactly thirteen days. The eggs hatch out, one by one, at considerable intervals, and the shells of each egg are removed some twenty minutes after the chick is clear of it. The shells are carried to some distance from the nest and dropped. Usually they are all dropped at the same spot.

The incubation and brooding—at any rate, during the day—seem to me to be entirely the work of the hen. I have heard the cock singing in the neighbourhood of the nest until some hours after the eggs are all hatched.



small supply of food for a specially hungry youngster.

The cock brings food to the entrance of the nest and feeds the young under the hen. The hen takes food into the nest and delivers it while standing over the young until the brooding period is past. Then she, too, feeds them from the entrance. The

> cock bird seems to do no more than fetch food, and he does not stay at the nest after it is delivered. Consequently, he brings much more food than the hen.

> When the young are fed, all the gapes are examined, and very often the old bird removes something from one of the gapes. This is either undigested or unswallowed matter, and is swallowed by the old bird.

> If caterpillars are brought, they are always rendered inert before being delivered; if the caterpillar is squirming, it is rubbed or knocked against a twig or the top of a post until it stops moving, and is then

EJECTING A SPIDER.

The song is a descending scale, and once learned is easily recognised; a beginner is, however, liable to confuse it with the song of a chaffinch. The best rendering of the song I can give in letters is, "whee-whee-wheewhee - which - ee - way - o." The first part is in a descending scale; the last part is subject to considerable variation.

The nesting period varies in length according to the weather conditions; sometimes it is only twelve days, but I have known the young stay sixteen days in the nest.

The food consists of insects of various kinds; caterpillers form the main portion, but many kinds of flies, small moths, and spiders are brought, especially by the hen.

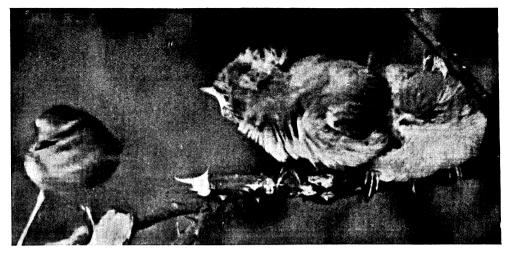
For the first half of the nesting period the hen broods nearly the whole time. She only leaves the nest when disturbed, or to cleanse the nest, or to fetch a



BOTH BIRDS ON THE NEST.

carried to the young. This is done even after the young have left the nest for some time.

When the young are hatched, they are almost naked; they have fairly long thick tufts of very light grey down between the eyes, on the back of the head, and on the top joint of the wings. Most of this down is



A PARENT BRINGING FOOD TO THE YOUNG BIRDS AFTER THEY HAVE LEFT THE NEST.

still present when they leave the nest. The mouth and tongue are yellow and without spots; the flanges of the mouth are lighter yellow.

When they are fledged and ready to leave the nest, the old birds entice them away. The method is to come near the young with food, and then flutter away along the ground a short distance. If the young do not follow at once, they are sure to do so after one or two repetitions of the performance.

The young and hen keep well together, even sitting touching one another on the same twig or branch. It is very curious that when two are together like this, the stronger will press against the weaker and urge it along the twig until it moves to another. Then the stronger follows it and does the same again.

At one nest two rather curious incidents took place. The birds became so tame that I could put my camera openly about four feet from the nest, and sit by the side of it and watch everything that was going on, as far as the hen was concerned. The cock would not come to the nest if I was within four yards of it. If I was a short distance away, however, he would often perch on my camera before alighting at the nest.

One day I thought to get a photograph of the hen replacing a feather in the nest. I therefore took a small feather, about one and a half inches long, from the nest and placed it a few inches from the entrance. The hen



ADMINISTERING THE FOOD.

took it in too quickly for me, so I made her come out again. She came out with the feather and went about a yard from the nest with it. I noticed she was mouthing it a good deal, and then she returned to the entrance. Here she perched and got the quill end into her mouth and began chewing it, and then, to my great astonishment, swallowed it. I just had wit enough left to snap her as the feather disappeared from view. This is, I believe, the only occasion on which such a bird has been known to swallow a feather.

A few days later I tried to repeat the experiment with a large feather. She took this in twice, and I had to fetch her out again. The third time she took it in and started to put it in position; then she must have thought she had had enough of it, for she brought it out again, flew some twenty to thirty yards, dropped it, and returned to brood.

The immigration is easy to follow on account of the song, and although many birds sing in August and September, the emigration is much harder to follow and map out. In mid-August I suddenly notice a great decrease, and then, perhaps, no change for some time : on the other hand, the numbers may be again swelled by arrivals from further north. Then, in September, the remainder seem to slip more gradually away, and one misses their song more and more, and by October the bird must be quite rare inland.



THE NIGHTINGALE.

How sweet that song from out the orchard boughs Falls on the still night air, Recalling by its passion all the vows That ever uttered were: An endless rain of liquid melody Bathes all the vibrant air. No eye may see the beating of thy heart; Embowered 'mid the leaves. Thoy utterest strains that never mortal art Or fashions or conceives; Enraptured love, divinest ecstasy Amid the quivering leaves. Hark! now a softer, now a melting strain, Note of love's sweetest bliss; A moment's pause, triumphant love again Singeth of victory. This-This is the very soul of harmony, Splendid, exultant bliss.

ERNEST HOCKLIFFE.

THE CABIN DOOR

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS

Author of "Hoof and Claw," "The Feet of the Furtive," "Neighbours Unknown," "Kings in Exile," "More Kindred of the Wild," etc.

Illustrated by Paul Bransom



HAT was known as the County Line Road, though in winter a highway of some importance for the sleds and sleighs of the lumbermen, was in summer little more than a broad, straight trail, with

grass and wild flowers growing undisturbed between the ruts. Just now, in the late and sodden Northern spring, it was a disheartening stretch of hummocks and bog-holes, the bog-holes emphasised by a leg-breaking array of half rotten poles laid crossways. It was beautiful, however, in its lonesome, pallid, wistful fashion, for its hummocks, where dry enough, were already blueing tenderly with the first violets, its fringes were sparsely adorned with the shy blooms of wind-flower, dog-tooth, and hepatica, and scattered through the dark ranks of the fir trees on either side were little colonies of white birch or silver poplar, just filming with the first ineffable green.

To the slim girl who, bundle in hand and with skirts tucked up half-way to the knee, was picking her steps along this exasperating path, the wildness of the scene—its mingled harshness and delicacy—brought a pang which she could but dimly understand. The pale purpling of the violets, the aerial greening of the birch tops against the misty sky, the solemnity of the dark, massed fir trees—it was all beautiful in her eyes beyond anything words could suggest, but it made her heart ache with something like an intolerable homesickness. This was incomprehensible to her, since she was already, in a sense, at home. This was her native wilderness, this was the kind of chill, ethereal, lonesome spring which thrilled through the memories of her childhood. And she was nearing—she could not now be more than twelve miles from—the actual home of her childhood, that grey cabin on the outskirts of the remote and wind-swept settlement of Stony Brook.

For the past three years—going on for four now, indeed—Sissy Bembridge had been away from this wild home, working hard, and saving her wages, in the big shoe factory at K-, down by the sea. Called home suddenly by word that her mother was ill, she had come by train to the end of the Branch, and tried to get a rig to take her around by the main road to Stony Brook. There was no rig to be had for love or money. Too anxious to wait, and confident in her young vigour, she had left her luggage, tied up a few necessaries and eatables in a handy bundle, and set out by the short cut of the old Line Road. Deaf to all dissuasions, she had counted on making Stony Brook before nightfall. Moreover-though she would never have acknowledged to herself that such a consideration could count for anything when all her thoughts were on her mother's illness-she was aware of the fact that Connor's gang was stream-driving on the Ottanoonsis, and would be by now just about the point where the Line Road touches the river. Mike Farrell would be on the drive, and if she should chance to pass the time o' day with him, and let him know she was at home-why, there'd be no harm done to anybody.

For hours the girl trudged on, picking her way laboriously from side to side of the trail, and often compelled to stop and mend a bit of the corduroy roadway before she could get across some particularly bad stretch of bog. Her stout shoes and heavy woollen stockings were drenched with the icy water, but she was strong and full of abounding health, and she felt neither cold nor fatigue. In spite of

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her anxiety about her mother, her attention was absorbed by the old familiar atmosphere of the wilderness, the haunting colours, the chill, elusive, poignant smells. It was not till fairly well along in the afternoon, therefore, that she awoke to the fact that she had not covered more than half the distance which she had to travel. The heavy going, the abominable state of the road, had utterly upset her calculations. The knowledge came to her with such a shock that she stopped short in consternation, almost dropping her At this rate she would be in the bundle. forest all night, for it would be impossible to traverse the bog-holes in the dark. Child of the backwoods though she was, she had never slept out alone with the great trees and the mysterious night stillness. For the first time she cast a look of dread into the vistaed shadows of the fir trees. Forgetting the violets, the greening birches, the delicate spring smells, she hurried on at a reckless pace which soon forced her to stop and recover her breath. The best she could hope was to reach the river-shore before dark, and perhaps find the camp of the stream-drivers. She felt cold, and tired, and small, and terribly alone.

Yet, as a matter of fact, she was by no means so alone as she imagined. For the past half hour or more she had been strangely companioned.

Keeping parallel with the road, but at a distance, and hidden in the shadows, went an immense and gaunt black bear. For all his bulk, he went as noiselessly as a wild-cat, skirting the open spaces, and stopping from time to time to sit up, motionless as a stump, and listen intently, and sniff the air with sensitive nostrils. But his little, red-rimmed, savage eyes never lost sight of the figure of the girl for more than a few seconds at a time.

For bears this was the hungry season, the season of few roots and no fruits, few grubs and little honey. The black bear loves sweets and berries far better than any flesh food, however dainty. And human flesh he either fears or dislikes so heartily that only under special stress can be bring himself to contemplate it as a possible article of diet. But this bear considered himself His lean flanks were under special stress. fairly clinging together from emptiness. To his eyes, thus prejudiced, the fresh young form of Sissy Bembridge, picking its way down the trail, looked appetising. Girl was something he had never tried, and it might be edible. At the same time, this inoffensive

and defenceless-looking creature undoubtedly belonged to the species Man, as his nostrils well assured him. Therefore, small as she was, she was apt to be very dangerous, even to go off at times with flame and a terrifying noise. He was afraid to show himself to her, but his hunger, coupled with curiosity, led him to track her, perhaps in the hope that she might fall dead in the trail and so make it safe for him to approach and taste.

