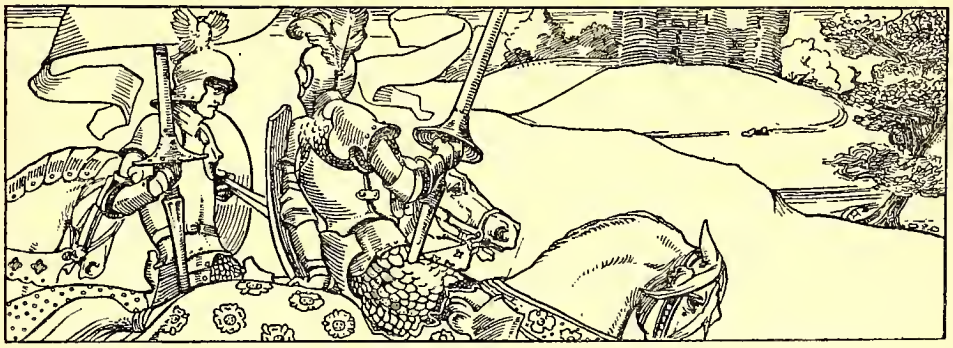
THE PARADE

THE PARADE 1897

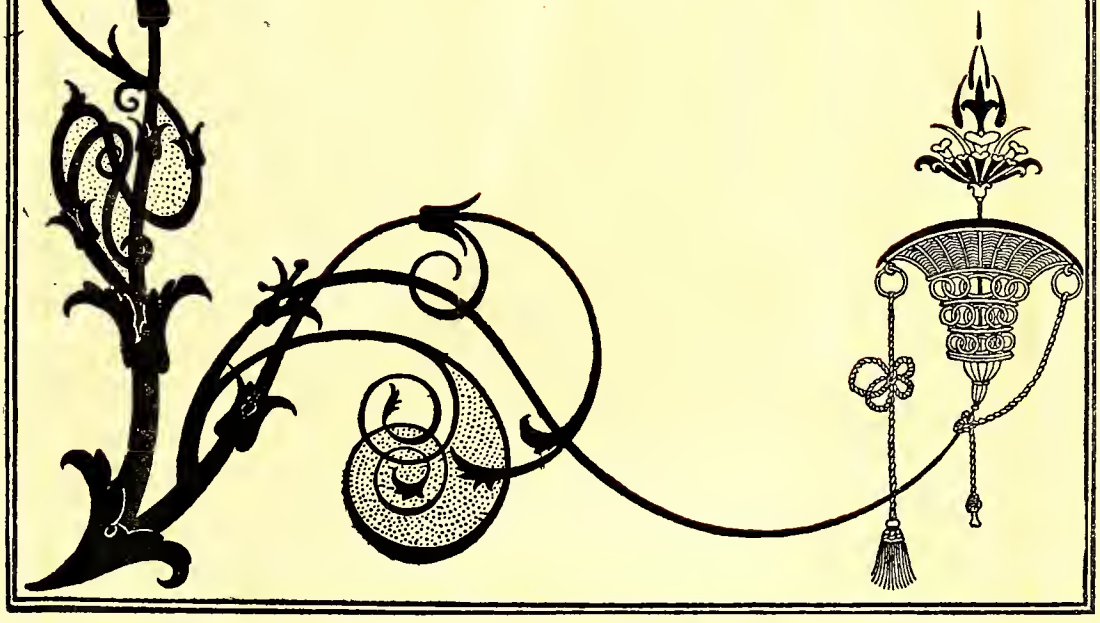


EDITED BY GLEESON WHITE

BY MRS. DEARMER

THE FROG
PRINCESS

THE PARADE
AN ILLUSTRATED GIFT BOOK FOR BOYS AND GIRLS
1897



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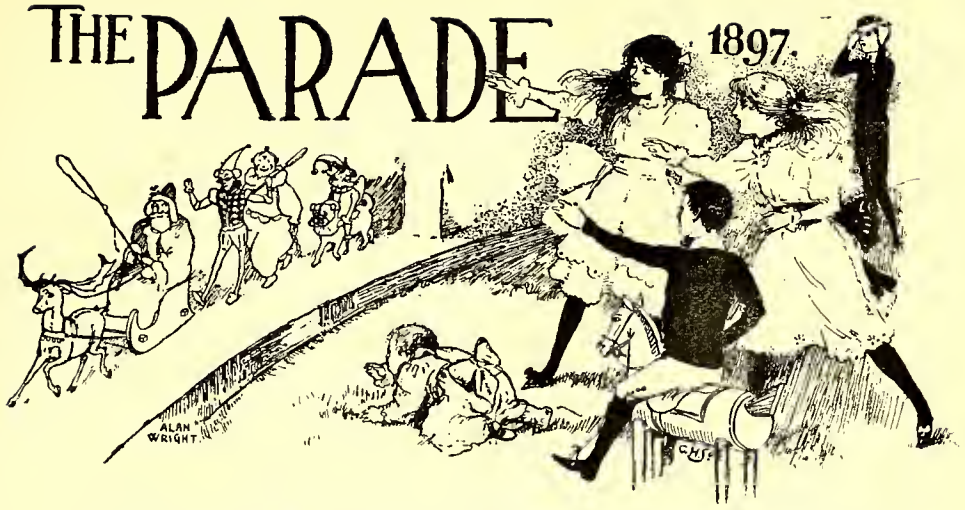

Do boys or girls read prefaces now? I wonder! I know, years and years ago, during school-hours the dullest preface to Latin Grammars, and such things, became quite fascinating. But prefaces to story-books always seemed to be written with an air of condescension which made one pity their grown-up author for his misguided attempt to unbend. It was especially annoying to be called 'dear Reader,' and very impertinent of a stranger (so I always felt) to call you so; I wonder if girls thought the same, or whether girls always skip prefaces. In the old preface, the editor—with tears in his voice—thanked 'the worthy ladies and gentlemen who had seconded his efforts to amuse his young readers.' It seemed to me that this showed that he was glad of an excuse to say something, just to prove that he was not silent because he couldn't chatter, but only because he thought it more polite to let his contributors do the really amusing part. But he was unable to resist confessing himself a benefactor of both species—the 'ladies and gentlemen' (mere men and women never wrote then) and the good little readers (purchasers or recipients of the volume).

So I don't think a preface need be written here, but as the printer left a page for it, it seemed best to say so. I shall

not even add, 'if my gentle readers find as much pleasure as I have in perusing the following pages, I shall die happy': because if they are amused they have the pleasure without the proof-reading—which is only funny when somebody else has to do it. Besides, they may even dislike something in this motley collection, and all their quite proper gratitude for the rest may vanish when they reflect that an editor who thought they would enjoy reading *that* must be a very stupid person.

For boys and girls are not, I think, quite so silly as prefaces usually regard them; and if any one of them finds any particular item, which will be certainly the editor's own anonymous contribution, very, VERY stupid—I shall think that he (or she) is most likely right. For if one is not quite an infallible critic before one has left one's 'teens, when is there any hope of being so? Yet they must not be too harsh on the misguided artists and authors, who really did their best to be interesting, and, as it seems to a mere grown-up person, with considerable success. G. W.

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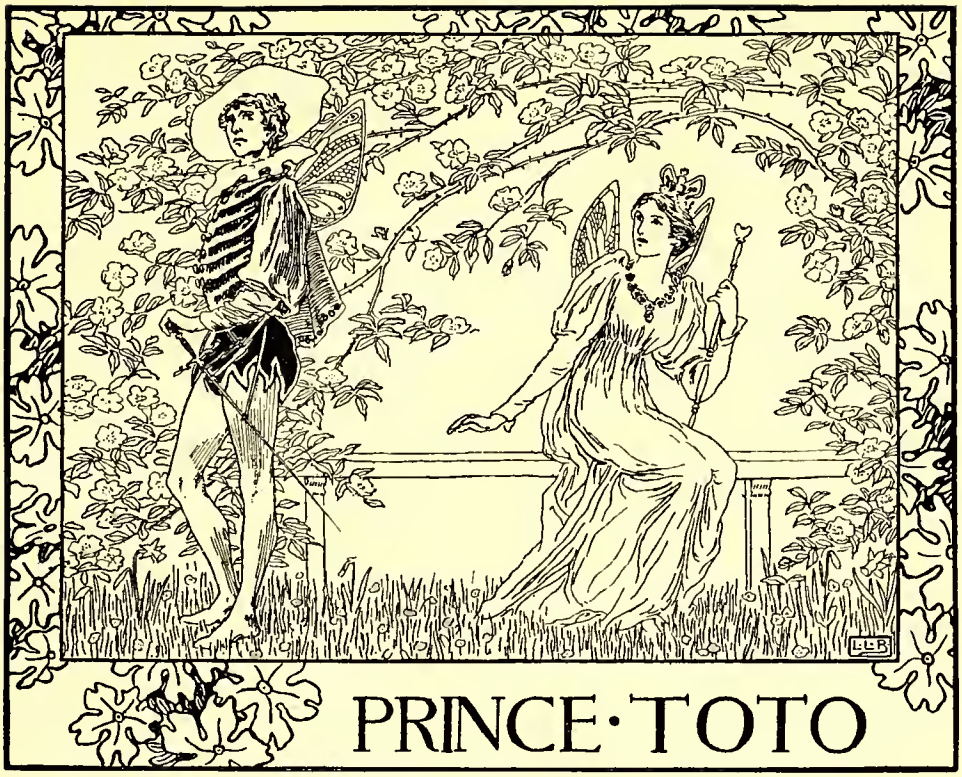
ALL HER OWN COURT . . . SHRIEKED WITH LAUGHTER AT HER QUEER FACE, AND DID NOT KNOW HER



PRINCE·TOTO

To My Little Son. By John Oliver Hobbes.

THIS is the story of Prince Toto, who thought everything hideous and everybody ugly. If any one said to him, 'Look at the sun sparkling on the sea,' he would say, 'Don't be silly'; and when his mother, the Queen, would say, 'Come and sit with me under this beautiful rose-bush,' he would get irritable, and reply, 'I would as soon see a radish as a rose!' It was impossible to please him. This was a great sorrow to his parents, the King and Queen of the fairies, because there were few fairies left on the earth, and they did not wish the last of them to seem so disagreeable. The King and whole court wondered what they could do to cure Prince Toto.

Now in the Land of Two Moons, which was the next country to theirs, there lived a beautiful Princess. She was called the Princess Verbena. She was four inches high, and she had golden hair, and cheeks like pink geraniums, and eyes like field forget-me-nots. The whole world said that she was quite faultless. When Prince Toto's unhappy mother heard this, she said to the King:

'Our son must see the Princess Verbena, and then he will surely admit that there is something worth looking at!' So they called the court painter, and he made a portrait of Prince Toto to send to the Princess. It was so large that eight grass-hoppers were required to carry it, and so of course the grass-hoppers never admired it in the least. But the court ladies, who looked on and were beautifully cool and comfortable, declared it a splendid portrait; and one, to flatter the Princess, pretended to be jealous, and drowned herself in a lily full of rain-water. She was saved afterwards by a court gentleman. But the Princess was just as pleased as though she had really been drowned—indeed, more so, for in that case she would have had to order court mourning and ride on bats instead of butterflies for several nights.

'So you think Prince Toto is handsome?' said Verbena.

'He is the pink of perfection,' exclaimed all her ladies.

'Poor Prince Toto!' said the Princess Verbena. 'What a pity it is that he thinks everything hideous and everybody ugly.'

Then she called for her looking-glass, and all her friends and all her attendants told her how beautiful she was. So she accepted the Queen's invitation to spend a hundred years or two at the Court of the Rainbow. When they say a hundred years in Fairyland, that is merely out of politeness. The Queen would have thought it very odd indeed if the Princess had remained with her so long. Then Verbena ordered some wonderful new dresses. Some were woven out of moonbeams, and some were made of sea-foam, and some were made of flower-petals, and some were made of gossamer. There were never before seen such pretty, pretty dresses as those of the Princess Verbena. She called together her fifty-

two court ladies and started out on her journey from the Land of Two Moons, which was her own kingdom, to the Country of the Rainbows, where Prince Toto lived with his parents. The Princess was borne along in her chariot, which was cut out of a single sapphire and drawn by twenty butterflies, each more dazzling than the other. When the chariot and the butterflies pass us we have to close our eyes or put up a parasol, because the light seems so great. That is why no ordinary boy or girl or man or woman has ever beheld the Princess and her Court. The chariot was followed by a band of crickets, who played music like the flute, and a band of white mice, and a band of grass-hoppers, and a band of larks, and a regiment of love-birds, and a regiment of robin-red-breasts, and a regiment of small green frogs mounted on white doves, and a regiment of bats. Last of all came two black spaniel puppies with long ears, and they seemed as large to the fairies as elephants do to us. These puppies were presents for the Prince, and they were great treasures. Forty-five dwarfs, well armed with thistle heads, had to guard them day and night. Now when the Princess was almost in sight of the Country of the Rainbows, and was looking out for the Prince and all his men, who were coming out to meet her, she saw instead an old witch on the road. This old witch was sitting inside a scooped-out water-melon, and she wore a bonnet made out of a dried plum-skin.

'Dear me!' cried the Princess; 'I think I know this witch. I will give her a present and ask her to say nice things about me. It is quite as easy to make friends as enemies.'

But the witch knew just what was passing in the Princess Verbena's heart. So she came out of the melon and invited the Princess to step inside. Verbena was rather frightened, although she was far too noble to show her fear.

'I don't want a present,' said the witch. 'I just want to have a talk with you.'

The Princess was most wretched at this, because she had always been taught that there was nothing more dangerous than talking. She offered the witch bottles of raspberry-

vinegar, and syrup made of honey, and boxes of almond paste. But the witch shook her head and said:

'No. I will have a talk, or nothing.'

Then the Princess stepped out of her chariot and followed the witch into the melon-house, which was yellow, damp, and most unpleasant.

'Now,' said the witch, 'I suppose you think that the wretched Prince Toto will take one look at your face and be cured.'

The Princess smiled and looked so pretty that even the witch began to love her.

'If you really wish to cure Prince Toto,' said the witch, 'you must give up all your beauty. Your golden hair must be green, and your pink cheeks must be blue, and your eyes must be yellow, like amber. And you must wear brown rags and march by the side of the puppies. And every one will jeer at you and mock at you, and when the Prince gets tired of the court he will visit the kennel and tease the puppies and laugh at your funny ugly face.'

At these words the Princess fainted straight off. But the witch fanned her with an oak-leaf and she soon revived.

'You must change places with one of your ladies-in-waiting,' continued the witch; 'and if you honestly like Prince Toto you will not mind the sacrifice. He is a good Prince, but he is under a spell, and the spell can never be broken until some one is willing to suffer for his sake.'

The Princess thought for a long time, and finally said:

'Let me see his portrait once more.'

So the witch called the eight grass-hoppers who were travelling in a special caravan with the Prince's portrait. They all came into the melon-house looking extremely tired and sick. And they stood in a row on the tip of their hind legs supporting the portrait of Prince Toto.

'He is very, very beautiful,' sighed the Princess Verbena. 'Do look at his rolling eyes, and his pointed chin, and those splendid buttons on his coat! How well he turns out his toes! how gracefully his hand rests upon his sword! It is enough to break any one's heart to think that he is so wicked.'

She walked up and down in front of the portrait till the grass-hoppers nearly dropped down with fatigue. Then she remembered that they might be tired, and, being a kind Princess, she gave each one a small medal and her warmest thanks for their devoted service. After that she graciously permitted them to limp out backwards, carrying the portrait on their wings. When they had gone she sighed afresh:

'Which of my ladies shall I send in my name and dress up in my clothes?' said she. 'How about the Countess Cob-web?'

Now the Countess Cob-web was the oldest and plainest fairy in her court.

'Oh no!' said the witch, 'you must send the prettiest one of the lot.'

'How very annoying,' said the Princess Verbena; but nevertheless she called in her friend the Lady Star-light, who was almost as fair as herself. The witch explained the plan. She waved her wand three times and touched the Princess Verbena with a pink poppy. What a transformation! Her moonbeam dress changed to rags, her golden hair turned bright green, her pink cheeks became pale blue, her eyes grew like yellow amber. The Princess looked at herself in the glass and burst into tears. But such tears! They rolled down her poor blue little cheeks—a radiant stream of pearls and diamonds, emeralds and rubies.

'While you can shed such beautiful tears,' said the witch, 'you need not mind your green hair and your amber eyes.'

But the Princess wept all the more bitterly, and the witch gathered up the pearls in a silver casket and told the Lady Star-light to give them as a present to the Prince. Then she put Verbena's crown on the sham Princess's head and helped her into Verbena's sapphire chariot. And the Princess Verbena had to march in the rear with the puppies; and all her own court, and her own regiment, and her own faithful crickets, and the eight grass-hoppers, to whom she had but a moment before given medals, shrieked with laughter at her queer face and did not know her. They bowed very low to the sham Princess, however, and, as the witch had managed

everything most cleverly, they never suspected that any change had been made.

The sham Princess lolled back on her cushions, and pointing to Verbena, said:

'I have bought this odd witch-girl for a slave to make *my* Prince Toto laugh. She is to take care of the giant puppies.'

'What a capital idea!' said the Lord Chief Busybody, who rode by the side of her chariot on a small grey squirrel. 'She is the funniest creature I ever beheld!'

The Prime Minister was so amazed at the Princess Verbena's green hair that he rolled off his bird (he was mounted on a pink and white parrot), and the Court had to wait for two whole hours while he changed his dusty robes. This delay put every one in such a bad humour that they forgot to laugh at the poor puppy-girl, and they began to say instead what tiresome, stupid, useless people Prime Ministers were.

Now, in the meanwhile, Prince Toto had started forth to meet his royal visitor. He wore scarlet silk stockings, with golden garters, and his gorgeous uniform as a General of the great army of Imperial Wasps—the most deadly force in the whole of Fairyland. He was quite six inches high, and he looked very fine and fierce as he rode on a tortoise-shell kitten. He chose the kitten because she could not trot so fast as his favourite charger—a white rat. But he did not like to seem in any great haste to see the Princess Verbena, which shows that he must have been rather anxious to appear more unkind and ungracious than he really was by nature. He was followed by the Imperial Wasps, and three thousand dancing stars, and a regiment of blue-bottles, and a regiment of night-owls, and a regiment of young eagles. It was a most imposing train. When Prince Toto came within sight of the Princess and her escort, his heart began to beat and he wanted to go home again. But he was too brave to own this even to himself, so he stroked the kitten's head and said in a loud voice: 'Never mind, I am here!' as though she were the frightened one of the two and needed encouragement. The

kitten was no fool and had always been in Royal stables, so she knew what was expected of her. She mewed and mewed and mewed and pretended to be terrified. This placed the Prince to a great advantage, and as the Princess's chariot drove up he seemed to be calming the wild, obstreperous kitten.

'How superbly His Royal Highness rides!' exclaimed the court ladies in the sham Princess's chariot.

'What courage! what a firm hand! And what a spirited, dangerous kitten! Oh, what a savage, peculiar, fiery, untamed kitten!'

They all gave little screams each time the kitten cried 'Mew,' and two or three swooned into the arms of the gentlemen-in-waiting.

But the sham Princess stood up and made a fine curtsy to Prince Toto, who, springing elegantly from the kitten, also made a fine bow. He did not think much, however, of the lady's looks, and was greatly disappointed. Nevertheless, he rode by her side, and they talked about themselves, and laughed very loud at each other's jokes, and were so excessively polite that the Prime Minister and the Lord Chamberlain thought it was a clear case of love at first sight. And when the Prince offered her a chocolate cream, and she gave him a macaroon, they all winked and said that the marriage would surely take place the next day. But this will show you how mistaken Lord Chamberlains and Prime Ministers may be.

At length they halted to rest on the top of a high hill. 'I am certain,' said the Lord Chief Busybody, who had been drinking more raspberry-vinegar than was good for him, 'that His Royal Highness would like to see the puppies and the witch-girl.'

Prince Toto bowed very low in order to hide a yawn, and said it would be delightful. But the sham Princess began to get cross, because she rather enjoyed talking to Prince Toto, and she did not want him to look at any one else, not even at the puppies or the witch-girl. But it was too late now to interfere, and the puppies were sent for. So the poor little Princess Verbena came in her rags leading the spaniels.

'Good gracious!' exclaimed Prince Toto, and smiled in earnest for the first time that day.

'Isn't she a droll creature?' said the sham Princess. 'I knew she would amuse you. And you can laugh out loud in her face. She does not mind. She is quite accustomed to it. In fact, if you don't laugh she will feel hurt and think she is a failure.'

So Prince Toto laughed for twenty minutes till his sides ached. He did not wish to hurt the witch-girl's feelings.

'I have never seen any one so hideous,' said he; 'she is absolutely frightful, and oh, so exquisitely ridiculous!'

The poor Princess Verbena said nothing, but stood there meekly while her own Court and Prince Toto's Court howled and yelled with merriment. Prince Toto knelt down on the grass at her feet.

'O Princess,' said he (of course he did not know that she was a real Princess, and he called her this to tease her). 'O Princess, with the green hair and the blue cheeks and the yellow eyes, shall I choose you for my Queen?'

'Yes, please!' said the Princess Verbena.

How they all screamed at this comic idea! Even the Imperial Wasps grinned and the Morning Stars forgot to dance. They had never before seen Prince Toto in such a gay humour.

'This girl with green hair,' said Prince Toto, 'is even more amusing than the puppies!'

And he kissed the sham Princess's hand and thanked her again and again for bringing him such a new kind of present. Then the royal procession moved on, and the Princess Verbena was again sent away to the rear with the two spaniels. At last they all came to the ivory gates of Prince Toto's palace, and there stood the King and the Queen to receive the splendid party. It must be owned that they also were a little disappointed with the sham Princess, although she was pretty enough and graceful enough to please anybody. But she was not so perfect as the Princess Verbena, nor did she look like the portraits of her enchanting mistress.

'Never mind,' whispered the King to his wife, 'she is

really very nice, although she looks bad-tempered; and if her court painter has sent us too flattering a picture, we must nevertheless pretend that it does not do her justice.'

Then the Queen said it was a great shame that they could not get such a court painter for themselves, as she rather wanted her own portrait painted for the National Museum. The King answered that he might be able to bribe that very man. Under cover of this pleasant conversation, the meeting went off as well as could be wished. The sham Princess was charmed by her reception. She remembered the little casket which the witch had given her and which contained the first tears which Verbena ever shed. So, as she wished to please Prince Toto till he was wholly captured by her amiability, she placed this gift in his hand.

'How odd!' exclaimed Prince Toto; 'I have never seen any jewels to compare with these. I wish you would tell me where I could find more, because, on my honour, they are the only things which almost please me! I assure you, dear Princess, I am strongly tempted to admire them. A thousand, thousand thanks!'

But the sham Princess dared not tell him that they were the poor witch-girl's tears, so she declared that they had belonged to her royal treasury and were the last of their kind. Then the Prince sent a command to all the gnomes and elves, and sprites and mermaids, to seek through every mine in the earth and every cave of the sea in quest of precious stones like those in the little silver casket. But they could discover nothing which even compared with the wonderful tears of the Princess Verbena. Prince Toto was so grateful, however, for the few he possessed that he rarely left the sham Princess's side. When they marched in to supper every one said that they made a charming couple, and evidently Prince Toto had at last seen some one whom he could call pretty. There were great rejoicings. They danced all night, and no one remembered the poor Princess Verbena, who sat all alone with the puppies. One puppy was smaller and weaker than the other, so the strong one had to let him have his own way in everything. The Princess Verbena used

to say to the Little Brother Puppy: 'Will you try your teeth on a biscuit, or would you rather bite Big Brother's ear?'

And almost every time the little weak one would reply that he much preferred to bite his big brother's ear. And the big one had to sit there patiently just because he was big and strong, while the little one gnawed at his ears. Sometimes, however, he would say:

'I am getting tired of being strong, and I would much rather not be a big brother. I myself should very much like to try *my* teeth on somebody's ear. This is extremely trying and monotonous!'

Then the weak little brother would call him a selfish great brute, and bite him all the harder. The Princess Verbena often forgot her own sadness when she saw the suffering of the Big Brother Puppy. Yet she too was absurdly fond of the weak one, and frequently let him use his teeth on her own fingers.

Now, when Prince Toto had danced for six weeks with the Sham Princess, and had changed his suit nine hundred and ninety-nine times in order to show off his fine figure, the Queen, his mother, thought she might safely ask him to fix a day for the wedding. But he was furious at the question, and said he had no intention of marrying 'such a little scarecrow.'

'I would as soon,' said he, 'marry the girl who watches the puppies. For she, at any rate, makes me laugh. And she is so dreadfully ugly, poor thing, that she makes even the sky and the trees look pretty in comparison.

'Oh, isn't this shocking behaviour!' cried the poor Queen, who was tired out from watching the capers of Prince Toto and the court. 'What will the Prime Minister and the Lord Chamberlain and the Lord High Poodle-Dog think?'

'I don't care a fig for the Lord High Poodle-Dog,' said the awfully wicked Prince Toto. 'And you can tell the Princess to go home. I don't want her!'

The Queen had hysterics, and the King was so angry that he ordered court mourning and a picnic to the tomb of his

ancestors. The Prince refused to join the picnic, and he went instead to the puppy kennel, where the Princess Verbena sat alone on a broken pie-dish, crying most bitterly.

And when the Prince saw her beautiful tears, he bit his thumbs with surprise.

'Surely,' he thought, 'those are like the jewels in the silver casket.'

He walked on tip-toe for fear of disturbing her; and when she had wept herself to sleep, he crept up and gathered all her tears into his cap.

'I shall make these into a crown,' said he, 'and it will be a crown for my Queen when I marry.'

So every day after that he walked down toward the puppies' kennel, in order to watch the Princess Verbena weeping. He used to bow with a great flourish, and say:

'Good-morning, my lady Princess with the green hair and the blue cheeks and the amber eyes.'

Then she would laugh till the tears came, and, when she was not looking, he would gather them up. After he left her, however, and passed out of sight, her laughter would change to weeping, and the Little Brother Puppy would complain that she made him feel dreadfully depressed. But he liked her tears all the same and thought they were glass marbles for him to play with.

As for Prince Toto—every one declared that he was greatly changed. He became more and more discontented, and people thought from his odd manner that he was hopelessly in love with the Sham Princess. They did not know that he used to get up at sunrise when all the court was asleep and no one could see him, in order to steal away to the puppy kennel, where poor Verbena, looking uglier than ever, sat patiently guarding the spaniels.

'O Princess,' said Prince Toto one day, 'O Princess with the blue cheeks and the amber eyes, I do not laugh so much as I once laughed at your green hair. I hope you do not mind. I am afraid I have grown accustomed to it; in fact —but please forgive me—I have almost made up my mind to like it. One gets very tired of golden hair and black hair

at once. And when Prince Toto and the Princess Verbena were married, she wore the crown made of her own tears. And Prince Toto was an excellent husband and a kind king. In the course of time he found much to admire in Fairyland. He even learned to like roses very well, and he admitted more than once that it was not absolutely silly to watch the sun sparkling on the sea.

The puppies grew up, married, and had large families. But the Little Puppy Brother gets very angry indeed when his own puppies want to bite each other's ears. He tells the Big Puppy Brother that he, for his part, wholly fails to understand such unaffectionate conduct; and they have long conversations on the subject as they stand on guard outside the palace of Prince Toto and the Princess Verbena.

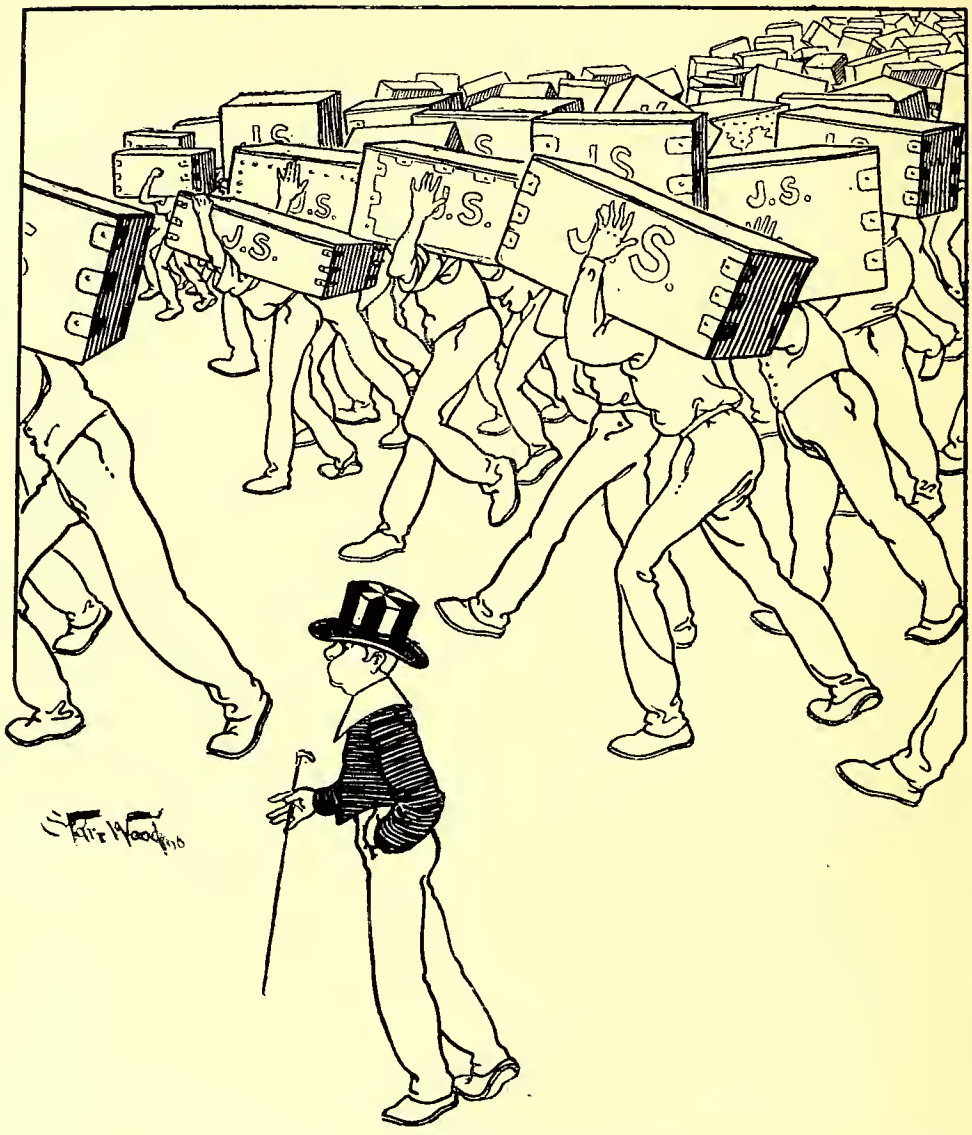
LITTLE FEET. BY RICHARD LE GALLIENNE. DECORATED BY CHAS. ROBINSON

LITTLE FEET. By Richard Le Gallienne

LITTLE feet that all day long
Make a lovely little song
Up above me to and fro,
Weaving fairy rings you go,
Little feet whose patterings small
Sweeter than the raindrops fall,
When each raindrop in a shower
Falls—to rise again a flower,
In the merry days of spring.

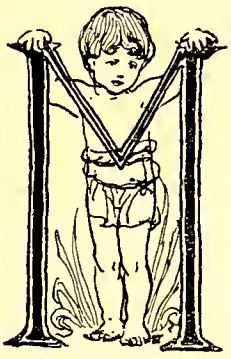
I have heard your mother sing,
Nothing else have heard so sweet,
Save the prattle of your feet;
Little feet that run and run
And never have enough of fun,
Little feet so pearly white,
That hate to go to bed at night!

Ah, though merry day be done,
In my heart you run and run,
Far into the quiet night—
Childless, lonely, listening night—
Sowing, little fairy feet,
Many a tear-flower pale but sweet,
Though within your quiet cot
You sleep—O my Forget-me-Not!



YOUNG Smith, who is now in 'The Third,'
When a new boy at Thwackem's had heard
Boxes there were allowed,
So he came with a crowd.
Those Dormitory Feasts! On my word!

THE GREAT ROW WITH MENALLON. By Barry Pain.



R. DOLBECK was hardly of the same type as the other masters at Desford; he was considerably older than most of them, it was said that his attainments were less, and he taught only the small boys. To some of the bigger boys it was a wonder how he ever came to Desford at all. He had come there twelve years before under a different *régime*, and still kept on—the same himself though his environment was altered and, perhaps, less suited to him. He was, as a matter of fact, an excellent teacher and good disciplinarian for small boys. He wore large onyx studs in his shirt and a very open waistcoat, was dictatorial in his manner to small boys and almost unduly deferential, as a rule, to everybody else. In speaking to ladies, especially, he always appeared to be selling something, and to be grateful for their patronage. In stature he was rather short.

His great row with Menallon, which occurred one evening in a hitherto uneventful summer term, raised him into sudden prominence, and provided the school with a subject of conversation for days. Years after, even, boys who in their earliest boyhood had witnessed the sensational scene would ask each other if they remembered it, or would describe it with the inevitable accrescences of time and imagination.

As a teacher, Mr. Dolbeck had nothing whatever to do with Menallon, who was in the sixth form and a prefect. They occasionally passed each other in the corridors of the schoolhouse, where Mr. Dolbeck was one of the assistant masters resident, or interchanged remarks when they met in the street or the cricket-field. Certainly until the evening of the great row there had been no enmity between them—they did not know each other well enough to be enemies. Menallon was a boy of intermittent brilliance, who did some things so well that you could not understand why he did not do other things better; his breakdowns and achievements

were alike curious. In work he would be sometimes first, and more often last, but very rarely in any intermediate position. At cricket he was more likely to miss an easy than a difficult catch; he was a good man to send in on a bowler's day when four wickets had gone in as many minutes for less runs, for he was particularly cool and free from nervousness. He carried pluck to the point of folly. It is possible that they still show a place at Desford known as Menallon's Jump. It would have been a fair broad jump in any case, but it was also the sort of jump that no man would ever have failed at more than once. Failure meant a fall of thirty feet on to the jagged rocks in the stream at the bottom of the chasm. The take-off was bad, and a slip by no means unlikely. It was idiotic to attempt it, but Menallon did attempt it, and, as it happened, with success. The jump became famous, and reached the knowledge of the head master, who chaffed Menallon about it, but none the less intimated that that jump was never to be jumped again, by Menallon or anybody else. Menallon, of course, obeyed.

That was rather a strange point about the great row—Menallon was not an insubordinate boy. He had occasional fits of temper, but he generally controlled himself remarkably well. The trouble began from a perfectly trifling cause. It was at tea on Saturday night at the school-house. Mr. Dolbeck was on duty that night—that is to say, he was to be present during the hours of preparation in the day-rooms to see that the younger boys did their work. Very frequently the master on duty did not come in to tea, and in that case a prefect was responsible for order during tea-time. But Mr. Dolbeck, unlike the other masters, always made a point of coming in to tea. He had been accustomed to do so in the old days, when the sixth and prefects had comparatively little authority, and he kept up the custom. He really enjoyed being on duty, liked to air his official manner, and prided himself on the silence, which was evidence of awe. Mr. Dolbeck sat at the head of one table; Menallon, as prefect, sat at the head of another. Now, although no definite arrangement had been made, it had

come to be understood (by all the masters, at any rate, except Mr. Dolbeck) that even when a master was present he did not interfere with the prefect's table; if anything went wrong at the prefect's table, it was left to the prefect to correct it. On this particular night something did go wrong: a boy broke into laughter which was beyond ordinary and seemly laughter; it was an unrestrained unmusical howl. Mr. Dolbeck immediately sprang up, and shouted, 'There is a great noise going on at the other table. I will not have any noise whatever made on *my* nights. Smithson, go out of the room, and speak to me afterwards.' The offending Smithson rose and departed. 'That's rather cheek,' said the sixth-form boy who was sitting next to Menallon. 'What can you expect?' said Menallon with a smile. 'He ought to be teaching in a Board school.' This, of course, was not audible to Mr. Dolbeck, but he saw that smile, and he considered it to be insolent, and decided just to take that Menallon down a little.

As Menallon was sauntering down the corridor to his own study, he remembered that he had not seen the papers that day, and turned into the senior day-room to have a look at them. He was bending over a newspaper at one of the tables when, at ten minutes to seven, Mr. Dolbeck entered the room. Preparation was at seven, and Mr. Dolbeck liked to have everything ready to begin punctually to the minute. 'Now, then, Menallon,' he began at once, 'I won't have you here; you're in the way. You're a perfect nuisance. Get about your business.' Menallon no longer smiled. He did not answer, but folded the newspaper and began to walk slowly out of the room. Mr. Dolbeck gripped him by the arm. 'And just move a little faster,' he said irritably.

'Take your hands off me,' said Menallon.

'What's that you said?' cried Mr. Dolbeck, aghast.

'I told you to take your hands off me,' said Menallon, twisting his arm out of Mr. Dolbeck's grasp, 'and you heard me too. I meant you to hear me.'

At once the whisper of rumour went abroad: 'Row on between Menallon and old Dolbeck.' From the studies, from

the junior day-room, from the hall and corridors, boys trooped towards the senior day-room to see and to hear.

Mr. Dolbeck caught hold of Menallon's arm once more. 'Then I'll teach you to use different language in addressing me, Menallon. I'll teach you to behave yourself.' He made some sort of futile effort to shake the boy. Menallon was tall, strong, eighteen years of age. He took Mr. Dolbeck by the wrists and forced him down into a chair, adding, 'You will find you can teach just as well without hanging on to me.'

Boys who in their day had been mildly impertinent, had been punished for it, and had repented, stood stupefied before an act of insubordination that exceeded their wildest dreams and imagining. Here was rebellion indeed, and the rebel was perhaps the last boy in the school from whom rebellion would have been expected. There was not a laugh at Dolbeck's discomfiture, not even a word spoken by any of the boys that had gathered round. It looked like tragedy. Some thought that Menallon must have gone mad.

If anger is a brief madness, both master and boy were mad by this time. Mr. Dolbeck sprang to his feet, but he did not attempt to touch Menallon again. He gesticulated, and spoke loudly, sometimes stammering a little.

'If I were twenty years younger, I would give you such a —I would give you c-cause to regret this.'

'Well, I don't think you would,' said Menallon, turning on his heel.

'You're no gentleman, Menallon. Don't run away. I command you to stop. Stop and hear what I think of you.'

'I don't want to hear it. I'm not interested in it.'

'Interested in it? You're no gentleman, whether you're interested or not. You're an offensive, swaggering, impertinent, despicable blockhead. D-don't think I've done with you, for I haven't! You may think yourself very fine, but you've ruined yourself. Whether you like it or not, you will pay for this.' Menallon had left the room by this time. 'Whether you expect it or not,' Mr. Dolbeck thundered on,

unconscious of his absence, and then stopped suddenly, for at the end of the passage the bell for preparation clanged loudly. He turned round, white-faced, on the crowd of boys, whom he had apparently not noticed before. 'Wh-what are you all doing here? Did no one hear the bell? To your places.' The crowd melted away quickly. Mr. Dolbeck went to the junior day-room, where he always sat during preparation, and took his chair at the end of the table. He opened a book, and appeared to be reading very fast, for he turned the pages quickly with visibly trembling fingers. After a few minutes he reversed the position of his book—he had had it upside down. Then he discovered that one of the onyx studs had come unfastened and secured it again. After a short time he put down the book and began to write a letter. He wrote quickly, in a large hand, sometimes whispering the words under his breath. The small boys either looked studiously away from him, or looked at him furtively, with a kind of morbid curiosity. One, bolder than the rest, came to him with some difficulty in his work. 'I am afraid I cannot attend to that to-night,' said Mr. Dolbeck, with unaccustomed gentleness; 'I am very busy.'

Preparation went on in absolute silence. The hour and a half seemed to spin themselves out interminably. The supper-bell rang at last. Menallon came in to supper, apparently unperturbed, talked neither more nor less than usual, and behaved as if nothing had happened. After supper and prayers the hour from nine to ten was on Saturday night free. Elsay, a particularly steady fellow, captain of the football, went into Menallon's study and talked things over. Elsay was plain-spoken. In his opinion Dolbeck had behaved like a bounder, and Menallon had behaved like a fool. 'Of course it 's no good jawing now,' said Elsay, 'but I think you 've been a fool. You mayn't like Dolbeck—I don't like him myself—but you 're leaving at the end of the term in any case, and he doesn't often cross your path. I 'd have put up with anything before I 'd have spoilt all my chances in life for the momentary pleasure of knocking a master down and then cheeking him.'

'I should have liked to have knocked him down, but as a

matter of fact I didn't. I put him, with no more force than was necessary, into a very comfortable chair. He'd no right to order me out of the day-room, for it was ten minutes to seven. In any case, he'd no right to speak to me as he did, and no other master in the place would have done it. He did it just to swagger before small boys and make me lose my temper. And he'd no right to lay a hand on me. In fact, as far as the rights of the case are concerned, it's old Dolbeck, not myself, who ought to get sacked.'

'And whom are you going to make see that?'

'Nobody, of course. When there's a row between a master and a boy, the boy always has to be in the wrong and the master always has to be in the right—even when the master's a dirty, underbred bounder like Dolbeck. No, of course I'm expelled. I know that. Probably Dolbeck's whining to the Old Man at this moment about me.'

. . . . .

But on the following morning it was quite obvious, from the Head Master's manner, that so far Mr. Dolbeck had made no report. Service in the school chapel was followed by dinner in the quiet normal Sunday fashion, and one or two boys prophesied that Mr. Dolbeck would ask Menallon to apologise privately, and then let the thing blow over. But the more general opinion was that a row of those dimensions was bound to have serious results. Intense excitement prevailed. After dinner, William, the school-house servant, was seen to hand Menallon a note in Dolbeck's writing, and Menallon immediately went up to Dolbeck's room. The excitement increased. Instead of going out as usual, boys waited about the house to see what would happen.

. . . . .

'You wished to see me,' said Menallon, after he had entered Mr. Dolbeck's room.

'I did. It was with reference to what happened last night.' Master and boy remained standing. 'You must be aware,' Mr. Dolbeck continued, 'that this is a very serious matter.'

'Of course, expulsion is serious,' said Menallon. 'I am not going to dispute what happened, or to beg for mercy. I

should be quite willing to go with you to the head-master now, and get it over.'

'I am not going to the head-master, and you will not be expelled,' said Mr. Dolbeck. Menallon could hardly believe his ears.

'I don't understand,' Menallon began.

Mr. Dolbeck smiled faintly. He had counted on this dramatic surprise. It was, in its way, a grain of comfort to him. 'I will explain,' he went on. 'When I entered the day-room last night I was annoyed with you about a trifle—which I need not go into—and consequently I ordered you out of the room with unnecessary severity, speaking in a way in which it is not now customary to speak to a prefect, at any rate when he is doing nothing wrong. I, in fact, provoked you. I do not think that I was entirely in the right, and for that reason I shall not report you. At the same time I have been knocked about and insulted in public by one of the boys here. No, Menallon, I am getting on in years, and I do not think you were in the right either.'

'Nor do I,' said Menallon, with sudden impulsiveness.

'If I do not report you—if you are not punished and humiliated—my position here becomes intolerable. The smallest boy will think that he can do what he likes with me. One or other of us must go, and I have decided that *I* will go myself. After twelve years' faithful service, with a deep attachment to the school, and with little prospect of ever obtaining such a post again, I have written my letter of resignation. You need have no fear—your name is not even mentioned in it.'

'You're behaving to me,' said Menallon, 'very differently, sir, from—from what I had expected. I don't want you to send that letter. If I had known you would have taken it in this way, I should never have dreamed——'

'It is too late,' replied Mr. Dolbeck. 'I will not report you.'

'Then, sir,' said Menallon with decision, 'I will report myself, and, whatever the result may be, I shall apologise to you publicly, as I now do privately.'

It was Mr. Dolbeck's turn to be surprised. He held out his hand vaguely. 'That's all—all right,' he said, 'if we're both sorry for our mistakes; but what you are going to do is not necessary.'

Menallon shook hands with him. 'I must go to the head-master at once,' he said.

A few minutes later William brought a message from the head-master that he would like to see Mr. Dolbeck.

. . . . .

Menallon was not expelled, but he was privately removed from the school. The concession was due in part to his previous good character, in part to the head-master's judgment of the merits of the case, and in part to the strong representations in Menallon's favour made by Mr. Dolbeck.

Menallon left behind him, attached to the screens, a written apology to Mr. Dolbeck, written in terms both humble and sincere.

And Mr. Dolbeck's position was strengthened, and it became considered particularly dangerous to play the fool with a master who even in the Great Row with Menallon came out victorious.

After some years a legacy came to Mr. Dolbeck and his health failed him, and he retired. His regular medical attendant is a doctor of the name of Menallon.

THE THREE SONGS: A FAIRY TALE. By Edward F. Strange.

