THE

STRAND MAGAZINE

An Illustrated Monthly

EDITED BY

GEORGE NEWNES

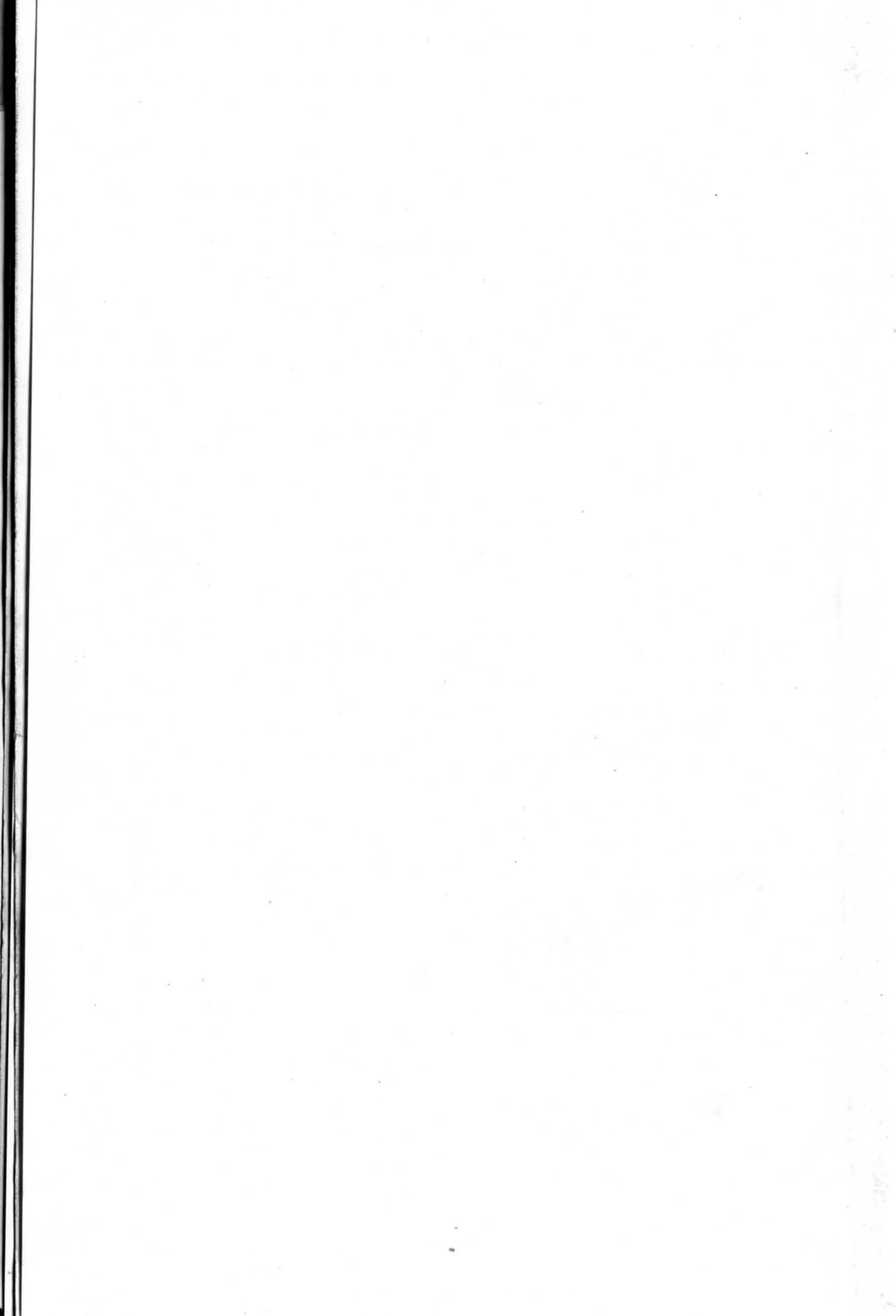
Vol. XXIII.