The girl, meanwhile, under the influence of her uncertainty and fatigue, was growing more and more apprehensive. She assured herself that there was nothing to fear, that none of the wild inhabitants of these New Brunswick woods would dare to interfere with a human being. At the same time she found herself glancing nervously over her shoulder, as the shadows lengthened and deepened, and all the wilderness turned to dusky violet. From the wet pools began the cold and melancholy fluting of the frogs, the voice of solitude, and under the plangency of it she found the tears running down her cheeks. At this she shook herself indignantly, squared her shoulders, stamped her foot, and plunged ahead with a firm resolution that the approach of dark should not make her a fool. And away in the shadows of the firs the bear drew a little nearer, encouraged by the fading of davlight.

Just as it was growing so dark that she found it hard to choose her path between the pools and the bog-holes, to her infinite relief she caught sight of a cabin roof crowning a little rise of ground by the roadside. She broke into a run in her eagerness, reached the door, and pounced upon it breathlessly. But there was no light in the With a sinking heart she realised window. that it was empty — that it was nothing more than a deserted lumber-camp. Then, as if in answer to her vehement knocking, the door swung slowly open, showing the black darkness within. It had been merely With a startled cry closed, not latched. she sprang back, her skin creeping at the emptiness. Her first impulse was to turn and run. But she recovered herself, remembering that, after all, here was shelter and security for the night, infinitely preferable to a wet bivouac beneath some dripping fir tree.

She could not bring herself, however, to grope her way into the thick darkness of the interior. Stepping some paces back from the threshold, she nervously untied her

bundle and got out a box of matches. Lighting one, she shaded it with her hand. crept forward, and cautiously peered inside. In the spurt of light the place looked warm and snug. She returned for her bundle, went in and shut the door. Then she drew a long breath and felt better. The camp was small, but dry and in good repair. It was quite empty, except for the tier of bunks along one wall, a rough-hewn log bench, a broken stove before the rude chimney, and several lengths of rust-eaten stove-pipe scattered on the floor. Lighting match after match, she hunted about for something to serve as fuel, for she craved the comfort as well as the warmth of a fire.

There was nothing, however, but a few handfuls of dry, fine spruce tips, left in one of the bunks. This stuff, she knew, would flare up at once and die in a couple of minutes. She made up her mind to go out and grope about in the wet gloom for a supply of dead branches, though she was now conscious of a childish reluctance to face again the outer solitude. Almost furtively she lifted the heavy latch and opened the door half-way. Instantly, with a gasp, she slammed it to again and leaned against it with quaking knees. Straight in front of her, not twenty feet away, black and huge against the grey glimmer of the open, she had seen the prowling bear.

Recovering herself after a few seconds, she felt her way stealthily to the bench and sat down upon it so as to face the two windows. The windows were small—so small that she was sure no monster such as the one which had just confronted her could by any possibility force its way through them. But she waited in a sort of horror, expecting momently that a dreadful shadowy face would darken one or the other of them and glare in upon her. She felt that the eyes of it would be visible by their own light, and she summoned up all her resolution that she might not scream when it appeared. For the time, however, nothing of the sort took place, and the two little squares continued to glimmer palely.

After what seemed to her an hour of breathless waiting, she heard a sound as of something rubbing softly along the logs of the back wall. She swung around on her seat to stare with straining eyes at the spot where the sound came from. But, of course, all was blackness there. And she could not keep her eyes for more than a few seconds from the baleful fascination of the windowsquares. The door of the camp was a heavy one and sturdily put together, but along its bottom was a crack some half an inch in width. Presently there came a loud sniffing at this crack, and then the door creaked, as if a heavy body were leaning against it. She shuddered and gathered herself together for a desperate spring, expecting the latch or the hinges to give way. But the honest New Brunswick workmanship held, and she took breath again with a sob.

After this respite, a thousand fantastic schemes of defence began to chase themselves through her brain. Out of them all she clung to just one, as possibly offering some hope in the last emergency. Noiselessly she gathered those few handfuls of withered spruce twigs and heaped them upon the top of the stove. If the bear should succeed in squeezing through the window or breaking down the door, she would light the dry stuff, and perhaps the sudden blaze and smoke might frighten him away. That it would daunt him for a moment, she felt sure, but she was equally sure that its efficacy would not last very long.

As she was working up the details of this scheme—more for the sake of keeping her terror in check than for any great faith she had in it—the thing she had been expecting happened. One of the glimmering greyblue squares grew suddenly dark. She gave a burst of shrill, hysterical laughter and ran at it, as a trapped rat will jump at a hand approaching the wires. As she did so, she scratched a bunch of four or five matches and threw them, spluttering and hissing, in the face of the apparition. She had a glimpse of small, savage eyes and an open, white-fanged mouth. Then the great face withdrew itself.

Somewhat reassured to find that the monster could be disconcerted by the spurt of a match, she groped back to her seat, and fell to counting, by touch, the number of these feeble weapons still left in the box. She had only six more, and she began to repent of having used the others so recklessly. After all, as she told herself, that bear could not possibly squeeze himself through the window, so why should he not amuse himself by looking in at her if he wanted to? It might keep him occupied. It occurred to her that she ought to be glad that the bear was such a big one. His face alone had fairly filled the window. She would save the remaining matches.

For a good ten minutes nothing more happened, though from time to time her intent ears caught the sound of cautious sniffing on the other side of the log walls, as if the enemy were reconnoitring to find a weak point in her fortress. She smiled scornfully there in the dark, knowing well the strength of those log walls. Then, all at once her face stiffened and she sat rigid, clutching the edge of the bench with both hands. The door had once more begun to creak and groan under the weight of a heavy body surging against it.

There was a sound of scratching, a rattle of iron claws, which told her that the beast was rearing itself upright against the door. The massive paws seemed to fumble inquisitively. Then her blood froze. She heard the heavy latch lift with a click.

The door swung open.

She felt as if she were struggling in a nightmare. With a choked scream she leapt straight at the door. She had a mad impulse to slam it in the monster's face and brace herself, however impotently, against it. As she sprang, however, her foot caught in one of the pieces of stove-pipe. She fell headlong, and the pipe flew half-way across the floor, clattering over its fellows as it went, and raising a prodigious noise.

Through a long, long moment of horror she lay flat on her face, expecting a gigantic paw to fall upon her neck as a cat's paw falls upon a mouse. Nothing happened. She ventured to raise her head. The door was wide open and the doorway quite clear. Α dozen feet away from it, at the edge of the road, stood the bear, staring irresolutely. He had been rather taken aback by the suddenness with which the door had flown open, and had hesitated to enter, fearing a trap. The wild clatter of the stove-pipes had further disturbed him, and he had withdrawn to consider the situation. In one bound the girl was at the door and had shut it with a bang.

The problem was now to fix the latch so that it could not again be lifted from the outside. She lit one more precious match, examined the mechanism, and hunted frantically for a splinter of wood with which to jam it down. There was nothing in sight that would serve. She tried to tear off a strip of her petticoat to bind it down with, but all her underwear was of a most serviceable sturdiness, and would not She heard the bear moving again tear. outside. She heard his breathing close to the door. Desperately she thrust a couple of fingers into the space above the latch, so that it would not lift. Then with the other hand she whipped off one shoe and stocking. The stocking was just the thing, and in a minute she had the latch secure.

It was no more than secure, however, before the weight of the bear once more came against the door. From the heavy, scratchy fumblings the girl could perceive that her enemy was trying to repeat his former manœuvre. On this point, at least, she had no anxiety. She knew the door could not now be unlatched from the outside. She could almost afford to laugh in her satisfaction as she groped her way back to her seat.

But her satisfaction was of brief life. The door began to creak more and more violently. It was evident that the bear, having once learned that this was a possible way in, was determined to test it to the utmost. The girl sprang up. She heard the screws of a hinge begin to draw with an ominous grating sound. Now at last the crisis was truly and inevitably upon her. And, to her amazement, she was less terrified than before. The panic horror had all gone. She had small hope of escape, but her brain worked calmly and clearly. She moved over beside the broken stove, and stood, match in hand, ready to set fire to the pile of dry spruce tips.

The door groaned and creaked. Then the upper hinge gave way, and the door leaned inwards, admitting a wide streak of glimmer. For some moments, thereafter, all sounds ceased, as if the bear had drawn back cautiously to consider the result of his efforts. Then he came on again with more confidence. Under his weight the door came crashing down, but slowly, with the noise of yielding latch and snapping iron. As it fell, the girl scratched the match and set it to the dry stuff.

In the doorway the bear paused, eyeing suspiciously the tiny blue spurt of the struggling match. After a second or two, however, he came forward with a savage rush, furious at having been so long baulked. The girl slipped around the stove. And just as the bear reached the place where she had been standing, the spruce tips sparked sharply and flared up in his face. With a loud *woo-oof* of indignation and alarm, he recoiled, turned tail, scurried out into the road, and disappeared.

In a couple of minutes the cabin was full of sparks and smoky light. The girl ran to the door and peered out. Her heart sank once more. There was the bear, a few paces up the road, calmly sitting on his haunches,



waiting. He had seen camp fires before, and he was waiting for this one to die down.

Sissy Bembridge knew that it would die down at once, and then—well, her last card would have been played. She wrung her hands, but in the new self-possession which had come to her, she could not believe that the end had really arrived. It was unbelievable that within some half a dozen minutes she should become a lifeless, hideous, shapeless thing beneath those mangling claws. No, there must be—there was—something to do, if she could only think of it.

And then it came to her.

At first thought the idea was so audacious, so startling, so fantastic, that she shrank from it as absurd. But on second thoughts she convinced herself not only that it was the one thing to be done, but also that it was practical and would almost certainly prove effective. But there was not a moment to be lost.

Snatching up one of the fragments of stove-pipe, she used the edge as a shovel, and carried a portion of the blazing stuff to the open doorway. Here she deliberately set fire to the dry woodwork, nursing with hand and breath the tiny uplicking flames. She fed them with a few more scraps of spruce scraped up from another bunk, till she saw that they would surely catch. Then, with her stove-pipe shovel, she started another fire in the further corner of the camp, and yet another in the uppermost bunk. When satisfied that all were fairly going, she retrieved her stocking from the broken latch, reclothed her naked foot, and set her bundle Then she looked at the safely outside. bear, still sitting on his haunches a little way up the road, and she laughed at him. At last she had him worsted. She darted in

through the doorway—now blazing cheerfully all up one side—and dragged forth the heavy bench, that she might have something dry to sit on while she watched the approaching conflagration.

Her calculation—and she knew it was a sound one—was that the cabin, a solid structure of logs, would burn vigorously the whole night through, and terrify the bear to final flight. If it should by any chance die down before full daylight, she would be able to build a circle of small fires with the burning remnants. And she felt sure that in daylight her enemy would not dare to renew the attack.