ONCE upon a time, many years ago, when the fairies had disappeared such a little while that the oldest of the birds could still remember them, there lived in the recesses of a great forest a wood-cutter and his only son. The wood-cutter was a stern, solitary man. He rarely spoke to his son (whose name was Kalim), except to chide him; and so it is not to be wondered at that Kalim grew up sad and lonely—his only friends the beasts and birds of the forest. His mother, he could not remember; and he saw no strangers save the rough men who worked with his father. Sometimes they would laugh at him, and ask when he was going out into the world to make his fortune; taunting him till the tears came into his eyes, and he would

flee to depths of the dark wood that he alone knew, and stay there as long as he dared.

Now it befell one day, when Kalim was come to be a man (although his father and the wood-cutters still treated him as a child), that they had beaten and reviled him till in desperation he had told them that he would bear it no longer, but would leave his home for ever. He ran away, and they chased him as long as they were able, because they did not want to lose so valuable a servant; but he was younger and stronger, so they could not overtake him. At last they gave up in despair and returned. And Kalim wandered on and on, having in truth nought else to do.

At last, when he thought himself safe from pursuit, he went more slowly and began to look about him. He was in a part of the forest he had never seen before—a green glade, in the midst of which stood the ruins of an ancient temple overshadowed with ivy, and a clear spring bubbling out from among them. The trees around were so tall and thick that you could scarce get a glimpse of the sky above them.

Kalim was too weary to go farther, so he looked about for a resting-place. In doing this he chanced to see a young owl, which had fallen out of its nest in the ivy, and was vainly struggling on the moss. As he came up, the owlet stopped struggling and lay passively blinking its great eyes at Kalim; who, tired as he was, yet picked it up at once, and, climbing slowly and carefully up the ruined wall, replaced it in its nest. Then he slid down, bathed in the stream and drank of its water, lay down, and slept.

In the middle of the night he awoke, and saw that a ray of moonlight shone through a rift in the trees, and fell just on the owl's nest over his head. Two great white owls sat there and talked, while Kalim lay and listened to their words.

And the she-owl said: 'Kalim was tired and weary, yet he climbed the wall to put our son back into the nest.'

And the he-owl said: 'We will give him a gift!'

Then the she-owl spoke again: 'What gift can we give, for he hath already bathed in the spring and drunk of its

waters, so that he knoweth the language of birds, and hath the gift of song?'

But the he-owl answered: 'He knoweth nought to sing but his own sorrow, and who will listen to that? We will teach him the song the thrushes sing in the springtime, so that he may go to the great city and wed the king's daughter.'

And he took a feather from a thrush's breast and let it fall on Kalim's lips.

In the morning Kalim arose. He remembered what the owls had said, and set out at once for the great city. On his way he heard the birds calling to him, 'Sing to us, Kalim.' Then he sang them the song the thrushes sing in the springtime; and they were glad, for it was autumn, and they had not heard it so long that they had well-nigh forgotten it. And they all sang back to him, 'Go to the great city and marry the king's daughter.'

He soon came to the end of the forest, and saw the city before him; he went boldly on, in spite of his fear at seeing so many men and houses, until he reached the great square before the king's palace; there he found the thickest crowd of all, each man wearing his richest robes and rejoicing. He asked one why they made so merry, and the man turned to him and said:

'Who are you who know not that the king's daughter has this day been betrothed to the son of the king of the next city? And wherefore come you in no better robe than that?' For Kalim was meanly clad.

And he answered, 'I am but a poor singer, and come to your great city for the first time to-day. I pray you tell me where I may see the king's daughter, for I have come far to look upon her.'

But the man laughed, and cried aloud, 'Come and see this singing fellow who would visit our king's daughter.' And a crowd came and jeered at him till he was half-dead with fear. Then one of them said, 'Sing to us if you can; if not, we will kill you.'

Just then a bird flew over the square, and Kalim heard him say, 'Sing, or they will kill you.'

So he took heart and sang the song the thrushes sing in the springtime—only he sang it not all.

The people listened; and some wept for joy, for there were no thrushes then in that land, and they had never heard the like before. Then they said, 'Who is this we would have killed? Let us put a robe of honour on him and take him to the king.' And when they had done so, the king bade him sing, saying, 'Thou comest in an auspicious hour, for my daughter has chosen a husband, and we are all glad thereat, for he is a king's son.' Then Kalim was sad, for he feared he was too late; but he heard a starling singing on the house-top without, and the song of the starling was this, 'Sing, O Kalim, for life is not over yet.' So Kalim sang to the king the thrushes' song—yet even now he sang not all of it. The king listened and wondered. He did not weep, for he was not like the common people; but when Kalim had finished he spoke very gently, 'Say, O sweet singer, what reward shall I give thee?'

Then Kalim answered, 'Let my lord grant that I may sing unto the king's daughter and her betrothed, and to none other.' When he heard this, the king was glad, for he wished his daughter to hear this wonder; so he commanded that Kalim should be led into the princess's chamber, and that no one else should be present to hear the song but her betrothed.

So they led Kalim thither; and when he looked upon her, and saw how beautiful she was, he was filled with love. And when he looked upon the king's son, who sat beside her on an ivory throne, he was filled with sorrow, and felt as though he could never sing again. But while he waited in silence, a nightingale in a golden cage sang to him, 'Sing, O Kalim, for it is long since I heard the thrushes sing in the springtime!' And Kalim sang.

While he was singing the princess bent her eyes upon him, and they grew darker and deeper ever with love for his strange melody; but the king's son thought only of his own love, and, when Kalim sang his last and sweetest notes, he laid his hand on that of the princess and whispered, 'Such is my love for thee.' So that she turned her eyes to his—and Kalim passed away.

He wandered out of the city—threw off his rich robe, seeing and caring not whither he went—till he was tired out, and would lie down to sleep. Then he knew that he had come again to the spot where he rested the night before, and that again the owlet had fallen from its nest. He felt almost too tired and sad to move, yet picked it up carefully, and, with infinite pain, put it back. This time he did not bathe, but only drank of the water and laved his brow therein before he slept.

In the night-time he awoke, and heard the great owls talking one with the other.

And the she-owl said: 'Kalim was weary and well-nigh broken-hearted, yet this second time has he climbed to put our son back in the nest.'

And the he-owl said: 'We will give him a gift.'

Then the she-owl said: 'What can we give him, for he hath already tasted twice of the spring water and knoweth the songs of birds, and hath laved his brow and become beautiful.'

But the he-owl answered: 'A bird's song is but a thing that cometh and goeth; we will teach him the song the river sings to the trees, so that he may go to the great city and wed the king's daughter.' And he dipped a leaf in the stream and let it fall on Kalim's lips.

In the morning Kalim arose refreshed, and once more set out for the city; and on his way the trees whispered to him, 'Sing us the river song, O Kalim.' And he sang it to them, and they bowed over him and shaded him from the heat. When he came to the city no one was in the streets, for the sun beat down on that day so fiercely that people dared not venture out of their houses. He made his way towards the square in front of the king's palace, and saw none; but when he got there, the great tree in the square bowed its branches over him and sighed, 'Sing.' So Kalim sang in the deserted city the song that the river sings to the trees, only he sang it not to the end; and the king lay in his garden and heard it. Then they beckoned Kalim to come into the palace, and he came and stood before the king, who did not remember him, for his face was changed. And the king said, 'Yesterday a sweet singer came, and he is gone we know not how; and to-day I

hear thee also singing a wondrous song. Sing to me, I pray thee.' So Kalim sang, but not all the song even now; and the thought of the river and trees melted the heart of the king, and he would fain have wept, but might not because he was a king. But he said, 'Choose thine own reward, O singer.'

Then Kalim said, 'Will my lord grant that I may sing unto the princess and her betrothed and none other.'

The king wondered, and said, 'So said the singer of yesterday—yet have your wish.'

They took Kalim into the princess's garden, where she sat with her betrothed on a couch of silver, and when he saw them he was full of sorrow: for the king's son had woven a chain of roses around the princess and bound her to him. And Kalim would fain not have sung, but the roses whispered, 'Sing us the river song, O Kalim, before we wither.' And he sang.

Then while he was singing the princess looked on him, and her ears drank in the melody of his song, and she would have arisen and gone to him, but the chain of roses bound her: and when Kalim sang his sweetest notes, the king's son whispered, 'So doth my love sing unto thine.' And she turned herself again to him, and Kalim passed away before they knew that he had gone.

Again he wandered out of the city, and again found himself at nightfall beneath the old ruin. This third time the owlet had fallen from its nest, but Kalim seemed scarcely to have strength to pick it up—yet did he contrive by slow degrees to raise himself just high enough to put it again in its nest, when his power failed, and he fell back with a groan. Scarce was he able to reach the spring with his hand so that he drank of the water—only this time he neither bathed nor laved himself in it—and then he fell asleep.

In the night-time he again awoke, and the two great owls talked one with another.

And the she-owl said: 'This third time has Kalim, with sore trouble of heart, yet raised our son to his place in the nest.'

And the he-owl said: 'We will give him a gift.'

But the she-owl said: 'What shall we give him, seeing that he hath now tasted three times of the spring, and hath

the gift of song, and is beautiful, and knoweth the fairy speech of old time?'

Then the he-owl answered: 'There is only one song he may sing, and that only to one; we will teach him the farewell song of the last fairy, so that he may go to the great city and marry the king's daughter.'

And he bent down and touched Kalim's lips.

In the morning Kalim arose and went on his way to the city: but this time he heard song of neither bird nor tree; and when he came thither there was a great noise of feasting, so that he asked one what it meant. And he who was asked answered: 'Who are you who know not that to-day the prince marries our king's daughter?' And Kalim answered, 'I am the singer who came this last two days.'

Then they received him with joy and would have feasted him, and borne him in triumph through the city, and have had him to sing for them. But he said, 'Nay, let me sing first to the bride.' So they took him to the king, and said, 'Lo, here is the great singer!' And the king was glad, and said, 'Surely thou wilt remain with us now—at least sing unto me before thou goest.' But Kalim said, 'Nay, my Lord, unto the bride first.' And the king granted his request.

Then they led him into the bridal chamber where the princess sat upon a throne of gold with the king's son beside her and his ring of beaten gold on her finger. And this time he feared not—but said, 'Princess, I have come this once to sing at thy bridal.' And he sang the farewell of the last fairy.

But the eyes of the princess filled with tears, and she would have thrown herself at his feet, had not the king's son clasped her in his arms. Even then she stretched her hand towards Kalim; and, as he kissed it, a tear fell from his eye on to the wedding ring, and directly it touched the gold it became a diamond, the most beautiful that ever was seen. But the king's son saw it, and whispered, 'That is the gift of my love to thine.' And Kalim passed away before they knew he had gone.

And he wandered into the forest, and at last reached the

old spot: the owlet was still in its nest, so he knew his work was done and laid down to rest.

And the princess married the king's son, and they ruled over both cities and lived happily for many years. Only whenever the thrushes sang in the springtime (for they came to that land after the singer was dead), and whenever she heard the river singing to the trees (for the stream from the old ruin grew into a mighty river and flowed throughout the country), she remembered the songs of the three days of her bridal, and thought, 'I would have married him—if he had been a king's son.'

But the owls said:

'He hath sung the three songs and hath wedded the king's daughter—for his life hath passed into hers.'

ONORIA'S OLD MAN.
BY MARY E. MANN.

SHE SMILED AT
HIM AS SHE TOOK
HER PLACE

ONORIA'S OLD MAN. By Mary E. Mann, Author of 'There was Once a Prince.'

'When he is forsaken,
Withered and shaken,
What can an old man do but die?'

IS it possible that one can touch the very soul of things with music and yet be soulless? Can an artist play upon the heart-strings of his hearers and be conscious only of the strings of his fiddle? While the music he evokes rises and falls, sighs and wails and weeps, unsealing the frozen waters, loosing the fountain of tears, tender as love's whisper in the dying ear, awful as the thunders of Sinai, is he privileged to hear only his own music, to see nothing but the notes before him, to care for nothing but the applause which follows? Can a man or woman be artist to the finger-tips and remain as insensible to the inner beauty as one born blind to the light of the sun?

I don't know. I have thought that these things are possible. All music-lovers to whom I have put the question have answered emphatically, No. I am not a musical person. I don't know. But I know Onoria Homfray.

Don't you agree with me that hers is a charming name? Onoria: Noria, as we all call her. Surely there is music in the sound. One seems to dwell on it lovingly.

The fashion in names has veered round. We have got back to the Annes, the Susans, the Betties of our grandmothers' day—the useful, homely names of homely, useful women—the names that wash, as it were. Yet all the same there is pleasure in taking such a name as Onoria's upon the lips; a

'Name that, like a pleasant thing,
Men's lips remember, murmuring.'

And she plays. They tell me she plays divinely. I am not musical—but I believe them. There is a fascination in her art even for me, the Philistine, the outsider.

I don't understand it; I can never talk to her of the

music she interprets. I mix up Chopin with Schubert and Mendelssohn. I ask her not to leave off, just to give us one of the songs without words—that lovely *Consolation*, for instance—and she laughs with scorn of me, and says she has just played it.

Yet because the speech is to me inarticulate, unfathomable, its effect is not the less powerful.

'That make you cry?' Onoria asks, laughing, and looks at me with her great brown eyes full of contemptuous wonder. 'Why, it is Grieg's *Norwegian Bridal Procession*. It is full of gaiety, of life, of "go." Did you think it was a funeral march, perhaps?'

I wipe away my tears ashamedly. 'Aren't there times and moods when gay music is more sorrowful than any dirge, Onoria? One can't disturb the dust of years and smile serenely. Don't you understand that there have been feet which have danced, perhaps to your "gay" measures, now stilled for ever? That once happy faces are scored to-day by rivulets of tears?'

What is the good of attempting to explain that to Onoria?

I am, however, only Noria's 'companion.' She does not concern herself much with the effect of her music on me. It was different, at first, with her Old Man.

For one thing, he was a man; and Noria believes that the sex, which I agree with her in thinking the stronger and superior, is also the more interesting. She has not seen quite so much of men and women as I have, and she may change her mind later. And if not, Noria's opinions do not matter much.

Her uncle performs the service at the Warrington Labour Home on Sunday afternoons, and Noria played the harmonium there. It was a splendid instrument of its kind or Noria would not have touched it. She could make it swell and roll like an organ, till the little chapel seemed to rock with sound, till you shook in your shoes and were afraid to look up because the music was like the frown of God made audible. She could make it speak till you could almost hear the

articulate words of divine promise and pardon. She could make it sing like the quiring of angels.

Noria—a bit of a girl of seventeen!

And on Noria's Old Man all this tumult of sound had a magical effect.

He was not so very old, not more than sixty, perhaps, but weakened and bent and shaken from some sufficient cause—God and he knew what. His legs trembled under him, and he walked with his shoulders bowed, but his face was still handsome, and his bearing was that of a gentleman. The fact was noticeable, because in that sad place were not many faces of refinement.

He sat close to the harmonium always, and his ears drank in the music, and his eyes dwelt upon Onoria's face.

It is not, to my thinking, a particularly pretty face, but it looks its best when she is playing, and I have certainly noticed that the afternoon sun falling on her hair from the window at her back turns the straying, outside threads of it to ruddy gold.

On other occasions it is brown hair, no better than other people's.

Of course, that enraptured attention did not escape Onoria; of course, she saw where the worship of the eyes was directed. She used to smile at him as she took her place, to smile again as he, with his poor brothers in misfortune, filed out. Soon, by watching, she grew to know the old man's favourite hymns and chants, and would hold up the music for him before laying it on the desk, that he might know what was in store.

And one cold, wet winter's day, there was a bunch of violets, surrounded with red-brown ivy leaves, lying on the harmonium.

Many times, while lessons and prayers were going on, she raised the flowers to her face; and when the service was over and the voluntary played, she found the old man lingering by her side.

'It was you who gave me the violets?' she said. 'Ought I to take them from you?'

For the poor souls who sheltered in the Labour Home were allowed sixpence a week, tobacco money; and Noria knew at that time of year the violets had cost him as much.

'It will make me very happy if you take them,' the old man said. His hollow-sounding voice had a tremble in it like his head and hands and legs, but it was the voice of a gentleman, unmistakably. 'I have to thank you for the happiness of my life,' he said. 'Its only happiness.'

'You are so fond of music?' Noria's face lit as it always lights when her talent meets with appreciation. 'If you could be in your place earlier, or stay a little later than the rest, I would play to you with pleasure,' said Noria.

And be sure he availed himself of that permission. He could not get to chapel before the rest, it seemed, but he lingered in his place till the others had departed; and when Noria and I were left alone, he crept out to a seat where, to the best advantage, he could hear and see; and Noria played upon his soul.

It was that she seemed to me to do.

I used to think his admiration extravagant, but Noria would not have complained of the most fulsome adulation. She was as greedy of it, as he of her music. And when her playing was done, she used to stop to hear what he had to say about it.

That he could appreciate her music, was about as far as her old man interested Onoria, I think. It was because I pestered her to do so, that she sometimes asked him for information about himself.

On that subject, he was not communicative. He had been rich and was poor, he said; and if he found the uses of adversity sweet, he did not tell us.

'Have you a wife?' Onoria asked him; and he answered that he had had a wife. He mentioned the fact with no softening of voice or eye; but after a pause, with another manner.

'I had a daughter,' he said.

I knew then why he looked at Noria with that hunger in his eyes; but Noria would never perceive it was for any sake

but her own, and it won't do for me to be always insisting on unwelcome truths.

'I only live for Sunday,' he once said. 'It is the thought of you and your music which keeps me alive.'

'Do you play yourself?' I asked him. They would have ignored me completely, if I had not brought myself before their notice now and then.

He shook his head without removing his eyes from Noria. 'I used to sing,' he said, then drew a breath and added slowly 'Not now—not now.'

He waited for a minute, quite silent, his head upon his breast—'She played,' he said dreamily. Then suddenly threw up his head and looked at me, with a colour in his waxen cheeks and the light of anger in his eyes:

'They took her away from me,' he said, with the echo of an almost forgotten fierceness in the voice. 'Her mother, and her mother's friends, took her away! The child would have saved me. She believed in me. She did not want to go—but they took her away! And I am what you see. No hope—no hope!'

I reminded him of the Psalms we had sung that day. 'Surely no man believing in a God, whose mercy is high as the heaven above the earth, can take those words upon his lips. The devils in hell might wail "no hope!" aloud for ever, but——'

But Noria crashed forth into the Hallelujah Chorus. Her old man preferred her music to my sermon, any day, she told me after.

'It is his daughter he sees in you. He says she could have saved him. Try if you can't do something in her place,' I urged.

And so, between the pauses of the music, Noria talked to him, or sometimes I talked, and he answered back as if it had been Noria who spoke. And always there was that weekly offering of flowers for which the few pence of pocket-money sufficed. Violets at first, then a few lilies of the valley. I used to count them with a jealous eye. Twopence a spray they were, at that time. The three sprays and their comple-

ment of leaves, represented his weekly tobacco-money, I knew. And Noria knew, because I told her.

'Isn't it sweet of him! My poor old man! He can but give me all he has,' she said.

Then a Maréchal Niel rose appeared, then carnations. Presently, as the summer came on, there was quite a bouquet for her to carry home after service. Sometimes she did not care to take the trouble, but would give them to the children in the streets—eager enough to possess such treasures, it is true.

By the time the flowers were plentiful, a change for the better was to be seen in Noria's old man. He shuffled less in his walk, and had lost some of the trembling in head and hands. In his eyes, together with that worship of Noria, was a faint light of pride and of rekindled self-respect. And because of his grey head and his gentlemanly bearing, and because of his uncomplaining submission to a sufficiently cruel fate, others besides Noria and her companion interested themselves in her old man.

The result we heard one Sunday when Noria had played him—it was an especial favourite of his—Chopin's Funeral March, and, having finished, had picked up her floral offering of clove-pinks interspersed with little delicate tinkling heads of the meadow-grass children call 'maidenhair,' and prepared to leave.

'When I hear that march, I think that I am a great man dead,' he said slowly. 'I can hear the tramp, tramp of the horses, and the tread of marching feet, and the shouts of a great crowd growing denser and denser as they bring me to my burial place. And then the welcome of the sweet singing voices, the divine words of forgiveness and compassion. Then the tramp of the retreating crowd—it dies away in the distance, and I am left to the peace that passes understanding.'

He sat in his accustomed attitude with folded hands, his head hanging upon his breast, but his eyes looking upward at Onoria, so that a bit of the yellowy-white showed beneath the blue iris. His iron-grey hair, which was thick and plentiful, was parted in the middle, and grew long enough to push

behind his ears, his iron-grey moustache drooped to his chin. His was a handsome and pathetic-looking figure.

Noria put out her hand in farewell.

'Something has happened,' he said. 'They have offered me a post with a salary. I could earn thirty shillings a week!'

'I congratulate you. I am delighted,' I cried.

He looked at Noria: 'I am not going away,' he said. 'It is in London. I will not go.'

I cried out upon his perversity, but he looked only at Noria: 'I will not go,' he said.

'Because of me? Of my music?' Noria asked, pleased and smiling.

He bowed his head: 'Because of you,' he said.

'But that,' I cried, 'is madness. If you refuse what is offered you, you cannot stop here; they will turn you out.'

'Then I will beg in the streets,' he said to Noria. 'I shall see you sometimes there.'

At that, I turned upon Noria: 'Why don't you tell him that you, too, are going away?' I asked. 'We also shall be in London after next week,' I told him. She is going to study at the Academy of Music. She will play only one more Sunday here.'

Afterwards she was pleased to read me a lecture on this unlucky speech: 'I don't want my old man in London,' she said. 'He is something to talk of and to laugh about here—there, he will get me laughed at.'

But Noria cannot be unkind to any one's face: 'My friend and I are to have rooms of our own,' she told him. 'You shall come to us of evenings, and we will have music—such grand music!'

He was to send us his London address before he left Warrington, and we, when we reached town, were to send him ours. Only his part of the compact was fulfilled.

Noria threw herself with enthusiasm into her studies, made new friends, found new admirers, worked steadily enough in working time—for she is extremely ambitious—in others, entered with zest into whatever distraction came her way.

One Saturday she came home to me, laughing in an irritated way, and in her hand was a great bunch of Gold of Ophir roses, which she flung across the table.

'Who do you suppose was waiting for me in Tenterden Street, with these in his hand?' she asked.

'Your old man,' I said quietly. 'He has found you out, I suppose.'

'A thorough old man of the sea, isn't he? It is fortunate that I was alone!'

'Did he reproach you with not keeping your promise to him?' I asked.

'Reproach me! I am more of an angel than ever. He has been dying to see me, he said—or that is what he meant, I suppose. Hungering and thirsting was what he called it—as if I were something to eat or drink.'

'He didn't inquire for me, of course?'

'Well, he didn't. I fancy he has forgotten you exist.' She sat down in the wicker-chair by the open window, and began thoughtfully to pull off her gloves. 'I wonder how I am to shunt him. He looks such a funny old man,' she said.

'He looks a gentleman, I am sure.'

'He wears a shabby old frock-coat, and such a hat! low-crowned, and a flat brim, you know—ironed, I am sure.'

'What do I care what he wears!'

She laughed again. 'And his trousers—you look instinctively to see them frayed at the boots—and they aren't, because he has mended them himself—quite evidently himself! And, look here!'

From her jacket-pocket she drew a tiny jeweller's box, and threw it over to me. Within was a cheap little gold brooch—just a bar of gold mounted on a pin.

'If he had had the means, he would have given me diamonds,' Noria explained.

'Meanwhile, he has half-starved himself for weeks to buy you this,' I said.

She warded off the jeweller's box with an outstretched palm when I would have returned it. 'Keep it, dear Sentiment,' she said. 'I make him, his jewellery, his flowers over

to you. Henceforth he is your old man. I can't any longer be bothered with him.'

However, in this she could not help herself, for each Saturday afternoon he waited for her as she left the Academy; and, whether she would or no, she had to walk through the streets at his side. She would not bring him to the street in which our flat was situated, but made some excuse to escape from him short of her destination.

And then she bethought herself to ask me also to come to meet her on these days.

I saw him walking up and down, up and down. The poor bowed head shook badly again, and I noticed the uncertain carriage of the legs. He recognised me with eagerness as I accosted him.

'I want to ask a favour of you,' he said. 'I want you always to accompany my dear child, here and back. I am only free on the Saturday afternoon, but I suffer agonies—agonies!—as I sit at my desk picturing her alone in the dangers of the streets. Each night when I go to bed I wonder if she is safely in hers, or in some hospital, it may be, knocked down, disfigured, and maimed—her sweet face, her clever fingers! The traffic is alarming, confusing even to me. Even I sometimes encounter rudeness from the passers-by.'

I told him that I would come if he wished it; I longed to add that Noria, in my opinion, was quite capable of taking care of herself.

'I want to hear about yourself,' I urged. 'You feel happier since your new start in life?'

He smiled sadly enough, without lifting his eyes from the ground: 'A new start!' he repeated. 'A man can't begin life over again at sixty. I keep on—oh, yes, I keep on—because the child is here and she wishes it.'

'Noria wishes you to stay in London, you mean?'

'Naturally. She has no father, dear child; and they took my daughter away from me.'

Presently he lifted his trembling head with a light in his blue eyes: 'I think she will be pleased to-day,' he said; 'I have been very fortunate—yes, I think she will be pleased—

I have had tickets given me for the Zoo to-morrow—two tickets. She and I can spend a long day there together. There is refreshment to be had, I believe—yes, quite a long day.'

Then we saw Noria coming towards us, and young Smollett was at her side.

'That your old man?'

I saw his lips form the words quite plainly. He scrutinised my companion with kind eyes as he came towards us. 'Poor old fellow!' I saw the lips say again. And when he had shaken hands with me he stopped to be introduced to the old man at my side, and raised his hat with much politeness, and said a few kind, respectful words, and went on his way. And because he did that Noria was angry; she liked to walk home from the Academy with young Smollett by her side.

So she accepted the flowers her old man offered her with less than her accustomed graciousness, and she responded somewhat sullenly to his talk.

'Keep him on your side,' she said to me. 'I can't hear what he says in the roar of the streets, and I don't want to hear.'

'Is she not pleased with me?' he asked me once, and his voice was indeed very low and far away, and the tremble was in it which shook his whole being. We were obliged to modify our pace to his, and the pavements were crowded, and Noria was cross.

True to her usual tactics she stopped at a house in the square before we reached our quarters.

'I have to call here,' she said; and, having got rid of him, smiled on her old man sweetly enough as she put out her hand.

And then he told her about the tickets for the Zoo.

'We can sit under the trees,' he said; 'and if thousands are there, you and I shall be alone.'

'Yes,' said Noria. She looked at me with her lips tight, and I knew that no power could drag Noria to the Zoo with her old man on the morrow.

She had arranged to meet him after church at the gate of Regent's Park, but he had thought of a better plan.

HE STOPPED TO
BE INTRODUCED

Looking up in the early part of the service at the sound of a shuffling footstep, I saw the old man being conveyed to a seat, among the poorer of the congregation, in the side aisle. By dodging the heads of my neighbours I could sometimes see his handsome waxen face, and always there was in the blue eyes that searched the building that hungry look which I knew was for Noria—Noria, singing happily behind a pillar, quite unconscious of his presence!

Coming out, she saw him and clutched my arm. 'There is my old horror!' she said. 'Nothing—nothing, do you hear?—will induce me to be seen walking with him to-day! As to going with him to the Zoo, wild horses would not drag me there. The Smolletts have asked me to lunch. I promised. You are going too.'

The Smolletts are friends of mine—not of Noria's—and I am always happy in their house. But to-day as we laughed and talked I thought all the time of that old man and his bitter awakening. He had been dressed with extra care that morning, his linen bright and stiff, his hair smoothly brushed, a little salmon-coloured rose in his button-hole. The rose was to have been transferred to Noria, I did not doubt, and as time went on I pictured it drooping, drooping in his coat. How long would it be before he understood?

The bright morning clouded over, and during the afternoon a heavy rain came on. His faith in her was so great, I knew that he was waiting still.

Noria was at the piano. I slipped away and took the 'bus down to Regent's Park.

He was at the appointed place, standing patiently in the rain which beat upon the old hat and soaked into the thin coat. As each female figure passed he looked eagerly beneath her umbrella. He would pace for a minute up and down the road, would reach the gate, and stand a patient sentinel again.

I touched him on the arm. 'You must go home,' I said. 'You are getting drenched. Noria is not coming.'

How the darkness settled down upon his face!

'She had a prior engagement which she had forgotten,' I

went on, and may I be forgiven the lie! 'She had to go out to lunch.'

He looked at me for long, then dropped his head: 'I see,' he said slowly, and repeated after a full minute of silence, 'I see.'

'You must go home,' I urged. 'Where is your home?'

'Home?' He repeated the word vaguely after me as if he had not understood.

'You are so wet.' I put my hand upon his sleeve.

He looked down upon his clothes: 'I could scarcely be wetter,' he admitted, and the fact, oddly enough, seemed to give him satisfaction.

'Come home with me and let me dry your clothes before you go to your own home.'

He shook his head. 'She wouldn't wish it,' he said; 'I think she would not wish it.' He looked down at the rose in his coat; it was broken on the stalk and hung only by a thread. 'Well! well!' he sighed, and brushed it away. Then looked at it stupidly as it lay on the ground at his feet.

Presently he glanced up at me with a gleam of unaccustomed keenness in his faded eyes: 'I suppose it was my hat,' he said; 'my hat and my shabby old coat.'

I should, perhaps, have lied again, but my heart was bitter against Noria and I would not speak.

He turned away and was entering the gates of the Park, but I went after him and again caught his arm. 'You will go home, dear old friend?' I said. 'Noria will write to you. On Saturday you will see her again. You will go home?'

'I will go in the Park first,' he said. 'I have—tickets for the Zoo. There are things to think about—many things.'

He looked back at me again when he had turned away. 'She was all I had,' he said, 'all I had! all I had!'

And so, muttering that phrase, turned away and shuffled out of my sight for ever.

It was young Smollett who brought the news to us the next afternoon as we were sitting over our tea.

'Your old man won't trouble you any more, Miss Noria,'

SHE WAS SILENT
AS IF A THOUGHT
STRUCK HER

he said, and I think there was a touch of scorn in his voice. 'He is dead.'

He put an opened newspaper in her hand and pointed to a certain paragraph.

He had gone home indeed.

Before he reached his wretched lodgings, wherever they were—and he had not apparently started for them till evening time, for it was in darkness that the accident had happened—he had been knocked down by a hansom and instantly killed. No blame attached to the driver, the paper said. He had done what he could, having a restive horse, to avert the misfortune. But the unfortunate man, being old and very feeble, had become confused, and so had apparently rushed upon his fate.

Noria cried bitterly.

'How unfeeling of you to come and give me the news like that!' she wept angrily to Smollett. 'You knew the whole story—and about yesterday, too, for I had told you. You might have broken it to me. She,' looking fiercely at me through her tears, 'has been giving me no peace—accusing me of breaking the old man's heart. And you—you come and tell me in this heartless—heartless way that he is dead!'

'He wouldn't have had me made so miserable,' she said presently, when she and I were alone again. 'He loved me better than any one else in the world. There is no one who admired me so entirely, and believed in me so utterly as he did! No one ever will again.'

'I think that more than likely, my dear,' I said.

She cried, off and on, for a long time: 'I shall never play to him again,' she said. 'And I always promised he should come to hear me play. Now, he will never hear me!'

She was silent as if a thought had struck her: 'Perhaps he will,' she said; 'we can't be sure about these things, can we?'

She opened the piano.

'The music he hears, and has always heard, is as high above yours as Heaven is above the earth,' I said to her. 'It is music that you couldn't even understand, Noria. I am not sure you ever will.'

She struck a low, heavy chord or two, cutting across my speech—the first solemn chords of the 'Funeral March' of Chopin.

Not for Onoria's old man the advancing tramp of horses, the march of the gathering crowd, the state and grandeur of the funeral *cortège*. Yet for him, let us hope, the quiring of angel voices, the song of Forgiveness and Forgetfulness, of the washing away of all sins and follies and regrets, of all wrongs and mistakes, and bitter, bitter disappointments. For him the healing of the wounded loves, the solace of the broken heart, the tears wiped away! For him the peace that is above all earthly dignities.

The sweetness and sadness of the heavenly song rose and fell, rose and fell as Noria played; and then came the sound again of the marching feet, receding, receding, dying away to the faintest murmur at last.

'I feel better,' Onoria said, as her hands fell softly from the keys. 'I think my old man heard.'

NELSON'S CHAMPION.[1] By Victor Plarr.

NINETY-THREE years gone by at least
Nelson's glory was thrilling our kind:
Out of the Baltic and out of the East
His name was blown upon every wind,

And many a home-bred English boy,
And many a home-bred English maid,
Heard his triumphs, and vowed with joy,
That now of old Boney they weren't afraid.

When the Portsmouth coach betrayed a gleam
Of a dark-blue sleeve or a golden star
The lads in the street would cry with a scream,
'There goes a thorough-bred British tar!

Huzzay for the men who have at France!
Down with the rubbishy Rights of Man!'
As they capered and shouted in rollicking dance
Both British and anti-Gallican.

The little middies on Nelson's ship,
Long ere the boys at home, went wild
For the hero they reverenced, heart and lip,
With the wonderful worship of the child.

Said Edward Chetham to Peter Brown,—
'Our Nelson is lord of all the sea;
I *know* he can knock *twelve* Frenchmen down!
A fig for their flag of the colours three!'

Now, Peter Brown was a peeking lad,
He came of a Whiggish stock; he frowned,
He argued, and ended in accents sad,
'Your Nelson's no hero, I'll be bound!'

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[1] The little-known anecdote of the great Nelson, on which these verses are founded, was told to the writer's mother by the late Admiral Sir Edward Chetham, Governor of Haslar, and one of the last of Nelson's 'Old Agamemnons,' as those who had served with him in the *Agamemnon* (1793-96) were proud to style themselves. According to Sir Edward's account, the mastheading took place in a bay on the coast of Jamaica, and his honourable wound kept him limping till the day he died.

Swiftly a boyish fist outflash'd :
  Brown stagger'd, a myriad of stars in his eyes,
Against the nettings he reel'd and crash'd,
  And the middies who watch'd look'd grave and wise.

'A duel,' said every one, nodding his head ;
  'That 's the only way out of it, Brown, my lad.'
So Chetham was challenged, and blithely said,
  'To fight for my hero I 'm proud and glad ! '

Up in the early West Indian dawn
  The two lads rose and put off to land ;
With grave young faces, white and drawn,
  They faced each other upon the sand.

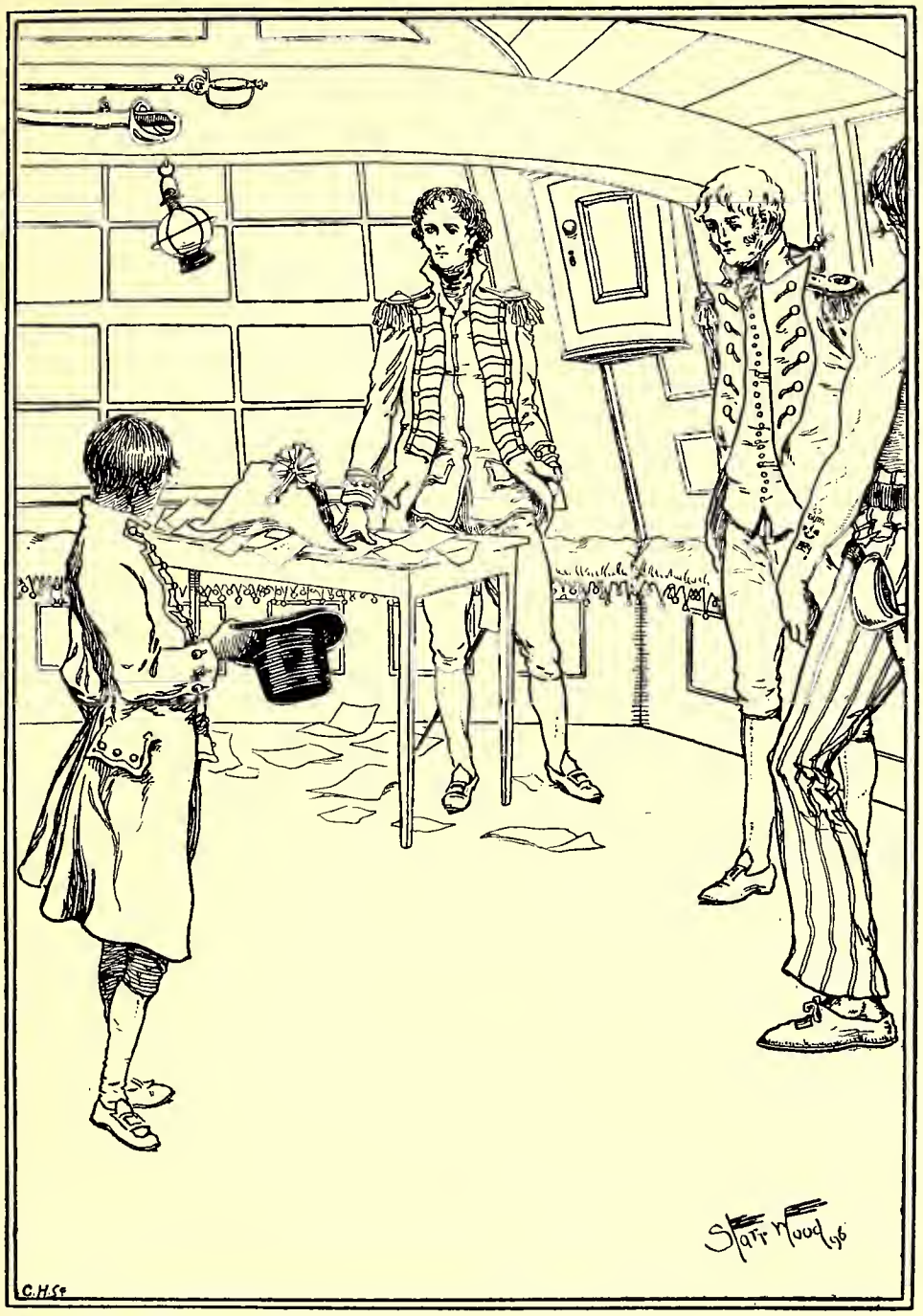
Loud bang'd the great horse-pistols, down
  Fell Nelson's champion—thank God, not dead ;
But the officer of the watch will frown
  At a boy with his stocking torn and red,

Row'd back to his ship at break of day ;
  And ere the wounded knee was dress'd
A sombre messenger came to say,
  'Midshipman Chetham is under arrest ! '

Later a terrible mandate came ;
  Nelson himself desired to see
The duellist—oh the pain and shame !—
  In his own state-cabin privately.

Did Chetham ever forget that hour—
  The sense of hollow and rank disgrace,
And Nelson's terrible look of power,
  And Nelson's beautiful classic face ?

In his well-loved state-room, carv'n and low,
  The captain sat by the windows wide,
And, seeing the culprit, he shouted 'Oh !
  'So this is my swaggering friend ? ' he cried.



MIDSHIPMAN CHETHAM
IS UNDER ARREST.'

Sternly he rated the lad and long,
  Grimly he spoke of the Navy's rules,
Of glorious discipline drown'd in wrong,
  Of slow promotion lost to fools.

Then after sombre, sudden pause :
  'Why did ye fight ?' The little mid,
Sobbing, made answer : 'Sir, because
  A fellow call'd you a coward, he did !'

Sterner than ever the great man sat :
  'Court-martial, sir, you cannot escape.
And sometimes it 's the masthead, but oftener the cat.
  Begone, sir ! Don't stand there and gape !'

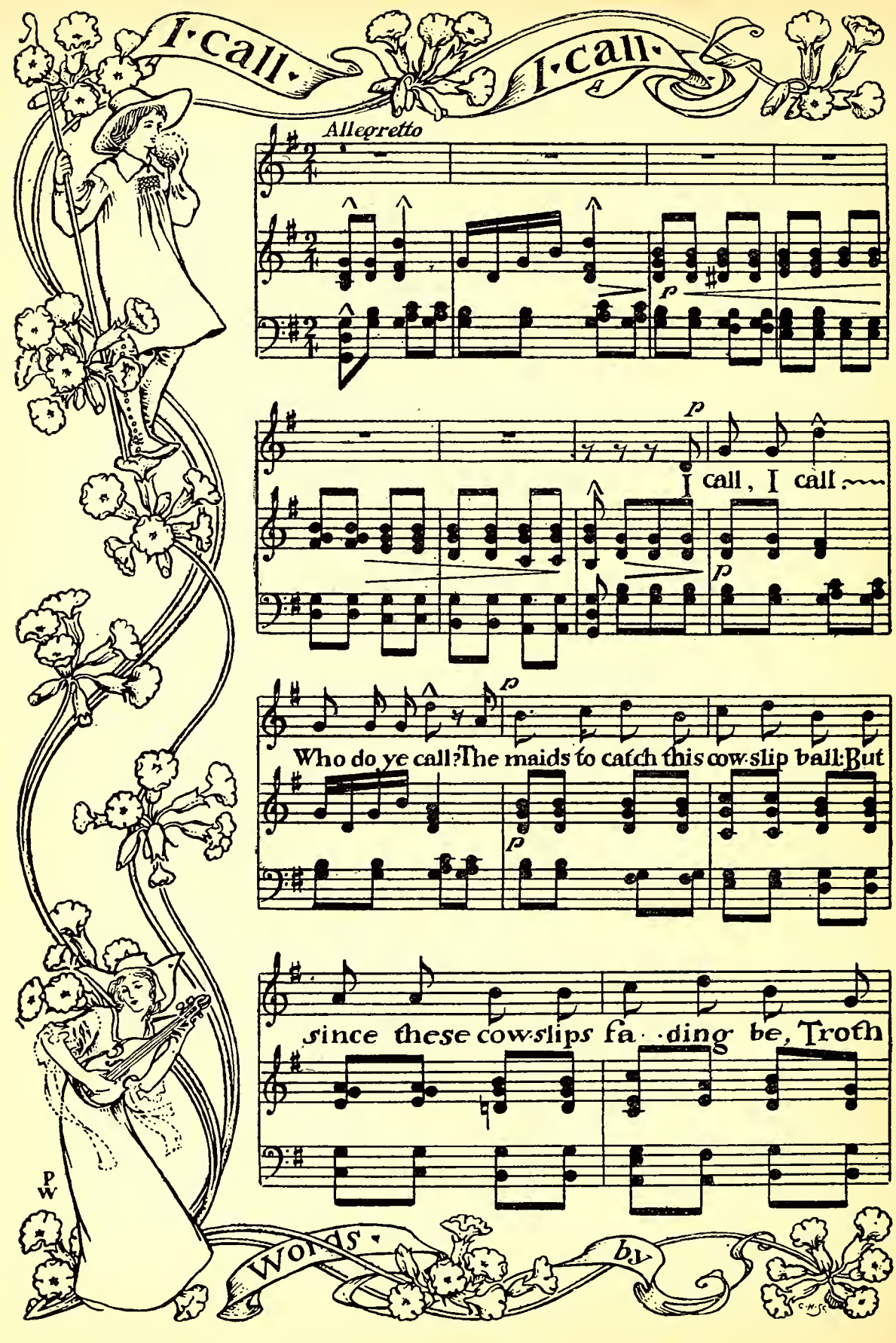
Limping the lad from the presence crept,
  Cow'd beyond measure, horribly shamed ;
But ere with a groan from the room he stepp'd,
  'Come back, sir !' a gentle voice exclaim'd ;

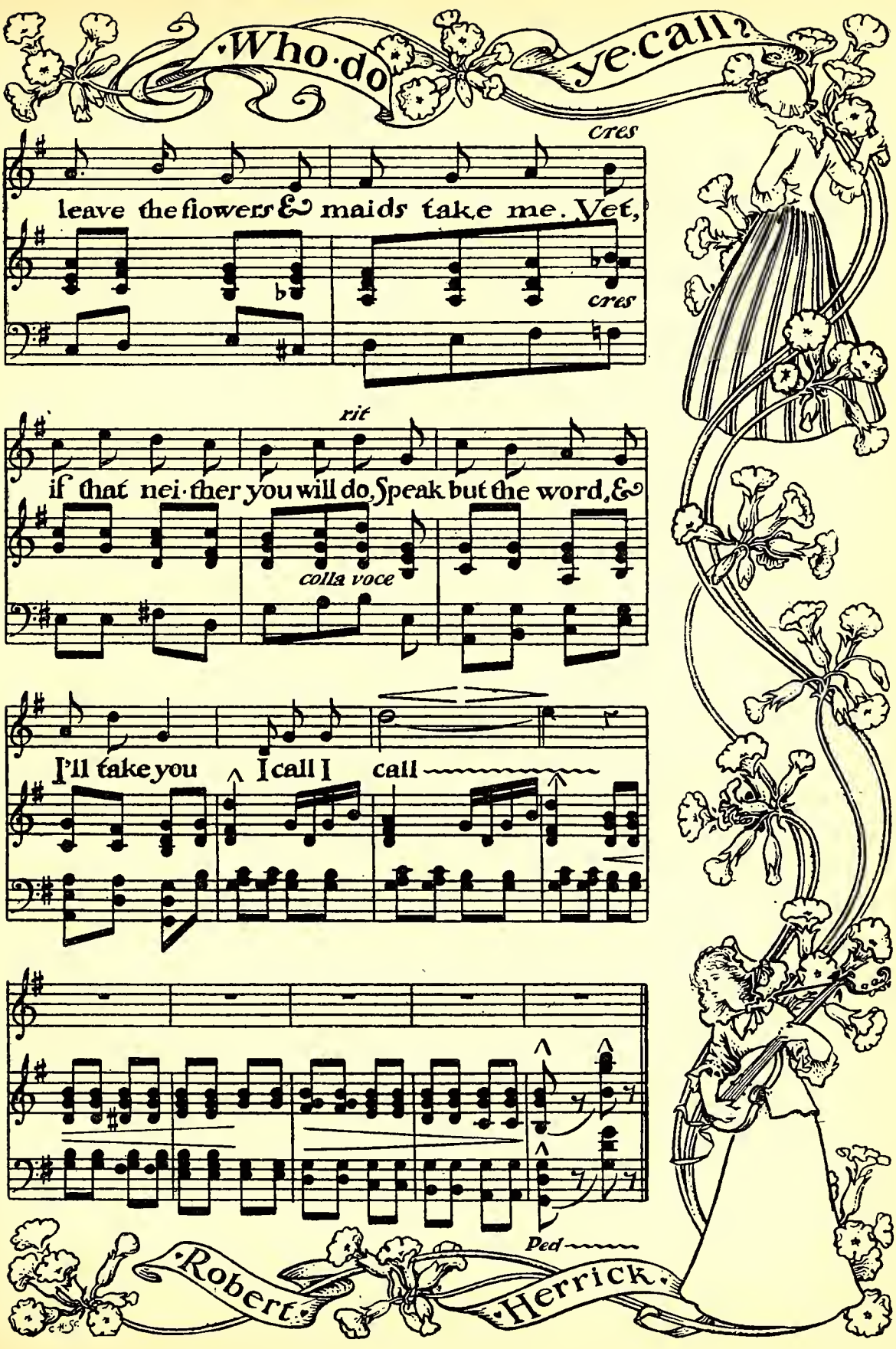
'I 've spoken to you as a captain must,'
  Great Nelson said with a courtly bend,
'Pray let me thank ye ; now, I trust,
  I shake your hand, sir, as a friend !'
. . . . . .