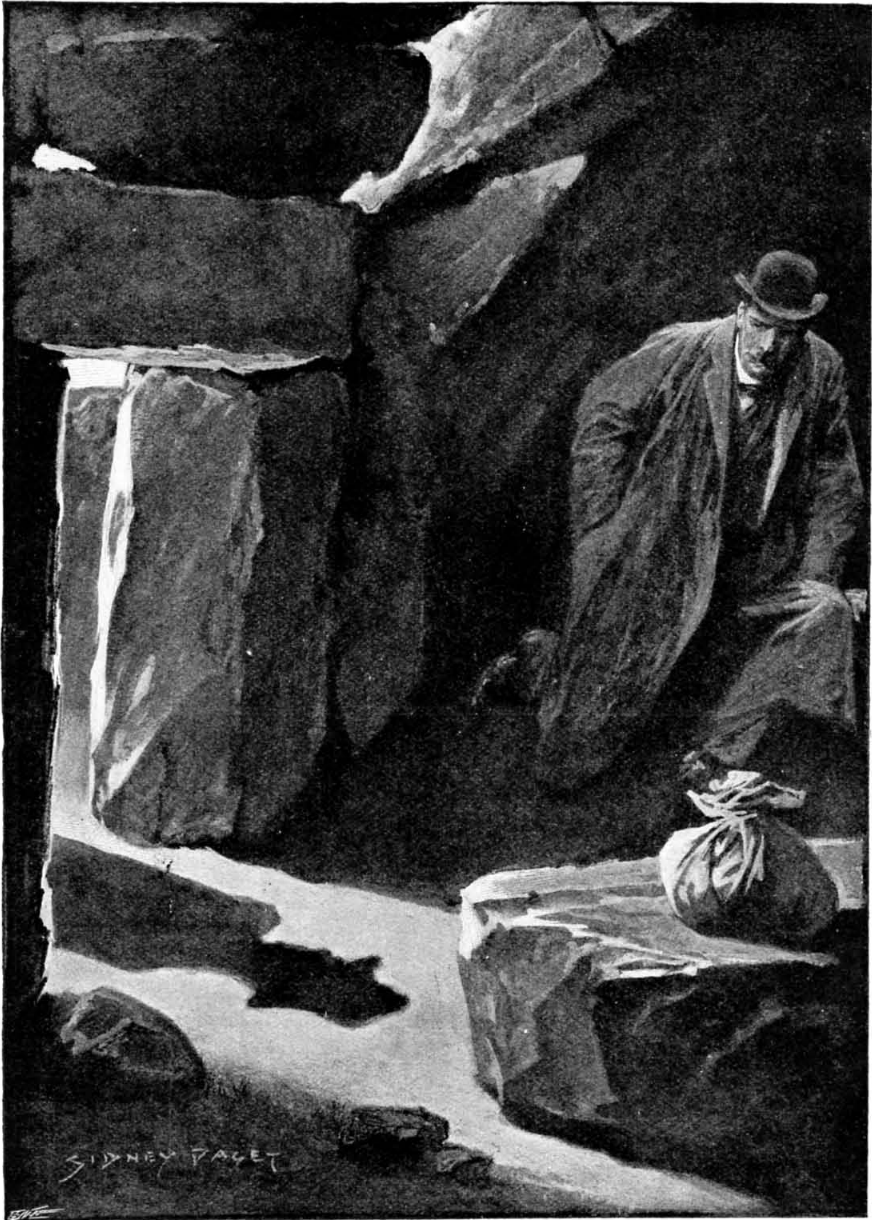
JANUARY TO JUNE

London:

GEORGE NEWNES, LTD., 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, & 12, SOUTHAMPTON STREET,
AND EXETER STREET, STRAND

1902





THE SHADOW OF SHERLOCK HOLMES.

(*See page* 15.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xxiii. JANUARY, 1902. No. 133.

The Hound of the Baskervilles.

ANOTHER ADVENTURE OF

SHERLOCK HOLMES.

By CONAN DOYLE.

CHAPTER X.

EXTRACT FROM THE DIARY OF DR. WATSON.

SO far I have been able to quote from the reports which I have forwarded during these early days to Sherlock Holmes. Now, however, I have arrived at a point in my narrative where I am compelled to abandon this method and to trust once more to my recollections, aided by the diary which I kept at the time. A few extracts from the latter will carry me on to those scenes which are indelibly fixed in every detail upon my memory. I proceed, then, from the morning which followed our abortive chase of the convict and our other strange experiences upon the moor.

October 16th.—A dull and foggy day, with a drizzle of rain. The house is banked in with rolling clouds, which rise now and then to show the dreary curves of the moor, with thin, silver veins upon the sides of the hills, and the distant boulders gleaming where the light strikes upon their wet faces. It is melancholy outside and in. The baronet is in a black reaction after the excitements of the night. I am conscious myself of a weight at my heart and a feeling of impending danger —ever-present danger, which is the more terrible because I am unable to define it.

And have I not cause for such a feeling? Consider the long sequence of incidents which have all pointed to some sinister influence which is at work around us. There is the death of the last occupant of the Hall, fulfilling so exactly the conditions of the family legend, and there is the repeated reports from peasants of the appearance of a strange creature upon the moor. Twice I have with my own ears heard the sound which resembled the distant baying of a hound. It is incredible, impossible, that it should really be outside the ordinary laws of Nature. A spectral hound which leaves material footmarks and fills the air with its howling is surely not to be thought of. Stapleton may fall in with such a superstition, and Mortimer also; but if I have one quality upon earth it is common sense, and nothing will persuade me to believe in such a thing. To do so would be to descend to the level of these poor peasants who are not content with a mere fiend dog, but must needs describe him with hell-fire shooting from his mouth and eyes. Holmes would not listen to such fancies, and I am his agent. But facts are facts, and I have twice heard this crying upon the moor. Suppose that there were really some huge hound loose upon it; that would go far to explain everything. But where could such a hound lie concealed, where did it get its food, where did it come from, how was it that no one saw it by day? It must be confessed that the natural explanation offers almost as many difficulties as the other. And always, apart from the hound, there was the fact of the human agency in London, the man in the cab, and the letter which warned Sir Henry against the moor. This at least was real, but it might have been the work of a protecting friend as easily as an enemy. Where was that friend or enemy now? Had he remained in London, or had he followed us down here? Could he—could he be the stranger whom I had seen upon the Tor?

It is true that I have had only the one glance at him, and yet there are some things to which I am ready to swear. He is no one whom I have seen down here, and I have now met all the neighbours. The

Copyright, 1901, by George Newnes, Limited.

figure was far taller than that of Stapleton, far thinner than that of Frankland. Barrymore it might possibly have been, but we had left him behind us, and I am certain that he could not have followed us. A stranger then is still dogging us, just as a stranger had dogged us in London. We have never shaken him off. If I could lay my hands upon that man, then at last we might find ourselves at the end of all our difficulties. To this one purpose I must now devote all my energies.

My first impulse was to tell Sir Henry all my plans. My second and wisest one is to play my own game and speak as little as possible to anyone. He is silent and distrait. His nerves have been strangely shaken by that sound upon the moor. I will say nothing to add to his anxieties, but I will take my own steps to attain my own end.

We had a small scene this morning after breakfast. Barrymore asked leave to speak with Sir Henry, and they were closeted in his study some little time. Sitting in the billiard-room I more than once heard the sound of voices raised, and I had a pretty good idea what the point was which was under discussion. After a time the baronet opened his door and called for me.