In another ten minutes the roof was ablaze, and soon the flames were shooting up riotously. The woods were lighted redly for hundreds of yards around, the pools in the road were like polished copper, and the bear was nowhere to be seen. Sissy dragged her bench and bundle still further away, and sat philosophically warming her wet feet. The reaction from her terror, and her sense of triumph, made her so excited that fatigue and anxiety were all forgotten. She grew warm and comfortable, and finally, opening her bundle, she got out a package of neglected sandwiches and made a contented meal.

As she was shaking the crumbs from her lap, she heard voices and pounding, splashing hoofs from up the trail. She sprang to her feet. Three lumbermen came riding into the circle of light, and drew rein before her in astonishment. "Sissy — Bembridge you!" cried the foremost, springing from his saddleless mount.

The girl ran to him. "Oh, Mike," she exclaimed, crying and laughing all at the same time, and clutching him by the arm, "I had to do it! The bear nigh got me! Take me to mother, quick. I'm that tired."

MAY-DAY.

THE birds are jolly now at five, And the earth leaps to be alive. I leave my bed betimes to see Something of dawn's high mystery. What is there in the light to thrill? You must admit the air is chill, And mist (as oft on May the First) Would seem to bar (to those unversed) Much magic: yet the blackbirds' notes Pour joyously from throbbing throats, And nightingales have scarcely done Love-songs in early night begun. Even the trees conspire to sing For rapture on this May morning, And the first winds that haunt the dawn Seem from strange ways of beauty drawn. 'Tis fine to be alive to-day, To live to see another May.

EDGAR VINE HALL.

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LOST-A RING

By ADAM SQUIRE

Illustrated by James Durden



OLONELLEGGATT tapped on the window as he saw that the taxi which had drawn up next door was being paid and dismissed by a tall young fellow in evening-dress. In answer to his sign, the taxi puffed

fussily up, and presently the Colonel was being rattled along to the Hamilton Club, where he proposed to spend an hour over the illustrated papers before joining his sister and her daughter at dinner in Wilton He smiled as he recalled Elsie's Place. eagerness to show off her fiancé. There had been an old appointment to dine on the Wednesday, when the young man was to be formally presented; but, on the Colonel's coming to town unexpectedly on the Monday. nothing would do for Elsie but that he should come to dinner the same evening and appreciate without further delay what an extraordinarily fortunate lot was hers. She was a great pet of the Colonel's, and he smiled again at the recollection of the girl's happiness and the wonder of the old, old story which is ever new.

As he darted past a lamp in Park Lane, his eye was caught by a gleam of light from the floor of the cab. He put out his hand and was surprised to find himself picking up a ring formed of two large sapphires and three good diamonds of great beauty and undoubted value. Without giving a thought to the driver or his right to any profit that might accrue, he slipped the trinket into his pocket; it would, no doubt, be advertised for, and, in any event, there was always Scotland Yard.

It was about an hour later that he walked from the club to his sister's house.

"Am I late?" he asked of the manservant.

"No, sir. Mr. Allen hasn't arrived yet,"

he answered. The words were spoken in a strong foreign accent.

Colonel Leggatt looked up at the sound of the voice.

"You're new here, aren't you ?" he asked.

"Yes, sir. I've only been in Mrs. Scott's service a few weeks."

"I thought I didn't know your face," said the Colonel, as the man helped him off with his coat.

Mrs. Scott was talking to her brother at the further end of the room when Mr. Allen was announced. The Colonel glanced at the door, and was mildly interested to see Elsie greeting apparently the same young man whom he had seen dismiss the taxi.

"I'm really awfully sorry, Elsie," he heard Allen saying. "I was kept late in the City, changed at the Sports' Club, and drove here as quickly as I could."

Colonel Leggatt cocked his ears. Wimpole Street was scarcely in the direct route from the Sports' Club to Wilton Place, and, as for being pressed for time, it was at least an hour since he had seen him already fully dressed and ready for his evening party.

"I really thought I had seen you already this evening in Wimpole Street," he said, as the young man was presented to him. He watched him closely, and it seemed to him that Allen showed some embarrassment, but without hesitation he said laughingly: "I'm afraid mine is a very common type of beauty."

The Colonel was annoyed at the incident, feeling, as he did, that he had made no mistake in identifying the young man. Any doubt he might have had on this subject was dispelled almost as soon as the party had sat down to table, for Elsie began to inquire of her *fiance* whether he had been able to get the repairs done to her ring.

"Oh, yes," he answered; "I have it with me." And his fingers groped in his waistcoat pocket. His face expressed the anxiety he felt as he went through one pocket after another unsuccessfully, and

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anxiety changed to absolute consternation as he realised that the ring was indeed gone. There was a great to-do. Elsie was genuinely concerned, her mother very annoved, and Allen the picture of remorse. The Colonel, for a moment, was tempted to restore peace by producing the missing ring, but he realised that it was a difficult thing to do. It was really no business of his if Allen were concealing something from Elsie; he may have had reasons for doing so which he considered good, and it would be most awkwardly embarrassing for Allen to be detected in an obvious untruth, which must be the case if the whole history of the loss and the finding of the jewel were gone into. These considerations had their weight in influencing the Colonel to keep silence, but at the back of his head there was also the feeling of how he would enjoy giving Master Allen a private setting down when the matter was finally disposed of. It would be amusing enough to answer his advertisement for the missing ring, to confront him with his deception, and administer a nice little lecture on the subject of open dealing between two young people who were to become husband and wife.

He was interrupted in these reflections by the voice of his hostess, who was speaking to the servant.

"Antonio, you might have a search made in the hall and on the staircase," she was saying.

"Is the ring the one that mademoiselle has been wearing lately, madam?" the man asked.

"Yes," she answered, "the sapphire and diamond one. The initials E.S. are on the inside of the gold band. It belonged to mother, you know," she went on, turning to the Colonel. "It would be most annoying if it were lost. You may have dropped it in the taxi, Dick. You must really go to Seotland Yard the first thing to-morrow."

The evening was quite spoilt by this unhappy incident, as a strict search by Antonio naturally produced no result, and the party separated rather woefully till the following Wednesday, by which time the Colonel said he felt sure that Elsie would be happy once more in the recovery of her property.

The next day passed very slowly for Colonel Leggatt, in whose pocket the ring was burning a large hole, and on the day following that he took up his paper and turned eagerly to the advertisement columns. It was as he expected. The advertisement had been put in without loss of time. It described the ring, mentioned how the probabilities were that it had been dropped in a taxi, and that the finder would be rewarded with five pounds on bringing it to Messrs. Johnson & Co., at an address in the Charing Cross Road.

At about twelve o'clock he walked down to the address given. He did not propose to hurry himself unduly in order the sooner to relieve Allen's anxiety. If young men were so foolish as to tell taradiddles, they must put up with the unpleasant consequences, and not expect elderly gentlemen to bustle themselves in order to pull them out of a mess.

He found the place without much difficulty. It seemed to be a sort of stationer's shop, and one of a not very superior order. The man and woman behind the counter looked slatternly, and the general condition of the shop was dirty and untidy. At the end of the room was a door, the upper half of which was of glass, and across this, for half its height, was stretched a dingy red curtain.

"I think," began the Colonel, addressing the frowsy-looking man, "you advertised concerning a certain ring that has been lost."

"That is so, sir," said the man.

"I've called about the matter," continued the Colonel. "Can I see the owner of the ring just now?"

"Well, no, sir, I think not," said the man. "You see, we have his instructions to receive the ring and pay over the reward. We act as his agents in the matter."

Colonel Leggatt's opinion of Dick Allen did not improve as the result of this speech. To arrange for the restitution of the ring in this hole-and-corner manner, through the agency of a tumbledown, second-rate stationer's shop, seemed to him in keeping with the duplicity which Allen had shown on the first evening they had met. He felt thoroughly disgusted with Elsie's young man, and looked forward to the pleasure of telling him so.

The frowsy man had meanwhile been busy looking at the description of the jewel and comparing it with the ring itself, which Colonel Leggatt had placed upon the counter. There could be no doubt that the ring which had been found was the one that had been advertised, and there was no reason why any further delay should take place in settling up the transaction. The ring was accordingly handed over, and the Colonel tucked the five pounds reward into his pocket-book with a grin of pleasure at the thought of giving Elsie a birthday tip with money obtained from her beloved one.

As he turned away from the counter, he became suddenly conscious that a pair of eyes were watching him over the top of the red curtain which covered the glass portion of the door leading from the shop into the inner room. He could not see the face to which they belonged, and even while he looked, the eyes themselves were withdrawn. The stare and the sudden disappearance of the face, however, gave him an unpleasant sensation of being spied upon, and as he reached the entrance of the shop, he turned round before going out, to take one further look at the curtained door. This time the door itself was slightly open, and the man inside the shop was handing something to some person who remained in the inner apartment. What it was that was being handed, it was impossible to see, but the person inside was evidently eager to receive it, for, although his person was invisible, his arm was stretched out through the opening of the door. The sleeve of his coat had been dragged slightly back by contact with the doorway, and there was revealed a portion of a bare arm, on which was to be seen the figure of a serpent tattooed in the most brilliant colouring. The body of the reptile was not visible, but the head stood out clearly in a tint of vivid blue, all but the eyes, which were of a fiery red. The whole picture was most realistically rendered, and a marvel of the tattooer's art.

Something in the sudden appearance of this uncanny apparition aroused Colonel Leggatt's suspicions, but before he had time to take any decided action, the arm was withdrawn and the door closed. With a shrug of his shoulders, he walked into the street. He had meddled with this business enough; for the future it must take care of itself; on Allen's shoulders must rest the responsibility.

He reached his home in Wimpole Street, to find that Elsie had been telephoning that he was not to forget he was dining that evening at Wilton Place. He was expected to make a fourth at bridge, and she would never forgive him if he failed to come and join their party.

Allen had already arrived when the Colonel entered Mrs. Scott's drawing-room, and was standing talking to his hostess and Elsie. The latter greeted him excitedly.

"Oh, uncle," she cried, "bad news! Not a sign of the ring at Scotland Yard."

Leggatt stared at her and then at Allen.

"Scotland Yard?" he repeated. "But didn't you put an advertisement in the paper this morning?" he went on, addressing Allen.

"No, he didn't, the silly boy," grumbled Elsie.

"The truth is, it clean went out of my mind," said Allen. "I went to Scotland Yard yesterday, where I could hear nothing of the ring, and so went on down to my office, intending to arrange for the advertisement. The beastly thing went clean out of my head, and when I *did* remember, it was too late for to-day's papers. It can't appear now till to-morrow."

"Never mind, Dick," said Elsie consolingly; "I don't suppose any harm's done. To-morrow will be just as good as to-day."