All through the night and the scorching noon,
  The white decks flaring underneath,
Fearing to sleep and fearing to swoon—
  For slumber or swoon meant headlong death—

The boy to the masthead fiercely clung
  Eighteen long hours, half mad with pain ;
But still through his reeling wits there rung
  Those kindlier words like a sweet refrain !

And when in the prosperous after years
  He told the story to folk on land,
The honest old eyes would fill with tears—
  He seem'd to be holding his Nelson's hand !


I call I call
Allegretto
I call, I call
Who do ye call? The maids to catch this cow-slip ball: But
since these cow-slips fa - ding be, Troth
P W
Words by


Who do ye call?
cres
leave the flowers & maids take me. Yet,
cres
rit
if that nei-ther you will do, Speak but the word, &
colla voce
I'll take you
I call I
call
Ped
Robert Herrick

THE ENCHANTED PRINCESS. By Laurence Housman.

I. THE FIRE-EATERS.

LONG time ago there lived a man who had the biggest head in the world. Into it was crammed all the knowledge that might be gathered from the four corners of the earth. Every one said he was the wisest man living. 'If I could only find a wife,' said the sage, 'as wise for a woman as I am for a man, what a race of head-pieces we could bring into the world!'

He waited many years before any such mate could be found for him: yet, at last, found she was—one into whose head was bestowed all the wisdom that might be gathered from the four quarters of heaven.

They were both old, but kings came from all sides to their wedding, and offered themselves as god-parents to the first-born of the new race that was to be. But, to the grief of his parents, the child, when he arrived, proved to be a simpleton; and no second child ever came to repair the mistake of the first.

That he was a simpleton was evident; his head was small and his limbs were large, and he could run long before he could talk or do arithmetic. In the bitterness of their hearts his father and mother named him Noodle, without the aid of any royal god-parents; and from that moment, for any care they took in his bringing-up, they washed their wise hands of him.

Noodle grew and prospered, and enjoyed life in his own foolish way. When his father and mother died within a short time of each other, they left him alone without any friend in the world.

For a good while Noodle lived on just what he could find in the house, in a hand-to-mouth sort of way, till at last only the furniture and the four bare walls were left to him.

One cold winter's night he sat brooding over the fire, wondering where he should get food for the morrow, when

he heard feet coming up to the door, and a knock striking low down upon the panel. Outside there was a faint chirping and crackling sound, and a whispering as of fire licking against the wood-work without.

He opened the door and peered forth into the night. There, just before him, stood seven little men huddled up together, four feet high all of them, with bright yellow faces all shrivelled and sharp, and eyes whose light leaped and sank like candle flame before a gust.

When they saw him, they shut their eyes and opened famished mouths at him, pointing inwards with flickering finger-tips, and shivering from head to foot with cold, although it seemed to the youth as if the warmth of a slow fire came from them. 'Alas!' said Noodle, in reply to these signs of hunger, 'I have not left even a crust of bread in the house to give you! But at least come in and make yourselves warm!' He touched the foremost, making signs for them all to enter. 'Ah,' he cried, 'what is this, and what are you? for the mere touch of you burns my finger'

Without answer they huddled tremblingly across the threshold, but so soon as they saw the fire burning on the hearth, they yelped altogether like a pack of hounds, and, throwing themselves face forwards into the hot embers, began ravenously lapping up the flames. They lapped and lapped, and the more they lapped the more the fire sank away and died. Then with their flickering finger-tips they stirred the hot logs and coals, burrowing after the thin tapes and swirls of vanishing flame, and fetching them out like small blue snakes still wriggling for escape.

After each blue wisp had been gulped down, they sipped and sucked at their fingers for any least tricklet of flavour that might be left; and at the last seemed more famished than when they began.

'More, more, O wise Noodle, give us more!' they cried; and Noodle threw the last of his fuel on the fire.

They breathed round it, fanning it into a great blaze that leaped and danced up to the rafters: then they fell on, till not a fleck or a flake of it was left. Noodle, seeing them still

famished, broke up a stool and threw that on the hearth. Again they flared it with their breath and gobbled off the flame. When the stool was finished he threw in the table, then the dresser, and after that the oak-chest and the window-seat.

Still they feasted and were not fed. Noodle fetched an axe, and broke down the door; then he wrenched up the boards from the floor, and pulled the beams and rafters out of the ceiling; yet, even so, his guests were not to be satisfied.

'I have nothing left,' he said, 'but the house itself; but since you are still hungry you shall be welcome to it!'

He scattered the fire that remained upon the hearth, and threw it out and about the room: and, as he ran forth to escape, up against all the walls and right through the roof rose a great crackling sheaf of flame. In the midst of the fire, Noodle could see his seven guests lying along on their bellies, slopping their hands in the heat, and lapping up the flames with their tongues. 'Surely,' he thought, 'I have given them enough to eat at last!'

After a while all the fire was eaten away, and only the black and smouldering ruins were left. Day came coldly to light, and there sat Noodle, without a home in the world, watching with considerate eye his seven guests finishing their inordinate repast.

They all rose to their feet together, and came towards him bowing: as they approached he felt the heat of their bodies as it had been seven furnaces.

'Enough, O wise Noodle!' said they, 'we have had enough.' 'That,' answered Noodle, 'is the least thing left me to wonder at. Go your ways in peace; but first tell me, who are you?' They replied, 'We are the Fire-eaters: far from our own land, and strangers, you have done us this service; what shall we do to serve you?' 'Put me in the way of a living,' said Noodle, 'and you will do me the greatest service you can.'

Then the one of them who seemed to be chief took from his finger a ring having for its centre a great firestone, and threw it into the snow, saying, 'Wait for three hours till the ring shall have had time to cool, then take it, and wear it;

NOODLE AND
THE FIRE-EATERS

and whatever fortune you deserve it shall bring you. For this ring is the sweetener of everything that it touches: bread it turns into rich meats, water into strong wine, grief into virtue, and labour into strength. Also, if you ever need our help, you have but to brandish the ring, and the gleam of it will reach us, and we will be with you wherever you may be.'

With that they bowed their turbans to the ground and departed, inverting themselves swiftly till only the shining print of seven pairs of feet remained, red-hot, over the place where they had been standing.

Noodle waited for three hours; then he took up the fire-stone ring, and putting it on his finger set out into the world.

At the first door he came to, he begged a crust of bread, and touching it with the ring found it tasted like rich meats, well cooked and delicately flavoured. Also, the water which he drew in the hollow of his hand from a brook by the road-side tasted to him like strong wine.

II. THE GALLOPING PLOUGH

HE went along and along till he came near to a rich man's farm. Though it was the middle of winter, all the fields showed crops of corn in progress; here it was in thin blade, and here green, but in full ear; and here it was ripe and ready for harvest. 'How is this,' he said to the first man he met, 'that you have corn here in the middle of winter?' 'Ah!' said the man, 'you have not heard of the Galloping Plough; you too have to fall under bondage to my master.' 'What is your master?' inquired Noodle, 'and in what bondage does he bind man?' 'My master and your master that shall soon be,' answered the old man, 'is the owner of all this land and the farmer of it. He is rich and sleek and fat like his own furrows, for he has the Galloping Plough as his possession. Ah, that! 'tis a very miracle, a wonder, a thing to catch at the heartstrings of all beholders: it shines like a moonbeam, and is better than an Arab mare for swiftness: it warms the very ground that it enters, so that seeds take root and spring, though it be the middle of winter. No man sees it but what he loses his heart to it, and sells his freedom for the possession of it. All here are men like myself who have become slaves because of that desire. You also, when you see it, will become slave to it.'

Noodle went on through the summer and the spring corn, till he came to bare fields. Ahead of him on a hill-top he saw the farmer himself, sleek and rosy, and of full paunch, lolling like a lord at his ease, yet with a working eye in the midst of his leisure.

To and fro, up to him and back, shot a silver gleam over the purple brown of the fields; and Noodle's heart gave a thump at the sight, for the spell of the Galloping Plough was on him.

Now and then he heard a clear sound that startled him with its note. It was like the sweet whistling cry of a bird many times multiplied. Ever when the silver gleam of the Plough had run its farthest from the farmer, the cry sounded;

and at the sound the gleam wavered and stayed and flew back dartingly to the farmer's side. So Noodle understood how this was the farmer's signal for the Plough to return; and the Plough knew it as a horse its master's voice, and came so fast that the wind whistled against its silver side.

As he watched, Noodle's heart went down into the valley and up the hillside, following in the track of the Galloping Plough. 'I can never be happy again,' thought he, 'either I must possess it, or must die.'

He came to the farmer where he sat calling his Plough to him and letting it go: and the farmer smiled, the wide indulgent smile of a man who knows that a bargain is about to fall his way.

'What is the price,' asked Noodle, 'of yonder Galloping Plough, that runs like an Arab mare, and returns to you at your call?'

Said the farmer, 'A year's service; and if the Plough will follow you, it is yours; if not, then you must be my bondman until you die!'

Noodle looked once the way of the Galloping Plough, and his heart flapped at his side like a sail which the wind drops and lets go; and he had no thought or will left in him but to be where the Galloping Plough was. So he closed hands on the bargain, to be the farmer's servant either for a year, or for his whole life.

For a year he worked upon the farm, and all the while plotted how he might win the Galloping Plough to himself. The farmer kept no watch upon it, nor put it under lock and key, for the Plough recognised no voice but his own, nor went, nor came, save at his bidding. In the night Noodle would go down to the shed or field where it lay, and whistle to it, trying to put forth notes of the same magical power as those which came through the farmer's lips.

But no sound that came from his lips ever stroked life into its silver sides. The year was nearly run out, and Noodle was in despair.

Then he remembered the firestone ring, the Sweetener.

'May be,' said he, 'since it changes and sweetens whatever I eat and drink, it will sweeten my voice also, so that the Plough will obey.' So he put the ring between his lips and whistled; and at the sound his heart turned a somersault for joy, for he felt that out of his mouth the farmer's magic had been over-topped and conquered.

The Galloping Plough stirred faintly from the furrow where it lay, breaking the ground and marring its smooth course. Then it shook its head slowly, and returned impassively to rest.

In the morning the farmer came and saw the broken earth close under the Plough's nose. Noodle, hiding among the corn hard by, heard him say, 'What hast thou heard in the night, O my moonbeam, my miracle, that thy lily-foot has trodden up the ground? Hast thou forgotten whose hand feeds thee, whose corn it is thou lovest, whose heart's care also cherishes thee?'

The farmer went away, and presently came back bearing a bowl of corn; and Noodle saw the Plough lift its head to its master's palm, and feed like a horse on the grain.

Then Noodle, glad at heart, waited till it was night, and surely his time was short, for on the morrow his wages were to be paid, and the Plough was to be his, or else he was to be the Farmer's bond-servant for the rest of his life. He took with him three handfuls of corn, and went down to where the Plough stood waiting in the furrow. Shaping his lips to the ring, he whistled gently like a lover, and immediately the Plough stirred, and lifted up its head as if to look at him.

'O my moonbeam, my miracle,' whispered Noodle, 'wilt thou not come to the one that feeds thee?' and he held out a handful of corn. But the Plough gave no regard to him or his grain: slowly it moved away from him back into the furrow.

Then Noodle laughed softly and dropped his ring, the Sweetener, into the hand that held the grain: and barely had he offered the corn before he felt the silver Plough nozzling at his palm, and eating as a horse eats from the hand of its master.

Then he whistled again, placing the Sweetener back between his lips; and the Galloping Plough sprang after him, and followed at his heels like a dog.

So, finding himself its master, he bid it stay for the night; and in the morning he said to the Farmer, 'Give me my wages, and let me go!' And the Farmer laughed, saying, 'Take your wages, and go!'

Then Noodle took off his ring, the Sweetener, and laid it between his lips and blew through it; and up like a moonbeam, and like an Arab mare, sprang the Galloping Plough at his call. So he leaped upon its back, crying, 'Carry me away out of this land, O thou moonbeam, and miracle of beauty, and never slacken nor stay except I bid thee!'

Vainly the farmer, borne down on a torrent of rage and amazement, whistled his best, and threw corn and rice from the rear; for the whistling of Noodle was sweeter to the ear, and his corn sweeter to the taste, and he nearer to the heart of the Galloping Plough than was the old master whom it left behind.

III. THE THIRSTY WELL

SO they escaped, slitting the swift hours with ungovernable speed. The furrow they two made in the world that day, as they went shooting over the round of it, was called in after times the Equator, and men still know it by the heat of it, though it has since been covered over by the dust of time.

To Noodle, as he went careering round it, the whole world's circuit ran in a line across his brain, entering his vision and passing through it as a thread through the needle's eye. Nor would he of his own will ever have stopped his galloping, but that at the completion of the first round a mighty thirst took hold of him. 'O my moonbeam,' he said, choking behind parched lips, and sick at heart, 'check me, or I faint!' And the Galloping Plough stopped at once, and set him to earth in a green space under the shadow of overhanging boughs.

He found himself in a richly grown garden, a cool paradise for a traveller to rest in. Close at hand and inviting to the eye was a well with a bucket slung ready to be let down. Noodle had little thought of seeking for the owner of the garden to beg for a drink, since water is an equal gift to all and the right of any man: but as he drew near he found the means to it withheld from him, the lid being fast locked. He went on in search of the owner, till at length he came upon the same lying half asleep under a thorn-bush with the key in her hand. She was an old woman, so withered and dry, she looked as if no water could ever have passed her lips.

When Noodle asked for a drink from the well, she looked at him bright and sharp, and said: 'Before any man drinks of my water he must make a bargain with me.' 'What is the bargain?' asked Noodle; and she led him down to the well.

Then she unlocked the lid and bade him look in; and at the sight Noodle knew for a second time that his heart had been stolen from him, and that to be happy he must taste that water or die.

Again he asked, with his eyes intent upon the blue

wrimpling of the water in the well's depth, 'What is the bargain?' And the old woman answered 'If you fail to draw water out of the well you must fling yourself into it.' For answer Noodle swung down the bucket, lowering it as fast as it would go: then he set both hands to the windlass and wound.

He heard the water splashing off the sides of the bucket all the way up, as the shortening rope brought it near; but when he drew it over the well's brink wonder and grief held him fast, for the bucket was as empty as vanity. From behind him came a noise of laughter, and there was the old witch running round and round in a circle; and everywhere a hedge of thorns came shooting up to enclose him and keep him fast for her.

'What a trap I am in!' thought Noodle; but once more he lowered the bucket, and once more it returned to him empty.

The old woman climbed up into the thorn hedge, and sat on its top, singing:

> 'Overground, underground, round-about spell;
> The Thirsty has come to the Thirsty Well!'

Again Noodle let down the bucket; and this time as he drew it up he looked over into the well's heart, and saw all the way up the side a hundred blue arms reaching out crystal scallops and drawing water out of the bucket as hard as they could go. He saw thick lips like sea-anemones thrust out between the crevices of the wall, sucking the crystals dry as fast as they were filled. 'Truly,' he said to himself, 'this is a thirsty well, but myself am thirstier!'

When he had drawn up the bucket empty for the third time, he stood considering: and at last he put into it the fire-stone ring, the Sweetener, and lowered it once more. Then he laughed to himself as he drew up, and felt the bucket lightening at every turn till it touched the surface of things.

Empty he found it, with only the ring lying dry at the bottom, and once again he let it down to be refilled. But this time as he wound up, nothing could keep him from letting a curious eye go over the brink, to see how the well-folks fared

over their wine; and in what he beheld there was already comfort for his mind.

The blue arms went like oars out of unison; like carpet-beaters stricken in the eyes and throat with dust, they beat foolishly against the sides and bottom of the bucket, shattering and letting fall their goblets in each unruly attempt. And because Noodle wound leniently at the rope, willing that they should have their fill, at the last gasp they were able to send the bucket empty to the top. It was the last staving off of destiny that lay in their power to make; thereafter wine conquered them.

Quickly Noodle drew out the ring, and sent the bucket flying on its last errand. It smacked the water, heeled over, and dipped under a full draught. Then Noodle spun the windlass with the full pinch of his energies, calling on the bucket to ascend. He heard the water spilling from its sides, and knew that the blue arms were there, battling to arrest it as it flew, and to pay him back once more with emptiness and mockery. Yet in spite of them the bucket hasted and lightened not, but was drawn up to the well's head brimming largely, and winking a blue eye joyously to the light of day.

Over head and ears Noodle plunged for the quenching of his thirst, nor stayed nor drew back till his head had smitten upon the bottom of the bucket in his pursuit of the draught. Then it was apparent that only a third of the water remained, the rest having obeyed the imperative suction of his throat, and that the thirsty well had at last found a master under the eye of heaven.

In the depth of the bucket the water flashed like a burning sapphire and swung circling, curling and coiling, tossing this way and that as if struggling to get out. At last with a laugh it threw down the bucket, and tore back into the well with a crash like thunder.

Up from the well rose a chant of voices:

'Under Heaven, over Hell,
You have broken the spell,
You are lord of the Well.'

Noodle stepped over the brink of his new realm, calling on the well-folk to reach hands for him and bear him down. All round, the blue arms started out, catching him and handing him on from one to another ladderwise, down, and down, and down. As he went, anemone lips came out of the crannies in the wall, and kissed his feet and hands in token of allegiance. 'You are lord of the well!' they said, as they passed him each one to the next.

He came to the bottom of the well: under his feet, wherever he stepped upon its waters, hands came up and sustained him. The knowledge of everything that was there had become his. 'Give me,' he said, 'the crystal cup that is for him who holds kingship over you; so shall I be lord of you in all places wherever I go.'

A blue arm reached down and drew up from the water a small crystal, that burned through the darkness with a blue fire, and gave it to Noodle. 'Now I am your king, however far from you!' said Noodle. And they answered, chanting:

'Under Heaven, over Hell,
You have broken the spell,
You are lord of the Well.'

'Lift me up!' said he: and the blue arms caught him and lifted him up; from one to another they passed him in ascending circles, till he came to the mouth of the well.

There overhead was the old witch, crouching and looking in to know what had become of him; and her hair hung far down over her eyes into the well. He caught her to him by it over the brink. 'Old witch,' he said, 'you must change places with me now!' and he tossed her down to the bottom of the well.

She went like a falling shuttlecock, shrieking as she fell; and as she struck the water, the drowned bodies of the men she had sent there came to the surface, and caught her by the feet and hair, and drew her down, making an end of her, as she also had made of them.

IV. THE PRINCESS MELILOT

THEN Noodle, carrying the crystal with him, set foot once more upon dry land; and straightway he was again on the back of the Galloping Plough, with the world flying away under him. But now weariness came upon him, and his head weighed this way and that, so that earth and sky mixed themselves before his gaze, and he was so drugged with sleep that he had no wits to bid the Plough slacken from its speed. Therefore it happened that as they passed a wood, a hanging bough caught him, and brushed him like a feather from his place, landing him on a green bosom of grass, where he slept the sleep of the weary, nor ever lifted his head to see the Plough fast disappearing over hill and plain and valley, out of sound of his voice or sight of his eye.

When Noodle awoke and found that the Plough was gone, he was bitter against himself for his folly. 'So poor a use to make of so noble a steed!' he cried: 'no wonder it has gone from me to seek for a worthier master! If by the help of fortune I find it again, I will do great things by its aid, and be worthy of its service.' So he set out, following the furrow of its course, determined, however far he must seek, to journey on till he found it.

For a whole year he travelled, till at length he came, foot-sore and weary, to a deserted palace standing in the midst of an overgrown garden. The great gates, which lay wide open, were overrun with creepers, and the paths were green with weeds. That morning he had thought that he saw far away on the hills the gleam of his silver Plough, and now hope rose high, for he could see by its track that the Plough had passed before him into the garden of the palace. 'O my moon-beam,' he thought, 'is it here I shall find you at last?'

Within the garden there was a sound of cross questions and crooked answers, of many talking with loud voices, and of one weeping apart from the rest. When he got quite close, he was struck still with awe, and joy, and wonder. For first there lay the Galloping Plough in the middle of a green lawn,

and round it a score of serving men, tugging at it and trying to make it move on. Near by stood an old woman, wringing her hands and begging them to leave it alone: 'For,' cried she, 'if the plough touches but the feet of the Princess, she will be uprooted, and will presently wither away and die. Of what use is it to break one, if the other enchantments cannot be broken?'

In the centre of the lawn grew a bower of roses, and beneath the bower stood the loveliest princess that ever eye beheld; but she stood there motionless, and without sign of life. She seemed neither to hear, nor see, nor breathe: her feet were rooted to the ground; though they seemed only to rest lightly under her weight upon the grass, no man, nor a hundred men, could stir her from where she stood. And, as the spell that held her fast bound to the spot, even so was the spell that sealed her senses,—no man might lift it from her. When Noodle set eyes upon her he knew that for the third time his heart had been stolen from him, and that to be happy he must possess her, or die.

He ran quickly to the old woman who, unregarded by the serving men, stood weeping and wringing her hands. 'Tell me,' said Noodle, 'who is this sleeper who stands enchanted and rooted like a flower to earth? And who are you, and these others who work and cry at cross purposes?'

The old woman cried from a wide mouth: 'It is my mistress, the honey-jewel of my heart, whom you see here so grievously enchanted. All the gifts of the fairies at her christening did not prevent what was foretold of her at her birth. In her seventeenth year, as you see her now, so it was told of her that she should be.'

'Does she live?' asked Noodle; 'is she asleep? She is not dead: will she wake? Tell me, old woman, her history, and how this fate has come upon her.'

'She was the daughter of the king of this country by his first wife,' said the old woman, 'and heir to the throne after his death: but when her mother died the king married again; and the three daughters he had by his second wife were jealous of the beauty, and charm, and goodness which raised

their sister so high above them in the estimation of all men. So they asked their mother to teach them a spell that should rob Melilot of her charms, and make them useless in the eyes of men. And their mother, who was wise in such arts, taught to each of them a spell, so that together they might work their will.

'One day they came running to Melilot, and said, "Come and play with us a new game that our mother has taught us!" Then they began turning themselves into flowers; "I will be a hollyhock!" said one. "And I will be a columbine!" said another; and saying the spell over each other they became each the flower they had named.

'Then they unloosed the spells, and became themselves again. "O, it is so nice to be a flower!" they cried, laughing and clapping their hands. But Melilot knew no spell.

'At last, seeing how her sisters turned into flowers, and came back safe again, "I will be a rose!" she cried, "turn me into a rose and out again!"

Then her three sisters joined their tongues together, and finished the spell over her. And so soon as she had become a rose tree, the three sisters turned into three moles, and went down under the earth and gnawed at the roots.

'Then they came up, and took their own forms again, and sang:

'"Sister, sister, here you are now,
Till the ploughman come with the Galloping Plough!"

'Then they turned into bees, and sucked out the honey from the roses, and coming to themselves again they sang:

'"Sister, here you must doze and doze,
Till they bring you a flower of the Burning Rose!"

'Then they shook the dewdrops out of her eyes, crying:

'"Sister, your brain lies under our spell,
Till water be brought from the Thirsty Well!"

'Then they took the top blossom of all, and broke it to pieces, and threw the petals away as they cried:

'"Sister, your life goes down for a term,
Till they bring you breath from the Camphor-Worm!"

'And when they had done all this, they turned her back into her true shape, and left her standing even as you see her now, without warmth, or sight, or memory, or motion, dead saving for her beauty that never changes or dies. And here she must stand till the spells which have been fastened upon her have been unloosed. No long time after, the wickedness of the three sisters and of their cruel mother was discovered to the king, and they were all put to death for the crime. Yet the ill they had done remained; and the king's grief became so great to see his loved daughter standing dead before him that he removed with his court to another place, and left this palace to the care of only a few serving-men, and myself to keep watch and guard over the Princess.

'And now four-fold is the spell that holds her: and to break the lightest of them the water of the Thirsty Well is needed; with two of its drops laid upon her eyes memory will come back to her, and her mind will remember of the things of the past. And for the breaking of the second spell is needed a blossom of the Burning Rose, and the plucking of that no man's hand can achieve; but when the Rose is laid upon her breast, her heart will belong to the world once more, and will beat again under her bosom. And for the breaking of the third spell one must bring the breath of the Camphor-Worm that has lain for a whole year inside its body, and breathe it between her lips; then she will breathe again, and all her five senses will return to her. And for the last spell only the Galloping Plough can uproot her back to life, and free her feet for the ways of earth. Now, here we have the Galloping Plough with no man who can guide it, and what aid can it be? If these fools should be able to make it so much as but touch the feet of my dear mistress, she will be mown down like grass, and die presently for lack of earth; for only the three other charms I have told you of can put whole life back into her.'

'As for the mastery of the Plough,' said Noodle, 'I will fetch that from them in a breath. See, in a moment, how marvellous will be the uplifting of their eyes!' He put to his lips the firestone ring—the Sweetener—and blew but one note

through it. Then in a moment the crowd divided hither and thither, with cries of wonder and alarm, for the Plough turned and bounded back to its master quickly, as an Arab mare at the call of her owner.

The old woman, weeping for gladness, cried: 'Thou art master of the Plough! art thou master of all the other things as well?'

He said: 'Of one thing only. Tell me of the Burning Rose and the Camphor-Worm; what and where are they? For I am the master of the ends of the earth by reason of the speed with which this carries me; and I am lord of the Thirsty Well, and have the Fire-eaters for my friends.'

The old woman clapped her hands, and blessed him for his youth, and his wisdom, and his courage. 'First,' she said, 'restore to the Princess her memory by means of the water of the Thirsty Well; then I will show you the way to the Burning Rose, for the easier thing must be done first.'

Then Noodle drew out the crystal and breathed in it, calling on the Well-folk for the two drops of water to lay on Princess Melilot's eyes. Immediately in the bottom of the cup appeared two blue drops of water, that came climbing up the sides of the glass and stood trembling together on the brim. And Noodle, touching them with the firestone ring to make the memory of things sweet to her, bent back the Princess's face, and let them fall under her closed lids.

'Look!' cried the old nurse, 'light trembles within those eyes of hers! In there she begins to remember things; but as yet she sees and hears nothing. Now it is for you to be swift and fetch her the blossom of the Burning Rose. Be wise, and you shall not fail!'

NOODLE RESTORES
MEMORY TO MELILOT

V. THE BURNING ROSE

SHE told him how he was to go, across the desert southward, till he found a giant, longer in length than a day's journey, lying asleep upon the sand. Over his head, she told him, hung a cloud, covering him from the heat and resting itself against his brows; within the cloud was a dream, and within the dream grew the garden of the Burning Rose. Than this she knew no more, nor by what means Noodle might gain entrance and become possessor of the Rose.

Noodle waited for no more; he mounted upon the Galloping Plough, and pressed away over the desert to the south. For three days he travelled through parched places, refreshing himself by the way with the water of the Thirsty Well, calling on the Well-folk for the replenishment of his crystal, and turning the draught to wine by the sweetness of his magic ring.

At length he saw a cloud rising to him from a distance; like a great opal it hung motionless between earth and heaven. Coming nearer he saw the giant himself stretched out for a day's journey across the sand. His head lay under the colours of the dawn, and his feet were covered with the dusk of evening, and over his middle shone the noonday sun.

Under the giant's shadow Noodle stopped, and gazed up into the cloud; through the outer covering of its mists he saw what seemed to be balls of fire, and knew that within lay the dream and the garden of the Burning Rose.

The giant laughed and muttered in his sleep, for the dream was sweet to him. 'O Rose,' he said, 'O sweet Rose, what end is there of thy sweetness? How innumerable is the dance of the Roses of my Rose-garden!'

Noodle caught hold of the ropes of the giant's hair, and climbed till he sat within the hollow of his right ear. Then he put to his lips the ring, the Sweetener, and sang till the giant heard him in his sleep; and the sweet singing mixed itself with the sweetness of the Rose in the giant's brain, and he muttered to himself, saying: 'O bee, O sweet bee, O bee

in my brain, what honey wilt thou fetch for me out of the Roses of my Rose-garden?'

So, more and more, Noodle sweetened himself to the giant, till the giant passed him into his brain, and into the heart of the dream, even into the garden of the Burning Rose.

Far down below the folds of the cloud, Noodle remembered that the Galloping Plough lay waiting a call from him. 'When I have stolen the Rose,' thought he, 'I may need swift heels for my flight.' And he put the Sweetener to his lips and whistled the Plough up to him.

It came, cleaving the encirclement of clouds like a silver gleam of moonlight, and for a moment, where they parted, Noodle saw a rift of blue sky, and the light of the outer world clear through their midst.

The giant turned uneasily in his sleep, and the garden of the Burning Rose rocked to its foundations as the edge of things real pierced into it.

'While I stay here there is danger,' thought Noodle. 'Surely I must make haste to possess myself of the Rose and to escape!'

All round him was a garden set thick with rose-trees in myriads of blossom, rose behind rose as far as the eye could reach, and the fragrance of them lay like a heavy curtain of sleep upon the senses. Noodle, beginning to feel drowsy, stretched out his hand in haste to the nearest flower, lest in a little while he should be no more than a part of the giant's dream. 'O beloved Heart of Melilot!' he cried, and crushed his fingers upon the stem.

The whole bough crackled and sprang away at his touch; the rose turned upon him, screaming and spouting fire; a noise like thunder filled all the air. Every rose in the garden turned and spat flame at where he stood. His face and his hands became blistered with the heat.

Leaping upon the back of his Plough, he cried, 'Carry me to the borders of the garden where there are open spaces! The price of the Princess is upon my head!'

The Plough bounded this way and that searching for some outlet by which to escape. It flew in spirals and circles, it

leaped like a flea, it burrowed like a mole, it ploughed up the rose-trees by the roots; but so soon as it had passed they stood up unharmed again, and to whatever point of refuge the Plough fled, that way they all turned their heads and darted out vomitings of fire.

In vain did Noodle summon the Well-folk to his aid; his crystal shot forth fountains of water that turned into steam as they rose, and fell back again scalding him.

Then with two deaths threatening to devour him, he brandished the ring, calling upon the Fire-eaters for their aid.

They laughed as they came. 'Here is food for you!' he cried, 'Multiply your appetites about me, or I shall be consumed in these flames!'

'Brandish again!' cried they—the same seven whom he had fed. 'We are not enough: this fire is not quenchable.'

Noodle brandished: till the whole garden swarmed with their kind. One fastened himself upon every rose, a gulf opposing itself to a torrent. All sight of the conflagration disappeared; but within these went a roaring sound, and the bodies of the Fire-eaters crackled, growing large and luminous the while.

'Do your will quickly and begone!' cried the Fire-eaters. 'Even now we swell to bursting with the pumping in of these fires!'

Noodle seized on a rose to which one hung, sucking out its heats. He tugged, but the strong fibres held. Then he locked himself to the back of the Plough, crying to it and caressing its speed with all names under heaven, and beseeching it in the name of Melilot to break free. And the Plough giving but one plunge, the rose came away into Noodle's hand panting and a prisoner. All blushing it grew and radiant, with a soft inner glow, and an odour of incomparable sweetness. He seemed to see the heart of Melilot beating before him.

But now there came a blast of fire behind him, for the Fire-eaters had disappeared, and all was whirling and shaken before his eyes; and the Plough sped desperately over earth-

quake and space. For the plucking of the rose had awakened the giant from his sleep; and the dream shrivelled and spun away in a whirl of flame-coloured vapours. Leaping into clear day out of the unravelment of its mists, Noodle found himself in the act of launching from the edge of a precipice for a downward dive into space. The giant's hair, standing upright from the wrath and horror of his awakening, made a forest ending in his forehead that bowered them to right and to left. Quitting it they slid ungovernably over the ledge of his brow, and went in full cry to the abyss.

Dexterously the Plough steered its descent; catching on the bridge and furrowing the ridge of the nose; nine leagues were the duration of a second.

The giant, thinking some venomous parasite was injuring his flesh, aimed, and a moment too late had thumped his fist upon the place. But already the Plough skirting the amazed opening of his mouth was lost in the trammels of his beard. Thence, as it escaped the rummaging of his fingers, it flew scouring his breast and inflicted a flying scratch over the regions of his abdomen. Then, still believing it to be the triumphal procession of a flea he pursued it to his thigh, and mistaking the shadow for the substance allowed it yet again to escape. At his knee-cap there was but a hair's-breadth between Noodle and the weight of his thumb; thereafter the Plough distanced him and all his efforts, and, with Noodle preserved whole and alive, sped fast and far, bearing the Burning Rose to the heart of the beloved Melilot.

The crone was aware of his coming before she heard him, or saw the gleam of his Plough running beam-like over the land. From her seat by the Princess's bower she clapped hands, and springing to his neck ere he alighted: 'A long way off, and a long time off,' she cried, 'I knew what fortune was with you; for when you plucked off the Rose, and bore it out of the heart of the dream, the scent of it filled the world; and I felt the sweetness of youth once more in my blood.'

Then she led him to the Princess, and bade him lay the Rose in her breast, that her heart might be won back into the world. Looking at her face again Noodle saw how memory

had made it more beautiful than ever, and how between her lips had grown the tender parting of a smile. Then he laid the Rose where the movement of the heart should be; and presently under the white breast rose the music of its beating.

'Ah!' cried the old nurse, weeping for happiness, 'now her heart that loved me is come back, and I can listen all day to the sound of it! You have brought memory to her, you have brought love; now bring breath, and the awakening of her five senses. Surely the light of her eyes will be your reward!'

VI. THE CAMPHOR-WORM

'TELL me quickly of the Camphor-Worm,' cried the youth as he feasted his eyes on the Princess's loveliness, made more unendurable by the awakening within of love; 'Where and what is it?' 'It is not so far as was the way to the Burning Rose,' answered the crone: 'an hour on the back of the Plough shall bring it near to you: but the danger and difficulty of this quest is more, not less. For to reach the Camphor-Worm you need to be a diver in deep waters, whose weight crushes a man: and to touch its lips you must master the loathing of your nature: and to carry away its breath you must have strength of will and endurance beyond what is mortal.' 'You trouble me with things I need not know,' cried Noodle. 'Tell me,' he said, 'how I may reach the Camphor-Worm; and of it and its ways.'

'By this path, and by that,' said the old woman, pointing him, 'go on till you come to the thick waters of the Bitter Lake; they are blacker than night, and their weight is heavier than lead, and in the depths dwells the Camphor-Worm. Once a year, when the air is sweetest with the scents of summer, he rises to breathe, lifting his black snout through the surface of the waters. Then he draws fresh air into his lungs, flavoured with leaves and flowers, and after he has breathed it in he lets go the last bubble of the breath he drew from the summer of the year before; and it is this bubble of breath alone that will give back life to the five senses of Princess Melilot. But the time for his rising is far off; and how you shall bear the weight in the depths of those waters, or make the Worm give up the bubble before his time, or at last bear back the bubble to lay it on the lips of the Princess so that she may wake, these are things I know not the way of, for to my eyes they seem dark with difficulty and peril.'

Then Noodle, opening the petals of the Burning Rose as it lay upon the heart of Melilot, drew out honey from its centre, filling his hand with the golden crumblings of fragrance; and he leapt upon the Galloping Plough, urging it in the way the

Princess's nurse had pointed to him. As they went he caressed it with all the names under heaven, stroking it with his hand and praising it for the delicacy of its steering: saying, 'O my moonbeam, if thou wouldst save the life of thy master, or restore the five senses of the Princess Melilot, thou must surpass thyself to-day. Listen, thou heaven-sent limb, thou miracle of quicksilver, and have a long mind to my words; for in a short while I shall have no speech left in me till the thing be done, and the deliverance, from head to feet, of my Beloved accomplished.'

Even while he spoke they came to the edge of the Bitter Lake—a small pool, but its waters were blacker than night, and heavier than lead to the eye. Then Noodle leapt down from the Plough, and caressed it for the last time, saying: 'Set thy face for the garden where the Princess Melilot is; and when I am come back to thee speechless out of the Lake and am striding thee once more, then wait not for a word but carry me to her with more speed than thou hast ever mustered to my aid till now; go faster than wind or lightning or than the eye of man can see! So, by good fortune, I may live till I reach her lips; but if thou tarry at all I am a dead man. And when thou art come to Melilot set thy share beneath the roots of her feet, and take her up to me out of the ground. Do this tenderly, but abate not speed till it be done!'

Then the youth put into his mouth the honey of the Burning Rose, and into his lips the Sweetener, and stripped himself as a bather to the pool. And the Plough, turning, set its face to where lay the garden with Melilot waiting to be relieved of her enchantment, remembering its master's word. And Noodle, bowing his head, and blessing it with lips of farewell, turned shortly and slid down into the blackness of the lake.

The weight of its water was like a vice upon his limbs, and around his throat, as he swam out into the centre of the pool. As he went he breathed upon the water, and the scent of the honey of the Burning Rose passing through the Sweetener made an incomparable fragrance, gentle and subtle, and wooing to the senses.

When he came to the middle of the lake he stayed breathing full breaths, till the air deepened with fragrance around him. Presently underneath him he felt the movement of a great thing coming up from the bottom of the pool. It touched his feet and came grazing along his side; and all at once shuddering and horror took hold upon him, for his whole nature was filled with loathing of its touch.

Out of the pool's surface before him rose a great black snout, that opened, showing a round hole. Then he thought of Melilot and her beauty laid fast under a charm, and drawing a full breath he laid his lips with the ring—the Sweetener—to the lips of the Worm.

The Worm began to breathe. As the Worm drank the air out of him, he drew in more through his nostrils, and more and more, till the great gills were filled and satisfied.

Then the Worm passed up the last bubble of air that remained of the year before, which had lain ever since in its body, and which alone could give back life to the five senses of Melilot. Then drawing in its head it lowered itself once more to the bottom of the pool. And Noodle feeling in his mouth the precious globule of air, fastened his lips upon it and shot out for shore.

Against the weight of those leaden waters a longing to gasp possessed him; but he knew that with the least breath the bubble would be lost, and all his labour undone. Not too soon his feet caught hold of the bank, and drew him free to land. He cast himself speechless across the back of the Galloping Plough and clung.

The Plough gathered itself together and sprang away through space. Remembering its master's word it showed itself a miracle of speed; like lightning was its flight.

The eye of Noodle became blind to the passing of things; he could take no count of the collapsing leagues. More and more grew the amazingness of the Plough's leaps, things only to be measured by miles, and counted as joltings on the way; while fast to the back of it clung Noodle, and endured, praying that shortness of breath might not overmaster him, or the check of his lungs give way and burst him to the emptiness

of a drum. His senses rocked and swayed; he felt the gates of his resolve slackening and forcing themselves apart; and still the Galloping Plough plunged him blindly through space.

But now the shrill crying of the crone struck in upon his ears, and he stretched open his arms for the accomplishment of the deliverance. Even in that nick of time was the end of the thing brought about; for the Plough, guiding itself as a thread to the needle's eye, gave the uprooting stroke to the white feet of Melilot; and Noodle, ready for the last gasp, saw all at once her beauty swaying level to his gaze and her body bending down upon his.

Then he fastened his lips upon hers, and loosed the bubble from his mouth; and panting and sobbing themselves back to life they hung in each other's arms. She warmed and ripened in his embrace, opening upon him the light of her eyes; and the greatness and beauty of the reward abashed him and bore him down to earth.

He heard the old crone clucking and crowing, like a hen over its egg, of the happiness that had come to her old years; till recognising the youth's state she covered him over with a cloak amid exclamations of astonishment.

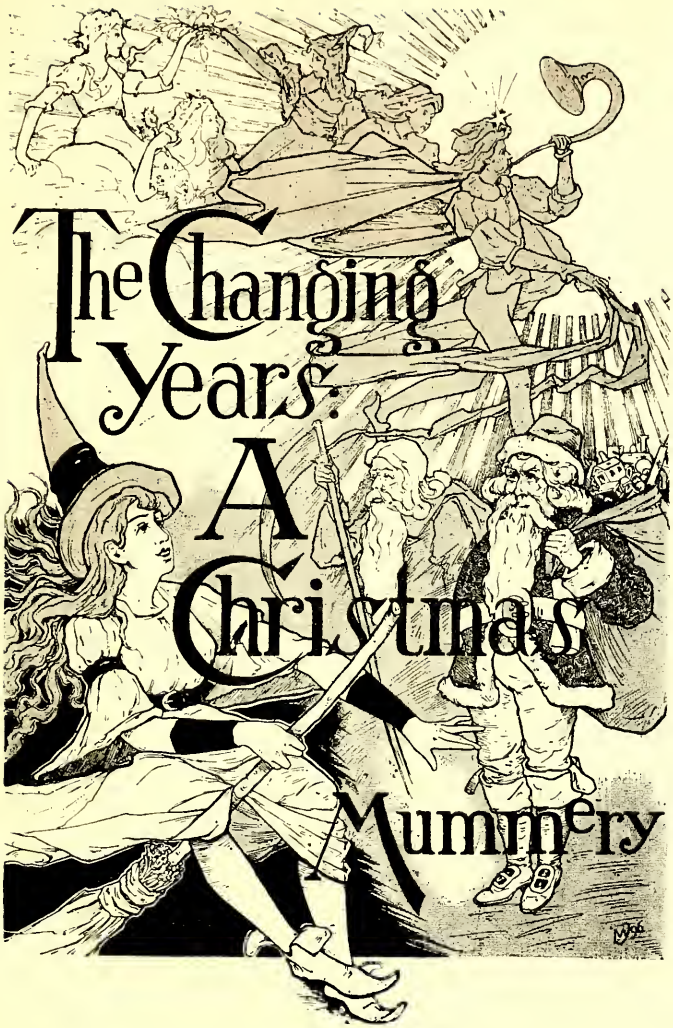
The Princess saw nothing but her lover's face and the happy feasting of his eyes. She bent her head nearer and nearer to his, and the story of what he had done became a dream that she remembered, and that waking made true. 'O you Noodle,' she said, laughing, 'you wise, wise Noodle!' And then everything was finished, for she had kissed him!

So Noodle and the Princess were married, and came to the throne together and reigned over a happy land. The Fire-eaters were their friends; and the gifts of fortune were theirs.

The Galloping Plough made all the waste places fertile; and the water of the Thirsty Well rose and ran in rivers through the land; and over the walls of their palace, where they had planted it, grew the flower of the Burning Rose.

REMORSE

BROWN paper and pieces of cane
They had tackled; but find to their pain
Twopence dropped in a slot
Yield cigars which are 'rot,'
And their one thought is 'Never again!'


The Changing Years: A Christmas Mummery

CHARACTERS.

JOY, THE FAIRY GODMOTHER.
FATHER CHRISTMAS.
THE OLD YEAR.
THE NEW YEAR.
THE FOUR SEASONS—SPRING, SUMMER, AUTUMN, WINTER.
THE DUNCE.
THE FIRST-PRIZE BOY.

MOTIVE.