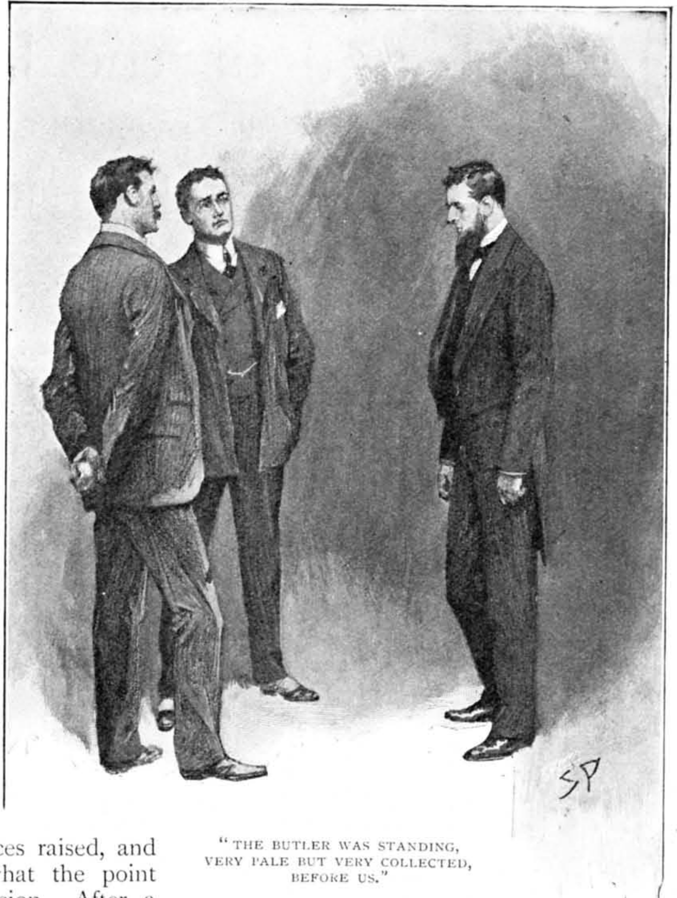
"Barrymore considers that he has a grievance," he said. "He thinks that it was unfair on our part to hunt his brother-in-law down when he, of his own free will, had told us the secret."

The butler was standing, very pale but very collected, before us.

"I may have spoken too warmly, sir," said he, "and if I have I am sure that I beg your pardon. At the same time, I was very much surprised when I heard you two gentlemen come back this morning and learned that you had been chasing Selden. The poor fellow has enough to fight against without my putting more upon his track."

"If you had told us of your own free will it would have been a different thing," said the baronet. "You only told us, or rather your wife only told us, when it was forced from you and you could not help yourself."

"I didn't think you would have taken advantage of it, Sir Henry—indeed I didn't."



"THE BUTLER WAS STANDING, VERY PALE BUT VERY COLLECTED, BEFORE US."

"The man is a public danger. There are lonely houses scattered over the moor, and he is a fellow who would stick at nothing. You only want to get a glimpse of his face to see that. Look at Mr. Stapleton's house, for example, with no one but himself to defend it. There's no safety for anyone until he is under lock and key."

"He'll break into no house, sir. I give you my solemn word upon that. But he will never trouble anyone in this country again. I assure you, Sir Henry, that in a very few days the necessary arrangements will have been made and he will be on his way to South America. For God's sake, sir, I beg

of you not to let the police know that he is still on the moor. They have given up the chase there, and he can lie quiet until the ship is ready for him. You can't tell on him without getting my wife and me into trouble. I beg you, sir, to say nothing to the police."

"What do you say, Watson?"

I shrugged my shoulders. "If he were safely out of the country it would relieve the taxpayer of a burden."

"But how about the chance of his holding someone up before he goes?"

"He would not do anything so mad, sir. We have provided him with all that he can want. To commit a crime would be to show where he was hiding."

"That is true," said Sir Henry. "Well, Barrymore——"

"God bless you, sir, and thank you from my heart! It would have killed my poor wife had he been taken again."

"I guess we are aiding and abetting a felony, Watson? But, after what we have heard, I don't feel as if I could give the man up, so there is an end of it. All right, Barrymore, you can go."

With a few broken words of gratitude the man turned, but he hesitated and then came back.

"You've been so kind to us, sir, that I should like to do the best I can for you in return. I know something, Sir Henry, and perhaps I should have said it before, but it was long after the inquest that I found it out. I've never breathed a word about it yet to mortal man. It's about poor Sir Charles's death."

The baronet and I were both upon our feet. "Do you know how he died?"

"No, sir, I don't know that."

"What, then?"

"I know why he was at the gate at that hour. It was to meet a woman."

"To meet a woman! He?"

"Yes, sir."

"And the woman's name?"

"I can't give you the name, sir, but I can give you the initials. Her initials were L. L."

"How do you know this, Barrymore?"

"Well, Sir Henry, your uncle had a letter that morning. He had usually a great many letters, for he was a public man and well known for his kind heart, so that everyone who was in trouble was glad to turn to him. But that morning, as it chanced, there was only this one letter, so I took the more notice of it. It was from Coombe Tracey, and it was addressed in a woman's hand."

"Well?"

"Well, sir, I thought no more of the matter, and never would have done had it not been for my wife. Only a few weeks ago she was cleaning out Sir Charles's study—it had never been touched since his death—and she found the ashes of a burned letter in the back of the grate. The greater part of it was charred to pieces, but one little slip, the end of a page, hung together, and the writing could still be read, though it was grey on a black ground. It seemed to us to be a postscript at the end of the letter, and it said: 'Please, please, as you are a gentleman, burn this letter, and be at the gate by ten o'clock.' Beneath it were signed the initials L. L."