"Dinner is on the table," came in the deep, foreign tones of Antonio, who had entered with his noiseless tread, and was standing at the door of the drawing-room.

Colonel Leggatt would have been a poor addition to any social gathering that evening. His mind refused to follow the general conversation, but reverted ever to the incidents connected with the loss of Elsie's ring. The matter was becoming more complicated than ever. He had been uncomfortable at the previous dinner, when, unknown to the others, he had had the ring in his pocket; much more so was he now, when he was conscious of having returned the ring to one who, apparently, was not only ignorant of the fact, but was busy arranging plans by which he hoped to lead to its recovery. He cursed the silly doubledealing of Allen's which had led to the present complication, and came to the conclusion that the only thing to be done was to explain the whole matter. Some light might then be thrown on the question as to who had got possession of the ring, and as to the best means to take to ensure its recovery. He would spare Allen the humiliation of being shown up before Elsie. but, as soon as they were alone, he would open up the subject with him and talk to him as an old man has a right to talk to one so much vounger.

Immediately the ladies had retired to the drawing-room, he searched his mind for a fitting way to introduce the subject, but, preoccupied though he was, it nevertheless could not escape his notice that Allen was no whit more at ease than himself. He fiddled nervously with the silver on the table, poured himself out a glass of port and drank it off like a liqueur. He hit a cigarette and then placed it almost untasted on the plate beside him. At last, just as Leggatt was about to begin the conversation, Allen blurted out—

"I have something I want to say to you, Colonel."

Leggatt raised his eyebrows.

"Of course," Allen stammered on, "I know quite well you saw me in Wimpole Street the other night. You must think me a proper liar."

"I imagined," said the Colonel rather pompously, "that you must have a very good reason for deceiving Elsie as to what houses you visit."

"I had," returned Allen with some heat, "a very good reason, I thought. I am probably wrong. Anyhow, I have no reason to keep it from you, and I don't like you to think me a liar, unnecessarily," he added, with a little touch of humour.

"I really think in every way it would be better that you should tell me," said Leggatt, relieved at finding he had to take no initiative in the matter.

"Do you know who lives at the house where I called ?" asked Allen.

" No."

"Would you be any wiser if I told you the house was inhabited by Miss Lowe?"

"Not a bit."

"Well," said Allen rather shamefacedly, "I was once engaged to be married to Miss Lowe."

"I remember now," said the Colonel, "I did hear you had been engaged to a lady who treated you badly."

"I shouldn't like to say that," said Allen rather hurriedly. "Anyhow, after we had been engaged for some considerable time, she preferred that the engagement should come to an end. That's more than a year ago, before I had met Elsie."

"And now that you're engaged to be married to Elsie," the Colonel suggested, "she thought she would like to see you again?"

"Something like that," agreed Allen. "I don't like talking about it, somehow, but I think she is rather sentimental, and I had some things of hers—a few letters and a photograph or two."

"I know," said Leggatt, "and she wanted you to come and give them back to her yourself, and take an eternal farewell, and all that sort of thing?"

Allen admitted that the Colonel's description about fairly represented the state of affairs. "You see," he said, "I didn't like to talk to Elsie about it. It seemed hardly fair to Miss Lowe, and it was simply bad luck that you should happen to see me."

"It was indeed," assented Leggatt grimly, "very bad luck." The time had now arrived for *him* to tell his story, to show what annoying consequences had followed Allen's deceit, and to wind up by pointing a nice moral for the future guidance of thoughtless young men. He cast about in his mind for a suitable exordium to his speech.

"Coffee, sir?"

The voice broke sharply and unpleasantly across his thoughts. Antonio was standing at his elbow. The light from the lamp which hung over the dinner table fell full on the silver salver which he was bending down to offer. Leggatt stretched out his hand to take a cup of coffee, when his action was arrested by a sight which came upon him with a shock of consternation. It came to him as something from a dream—some illusion conjured up by a disordered imagina-The same hideous serpent head of tion. blue which he had seen that morning, the same vicious eyes of fiery red, stared at him from the hand which held the tray. He caught his breath sharply and waved the servant away, but watched him intently as, having waited upon Allen, he made to leave When he reached the door, the room. Leggatt called him back. He was now master of himself, and realised to the full the significance of what he had seen. As Antonio moved towards him, the man seemed to become conscious of Leggatt's continued study, and showed some embarrassment under the scrutiny.

"I think I'll change my mind," said Leggatt pleasantly, and as he took the cup from the tray, he remarked—

"That's a beautifully executed piece of tattooing, Antonio."

"I must beg your pardon, sir," said the servant; "I should have seen that it was properly covered up." And he made an attempt to replace the shirt cuff, which had been forced back as he handed the tray.

"Not at all," protested Leggatt. "Don't apologise. I'm delighted to have an opportunity of studying it at close quarters. I really couldn't see it properly this morning in the Charing Cross Road."

Antonio straightened himself with bound. The silver on the tray danced with a jarring noise, and the hands of the man were trembling so agitatedly that the tray itself would have fallen if Leggatt had not been in a position to come to the rescue. "Place that on the table," directed Leggatt, "and listen to me, Antonio." of fight from out of him, and he stood trembling, the embodiment of detected guilt. "You will go downstairs at once, or

upstairs, or wherever it is that you keep



The frightened wretch did as he was id. The Colonel's sudden attack, and the unexpected allusion to that morning's proceedings, had knocked any semblance your jewellery, and you will give Mr. Allen, within five minutes, what I handed to your representative this morning. Do you understand?" During this conversation it had seemed to Allen that both the Colonel and Antonio had taken leave of their senses. He had not the vaguest idea as to what was the subject of the discussion; nor was he much enlightened, although considerably astonished, by hearing Antonio say with a whimper, "I have it here with me, sir," and seeing him lay upon the table the ring, the loss of which had caused him so much annoyance.

"You can go now, sir," the Colonel said sternly; "you will be dealt with further to-morrow morning." And the wretched man, his face as white as a sheet, shuffled hurriedly from the room.

At some length, and with much solemnity, Leggatt proceeded to acquaint Allen with the facts of his having hailed the taxi, of his finding the ring, and of the false position in which he had been placed by Allen's prevarication. He told of the steps he had taken to return the ring in answer to the advertisement, and of the lucky chance which had revealed Antonio's fraud.

"He's an ingenious beggar to have got ahead of me with the advertisement," said Allen. "I really am most obliged to you, sir. I don't suppose we should ever have recovered the ring without you."

"Just luck, my dear fellow," answered the Colonel. He could be magnanimous under the altered circumstances. "And now, my dear boy," he went on—the moment had at last arrived for the little sermon he had promised himself from the beginning—"my dear boy, you must allow a much older man than yourself to give you a little advice. The whole basis of married life consists in mutual faith and confidence. Any concealment of the truth, or even an apparently trifling reservation, will in time sap the foundations on which depends the happiness of the married state. That is the result of my experience in life."

"I didn't know that you were ever married, sir," said Allen very respectfully.

"I never was, my boy; but if I had been blessed with a wife, I should have had no secrets from her; every thought of mine would have been shared with her—— What the dickens are you laughing at, sir?"

APPLE TREE STORIES.

THERE stands a little apple tree down yonder green drove, And as I pass, it tells me of all things that I love: The May sun, the setting sun, as red as heather fire, The cuckoo flow'r across the brook, the garden sweet of briar, The purple stock, the gillyflow'rs, the pansies dark as night. Like some old book of fairy tales, unfolding fresh delight,

Its pages turned by the May breeze; and, list'ning in the lane, Wild forest cante-fables fall on my ear again :— The nightingale's long legend o' love, beset with call and cry; The laughter of the willow-wren, the nesting robin's sigh; Even as the willow winds its wool through all the month o' May So spins the little apple tree new stories day by day.

Adown yonder drove it stands, the little apple tree; Rose-red and dewy-hearted, its blossoms bend to me, With dainty lips half parted, it stoops towards my ear, And tells me deep May secrets, the sweetest o' the year; While hill-blue violets greyer grow amid the passing light— Tell me one tale, or, ere I go, one kiss—and then good night!

ALICE E. GILLINGTON.



"A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE,"

VISITOR: What are you learning at school just now, little lady? LITTLE LADY: History.

VISITOR: Indeed; then can you tell me what important person in history had an impediment in his speech? LITTLE LADY (promptly): George Washington.

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

MRS. JENKINS informed her husband one morning that she expected a party of guests that afternoon. Immediately Mr. Jenkins arose and put all the umbrellas away, much to his wife's astonishment.

"Why, Walter, do you fear my guests will steal your umbrellas?" she asked in an injured tone.

"No." said Walter, as he closed the cupboard door; "I'm afraid they'll recognise them."

"DADDY," asked a small boy, "wouldn't you be glad if I saved half-a-crown for you?"

"Certainly, my son," said the delighted parent.

"Well, I saved it all right," said James. "You said if I brought a good report from school, you would give me half-a-crown; but I didn't."

An Irish priest who was a staunch total abstainer, seeing a member of his flock about to enter a public-house, remonstrated in a loud

voice from the opposite side of the street. The man, however, went on his way through the swing-doors, taking no notice of the priestly Later in the day these two admonitions. persons met again, face to face this time, when the priest said : "Didn't you hear me when I called to you this morning?"

"Sure, ye honour, I did, but I only had the price of one drink on me," was Pat's reply.



A SMALL boy had made loud and repeated calls for more pudding. After he had disposed of a liberal quantity, he was told that too much pudding would make him ill. Looking wistfully at the desirable dish for a moment, he said-

"Well, give me another piece and send for the doctor.'



ONE small child, after having been told that a certain canon was to be in the pulpit on Sunday, was heard to say: "Oh, don't let us go-perhaps it will kill us!"



SOON SETTLED.

VISITOR: Can you tell me if this tree belongs to the acanthus family?

PARK-KEEPER: It do not; it belongs to the Town Council.

DENTISTRY DE LUXE.

(A well-known authority suggests that tooth-drawing would be deprived of all its horrors if only dentists would employ young ladies of great personal charm to administer the anæsthetic, and also have a small orchestra playing during the operation.)

A visit to the dentist was a terrible affair In the days that seem for ever to have fled;

Oh, the feelings he inspired when he pushed me in the chair

And started waving forceps round my head !

But to-day the modern methods of the man who's up-to-date

Makes having molars pulled a thing of joy,

And when I get the toothache I am reconciled to Fate

By the fascinating cures they now employ.

I am welcomed in a manner that is polished and polite

By a lady with a picture-postcard smile,

And the implements of torture are all hidden out of sight,

While a band plays dreamy music all the while.