Joy, the fairy godmother of the world, introduces, in a series of tableaux, familiar characters from Fairy-land, who are hastening to —— — Schoolroom for the birthday of the New Year. The Prologue describes the relationship of the characters to each other, and by means of the Dunce and Prize Boy their connection with the audience, evincing a simple allegory. The characters having arrived, the action of the little Masque transfers the Seasons from the Old Year, who is inclined to be rather cross, to the young and boisterous New Year. The friction between them is allayed through the genial disposition of Father Christmas, who awakens a kindlier spirit in every one, and discovers to the audience the beauties and blessings of the years and seasons.

Having spoken words of happy counsel, he completes his purpose by presenting a Christmas-tree to the company.

THE CHANGING YEARS: A CHRISTMAS MUMMERY.

In Three Tableaux. By KATHARINE HART-DAVIS and FRANCIS BATE. MUSIC by FRANK ARNOLD.

ROLOGUE *Spoken by* FAIRY GODMOTHER *before the curtain.*

Enter FAIRY GODMOTHER.

FAIRY GODMOTHER. I am Joy, the godmother of ancient fairy-tale—the fairy godmother of all the world. I am she who found Cinderella, dressed her in pretty clothes, made her a grand carriage, and sent her to dance at the King's Court, where she lost her glass slipper and found the handsome prince.

I am the friend of little children, and visit each one of you at your birthday feasts and bring you good gifts.

This is the birthday of the New Year. I am come to you now to conduct the ceremonies, for I love you all, you jolly little children with your merry faces. I will tell you something that will make you glad. I will tell you of some one else who is coming to see you. Old Christmas—Father Christmas—has promised to call in here on his way back to his snowy kingdom.

He and I live together in Fairyland, the place of wonders, the dreamland; and although you would like to know where that is, I can only tell you that it is at the top of a very high mountain and far away.

You would like to see Father Christmas trudging here in the cold night and through the heavy snow? You shall! I will wave my broomstick, and for a little minute you shall sleep, and in your sleep you shall see him hurrying along.

Now close your eyes whilst I count twelve—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve.

[*Curtain.*

TABLEAU I. FATHER CHRISTMAS *and* OLD YEAR.

FAIRY GODMOTHER. There is Father Christmas. You all know him; but who is that old fellow with him? Do you guess? It is the Old Year that clings to him, the Year 1896, that is almost done with; he is very tired and sad, but Christmas will cheer him. [*Curtain.*

FAIRY GODMOTHER. There is yet another who comes to take part in our revels. The New Year approaches, and in his train he brings the children of the years, Winter, Spring, Summer, Autumn. I hear the footsteps of the coming year, and the four Seasons with him [*waves broomstick, counts*]—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve. [*Curtain.*

TABLEAU II. *The* NEW YEAR *and four* SEASONS.

FAIRY GODMOTHER. Behold then! They are coming to us! They will be in time. [*Curtain.*

FAIRY GODMOTHER. Now listen! As I go to and fro in the villages, and the towns, and the cities, I hear tell of you—of the good deeds that you do, and of your naughty acts—of your home-life, and of your school-life. Remember that!

As I bustled here to-day I met a Dunce, a little girl who would not learn her lessons; and walking just in front of her I saw the First-Prize Boy, who learned his lessons better than any one in his class. And I commanded them to come here this evening and meet Father Christmas. You would like to see them on their way, as you saw the others? Well, close your eyes—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve. [*Curtain.*

TABLEAU III. *The* DUNCE *and* FIRST-PRIZE BOY.

FAIRY GODMOTHER. They stop to count their marbles as they come along. [*Curtain.*

FAIRY GODMOTHER. You see, my little ones, what wonders I can perform. Your poor old godmother has put before you visions of those who come to minister to your happiness—the years that come and go—the old and new—their

children the perennial seasons, coming in proper turn, and each of whom we love. You have seen the First-Prize Boy and the Dunce, who will resolve, like each of you, to do much better in the coming year. You have also seen old laughter-loving Christmas, who makes warm hearts warmer. He is my dear old friend; he calls me Joy. And glad I am to hear the music of his mirth and keep for ever young within the sunshine of his smiles. For I am not really thus an old decrepit dame with bristling broom. It is a poor disguise I wear to hide me from a curious world. But now and then I put it off, like sorrow from a weary life, and let my own real self—the Joy of life—with love and peace and laughter all around me, appear before you.

[*Throws off gown and hat and wig, casts aside besom, becomes young and gay, and takes up wand with butterfly. Children's voices heard behind curtain.*

FAIRY GODMOTHER. But hark! I hear the sound of children's voices, and I must ever be where youth rejoices.

[*Curtain.* FAIRY GODMOTHER *pirouettes on to stage from front, and discovers* DUNCE *and* PRIZE BOY *playing marbles.*

FAIRY GODMOTHER. Ah, you little rascals! so you 've come.

DUNCE and PRIZE BOY. Yes, pretty fairy, we are here, and wish you joy.

FAIRY GODMOTHER. Then spell it, please, you First Prize Boy.

PRIZE BOY. Y O U. [*Points at her. She kisses him quickly.*]

DUNCE [*hesitatingly, rubbing forehead*]. B L I S,

FAIRY GODMOTHER. Ah! ah! You 're wrong, you little rogue, but there 's a kiss. [*Kisses her.*

Enter OLD YEAR *and* CHRISTMAS.

FAIRY GODMOTHER. Why, here 's the Old Year lingering yet, and Father Christmas loitering with him.

PRIZE BOY and DUNCE. Hurrah! [*running to him.*] We 're very glad to see you, sir.

CHRISTMAS. Yes, I 'll be bound you are, you little Turks.

PRIZE BOY and DUNCE. We pray you, sir, be seated.

[*Pointing to seat.*

CHRISTMAS [*indicating* OLD YEAR]. Grace to the aged. Speed the parting guest.

PRIZE BOY [*showing* OLD YEAR *seat*]. Your pardon, Passing Year. But can you stay ?

[OLD YEAR *and* CHRISTMAS *sit down.*

OLD YEAR. Well, thank you, yes, I'll gladly stay a little while and hear what Christmas has to tell ; but when the clock strikes midnight I shall slip away.

[*Noise heard outside.*

CHRISTMAS. What's all this noise ?

FAIRY GODMOTHER. Some one arriving !

Enter NEW YEAR.

OLD YEAR [*curtly*]. Who's this ?

NEW YEAR. Greeting, good people all. We have not met before ; let me present my card.

[*Hands large card to* CHRISTMAS, *who reads and passes it on to* OLD YEAR.

CHRISTMAS [*handing card to* OLD YEAR]. The New Year 1897.

OLD YEAR [*crossly, to* NEW YEAR]. Surely you're a little early ; we hardly expected you so soon.

NEW YEAR [*unabashed*]. That's likely. Well, never mind. 'Better late than never.'

OLD YEAR [*irritably*]. Late, you're not *late*, you're *early*.

NEW YEAR [*jauntily*]. 'Tis the early worm that finds the bird.

PRIZE BOY [*quickly, to display knowledge*]. You 'mean the early bird that finds the worm.'

NEW YEAR [*emphatically*].

That used to be ; but in these latter days
We've changed, somewhat, those queer, old-fashioned ways.
For early worms the early bird *came* fast ;
Now worms get up when early birds have passed.

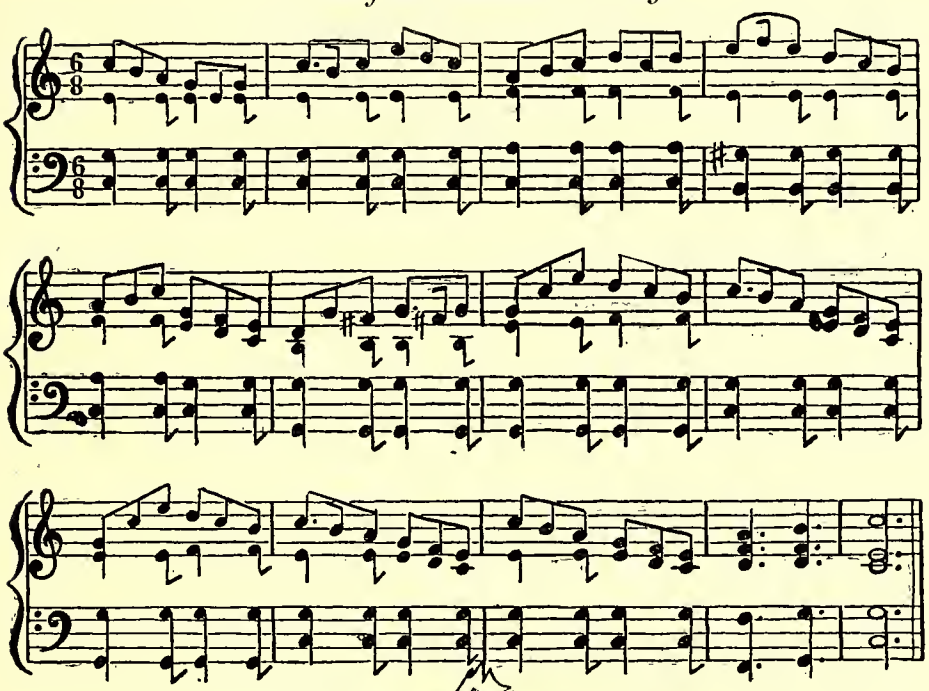
OLD YEAR [*rudely*]. Then you're a foolish worm to be so early, and I'll not budge before my proper time.

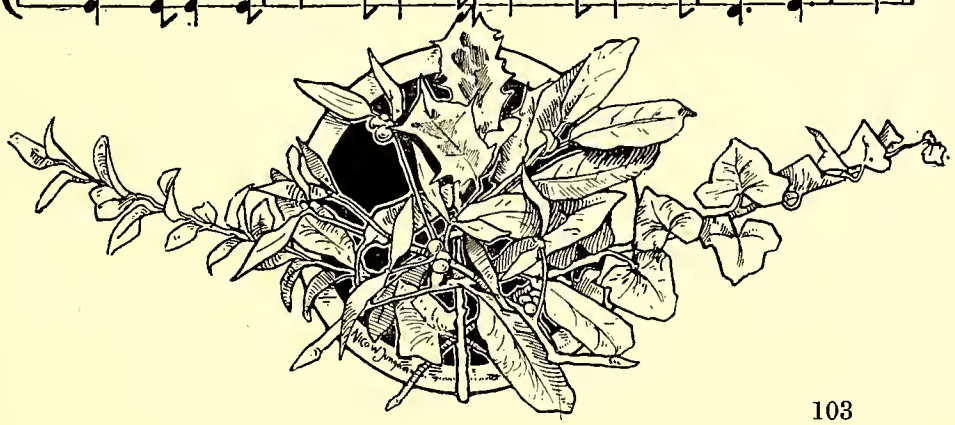
NEW YEAR [*impertinently*]. All right, old crab-apple.

CHRISTMAS. Tut ! Tut ! you boisterous boy, be still. Respect an able generation that is passing. And you, Old Year, be not too hasty to resent the aspirations of a

livelier energy than yours. We all of us must dignify our life by work; and at its end, to mourn its highest purpose unfulfilled despite our great endeavour, is quite as worthy as the noble hope that marked its starting. 'Tis many times I've come to take the hands of neighbouring years and join them with goodwill and peace. To-day you two must, hand-in-hand, stand up before the world, while I, the merry Christmas, come pleasantly between you.

Enter four SEASONS *dancing.*

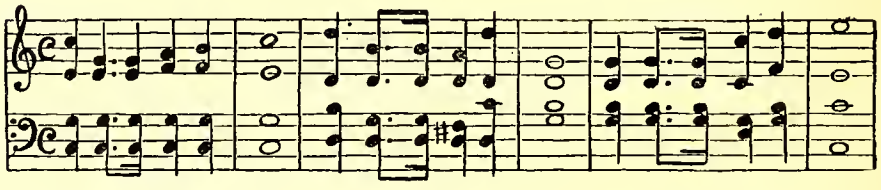


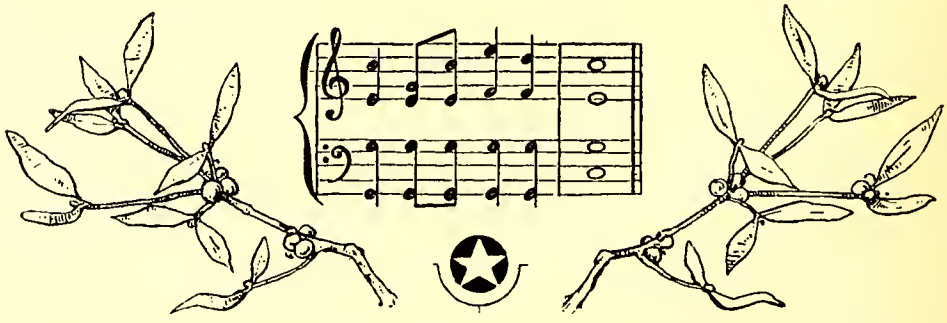


We are the Seasons four.

Song—We are the Seasons four.
Old Year, farewell to thee;
New Year is at the door,
Welcome him merrily.

Spring brings the bursting leaf,
Summer wakes rosily,
Garnered the autumn sheaf,
Winter nods drowsily.





CHRISTMAS. And now, Old Year, you must transfer the blessing of these children to your successor, for they must serve this bright-faced boy and labour with him to crown the world with grace and beauty, love and laughter, peace and plenty.

OLD YEAR. [*Sings.*]

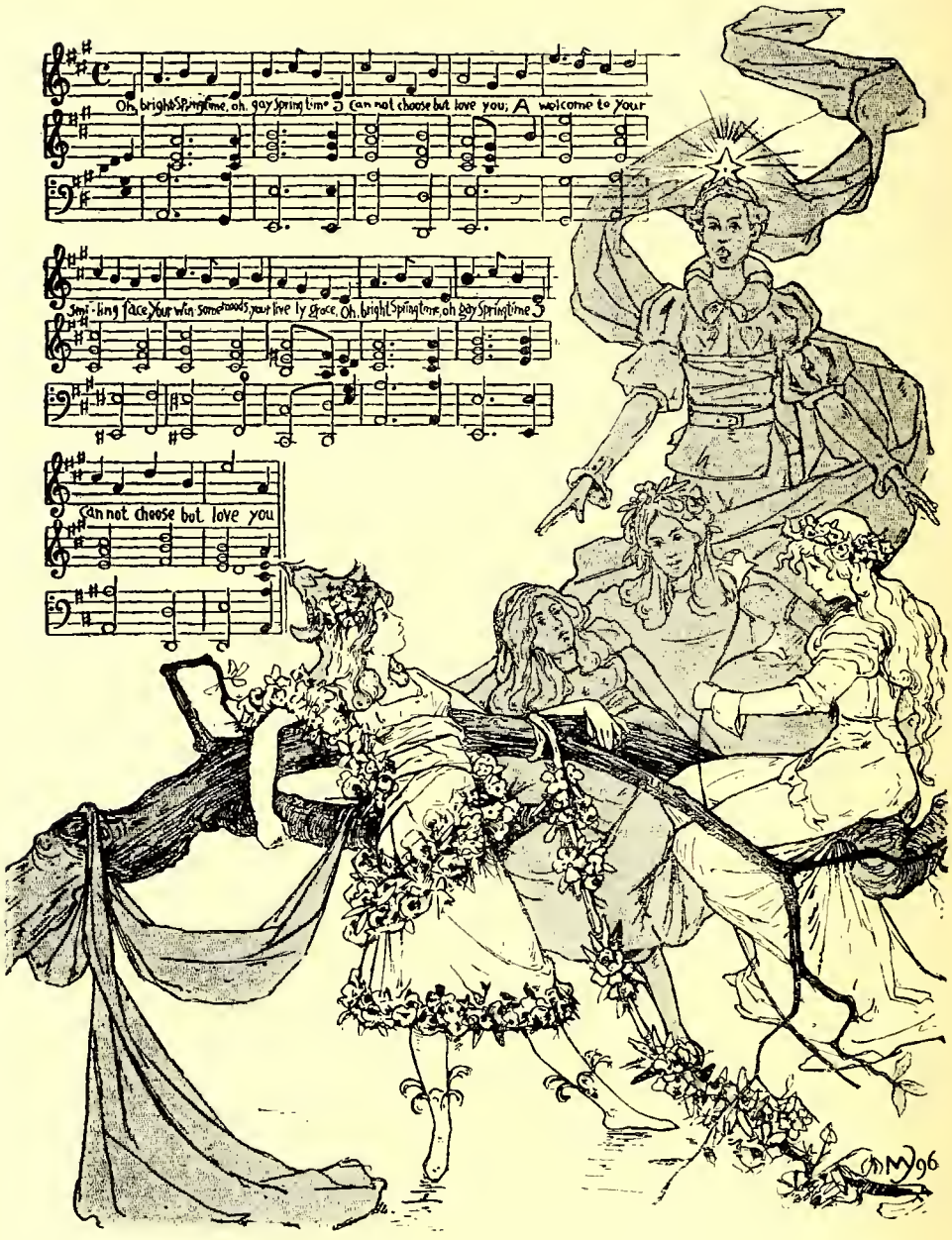
New Year, receive from one, whose failing hours
Are sped to laughter of your younger powers,
The living hope, that like as sunny flowers
Beguile the way,
Shone through the purpose of my days—the wrong
To right, soothe sorrow, leave the weakling strong.
While now I, lingering, pass to join the throng
Of years gone by,
Come you with steadfast heart my task to take,
Breathe lustier gladness through life's song and make
A New Year's note still nobler echoes wake
To ring through time.

OLD YEAR [*to* SEASONS]. Go then, my dears, and take your stand with the New Year, who comes to fill our hopes with stronger life, and brings the healing hand of time to comfort the hurt of our disasters. Go, little Seasons, and so serve the allotted days with your new master,

That when old Christmas comes to speed *his* going,
The world shall ring with praise of your well-doing.

NEW YEAR [*to* SEASONS]. Come then with me and help the march of time to carry love and peace throughout the land. So let us strive with all the fears and dangers of the days, that at the end we win with years long passed and this one passing—

A splendid place in history's famous pages,
A sacred memory to light the ages.


Oh, bright Springtime, oh, gay Springtime I can not choose but love you; A welcome to your
Smi-ling face, Your win some moods, your live ly grace. Oh, bright Springtime, oh gay Springtime I
can not choose but love you
MW96

NEW YEAR. [*Sings to* SEASONS, *a verse to each in turn, last two lines of each verse chorus.*

1 Oh, bright Springtime; oh, gay Springtime,
I cannot choose but love you;
A welcome to your smiling face,
Your winsome moods, your lively grace,
Oh, bright Springtime; oh, gay Springtime,
I cannot choose but love you.

2 Oh, Summertime; oh, Summertime,
I cannot choose but love you;
The murmur of the thronging bees
Makes glad your honey-scented trees;
Oh, Summertime; oh, Summertime,
I cannot choose but love you.

3 Oh, Autumn brown; oh, Autumn brown,
I cannot choose but love you;
When moanings of the swollen rills
Bewitch the golden-mantled hills;
Oh, Autumn brown; oh, Autumn brown,
I cannot choose but love you.

4 Oh, Winter drear; oh, Winter grey,
I cannot choose but love you;
Whose snow-track in the quiet night
Leads home my love to my delight;
Oh, Winter drear; oh, Winter grey,
How can I choose but love you?

DUNCE. Dear Sir, I thank you for your song, and think it very tuneful; but won't you sing again and love me too?

NEW YEAR. Yes, little maid, the years will care for you, and your fair life shall also see its seasons. Your budding spring shall flower in summer's sunshine, and the beauty of them both shall ripen fruits in autumn to make glorious and enrich the quiet winter of your days. [*Sings.*

5 Oh, children dear; oh, children mine,
I cannot choose but love you;
Your laughter echoes through the years,
Your touches heal the hurt of tears;
Oh, children fair; oh, children dear,
My heart goes out to love you.

WINTER [*to the* SEASONS]. So, dears, my sisters, we begin our life anew, with this good year to hold us. Let us have care to take our duties well in hand to earn men's gratitude. Oh, how I love to hear the north winds blow across the plains, and through the empty trees, and see the snow-clouds drift from the distant mountain tops and gather overhead. I long to make the hard frost bind the sleeping fields.

SPRING. Ay! then comes my turn. For when the cracking frost lets the soft snow melt slowly in the earth, I wake to life the little seeds and bulbs and fibrous roots, and soon the flash of yellow aconites is seen across the meadows. The snowdrop and the crocus lift their cups, and presently a dainty green flushes the dusky trees, and when the flowers bloom. . . .

SUMMER [*interrupting*]. Why, that 's my day. Then on a sunny morn you 'll see that every bank is patterned with pretty blossoms. Then leafy trees glisten and play like fountains against the sky, and blue streams wind among the grasses. While even the lark, whose merry music mocks the lazy air, rests with a listless wing upon the quivering day.

AUTUMN. Yes! yes! but think! the greatest glory of the year is mine, when carried sheaves have left a golden stubble on the land and fallen ears about the roadside hedge. When first the woods make moanings that swell the floating whisper of the hills, to sighs and sobs mysterious.

[*Exeunt* SPRING *and* WINTER, SUMMER *and* AUTUMN *dancing.*

DUNCE. That 's when the fruit is ripe and rosy apples fall into my lap.

PRIZE BOY. Of course it is, you little Dunce. You always think of stupid things. But I 've discovered something wonderful about this silly shifting of the years.

NEW YEAR and OLD YEAR [*with great interest*]. What 's that?

PRIZE BOY [*leading* OLD YEAR *and* NEW YEAR, *one by each*

hand, to footlights]. Now, if you knew as much arithmetic as I do you would understand that four divides into 1896—474 times exactly.

NEW YEAR. Well, what's the odds?

PRIZE BOY. There's none, it's even, and without remainder.

NEW YEAR. That can't be right, for I remain.

PRIZE BOY. You goose, just notice what I tell you. If you divide the year's full age by four, and find that no odd days remain, that year's called leap-year. Then the law allows such bits of girls as this [*pointing to* DUNCE] to fall in love with us big boys—and if we choose we let them.

OLD YEAR. You'd thank your stars to get them. Don't be so cock-a-hoop. For though you'd take the prize at any poultry-show for peacock vanity, I don't think much of your high struttings—moreover, your good fortune waits a happier chance, this leap-year's privilege has passed.

PRIZE BOY. Not quite.

CHRISTMAS. Come, come, Old Year, be kindly at the last.

NEW YEAR. And leave this prodigy to me [*takes* PRIZE BOY *by hand*]. [*To* DUNCE] You too I'll take in charge.

DUNCE. And I will try to learn my lessons better in the future.

FAIRY GODMOTHER. That's right, my dear.

CHRISTMAS. A very good and proper resolution, which I am pleased to hear. For on this day you all should make a firm resolve to keep more closely to your good intentions, and, overlooking one another's failings, help one another and rejoice together. And to assist to such a happy end after that peace is made between the changing years, I wait with Joy, your fairy godmother, who dwells with me and all the other elves and sprites you read of in your goblin tales in that far land of magic rite that you call Fairyland. I wait with her and hope to spread peace and goodwill among you all, ere we return to rest in crystal homes that twinkle in the snowy mountain dells. Thence to look down upon the darker earth and see your happy homes shine bright, like stars about a quiet sky. And after twelve short months are spent we trust to come again and

find you here to welcome us. For I delight in frosts and snows, bleak winds and darkness that the winter brings. I love to see the large log splutter on the hearth, to wear a crown of fruiting holly, to find a bough of mistletoe above me and lots of kissing underneath it. And so I tear up by the roots the nearest tree that grows about my kingdom. I furnish it with toys from all the countries that I pass through. I have one here for boys and girls of ——, and your good fairy godmother by magic art has made it bright with little lights and glittering things.

[FAIRY GODMOTHER *advances waving wand. Back cloth is drawn up, disclosing Christmas-tree decked and lighted, and four seasons grouped about it. Red fire behind. Chorus and dance around the tree by all the characters.*

1

Round the fir-tree evergreen let us dance and sing,
Greet with laughter all the gladness that the hour shall bring.
Bright with blossoms beautiful, gifts for you and me;
Come then, little children, hail the Christmas-tree.

2

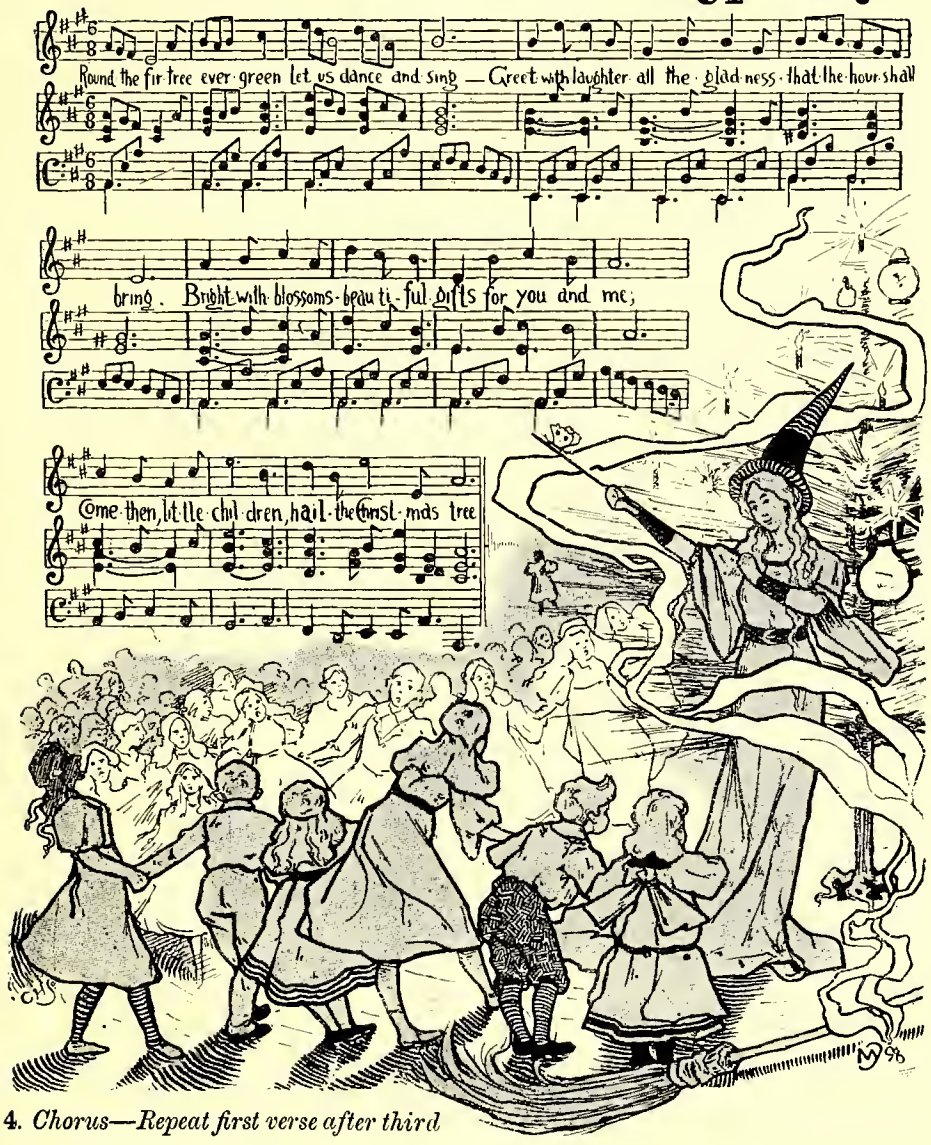
Tricked with treasures wonderful, twinkling lights about,
Hand in hand with loving hearts encircle it and shout.
Shout a merry welcome that smiling Joy may see
Happy little children dance around the tree.

3

Welcome Christmas cheerily, as the New Year comes
Stretch forth kindly hands to guide him gaily to your homes.
Darkest days like fir-tree's shade full of gifts shall be,
Come then, little children, hail the Christmas-tree.

[*After the last verse of song* OLD YEAR *leaves reluctantly while the clock strikes twelve, after which repeat first verse of song and dance.*

Round the Christmas tree.

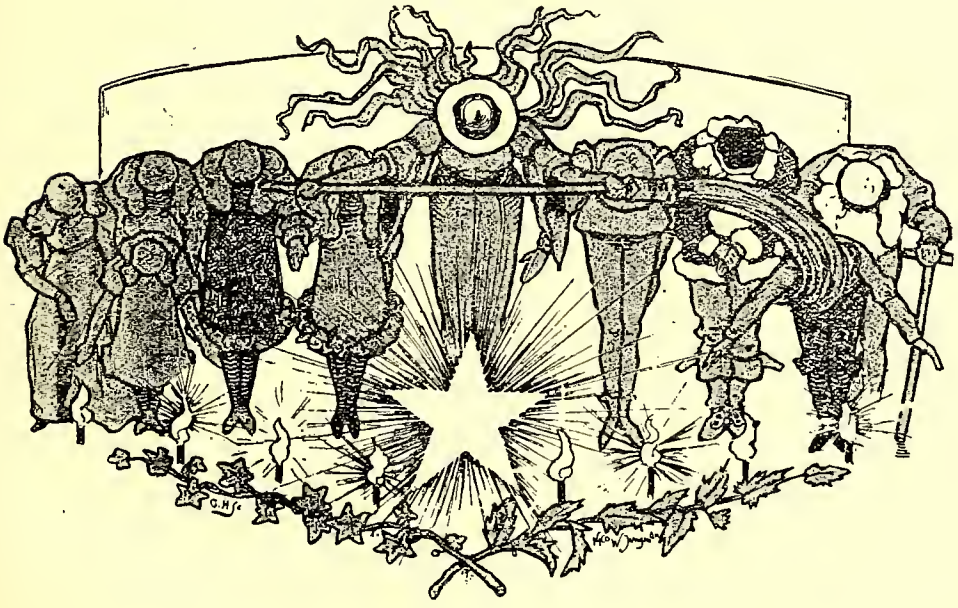


4. *Chorus—Repeat first verse after third*

EPILOGUE *Spoken by* FAIRY GODMOTHER.

FAIRY GODMOTHER. The Old Year has gone. The New Year shall reign for 365 days, and we have a new round of work to take up. As Father Christmas has told us, work dignifies life. You know what that means, my dears. It means that without work life would be neither so noble nor so beautiful. Then let us do it well and happily. And as for you and me, let us be friends always. Remember my wonderful powers. Do not thrust me away, lest, like the sleeping beauty in the wood, I should send you to sleep for a hundred years, and no fine prince should wake you with a kiss. Believe me, every one of you, your journey through life will be all the sweeter if you carry Joy in your heart. [*Curtain.*

[*Arrangement of table and seats on stage, distribution of gifts from tree by* CHRISTMAS, FAIRY GODMOTHER, OLD YEAR, *and* NEW YEAR.



THE EXPERIENCES OF CHARLES LEGGET DURING THE INDIAN OUTBREAK OF '95. By Colonel Strange.

CHAPTER I

S you are aware, Charlie and I have been chums and friends from our earliest days.

We met for the first time on our way to join a great public school. Two more miserable little morsels of humanity never left their homes. And having the same fears and terrors of what was to come, we immediately fraternised, and from that day to this our friendship has never been shadowed by the smallest cloud.

Nobody could help liking Charlie. He was one of those fresh-looking boys with curly brown hair and rosy cheeks, which always seem to accompany a frank and open nature.

Every one loved him—masters, fellow-pupils, and particularly the girls. This latter was often very trying to me, as when Charlie was near I was thrown over, and as we were nearly always together, I was frequently left in the cold.

When our school days were finished we went to a military college together, to study fortification and the rudiments of the military art. Many pleasant days were spent: boating, sailing, and fishing, and in all the sports which the souls of boys love. Charlie, as time went on, became captain of the football team—we always played the Rugby game—and both of us were in the first fifteen.

Many were the fierce tussles we enjoyed. And never shall I forget the dismay that seized us when, in a tremendous match, a fearful fall broke Charlie's collar-bone. He was making a splendid run right down the field. Nobody possessed a fleeter foot than he. There only remained one of the opposing side between Charlie and a touch down. We saw his opponent bend almost double in his anxiety to collar Charlie well down below the knee. In a flash, before we could well believe our eyes, we saw Charlie attempt to pass him by jumping clean over his head. Alas! the attempt was vain. As he rose in the air he was caught by the feet, and came

down a most awful smash on his shoulder. The shock was so severe he was partially stunned, but he tried to go on again; turning sick and faint from the pain, he fell once more, and had to be carried from the field. Alas! his accident caused us the loss of the game, and we failed to secure the championship cup.

I think you would like to hear one more incident of our college life before I recount our North-West experiences; it will give you an insight into Charlie's character.

He was one of those souls to whom fear seems an absolute stranger, if indeed there are any such. For myself I can recall many visits from that unpleasant personage, with the accompaniment of the various emotions he excites, such as a rapid beating of the heart, succeeded by a cold sweat which makes even the hair damp and moist, and the space below the ribs seem an absolute void, as if one's whole weight was sustained by the backbone alone as a skeleton is.

About 1882, a year before our college career closed, we organised a great duck-shooting expedition across the great bay which forms the lower portion of Lake Ontario before it narrows down into the justly celebrated Thousand Islands, beloved of all boat and sailor men.

The party consisted of Charlie and myself and three other young fellows, all great friends of ours.

We had a very good boat, about eighteen feet long and of fair beam, but quite undecked, and always liable to be filled and swamped by a curling wave.

When the boat was loaded with all our paraphernalia—guns, canteens, tents, much food, and a huge, heavy tarpaulin to keep out the rain, we found she was very low in the water. However, the weather was fair; and with cheery hearts and much chaff and fun we set sail, towing a small rowing-boat behind us. Unfortunately the wind was dead ahead, and we had to beat our way, right into the very eye of the wind; this made our progress somewhat tedious, and it was not until late in the evening that we landed on the shore of Wolf Island, where we were sheltered from the wind.

We immediately set to work collecting wood for a fire,

and soon had a bright blaze, over which our camp-kettle, suspended on a tripod, was soon hissing and spluttering.

Tea made and drunk, and pipes lit, we began to speculate as to when we should arrive at our destination. Our progress so far had been very slow, and we still had many miles to make. Saturday afternoon was gone, and our leave only extended over Sunday evening. Some one mooted the question, would it not be better to sail straight back across the bay that night, as we easily could with a following wind, and spend Sunday quietly at home? I don't know who first suggested this idea, but I have since shrewdly suspected it may have been Charlie. I should have mentioned that my father and mother lived in a large house on the very shores of the lake, and that at this time (as was indeed usually the case) a large house-party were staying with them, among others, Major and Mrs. A Dean and their daughter Mary.

I had noticed Charlie had not seemed as energetic as usual about the duck-shooting, and now he seemed to fall in very readily with the idea of returning home, which a majority of votes soon decided was the best course to pursue.

No sooner said than done; and with the cry of 'all aboard,' we took our seats again.

Before many yards had been traversed we realised that the wind had risen considerably since we had landed two hours before. It was now nearly dark, and little could be seen but the already diminishing shore of Wolf Island and the snowy tops of the waves, which seemed to follow fast on our deeply laden boat. When the open lake was reached we felt the full force of the wind, and George Rayner, a great broad-backed chap, who was sitting on the bow thwart, alarmed us all by saying in an excited voice, 'I say, you fellows, the boat is making water fast; the bow of the boat plunges right under each wave.' Charlie, who was steering, immediately told him to sit right in the bow, and with his back to keep out the water, while the rest of us set to work bailing hard with every sort of utensil. I could find nothing better than my forage cap, which answered excellently, except that next day I found the gold lace somewhat deteriorated. The boat still

poked her nose under the water, pressed down as she was by the force of the wind in the sail. Charlie, who acted as both captain and helmsman, ordered the main-sheet to be let go; and, the mast having no stays, the sail blew right round with the main-boom pointing right over the bow, and the sheet thrashing backward and forward in a most uncomfortable manner. We now found that the little boat towing astern was almost full of water. As our boat sank in the hollow of each wave the little boat posed on the top of the succeeding one and swooped down on us each time as if bent on smashing our rudder and breaking in our stern port. There was no alternative but to cut her adrift, which was soon done with the aid of a pocket knife. This eased us a good deal, but we still ran a great risk of being pooped by foaming, roaring crests of the great waves, which now shone white and gleaming in the pale moonlight. The least failure of Charlie's nerve or an error of judgment would have made our boat broach-to, and then—the deluge. Most of us, and I among the number, were very anxious to lighten the boat by throwing the guns and spare gear overboard; but not a bit of it. Charlie declared he would sooner swim home than lose his favourite gun; so, encouraged by his pluck and determination, we set to work bailing harder than ever. We had now been driving along under a bare pole at a terrific rate for several hours, and were beginning to feel the cold and wet severely. Soon the light from the Martello Tower on Cedar Island was descried, and we planned to take shelter under the lee-side of the island, and beach the boat on a small stretch of sand we knew of, one of the few safe landing-spots on that granite shore. As the boat came close to land we all sprang overboard into the water, and rushed her up the beach. Precious glad we all were to feel *terra firma* under our feet again.

Mightily astonished they all were at home when our drenched and dripping party broke in upon them shortly before midnight. Charlie told me afterwards that the tiller was split in half close to the rudder-head, and that he had steered all the time with one hand, while with the other he had held the tiller tightly near the rudder-head to prevent the crack

extending. He had kept this to himself, although he well knew that at any moment we might all have been ushered into eternity. Most of us said our prayers that night with uncommon fervour, and none more so than Mary A Dean.

Our college course finished that year, and we all separated for a last summer holiday at home, Charlie and I arranging to go together in the autumn to the great Canadian North-West, the land of the grassy seas, the Indian, the buffalo, the bucking broncho, and last but not least, the historic and celebrated cowboy.

CHAPTER II

An invitation to spend the winter at a neighbouring ranche came very opportunely; and I can truthfully say I never spent two more happy years, for our winter invitation was transformed into an engagement as cowboys, and we both took up the new *rôle* with the greatest delight, and actually essayed to become glorified cowboys, or rather broncho busters. The genus broncho buster is of the type cowboy, but promoted from the herding of cattle and ponies to the taming and breaking to saddle and harness of the wild horse of the North-West, a very different animal from the cayuses or Indian ponies brought over to England by Buffalo Bill. The broncho is a fine specimen of a horse, often standing over sixteen hands. The antics and capers he can cut when first saddled are truly astonishing. Nobody I ever met enjoyed broncho busting. The exercise is somewhat similar to having one's teeth drawn, not singly, but *en masse*. Not infrequently the rider is busted instead of the broncho; however, it makes good horsemen, and we were fairly proficient after one or two years' training.

Early in the year of 1885 the great Indian rebellion broke out, and both of us gave in our names as volunteers for the local corps of scouts raised by an old soldier and renowned scout on the first rumour of the outbreak, which luckily did not extend to all the Indians. A faithful brave, by name Old Brass, accompanied us throughout the campaign—a fine specimen of a red Indian and a man, six feet two inches in his

moccasined feet, and broad in the shoulder for an Indian. He was a match in any kind of rough-and-tumble fighting for any man of his weight, and more than a match for most of them in guile. I firmly believe his name arose from the brazen way he could lie when the occasion required it. Charlie, poor fellow, was in great distress. The rebellion first broke out near a little town called Prince Albert, and the mounted police were hastily called from all quarters to concentrate in the neighbourhood, leaving many other isolated settlements quite unprotected; among them Fort Pitt on the Saskatchewan River, where Major A Dean had been in command before he was hastily summoned to Prince Albert, leaving his wife and daughter with half-a-dozen policemen and a few squatters' families in the tumble-down fort.

A few weeks after the original outbreak of the French half-breeds, a tribe of Indians, called Crees, under their chief, Big Bear, went on the war-path. They made an unsuccessful attack on Fort Pitt, and then began raiding all the isolated settlements within reach, murdering and mutilating all the full-grown men, and taking the women and children prisoners.

Soon no communications could be sent to Fort Pitt or received from them, as it was completely surrounded by the Indians and in great danger of being captured. A relief column was hastily organised, and our scouts, usually called steels (a good name for a soldier), from our chief, formed part.

It was now I learned Charlie's secret, which I had often suspected. He was in love with Mary, and had obtained from her a sort of half promise of engagement. He was to come back for a final answer in two years' time. When they had parted at Kingston Mary had admitted under much persuasion that she was not indifferent to him, and that in any case she liked no one better. Poor Charlie! poor Mary! the two years were up, and now Charlie was about to get his answer; would she ever speak it? In the utmost danger, in a weak wooden fort surrounded by savage Indians, perfect fiends when excited by bloodshed and gin; if she escaped slaughter and death in the assault, what was before her? A hopeless captivity as the wife, or rather slave, of a

savage, to whom a woman is only the plaything of his passions, an object with a voice on whom to vent his rage.

The knowledge of all this nearly drove Charlie mad, and only the incessant marching and movement, and the dim hope that perhaps the fort might hold out, kept him from insanity. As it was, he seemed tireless; here, there, everywhere, doing ten men's work and encouraging all by his activity, he was soon selected for promotion, and was made a corporal. Half the scouts were young Canadian and English gentlemen, the remaining half cowboys, than whom no better fellows exist in the real stress and battle of life when they have something to do besides swear. Charlie, myself, a cowboy called Jim Christy, and old Brass, formed a little mess, and we were frequently indebted to our Indian friend for the addition of a rabbit to our stock-pot, which usually contained only bouilli beef and dry biscuit.

On arrival at Fort Pitt our worst anticipations were realised. Nought remained of the fort but one or two buildings; on the floor of one of these flour was strewn knee-deep. The small garrison were evidently all captives, and Mary's whereabouts were now quite unknown. That evening Charlie, Jim Christy, and myself were all sitting outside our tent near a small fire. Presently I smelt a very unpleasant odour. Charlie declared it was putrifying meat; and it seemed to be growing stronger as the evening haze set in after the heat of the day. Christy's nose was proof against any smell, but Charlie and I found it so distasteful we set to work to find out what it could be. The three of us formed a line and proceeded to march abreast up wind. The smell grew more and more intense. Suddenly a loud shout from Christy made us both run towards him. He was leaning over a dark object stretched on the ground, which was evidently the focus of the smell. It was the body of a policeman evidently killed by the Indians some time ago. Poor fellow, he was torn and gashed in the most shocking manner; and stuck up on the sharp end of a pole was his heart, dried up by the sun into a shapeless mass. From the position of the body we made out that he had been running towards the fort. His horse was

found some distance farther off. I brought a spade, and called the padre, to do the best we could for the senseless clay.

CHAPTER III

We were now nearing the Indians, whom we found next day occupying a strong position on the crest of a ravine. They had made splendid rifle-pits and ambushed the road, but we managed to outflank them, and attacked them from the rear, driving them off their rifle-pits and hunting them through the woods.

In a few hours they were in full flight. Tired and worn out, we could do no more that day.

All lay down under our wagons for a little much-needed rest. Long before daylight we were up, and scouting-parties were organised to follow up the various trails, the Indians having broken up into small parties of ten to twenty, each party making a way for themselves through the woods, which were very thick.

That evening some fifty or sixty prisoners were recovered, among them Mrs. A Dean. From her we learned of the fall of the fort, which had been taken by treachery, and also that Mary and one of the maidservants were prisoners to a chief called Little Poplar, who had won them by drawing lots. Mrs. A Dean was a most pitiable sight. Her hair had become white in patches, which gave her the most weird appearance. The slightest noise or movement made her tremble all over. It was several hours before she became composed enough to tell us the story of their trials, which had been cruel; but she told us Little Poplar seemed very fond of Mary, and had given the two girls a tepee, or wigwam, to themselves, with one Indian woman to look after them. She adjured us to lose no time, as Little Poplar had several times told her he meant to make Mary his squaw, but that he would not marry her until the white men were all killed, which would, no doubt, be soon. But this was before the fight, and there was no knowing how he might act after the severe defeat the Indians had suffered. He had fought hard against us, and several

white men to whom he was well known told us he had been severely wounded late in the day.

That evening we held a council of war—Christy, Charlie, myself, Old Brass, and a young Indian called Plenty Moose, on whom he could rely. Charlie told us he meant to follow Little Poplar's trail until he found Mary, no matter where it led him, and he asked us all what we thought and if any of us would accompany him. He pointed out that we should have to travel on foot the whole way and could carry but little food, that our main dependence must be on our securing a little game as we went along. Christy said he was game for anything, but he wished it was possible to ride. It seemed to me a hopeless task for five men to follow ten or more Indians through the woods in which they were born and bred; our only hope could be in surprising them. But how were we, untrained white men, to cope with the cunning of the Indians in woodlore? I did not say anything of this to Charlie, however, and told him he could count on me. Charlie then offered Old Brass two new rifles and the price of two ponies each if he and Brown Moose would join us. Old Brass took the stone pipe he was smoking out of his mouth and offered it to Charlie, then passed it to each man in turn, which signified his intention of standing by us, although he spoke no word, neither did Brown Moose.