"Have you got that slip?"

"No, sir, it crumbled all to bits after we moved it."

"Had Sir Charles received any other letters in the same writing?"

"Well, sir, I took no particular notice of his letters. I should not have noticed this one only it happened to come alone."

"And you have no idea who L. L. is?"

"No, sir. No more than you have. But I expect if we could lay our hands upon that lady we should know more about Sir Charles's death."

"I cannot understand, Barrymore, how you came to conceal this important information."

"Well, sir, it was immediately after that our own trouble came to us. And then again, sir, we were both of us very fond of Sir Charles, as we well might be considering all that he has done for us. To rake this up couldn't help our poor master, and it's well to go carefully when there's a lady in the case. Even the best of us——"

"You thought it might injure his reputation?"

"Well, sir, I thought no good could come of it. But now you have been kind to us, and I feel as if it would be treating you unfairly not to tell you all that I know about the matter."

"Very good, Barrymore; you can go." When the butler had left us Sir Henry turned to me. "Well, Watson, what do you think of this new light?"

"It seems to leave the darkness rather blacker than before."

"So I think. But if we can only trace L. L. it should clear up the whole business. We have gained that much. We know that there is someone who has the facts if we can only find her. What do you think we should do?"

"Let Holmes know all about it at once. It will give him the clue for which he has been seeking. I am much mistaken if it does not bring him down."

I went at once to my room and drew up my report of the morning's conversation for Holmes. It was evident to me that he had been very busy of late, for the notes which I had from Baker Street were few and short, with no comments upon the information which I had supplied, and hardly any reference to my mission. No doubt his blackmailing case is absorbing all his faculties. And yet this new factor must surely arrest his attention and renew his interest. I wish that he were here.

October 17th.—All day to-day the rain poured down, rustling on the ivy and dripping from the eaves. I thought of the convict out upon the bleak, cold, shelterless moor. Poor fellow! Whatever his crimes, he has suffered something to atone for them. And then I thought of that other one—the face in the cab, the figure against the moon. Was he also out in that deluge—the unseen watcher, the man of darkness? In the evening I put on my waterproof and I walked far upon the sodden moor, full of dark imaginings, the rain beating upon my face and the wind whistling about my ears. God help those who wander into the Great Mire now, for even the firm uplands are becoming a morass. I found the black Tor upon which I had seen the solitary watcher, and from its craggy summit I looked out myself across the melancholy downs. Rain

"FROM ITS CRAGGY SUMMIT I LOOKED OUT MYSELF ACROSS THE MELANCHOLY DOWNS."

squalls drifted across their russet face, and the heavy, slate-coloured clouds hung low over the landscape, trailing in grey wreaths down the sides of the fantastic hills. In the distant hollow on the left, half hidden by the mist, the two thin towers of Baskerville Hall rose above the trees. They were the only signs of human life which I could see, save only those prehistoric huts which lay thickly upon the slopes of the hills. Nowhere was there any trace of that lonely man whom I had seen on the same spot two nights before.

As I walked back I was overtaken by Dr. Mortimer driving in his dog-cart over a rough moorland track, which led from the outlying farmhouse of Foulmire. He has been very attentive to us, and hardly a day has passed that he has not called at the Hall to see how we were getting on. He insisted upon my climbing into his dog-cart and he gave me a lift homewards. I found him much troubled over the disappearance of his little spaniel. It had wandered on to the moor and had never come back. I gave him such consolation as I might, but I thought of the pony on the Grimpen Mire, and I do not fancy that he will see his little dog again.

"By the way, Mortimer," said I, as we jolted along the rough road, "I suppose there are few people living within driving distance of this whom you do not know?"

"Hardly any, I think."

"Can you, then, tell me the name of any woman whose initials are L. L.?"

He thought for a few minutes.

"No," said he. "There are a few gipsies and labouring folk for whom I can't answer, but among the farmers or gentry there is no one whose initials are those. Wait a bit, though," he added, after a pause. "There is Laura Lyons—her initials are L. L.—but she lives in Coombe Tracey."

"Who is she?" I asked.

"She is Frankland's daughter."

"What? Old Frankland the crank?"

"Exactly. She married an artist named Lyons, who came sketching on the moor. He proved to be a blackguard and deserted her. The fault from what I hear may not have been entirely on one side. Her father refused to have anything to do with her, because she had married without his consent, and perhaps for one or two other reasons as well. So, between the old sinner and the young one the girl has had a pretty bad time."

"How does she live?"

"I fancy old Frankland allows her a pittance, but it cannot be more, for his own affairs are considerably involved. Whatever she may have deserved one could not allow her to go hopelessly to the bad. Her story got about, and several of the people here did something to enable her to earn an honest living. Stapleton did for one, and Sir Charles for another. I gave a trifle myself. It was to set her up in a type-writing business."

He wanted to know the object of my inquiries, but I managed to satisfy his curiosity without telling him too much, for there is no reason why we should take any-one into our confidence. To-morrow morning I shall find my way to Coombe Tracey, and if I can see this Mrs. Laura Lyons, of equivocal reputation, a long step will have been made towards clearing one incident in this chain of mysteries. I am certainly developing the wisdom of the serpent, for when Mortimer pressed his questions to an inconvenient extent I asked him casually to what type Frankland's skull belonged, and so heard nothing but craniology for the rest of our drive. I have not lived for years with Sherlock Holmes for nothing.

I have only one other incident to record upon this tempestuous and melancholy day. This was my conversation with Barrymore just now, which gives me one more strong card which I can play in due time.

Mortimer had stayed to dinner, and he and the baronet played écarté afterwards. The butler brought me my coffee into the library, and I took the chance to ask him a few questions.

"Well," said I, "has this precious relation of yours departed, or is he still lurking out yonder?"