- Then the dentist tells a story which is funny but refined.
 - To send me off to sleep, you understand;
- But in case to nervous horrors I am any way inclined,

The charming maiden holds my little hand.

So you wake up feeling happy, and he says, "l've drawn ten,"

And "Auld Lang Syne" the band begins to play Yes, the terror has departed from the dentist and his den—

I could go and have a tooth out every day.

R. H. Roberts.

TRAVELLING REQUISITES.

SHE had really only meant to buy a tooth-brush on the ground floor and come out again, but people were wandering about looking at things in other departments in a way she found herself copying, and she spent a pleasant ten minutes instead, counting all the things she wouldn't know what to do with if somebody gave them her. Presently she stopped opposite a counter and wondered to herself.

There were lots of them—all the same size, all different colours, all in pairs—large, flat, linen things the shape, more or less, of a boot.

linen things the shape, more or less, of a boot. "For motoring in," she said suddenly, and found herself addressing a salesman who had appeared at the counter from behind a pile of leather suit-cases. "How very tidy! I have never seen dust-boots before, though, of course, one knows the sort of thing in fur for the winter. What a pity I shall not be motoring!"

"Excuse me, miss, these are boot-bags. Can I show you anything in this line? Quite a novelty."

"Thank you," she said slowly, "I never wear boots. And, besides, mine aren't a bit that shape. Haven't you anything else to travel with? I don't think linen boot-bags are very cosy things for a long journey."

"Certainly, miss, certainly. Of course, for comfort we should recommend something quite different. A nice rug, for instance."

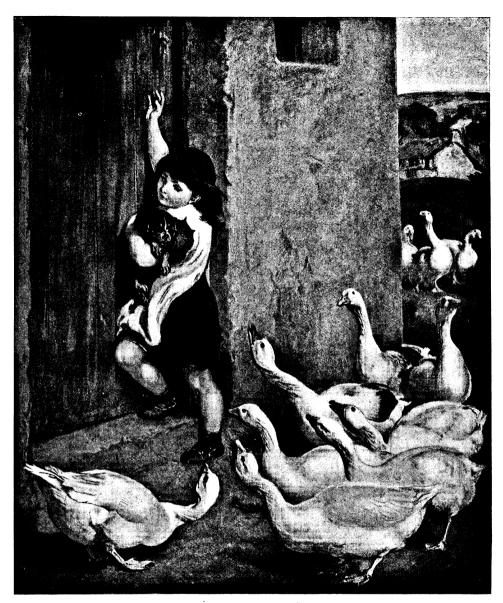


A DOUBTFUL PORTENT.

SHE: I suppose you know it's my birthday next week?

HE: Of course I do. Why?

SHE: You look so cheerful, I thought you had forgotten.



"DISCRETION IS THE BETTER PART OF VALOUR." BY BRITON RIVIERE, R.A. Reproduced by permission of Messrs. Hildesheimer & Co., Clerkenwell Road, E.C., owners of the copyright and publishers of the large plate.

"Thank you-I have a rug."

"Here are some little silk cushions for the head, in leather cases, ten shillings and sixpence complete."

"Î'm sure they'd be no use, thank you. If I had a bad head, I shouldn't travel that day; and, if you are well, you move your head about looking at things, don't you? And then it would slip down. What are these?"

"Ah, those, miss, I am sure, you would find convenient." (He was an excellent salesman, of the type that keeps cheerful in the face of threatening failure, and smiles persistently.) "Sandwich tin, writing-pad, and toilet-case all in one, with a place for magazines at the back. It saves so many little odd packages."

"They certainly do look odd. You are sure one wouldn't have to take an extra ticket for it? One has to for a perambulator, I know, and it's almost as large, isn't it? I don't think you need trouble to open it, thank you. I never eat sandwiches in the train. I am sorry, but you don't seem to have what I want here. It's funny, because I should have thought it was a thing you would be asked for constantly."

For the first time his forehead wrinkled and his manner lost a shade in friendliness.

"What was it you were wanting particularly? Perhaps we could get it for you," he said.

"Oh, it doesn't matter, thank you. I won't trouble you to do that. But I thought, as it says 'Travelling Requisites' at this counter, that you would be sure to have it. You see, what I wanted was a ticket. One can't travel without that, can one?" And she wandered off slowly in the direction of the door. the conversational campaign by remarking affably: "Looks like rain, sir."

"Indeed it does," said the lodger, "but it smells a little like coffee."



FEELING not in the best of humour, but very hungry, he went into a restaurant and ordered

DURING some recent manœuvres at Aldershot the weather had been very dry and windy for some days, and therefore caused con-* siderable dust. One day, a t dinner. one of the rank and file complained that all his food tasted gritty. His lieu. tenant heard him growling about it, and asked him whether he came there to serve his country or to complain of the food.

The soldier said: "I certainly came to serve my country, but not to eatit!"

An old farmer had never seen a clinical



"BUT didn't I hear you were making lots of money?" "Not lots, sir, 'cos they caught me as soon as I tried to pass one."

thermometer; so, when the house-surgeon at the hospital inquired whether the patient had had any food, the old chap said that one of the nurses had put a bit of glass in his mouth, but she had taken it out again.

ACC -

HE was stirring and looking somewhat dubiously at his matutinal cup of coffee, when his landlady entered the room. She opened the candid child. "It is mother who has been angelic all day, and never once lost her temper."



HE had recently taken a flat, and was showing a friend round his new abode. Said the latter: "It's all very nice, but you haven't got a bathroom."

"Oh, that doesn't matter; I've only taken it for a year," was the somewhat startling reply.

a beefsteak. After cutting into it, he called the waiter and said very sarcastically: "I have managed to cut this steak, but I really don't see how I am to chew it."

The waiter answered: "I am sorry, sir; 'b ut while we are able to guarantee the knives, we cannot possibly take anyresponsibility with regard to our customers' teeth."



"MAMMA tells me you have not been punished all day, Jane," said the father upon his return home. "So you've been a good little girl all day?" "It isn't that, "replied THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE.



THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE.



"ANY PORT IN A STORM."

VICAR: I have been pleased to notice you at church, George, these last two Sundays, after a very long absence. GEORGE: Well, zir, wot with the twins and our eldest nipper's toothache, I 'aven't been able to get a wink o' sleep at 'ome lately.

RORY AND JESS.

She spends three hours and over Upon her face and clothes, And twelve, like pigs in clover, In quite unearned repose.

For Jess was he'er a striver; With movements full of grace, As native instincts drive her, She gads from place to place.

"And Rory, sure he minds her Disgraceful waste of days?" The contrary ! He finds her Beyond his power to praise.

Whate'er she does, in his eyes Seems right beyond compare; With rapture he to kiss hies Her brow, nose, lips, and hair.

His cooing and his billing Make all the neighbours laugh; He'd melt his final shilling For drinks she'd love to quaff.

- "I s'pose she's very loving?" Secretive; self-engrossed; Her own small interests shoving; Responsive as a post.
- "A paragon of looks, then?" Chunky, and dark as night. "Amusing, up in books, then?" The very opposite.
- "The scribbler of this story Is rhyming through his hat?" No. Still unbreeched is Rory; And Jess, a small black cat.

Mabel Garland.

"WHAT's the shape of the earth?" asked the schoolmaster, calling suddenly upon a small boy.

" Round."

"How do you know it's round ?"

"All right," said the boy; "it's square, then. I don't want to start any argument about it."



A LADY, when taking a tram the other day, had a little dog with her, and inquired of the conductor whether, supposing she paid the fare for the dog, he would have the same privileges as any other passenger.

"Certainly, ma'am," said the conductor; "on the same terms, he will not be permitted to put his feet on the seats."



MRS. BLACK woke her husband one night and whispered: "There's a burglar downstairs. I heard him bump against the piano and strike several keys."

" Is there?" said the husband. "I'll go down at once."

"Oh," whispered the excited wife, "don't do anything rash !"

"Rash?" replied the husband. "Why, I'm going to help him! You don't suppose he can move that piano from the house without help, do you?"



AMBIGUOUS.

VISITOR: You will be sure to tell your mistress that I called while she was out. MAID: Ob, yus; she'll be delighted to hear it.

An Ideal Type of Holiday

O^{NCE} again the momentous question crops up as to where the Holiday can best be spent, and it is one which requires careful consideration, as health during the rest of the year may largely depend upon the annual vacation ; in whatever sphere we move, holiday should take the form of an entire change from ordinary surroundings.

With this end in view a more ideal holiday cannot be spent than one actually on the sea. Quite a delightful as well as a most interesting vacation can be passed by taking a cruise amongst the lochs and sounds of the West Highlands with the privilege of visiting such picturesque spots as Loch Swen, Loch Melfort, Oban, Loch Linnhe, Fort William, Sound of Mull, Loch Duich, Kyle of Loch Alsh, Loch Torridon. and others, too numerous to mention; in addition to which is the magnificent scenery round the Isle of Skye; and such beautiful spots as the Pass of Glencoe, The Pass of Melfort, Glen Shiel, &c. These cruises are performed by S.S. "Princess Royal" (1,982 tons), which steamer is practically a large vacht: she does not carry on any cargo work, cruises generally in smooth water amongst the finest of the scenery, is at anchor quietly almost every night, and offers an opportunity to visit out-of-the-way places of great attraction and beauty which are not always easy to reach.





LOCH CORUISK.



o by] [H. M. Jones, Heswall. VIEW IN GLEN NEVIS.

It may be interesting to mention that a tour round the entire coast of Great Britain can be completed in the short space of twelve days. The distance covered is over 1,800 miles, and, as can be imagined, the diversity of scenery passed en route leaves an indelible impression upon the tourist's This cruise gives one an opportunity mind. of seeing some of our largest seaport towns, such as Inverness, Aberdeen, Newcastle, Hull, Portsmouth, Southampton, and Plymouth. What could be more fascinating to the true sea-lover? But for those who cannot spare the time some delightful shorter cruises have been arranged between Liverpool, Oban, Orkney, Aberdeen and Edinburgh, thus embracing some of the finest scenery in the United Kingdom.

A holiday of this type, though so thoroughly enjoyable, can be obtained inexpensively. and any who are interested should write to Messrs. M. Langlands & Sons, Brown's Buildings, Liverpool, for copies of their booklets giving full particulars of various cruises; their steamers are well-appointed, and every care has been taken to provide comfort for the and convenience of passengers; any possible monotony of being afloat too long is overcome by the frequent opportunities which are offered of interesting excursions on shore.

THE WEED.

By Charles Marriage.

HE stood in the middle of the garden-path, hoe in hand. (He had just begun to take his garden seriously.)

"Where's your mother, Alan? Where's Waters? Where's Waters, I say? Where's anyone? I will have this matter of weeding gone into thoroughly. This bed's a disgrace. Morning, Somers!"—as I appeared. "Glad to see you down your mother? Perhaps *she* knows where Waters is to be found."