We then arranged to travel as light as we could, making up our parcels of tea, tobacco, dried meat, and cartridges into little packages, convenient for carrying on our backs. We filled our water-bottles, and I carried the sole flask of brandy we possessed. Charlie went to get leave for the expedition from the general in command of the force, while Old Brass utilised his time in pumping the Indian prisoners as to which way Little Poplar and his band had gone. He found that the chief had several times talked of sending on his squaws to Cold Lake, one of the innumerable great lakes to be found towards the far north, which swarmed with fish, and where they could easily subsist and pass the winter. It was of the greatest importance we should find their trail, so as to follow in their footsteps and overtake them. If we made direct to

Cold Lake we should be certain to pass them in the dense forest, and then if they changed direction we should lose them altogether. But Old Brass understood this sort of business. He said we must march one sun, meaning one day, in the direction of Cold Lake to the north, then divide into two parties and make a detour to the east and west, when we should be certain to cross their trail if they had gone in the way we anticipated.

We started before sunrise after a hearty meal, the last we were to eat for some days. Before sundown we had covered many miles through absolutely trackless woods, marching single file—Brass and the Moose in front, watching and listening for every sight and sound; Charlie followed them, and I brought up the rear.

The Indians made their way through the forest in a marvellous way, the moss on the trees, which always grows on the north side, giving them the points of the compass, as it were. We had a small meal, and all laid down, dog-tired.

Next day we divided—Charlie and the Moose going to the west, while old Brass and I went to the east; Jim Christy, who was less accustomed to walking than either of us, staying in camp and looking after our few provisions.

Before we had traversed more than three miles, a grunt from Brass told me he saw something of interest. He told me a party of Indians had crossed the direction we were following about three days ago. He said we would follow their track a short distance and see how many there were in the party. I could not see anything except a broken twig here and there, and a few leaves crushed and bent; but Brass walked along as if it was the queen's highway, with a telegraph pole every few yards.

Brass said from the track not more than six or seven could have passed, but to make sure we must find their camping ground, which we soon did. Only one fire had been used, which he said meant only five or six Indians. We then continued tramping along. My legs were getting used up; the cords at the back of the knee were swelling and very sore, and I was contemplating calling a halt, when we came

across another trail fresher than the first, and evidently a larger party, as the track was wider and more straggling. We followed it about five miles, and found three fires where they had rested for the night; there were also some fragments of dough and a few feathers scattered about; and near one fire, which was somewhat apart from the other two, I found a scrap of paper, but nothing on it which could give us a clew. Brass said this looked like little Poplar's party, but he could only trace one white woman, who walked with her toes turned out. We searched the ground carefully to try and find boot marks, but could find none. We came back to the fires and began stirring them about. On the small fire one piece of wood was very green, and had not burned much; on kicking it over I saw on the under side three distinct scratches on the wood in the shape of a broad arrow, but much larger. I paid no more attention to it at the time, and we had a bite of biscuit, and chewed up our two lumps of dried beef before starting back.

CHAPTER IV

When we got back to camp the other party had not returned. Christy had set a few rabbit-snares in the hopes of snaring some rabbits during the night, as we did not like to fire our guns if we could possibly help it. For two reasons—first, we might bring an Indian party down on us, and our object was rescue, not fighting; secondly, we might alarm the people we were in pursuit of, our only hope of catching them being that, of course, they did not expect to be followed, and would not travel at their utmost speed.

Next day we were rewarded, and had roast rabbit for our breakfast; very good it was too after the everlasting boot-heel beef. Charlie and the Moose appeared soon after we got in, the former in the utmost dejection; but when he heard we had found the trail he brightened up wonderfully, and wanted to start at once; but we gently explained that if he needed no rest we did, and prevailed on him to wait as patiently as he might till day dawn.

The following evening saw us a good thirty-five miles on

our way. We travelled comparatively slowly at first, to make sure the Indians had not left one of their number behind as a spy to see if they were followed. The Moose marched the whole time on the right of the trail, and about a quarter of a mile ahead, so that if we suddenly came on an Indian lurking in ambush, the Moose would be in his path when he tried to regain his own people. During the day we passed two camp fires, showing the Indians were not travelling more than thirty miles a day at the outside; and at each fire we found a bit of wood marked in just the same way as I have already explained to you. This aroused our curiosity. What on earth could it mean? It had evidently been put on the fire intentionally, but who by and what for? That evening after supper I thought Charlie was asleep, but he suddenly jumped up, shouting, 'I have it.' He explained that he meant he had an idea of the meaning of the piece of wood, and he asked me to replace the piece found at the last fire (where we had camped) just as I found it. This I did, still quite mystified as to his idea. He said, 'Now, do you see these three lines all point together just like an arrow-head?' 'Well, what of that?' was my rejoinder. To which he answered only one word, a word which it is strictly forbidden to apply to one's brother. Charlie was very angry with me, almost for the first time in his life. 'Did you never notice,' he said, 'that arrow-heads are always used to point out the path or direction? Perhaps you don't know that the arrow on a map points to the north.' I was at once convinced that he had reasoned rightly. Now, to find out what it pointed to, we placed it on the ground in the position it was found, and then walked about forty steps in as straight a line as possible, Charlie telling me if I moved off the straight line. Bump, I had run my nose, which is not very short, against a great silver birch-tree. Brass, on examination of the tree, not my nose, said somebody else had been standing there before. A careful survey showed a small piece of bark was loose; it was taken off instantly, and on the inside was written, or rather scratched with a pin or something like it, 'Be quick; we are in small tent with one squaw. M.'

Charlie was wild with delight; there could be no doubt now we were on the right track and would soon be up with them if all went well. We followed them four days more, evidently gaining rapidly. On the evening of the fourth day the fires we came to were quite warm; we could not be more than one day's travel behind. Charlie proposed we should follow them the next day to within ten miles of their camp, and then make up the ten miles in the night and attack them just before sunrise.

Old Brass said we were not quite ready yet; and he explained that the Indians had two dogs which would be certain to bark and discover us to our enemies.

This was a poser; how could we get rid of the brutes? Old Brass counselled patience, and said we should not have long to wait; indeed, the next day no dogs' tracks were to be seen near the camp-fires, and the Indians had sold themselves for a pottage of dog. It then transpired that Old Brass had been carefully noting the daily decrease of dog, and that when we first took up the trail the Indians had six or seven canine friends, now, thank goodness, unable to bark from the quiet abodes to which they had been consigned.

Only one day and one night more and we should have our revenge. Towards evening we were all very weary, and plodding along very slowly. I was suddenly electrified by a loud howl from Brass, who was as usual leading. Before I divined what was happening, Brass was flying along the trail like lightning, the eagle feather in his scalp-lock bent quite flat from the rush of the air as he sped. Ten yards in front of him was another Indian, naked all but paint and in full war dress —a few feathers—running for dear life. All three of us dashed after them at our best pace, the fatigue and want of food quite forgotten in the excitement of the moment. If the Indian escaped, we were undone; he would warn his party and a surprise would be impossible. As we ran I could see Brass was closing on his foe, who was a stouter and more thickly-set man, not built for running, although not to be despised as a sprinter. Charlie was overtaking them both, and I was close up, Christy being hopelessly out of it. Charlie

was almost level with Brass when a loud war-whoop rent the air—a dull thud, and I saw a regular scrimmage of heads, legs, and bodies, all mixed up. They gradually sorted themselves and all stood up but one—the strange Indian. The handle of a tomahawk was standing out of his back, which Brass now took hold of and wrenched out, turning the man on to his back as he did so. A long knife was sticking in his right side, which the Moose restored to its proper sheath in his own belt without wiping. A few minutes' more conversation, and Brass took hold of the scalp-lock of the fallen man. We all looked the other way, and of course did not see what he was doing. In a moment the scalp was hanging in his belt after the blood had been wrung out. This is a phase of Indian fighting I never was able to acquire a taste for.

CHAPTER V

The Moose had been in front as usual, and on hearing the chase had run towards the trail just in time to intercept him, but too late to obtain his scalp, as Brass at that moment had thrown his tomahawk with unerring aim.

It was now necessary to attack that night. If the man did not return, in the morning he would be missed and a search made.

Our plans were quickly laid. We agreed to close on their camp about dusk. As soon as we could see to move, Brass was to howl once like a wolf to signify all was clear to rush in; and a few minutes later he was to howl again twice, on hearing which we were to rush on the two big tepees, with a loud hurrah to show Mary who it was. What an awful night that was: no one allowed to smoke or to sleep; obliged to keep quite still, I seemed to get cramp everywhere, and at times a sort of nervous feeling that I must get up and move about almost overcame me. But everything comes to him who waits; and at the first streak of day the wolf howled not far off, sending a strange thrill right through, from the crown of one's head to the sole of the foot. A moment, and we were crawling towards the tepees, which were just visible. Not a sound broke the stillness of the forest until the wolf howled again; and the

thrills once more invaded my spinal marrow, making me feel as if whole flocks of geese were walking over my grave.

Once more the howl swelled and sank. Before it had quite subsided, with a loud yell rather than hurrah we rushed on the nearest tent, Charlie and I neck and neck, Christy close behind us. A babel of shrieks and cries rose from the tepees; and as we gained the opening which serves as a door, we saw two Indians jammed and struggling frantically to get out. I can remember now the curious feeling of surprise I had at the softness of the human skull compared to the butt of a carbine, as I knew well how hard it felt compared to a fist. No firing was allowed, as we might wound or kill one of the girls. Charlie dashed into the tent; and almost as he did so, an Indian wriggled under the wall of the tepee, and rushed for the small tent standing about twenty yards away, where we could hear the girls screaming with terror and excitement. I rushed after him, but too late; he would get there first. Death was in his war-shout. He was bandaged. It was evidently Little Poplar, determined if he did not wed Mary no one else should. I heard Christy yell lie down, and I fell flat on my face as if by instinct, without stopping to think why. Almost at the same instant the report of Christy's pistol rang out. The chief threw up his hands and fell forward on his face, the tomahawk falling from his nerveless hands. The ball had been well aimed; he was shot through the spine, and could not stir an inch. His spirit soon fled to the happy hunting-ground. I rushed on into the little tent, but was overtaken by Charlie, who passed me and got in first. He was horror-struck: instead of Mary, three Indian girls were struggling on the ground, two trying to hold down one who held a knife. A kick from Charlie sent the knife flying, and in a moment one of the girls sprang up and threw her arms round his neck. It was Mary, dressed in full Indian garb, and with her face painted Indian fashion. No wonder I did not recognise her at once. A perfect tempest of cries and groans of the combatants outside suddenly sounded in my ears. Leaving Charlie and the girls to secure the squaw, who was still dangerous, I ran out. Christy and

TWO REVOLVER SHOTS
RANG OUT

Brass were fighting hand to hand with three Indians, while the poor Moose lay on the ground. No more would he follow the war-path in the land of the living. The keen edge of a tomahawk thrown with great force had laid open the brain. My advent turned the scale; the Indians fled at once. It would have been better for them had they fought it out, as Christy could not use his pistol in the *mêlée*, for fear of wounding his friends, but the moment they turned to run they delivered themselves into his hand. Bang, bang! two bullets struck the farthest man, who pitched straight on to his head; again two revolver shots rang out, and the second man fell; luckily for the third, Christy's revolver was now empty, or his fate would have been sealed. In these days the revolver, not the sword, is the queen of weapons in the hand of a man who can use it.

The fight was over; it had barely lasted two minutes. Our success was most complete, but we had to deplore the loss of poor Moose, whom we had grown to esteem and like. He was a taciturn man, as most Indians are, but his thoughts were always devoted to the object in view, and in many ways he proved of the utmost assistance to us.

We all returned to Poplar's tepee—that is, Christy, Brass, and myself. Not a soul remained; all the squaws had fled into the surrounding woods, and our only prisoner was the Indian girl, Many Beads, who had been captured in Mary's tepee.

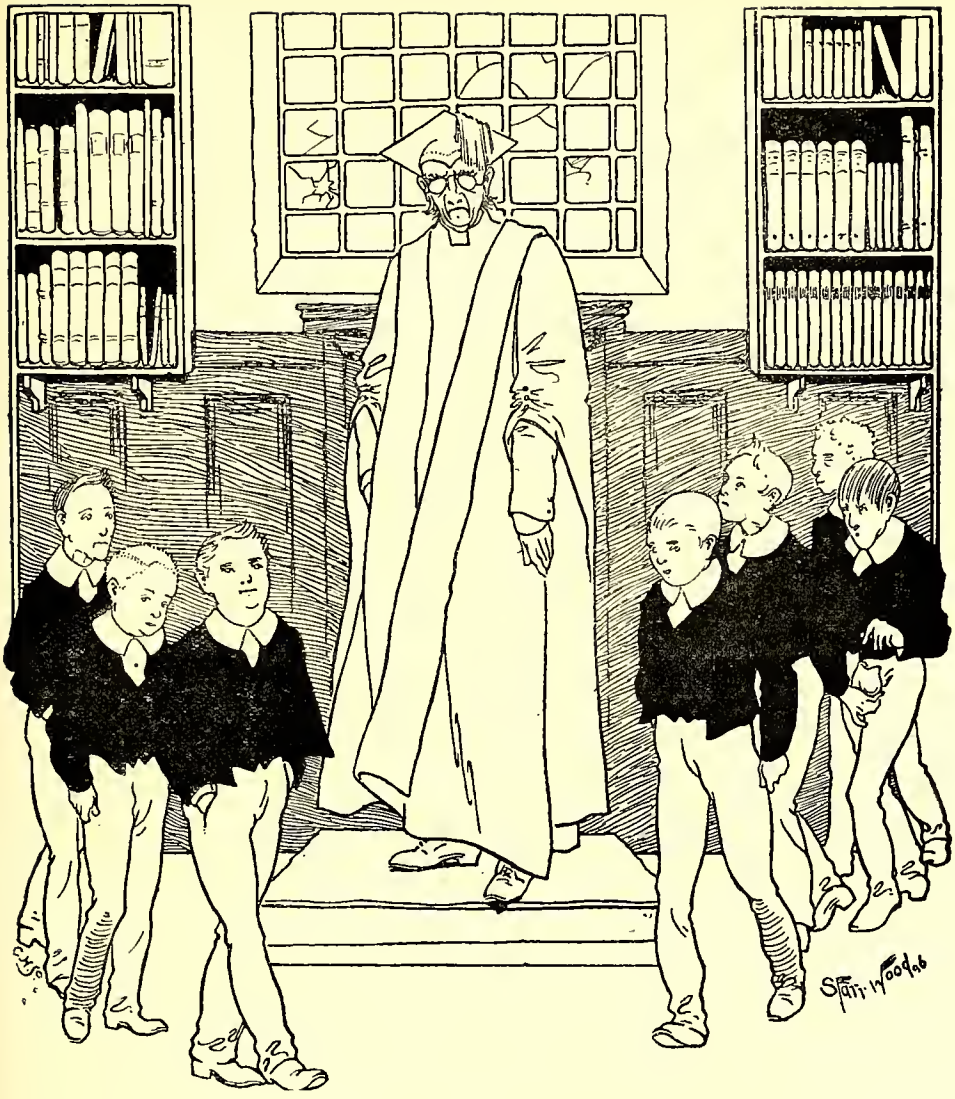
Brass said we must be off without delay. I went to tell Charlie to get Mary and her maid ready, as we should start back immediately, while Brass and Christy proceeded to cut small trees to make a bier for the Moose (an Indian is never buried). It was soon done, and he was laid to sleep soundly on his rough bed of crossed sticks, about eight feet from the ground, to preserve the body from wild beasts. His rifle, tomahawk, and knife we laid beside him, also his ration of food, his pipe and tobacco, as is customary, so that he might not want in his travels to the happy hunting-grounds the Indians believe in.

We left our comrade very sadly, with his face turned to the skies, and no company but the ghastly dead.

The girls were now ready to accompany us. The vermilion and gamboge had been washed from their faces; and very comely Mary looked in her Indian get-up, albeit her face was thin and pale. The short skirt and fringed leggings are certainly more becoming to a woman than knickerbockers and stockings.

We struck off direct through the woods to Fort Pitt, and arrived there after some hard marching. It was a sufficient reward for all our exertions to witness the meeting between Mary and her mother. The poor old lady was quite overcome; nothing that she could do was enough for us. Brass returned to his own tribe, 'the Blackfeet,' a rich man, possessed of quite a herd of ponies, while Christy rejoiced in a pair of the most lovely silver-mounted pistols ever seen, in token of his prowess with that arm, and also in a satisfactory balance at his banker's, a condition of affairs he was quite unaccustomed to.

The A Deans returned to the old Canadian city of Mount Royal for the winter, and in the early spring Charlie and I followed them. The old bells of Notre Dame rang out a merry peal one fine May morning. I was best man, and you can guess the bride and bridegroom. A handsome couple they made, their faces reflecting clearly the love and devotion in their hearts.



JONES'S CATAPULT

SUCH a row for a smashed piece of glass—
The Doctor won't let the thing pass—
Five hundred lines each,
And a jolly long preach,
'Cause Jones aimed askew—the young ass!

LITTLE BILL, A VIOLET-POWDER MONKEY: A Legend of a Great Naval Victory

HE yarn I 've got to tell you, I have heard
my grand-dad tell,
He were a scorcher too, he were, none
ever yarn'd as well;
He was brimmin' full of stories, and
though none of 'em were bad,
We 'd heard 'em all so often, they well-
nigh druv us mad.
We 'd heard about The Midshipmite, and
Powder Monkey too,
And gallant little Jims and Dicks, boy-heroes not a few;
But one fine day he told us of another little kid,
Who didn't cry, nor pose, nor rant, as all the others did.

So we heard of Little Bill
(Sing, my lads, yeo ho!)
What that sentence means, I fear
None of you will know.
Yeo ho! rhymes to foe,
So does Bill to kill,
So I guess he chuck'd 'em in
Just the rhymes to fill.

'Twas '98 my grand-dad said, and then we knew would come
As tough a yarn as e'er he 'd spun, for when he 'd sipp'd his
rum,
And started on his memories of eighteen-seventeen,
Why none of us could tackle him, and we 're not very green.
'Twas such a fight you never saw, a hundred ships to one,
And all our shot was fired away, we 'd busted every gun.
Our Admiral kill'd, and all our captains lying in a heap,
When Bill the Admiral's baby, woke up from his long, sweet
sleep.

As he woke he gave a frown,
(Sing, my lads, yeo ho!)

(*To the tune of a well-known Song.*)

Rubb'd his little hairless crown
Hitch'd his pinny, so.
Turn'd his quid and said a few
Naughty words quite low,
As he saw the battle-ships
'Gainst us in a row.

Now little Bill was thirsty, and he miss'd his milk and rum,
He miss'd his little rubber ring to ease his little gum.
We took him from his cradle, for we thought he'd pipe his eye,
And the sailors crowded round him all ready for to die.
'Cheer up, my lads,' says Little Bill, 'we'll beat 'em yet you see,'
With that he gropes, and then pulls out his pocket handkerchee,
And boldly marching forward, without a single shout,
He turns him to the enemy and simply WIPED 'EM OUT.

All he did, that Little Bill
(Sing, my lads, yeo ho!)
Is what every Jack Tar will
When he meets the foe.
So ho, to and fro,
(Sing, my lads, yeo ho!)
Here's a health to Baby Bill
Dead for long ago.

G.

THE CAT CINDERELLA.
BY SIR RICHARD BURTON.

PRINCESS
ZEZOLLA

THE CAT CINDERELLA[1]: A STORY FROM 'THE PENTAMERON.' BY SIR RICHARD BURTON.

ONCE upon a time there lived a Prince who was a widower, and he possessed an only daughter, so dear to him that he saw nought but by her eyes: and the Princess had a governess, who taught her all kinds of fancy work, and educated her in many other feminine endowments.

Now this woman made a great show of affection for her pupil, more in sooth than can be expressed. The Prince took to himself a wife after a little while, and she chanced to be an evilly-disposed woman, who looked with disfavour on her charming step-daughter, treating her with contempt and coldness and spite, so much so that the unhappy child used to complain of the ill-treatment she received to her teacher, saying to her, 'Ah me, would that thou hadst been my darling mother, thou who lovest me, and art always caressing me!' And so long did she continue this song that the governess at last lent a pleased ear to it, and, blinded by Satan, spake to the child thus, 'If thou wilt do as I bid thee, I will become thy mother, and thou shalt be dear unto me as my very eyes.'

She was going to end her say, when Zezolla (thus was the Princess hight) interrupted her, and said:

'Pardon me if I thus stop the words upon thy lips: I ken quite well that thou lovest me: therefore say no more, but teach me only by what art we can come to the end of our desires. Write thou, and I will sign the deed.'

The teacher rejoined, 'Open thine ears, and hearken well, and thou shalt have bread as white as snow. When thy sire fareth to the chase, say to thy step-mother that thou wouldest like to wear one of the old raiments which are to be found in the large chest stored away, as it is thy desire to save for high occasions the one thou wearest now. Thy step-mother, who loveth above all things to see thee in rags, will at once

[1] Translated by Captain Sir Richard Burton, K.C.M.G., from the Neapolitan of Giovanni Battista Basile, Count of Torone. By permission of the Executors of the late Lady Burton.

consent, and will go and open the chest, and will say to thee, "Hold up the lid," and thou wilt hold it: and when she searcheth therein, thou wilt let it fall, and thus her neck will be broken. And after this thou knowest thy sire will do anything, even to false coinage, to please thee: therefore, when he caresseth thee, beseech thou him to take me to wife: and then wilt thou be blessed and happy, since thou wilt be the mistress of my life.'

Having listened to the bidding of her governess, every hour seemed a thousand years to her until she could execute her teacher's rede. And after a time she did so; and when the mourning for her step-mother's untimely end had passed, she began to speak to her sire, telling him that she would be very happy if he would wed her teacher.

The Prince at first heard not; but the daughter kept ever speaking and persuading him, till at last he lent a willing ear to her desires, and took Carmosina (thus was the teacher hight) to wife, and ordered great joyance and feasting in all his realm. Now it so happened that, whilst the bride and bridegroom were making merry, Zezolla was looking out of one of the windows in the palace, and beheld a pigeon flying about, which at last settled upon a low wall in front of her, and addressing her in human voice, spake thus: 'When thou desirest to have something, send to the pigeon of the fairies in the island of Sardinia, and thou shalt have thy wish.'

The new step-mother for five or six days caressed and petted the young Princess, seating her in the best place at table, giving her the choicest morsels, arraying her in the finest raiment: but having passed a short time, forgetting the deed Zezolla had done to serve her (and sad the soul that hath a bad master), she brought forward six daughters of her own, whom she had kept hidden secretly: and so much art did she use that, having ingratiated her daughters in the step-father's favour, he lost all love and affection for his own child, so that (argue to-day and speak to-morrow) Zezolla was sent from the chamber to the kitchen, from the dais to the fireplace, from the silken and golden raiment to the coarse cloth, and from the sceptre to the spit. And not only did

she change her estate, but her name was changed also, and she was called the Cat Cinderella.

So it chanced one day of the days that the Prince, her sire, had to journey to the island of Sardinia on matters concerning his realm; and before departing he asked each one of his step-daughters—Mperia, Calamita, Sciorella, Diamante, Colommina, and Pascarella—what they would that he should bring to them on his return. One asked for fine raiment, another jewels for her hair, another cosmetics and pomade for the skin, another divers playthings to pass the time, another fruits, another flowers: and at the last, in contempt for his own daughter, he turned and said to her, 'And thou, what wilt thou?' and she answered, 'I want nought, but I desire that thou recommend me to the pigeon of the fairies, bidding her tell them that they would send me somewhat; and an thou shouldest forget to do my bidding, mayest thou not be able to stir forward or backward from thy place. Remember well my saying; thine is the weapon, and thine is the sleeve.'

The Prince fared to Sardinia, ended all his affairs, bought all the things desired by his step-daughters, and forgot quite Zezolla's bidding. He took ship for his return; but do as they would, the ship would not move from its place, neither backward nor forward, and it seemed glued to its mooring. The vessel's master was in despair, and in the evening, being very tired, he lay down and slept. And he beheld a fairy in his sleep, who said to him, 'Knowest thou wherefore thy ship cannot sail? 'Tis because the Prince thou hast on board hath failed to keep his promise to his daughter, remembering all his step-daughters, and forgetting his own flesh and blood.'

The master awoke from sleep and related his dream to the Prince, who, confessing the fault he had committed, fared at once to the fairies' grotto, and recommending his daughter to them, begged that they would send her somewhat: and at his words, out of the cave came a beauteous young lady, who said to him that she thanked his daughter for her kind remembrance, and that she bade her take for love of her these her gifts: and thus saying, she gave him a date-tree, a

mattock, a golden bucket, and a silken napkin, the one to transplant, and the others to cultivate the tree.

The Prince marvelled at the present, took leave of the fairy, and journeyed with the ship towards his country. On his arrival he gave his step-daughters that which they had bidden him bring, and lastly to his daughter the gifts of the fairy. Zezolla accepted the gift with great joy, and transplanted the date-tree in a larger and finer vase, and watered it, and dug round it morning and evening, and dried it with the silken napkin, and in four days it grew to a woman's stature: and the fairy came out of it one morning, saying, 'What wilt thou?' and the Princess answered, 'I would like to fare from this house, but should desire that my step-sisters should not know of it': and the fairy rejoined, 'Each time that thou wouldest fare out and enjoy thyself, come to the date-tree, and say:

"My date-tree tall and golden,
With a golden mattock I dug thee around,
With a golden bucket I watered thee,
With a silken napkin I wiped thee dry:
Undress thyself, and robe thou me."

And when thou wouldest undress, change the last verse, and say, "Undress thou me, and robe thyself."'

Now it so chanced that a great festival was held by the King: and the daughters of the teacher went to it in fine raiment, and jewellery, and ribbons, and fine shoes, and flowers, and perfumed with roses and posies. As soon as they departed, Zezolla ran to the date-tree, and repeated the verse taught her by the fairy: and at once she was arrayed as a queen, and put on a steed, and twelve pages followed her, all dressed with luxury and taste: and she went where her step-sisters had gone before her, who knew her not, and were ready to die with envy.

But as fate decreed, came to that same place the King, who, on beholding Zezolla, fell enamoured of her, and desired one of his most trusty followers to learn who was this beauty and where she dwelt. The King's servant at once followed the Princess; but Zezolla, perceiving the snare, threw a

handful of golden coins to the ground, at the sight of which the man forgot to follow the courser as he stooped to gather the gold, which Zezolla had begged the date-tree to give her for this same purpose. Thus she had time to run into the house and undress herself as the fairy had taught her.

And when those witches, her step-sisters, arrived home, they said many things in praise of the festival, of what they had done and what they had seen, to cause her vexation, as they supposed. In the meanwhile the follower returned to the King, and related to him about the handful of coins and how he had lost sight of her, at which the King waxed wroth, and said to him that for a few dirty pieces of gold he had deprived him of his delight, but that he would forgive him this time, but he must be sure to follow her on the next feast-day, and to discover for him who this beautiful bird was.

The next feast-day the step-sisters went their way all bedecked in finery, and left the despised Zezolla at the fire-place. As soon as they were gone, she ran to the date-tree and said the usual charm: and some young girls came forward, some with the mirror, some with the perfumes, some with the curling-tongs, some with the comb, some with the hair-pins, and others with the raiment, some with the necklace, and others with flowers: and decking her like a bride, she looked like the sun, and setting her in a carriage, with six horses, with footmen and servants and pages in livery, she arrived at the same place where had been held the festival heretofore: and she lit more marvel and envy in her step-sisters' breasts, and greater love and fiercer fire in the King's heart.

But having departed, the same servant followed her: but she threw at him a handful of jewels and pearls and precious stones, and he could not withstand the temptation to gather them, as they were too precious to lose. And the Princess had time to reach her home and to undress as usual. The man returned to the King, who said, 'By the bones of my ancestors, if thou findest not this lovely being for me, I will give thee as many cuffs as thou hast hairs in thy beard.'

The third festival came: and the step-sisters having departed, Zezolla went to the date-tree, and saying the

charmed verse, she was at once apparelled most splendidly, and seated in a golden carriage, followed by many servants, pages, and retainers. And thus she caused more envy in the sisters' breasts: and the King's follower stuck to the carriage. And the Princess, sighting him always beside her, said to the coachman, 'Hasten on,' and the horses raced with such speed that nothing could be discerned clearly, and in the fury of the race a slipper of the Princess flew out of the carriage.

The servant, unable to follow the carriage, which seemed to fly, picked up the slipper, and brought it to the King, and related all that had happened; and the King, taking it, said, 'If the foundation is so beautiful, what must be the house? O beauteous candlestick, which holdest the candle that consumeth me! O trivet of the beauteous kettle where boileth my life! O fine cloth, to which is tied the net of love wherewith thou hast caught this soul! I embrace thee and hold thee to my bosom; and if I cannot have the tree, I worship the root; and if I cannot hend the chapiter, I kiss the foundation. Thou wert the covering for a white foot, and now art thou the pulley of this blackened heart; by thee stood thy fellow, an inch tall and more, who is the tyrant of this life of mine; and by thee groweth so much sweetness in my soul, whilst I gaze upon thee and own thee!' And thus saying, he called his secretary, and commanded him to send the public crier to publish a ban that all the women in the land should be invited to a banquet by the King.

And the day came. O goodness me, what a banquet was that, and what joyance and amusements were there, and what food: pastry, and pies, and roast, and balls of mincemeat, and macaroni, and ravioli, enough to feed an army! All the women came: noble and commoner, rich and poor, old and young, wives and maidens, beautiful and ugly; and the King arrayed in costly raiment, tried the slipper on each one's foot to see if it would fit one of them, hoping thus to find the one he was seeking: but he found not what he sought, and he came nigh unto despair.

At last, commanding perfect silence, he said to them, 'Return to-morrow to do penance with me: but an ye love

me, leave not a single female in the house, be she who she may.' Said the Prince, 'I have a daughter who sitteth always in the kitchen by the fireplace, because she is not worthy any one's notice, and she deserveth not to sit at thy table.' Said the King, 'Let this be the very one at the head of all: such is my desire.' Therefore all departed, and on the morrow all came again, and with the daughters of Carmosina came also Zezolla, and when the King beheld her, he knew her for the one he sought: but he dissembled.

The banquet was more sumptuous than the last, and when all had eaten their fill, the King began to try on the slipper: but no sooner came he to Zezolla, than the foot was caught by love like steel to the magnet; and the King surprised her by putting his arms around her, and seating her under the dais and putting the crown on her head, he commanded that all should do her obeisance as to their Queen. The step-sisters, beholding this sight, full of wrath and envy, and being unable to support this blow without showing their chagrin, departed quite quietly towards their mother's home; confessing, in spite of themselves, that

'Tis a madman's deed to dispute the stars' decree.'

THE 'BONAVENTURE.' By Paul Creswick

(Three chapters from the Memoirs of Mr. Fairfax, of Devon)

CHAPTER I

SHOWING HOW WE DANCE ATTENDANCE UPON A WRECK, AND HOW CHANCE AND A CERTAIN NOTARY SET ME UP IN BUSINESS

TO make a long story short, I ran away to sea so soon as I had the chance, falling on my feet very fortunately at once, as the mate of the trading schooner on which I served, as a sort of cabin-boy, mightily interested himself in me from the outset; and he would make me come to his bunk at nights to tell him some of the things I had read in my books—for I was a fair scholar (thanks to my Aunt Prissy), and had a good memory too; then he would bring out some papers from his box, and tell me of the wonderful happenings writ in them, they being a true account of his dealings with pirates and the like in the China seas.

We traded betwixt Plymouth and Bristol, touching many smaller places on our way; and I suppose earned good money too; for they were as honest a lot on that ship as ever I have come across, and we dealt fairly with the owners and each other in all our trips—nor did we do any smuggling.

At the end of two years I came home to my people—like any prodigal son, save that I had sent them many letters in the meanwhile; and great rejoicings there were, for I was made second mate already, because of my learning and knowledge of books. I do well remember my dear father laying his hand on my head, and praying God that I might always be an honest and clean-living man; 'for,' says he, 'so sure as you are both of these, you shall never feel hunger or thirst in this life. The Almighty looks after His own as carefully as does the devil,' he says. And then he lifted his hand and looked straight in my eyes, and I could see that he was proud of me, and that I was forgiven for the running away.

I carried some cheap clothes back to our ship from Plymouth, and found that I could do a good sale with such

things at some of the small ports, there being no other to rival me; and on the next trip I made good money at the business, and was able to bring home to Churston the following year as much as thirty silver shillings. I kept on with my friend the first mate, who had become captain now of our little schooner, and continued to prosper in a small way, though I was far from content at what the sea had brought me up to then, the visions I had had from my books being as yet as misty and unreal as when I first had imagined them.

I had many talks with Culpepper, my good friend and senior officer, and at last we conceived the idea of running a ship for ourselves, though where the money was to come from remained a stumbling-block for some time, until my mother got to hear of the scheme. She plied my father on the subject for the next six months, and finally we did all go down to Plymouth to see what could be done; but the price was too dear, and Culpepper and I had to take our respective positions once again on the little trader. Thus passed away two or three years, leaving me nigh on to two-and-twenty.

My life indeed began to bid fair after all to be as steady and uneventful as might be, and I to turn out a most respectable youth despite the spoiling in my early years; but at last a chance came, and you may be sure I was not slow to seize hold upon it.

It seems that a great merchantman bound for the Port of London had within sight of her own shores been foundered through trusting to a bad pilot; and that close by the beach at Land's End she lay all battered and washed by every tide, a fair prey for the wreckers and such like wretches—for whose malefactions Cornwall has ever had an evil name. Now our owners had interest in the cargo that was lying there at the mercy of any thief, and we were told off to form a guard over the great vessel, with orders to beat off any that approached suspiciously, or too near. After a month or so at this business of cat and mouse, wherein the mouse invariably got the better of it, Culpepper takes a sickening to the thing, and puts our ship back for the Three Towns (as they call Plymouth) in a great show of temper.

Our owners and he had a fine argument once we were returned, and my friend stormed and swore very lustily at their stupidity. 'What in the name of all that's sensible,' cried he, 'is the use of our paddling about all day long round and round a dirty old hulk, exposing ourselves to all sorts of weather, when the rascals only come at nights? Give me cats' eyes, and I'll do something for it,' he roared, being a hot-tempered fellow, though very lovable at bottom. And then in a heat he turns to me, who stood with him in their office all of a tremble at his violence: 'Why, Tony,' he says, 'I won't do it, not for the King himself. I'll break stones on the moors rather—I'll take to holding horses or swabbing the deck——'

'You sha'n't have the chance of swabbing ours, sir,' says one of the owners—I forget now which; 'you shall do whatever you please—I forfeit your commission, sir, and bid you leave this room at once!'

Then there was a scene; and we crowned it by stamping out of the office with our faces all flushed, and our dismissals in our pockets—with the little bit of money that was owing to us. And mightily glum did we look next morning to find our places filled and the little trader off again to Land's End.

At this juncture Culpepper was for joining the wreckers and making war on our late vessel, but wiser counsels prevailed. And soon I determined to return to Tor Bay, taking him with me as my guest. 'We will discuss the matter with my father,' said I; 'he will advise us well, you may be sure.' And I got him at last to my way of thinking.

But my dear father did more than advise, for he now made up his mind that I should have my own vessel and trade for myself. To this end he sold some of the land, though with a sore heart, I expect, and we journeyed once again to the Three Towns. This time we managed to buy a steady little brig that was just big enough to hold six, and carry a fair cargo as well; and Culpepper standing in with the purchase-money, the boat was made over to us, and we began trading at last as our own masters. We had hardly done preparing for the first trip, when along comes that chance, of which I

A STEADY LITTLE BRIG

spoke a while ago, disguised in the person of a notary—a little wizened, dried-up sort of man, who so continually took snuff that he was always wanting a clean frill to his shirt.

'You are making a fine start in life, young gentlemen,' says he, with his little eyes peering at our boat; then he came up to the edge of the quay wherein we were anchored. 'A glorious fine day, sir,' he says, addressing my father, who could not bring himself to go back home to Churston until we were fairly under way. Then when he had got his answer, he makes as though he would leave us—then alters his mind, and helps himself to another pinch of snuff. 'Where do you trade?' he asks, coming back.

'Betwixt Bristol and here,' I replied.

''Tis too far,' says he; 'your boat will be swamped by the great waves out yonder'—and he pointed to the bar whereon the white surf was always and for ever breaking.

'We shall see,' I returned, and went on with my work: but he still stood there, with his little roving eyes taking us all in very thoughtfully.

'There is a good ship come to grief, though,' he goes on; 'and near by where you must pass—if you go to Bristol City. She lies at the Land's End——'

'I know,' cried Culpepper wrathfully; 'you need not describe her to me——'

'Why, do you know her, then?' and the little fellow affected astonishment. '*There* is good ballast going cheap, if you like,' he says, turning sharply to me.

'What do you mean?' asked I.

'Her cargo is being sold as salvage,' says he, 'on account of the difficulty in getting it out of her. . . . Now with your little boat and strong arms, you might make a fortune . . . granted you can keep quiet tongues——'

'We can do *that*,' said I; 'but the work must be honest, or we will have none of it. What do you propose that we should do, for I see that we are to have a partner who will want his share of the fortune.'

'That's what I call talking,' cries he; 'and now I will tell you the whole matter. There is on board of that wallowing

ship,' and he waved his arm out towards the west, 'no less than a hundred chests of good China tea, the same that is selling for twenty shillings the pound in the London markets. Each chest holds twenty pounds of tea—'tis an easy calculation——'

'If the tea were not all spoiled,' said my father, with a laugh.

'Now, that is just what they think and say about here,' says our little friend, speaking all of a hurry in his eagerness; 'they are fools, all of them, and mad. . . . The tea is in wooden chests, true enough, but every chest is lined with tin, and no water can possibly enter them.'

At this we were all of a shake, sure enough; and I asked the notary to step on board and give us particulars. He soon made it clear that his information was reliable in every way, and that the tea being sold as salvage would escape duty; also he enlightened us as to why he had chosen us to help him in his scheme; for he very plausibly explained that the mere fact of his buying salvage at the sale would excite suspicion, as he was known in all the Three Towns. Then our boat was well understood to have changed hands, and we being beginners would only be regarded as ignorant fellows, with more money than brains, were we to buy. No one would oppose us; the field would be all our own; only—there would be danger in getting the stuff out of the vessel, and great tact required in the after disposal of it. That was the part that our friend purposed playing himself.

At this Culpepper looked askant at me; but after a moment's thought he brought his hand sharply down on his knee. 'We'll do it,' he cried, with an oath (at which my father shook his head); 'for we shall then get the better of our late employers in a very satisfactory manner!'

'Perchance this very tea was consigned to them?' suggested my father.

'Not so,' I replied; 'for then they would know of the tin linings. Their part of the cargo is more like to be hardware of some sort, or possibly preserves in glass-stoppered bottles——'

'Ay,' said Culpepper, nodding his head very wise; 'the Chinese are great lovers of sweet things; they do pickle ginger in a very wondrous and agreeable fashion. Ay, I make no doubt you are near the truth, my lad—as near as makes no difference to us. . . . If so be we can come to terms,' he added, turning to the notary, 'we 'll do it—and do it handsome.'

CHAPTER II

SETTING FORTH THE STRANGE HAPPENINGS AT LAND'S END, AND HOW WE ARE MERCIFULLY SPARED FROM DEATH

I need scarcely say that for the next day or so we were all in a fine flutter; my dear father, bless him! being as eager for the thing as any of us, having always a sharp eye for business, like most west-countrymen; and we soon got the matter arranged, thanks to our friend the notary, who gave us careful instructions—indeed, I must admit that for the first part of it we others were little more than figure-heads, he virtually doing all the work.

We bought up the tea at a dirt-cheap price, notwithstanding the significant nods and winks of the buyers and idlers at the sale. One of our late employers was there too, and he laughed very sneeringly at our bids.

'Have you heard of that new company that is being floated,' cried he across the saleroom, so loudly that all eyes and ears were turned his way; 'they are going to sift the sands of Plymouth—to extract the gold that is there—so they say——'

'And they have equipped a fine fleet of vessels to sail to the moon,' shouted back some other zany; 'so as to bring green cheeses to Devon!'

At this sally there was a great laugh at our expense, but I pretended not to notice it. Culpepper, however, was all on fire in a moment. 'You shall be glad to take tea with us yet,' he roars, mightily red in the face; nor would he have stopped there if I had not caught hold of his arm and given it a good pinching.

However, we bought our tea. And now there was only the

shipping of it to our little *Bonaventure*—this, we were to discover, being by far the worst part; for when we were gotten to the wreck we found she had canted over most inconveniently, so that we were bound to wait for high tides before we could get aboard of her at all. The other buyers of salvage (there were only two of them) had not yet arrived, having (so we afterwards learned) determined to see how we fared before taking further risk; indeed, they had only bought because, being Scotsmen, both of them, they could not forgo the chance of a bargain.

Thus we had the wreck all to ourselves—leaving out the wreckers, who seeing us so determined, and with a little cannon aboard too, contented themselves with merely watching us from a respectful distance—at first. I say at first, though I believe they were only maturing their plans to get the better of us, for they are a most bloody-minded, evil lot, as you may well believe from their trade. Our crew were as follows: My father and myself, our good friend Culpepper, Mr. Ferret, the notary, who was really of small use on board ship, and two country lads, whom we had picked up 'beachcombing,' as they call it, and engaged for the trifling wage of a penny a day. But these last made up in strength what they lacked in experience; and having very fair weather, we managed our ship remarkably well all through.

After one or two attempts we got hold of the right way of dealing with the wreck. This was to wait until the tide was nigh upon full and she standing up a goodish deal more straight, though it was always like climbing up the side of a house; then to run our little *Bonaventure* close under her bows, and watching a chance, one of us would spring from our yards fair on to her deck. This was a ticklish business, for unless one jumped very confidently—a difficult thing from the crosstrees of a little boat—one would either fall short and go souse into the water, or else would come a fine cropper on the smooth and slippery deck, then instantly slide down and shoot out through one of the scuppers.

The thing was to dig your toes into her directly you touched, and seize hold upon anything projecting—such as an

eye-bolt or one of the loose ends of her rigging; and as I generally managed best on these occasions, the task of boarding her nearly always fell to me.

Once safe, I would make a good foothold, and throw them the rope which I had first placed round about my waist; then Culpepper could get aboard tolerably easily, and we would both clamber down to the hold—which task fortunately was not so troublesome—and make shift to get at our tea. It will be wondered, perhaps, why we did not always keep moored alongside, and so save half our trouble; but this was too risky, on account of the continual settling down of the hulk—besides, there were the land-folk to consider, and we did not care to be too near them o' nights.

The chests were not so wonderfully heavy, and were of course at the top, so that we could comfortably bring them up one at a time, and ship them, while the tide was at full and we had the chance, into the *Bonaventure* at the rate of a dozen each tide. The revenue-officers, duly apprised of our purchase, came aboard of us once or twice to see that we took nothing else, though why the authorities should have so troubled themselves to stop us taking goods that were bound in a few weeks' time to be swallowed up by the hungry sea, I cannot imagine—more especially as they did not seek to take anything for themselves. A great and sinful waste, I call it—but so probably did the wreckers, as my father reminded me.

We got as many as seventy of the chests stowed into the belly of the snug little *Bonaventure* before anything untoward occurred; but every succeeding day had seen our work more difficult; and the continual watch that had to be kept upon the longshoremen was a great strain upon us all. In point of fact, we were half a mind to be content with what we had, and give up trying to get all the tea; but Culpepper was as obstinate a fellow as ever I did meet, and would have all that he had paid for, cost him what it might.

As I have said, the weather had been very fine; but there had not been signs wanting that an end was coming to it. On the eighth day I noticed that the sky was all bedraggled with

thin misty little lines—'mare's tail' they call it; and the sun sank to his bed in the west in a great mass of fiery-red clouds, as though he were some volcano spouting them forth. I drew my father's attention to this, and he shared my view that it would be as well to put back at once for Plymouth; but Culpepper would have none of it, and the notary, seeing money trembling in the balance, cast in his vote with him. We therefore elected to stay, but decided to anchor in safer water near by Penzance, starting earlier than was usual in order to effect this.

On our way we hailed a smart trim-built little ship that was making for Whitesand Bay (so they said), and warned them of our fears, which they derided altogether; so that after a while Culpepper would have us heave to and go back. I was dead opposed to this, but he stuck to it so firmly, saying that he was quite sure the stranger vessel meant mischief to our friend the wreck, that at last we turned also and sailed back after them.

A fresh breeze had sprung up by now, and the first shades of night were already deepening. The sky still glowed like some distant burning fire, and there was that strange restless little noise from the sea which ever foreruns a storm. It was a fairly clear evening, though, being only in May as yet, and we could just distinguish the lights of the small vessel we had spoken. I found it chilly on deck, and went below for a spell; but Culpepper must needs stay above, lurching about the ship and chewing tobacco.

So the night wore on until we had got back close outside the wreck, when we dropped anchor. The air grew quiet for a brief spell and the coldness increased, so that I shivered. Presently down comes Culpepper all in a bustle, his eyes fair starting out of his head with the news he had got for me.

'They're here, Tony,' cried he; 'did I not tell you so? I heard the noise of the chains as their anchor ran out—d——n it all, they'll all beat us yet!'