"I don't know, sir. I hope to Heaven that he has gone, for he has brought nothing but trouble here! I've not heard of him since I left out food for him last, and that was three days ago."

"Did you see him then?"

"No, sir, but the food was gone when next I went that way."

"Then he was certainly there?"

"So you would think, sir, unless it was the other man who took it."

I sat with my coffee-cup half-way to my lips and stared at Barrymore.

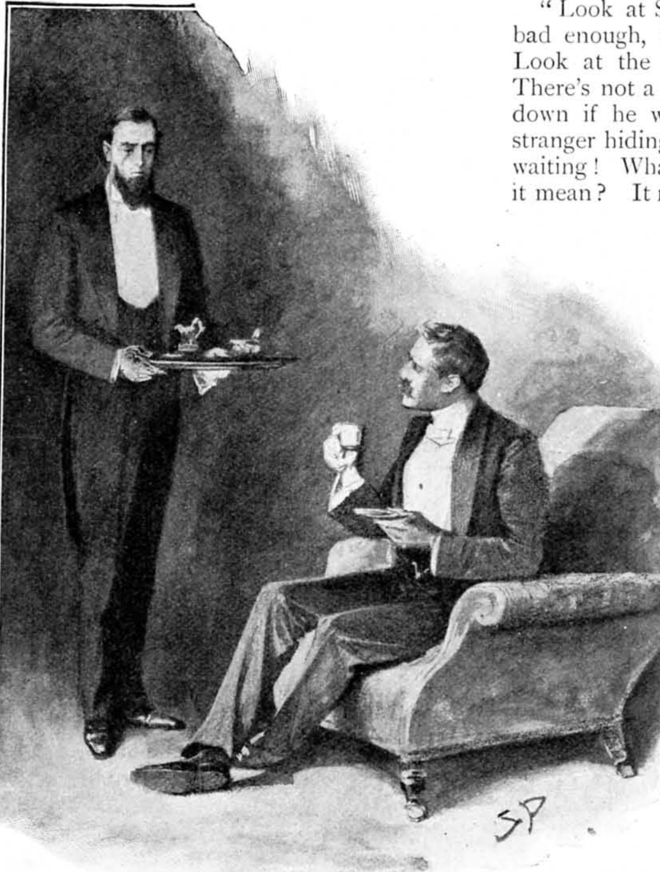
"You know that there is another man, then?"

"Yes, sir; there is another man upon the moor."

"Have you seen him?"

"No, sir."

"How do you know of him, then?"



"YOU KNOW THAT THERE IS ANOTHER MAN, THEN?"

"Selden told me of him, sir, a week ago or more. He's in hiding, too, but he's not a convict so far as I can make out. I don't like it, Dr. Watson—I tell you straight, sir, that I don't like it." He spoke with a sudden passion of earnestness.

"Now, listen to me, Barrymore! I have no interest in this matter but that of your master. I have come here with no object except to help him. Tell me, frankly, what it is that you don't like."

Barrymore hesitated for a moment, as if he regretted his outburst, or found it difficult to express his own feelings in words.

"It's all these goings-on, sir," he cried, at last, waving his hand towards the rain-lashed window which faced the moor. "There's foul play somewhere, and there's black villainy brewing, to that I'll swear! Very glad I should be, sir, to see Sir Henry on his way back to London again!"

"But what is it that alarms you?"

"Look at Sir Charles's death! That was bad enough, for all that the coroner said. Look at the noises on the moor at night. There's not a man would cross it after sundown if he was paid for it. Look at this stranger hiding out yonder, and watching and waiting! What's he waiting for? What does it mean? It means no good to anyone of the name of Baskerville, and very glad I shall be to be quit of it all on the day that Sir Henry's new servants are ready to take over the Hall."

"But about this stranger," said I. "Can you tell me anything about him? What did Selden say? Did he find out where he hid, or what he was doing?"

"He saw him once or twice, but he is a deep one, and gives nothing away. At first he thought that he was the police, but soon he found that he had some lay of his own. A kind of gentleman he was, as far as he could see, but what he was doing he could not make out."

"And where did he say that he lived?"

"Among the old houses on the hillside—the stone huts where the old folk used to live."

"But how about his food?"

"Selden found out that he has got a lad who works for him and brings him all he needs. I daresay he goes to Coombe Tracey for what he wants."

"Very good, Barrymore. We may talk further of this some other time." When the butler had gone I walked over to the black window, and I looked through a blurred pane at the driving clouds and at the tossing outline of the wind-swept trees. It is a wild night indoors, and what must it be in a stone hut upon the moor? What passion of hatred can it be which leads a man to lurk in such a place at such a time? And what deep and earnest purpose can he have which calls for such a trial? There, in that hut upon the moor, seems to lie the very centre of that problem which has vexed me so sorely. I swear that another day shall not have passed before I have done all that man can do to reach the heart of the mystery.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MAN ON THE TOR.

THE extract from my private diary which forms the last chapter has brought my narrative up to the 18th of October, a time when these strange events began to move swiftly towards their terrible conclusion. The incidents of the next few days are indelibly graven upon my recollection, and I can tell them without reference to the notes made at the time. I start, then, from the day which succeeded that upon which I had established two facts of great importance, the one that Mrs. Laura Lyons of Coombe Tracey had written to Sir Charles Baskerville and made an appointment with him at the very place and hour that he met his death, the other that the lurking man upon the moor was to be found among the stone huts upon the hill-side. With these two facts in my possession I felt that either my intelligence or my courage must be deficient if I could not throw some further light upon these dark places.