By this time Mitford had joined us. Mitford is in the Admiralty, and, for some reason or another, rather prides himself on being practical.

"What's it all about? Oh, *I'll* find the gardener for you. I expect he's in one of the greenhouses." And he disappeared by a short cut through the strawberry-beds. Sly brute, Mitford. To give him his due, though,

see you down so early. Now, look here "- and he took me by the arm. "See those dahlias? Choked, positively choked. Two gardeners and a piece of land the size of your handkerchief, and they can't dotheir work better than that! Waters! Waters, I say! Where the deuce is Waters? I'm not going in to breakfast till I've thrashed this matter out.'

I looked up and saw Archie strolling down the path.

"Hullo, what's the matter with the dad? Weeds? I don't see any. What? That little chap at the back? Oh, I should leave him. Let's come and have some break-



THE HOSTESS: I want you to meet Mr. Sharpe. So interesting—he believes in nothing, you know. THE PESSIMIST (gloomily): What enthusiasm !

fast." "My dear boy, you'd leave *everything*. This thing's got to be tackled. I'm not going to stand it. If they can't do their work, I'll turn 'em off and do it myself; but, before I do it, I mean to see Waters and give him a piece of my mind. No, the under-gardener isn't any good at all. I'm going to headquarters. If you want a thing *done*, go to headquarters for it. Remember that, Archie. Has anyone seen

you. Do you hear that? They want air. Air and light, just as much as any human being. I shouldn't be in the least surprised—if Waters can't be found in the next half-hour—if we didn't lose that plant altogether. And what's the use of my making notes at the Horticultural, and spending Heaven knows what on roots, if they receive no more attention than—"

He said lots more, but it is about now that I

I believe he hunted p r e t t y thoroughly. He was away quite ten minutes, but he came back alone.

"I expect he's having his breakfast,"he said. "Break-

f a s t ? A gardener? At nine in the morning? If I find he breakfasts at nine, as well as neglecting the beds in the disgraceful way he does—"

I kicked Mitford. Oil, not aggravation, was what was needed. Besides, I was g e t t i n g hungry, and one small weed stood between me and my meal.

"T h at t plant"—he was off again — ''c a n't possibly live, h e m m e d round like that. I doubt if we shall save it even now. It can't live, I tell

Vigour

A determination to "get ahead" is found in every action of the successful man or woman.

Vigour of body and brain comes principally from the food one eats.

Grape=Nuts

is the regular morning ration for thousands who are "making good," and who know that a clear brain and steady nerves are necessary to success.

Made of Wheat and Barley, **Grape-Nuts** contains all of the vital tissue-building elements of the grains. **Grape-Nuts** is a concentrated food and is so thoroughly baked that it is very easily digested and assimilated.

"There's a Reason" for **Grape=Nuts**

Sold by Grocers Everywhere.

have to stop saying what he really did say. Presently Cynthia came across the lawn to us.

"What are all you men looking at?" she asked. "Why, dad, you look wretched! What is it?"

Her father had relapsed into silence, so I explained as tactfully as I could.

"He is afraid it may kill the dahlia in time, you see," I wound up.

When I had finished, she burst into a loud fit of laughter. I felt nervous. She didn't realise in the least how serious the matter was to him, and breakfast might now be further off than ever.

"Oh, you sillies—you five dear sillies!" she said when she could speak, as she looked from not wisely but too well, "that I never wanted you to come before me again?"

"Yes, sir," replied the prisoner, "but I couldn't make the policeman believe it."



It was the husband's afternoon off, and he thought he would take the children for a little outing.

"My dear," he said to his wife, "suppose we take the children to the Zoo to-day."

"Why, dear, you promised to take them to mother's."

"All right, if it's all the same to the children."



FALSE ECONOMY. LIZ: Ain't she lovely, Bill? BILL: Wot's the use if she can't afford an 'at?

one to the other of us. "Look here!" And, gathering up her skirts, she cleared a row of begonias very neatly, had the weed up by the roots, and was back with it in her hand. "Now you can all have your breakfasts," she said.

"That," said Archie thoughtfully, as we strolled back to the house, "is just one of those occasions when a woman's intelligence almost comes up to a man's."



'DIDN'T I tell you the last time you were here," said the magistrate sternly to the prisoner, who had celebrated a festive occasion "MISS DOYLE," said the six-year-old boy to the visitor who was waiting for his mother, "will you take one of your shoes off a minute?"

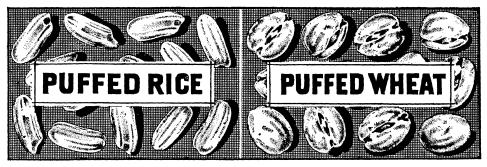
"My shoes?" repeated the caller in amazement. "Why, Johnnie?"

"Why, I heard mother say you were getting crows'-feet awfully."



FIRST TRAVELLER: I see that some carriages in use on this line go back to the Great Exhibition of 1851.

SECOND TRAVELLER: Really? I had no idea they were so up-to-date as that!



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The novelty alone of Puffed Rice and Puffed Wheat is reason enough for their always being on your table.

For these crisp, ready-to-eat, melt-in-the-mouth kernels will tempt appetite when all ordinary foods fail.

Yet Puffed Rice and Puffed Wheat have a still greater recommendation in their nourishment and digestibility. They actually give you *all* the food value of rice and wheat. A wonderful steam explosion process has made them wholly digestible — has brought rice and wheat to a degree of wholesomeness never attained by ordinary cooking.

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They are made by this curious process: the whole rice or wheat kernels are put into bronze-metal guns. The guns are sealed, then revolved in specially constructed ovens heated to over 550 degrees. The heat turns the moisture in the grain to steam, and the pressure becomes terrific. Then the guns are fired off. Instantly every starch granule in the grain is blasted into a myriad particles. The kernel of grain is expanded *eight to ten times* its original size. Yet the coat is unbroken; each kernel is shaped as before. It is now perfectly cooked, far more digestible than bread, and ready to be eaten. Serve as directed on packets. Sold by Grocers everywhere.

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THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE.

PUBLIC OPINION.

By a Cynic.

PUBLIC opinion is what we think other people are thinking, or it is what we think other people think we think. When we think we are thinking like other people, then we think they are thinking as we think. That is what we think is public opinion.

When we meet someone who does not think as we think, then we think that is not public opinion. When we meet, or hear of, a number who do not think as we think, then we think that what they are thinking is something contrary to what public opinion ought to be, and, indeed, will be, as soon as they all begin to think as we think they ought to think. •

Public opinion is of two kinds—what it is not, and what we think it is. On the other hand, what we think is public opinion may not be what we think it is.



PARENT: Tommy, don't you think you've had enough chocolates ?

TOMMY: No, mother. There are two left.



JONES: Every book in my library has the author's autograph.

BROWN : How do you manage it? JONES : I never borrow any other kind.



THE OBVIOUS ALTERNATIVE

"If you was a genelman, 'Enery, you would 'elp me carry these parcels." "Ho, yus! An' hif you was a lidy, you would 'ave

'em sent

TO AN OLD TEAPOT.

Now from the dust of half-forgotten things, You rise to haunt me at the year's Spring-cleaning, And bring to memory dim imaginings Of mystic meaning.

No old-time potter handled you, I ween, Nor yet were you of gold or silver molten; No Derby stamp, nor Worcester, can be seen, Nor Royal Doulton.

You never stood to grace the princely board Of monarchs in some Oriental palace. Your lid is chipped, your chubby side is scored As if in malice.

I hesitate to say it, but your spout Is with unhandsome rivets held together— Mute witnesses of treatment meted out In regions nether.

O patient sufferer of many bumps! I ask it gently—shall the dustbin hold you? And will the dust-heap, with its cabbage stumps, At last enfold you?

It ought. And yet with gentle hands I place You with my priceless Delft and Dresden china, For sake of one who loved your homely face In days diviner.



Player's Navy Cut De Luxe

IS A DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORIGINAL PLAYER'S NAVY CUT.

Player's Navy Cut de Luxe is the outcome of many years experience and is probably the best Pipe Tobacco yet offered to the Public. It is perfectly accurate to describe it as being manufactured from not only the best growths of Virginia, but from the selected leaves of those best growths.

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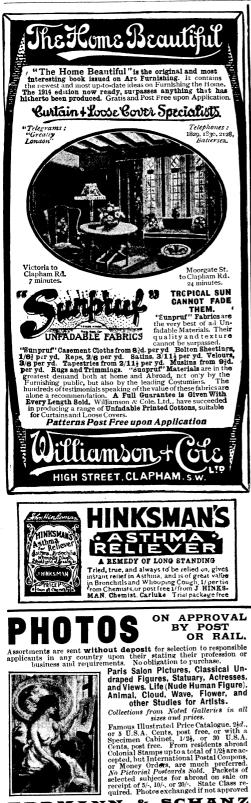
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Left Hospital a Cripple

Miraculous Cure of Paralysis by Dr. Cassell's Tablets.

MRS. COOPER, of Fenn Lanes, Fenny Drayton, near Nuneaton, says :—" Dr. Cassell's Tablets have worked a wonderful cure in my little girl, Hilda. She was paralysed for three years, and now after a course of the Tablets she can go about by herself. The cause of the trouble was her being knocked down by a bicycle when three years old. Some years later the Paralysis came on and though we had good advice, and also took Hilda to hospital, where a slight operation for the removal of a piece of bone was performed, there seemed no hope. She left hospital a cripple, and it was thought she could not live many months

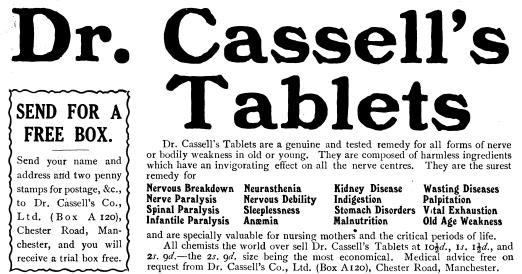
"However, finding that everything else had failed, I thought I would just try what Dr. Cassell's Tablets would do. The result amazed me. The first sign of benefit was that Hilda improved in general health. She began to eat better, then slowly but surely power returned to her limbs, and she was able to get up for a little. It is only six months since I first got the Tablets, and now she can get about wonderfully. She helps me in the house, and even tups little arrands. Of source the set of the size of the



Hilda Cooper, Nuncaton.

about and even runs little errands. Of course, the loss of the piece of bone causes her to limp, but she goes about the house without any help. In fact, she is cured. She is in the best of health, a big girl for her age (13), and growing stronger on her feet daily."