'Steady,' said I, though excited enough; 'let us be circumspect——'

'Circumspect be hanged!' roared he; 'I tell you that our

goods are being stolen under our very noses, and you sit there like some moon-calf the while. It 's time for action, Tony, my lad; it 's time for us to give them the pleasant information that we are here, and mean to hold by our own.'

'Just so,' put in my father very quietly, 'but you do not know for certain that this stranger vessel means any harm. Besides, they will have seen us by now——'

'You had better get yourselves ready,' replied Culpepper, very short, 'for there 's going to be trouble this night, or my name 's not what it is'; and he strode back to the deck mighty offended.

I followed him there, and found, sure enough, that the vessel we had seen off Penzance was right up under the bows of the wreck. The moon was struggling through the clouds by now, and there could be no doubt about the matter. Also, I noticed, as I glanced towards the shore, that there were a number of lights moving about the beach—showing, too, that our friends the longshoremen and their allies were fully prepared to make the best of our fancied absence.

There was about half a gale blowing; but it was gusty and fitful, and more threatening than anything else. And so we determined to stand by and watch—waiting events rather than anticipating them. This was dead against Culpepper's advice—he wanted to fire off our gun at once and then rush in upon the other boat; but we managed to pacify him by promising to do this if the stranger was seen to be injuring our interests.

Our thoughts and attention were all round about the wreck, leaving out the two far more important factors in the case—the impending storm and the land-folk; nor should we have been very quick to remember either of them, had it not been for a sudden gleam of moonlight through a rift in the clouds, which showed us only too plainly that the wreckers meant mischief, there being a boatful of men creeping round by the far side of the hulk. On a sudden it flashed in upon me that they thought we had come back, and so meant capturing our vessel and the goods they had seen us so laboriously removing—never doubting that it must be some-

thing worth having, for us to take all the pains we had. I mentioned this to my father; but though inclined to agree with me, he thought that the shore-folk must have seen that there were two vessels by now. . . . Still, we were not very far in, and it was a dark night on the whole, so I think that we were not noticed, either by those on land or by the others, who were briskly engaged with the wreck.

I have said the wind was blowing fitfully, although rather boisterous; but there was now a distant booming sound, and the gale sensibly freshened. The roar of the breakers by the great rocks sounded louder, and a few drops of rain came whisking into our faces with the wind. Our boat began to feel the strain too, and for the next few moments it took all our attention getting her close-reefed and ready for an emergency.

Meanwhile we had, of course, lost all sight of the boatful of men—and the wreck, too, for the matter of that—and could only wait with what patience we could find for anything that might happen, Culpepper storming the while at our inactivity, and anticipating the worst of evils that were to fall to us now through our neglecting his advice. I got fair vexed with him at last, and told him to keep his breath for the fighting, if he was so sure it would come to that.

So we waited, our little gun loaded so full by Culpepper that I made no doubt it would burst as soon as we attempted to fire it off; our sails snugly reefed, our swords ready drawn, and all thoughts of sleep clean banished from our minds. Suddenly there came a flash of light from somewhere near the wreck, followed by a sharp report; then another flash, then two or three together; then came clearly the sound of firing, despite the roaring of the wind.

At this we determined to stand in a trifle nearer, and at some risk weighed anchor accordingly. When this was done our ship rode easier; but we soon found ourselves running too quick towards the shore, and I half regretted our haste. That desperate fighting was going on by the wreck we could no longer doubt; the shouting of men and the firing of the guns showed only too plainly that some black business was afoot. We cast anchor again, but she only dragged the

ground, we being over a sandy bottom; still, this did retard us a little, and gave us pause to consider our best course.

The matter was solved for us while we stood hesitating, for all of a moment there springs up a great sheet of flame from the wreck, dazzling our eyes and making night into blinding day on the instant; then comes darkness as sudden as the light, then a deafening roar, silencing for a moment the shrieking wind and muttering sea; then dense clouds of smoke puffing in our faces like some evil fog, save that it smelled fifty times more vile, and was scorching hot too. Our little *Bonaventure* staggered with us under the shock, and great wave upon wave belched up and drove us so rapidly to the shore that nothing could save us from it or the foaming surf that we could now so plainly hear. It was a critical moment, and I think we had all given ourselves up for lost, when fortunately our anchor caught upon something, the cables strained, buzzing like bees with the sudden vibration, then became taut . . . and held us firm and safe.

We were close in, though, and no mistake, being right under the lee of the cliffs; this, too, was a lucky thing for us, for here we were out of the stress of the storm. The smoke cleared off gradually, and for a moment the moon peeped out hurriedly, giving us a clear view of the sea and shore. There was a crowd of folk on the beach at about three furlongs distance; but the sea was quite clear, there being no sign either of the wreck or of the stranger vessel.

'God rest their souls,' said my father, very solemn, and pointing with his finger, 'and give us thankful hearts.' To which we did all say Amen!

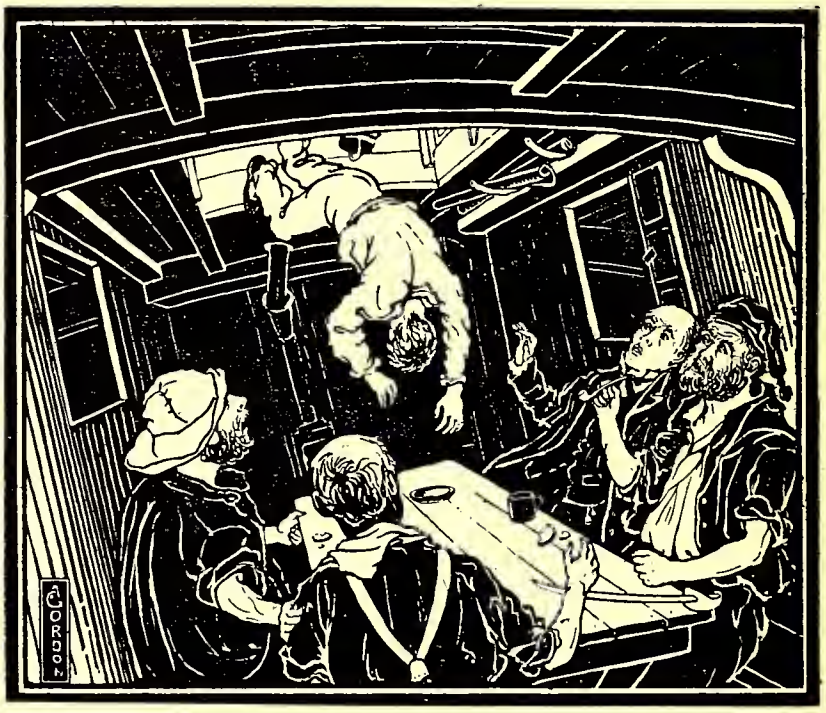
CHAPTER III

HOW WE ARE OVERCOME BY THE WRECKERS, AND CAST INTO PRISON, AND HOW A GOOD MEMORY SERVES ME TO SOME PURPOSE; WITH A TRUE ACCOUNT OF OUR ESCAPE, AND RETURN TO PLYMOUTH.

The sun rose, bringing with him as fair a morning as we could wish; the wind had nearly gone, and the sea was very tolerably smooth. There was a sweetness and vigour in the

fresh breeze that blew in my eyes; and, after a good swim in the inviting water, Culpepper and I found ourselves none the worse for the night's wear and tear. Foolishly, we were so intent upon our bathing as to give scant attention to the shore, for which we had to pay finely later, as will be seen.

We fell a-chatting at our breakfast, and it was fairly late when I proposed we should go on deck and make ready for



our return; but even as I spoke the sounds of a scuffle reached us, and ere we had time to think, the dead body of one of our lads came plump in upon us through the cabin-light, bringing up with a dreadful crash right across the table. In an instant more came the sound of many feet, with the sounds of cursing and clashing of steel.

Then, while our consternation was still holding us, there rushed down the cabin-stairs as fierce-looking a villain as ever I clapped eyes on.

'Surrender your swords!' cried he, with a great oath, and

staring about him with eyes like any vulture's. 'I call upon you to surrender your swords.'

'Softly, my good friend,' said my father, recovering himself a little; 'pray inform us the meaning of this intrusion—do you represent the Excise——'

The fellow broke in with a string of vile words. 'Deliver me your swords without further parley, or——' and he pointed threateningly at the terrible object that lay upon our table. . . . But now the noise above us increased to an uproar, and I could see that all was lost.

. . . All things come to an end, they say, and so we were dragged to land and subjected to indignities and insults that I cannot repeat. Here, at a motion from the leader of the desperadoes, we all were taken to a wretched little hut that had no window, and there we were flung incontinently upon the damp straw within. Our prison, I had the wit to note, was some hundred yards inland, well out of sight of the sea, being situate behind one of the great peaking cliffs that fringe the coast hereabouts, and no doubt was used as some kind of store-place in the ordinary course of events, judging by the smell of spirits that hung heavy in the close atmosphere. Here we had time to reflect, and no mistake, for the villains kept us without bite or sup for over six hours, it being nigh upon four o'clock when at last they sent us some food.

A lad came in with meat and bread, none too fresh or new, but very welcome nevertheless; he untied our hands only—for, of course, we had been bound hard and fast by the robbers—and we fell to with gusto. He was a decent little fellow with a face as familiar to me as the old moon's, yet I could not call to mind where I had seen him. He made himself agreeable, however, in many ways—bringing us water to drink; and by a sudden lucky inspiration I made a venture as to his identity.

'Did I not know you at school?' asked I, anxious as you please.

He laughed. ''Tis many years ago, then,' says he, looking very old at us.

The trick of his manner gave it to me. 'Why, 'twas at

Falmouth I met you, young sinner,' cried I, remembering him; 'you were bathing in the river and had cramp——'

'And you pulled me out,' shouts he, taking stock of me. 'If it be not Tony Fairfax, after all,' he says, drawing a long breath, as a man might. 'Why, Tony, this is bad for you.'

'To be sure,' I replied drily, and thanking Heaven that I had got him interested in us. How I blessed the day that had taken me to Falmouth, selling those cheap clothes I have told you of! But for that, and the good bribe that we promised him, I doubt if we should ever have got away from our prison—or sold our tea either, for the matter of that.

He shook his head at our first talk of escape; but presently he consented to help us, saying that he would come back at nine o'clock, if there was a good chance of success, and be our guide. 'I'm tired to death of this life,' says he, ready, like all boys, for a change; 'and seeing they are all busy gathering treasures on the beach—cast up by the big ship that was blown to pieces by you gentlemen——'

'Not by *us*,' says Culpepper, not heeding my signs for him to keep quiet.

'I will perhaps come for you'—and the youngster was off and away, hearing some one calling him from outside.

It was as long a two hours as ever I did wait, and mightily cramped in our legs were we all when at length came sounds of approach. The door of the hut was unfastened cautiously, and we all waited in breathless suspense.

'Are you ready?' came in a sharp whisper—and 'twas our little friend!

Without waiting for a reply, he flung in a knife so that we could free ourselves, then moved quickly away, leaving the door only just open; and one by one we all crept out with beating hearts, and began to follow him. He glided rather than walked, moving very quietly and rapidly—being rather afraid too, I expect.

As we had been somewhat prepared for a tidy walk, we stepped along patiently enough, nor made any fuss at having to strike at first straight away from the coast; but after an hour's tramp through the damp grass, stumbling at every third

step, so dark and rugged was the path, our little notary began to snivel finely. 'Surely there must be some roadway,' he pleaded; 'let us find it, in Heaven's name, for I am as lame as any horse. Gentlemen, I beg of you to insist upon this fellow stopping at once; how do you know he is guiding us fairly?'

'This is no place for the niceties of the law courts, friend Ferret,' replied Culpepper roughly; 'keep your eloquence to yourself, and put your trust in your patron saint, the devil. He will certainly not forget to look after you, I dare swear.'

'I think we ought to question the lad,' said my father; ''twere only prudent to know his plans—and see, we have managed to get clear away from our captors without giving them any alarm——'

'Of that I'm not so sure,' put in Mr. Ferret; 'I may be mistaken, but I do certainly fancy that there are sounds in the air.' And he abjectly helped his nose to a last pinch of snuff.

I made our guide a sign, and we all paused, silent and alert for the least noise. There was a faint light in the sky eastwards, the herald of the moon's advent, for she would be rising at midnight, as I well knew, and it would go hard with us if we were not safe aboard our ship by then; for the country, though wild hereabouts, is singularly bare of nature's clothing—by which I mean forests and the like. There was, indeed, little to hope for if things came to this pass; and our terrors were added to by faint but certain sounds of pursuit.

'Hurry, boy, in God's name,' cried I, when there could no longer be any doubt of it; and in an agony of suspense we resumed our march, still going forward, one behind the other, as the wild Indians do—so Culpepper afterwards told me—over the rough uneven ground. We had for some time been steadily travelling upwards, always trending to the left, after the first debouch; and I was not surprised to presently find that we were nearing the cliffs again, the light above becoming sensibly stronger every moment.

The roar of the sea began to drown all else, and for a while we were in doubt as to whether our enemies were still pur-

suing us ; but suddenly our guide flings himself flat upon the earth with a quick whisper for us all to do the like.

Thus we lay prone on our bellies, our hearts literally in our mouths ; and lest there be any who will, in security, laugh at our cowardice, I would remind them, respectfully enough, that we were without arms of any kind, with two of our number old men, and all hungry and tired out too with the travails of the day. It was an uncanny sort of place, full of the sullen booming of the sea, and sharper noises to our rear. Ever and anon came a deeper sound, a strange sort of note like far-away thunder. But presently I saw that the boy was moving again, wriggling his way through the dank vegetation on all-fours. If the walking had been arduous, then this was ten thousand times worse. The brambles scratched our faces, and the great nettles stung us most cruelly, while our knees were cut by the sharp stones. I could hear my companions puffing and blowing behind me, Culpepper cursing occasionally under his breath. The faint incessant whining of the notary, who came next, irritated me beyond measure—much more than did Culpepper's blasphemies—for I do hate to hear a man always and for ever grumbling ; and it was well for him that he was no nearer, for I should certainly have given him a sly kick or so, by way of interest to his pains. I blamed him too for our present plight, though I saw that this was somewhat unjust, when I came to reason it out.

Suddenly we heard the strange sound again, and as suddenly came the knowledge to me as to its meaning. They were tracking us with a bloodhound, sure enough ; and I gave up all for lost so soon as I realised the horrid fact, being full of horrific tales as to the sagacity and determination of these beasts. That the moon was beginning to show herself, too, was evident also, but she was seawards yet ; and frantically we hurried on, having risen to our feet now and scampering like so many hares. Like hares were we being hunted too, as the ever-recurring yelp behind told me.

I was conscious already of that dreadful pain in the side that inevitably comes to the unpractised runner ; chill as the night was, great drops of perspiration fell on my hands or

trickled exasperatingly adown my cheeks. I turned to find my dear father at this juncture, feeling that we would at least die together; but he signalled me to run on.

This I would not do, and so fell back to his side, just in time to note in a dull fashion that the boy had disappeared over the brow of the endless hill we were still climbing. Culpepper dashed past, and vanished too, so suddenly as to make him call out. This was, however, no season for surmises, and catching hold of my father's hand, I plunged after them both to find only a sheer precipice between us and the great restless ocean.

Before I had fully grasped the thing, I heard a reassuring cry from Culpepper. He had found a little zig-zag path, scarce discernible in the faint light, that led down to the beach below; he had, indeed, fallen down the first few steps, and only by a miracle had escaped a headlong plunge on to the cruel rocks. Pushing after him, and still holding each other very tight, we began the descent.

A dangerous little path it was too, and one that no power on earth should make me attempt again; but fortunately half its terrors were hid by the night, and we had besides no alternative but to trust to its mazy and slippery courses. At last we got down to the pebbly beach that lay in thin strips between the green and shining rocks, with the moonlight dancing like a thousand burnished little feet upon the restless waters, and the salt breeze blowing in our faces in a very refreshing manner.

Without pausing an instant, the boy ran towards the edge of the sea, and I saw before him a small boat. He beckoned impatiently to us to join him, scarce waiting until we were nigh ere he called for two of us to get in. 'The boat can make shift to take three on such a night,' said he, panting; 'come, jump in'; and he held out a hand for me.

'Nay,' said I, and I pushed my father forward, much against his will, so that we began a pretty wrangle as to who should go and who should stay.

'Come, hurry yourselves,' cried our young guide angrily; 'you will waste all the night while you are playing the fine

gentleman, you two'—and he waved his hand scornfully towards me.

Just now, however, we were startled by a loud crash from behind, and looked round to discern Mr. Ferret lying all of a heap at the bottom of the cliff. I ran back with Culpepper, who had begun to swear again, having got his breath, fully expectant of finding the poor notary a mangled and dreadful corpse; but the little fellow was up long ere I got nigh to him, bawling out that he was killed so loudly, that I knew that there could be nothing very serious the matter with him. I picked him up and carried him to the boat, where I found the boy already seated; then between us I got my dear father aboard, violently protesting the while, and wasting much valuable time too.

Then we pushed them off, and we stood anxiously watching the little boat make its way towards the *Bonaventure*, the outline of which I could just distinguish at about a quarter of a mile's distance; and an exceedingly uncomfortable probation it was—to wait there, knowing full well that our pursuers were very near indeed.

We stood silent, each of us eyeing the other askance, and fearfully dreading the advent of our enemies; but they had clearly lost the trail for the moment, for we could hear their savage cries away off to the right, and their dog's yelp was changed to a dim snuffling sort of growl, each time the wind carried the sound of it to us. I began to take heart of grace, and to fondly hope that we should all of us get away, though I was by no means anxious that I should be the last one to leave the beach.

At last we saw the boat returning, and none too soon, for the sound of pursuit was getting nearer than was quite comfortable. A great dog came springing down the little zig-zag path, and both Culpepper and I rushed into the water, wading up to our middle to reach the boat sooner; and we clambered in all wet and trembling just in the very nick of time—the dog baying deep in his rage at our escape, while our enemies poured down to the beach, and, finding us beyond them now, fell to throwing stones and shouting in most horrid fashion

to hear. Our little ship was ready to sail at once, my father having got all in readiness while waiting for us. We found the other member of our crew hanging from the yard-arm, and, of course, quite stiff and stark; so we took him down, and my dear father read us the Burial Service while his poor body was lowered into the sea.

Thus ere the old moon had fairly commenced her night's work, we were providentially escaped from as wicked a set of rogues as ever I did see, the worse for our trouble by the loss of two of our crew. . . . I registered a vow to find out their relations, if they had any, and make such poor compensation as we could, so soon as we were safe in Plymouth once more. And so our first trip ended, it being a fine experience for us all; but we sold our tea to a good tune, and I had reason, therefore, to be thankful in the end; but I think we paid a pretty fair price for the stuff after all, what with one thing and another.

My father would have the lad that had saved us go to school—for a year, at least; and now he serves me on board our new boat—a bigger and finer *Bonaventure* than the first little ship: but we do no more trading in tea—'tis too exciting a game for simple folk.

A VOYAGE TO FAIRY-LAND

HOW DORA MADE A VOYAGE TO FAIRYLAND, AND WHAT HAPPENED ON THE WAY. By Alfred Jones.

ORA closed the book she had been reading with a slightly impatient gesture, as it was now growing quite dark. 'I don't believe there are fairies and things *really*,' she said aloud, although there was no one else in the room, as she placed her chin on her hand and gazed abstractedly into the nursery fire. Now Dora loved fairies and fairy tales, but she had just finished reading such a particularly choice one that, growing somewhat envious of the good life the fairies led, she had given vent to this sceptical remark to ease her feelings. The lights had not yet been brought in, and the flicker of the fire threw fantastic shifting shadows on the walls and floor.

When Dora expressed her disbelief in 'fairies and things,' it must not be supposed that she dismissed them from her mind. Oh no! her thoughts were very busy now; and, gazing intently into the dancing flames, she there discovered all sorts of lovely fairy corners. Goblins skipped about and danced in rare abandon, while dainty little fairies with bright hair and smiling faces, and clothed in flower petals, strolled about in a manner most sedate and queenly for people so very small. Her attention was strangely attracted by a number of goblins dancing wildly, with hands clasped, round a timid little fairy, who seemed greatly amused and somewhat embarrassed. Quickly and more quickly they went round, until the rate was really dazzling, and Dora trembled lest one of them should tumble or let go. 'There! I thought so,' she cried excitedly, with a start; 'I knew you would do that'; for one of them had broken loose and been hurled right out of the circle on to Dora's shoulder, where he lay gasping like a fish out of water. 'Here's a go,' said the goblin at last, in a funny squeaky little voice, as he crouched there and hung on to her pretty auburn hair. Dora gazed at him with open-mouthed astonishment, as with eager eyes fixed on hers, he commenced gingerly to climb down her arm on to the rug.

'I hope I haven't hurt you,' he continued, 'but it wasn't my fault exactly; you see——'

'Don't trouble to explain,' said Dora, who was growing accustomed to the situation. 'I saw it all. You're a fairy, aren't you?' she added abruptly.

'You put it rather bluntly, but I suppose I am,' returned the goblin, who had now reached the rug, and was leaning against Dora's knee; 'but there! I must be going.'

'Where?' asked Dora.

'Back,' replied the goblin, jerking his head over his shoulder as an accompaniment to his rather vague answer.

'Please be a little more definite; where's "back"?'

'Oh, Fairyland, you know.'

'Then take me with you, please; I'll be *so* good,' cried Dora, so suddenly that it made the goblin jump.

'Well, you're rather a lot to look after, but come along,' he replied; and taking her by the hand, they vanished through the wall in a twinkling.

Dora was not surprised or startled, somehow, even when she observed that she now appeared no bigger than her companion, for she had something else to wonder at. They were standing amidst a mass of lovely many-coloured flowers, with everything around bright and dazzling. The sun was shining in a deep blue sky, while along the flowery slopes, across a belt of yellow sand, lay the sea, shimmering in the sunlight.

'Oh, how lovely!' cried Dora, clasping her hands. 'Is this Fairyland?'

'Oh dear no; Fairyland is over there,' replied her companion, pointing across the shining water. 'This is only one of the branches, so to speak.'

They glided across the smooth sand down to the water's edge.

'How are we going to get there?' Dora ventured to remark.

'Well, I think I'd better call a ship,' he said; and holding up his hand and giving a low whistle, a queer-looking ship approached them.

When Dora got on board she found several other children there who were about to make the same voyage. Slowly they sailed across the harbour into the open sea. Dora was lost in enchantment. The water was divided into bands of purple and blue, and grey, and green; and the deep blue of the sky was made to appear more intense by little fleecy white clouds blown by gentle zephyrs across the sky, while right in the midst of a purple stretch of water nestled a group of golden-rimmed islands like jewels in their settings.

'What glorious colour!' exclaimed Dora under her breath to her companion.

'Yes, it isn't bad; but you see I get it every day,' he added, noticing the reproach in her eyes; and with this he left her and went below.

Birds of gay plumage darted in front of them, and seemed to disappear into the little white blotches of surf that the sea was flecked with. Amidst the sighing of the winds and the splashing of the water, as the ship ploughed on, Dora thought she distinguished the sound of faint music, and looking intently in front, she perceived that what at first she had taken to be a gathering of mist, had resolved itself into two fairy figures playing on fairy instruments, and singing softly. As they proceeded, the music grew more distinct and more lovely, and Dora was quite carried out of herself. She was brought back, however, by the little man, who had returned, and was digging her in the side.

'You see, we don't steer our ships as you do in your world; we are drawn to our destination by the music of Fairyland.'

'How sweet,' murmured Dora; and looking over the side she saw lovely mermaids with golden hair besporting themselves in the blue; she was sure also she could see little fairies riding on the tops of the waves. The coast of Fairyland appeared very distinct now, and the music which filled the air was loud and sweet. On a little promontory stood a crowd of dainty people in dresses of flowers waiting to receive the voyagers. Sweetly they smiled on Dora as she stepped ashore, and Dora could hardly keep the tears back for very

joy. Soon the crowd of fairies divided, and coming towards her appeared the Queen more radiant than them all; and as she took Dora by the hand, the music, which had been growing continually louder and more sweet, burst into a flood of melody. But then, as the face of the Queen drew near to Dora's to kiss her, the joy became so intense that she must have swooned, for everything seemed to fade right away, and then—— 'Come, you must go to bed, dear,' said a voice in her ear. Dora had awakened in nurse's arms.

BY NICO JUNGMAN

A STREET BALLET

THE STORY OF THE SMALL BOY AND THE BARLEY-SUGAR. By Max Beerbohm.

Little reader, unroll your map of England.
Look over its coloured counties and find Rutland.
You shall not read this story till you have found Rutland; for it was there, and in the village of Dauble, that these things happened.
You need not look for Dauble; it is too small to be marked.

THERE was only one shop in the village, and it was kept by Miss Good, and every one was very proud of it.

A little farther down the street there was, indeed, a black, noisy place with flames in it. This was kept by a frightening man, who wore a great beard, and did not go to the church on Sundays. But I do not think it was a real shop, for only the horses went there. The children always ran past it very quickly.

The children never ran past Miss Good's, unless they were late for school. They used to crowd round the window and talk about the red and yellow sweets, which were banked up against the glass in a most tempting and delightful fashion. Sometimes one of the boys, more greedy than the rest, would

stand on tip-toe and press his lips to the glass, declaring he could nearly taste the sweets, or 'lollypops,' as he called them. Sometimes Miss Good would come and nod her ringlets to the children, over the bottles of home-made peppermint. How they envied her, living always, as she did, in company so sweet and splendid!

They were not rich, these little children. But most of them were good, and often, when they had been very good, their parents would give them brown pennies. Hardly a day passed but one of them would strut forth from the rest and go solemnly into the shop, soon to return with treasure wrapped in paper. This happy child—were it boy or girl—seldom broke the rather harsh law that compelled the bag to be handed round among the other children, first. His or hers were all the sweets that remained. Therefore pear-drops were usually chosen, because they were so small, and half an ounce meant very many pear-drops.

Out of school-hours, Miss Good's window was seldom free from its wistful crowd. Indeed, a certain small boy, named Tommy Tune, was the only one of all the school-children who did not seem to love it. Was he not fond of sweets? He was indeed. Was he never good enough to be given a penny? He was almost always good. But, alas! his parents were so poor that they had no pennies to spare for him. When first he went to the school he used to go and look at the sweet-shop with the other boys and girls, and always took a sweet when it was offered him. But soon he grew ashamed of taking sweets, he, who was never able to give any in return. And so he kept away. If he were ever to have a penny, he was going to buy a stick of barley-sugar and share it with Jill Trellis. She was eight years old, like him, and she had curly brown hair and blue eyes, and he loved her. But she was unkind to him, because he never had a penny. She would not go and play with him in the fields, as he asked her, but preferred to be with the other boys. When Tommy saw her in the distance eating their sweets or running races with them, or playing at kiss-in-the-ring with them, his cheeks grew very red, and his eyes filled with tears. But somehow

he loved her all the more. And he often used to dream of Jill, and of pennies, and of the window that Jill loved.

There were other things than sweets in this window, but they were seldom sold. There were strips of bacon, which were not wanted, because every cottager had a pig. There were bright ribbons round reels, but the girls of that village were not vain, and fairs were few. From the low ceiling hung bunches of tallow-candles, seeming to grow there like fruit, but every one in that village went to bed at sunset. There was starch, but why stiffen linen? And bootlaces, but they always break.

So Miss Good, like a sensible person, had devoted herself to the study of sweets, how to make them cheaply and well, and, as she was fond of little children, she was pleased that they were her chief customers. But it so happened that she herself was also very fond of sweets. She enjoyed tasting them, not only when she wished to see if they were good, but also when she knew quite well that they were good.

Now, one summer's evening, when all the children had gone home to bed and she was putting up her humble shutters, Miss Good remembered suddenly that it was her birthday. You see, she had not had one for a whole year, and had forgotten that there were such things. She smiled to herself as she bolted the door of her shop, murmuring softly :

'I must really celebrate my birthday!'

So she cut down one of the tallow-candles and, having lit it, set it upon the counter.

'Illuminations!' she murmured.

Then she cast her eye slowly over all the variegated sweets that were in the window. With deft fingers she selected some of every kind, piling them all, at length, upon the counter. In the fair light of the candle they sparkled like precious stones.

I am sorry to say that the next morning, when Miss Good awoke, she felt very ill, and regretted, not only that it had been her birthday, but she had ever been born at all. She felt that she could not serve in the shop that day. And this was serious, for she had no assistant and thus might lose much custom.

Miss Good was at all times, however, a woman of resource. Rising from her bed, she threw open the little lattice-window and called softly for the Queen of the Fairies, with whom, by the way, she was distantly connected. Then she returned to her bed.

In less than a minute, the convolvulus-chariot and team of dragon-flies flew in at the window, and drew up sharp at the foot of the bed. Dismissing with a word her escort of butterflies, the tiny Queen alighted on the counterpane, and said:

'Miss Good, why did you call for Us?'

The invalid confessed how greedy she had been, and implored the Queen not to think ill of her. And Her Majesty, knowing well that the sellers of sweets must ever be exposed to stronger temptations than are ordinary folk, smiled upon her not unkindly.

'Could you possibly,' murmured Miss Good from her pillow, 'without inconvenience, send a fairy to mind the shop, just for to-day?'

'On the condition that you never again exceed,' said the Queen.

'I promise,' said Miss Good. 'Thank you very much. My head aches sadly. I am best alone. Thanks. Remember me kindly to the King.'

With a gracious inclination of her head, Her Majesty stepped into her chariot and was gone.

Now, as it happened, Tommy Tune's father came home that morning from another village, where for some days he had been making hay. The kind farmer, whose hay it was, had paid him very handsomely for his work. And when Tommy, having eaten his dinner, took his slate and was starting again for school, his father called him back.

'Tommy, son,' he said, 'I've brought back something for you. Shut your eyes and give me your hand.'

Tommy obeyed in wonder. When he opened his eyes and looked to see what was in his hand, he saw—what do you think?—a real, brown penny!

'Oh father,' he cried, 'how wonderful it is! And can you really spare it?'

'I'm not sure that I can,' replied Mr. Tune, rather grimly. 'Run away now before I ask for it back.'

And Tommy scampered off.

Far down the road, on the way to school, walked a little girl, whose brown hair curled over her pinafore. It was Jill. He shouted to her to stop, and ran still faster. Yesterday he would not have dared to speak to her, certainly not to shout.

When he came nearer, the little girl heard him and looked round. At first she shook her head and began walking on, but Tommy called to her so eagerly that at length she waited for him.

'Jill!' he said to her, shy and breathless, 'will you come with me after school and buy barley-sugar?'

'No, I won't,' she said. 'I'm going to play at horses with Dicky Jones. And what's more, I haven't a penny. And if I had I shouldn't go with you, because I don't like you.'

'But *I* have a penny, Jill,' he pleaded.

'Show it!' rejoined the little girl.

Tommy showed it.

'Well,' she said, after a while, 'I won't play at horses to-day. And I—I think you're much nicer than Dicky Jones. And—and—oh, Tommy! why are you always so unkind to me now?'

Tommy hung his head.

When they came to the school, the school-bell had almost ceased tolling, and all the children had gone in. Just outside the porch, Jill whispered:

'Tommy, I'm not angry with you. Kiss me. Quickly!'

And in another moment, they went in too.

How very slowly the time went for Tommy that afternoon! He could only just see the top of Jill's curly head. She always sat far away from him, for, though she was a girl, she was cleverer than he was, and was in a higher class. But he thought about her all the time. The big round figures seemed to write themselves on his slate, he knew not how. Whenever a 'nought' came, he put four little dots in it; two for Jill's eyes, one for her nose, one for her mouth. And all his sums came out right that afternoon, long before the other

boys and girls had done theirs. Then there was nothing for him to do, but to keep his eyes on the clock. Thirty whole minutes more! What was thirty times sixty?

He remembered that Jill's class did its spelling lesson in the last half-hour. Jill would stand up with the rest by the teacher's desk. Perhaps she would look round at him. He could scarcely believe that soon they would be sitting together, all alone in the field, with a stick of barley sugar.

When Jill went up with the others to the high desk, she did look round at Tommy, with her finger to her lips, just where he had kissed her. In another instant she had clasped her hands behind her and was looking up at the teacher.

She was near the top of her class, and her turn came soon. She was given a very easy word to spell; but she must have been thinking of other things, I am afraid, for she missed it. She spelt *Cow* with a *U*. Tommy, in his corner, blushed scarlet.

When her turn came round again, she spelt *Kite* with a *C*. The teacher, who had always thought her to be one of the best of her pupils, frowned.

'Be careful, Jill Trellis!' she said sharply.

Tommy held his slate very tightly with both hands.

Then Jill was told to spell *Box*.

'*B*,' she said, '*O*.' Then she stopped short. Then she shook her head.

'Be very careful,' said the teacher. 'You cannot be attending. *B*, *O*,—well?'

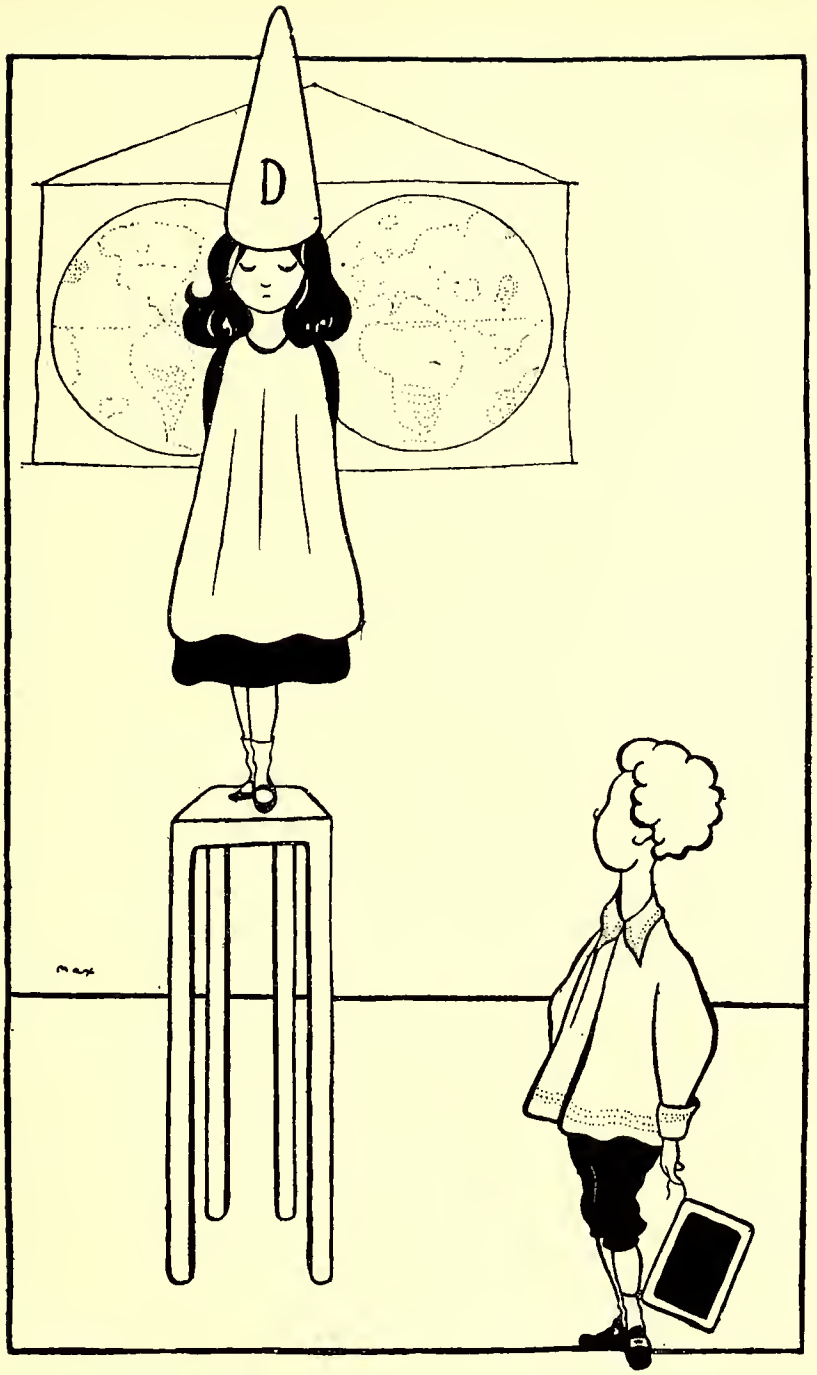
Jill shook her head.

'*X*,' said the teacher. 'Abominable little girl! Fetch the Dunce's cap and stand on the stool. You will stay here for an hour after school is over and learn two pages of hard words.'

So Jill fetched the Dunce's cap and climbed up on to the stool and clasped her hands behind her.

Nor did she look at Tommy when the clock struck four, and the school-children trooped out.

For some time Tommy stood in the porch. There, at least, he was near his poor sweetheart. He would wait there till she was set free.



NOR DID JILL LOOK AT HIM
WHEN THE CLOCK, ETC.

But somehow, as the minutes went by, he grew more and more miserable. He could not bear to think of her in there with her spelling-book. He would run away somewhere and be at the gate to meet her when she came out.

As he ran, it struck him that she might be comforted if he met her with the barley-sugar in his hand. And so he stopped at the door of Miss Good's shop and walked boldly in.

To his surprise, Miss Good, whose ringlets he had often seen through the window, was not there, and in her stead, smiling from behind the counter, was a beautiful young person with bright yellow hair and blue wings.

'Good afternoon, little sir,' said the young person, 'what may I serve you with?'

'A penny stick of barley-sugar,' said Tommy. He spoke in rather a surly voice, for he did not like any one to be pretty except Jill; though Jill, of course, was far prettier than this stranger, in his opinion.

'What a pleasant afternoon, is it not?' said the young person, taking from a glass bottle a short, twisted stick of barley-sugar.

Tommy stretched out his hand in silence.

'Quite seasonable!' she continued, looking down at her little customer and holding the stick just beyond his reach. 'But you are behaving as if it were mid-winter and the snow had smothered the flowers. I suppose you are what would be called unhappy.'

'Yes, I am,' said Tommy sulkily, 'and I want the barley-sugar.'

'Certainly, little sir,' replied the young person. 'I will not detain you.' Lightly she blew upon the yellow stick. 'Now, understand,' she said, 'that every time you take a bite at that, you can wish, and all your wishes will come true. Say "thank you," and give me your penny.'

Tommy opened his eyes very wide and thanked her.

'Good afternoon,' she said, dropping his penny into the till.

Tommy ran, as hard as he could, to a certain field. He held the barley-sugar tightly in his hand. He knew what he

was going to wish for first. His eyes sparkled as he ran. Visions of what he would wish for later on came vaguely to his mind—a lovely garden of roses for his mother, a lovely farm for his father, for himself a regiment of wooden soldiers, taller than he was. But these fair visions he hardly heeded. He was thinking only of his first wish.

That he might get more quickly into the field, he climbed through a break in the hedge, caring not how the brambles scratched him, and jumped over the ditch on to the grass beyond. He stood there, after his run, flushed and trembling with excitement. He put the sweet yellow stick to his lips and set his teeth upon the very edge of it, so as not to take more than a tiny bite. Then, shutting his eyes tight, he said aloud:

'I wish that Jill may come here at once.'

And, when he looked, there stood Jill before him, in her Dunce's cap. There was a spelling-book in her hand, and her eyes were full of tears. But Tommy flung his arms round her neck so quickly that the book and the cap both fell to the ground. Tommy kissed away all her tears.

'Leave go, Tommy!' she cried at last. 'Tell me why I am here? I was in the school-room. Why am I in this field?'

'I wished for you to come to me, Jill,' the boy answered.

'But I was in the school-room!' said Jill.

'This is a stick of barley-sugar,' Tommy began.

'So it is,' said Jill, drawing nearer. 'It looks good.'

'But it isn't like the others,' Tommy went on, 'because you see, a fairy gave it me for my penny, and when you take a bite you wish, and your wish comes true. I wished for you, Jill. And I'm going to wish for—oh! heaps of things. You shall wish too.'

'May I?' cried Jill.

Swiftly she snatched the yellow stick from his hand and ran away, crushing it all into her mouth at once.

'Jill! Jill!' cried the boy piteously, as he chased her round the field. 'Do leave a little!'

At length he caught her and held her fast in his arms. 'Haven't you left a little? he asked her.

She shook her head from side to side. Her mouth was too full for speech.

'And, Jill! you never wished!' he said sadly.

'Oh yes, I did,' she answered presently. 'I wished that you hadn't eaten that first bit.'

Little reader, roll up your map of England.
But first look once more at Rutland, that you may remember where it is.
Perhaps you have often laughed at Rutland, because it is the tiniest of all the counties, and is painted pink.
Now see how neatly and well they have painted it, never going over the edges, as you would have done.
And know, also, that though it looks so small, it is really more than three times as big as your nursery, and that things can happen there.
It is very foolish to laugh at Rutland.

STORIES TO TELL THE LITTLE ONES: UNDINE, THE WATER MAID, WHO WEDDED A MORTAL.

WHO was Undine? Why, just the most beautiful Rhine maiden who ever existed, but she wanted to be a mortal and to leave the lovely caves below the waters and become a commonplace human being. So her great uncle Kühleborn, who was ruler of the spirits of the waters, made a mighty storm, and Undine, in the shape of a tiny baby, was washed to the shore of a lake, where the old fisher people who had lost their own child adopted her. Now when she had grown up, a knight rode through the forest and stopped with the old fisher people, and that night another storm rose, and the lake burst its bound and encircled the house, so that they were cut off from land, and saw no way ever to rejoin the rest of the world. A priest was wrecked below their hut, and the next day Huldbrand, the knight, married Undine, who at once became mortal—the sweetest, gentlest, loveliest bride knight ever had. Then the lake sank down to its usual size, and straightway the knight bore off his bride. But Kühleborn followed them through the forest—now as a brook, and then as a waterfall—always near to watch over Undine. For a long time they were very happy: but a lady at the court, Bertalda, had loved the knight herself before ever he met Undine, and still loved him; so she did her best to persuade him that the fair Undine was a witch. Undine thought that a person who was so cruel must be unhappy, and thought it was because she was an orphan, so she found out through the water-fairies that Bertalda was the lost daughter of the fisher-folk, her foster parents, and sent for them. But Bertalda was furious at being discovered to be a peasant, and hated Undine still more, and did more to set Huldbrand against his bride. Now Undine knew if her husband was cruel to her or loved another, she would have to kill him and rejoin the water-people; so she did her best by loving ways to inspire him with faith, but he grew more and more

UNDINE

suspicious, especially when Undine had the great well of the castle covered with a huge stone, for she feared lest Huldbrand's treatment would cause the Rhine-fairies, who could only enter the castle by that spring, to do him injury.

Afterwards, much against her wish, she went with her knight, and Bertalda, for a tour on the Rhine. And here one day her husband called her a witch, and in a violent rage bade her go back to her people ; so she vanished over the side of the boat and melted like water into the stream.

Huldbrand grieved bitterly, but after a while was comforted by Bertalda's love, and married her. The new bride, eager to display her power, ordered the castle well to be uncovered, when a pillar of water rose, that changed into the form of Undine, who, wringing her hands, walked to Huldbrand's chamber, where they found him dead in her arms. They buried him, and a bubbling spring gushed from the turf by his grave, encircling it ere it flowed into the lake. Thus does Undine still hold her loved knight in her embrace.

THE LITTLE PRINCESS AND THE GOLDEN BALL.

By Mrs. Percy Dearmer.

VERY dissatisfied the little Princess felt; the corners of her mouth drooped, and her nose tip-tilted itself into the air. Her father was quite a poor King, and she only had ten maids of honour. In fact they were too poor to keep a garden of more than a thousand acres, and the only spot nice to play in was the orange orchard just past the garden of fountains. The Princess often complained to the head gardener about his neglect of the orange orchard; for he would let the grass grow quite long, and cow-parsley and foxgloves crept right up to the yew hedge. The little Princess did not think they looked pretty with oranges, and then would lose her temper, and threaten to have the head gardener executed. She would always feel a little ashamed when she realised how hot and angry she had been, and how gravely the gardener's son had watched the haughty expression of her face. She cared more for the opinion of the gardener's son than for anything else in the world. He had beautiful dark eyes, and he knew the names of every plant and insect the little Princess had ever heard of. His hands were brown and strong, and he could do such wonderful things with them. He was so much nicer than the princes who came to her father's court, and played on the flute, and said graceful things in praise of her beauty. The little Princess knew that in reality they were all sneering at her father's poverty, at her home-made frocks, and at the ten maids of honour. She would have liked to have told the gardener's son how much she despised them and how much she liked to play with him, but he was very distant and respectful, and only bowed when she talked like that. It made the little Princess very unhappy, and to-day she thought the best thing to be done was for her and the ten maids of honour all to go and drown themselves in the pond

in the orange orchard. She could not see any other way out of the difficulty; for her father was so poor, she was so miserable, and the gardener's son was so horrid. The ten maids of honour did not like it at all, for they all hoped to marry princes and be princesses themselves some day, and they thought it would be dull to give up all this and be drowned in the orange orchard. But the Princess said that they would certainly be beheaded if they did not put on their best dresses and follow her to the pond. So they just cried a little, and then interested themselves in tying black scarfs round their steeple hats as prettily as possible.