I had no opportunity to tell the baronet what I had learned about Mrs. Lyons upon the evening before, for Dr. Mortimer remained with him at cards until it was very late. At breakfast, however, I informed him about my discovery, and asked him whether he would care to accompany me to Coombe Tracey. At first he was very eager to come, but on second thoughts it seemed to both of us that if I went alone the results might be better. The more formal we made the visit the less information we might obtain. I left Sir Henry behind, therefore, not without some prickings of conscience, and drove off upon my new quest.

When I reached Coombe Tracey I told Perkins to put up the horses, and I made inquiries for the lady whom I had come to interrogate. I had no difficulty in finding her rooms, which were central and well appointed. A maid showed me in without ceremony, and as I entered the sitting-room a lady, who was sitting before a Remington typewriter, sprang up with a pleasant smile of welcome. Her face fell, however, when she saw that I was a stranger, and she sat down again and asked me the object of my visit.

The first impression left by Mrs. Lyons was one of extreme beauty. Her eyes and hair were of the same rich hazel colour, and her cheeks, though considerably freckled, were flushed with the exquisite bloom of the brunette, the dainty pink which lurks at the heart of the sulphur rose. Admiration was, I repeat, the first impression. But the second was criticism. There was something subtly wrong with the face, some coarseness of expression, some hardness, perhaps, of eye, some looseness of lip which marred its perfect beauty. But these, of course, are afterthoughts. At the moment I was simply conscious that I was in the presence of a very handsome woman, and that she was asking me the reasons for my visit. I had not quite understood until that instant how delicate my mission was.

"I have the pleasure," said I, "of knowing your father."

It was a clumsy introduction, and the lady made me feel it.

"There is nothing in common between my father and me," she said. "I owe him nothing, and his friends are not mine. If it were not for the late Sir Charles Baskerville and some other kind hearts I might have starved for all that my father cared."

"It was about the late Sir Charles Baskerville that I have come here to see you."

The freckles started out on the lady's face.

"What can I tell you about him?" she asked, and her fingers played nervously over the stops of her typewriter.

"You knew him, did you not?"

"I have already said that I owe a great deal to his kindness. If I am able to support myself it is largely due to the interest which he took in my unhappy situation."

"Did you correspond with him?"

The lady looked quickly up, with an angry gleam in her hazel eyes.

"What is the object of these questions?" she asked, sharply.

"The object is to avoid a public scandal. It is better that I should ask them here than that the matter should pass outside our control."

She was silent and her face was very pale. At last she looked up with something reckless and defiant in her manner.

"Well, I'll answer," she said. "What are your questions?"

"Did you correspond with Sir Charles?"

"I certainly wrote to him once or twice to acknowledge his delicacy and his generosity."

"Have you the dates of those letters?"

"No."

"Have you ever met him?"

"Yes, once or twice, when he came into Coombe Tracey. He was a very retiring man, and he preferred to do good by stealth."

"But if you saw him so seldom and wrote so seldom, how did he know enough about your affairs to be able to help you, as you say that he has done?"

She met my difficulty with the utmost readiness.

"There were several gentlemen who knew my sad history and united to help me. One was Mr. Stapleton, a neighbour and intimate friend of Sir Charles. He was exceedingly kind, and it was through him that Sir Charles learned about my affairs."

I knew already that Sir Charles Baskerville had made Stapleton his almoner upon several occasions, so the lady's statement bore the impress of truth upon it.

"Did you ever write to Sir Charles asking him to meet you?" I continued.

The flush had faded in an instant, and a deathly face was before me. Her dry lips could not speak the "No" which I saw rather than heard.

"Surely your memory deceives you," said I. "I could even quote a passage of your letter. It ran, 'Please, please, as you are a gentleman, burn this letter, and be at the gate by ten o'clock.'"

I thought that she had fainted, but she recovered herself by a supreme effort.

"Is there no such thing as a gentleman?" she gasped.

"You do Sir Charles an injustice. He

"REALLY, SIR, THIS IS A VERY EXTRAORDINARY QUESTION."

Mrs. Lyons flushed with anger again.

"Really, sir, this is a very extraordinary question."

"I am sorry, madam, but I must repeat it."

"Then I answer—certainly not."

"Not on the very day of Sir Charles's death?"

did burn the letter. But sometimes a letter may be legible even when burned. You acknowledge now that you wrote it?"

"Yes, I did write it," she cried, pouring out her soul in a torrent of words. "I did write it. Why should I deny it? I have no reason to be ashamed of it. I wished him to help me. I believed that if I had an

interview I could gain his help, so I asked him to meet me."

"But why at such an hour?"

"Because I had only just learned that he was going to London next day and might be away for months. There were reasons why I could not get there earlier."

"But why a rendezvous in the garden instead of a visit to the house?"

"Do you think a woman could go alone at that hour to a bachelor's house?"

"Well, what happened when you did get there?"

"I never went."

"Mrs. Lyons!"

"No, I swear it to you on all I hold sacred. I never went. Something intervened to prevent my going."

"What was that?"

"That is a private matter. I cannot tell it."

"You acknowledge, then, that you made an appointment with Sir Charles at the very hour and place at which he met his death, but you deny that you kept the appointment?"

"That is the truth."

Again and again I cross-questioned her, but I could never get past that point.

"Mrs. Lyons," said I, as I rose from this long and inconclusive interview, "you are taking a very great responsibility and putting yourself in a very false position by not making an absolutely clean breast of all that you know. If I have to call in the aid of the police you will find how seriously you are compromised. If your position is innocent, why did you in the first instance deny having written to Sir Charles upon that date?"

"Because I feared that some false conclusion might be drawn from it, and that I might find myself involved in a scandal."

"And why were you so pressing that Sir Charles should destroy your letter?"

"If you have read the letter you will know."

"I did not say that I had read all the letter."

"You quoted some of it."