The wonder of such a cure as this must strike every reader. All ordinary treatment had failed, yet Dr. Cassell's Tablets cured. Why? Because Dr. Cassell's Tablets restore power to the nerve centres by supplying nerve nutriment; and when the nerves thus regain their lost vitality the processes of life must proceed perfectly and efficiently. It is the root cause of the trouble that is set right by this wonderful medicine. That is why they cure.



iv

FREE! THE MOST POPULAR BOOK OF HAIR FASHIONS EVER ISSUED.

Royal Hair Specialist's Remarkable Gift of 24 Hair-Dressings and Fashionable Coiffures FREE to "Windsor" Readers.

Hair Fashions for Men and Complete Harlene Hair-Drill Outfits for Growing Beautiful Hair also included in Magnificent FREE Offer.

The wonderful Gift-Manual of elegant and *recherché* hair dressings, produced by the Royal Hair Specialist, has been received with the utmost enthusiasm. For the benefit of any who have not yet received their copy, together with the free hair-growing and hairbeautifying "Harlene" outfit, Mr. Edwards is repeating the offer to-day.

GAIN YOUTHFUL BEAUTY & GLORIOUS HAIR IN THE USUAL MORNING TOILET.

"Harlene Hair-Drill," a stimulating treatment that grows hair so luxuriantly, gives a fresh youth and attraction to the appearance. And, in addition to a complete outfit for practising this, Mr. Edwards offers a Guide to Parisian and Bond-street coiffures for the opera, the drawingroom, and for "everyday."

It is quite unnecessary for anyone to look old or old-fashioned. Hairrejuvenation, and the adoption of the right style of hair-dressing, will take any number of years from the appearance. It is all a question of knowing

which style best suits YOU personally, and this advice is carefully planned out in the beautiful Hair-Dressing Guide.

A SENSATIONAL YOUTH-AND-BEAUTY GIFT.

Whether your hair is dull, lifeless, just beginning to thin, or whether you are becoming wholly bald, this gift will show you there is a means of revitalizing hair-life, and if you persevere, your hair must regain its youthful, bright, "snappy," rich-coloured, abundant appearance.

"HARLENE HAIR-DRILL" AFFORDS A Definite cure for

Scurf.	Baldness.	
Dandruff.	Irritation.	
Thinning Hair.	Dullness.	
Greasiness.		

The Free Outfit is sufficient to prove to every individual reader that the claims made for "Harlene," remarkable though they may seem, are really justified by the speedy revitalization of your hair.

The plainest face is rendered charming if the hair is abundant and tastefully dressed, just as the prettiest of facs becomes wholly unattractive if surmounded by a crown of scanty or indifferently dressed hair. It should not be forgotten, too, that hair poverty makes you look old before you really are. Mr. Edwards to-day offers a magnificent gift of a complete outfit for growing abundant hair and a guide for dressing it, secured free by using the coupon below.

If the hair comes out in handfuls, "Harlene" will rebuild it from the roots upwards; if the hair splits at the ends, gets clogged with scurf or dandruff, is too greasy or too dry, "Harlene" starts at once to strengthen, cleanse, and give new health to hair and scalp alike.

"Harlene" is refreshing and cooling, a brilliant success as a hair tonic and dressing, so that even if your hair is already perfect you will find it of infinite use in *preventing any possible falling or decaying*.

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(3) A packet of "Cremex" Shampoo Powder, which effectively dissolves scurf, allays scalp irritation, and prepares the head for "Hair-Drill."

(4) Full directions how to grow luxuriant hair by 2 minutes' "Harlene Hair-Drill" daily.

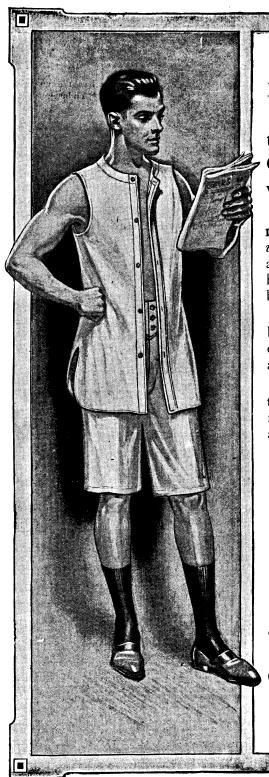
"Harlene" is sold in 1/-, 2/6, and 4/6 bottles, and "Cremex" in 1/- boxes of 7 shampoos (single 2d. each), by all Chemists and Stores, or direct and post free on remittance. Foreign orders postage extra. Cheques and P.O.'s should be crossed.

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Will send to all signing this coupon (1) A com- plete "Hair-Drill" Outfit and (2) a Home Hair-Dressing Guide. Enclose 3d. stamps only for postage anywhere in the world. (Foreign stamps accepted.)
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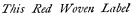


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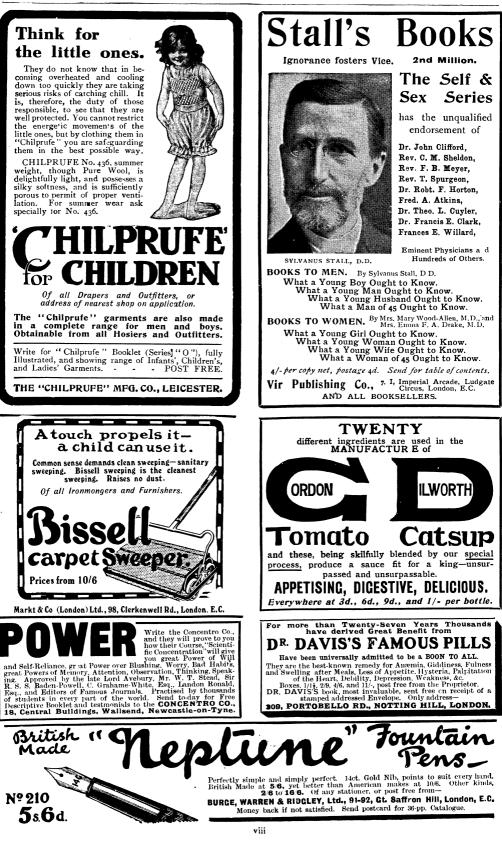




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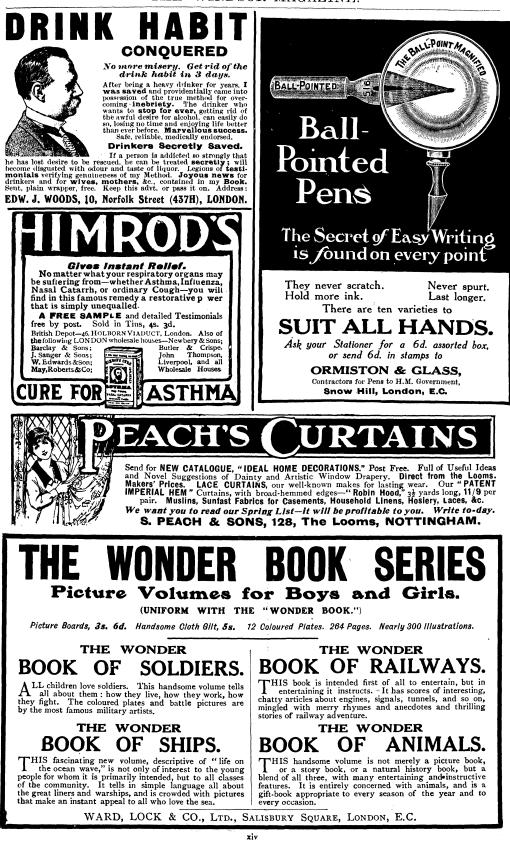
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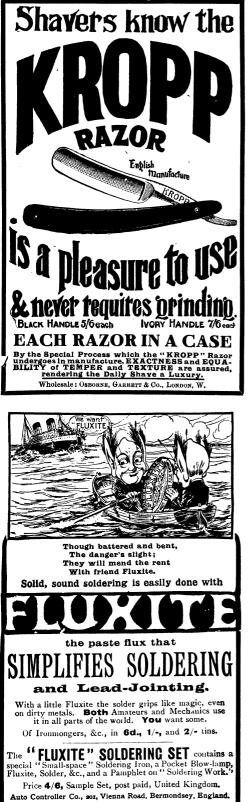
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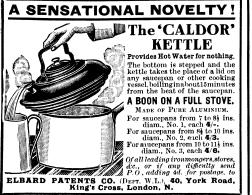


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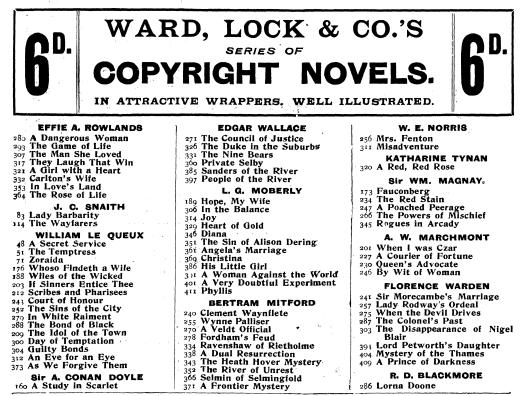
You know that the nerves convey the force that runs the human body. This nerve force, as it is called, is another name for electricity. Now when your nerve force is overtaxed by hard work, worry or dissipation, there is sure to be trouble. Not only the nerves are affected, but the heart, stomach, kidneys, liver, and other organs of the body suffer as well. Complicated diseases often result, and can only be cured by building up the nerve power. The "Ajax" Battery applied while you rest will do the work.