The Princess went to say good-bye to the gardener's son. And for the first time he forgot his position; and when she had explained the situation, he laughed—at least his mouth twitched a little and his eyes were full of merriment. The little Princess was very offended, and she gathered up her embroidered skirts in great disdain. When they arrived at the orange orchard the Princess found that the long grass was wet, so five of the ten maids of honour were sent back to the castle to get goloshes in case the damp should give them all cold. 'While one still remains upon the earth,' said the little Princess, 'one must obey the laws of health.' She knew this was a sentence her governess would have approved of, and she felt very good indeed. When the rest of the maids of honour returned they all put on goloshes, and the little Princess led the way. The surface of the pond was gently stirred by a faint ripple, which broke the reflections of the grass and the water-lilies. 'I wonder why they are upside down,' thought the little Princess, standing on the bank. 'I wonder if I shall have to walk on my head when I go into Pond-land. I must ask the gardener's son'—and then she remembered. Suddenly one of the ten maids of honour gave a little squeak, and the Princess looked up. The pond was covered with frogs—great big fat frogs that ran and jumped everywhere. The little Princess was indignant.

'How dare you behave so boldly in my orange orchard,' she asked, 'just when I want to come here and be drowned?' But they only blinked, and looked fatter than ever. She

glanced again at the pond in bewilderment. The ripples were getting bigger and rounder every moment, and at last the head of an enormous frog appeared. His face was very curious. The Princess wondered what gave him such a strange look, until she discovered it was caused by a great golden ball that he carried in his mouth.

'Give me that ball,' she said; 'you cannot talk with that ridiculous thing in your mouth. And tell me quickly what you all mean by coming up like this unannounced. It is very disturbing.'

'I come to bring you a gift, Princess,' said the frog; 'and if you will only sit down and listen to what I have to say, without flying into a temper, I will tell you all about it.' So the Princess and her maidens sat down round the pond and forgot all about the damp grass while the frog talked to them. He told them how, thousands of years ago, the pond had been enchanted by two fairies—a good fairy and a bad fairy, and how he had been placed there to watch over the two gifts which they had left in the pond, until the little Princess should come along to have one of them. 'I have been here so long,' said the frog, apologising, 'that I have grown this enormous size. It is very uncomfortable.'

'But what is this golden ball?' asked the Princess.

'That is one of the gifts,' said the frog. 'You have only to hold it in your hand and you will become at once the richest, the most beautiful, and the most virtuous Princess in the whole world.' The eyes of the little Princess sparkled.

'O Frog!' she cried, 'give me the ball to keep, and then we need not drown ourselves after all!'

'Oh do, dear Frog!' cried all the ten maids of honour; 'we don't want to be drowned.'

'Very well,' said the frog; and he prepared to leap back into the water.

'Stay,' cried the Princess, 'what is the other gift?'

'You can only have one,' said the frog; 'give me back the ball, and I will give it to you.'

'Oh, no, no, no!' cried the Princess! 'This beautiful thing that will help me to be so good must be the gift of the good

fairy; the other gift will be something bad and terrible, for wicked fairies cannot give good gifts. I don't even want to know what it is.' But when she looked up again the frogs were gone.

'Now we can go and take off the mourning veils from our steeple hats,' said the maids of honour. 'How very glad we are that we met the frog.'

But the princess said nothing—she was thinking.

When they reached the castle they met the gardener's son. He would have smiled again to see them coming back, only he had caught sight of the princess's face. It was so strangely beautiful that it dazzled him. He could only bend his head and pass on. Soon afterwards all sorts of merriment was going on in the castle; there were banquets and jousts every day. The rarest and most beautiful things were bought. Hundreds of acres were added to the garden, and a whole army of gardeners were engaged. There was no room for the gardener's son, and he went to help in the kitchen. The fame of the little Princess spread everywhere. She was called the Beautiful Princess now, and her suitors numbered thousands of the richest and most handsome princes in the world. The gardener's son watched them come through the barred gate of the kitchen garden, and felt a dull pain at his heart, as he knew they had come to woo her. The Beautiful Princess never wanted to know about caterpillars and butterflies now; and all the snails that she used to keep in a flower-pot had been thrown out of the window. He rooted up a bed of columbine that he had planted for her long ago by the cucumber frames, and as he did so two hot tears fell on one of the flowers. He was very unhappy; but then he was only a gardener's son.

The Princess's governess, and all the professors that came to teach her astronomy and natural science, gave the most wonderful accounts of her. She was so clever and she was so good. Her maids of honour, which now numbered two hundred, began to give themselves airs, and became quite overbearing, as she never corrected them. No one in the whole court was ever beheaded; because, when the old King felt annoyed with any courtier the Beautiful Princess would

go down on her knees so sweetly and plead so graciously for his life that he was never led to execution after all.

And she wore the most wonderful dresses, all stiff with gems, and full of little corners and points; they crackled as she walked, for the foundations were of beaten gold. They were very uncomfortable, but she never grumbled or had them altered, she was so good.

She never got into tempers now, or was rude to the gardener or the servants; and everybody loved her, only they loved her at a distance. She was so very perfect that they felt it would be disrespectful of them to love her too much.

She had the gardener's son up to see her one day. The joy of seeing her again was almost too much for him; but when he was ushered into her presence by four-and-twenty pages and twelve squires, he could not take his eyes off the ground. He tried to speak, but the words stuck in his throat. He longed for the little Princess who used to try and make him play with her long ago. The Beautiful Princess was very gracious, but as he was led away he felt her eyes fixed sadly upon him. He thought she seemed a little lonely, and he forgot to be sorry for himself.

Some time after this there was a rumour whispered about the court that the Beautiful Princess was dying, she was so unhappy—she was too good to grumble or cry, but she was so terribly, dreadfully unhappy that she was just wasting away. All her precious things, and the wonderful beauty of her face, and the thought of all her goodness gave her no pleasure; and the court physicians announced that the Beautiful Princess was dying of a broken heart.

At last, as she had not many more days to live, she wandered down into the orange orchard to see the frog. But the pond was all silent, and not a ripple disturbed the surface. She called to him, but there was no answer.

'Frog! Frog!' she called, 'give me the other gift, the gift that I know not the name of. The golden ball has brought me nothing but unspeakable misery.' There was no sound but the rustling of the grasses. She made a step forward as

though to throw herself into the water, when the golden ball slipped to her feet and rolled into the pond with a splash. She looked up, and there was the gardener's son standing at the other side with a glad smile on his face. She looked down, and once more she had on her little yellow home-made gown.

'Why is this horrible pond between us?' she cried impatiently, smiling across at him. 'I wish it was real, and then I would have it beheaded.' But the gardener's son was running; and he ran and ran and ran, and caught her hands in his brown strong ones.

'I am not afraid of you any more,' he whispered, 'let us get away quickly, for I can see the ten maids of honour coming through the orange-trees.'

'But do you love me now?' said the little Princess. 'My nose turns up and we are poor again, and I have got a dreadful temper.'

'You are the most beautiful and the best little Princess in the world,' said the gardener's son.

'And I am the richest,' she whispered, 'for you are all the world to me.' And they wandered and wandered far away; and the land they wandered in was a quite new land, where they had never been before, for it was Paradise.

TWO STORIES OF WAR. By F. Norreys Connell.

I. THE TRUMPETER'S STORY

I WAS born in the village of Glounthaume, on the banks of the Lee, about the beginning of the year 1799. The English had hanged my father as a rebel a little while before; and my poor mother, worn out by sorrow and suffering, died in giving me birth. I was an unowned child in a land where children were over-plentiful; so I led the life of Nobody's dog: kicked, and cuffed, and starved, I enjoyed myself amazingly, for I was free.

I followed the Du Hallow huntsmen to hold their horses, I ran from Cove to Cork and back again with letters from the King's officers to the town ladies: these labours were well paid, but not to be had every day. Sometimes I worked for weeks in the fields to half-fill my stomach with wet potatoes, or scared the birds from the young crops for a crust of bread.

All the time I dreamt of the day when the French would come again and set the country free. I did not know why they should come, but I knew that my father had been killed for singing the *Shan-van-vocht* in Youghal market-place, and the *Shan-van-vocht* distinctly says:

> 'The French will come again,
> And they'll bring ten thousand men,
> And with powder and with ball
> For our rights we'll loudly call,
> And who'll deny us then?'

'And who'll deny us then?' I would sing loudly to myself as I skipped along the Passage road with the King's officers' love-letters. It did not occur to me that if the French came I should find my best occupation gone; for the arrival of their foreign enemies must result in the retreat or destruction of my masters at Cove. I only know that I was an ardent rebel at heart, and hated the British Government furiously, though I did not connect the King's officers with it in any way: it was more the dark-coated Cork policemen whom I regarded as Saxons, although they were as a matter of fact Danes from the east, or mongrel Scots from the north.

It was about my fourteenth year that I first heard the name of a man called Napoleon: he was King of the French, just as George was King of the English, and he hated George quite as much as I did. At least so Micky the piper told me, who knew a great deal about foreign affairs. It was Micky who taught me all the rebel airs, and he declared it a great delight for him to hear me sing them; for I had a pretty ear for music: he taught me also to play on the pipes, and even to sound the Alarm, Assembly, and other calls, on a battered old French dragoon trumpet.

'When we raise our standard again, you shall play us to glory, Donal avick, these 'll be the days when we march on Dublin; you, Napoly, Mr. Emmett, and myself, and we all shall come by our rights again.'

So said Micky: but Napoleon never came, and at last we heard that the Austrians, the Russians, the Prussians, and the English—of course the English—had laid him by the heels and clapt him in gaol.

Micky was very angry: 'The spalpeens,' he declared, 'the lot of 'em got together and attacked him from behind when he was retreating from Moscow. Shame on them, the cowards, the dastards!'

I was very sorry that Napoleon had been beaten, for I had looked forward to meeting him in Ireland. I knew what he was like—a little fat man who couldn't sit straight on his horse, but with eyes that saw through the middle of the earth and out at the other side. I was now fourteen or fifteen years of age, tall and thin, and my hard life made me look older than I was. I began to tire of doing children's work, and wondered what I could lay my hand to for a change.

'Be a piper,' says Micky, 'and keep the legend of Ireland's wrongs alive till the day comes when we can right them.'

'But we can never right them,' said I. 'The day will never come now that Napoleon is defeated.'

'Nonsense,' says he; 'Napoleon 's not done for yet. Sure they 'd have killed him if they dared. They were afraid to kill him, he was so powerful. Isn't the Emperor of Austria his own wife's father? And when a man fights with his son-

in-law, do you think he is in earnest? Pish! Napoly and the Austrians are only laying their heads together to make a hare of the English.'

And I thought that Napoleon was a greater man than before, now that he was beaten and all his enemies more afraid of him than ever. Such a man, I felt, could not brook captivity long, and I gazed away to sea, and wondered whether he had yet broken his bonds.

And even as I watched the water, far away beyond my sight a ship stole away from the shores of Elba, and steered across the sea to France. The Bourbon tumbled off his throne, struck all of a heap by the news that Napoleon and a handful of grenadiers were invading his dominions, and the call to arms rang out from Valentia to the Black Sea.

Those were great days; the angel of battle seemed having one last good fling before she folded her wings. There wasn't a King's officer in the county who hadn't the *route* for Belgium, and the militia were called out for garrison duty at home, save whole heaps of them who were embodied in the army, and sailed away with the rest in great wallowing transports.

I nearly went mad during that time, I wanted to go to France and help Napoleon against his enemies; but it was impossible, even Micky said it was impossible.

I say I wanted to fight with the French against their enemies, even against the English, even against the King's officers, whose love-letters I had carried to the Cork ladies.

A man's will is a weak thing when the winds blow against it.

I was leaning over the wooden piles by the Admiral's steps at Cove, trying to make up my mind to steal Darby the fisherman's boat and take my chance of getting to France alive in her, when I heard a dragoon-trumpet going *tantivy, tantivy, tolla lo lo* down the High Street. Looking round I saw a troop of the King's Horse coming down at a trot, their trumpeter, a younker of my own age and cut, tootling away for all he was worth by way of a band.

He looked very spick and span did that trumpeter, and

'I CAN BLOW A DRAGOON-TRUMPET,' I SAID

the devil of envy gripping hold of me, I think, 'I wish I were you, my bantam!'

Scarcely had the thought touched me when the trumpeter's horse crosses his legs, and tumbling forward with the crack of broken knees, shoots his rider head-foremost on the stony road.

'He won't be no more use to us, sir,' says the sergeant, picking him up and looking at him.

The officer tugs his moustache. 'Most annoying. We've no time now to find any one, and, besides, a trumpeter wants training.' He sprang off his horse and looked reproachfully at the little bugler, who was growing black in the face.

Then the devil took complete hold of me, and I came forward touching my cap.

'Who the deuce are you?' asked the officer.

'I can blow a dragoon-trumpet,' I said.

'Where on earth did you learn?' he inquired with blank astonishment, then checked himself and answered curtly, 'Take the thing and show what you can do.'

I took as much air as I could into my lungs, and with all my force sounded the Charge.

The stone quays and the mountains gave back the echo, and the sailors crowded to the decks of their vessels to see who was raising such a riot.

The officer's face brightened.

'Give him the shilling and Brady's uniform. I'll requisition a horse for him in Belgium. The other had better be shot.'

The next day I was at sea for the first time in my life, and a fortnight later I stood on the quay at Ostend, on my way to fight with my enemies, the English, against my friends the French. They had kept me hard at work upon the troop-ship, teaching me how to bear myself like an English soldier, as if I cared about England! Little did they know that it was mere bad luck prevented me from fighting against them. Still they were good fellows in their way—many Irish; for the troop was a draft of recruits for the Inniskilling Dragoons.

We reached our head-quarters towards the end of May, and found ourselves cantoned not far from Bruges. The

regiment was short of cattle, so they mounted me on a great fat, Flemish cart-horse, whose broad back almost split me in two as I lumbered about in the saddle on parade.

But I took kindly to my trade, and when the advance was ordered the second week in June, I was not the worst trumpeter in the regiment. I had also made a friend in big Murphy the sergeant, whom I had seen pick up my predecessor at Cove. He was a fine fellow was Murphy: big as a grenadier but well-balanced as a hussar; he was the pride of the regiment—a perfect dragoon. Lord Edward Somerset tried to buy him for the Household cavalry.

It was by his side I rode as we trotted into Brussels on the night of the 10th June. We had a gay time in the city for two or three days, for we knew that we should soon be in battle array, some of us for the first and most likely the last time.

Well do I remember the night of the fifteenth of June, when the Duchess of Richmond, a very great English lady, gave a ball, and the Duke of Wellington (who I always thought was an Irishman until I saw his face) was there with his whole staff. Big Murphy and I were on duty, with a small picket of our troopers, outside the house. We could hear the roar of the music and the voices eddying through the doorway, and I felt disappointed with my career and wondered why I wasn't a general of division dancing with fine women inside instead of a lonely bugler with his legs at right angles with his saddle.

I had gone to sleep over these sad reflections, one foot dangling out of my stirrup, my chin dug down deep behind my stock, and big Murphy snoring like an overcharged ship's cannon beside me, when we were wakened by a great shout and the clatter of a cavalryman's iron hoofs on the cobble-stones. Big Murphy whips out his sword before you could say 'Mullingar,' but it was only a Prussian hussar on a horse swimming in lather, galloped every inch of the road from Charleroi, thirty miles away, to say that the French had crossed the frontier and the Prussian outposts were driven in.

We heard the clink of spurs and scabbard-ends on the

stone pavement of the hall as the Duke and a couple of his staff came out, well knowing what the scurrying hoofs meant.

The Duke hears what the hussar has to say, gives a little thoughtful sniff, as much as to say that it was going to be a fine day, then turning to me, says, 'Trumpeter, sound the *Reveillé*.'

'Trumpeter, you're Irish,' he added simply when I had done it.

It was then three o'clock of a cool summer morning. Within an hour's time the heads of the infantry columns were moving out of the town along the Charleroi road. And at seven the Duke himself rode off with most of his staff. Still we had received no orders, though we heard that the other regiments of horse were being called up from their cantonments on the river to be thrown forward towards Enghien.

About two o'clock some of us thought we heard cannon in the distance, but still no orders came, nothing until four when we were served out with three days' biscuit. Later again came the order to advance. Even then we left the town at an easy walk, and moved off to the west instead of the direction in which the infantry had gone. At Nivelles we came across the hay-bags of the 11th Hussars who had gone forward to Quatre Bras at the trot, but arrived too late after all.

Not until midnight did we reach the scene of action and take up our position in rear of the infantry, themselves encamped on the field they had bought with their blood.

I slept soundly, but was awakened before daylight by a sputtering musketry-fire from the front. All stood to their arms, but the alarm turned out to be caused by a misunderstanding between a French outpost and one of our over-officious light-cavalry patrols. The noise soon ceased, but we were too excited to go off to sleep again. To our surprise and danger we found that several of our troop horses had died during the night from eating the still green wheat and barley, in fields of which we had bivouacked.

At about ten o'clock the infantry in our front began a retrograde movement, leaving their outposts untouched, and our brigade consisting of the Royals and the Scots Greys besides ourselves, advancing through the intervals took up

the ground which they had quitted, having the Household Cavalry on our right, the Duke himself with the light cavalry in echelon of squadrons on the left, and far away to the west of Quatre Bras our remaining horsemen. Pickets of light dragoons and hussars galloped out to relieve the infantry outposts, who tore away behind us to rejoin their comrades.

We made a fine show, and for a moment the enemy was puzzled until he realised that he was watching a mere cavalry demonstration which covered the retreat of our army.

Then he pushed his regiments steadily forward, and I saw Frenchmen for the first time in my life. The Duke could not spare me many minutes to look at them, however; for now our battalions were well on their way through the dangerous defile of Genappe in our rear, and our object accomplished, we could only follow them as rapidly as decency would permit.

Going about, the Royals trotted down the Brussels high-road, followed by ourselves and the Scots Greys. Behind came the Household Brigade with a couple of light-dragoon regiments as rear-guard. The other two columns went off, one on the right, the other on the left, and the latter being pressed home by the French cuirassiers, let fly with its horse-guns, and brought down a thunderstorm, which drenched us with rain, turning the line of retreat into a sea of mud.

Firing continued briskly on the left, and just as we had cleared the town a rapid pop-pop of dragoon carbines broke out in our rear. Moving off the road, our brigade took up its position in column of half-squadrons in the fields on the west. The other heavy brigade was partly on the road, its head towards Brussels. The 23rd Light Dragoons, which was being wheeled into line of troops in our rear, suddenly seemed to club its ranks and get out of hand. We heard Lord Uxbridge shouting at the colonel in a tremendous rage; then he said, 'Take your tinkers out of the way altogether,' which made us all laugh. As the light horsemen cleared our front we saw a dense column of French lancers pricking up the hill after us. I thought we were in for it, and my breath came very quickly, but the General simply made two squadrons of the Life Guards go about in their tracks, and just as the

Frenchmen slackened at the pull of the hill, he launched them forward at the gallop. The sight dizzied me, and I shut my eyes; when I opened them the lancers had disappeared, save for the dead and dying by the roadside, and the Life Guards were tearing up the streets of Genappe.

The enemy did not bother us much after that, for the rain continued to come down, and made all rapid movement impossible. We took the road again, and retired slowly but peacefully to the bivouac appointed us at Mont Saint Jean. We had scarcely off-saddled when we were disturbed by a violent cannonade in our rear, but as the day drew to an end this died away, and the night closed in, wet and silent, save for the occasional groaning of thunder.

That night I could not sleep, the ground was sodden with the heavy rain, and I could not find a dry spot even close in the full blaze of our huge camp-fires. Our greatcoats had been packed off to Ostend, as the campaign had opened in fine weather, and the damp air felt cold. However, we had biscuit enough to eat, with more than enough gin to moisten it, and so fared better than the poor French, who for the most part passed the night, I am told, without warmth, victuals, or drink, a sorry preparation for the storm and struggle of the morrow.

Shortly after daybreak our men began to awake and move about the camp-fires with sullen, cheerless faces, looking with their bloodshot eyes, unkempt hair, and blue jaws, and rain-sodden uniforms like so many animated scarecrows. About five o'clock, the mist rising from the valley, we caught a glimpse of the outposts of the enemy, which lay at not more than a mile from us. We breakfasted off our remaining biscuit, and at seven rode into the position allotted us in the order of battle; this was to the east of the Charleroi road, in rear of Kempt's infantry, and in a line with the Household Brigade, who were on the other side of the road; a battery of the reserve artillery lay between us and them.

About mid-day we heard the crackle of musketry, and soon our outlying batteries below the ridge, which stretched away on either side, began to thunder. I was wildly nervous, for I

could see nothing but the infantry in front of us standing quietly to their arms with calm, set faces, as if nothing in particular were going forward.

Then the Scots Greys, who were on our left, got an order to take ground more to the rear, and as the threes went about I heard a great whiz, and an officer and trooper, with their horses, were dashed in a bloody heap upon the ground. I felt as if the food in my stomach had turned to lead, and I gripped Big Murphy's arm, 'For God's sake, look,' I whispered.

Murphy nodded. 'I seen it,' said he. ''Tis a painless death; Lord ha' mercy on 'em, and give us no worse.' That was all.

Something flew over my head and burst with a crash behind. I heard a smothered cough, and a riderless horse galloped past, tearing his way through the infantry files, and making for the front of the battle.

Then we heard great shouting, the heavy fire beneath the ridge ceased, giving way to the clash of steel. I saw the infantry in front form line. I was watching them intently when a tremendous bang beside me made my heart leap into my mouth; the battery by the road had opened fire.

'They're firing case shot,' muttered Murphy. 'There'll be devilment in a minute. Now, mark ye, Donal', my boy, you can but die once, and it's better done decent.'

Scarcely had he said the words when the infantry in front ceased fire, brought their bayonets to the charge, and with a great bugling and piping swept over the ridge; they were thrown into disorder by a sunken road which crossed their route, and we saw them fall thickly as they scrambled up the other side.

The battery ceased fire, and I watched the men sponging the smoking pieces. The infantry disappeared in the flame of the battle, and a Highland regiment moved up and partly occupied the ground they had quitted, standing ready, with fixed bayonets, to plunge into the fray.

Stragglers from the regiment which had just charged came limping back. Four soldiers struggled across the road carrying a General of Division in their arms. The seal of

death was on his face. 'Bury me down there with the men,' he said, as they hurried him past me.

An aide-de-camp galloped up, but ere he could deliver his orders a stray bullet struck him in the temple, and his horse bolted, bearing him away, stiff, stark, dead in the saddle.

The firing in front redoubled in intensity. We were wheeled into line, and as we executed the movement I saw the Household Brigade trot off rapidly down the Charleroi road. Our Brigadier passed along the line and dismounted beside me. 'Sergeant,' says he to Murphy, 'tighten my girths for me.' Scarcely were the words out of his mouth when the Highlanders rushed across our front, and with a shout of '*Vive l'Empereur*,' the French came surging over the ridge.

The next instant I was blowing the Charge, and the whole regiment, pell-mell, anyhow, riding through the Highlanders, went racing down upon the foe. We went through them as if they were children, and thundered on down the slope, taking every obstacle in our stride, and shouting like schoolboys.

'Get away forward, Trumpeter,' cried a young officer, whipping my charger with the flat of his sword. I felt the great lumbering legs gather together under me as, frantic with pain, the brute took bit, curb, and all between its teeth and ran away with me. I shot forward beside our colonel, a grey-haired old foxhunter, shrieking like a fiend from hell, with his spurs buried in the belly of his maddened battle-horse.

'We 'll give it to 'em, we 'll give it to 'em!' he was shouting, when the ground rose up under him and swallowed him in a cloud of smoke.

On we tore, leaving great mounds of men, our own amongst them, to mark our passage. The enemy fell on all sides; I saw no blow struck; they seemed to melt away, blasted by the light of our eyes.

Through the din of the battle came the rattle of wheels and chain; a French battery dashed across our front, the drivers flogging the horses in vain hope of escape. In a second we were on them, the men sabred, the horses' throats

cut, the caissons burst, the guns shattered, and still onwards we tore. On and on and on. 'To Paris,' cried Murphy, his face aflame with the fury of blood, 'we 'll gallop to Paris; Ireland for ever!'

Suddenly, through the smoke of the fray, I saw a great cloud of steel-clad horsemen come down upon our right. They passed us by, and wheeling my horse I saw them engulf a little posse of our Life Guards and Dragoons. One great big fellow rode at me; then seeing I was a boy, he dropped his sword-point and passed on with a smile on his face, to be struck dead by Murphy, who cut him through the helmet, and he went down with the long dragoon-sword sticking in his head.

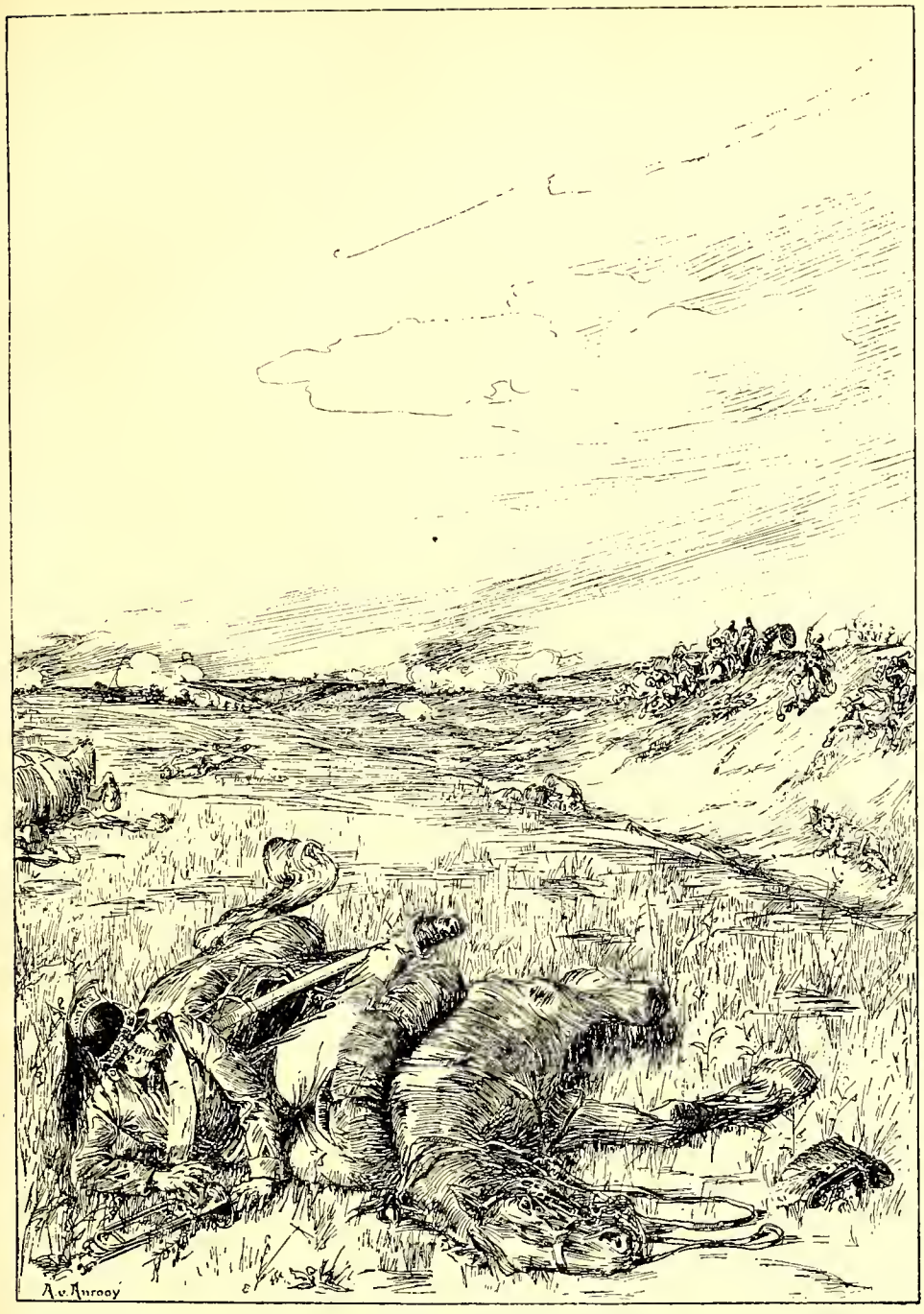
Yelling with horror, I put spurs to my horse again, and sped away from this accursed spot; everything I saw was red, and I felt as if God had taken the world between his hands and crushed it out of shape.

I could not have gone very far when I felt my horse quiver under me, and with a snort of anguish it dropped dead in full flight, falling upon me with tremendous force. I tried to disengage myself from the carcase, but the effort to do so caused me indescribable agony; my right leg had been broken to bits.

I had scarcely gathered my senses when a trembling of the earth made me look round. A battery of horse artillery was approaching me at the gallop. I saw the officers waving their swords, I saw the drivers plying their whips and, God! I saw the great wheels leap and jerk in mid-air as the black guns came dancing over the bodies of the dead and wounded.

Then, overcome with fear, horror, and pain, I fainted away.

Two days later I was found, and carried to the ambulance, where they cut my right leg off from the knee. They told me that we had beaten Napoleon, and that the Prussians had drummed him flying into the night. They said it was a glorious victory, well worth the cost of blood. But what I say is this: 'Ask the men rotting at Waterloo what they think.' For myself, I am only a piper, and a leg more or less is a small matter.



IT DROPPED DEAD
IN FULL FLIGHT

II. MY SOLDIER

I WAS only thirteen in July of the Terrible Year; we were living on my father's little farm on the Moselle bank, between the Bois de Vaux and Metz. We heard that France had war with the Prussians, but my father was a busy man who read no newspapers, so we knew but little. Indeed, Monsieur Swarzmann, the mayor, who received two journals regularly, one from Strasburg and one from Paris, seemed to know not much more than we. They took my eldest brother to join the army, that was all. We never saw him again; I have been told he died in prison at a place called Graudenz, but do not know if that is true. That he will never return, I feel certain.

When he had gone, only my little brother, father, mother, and I were left on the farm. My little brother was very young, eight years younger than I. We called him Tonton after his uncle Gaston, then a waiter at the Café Turc in Metz, and quite rich. He was a clever child, but sly; we loved him.

We knew nothing of the happenings of the war, and did not think of it; for the harvest promised to be good, and that is of more importance to poor people.

My mother came home from Metz one evening, and seemed upset.

'They have let water into the ditch round St. Quentin,' she said.

'It is on account of the war,' said my father. 'I hear coffee has gone up two sous.'

'Everything has gone up,' answered my mother.

'It is on account of the war,' said my father again. He lit his pipe and smiled.

'Our vegetables will sell well this winter,' he told her.

'Yet I wish we had not war,' murmured my mother.

'Bah! it is good for trade.'

'But the dead men, Antoine, the dead men——'

'Enrich the earth,' declared my father; then seeing I was listening, he added, 'Get thee to bed, Marthe!'

Three days later I saw dust in the distance; at the same time I heard the trampling of feet, there was also a jangling of chains and wheels. Then slowly multitudes of soldiers came into sight. I have never seen so many before or since. They were all French, all dishevelled and weary; none of them spoke to me. Although they moved by the fields and roads at once, they took a whole day to pass the house.

Many were horsemen, and my father was angry with them; they trampled down our crops.

'Why don't you fight the Prussians,' he called after one party, 'instead of ruining honest folk's harvest?'

'We have fought the Prussians,' said one old man sadly; he was pale, and had his head bound up: I felt sorry for him.

'I do not like war,' said my mother. My father made no reply.

Tonton cried himself to sleep while the soldiers were passing. If I had been as young as he, I should have been frightened too.

Two days later, as I was washing the linen in the mill-stream, I saw the flutter of a lance-flag over some bushes: a French soldier on horseback came down the road.

Seeing me he stopped, and, trying to dismount, fell face downwards on the road. My father, who was working in a field close by, picked him up and sent me to the house for brandy.

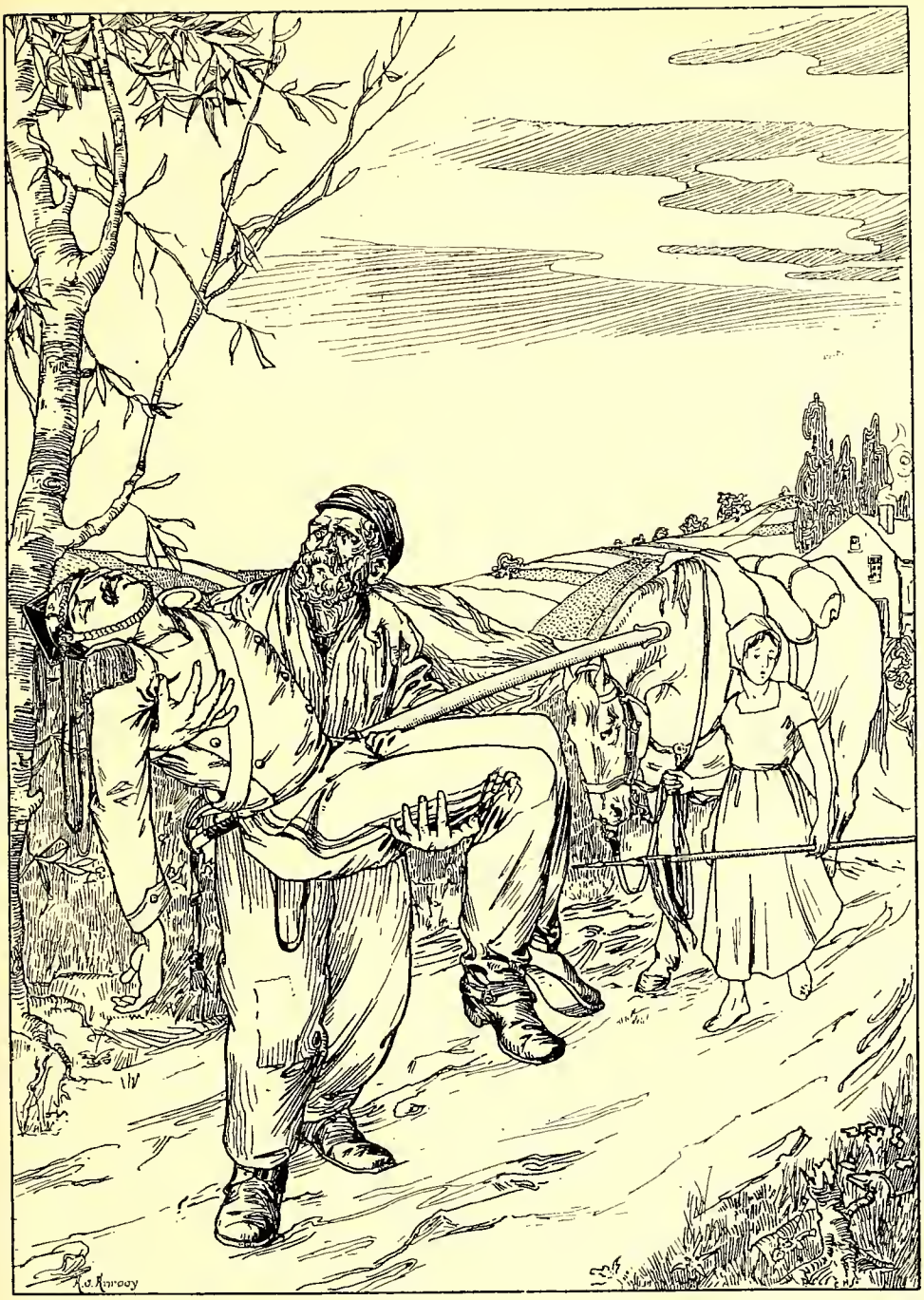
When some had been poured down his throat, he revived slightly.

'I am starving,' he told us.

My father, who though small was strong, carried him home. I followed, leading the horse. I held the reins in one hand and the soldier's lance in the other; it was very long, and once I tripped over it, which made me notice a dull red stain on the point.

When the soldier had eaten, drunk, and slept, he told us he belonged to the Lancers of the Guard. We asked him why he was alone, and he smiled.

'My troop was part of the rear-guard after Fræschwiller,' he said. 'I am that rear-guard now.'



MY FATHER CARRIED
HIM HOME

I did not understand what he said, but I think my father did. 'Then our army is defeated?' he asked sternly.

'If it exists at all,' answered the soldier.

That night the soldier remained with us. Father and mother were very gloomy; but he seemed gay enough, now that he had eaten and drunk. He took Tonton on his knee, put his cap on his head, and trotted him up and down.

'You are a Lancer of the Guard, little one?' he said.

'Yes, yes!' said Tonton.

'And you serve the Emperor?'

'Yes, yes!' said Tonton.

'Then trot, and gallop, and charge!' cried the soldier, bumping him up and down till the cap fell over his eyes.

'Please, do not teach him war,' said my mother.

My father said nothing.

I did not speak to the soldier, he was very tall and handsome; I was afraid to speak to him, he was so tall and handsome. I hoped he would remain with us a long time: he seemed to protect the house. He was kind, too; Tonton cut a button from his coat with mother's scissors, and he only laughed. But he could tease too—he called me a little German girl because I spoke French badly, being an Alsatian; he was a Breton, and I have since found out that he spoke French badly too; only the Parisians speak French well. I was angry when he called me a German, but I did not hate him, for he was so tall and handsome. He kissed me when I was going to bed, and I did not sleep.

Next day he left us; six men wearing the same clothes came down the road, and he joined them. I saw him shake hands with them, and they seemed glad to see him. They all rode off together towards Metz.

I felt quite lonely all day, until I found Tonton playing with the button he had cut off the soldier's tunic. It was a large brass button, with foreign words on it; I asked Tonton to give it to me, which he did when I promised to let him pull my hair. He hurt me, but I wanted the button.

At bed-time, I remembered that my soldier had kissed me the night before, and I did not sleep.

The next morning was very beautiful, not a cloud in the sky, and I was surprised to hear thunder.

'That is not thunder,' said my father. 'It is war.'

My mother turned very pale. She made me pray with her for a long time before the statue of the Blessed Virgin. We were busy people, and did not often pray.

The noise of war went on all day. About midday it was deafening, but as the light waned it died away.

When it had almost altogether ceased, I went down towards the mill-stream. I sat by the water's edge watching the smoke far away, and waiting for my soldier to come back. But this evening the road seemed quite deserted: no peasants even passed through from the fields. I thought they must have gone to see the war, and I wished I too could go, but my mother had forbidden me to do so. Besides, I was afraid of the noise I had heard during the day. I waited a long time by the mill-stream without anything happening, and at last, at sunset, I was starting homewards when suddenly I saw the fluttering lance-flag again over the bushes, and heard the trampling of horses. I looked up for my soldier.

Two lancers came down the road, they held pistols in their hands, and were staring to left and right. Twenty yards behind came a long train of horsemen; all were bloody and dirty. They were not French.

I was terrified, and hid in the long grass till they had passed. They did not take the direction of our cottage, but branched off more towards Metz.

I did not know what to do; I was heartsick; I wondered what had become of my soldier.

I felt I could not go home without knowing what had happened. I was curious. Curiosity is to a child stronger even than fear: I walked up the road along which the soldiers had come.

I had walked for an hour and more, when I came on a dead horse; its girths were broken, but I noticed no wound upon it, it was very thin, perhaps it died from want of food.

I left the road and crossed the fields: in a ditch was a

I SAW ONE QUITE
YOUNG AND BOYISH-
LOOKING

large black wheel; round about, the ground was much rutted. In the next field I saw the earth had been thrown up into an embankment. At the other side I saw heaps of blue and red cloth. I had to walk over them to pass on my way, and I felt them quiver beneath. I looked closely, for the evening light was failing. As I tried to make out clearly on what I was treading, I heard a groan. Beneath me were piled, one upon another, dead and dying French soldiers. I had found my way to the place whence had come the noise of war.

Leaving these things behind me, I sought to regain the highway; but only wandered more deeply into the midst of corpses. The road itself was strewn with dead. There was a cannon, with its horses and powder-cart, behind a hedge. The horses lay heaped on one another, their harness in fragments; the soldiers, all mutilated, were scattered around; one lay in a mangled mass beneath the wheels. Something seemed to have burst, I could still smell the gas.

In the meadow at the other side of the road were several tents; here were few bodies, but one frightened me very much —a great bearded man lay with his back to the earth, but not upon it. His form was enormously swollen, and had risen in the middle like a hoop, so that he was held up only by his head and feet. I suppose it was only the sun made it look like that, but, at the time, I thought I saw the body of a man who had not gone to Heaven.

He looked so awful, I ran away from him, and even though I saw a splendid kettle near one of the tents, I dared not stop to pick it up.

I regained the high-road, and thinking I saw a lance-flag, went towards it. Then I noticed there were several, but only one was upright: it fluttered in the evening breeze. The road here sunk beneath the level of the fields: there were many dead lancers lying across the road. Also there were bodies with white coats and brass helmets; I suppose the lancers and white coats had killed each other. The white coats, no doubt, were Prussians; yet they did not all look bad men. I saw one quite young and boyish-looking, with a broken sword in his hand; he was lying on one of the lancers,

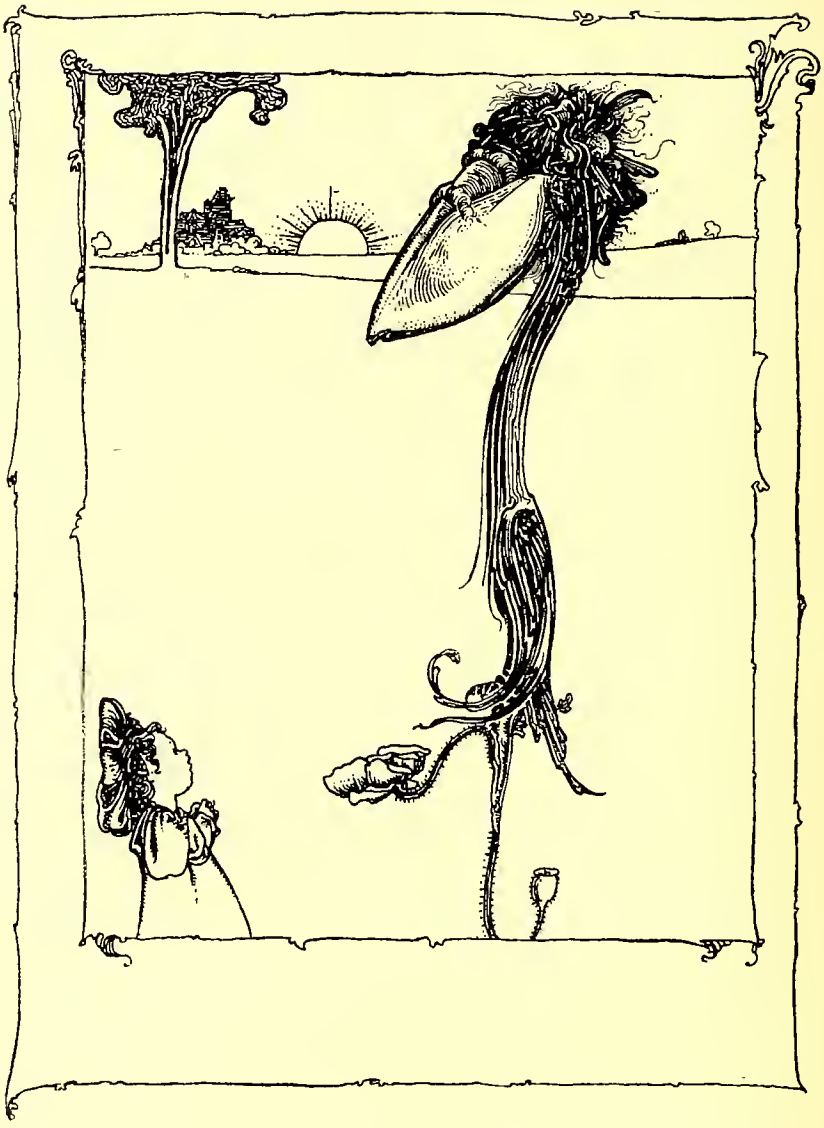
who seemed to me to have shot him. The lancer's face had been opened from ear to ear by the broken sword, and looked hideous. His coat too had been torn, and one or two of the buttons were missing from the front.

I thought of what my father had said about the earth being enriched by the dead men, and I felt glad that it was not our land that should be so enriched.

Then I remembered that it was time for me to go back and put Tonton to bed.

But first I said a prayer for my soldier.

DEAR LITTLE BIRD.
BY PAUL A. ARRE.
ILLUSTRATED BY
CHARLES ROBINSON.