"I quoted the postscript. The letter had, as I said, been burned, and it was not all legible. I ask you once again why it was that you were so pressing that Sir Charles should destroy this letter which he received on the day of his death."

"The matter is a very private one."

"The more reason why you should avoid a public investigation."

"I will tell you, then. If you have heard anything of my unhappy history you will know that I made a rash marriage and had reason to regret it."

"I have heard so much."

"My life has been one incessant persecution from a husband whom I abhor. The law is upon his side, and every day I am faced by the possibility that he may force me to live with him. At the time that I wrote this letter to Sir Charles I had learned that there was a prospect of my regaining my freedom if certain expenses could be met. It meant everything to me—peace of mind, happiness, self-respect—everything. I knew Sir Charles's generosity, and I thought that if he heard the story from my own lips he would help me."

"Then how is it that you did not go?"

"Because I received help in the interval from another source."

"Why, then, did you not write to Sir Charles and explain this?"

"So I should have done had I not seen his death in the paper next morning."

The woman's story hung coherently together, and all my questions were unable to shake it. I could only check it by finding if she had, indeed, instituted divorce proceedings against her husband at or about the time of the tragedy.

It was unlikely that she would dare to say that she had not been to Baskerville Hall if she really had been, for a trap would be necessary to take her there, and could not have returned to Coombe Tracey until the early hours of the morning. Such an excursion could not be kept secret. The probability was, therefore, that she was telling the truth, or, at least, a part of the truth. I came away baffled and disheartened. Once again I had reached that dead wall which seemed to be built across every path by which I tried to get at the object of my mission. And yet the more I thought of the lady's face and of her manner the more I felt that something was being held back from me. Why should she turn so pale? Why should she fight against every admission until it was forced from her? Why should she have been so reticent at the time of the tragedy? Surely the explanation of all this could not be as innocent as she would have me believe. For the moment I could proceed no farther in that direction, but must turn back to that other clue which was to be sought for among the stone huts upon the moor.

And that was a most vague direction. I realized it as I drove back and noted how hill

after hill showed traces of the ancient people. Barrymore's only indication had been that the stranger lived in one of these abandoned huts, and many hundreds of them are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the moor. But I had my own experience for a guide, since it had shown me the man himself standing upon the summit of the Black Tor. That, then, should be the centre of my search. From there I should explore every hut upon the moor until I lighted upon the right one. If this man were inside it I should find out from his own lips, at the point of my revolver if necessary, who he was and why he had dogged us so long. He might slip away from us in the crowd of Regent Street, but it would puzzle him to do so upon the lonely moor. On the other hand, if I should find the hut and its tenant should not be within it I must remain there, however long the vigil, until he returned. Holmes had missed him in London. It would indeed be a triumph for me if I could run him to earth where my master had failed.

Luck had been against us again and again in this inquiry, but now at last it came to my aid. And the messenger of good fortune was none other than Mr. Frankland, who was standing, grey-whiskered and red-faced, outside the gate of his garden, which opened on to the high road along which I travelled.

"Good-day, Dr. Watson," cried he, with unwonted good humour, "you must really give your horses a rest, and come in to have a glass of wine and to congratulate me."

My feelings towards him were far from being friendly after what I had heard of his treatment of his daughter, but I was anxious to send Perkins and the wagonette home, and the opportunity was a good one. I alighted and sent a message to Sir Henry that I should walk over in time for dinner. Then I followed Frankland into his dining-room.

"It is a great day for me, sir—one of the red-letter days of my life," he cried, with many chuckles. "I have brought off a double event. I mean to teach them in these parts that law is law, and that there is a man here who does not fear to invoke it. I have established a right of way through the centre of old Middleton's park, slap across it, sir, within a hundred yards of his own front door. What do you think of that? We'll teach these magnates that they cannot ride rough-shod over the rights of the commoners, confound them! And I've closed the wood where the Fernworthy folk used to picnic. These infernal people seem to think that there are no rights of property, and that they can swarm where they like with their papers and their bottles. Both cases decided, Dr.

"'GOOD-DAY, DR. WATSON,' HE CRIED."

Watson, and both in my favour. I haven't had such a day since I had Sir John Morland for trespass, because he shot in his own warren."

"How on earth did you do that?"

"Look it up in the books, sir. It will repay reading—Frankland *v.* Morland, Court of Queen's Bench. It cost me £200, but I got my verdict."

"Did it do you any good?"

"None, sir, none. I am proud to say that I had no interest in the matter. I act entirely from a sense of public duty. I have no doubt, for example, that the Fernworthy people will burn me in effigy to-night. I told the police last time they did it that they should stop these disgraceful exhibitions. The county constabulary is in a scandalous state, sir, and it has not afforded me the protection to which I am entitled. The case of Frankland *v.* Regina will bring the matter before the attention of the public. I told them that they would have occasion to regret their treatment of me, and already my words have come true."

"How so?" I asked.

The old man put on a very knowing expression.

"Because I could tell them what they are dying to know; but nothing would induce me to help the rascals in any way."

I had been casting round for some excuse by which I could get away from his gossip, but now I began to wish to hear more of it. I had seen enough of the contrary nature of the old sinner to understand that any strong sign of interest would be the surest way to stop his confidences.

"Some poaching case, no doubt?" said I, with an indifferent manner.

"Ha, ha, my boy, a very much more important matter than that! What about the convict on the moor?"

I started. "You don't mean that you know where he is?" said I.

"I may not know exactly where he is, but I am quite sure that I could help the police to lay their hands on him. Has it never struck you that the way to catch that man was to find out where he got his food, and so trace it to him?"

He certainly seemed to be getting uncomfortably near the truth. "No doubt," said I; "but how do you know that he is anywhere upon the moor?"

"I know it because I have seen with my own eyes the messenger who takes him his food."