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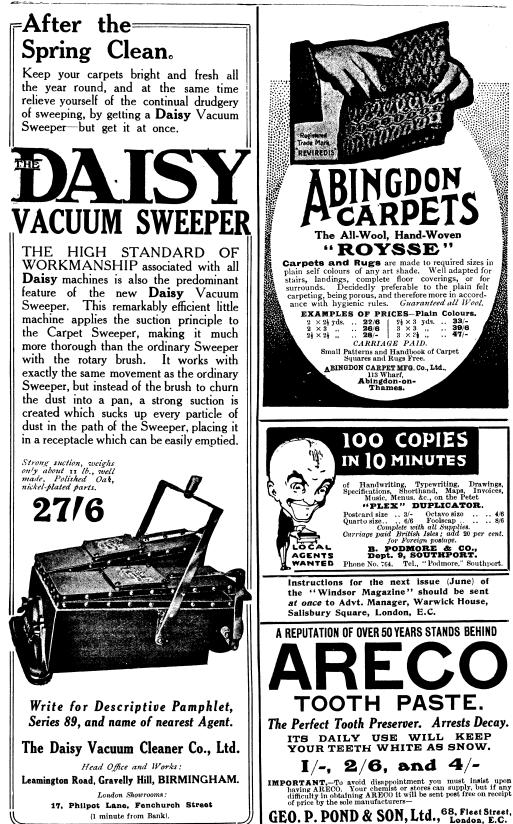
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Key-top

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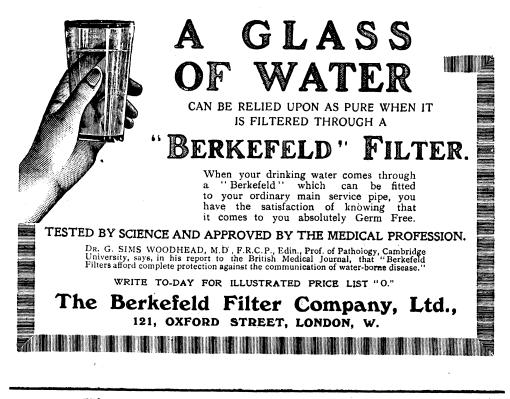
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Secrets of Beauty

վիրորը պետրելությունը պետրելությունը վերարես վերարեսը հետրելությունը մետրելությունը ունենի պետրելությունը մետրե Արդիուցի պետրելին պրուսի պրուսի պրուսին
RECIPES SELECTED FROM HERE AND THERE. THINGS EVERY WOMAN WANTS TOKNOW. Kererere a sere a s

 ${f R}^{
m EAUTIFUL}$ hair adds immensely to the personal magnetism of both men and women. Actresses and smart women are ever on the look-out for any harmless thing that will increase the natural beauty of their hair. The latest method is to use pure stallax as a shampoo on account of the peculiarly glossy, fluffy, and wavy effect which it leaves. \mathbf{As} stallax has never been used much for this purpose it comes to the chemist only in $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. sealed original packages, enough for twentyfive or thirty shampoos. A teaspoonful of the fragrant stallax granules, dissolved in a cup of hot water, is more than sufficient for each shampoo. It is very beneficial and stimulating to the hair, apart from its beautifying effect.

≭

*

HOW to permanently, not merely temporarily, remove a downy growth of disfiguring superfluous hair, is what many women wish to know. It is a pity that it is not more generally known that pure powdered pheminol, obtainable from the chemist's, may be used for this purpose. It is applied directly to the objectionable hair. The recommended treatment not only instantly removes the hair, leaving no trace, but is designed also to kill the roots completely.

PERSISTENTLY shiny nose or a dull, lifeless complexion drives many a woman to cosmetics and consequent despair. And all the time a simple remedy lies at hand in the home. If you have no cleminite in the house you need only get about an ounce from your chemist and add just sufficient water to dissolve A little of this simple lotion is Nature's it. own beautifier. It is very good for the skin, and instantly gives the complexion a soft, velvety, youthful bloom that any woman might envy. It lasts all day or evening, renders powdering entirely unnecessary, and absolutely defies detection.

*

DOES your skin chap or roughen easily, or become unduly red or blotchy? Let me tell you a quick and easy way to overcome the trouble and keep your complexion beautifully white, smooth, and soft. Just get some ordinary mercolised wax at the chemist's and use a little before retiring, as you would use cold cream. The wax, through some peculiar action, flecks

off the rough, discoloured, or blemished skin. The worn-out cuticle comes off just like dandruff on a diseased scalp, only in almost invisible particles. Mercolised wax simply hastens Nature's work, which is the rational and proper way to attain a perfect complexion, so much sought after, but very seldom seen. The process is perfectly simple and quite harmless.

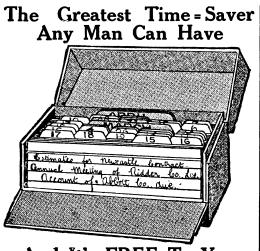
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DISTRESSING lack of hair will mar the most beautiful face, and after all there is really no need to have poor or impoverished hair if a few common-sense rules are observed. First of all, hair tonics must be freshly made in order to obtain the best results, and thousands of women, and men, too, are now making up their own lotions with most satisfactory results. For this purpose they obtain from the chemist's one ounce of boranium and mix this with 1 pint of bay rum, quite a simple formula, and, according to all accounts, remarkably effective. This simple home-made lotion quickly removes all dandruff, and creates a growth of new healthy hair which will gladden the heart of any woman. One word in conclusion. Do not experiment with your hair, long suffering though it may be. Nature will surely revolt if you continue to subject the hair and scalp to all kinds of fanciful treatments. Employ a tonic by all means if such is required, but having found a satisfactory one, use no other.

SIMPLICITY is the order of the day as regards beauty culture. Many women regularly visit the specialist to have their wrinkles ironed out with the help of hot applications, cold creams, and massage. Most of us realise that there comes a time when no amount of persuasion of this sort will avail. This process of "wrinkle removing" is wrong in principle. Both the hot water and the massaging tend to expand and loosen the skin, besides softening the muscular foundation. The very opposite result should be aimed at. The tissue should be strengthened and the skin tightened to smooth out the wrinkles. For this purpose ordinary parsidium jelly, obtainable at all chemists, may be used with beneficial effects. Get about one shillingsworth and apply like cold cream. The face will quickly look years younger.

*

*



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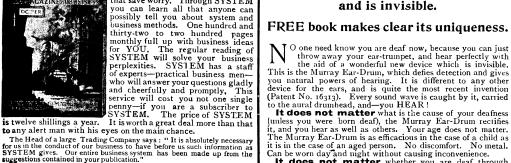
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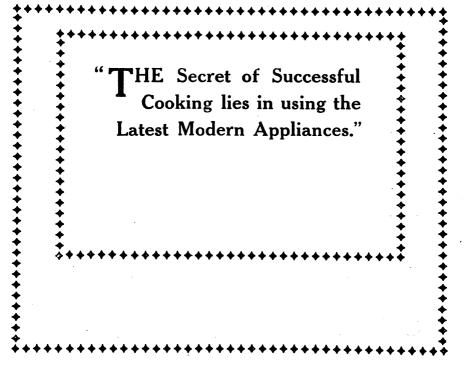
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Unfortunately that "if" implies an obstacle which is not always as easily overcome as might be supposed; many a meal has been spoiled, many an expensive joint has been robbed of its nutritive value by bad cooking.

And the reason is not far to seek.

Old fashioned kitchen ranges depended for their efficacy upon the quality of coal used, the skilful management of the fire and all the vagaries of the grate in which it burned—or did not burn as the case might be.

The cook's lot in those days was emphatically "not a happy one" and even if she knew how to make and maintain a hot fire there were further difficulties to overcome. For different dishes needed different degrees of heat at one and the same time, and how was this to be managed?

It was obvious that a large joint needed longer and slower cooking than a piece of light pastry. Soup must be left to simmer, plates must be kept hot, water must be boiled, sauces and savouries were required at a minute's notice.

A deft and experienced cook might manage all this with one pair of hands—but not with one source of heat which could only be slowly and irregularly varied. So it came about that the quality of cooking was always uncertain and every housewife recognised the unpleasant fact that the meals which it was her business to provide must always be a matter for anxiety and worry.

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Every disadvantage of the coal range was swept away and facilities before undreamt-of were put at the command of every householder who was wise enough to take advantage of them. The gas cooker, indeed, makes good cooking easy and inevitable, because it provides every kind of heat at a moment's notice—and several kinds of heat together. That is the whole secret. The cook can have the oven at full heat for—say—a joint, a ring turned low upon which the soup can simmer gently, another ring so regulated as to boil a kettleful of water in a couple of minutes, a third set of burners engaged in making toast.

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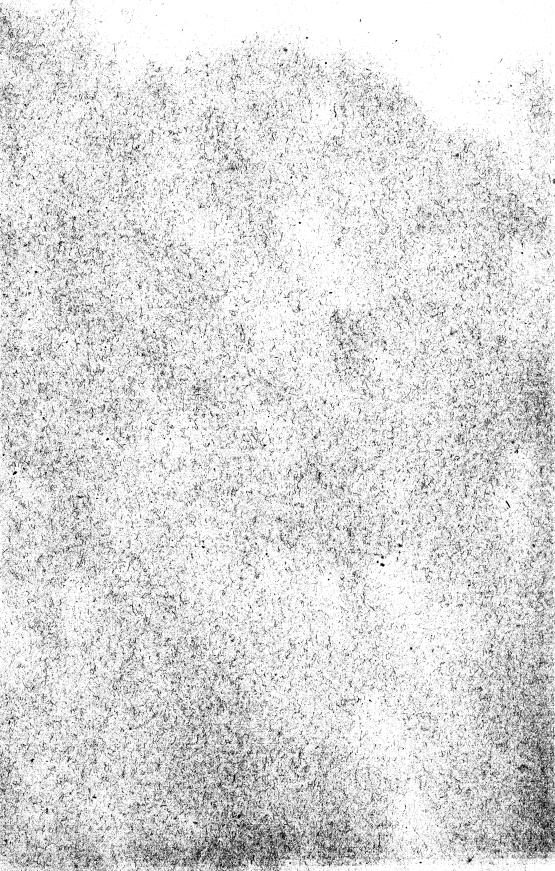


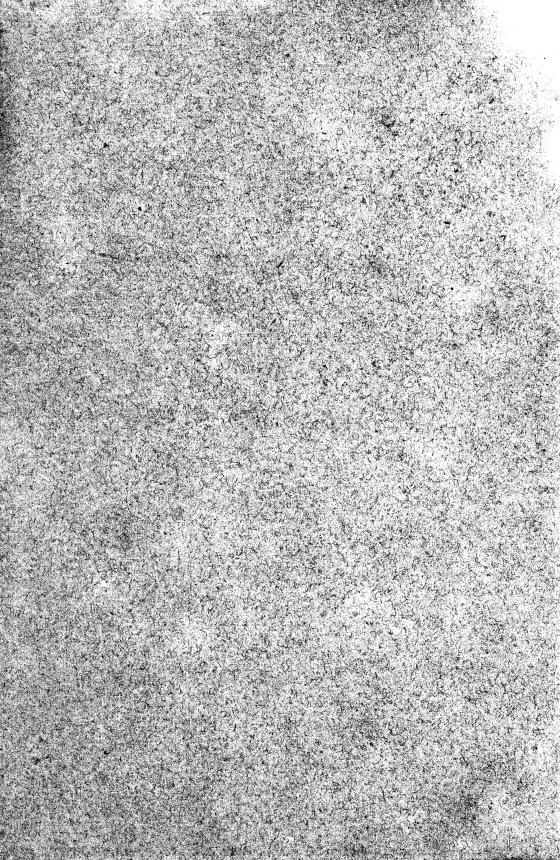
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