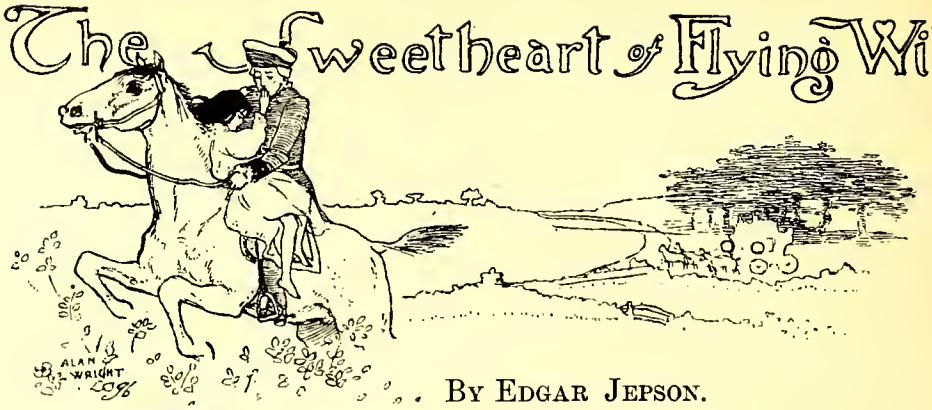
'DEAR LITTLE BIRD.' By Paul A. Arre.

EAR little bird,
Up in the tree,
When, in the morning,
You chirrup to me,
Don't you get tired
Of twittering so?
I suppose, if you could,
You would answer me, No!

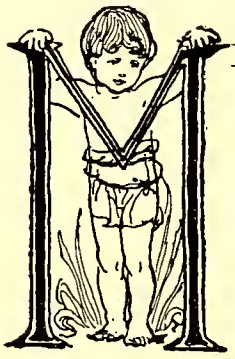
Dear little bird,
Up in the tree,
When the wind blows,
Don't you wish you were me?
Tuck'd in my nice little,
Warm, cosy cot?
I suppose, if you could,
You would say, 'I do not!'

You 're just as well off
As I, I expect,
As you sit on the bough there,
With leaves all bedeck'd—
Your wing is your shelter
When sleeping at night,
I suppose, if you could,
You would say, 'You 're quite right!'

The Sweetheart of Flying Will



By Edgar Jepson.



R. WILLIAM RUSTON, known to fame as Flying Will, had a gentle heart; and even if, sometimes, in the exercise of his calling, or the pursuit of his pleasure, he had done violence to its gentleness, it was but natural that, when he rode up to the 'Rose and Crown,' and found the landlord, Cyrus Bodset, beating a child with a strap, he should cry very sharply, 'Hi! you there! Bodset! Let that child be; will you!'

His words fell on deaf ears; and, his temper being as short as his heart was gentle, he swung himself off The Kestrel, caught Bodset by the collar, and flung him reeling across the yard. Bodset turned, and abused him from a full heart, assuring him that he should esteem the day on which he saw him hanged a happy one; then went grumbling into the inn. A grinning hostler led away The Kestrel; and Flying Will was left standing before the child who cried on, her face hidden in her hands. He gazed at her in a great embarrassment; for though he was a younger son of a good family, he had quarrelled with his father some five years before, and of late had only met gentlewomen now and again in coaches. He saw that the child, for all her coarse, homespun gown, and bare feet, had an air of gentle breeding: her skin and black hair were fine, her feet were small, and her small hands were, for the days of George the Second, very white. Presently he observed that the note of her sobbing

I DRINK TO YOUR
LIPS, LITTLE MADAM

changed from pain to anger; and he said, for all the world as if he were dealing with The Kestrel in a tantrum, 'Soh, now, soh: gently, little lady, gently now,' and stroked her head.

The child peeped at him through her fingers, and saw a tall, slight figure, dressed in a dull crimson coat, flowered vest, white riding-breeches, and long boots, all very neat and fresh; a pale, pleasant face with clean-cut features, and bright eyes; a very fine, debonair gentleman indeed.

He saw her glance; said, 'Come, come, little sweetheart, cry no more. It 's all over;' and drew her hands from her face very gently.

He stepped back with a soft whistle of amazed admiration; and, in truth, her delicate face with the flush of anger on it, the dilated nostrils, the eyes brilliant with the tears that brimmed them yet, the whole thrown into vivid relief by the frame of black hair, was of a startling beauty.

He swept off his hat with a very low bow, and said, 'Your servant, little madam.'

Satisfied by a swift, keen glance that he was not jesting with her, the child made him a pretty curtsy; he caught her up lightly in his arms, carried her into the inn, and set her in the great arm-chair in the parlour. Then, throwing himself into the facing chair, he smiled at her so pleasantly that she smiled back at him without knowing why; and called for a bottle of claret and glasses. He poured out a glass for her, filled one for himself, clicked their rims together, and, crying 'I drink to your eyes, little madam!' drank it off. He filled it again quickly, cried 'I drink to your lips, little madam!' and drank the half of it.

'I drink to you, sir,' said the child, and touched her lips with the glass; her voice rang pleasant, with a faint foreign ring. She gazed at him very serious, and well-mannered.

'I, little madam, am Mr. William Ruston, at your service; and you would oblige me by telling me who you are, and how you came here.'

The child was thoughtful a while, and then began the story, the thread of it eked out by his many questions. She

was named Suzanne; and she lived in France, in the country, in a beautiful big house, a château; and months ago, oh, many months, her nurse had taken her to walk in the woods; and they had found a carriage in a lane, and an ugly, dark man in it, and the nurse and she had got into the carriage, and driven for hours and hours till they came to a town, a vast town; and they had told her that her dear mother and good papa were coming; but they never came. Then she drove to the sea, with another dark man; and they sailed on it days and days; and she was very ill. And they came to another big city, but not so big, she heard the sailors call it Bristol; and then they rode in a carriage again, miles and miles; and they came hither. In the morning the dark man, he was called Monsieur Louis, was gone; and she stayed here; and after a while Mr. Bodset began to beat her, always for nothing, nothing at all; he was very cruel. And she had never seen dear mamma any more, 'never any more,' she repeated, and her voice sank, and the tears brimmed into her eyes again.

Flying Will was silent; the story seemed to him to tell of the working out of some private grudge. But of that he thought little; the child herself filled his mind. As her face had brightened or grown sad in the telling of her tale, and he had been at a loss to decide in which mood it was the more beautiful, a new desire had sprung up in his mind. Why should he not make the lonely child his own? He, too, was alone in the world: he had no kinsfolk now; his friends, or rather hangers-on, would sell him cheerfully for ten guineas, any one of them; and it seemed to him that if Suzanne's beautiful eyes looked for his coming, the world through which he came to them would be brighter. Besides, one day he might chance upon Fortune smiling, and bring from the encounter money enough to buy a small farm; if there were the child, he would buy it; if there were no child, the money would go, as it had gone before. His mind was made up; he was not a man to waste time; he turned eager eyes on Suzanne, and said in a very soft voice, 'Would you like to belong to me, Suzanne?'

'Oh,' gasped Suzanne, clasping her hands, her face alight, 'but I should!'

Flying Will banged his hand on the table, shouting, 'Bodset! Bodset!' and the landlord came in, his glum face set so surly that Suzanne's heart sank at the thought that her pleasant, gentle friend would never be able to persuade him. But her pleasant, gentle friend had changed in the twinkling of an eye to a gentleman of a grim, overbearing air, with thin, straight lips, who said in a harsh rasp of a voice, 'Hark ye, Bodset. I've taken a fancy to this child here; and if you mishandle, or miscall her again, I'll cut your ears off.'

Suzanne thought that if ever he spoke to her in such a fashion, she would die of grief and fear: it was a thousand times worse than the loudest abuse, even than the blows of the landlord.

The landlord broke out into loud complaint: if an honest Englishman might not chastise the wenches in his own house, who might?

'Did you mark what I said? I'll cut your ears off!' shouted Flying Will; and Bodset and Suzanne jumped at the shout. He glared at Bodset a while; then his mood seemed to change, and he said indifferently, 'I'll tell you what I'll do. I've taken a fancy to the child. She's only a burden to you. I'll give you a guinea for her.'

Suzanne's face, wavering from hope to fear, fell at the little value he set on her.

'Sell flesh and blood! Sell a child intrusted to me! For a guinea!' cried Bodset.

'Well, you rogue, how much?' said Flying Will.

'Five guineas, Mr. Ruston. Five guineas, not a penny less.'

'Done,' said Flying Will, with a little yawn. 'But I fear me, Bodset, I fear me that your greed will one of these days set you in the way of a flying bullet. You'll go talking about some honest gentleman who wants a quiet life.' He drew a purse from his pocket, and counted out five guineas on the table. 'Bring ink and paper, and make me out a proper bill of sale,' he said.

The landlord brought them; made out the bill of sale, and signed it. Suzanne had changed hands.

She heaved a deep sigh of relief; and Flying Will said in his hectoring fashion, 'She will stay here at my charge for a while; and see that she has the best of everything. D' ye hear?'

As the door shut behind the landlord, his overbearing air fell from him like a mask, he stretched out his arms, and said with a charming smile, 'Give me a kiss on the bargain, little sweetheart.'

She sprang to him with a little sobbing cry, threw her arms about his neck, and kissed him with all her heart.

'Those are the sweetest kisses I've tasted these five years,' said Flying Will.

From that day Suzanne's life was changed indeed: no more abuse, no more blows, no more coarse food. Her new friend took up his abode at 'The Rose and Crown'; and seemed disposed to stay there, only leaving it for one day to ride to Bristol, and bring back his valise full of taffetas, muslins, lace, and fine cambrics for Suzanne's adornment; and besides, a crimson cloak that he had chosen for her because it matched his coat. A seamstress from the village, used to working for the gentry, made the stuffs into gowns, of a rustical simplicity, but on the child vastly pretty and becoming; and she went in her new finery more beautiful than ever. Dearest to her of all of it was the crimson cloak, because he had chosen it as matching his coat; and ever and again, in the privacy of her chamber, she would kiss it.

She spent all of her time with Flying Will that the difference in their hours allowed: she rose early, and went to bed early; he was late about both. She breakfasted with him; and sat with him under the great elm, while he smoked his long pipe, and watched the grooming of The Kestrel, a powerful bay of a rare turn of speed and endurance. She sauntered with him along the lanes or over the fields till dinner; dined with him, sauntered again; and supped with him, falling sleepy very soon after. For his part, her beauty and intelligence ever charmed him more; and he talked to

her, or told her stories; sang to her, or played on the old spinet in the inn parlour, for her pleasure; and listened to her wise prattle with never a moment's weariness. He taught her to ride The Kestrel, striding along at her side, patient with her natural fear of so big a creature, until she had gained courage, and the horse knew her and was as gentle with her as his master himself. Little by little, in that quiet life, certain lines, scored on his face by his wild past, began to fade; his eyes grew as clear as the child's own; a colour began to mantle his pale cheeks. His fine hair was Suzanne's peculiar care: she had heard him say he missed his perruquier; and she dressed it every morning with industrious nicety, growing more skilled, until it wore as fine a gloss as ever shone on hair. One or two of the rare travellers who came to 'The Rose and Crown' and chanced, in spite of Flying Will's care to avoid strangers, to see him and the child, carried the fame of their beauty far up and down the Western Road; and indeed, when they went, sedate and decorous, to the village church on a Sunday, you could not have found a pair to match them in all the cathedrals in England.

But he had his dark days, days when he would lie back in his arm-chair, dull, gloomy, and frowning, sometimes muttering wicked words; and on these days Suzanne was his silent, sympathetic shadow. Now and again he would cry, 'Go away! go away, and play!' And she would make a feint of leaving the room, only to steal back noiselessly, and crouch down at his side, out of sight. He would not know that she was there until a faithful sigh, echoing a groan from him, would inform him; and at the third or fourth of them, the humour of the dear child's grieving her little heart about a perverse, worthless dog like himself would draw from him a dreary laugh. Then it was the turn of Suzanne, and with joyous eyes and smiles she would entreat him to come forth with her; for she had found the open air sovereign for his melancholy.

At last there came a day when he came to breakfast booted and spurred, and told her that he must be off on his

business, and would be away ten days. He charged Bodset very strictly to be careful of her; The Kestrel was saddled; and he rode away, turning round many times to throw a kiss to the tearful, forlorn Suzanne. She was indeed forlorn; the days passed very slow; she wandered listlessly about the lanes; she had no heart for any but her plainest gown, wearing it as a kind of mourning for the absence of her friend. Bodset let her be, and save for a word now and again to one of the maids, she spoke to no one. In her loneliness she grew almost as unhappy as she had been of old, and on the eighth day she sat miserable in her chamber, grieving that there were still two whole days before she would see him. Of a sudden a clear voice cried from below, 'What, ho! Little sweetheart!' Scarce believing her ears, she sprang to the casement, and saw Flying Will on The Kestrel smiling up at her. She ran down the stairs and flung herself, speechless and breathless with surprise and joy, into his arms.

They took up the thread of their life where his absence had broken it; and Suzanne soon forgot the unhappy days when he had been away from her. One evening they were strolling along a lane, The Kestrel, who would follow his master like a dog, was walking behind them without bridle or saddle, stopping to eat any fresh and juicy shoot that caught his fancy, when a young farmer of the neighbourhood came riding along. He reined up with a 'Good-evening, Mr. Ruston. Heard the news?'

'What news?' said Flying Will.

'The Bishop was stopped no more than three miles out of Bristol a week agone, and robbed of two hundred guineas,' said the farmer. 'They do say as Flying Will done it.'

'I shouldn't think it likely,' said Flying Will indifferently. 'Flying Will keeps the London roads. How should he be in this part?'

'Well, I doan't know; but he's a rare hard un to catch.'

'So it seems,' said Flying Will thoughtfully, jingling his money in his pocket; and the farmer bade them good-night, and rode on.

Some ten days after this a new guest came to 'The Rose

and Crown,' one Mr. Christie, a sharp-eyed, fussy gentleman from London, travelling for his health. He protested that the country around charmed him, that the air was bracing and salubrious; and proposed to make a stay of a week or two there. He awoke in Suzanne a very lively dislike of him by offering her a crown for a kiss; and she kept all her kisses very jealously for her dear Will. Moreover, affecting a friendliness for Flying Will which the child out of some instinct distrusted, he would often join them on their walks; and she found that his impertinent, garrulous company spoiled her pleasure. She could not talk freely to her friend before any one else, and indeed Mr. Christie kept most of the talk to himself. Flying Will found him an entertaining fellow in spite of his awkward questions about his past and his means of livelihood; but she was very glad when this importunate intruder into their lives said that he must return to London to his business. On the day before he set out, he was loud in his complaints of the folly of one of his friends, a merchant, who was travelling the very next day from Bristol to Plymouth with seven hundred guineas on him.

'There is little danger,' said Flying Will, 'if he take the morning coach, and spend the night at an inn.'

'No, my dear sir, there is not,' said Mr. Christie. 'But the foolish man leaves Bristol in the evening.'

On the next morning Mr. Christie rode away on his grey cob; and all through the day Flying Will was so full of thought that Suzanne went about with him silent, wondering at his mood. In the evening he left her, and went to the Parsonage for a while. He was more tender than his wont in bidding her good-night, and said, 'If any ill ever befall me, little sweetheart, go you to the parson. He is an honest man; I have left with him moneys for you, and he will be your friend.'

'I want no friends but you, Will, dear,' said Suzanne, very earnest; 'and if ill befell you, I—I—should die.'

'Never do anything so foolish, little sweetheart. I 'm not worth it,' he said sadly, and kissed her again.

Suzanne could not sleep; his serious words and tone had

inspired into her a great disquiet. After an hour she arose, and wrapping round her her crimson cloak, that matched Will's coat, she sat at the casement staring into the starlight, the sense of impending misfortune growing heavier and heavier on her. Later she fell into a light doze, and was aroused from it by the clink of a horse's hoof against a pebble. Looking down, she saw Will leading out The Kestrel, bridled and saddled, and while she debated whether to call him or no, he mounted on the turf by the roadside and rode noiselessly off. Then indeed was she troubled; and sat on, a thousand fears, a thousand dismal fancies hurrying through her head. The clock below struck eleven; ten minutes later her heart leapt to the sound of hoofs, fell when she found that they came from the wrong direction, and leapt again when Mr. Christie, on his white cob, rode into the yard of the inn. He came straight to the landlord's window, and called, in a low voice, 'Has he ridden forth, Bodset?'

'Yes,' said Bodset, 'and he axed me to-day what time the Bristol coach came down the Western Road, and I tells him it passes Hangman's Clump at midnight. There you 'll find him.'

Mr. Christie chuckled, and said, 'The best trap I ever set. Three of the sharpest thief-catchers in England on the top of the coach, and four soldiers inside. If Flying Will, *alias* Mr. Ruston, *alias* I don't know what, ain't dead or in Bristol gaol before morning, my name ain't Jack Swain!'

'And my fifty guineas?' said Bodset.

'Oh, they 're all right. Jack Swain always pays!' he said; and rode briskly off towards the Western Road.

Suzanne was shaking like a leaf, her mind a whirl; but when her wits came back, she lost no time. She found her shoes, stole out of her chamber and down the stairs—every board seemed to her to creak louder than a gunshot—and came into the kitchen. The window-fastening was very stiff, and tried her wrists, but she tugged it open with as little noise as might be, dropped her shoes gently on the ground, and herself gently after them. She drew them on swiftly, crept round the side of the inn and along the road in the

shadow of the hedge till she was out of sight of it, and then began to run; five miles to Hangman's Clump, and forty minutes to midnight.

The road stretched dark and lonely before her; but to the darkness and loneliness, commonly most dreadful to her, she gave no thought; she only shed a few tears that Will, her dear Will, should be a wicked highwayman. Then the overmastering desire to save him drove all other thought from her mind, and she ran panting on. She did not slacken for the first mile, then her legs could carry her at the pace no longer, and she was forced to walk. Soon she was running again. Here and there she stumbled; once she fell and cut her hands. The shock shook a burst of tears from her; they soon dried, and she was running again. At last, running and walking, walking and running, she staggered out to the Western Road, half a mile below Hangman's Clump, her little feet lead, her legs mere shooting pains, her breath shaking gasps, her eyes nearly blind. All her body cried on her to rest, but her spirit was the stronger; she paused but a moment to listen, and caught the faint clatter of the coach beyond the hill. For the first time fear gripped her heart; with a great sob she flung away her dear cloak, kicked off her shoes that were weights to her feet, and, bare-foot and in her nightshift, a piteous little white figure, struggled up the hill. It seemed to tower above her to the sky. The rattle of the coach, growing louder and louder, was her spur. She came on to the top to see its lights fifty yards away, and under the trees, not ten yards from her, a dark horseman, waiting. She had no voice to cry to him; tottered to his side, and gripped his long boot.

He looked down, and cried out, thinking the little white form a spirit; but the grip was flesh and blood, and he cried, 'Suzanne!'

'The coach—thief-catchers—soldiers!' gasped the child, clutching at her bosom.

Swift as thought he leaned down, caught her by the arms, swung her on to the saddle before him, and set The Kestrel at the hedge. A shout from the coach, a crack of pistols as

the horse rose to the leap : Suzanne jerked in his arms to the sound : and he landed safe in the meadow with a mocking laugh. Two horsemen crashed through the fence behind him, and he sat down to ride The Kestrel as he had never ridden him before. He felt Suzanne's hand grope feebly up his chest, touch his lips, and fall. The fields flew by, The Kestrel cleared hedge after hedge, the pursuing hoofs grew fainter and died away. He wondered at the stillness of the child in his arms, and shifted her into an easier position. He need not have been at the pains : a bullet had pierced her faithful breast, and the nightshift, dyed in her life-blood, matched his crimson coat as nearly as the cloak she had thrown away to save him.

STORIES TO TELL THE LITTLE ONES. II. RIP VAN WINKLE AND HIS LONG NAP

AST New York, right up the Hudson River, you come to great mountains—called The Catskills — which are otherwise known as the 'Kaatsberg.' Long ago there lived in a village, at the foot of one of these tree-clad hills, a Dutchman named Rip Van Winkle, who had a wife, a grumbling, bad-tempered woman; a son, a young Rip; and a blue-eyed daughter, whom he loved dearly. The old Rip was a lazy, good-natured fellow, fond of sitting outside the village inn and gossiping in the shade beneath the sign-board which bore a portrait of King George III., for America was then an English colony. One summer evening when poor Rip Van Winkle had been scolded by his wife, who had routed him out of his favourite seat, he scrambled up the mountain for peace and quiet with his dog and his gun, and threw himself on a green knoll, and dozed.

He was aroused by hearing some one call 'Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!!' His dog Wolf growled and skulked to his master's side, as a curious dwarf approached them carrying a keg of liquor on his shoulders; he made signs for Rip to help him carry his burden up the mountain, and they climbed in silence, broken only by long rolling peals like distant thunder, until they came to an open space, where Rip saw a company of odd-looking personages playing at nine-pins. They were dressed in short doublets, with great knives stuck in their belts, and wore enormous breeches, each had a long beard and a queue, and each wore a high-pointed hat, with a crown like a sugar-loaf and a broad brim. By-and-bye they induced Rip to join them, and he found the noise he had taken for thunder was caused by their balls as they rolled along the mountain sides. After a while they offered him a flagon of hollands, which he drank and fell down in a deep sleep.

When he woke it was bright sunshine, his first thought was, What excuse shall I make to Dame Winkle? He looked

round for his gun, but in place of the clean, well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old firelock, its barrel crusted with rust, its lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. Wolf was gone, nor in spite of his whistling could he bring him back. As he clambered down towards the village, the people he met seemed dressed in a different fashion from that he had known, and they all stared at him and stroked their chins. As Rip did the same he found he had a beard a foot long. He approached his house, it had fallen into ruins; a half-starved dog snarled at him, and Rip was sad to find that Wolf, as he thought, had forgotten him. He called for his wife, but no answer came. So he strolled on to the village inn, but in place of the quiet little house, he found a great building with a flag of stars and stripes fluttering above it, and a sign with a head, entitled 'General Washington.' He asked in vain for his old friends. 'Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle,' he shouted. 'O yes, there he is,' said two or three voices at once, and he looked up and saw a man exactly like he was when he went up the mountain. Then he saw a comely woman, and as she spoke to her little boy, 'Hush, Rip, the old man won't hurt you,' he seemed to know her voice. 'What was your father's name?' he said. 'Ah, poor man, Rip Van Winkle was his name, but it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and has never been heard of since his dog came home without him.' 'Where is your mother,' he asked. 'She died some time ago,' she replied. 'I am your father,' the poor man said; and then a very old woman came forward and said, 'Sure enough it's Rip Van Winkle himself. Well, old neighbour, where have you been these twenty years?'

But nobody believed the story he told, yet they were kind to him, and he soon grew very happy, for there was no cross Dame Van Winkle to worry him; and if any one wants to know more about him, a famous writer named Washington Irving has told the story much better than it is told here in his *Sketch-Book*.

RIP VAN
WINKLE

NUMBER NINE TO NINETEEN; BEING THE STORY OF THE CURIOUS ADVENTURE OF 'MY-PRETTY' AND HER BROTHER 'TOO' ONE CHRISTMAS EVE.

By Mrs. Molesworth, Author of 'Carrots,' etc.

THERE was excitement in the nursery, great excitement. For besides its being Christmas Eve, two uncommon things had happened. A new nurse—or 'children's-maid,' as mamma called her, for Madeleine and Rupert were no longer so *very* little—had arrived the night before, a French girl, who could not speak English; and this morning a note had come inviting the little pair to a children's party on Christmas Eve.

Mamma ran upstairs herself to tell them. She told Virginie about it, in French first, and then she told Madeleine and Rupert about it in English. They listened with their eyes very widely opened, and their mouths too, I fancy. But they had not time to ask mamma any questions; she went downstairs again so soon, for papa was waiting breakfast for her, she said. And then the children looked at each other. They were pleased because mamma was pleased, but they did not understand very well what a children's party was. 'My-pretty,' as Madeleine was always called ever since old nurse had greeted her by that name as a baby, fancied it must be like the dinner-parties mamma gave now and then, at which she and her little brother used to peep over the balusters. And in her own mind she had a sort of fancy that she would

find herself turned into a big lady, with a long silk skirt trailing behind her, even though she knew it was a *children's* party.

And 'Too'—no one was quite sure what *his* name came from. Some thought it was from trying to say 'Ru' for 'Rupert'; some said it was because when nurse called his sister 'My-pretty,' he would look up and say, 'me *too*.' Too's idea of 'a party' was taken principally from the pictures in one of their toy-books of 'the Cats' tea-party.' Perhaps he expected to find himself with whiskers and a long tail!

They had no one to talk about it to. For though Virginie was quite ready to talk, and *did* talk, they could not understand a word she said except *oui* and *non*, and *ma petite*, which was *her* translation of 'My-pretty,' and 'Tou-tou,' which she called Rupert. And mamma was very, very busy just then, getting Christmas presents, not only for home, but for 'aunts and cousins by the dozens,' who wrote to her for everything they could not get in the country, from blankets for the old women, to dolls and humming-tops for the school-children.

And My-pretty and Too had never been at a party. I am not sure that they had ever been invited to one. For they had no relations living in London, and such tiny children as they, are not often invited to parties except at the houses of grandmammas, or aunties, or people like that, who seem almost a kind of second mammas. And the party was to be the very next day, for to-day was the 23rd of December, and Christmas Eve, as you all know, comes on the 24th.

They thought a great deal about it all that day; they *thought* more than they talked, even to each other, about it. For neither of them quite knew what they wanted to know or to ask. My-pretty was only six, and Too was four-and-a-half. And though Virginie chattered away and smiled, and My-pretty felt sure that a good deal of the chattering and talking was about the party, still it wasn't much good, as they couldn't understand her language. One thing they did understand, and that was in the afternoon, when they came

in from their walk, and Virginie got out their best clothes—My-pretty's was a soft white silk, with lots of 'lacey threads,' as she called them, worked in and out all over it, and Too's was a white serge sailor suit, with a pale blue collar, and as My-pretty had a wide pale-blue sash, they 'matched,' which they were glad of.

Virginie laid out the clothes carefully, after examining them all over, and mamma came up after tea to look at them with her. And then they talked about them in French, the children standing gravely by the table to listen, trying to catch a word they knew, though it wasn't much use, till mamma turned round and kissed their solemn little faces.

'You will soon learn to understand Virginie,' she said. 'Isn't she nice and kind?'

'Yeth, vewy,' said My-pretty, and Too repeated 'vewy,' and then My-pretty said, 'Are we to wear our bethtethet f'ocks at the party?'

'Of course, darling,' said mamma, 'and to-morrow morning I will get you each a new pair of white gloves—that is the only thing you need.'

Then she kissed them both again, and off she went. Mamma *was* such a busy mamma just then.

But the next day, just after breakfast, in she came again, and this time she was not in quite such a hurry. She had a little parcel in her hand, which she undid, and took out two dainty pairs of white silk gloves, one pair a tiny bit smaller than the other. These had to be tried on, which was a serious business, but it turned out all right; the gloves fitted perfectly, and Virginie put them away carefully for fear they should get soiled, after marking Too's pair with a very small stitch in red cotton, inside, where it could not show, so that there could be no confusion as to which gloves were his and which My-pretty's.

'And now, darlings,' said mamma, after the gloves were settled about, 'I want to explain to you a little. The party you are going to is at Mrs. Temple's in Portland Gardens. You are to be there at five. Virginie will take you in a four-wheeler, but she will not stay, as the house is not very large,

and if all the children's maids stayed it would crowd it up too much. Virginie will take off your wraps and then she will come back home again in the four-wheeler, as she doesn't know her way about London yet. And then you will go upstairs to the drawing-room, where there will be a lot of other children and ladies. But you won't feel shy, because *I* shall be there. I have to go to a tea-party we are giving to some poor people early in the afternoon, but I hope to be at Portland Gardens by five, or a little before. But just *supposing* I am not there at first, you won't mind, because I shall be coming directly, and Mrs. Temple will be very kind to you. She knows you; as she has often been here; perhaps you remember her, My-pretty? She has very light hair and just now she always wears black, and she is very kind.'

But My-pretty couldn't say that she remembered Mrs. Temple. However, mamma did not think that mattered—she explained it all over again to her little daughter, Too listening gravely, and then My-pretty nodded her head and said, 'I underthand, mamma, dear,' and Too nodded *his* head and echoed 'under'tand too, mamma, dear.'

The day seemed to pass very slowly—it felt as if the afternoon would never come. At dinner-time My-pretty fancied she could not eat anything; she had such a funny feeling inside, somewhere near her heart, as if it was shaking about. She asked Too if he felt it also, and as soon as she told him about it, he began to think he did, and they both laid down their forks and spoons and shook their heads to make Virginie understand that they were not hungry.

But Virginie, if she did not know English, knew all about children and their ways. She petted them kindly and gave each a little drink of water, and then took away part of the minced meat and mashed potatoes from each plate, and smiled and nodded and said something about 'un peu,' which they found out meant 'a little,' and to please her, My-pretty set to work again, and when she and Too had finished 'un peu' they found, after all, they could manage a little *more*, at which they all three laughed, and then the queer shaky feeling had gone away and the children were much better.

At four o'clock—they had been a walk in the morning, for it was a cold winter's day—Virginie began to dress them. It took a good while, for she was 'very pertickler,' as My-pretty remarked to Too. Their curls were combed and brushed most carefully, and without 'tugging,' wonderful to say. And when they were quite ready and Virginie had turned them round and round two or three times, My-pretty felt sure, by the smile on her pleasant face, that the new maid thought they looked very 'neat.' 'Neat' was My-pretty's word for things being very nice. She was too simple a little girl to think about being 'pretty,' though she *was* very pretty, and so was Too. Perhaps being always called 'Pretty' made her not think about it—it just seemed to her like 'dearie' or 'pet' or any other loving little name, which happy children are used to hearing whether they are pretty or plain.

Then began the real fun—the part which, at the bottom of their hearts, the children had looked forward to most of all.

And that was the going out in a four-wheeler, after it was dark and the lamps and shop-windows lighted up in the streets. It *was* lovely. And it was the first time—except, that is to say, once when they had come back late in the evening from a winter visit to an aunty in the country, and had driven home from the railway station. But *that* time they were tired and sleepy after the journey. And *now* they were quite fresh and nicely dressed, and looking forward to still another treat, wonderful though unknown, when they got to the 'party.'

It was all so interesting. The waiting in the hall,—or rather peeping out of the library door, for Virginie was afraid of draughts in the hall—while George, the footman, whistled for a four-wheeler. Then the hearing it drive up, and the cabman's gruff voice in reply to George's calling out, 'Number something—('nine,' My-pretty thought he said) 'Portland Gardens and back here again.' And the stepping out across the pavement, where one or two poor little human sparrows were standing watching the setting-out to 'a party,'—and the rattle and rumble of the old growler and the blaze of light when they drove out of their own quiet crescent into the big

'shop street,' as they called it. It was really too lovely, and My-pretty wished they could go on like that all night, and no doubt if she had said so to Too, he would have been true to his name and thought so also.

The drive came to an end all too soon. They stopped, but when Virginie looked out, she pulled her head in again and shook it a little.

'Pas encore—attendez un peu,' she said.

My-pretty remembered that 'un peu' meant 'a little,' what could 'tandy' mean?

'Oh, I know,' said Too, who had got on to the back seat and was peeping out that way, 'There 's nother calliages in f'ont.'

My-pretty thought he was very clever to have found that out, and told him so, and he reminded her that when 'the lady what b'longed to the pallot' in their street had parties, there was 'thousands of calliages, one after the nother wot slowed on just like now.'

But before My-pretty had time to reply, they themselves 'slowed on again' and then came to a stop, this time just in front of an open door, up to which—new joy!—led a lovely strip of red carpet, for the little guests, as welcome as if they were all princes and princesses, to step along as they entered the house of the party.

It had seemed light outside, for Portland Gardens was just off a large 'shop street,' but compared with the hall and the wide staircase before them, that brightness was dull. My-pretty and Too could not help blinking a little as they trotted in, each holding tight to one of Virginie's hands.

'Cloak-room to the left,' said one of what seemed to the children a whole crowd of gentlemen, 'dressed ready for dinner like papa.' And then in the cloak-room there were other little children, whose nurses and maids were taking off their wraps and smoothing out the little girls' skirts and setting the boys' ties straight before the small people started off upstairs on their journey to the drawing-room.

My-pretty and Too's turn came directly.

'Adieu, mes chéris,' said Virginie, feeling, to tell the truth, more shy for them than they did for themselves, and

not half liking the leaving them till she saw them safe with mamma herself. 'Adieu. Montez donc. Maman là-haut,' and with a nod and smile of encouragement she stood at the foot of the staircase to watch her little pair waived on by one 'gentleman' after another, hand-in-hand and quite calm. For was not 'mamma' upstairs—Virginie had said something about her, or even if not, she would be coming 'd'rectly,' as My-pretty said, first to herself, and then in a low voice to Too, when, among the crowd at the drawing-room door, no 'mamma' was as yet to be seen.

But some one else was there—a sweet-faced lady, with silvery-white hair and dressed in black, came forward to meet them.

'How do you do, my dears?' she said in the kindest voice. 'You are just in time for "Punch and Judy," and after that we shall all go downstairs to tea.'

She got them good places at the very front of the rows of chairs, for they two were among the very youngest of her little guests, and My-pretty was quite happy. It never struck her that this nice lady was quite old, and that her hair was *white*, not *light*. The words meant the same to her, and mamma had said Mrs.—— (the name 'Temple' had grown hazy), had light hair and a black dress. And she did not hear the lady's whisper to a girl beside her, 'I cannot think who they are, but it would be unkind to ask their name. No doubt it is all right.'

'Mamma will come thoon,' said My-pretty, in the tone of being quite sure, which sometimes in a child means just a tiny shade of fear. 'Will thoo,' for My-pretty lisped, though she was nearly six, 'will thoo tell her where we're thitting?'

'Oh yes, dear. Mamma will spy you out in a moment,' was her answer.

Then followed a most interesting half-hour of 'Punch and Judy,' in which even mamma's coming was forgotten. Too laughed so loud that a gentleman sitting just behind them—a tall, thin, brown-looking gentleman, with grey hair and grey 'prickles,' as My-pretty called a moustache—could not help smiling to hear him.

'Your little brother enjoys "Punch and Judy," I see,' he said to My-pretty, who was not laughing.

'Yeth,' she replied. 'He'th only four patht, you know. *I* think it'th rather thad—don't thoo?'

She gazed up in the gentleman's face—he was an old gentleman, 'about a hundred' she thought to herself—with her soft brown eyes, looking very serious. He started a little—then murmuring something to himself that sounded like 'absurd'—he spoke again to the little girl.

'It is only play, you know, my dear. You must not fancy it is real. They are only dolls.'

'But *Toby* is real?' said My-pretty, in a puzzled tone.

'Yes, but nobody hurts him. He is quite a happy little dog. They couldn't teach him to do these tricks unless they were kind to him. You ask your mamma, and she will tell you all about it,' he went on, with a glance round. 'Isn't she here?' with a sort of feeling that this little pair seemed somehow rather left to themselves among the others who were chattering together as if they were old friends.

'I don't know,' said My-pretty. 'I think she mutht have comed. But I can't get out to thee if she's there.'

A slight look of trouble came into her face, which had been quite content before, though a little serious. The gentleman felt vexed with himself for having caused it.

'"Punch and Judy" will be over in a minute or two,' he said kindly, 'and then you can go to find your mother. No doubt she is among the big people at the other end of the room.'

My-pretty glanced at him again. He was almost the only grown-up person seated near the show. He understood her look, and laughed a little.

'You are wondering what *I* am here in the front for, aren't you?' he said. 'Well, I will tell you, I begged for a seat among the children, because my sight is not as good as it used to be; you see I am getting old, and I wanted to have a good view of old "Punch and Judy." It is so many many years since I have seen them.'

My-pretty looked extremely interested.

'Not thinth thoo wath a little boy?' she said.

'Scarcely,' he replied. 'I have been far, far away, and when I was at home I don't think I ever came across them. Perhaps I was too busy to look.'

'Poor mister,' said the child, and now again when the serious look came into her eyes, he started a little.

''Pon my word,' he said to himself. 'I could almost——' but just then there came a clapping of hands, followed by the sound of chairs being pushed back and a general bustle. 'Punch and Judy' was over. My-pretty got down carefully from her chair, and helped Too off his. Then she took him by the hand and turned away, and, in the crowd of children and ladies, the old gentleman lost sight of them.

There was no 'mamma' to be seen; the little pair threaded their way through as well as they could; Too, perfectly happy as he felt his hand tightly held in his sister's; My-pretty not uneasy, only a trifle wistful, as she glanced up into one unfamiliar face after another. It would have been so nice to have found mamma, and the brown old gentleman had been sure she was there. With a half idea that he might help her in her search, My-pretty looked round for him. But, no, he was not near her; and just then there came a sort of polite rush to the door. Tea was ready, and all the little people were going downstairs. My-pretty and Too followed—perhaps mamma would be waiting for them in the 'diney-room,' but no, again. Only when they got there, the white-haired, black-dressed lady caught sight of them, and took hold of Too's other hand.

'Mamma hathn't come,' said My-pretty.

There was a half question in her voice, and the lady answered very kindly, 'I am afraid not, dear; but never mind, I will take care of you.'

And so she did—she took special care of them, from a touch of self-reproach at not being able to remember who they were. She found a cosy corner for them, and herself stood near to see that all their wants were supplied.

'Dear aunty,' said a lady beside her, 'you will be tired. Do let me look after these little people.'

The black-and-white lady, as My-pretty had called her in her own mind, said something in a low voice. The younger one glanced at the children, but shook her head.

'I can't help you, I fear,' she said. 'They are little sweets, whoever they are. But, oh, aunty,' she went on, 'I see Sir Rupert here. How *did* you get him to come?'

'He called on Sunday, and happened to hear of it. And he seemed as if he would like to see a Christmas party again, so I asked him. Poor man, he is so lonely. Your father says it is such a pity, some family misunderstanding that might have been put right—with a son, I think, his only child—and nothing really serious, nothing wrong on either side. But I don't know his people at all. I had not seen him for twenty years, and then it was in India.'

'Poor man, indeed,' said her niece, 'to come home to loneliness! And he has such a nice face—poor Sir Rupert.'

My-pretty had heard this conversation, for the voices were not very low, and the speakers were close to her. But, of course, she scarcely understood any of it. And she was as surprised as the two ladies were, when Too suddenly looked up.

'*Lupert*,' he said, 'dat's mine name.'

'Is it, you dear little man?' said the white-haired lady, 'we must tell Sir Rupert. He was speaking to you, wasn't he? He will be quite pleased.—And what is your name, dear?' to My-pretty. 'You see, among so many little friends, I forget names sometimes.'

My-pretty's serious face grew rather perplexed.

'My name,' she began, 'ith My-pretty.'

'*Mapetty*,' repeated the ladies, in surprise. And then the child thought again.

'No, no,' she said, 'I've another name, but it's very long, and——' before she had time to say more, there came a call. 'Aunty, granny, do come. They want you in the library,' for in the library was the Christmas tree, which was to be the finishing-up treat of the evening, so both the ladies hastened away.

Our two little people had seen Christmas trees before, but never such a large one. They gazed at it in admiration

without speaking, and in their simplicity they did not notice for some time that all the pretty things, as they were cut off, were given to the children whose names were marked on them, but that their own names were never called out. And by degrees, though they had been pretty well to the front to begin with, the running forward of the others pushed them back almost into a corner. There they stood seeing the merriment about them, hearing the shouts of glee, till at last, glancing down at Too, My-pretty saw, to her distress, that he was crying—quietly, but very sadly.

'Darling,' she said, stooping to kiss him, 'don't, don't cry. There's thum mithtook. But oh, where *can* mamma be; why dothn't her come?'

The wail in her voice, though she spoke low, caught some one's ears, who had not known how near to him the little couple were standing. Tall Sir Rupert bent down.

'What is the matter, my child? Not found mamma yet?'

My-pretty caught his hand.

'It'th poor Too,' she said, and choking down a sob. 'There ithn't any prethent for him; and mamma hathn't come.'

'There must be some mistake,' said the brown gentleman, quickly. 'Wait here where you are for a moment, my dears.'

He turned away, and My-pretty, with already a feeling of comfort-to-come, whispered cheering words to Too. And almost before the little fellow had taken them in, Sir Rupert was back again, and with him the 'black-and-white lady,' her face full of concern, her hands full of treasures! A doll and work-bag, and ever so many other things for My-pretty; a miniature omnibus, with horses 'to take out and in,' and several delightful 'boy'-toys for Too.

He was consoled on the spot, and sat down there and then, cross-legged like a Turk, on the floor, to examine his Christmas-tree spoil. But My-pretty, though happy with her own gifts, and happier still to see *him* so, had yet anxieties on her mind.

'Pleathe, hathn't mamma come *yet*?' she asked, after thanking in her pretty way.

'I am afraid not, my dear little girl,' said the lady. 'There must have been some mistake. We shall have to arrange something about sending you home,' for it was getting near big people's dinner-hour, and the small guests were fast disappearing under the care of mammas or elder sisters or maids sent to fetch them. 'I will ask if your maid has perhaps come back. Let me see—what is the name?'

'Virgenny,' said My-pretty. 'But I'm sure she won't come back. She'th French and she dothn't know the way, much. That'th why mamma thaid *she'd* come.'

The lady glanced at the gentleman with a slight shake of the head. 'Who *can* they be?' she murmured.

'I don't mean your maid's name, my sweet,' she said, 'but yours—your own name.'

'My-pr——,' began the child. 'No, that'th only my pet name. I thaid it before by mithtook—p'raps that'th why my prethents wathn't called out? My perropper name is'—with some effort—'Madderlane.'

Sir Rupert glanced at her keenly.

'And mine,' added Too, 'is Lupert.'

This time the brown gentleman really started.

'But,' said the lady again, 'your—your *last* name, and the name of your house.'

'Oh,' said My-pretty, 'didn't you know? It'th Carey. Mamma and papa are called "Carey," too, and our houth ith'—some hesitation—'number fifty-three Castlemain Crescent.

'Fifty-three Castlemain Crescent,' repeated the lady. No, that told her nothing. But 'Carey'—she glanced at Sir Rupert—no longer brown, for a strange pallor had crept over his face, and but for the deeply ingrained dye of a lifetime in the tropics, he would have been deadly white.

'Carey,' he too repeated, though in a voice scarcely to be heard, 'Carey—and Madeleine and Rupert. My own name and my wife's. Lady Ferreys, you do not know my—the sorrow of my life, but——'

'I know something,' she said eagerly. 'Perhaps—dear Sir Rupert, perhaps all this is——'

In her turn she was interrupted. Late as it was, a new guest had just arrived. A pretty creature in morning-dress —her sweet fair face and brown eyes, like My-pretty's, charming among her furs, though all overclouded with terror and anxiety. She caught sight at once of the group in the corner, and before there was time for a word of explanation, My-pretty was in her arms.

'Mamma, mamma,' she cried, while Too, slowly getting himself on to his feet again, his arms full of his new possessions, stood gazing, glad to see the new-comer, though he had not been seriously discomposed—'Oh, mamma, why didn't you come?'

'My darlings,' said young Mrs. Carey, it is all right now, but—I have been so frightened,' she went on, bowing to the elderly lady. 'I must apologise heartily. There has been an absurd mistake. The children should have been left at number *nineteen*, not nine—Mrs. Temple's. I went there in good time; but they never came. Then I rushed off home, thinking they had got ill, or had some accident, and found the maid quite happy. She was sure she had brought them all right. And the footman was out and could not be asked what address he had given. So I got a hansom and took Virginie to nine Portland *Square*. But it was a house to let —then we tried nine Portland *Terrace*, which was a doctor's, and they knew nothing of Mrs. Temple. Then we tore off home again; by this time George was back, and *thought* he *might* have said number nine, and—and—here I am, and terribly ashamed of the trouble I have given you.'

Lady Ferrey's face was full of kindness as she begged Mrs. Carey not to trouble about *that* part of it.

'The dear little people have been happy through it all, I think,' she said. 'They found a good friend. Sir——' she hesitated; then, for she was a brave old lady, she made the plunge—'Sir Rupert—Mrs. Carey, may I introduce Sir Rupert Carey to you?'

Over 'the brown gentleman's' face there rushed now a flood of crimson—it was the young lady's turn to grow white. But she did not hesitate—she, too, was brave.

'Sir Rupert Carey,' she said, with her hand outstretched, 'thank you, with all my heart, for your kindness to my darlings.'

'It was my right—and their right,' he replied very gravely. 'They are——' here he turned away for an instant. 'My little girl,' he said to My-pretty, 'my Madeleine, and you too, my little Rupert, come to me—do you know who *I* am? I am your own grandfather.'

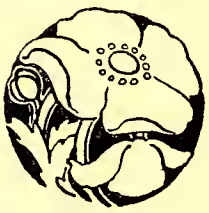
They crept up to him—into his arms, half shy but wholly happy—with a misty idea that somehow it had all to do with the wonderful 'party.'

'Won't you come home with uth?' said My-pretty, with the instinct that is sometimes almost like magic in a child. 'Come home and thee papa too?'

'Mamma' put out her hand and touched the thin brown fingers tenderly.

'Oh, *do*,' she said.

And he did.



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BY HENRY TEIXEIRA DE MATTOS

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