My heart sank for Barrymore. It was a serious thing to be in the power of this spiteful old busybody. But his next remark took a weight from my mind.

"You'll be surprised to hear that his food is taken to him by a child. I see him every day through my telescope upon the roof. He passes along the same path at the same hour, and to whom should he be going except to the convict?"

Here was luck indeed! And yet I suppressed all appearance of interest. A child! Barrymore had said that our unknown was supplied by a boy. It was on his track, and not upon the convict's, that Frankland had stumbled. If I could get his knowledge it might save me a long and weary hunt. But incredulity and indifference were evidently my strongest cards.

"I should say that it was much more likely that it was the son of one of the moorland shepherds taking out his father's dinner."

The least appearance of opposition struck fire out of the old autocrat. His eyes looked malignantly at me, and his grey whiskers bristled like those of an angry cat.

"Indeed, sir!" said he, pointing out over the wide-stretching moor. "Do you see that Black Tor over yonder? Well, do you see the low hill beyond with the thorn-bush upon it? It is the stoniest part of the whole moor. Is that a place where a shepherd would be likely to take his station? Your suggestion, sir, is a most absurd one."

I meekly answered that I had spoken without knowing all the facts. My submission pleased him and led him to further confidences.

"You may be sure, sir, that I have very good grounds before I come to an opinion. I have seen the boy again and again with his bundle. Every day, and sometimes twice a day, I have been able—but wait a moment, Dr. Watson. Do my eyes deceive me, or is there at the present moment something moving upon that hillside?"

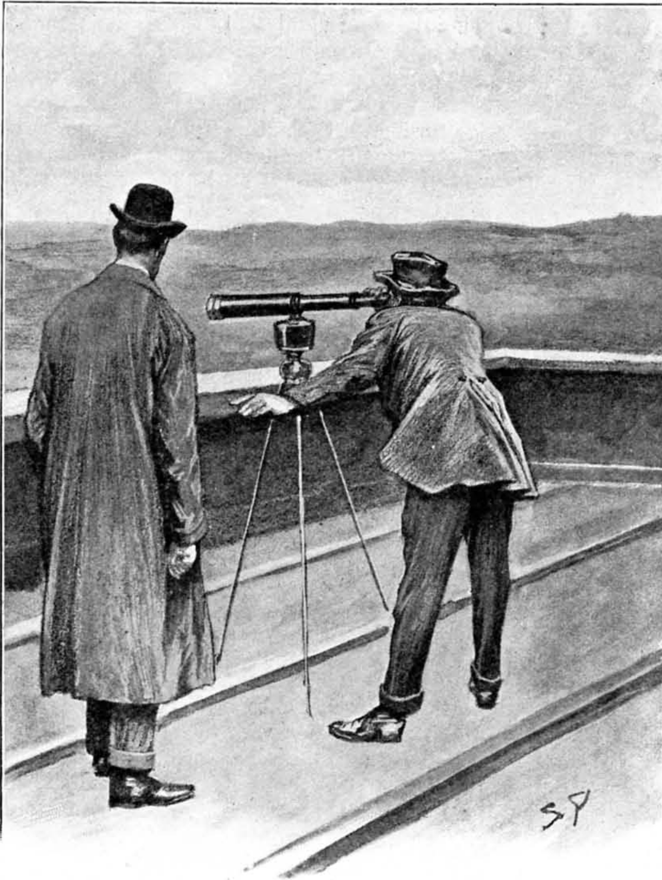
It was several miles off, but I could distinctly see a small dark dot against the dull green and grey.

"Come, sir, come!" cried Frankland, rushing upstairs. "You will see with your own eyes and judge for yourself."

The telescope, a formidable instrument mounted upon a tripod, stood upon the flat leads of the house. Frankland clapped his eye to it and gave a cry of satisfaction.

"Quick, Dr. Watson, quick, before he passes over the hill!"

There he was, sure enough, a small urchin with a little bundle upon his shoulder, toiling



"FRANKLAND CLAPPED HIS EYE TO IT AND GAVE A CRY OF SATISFACTION."

slowly up the hill. When he reached the crest I saw the ragged, uncouth figure outlined for an instant against the cold blue sky. He looked round him, with a furtive and stealthy air, as one who dreads pursuit. Then he vanished over the hill.

"Well! Am I right?"

"Certainly, there is a boy who seems to have some secret errand."

"And what the errand is even a county constable could guess. But not one word shall they have from me, and I bind you to secrecy also, Dr. Watson. Not a word! You understand?"

"Just as you wish."

"They have treated me shamefully—shamefully. When the facts come out in Frankland *v.* Regina I venture to think that a thrill of indignation will run through the country. Nothing would induce me to help the police in any way. For all they cared it might have been me, instead of my effigy, which these rascals burned at the stake. Surely you are not going! You will help me to empty the decanter in honour of this great occasion!"

But I resisted all his solicitations and succeeded in dissuading him from his announced intention of walking home with me. I kept the road as long as his eye was on me, and then I struck off across the moor and made for the stony hill over which the boy had disappeared. Everything was working in my favour, and I swore that it should not be through lack of energy or perseverance that I should miss the chance which Fortune had thrown in my way.

The sun was already sinking when I reached the summit of the hill, and the long slopes beneath me were all golden-green on one side and grey shadow on the other. A haze lay low upon the farthest sky-line, out of which jutted the fantastic shapes of Belliver and Vixen Tor. Over the wide expanse there was no sound and no movement. One great grey bird, a gull or curlew, soared aloft in the blue heaven. He and I seemed to be the only living things between the huge arch of the sky and the desert beneath it. The barren scene, the sense of loneliness, and the mystery and urgency of my task all struck a chill into my heart. The boy was nowhere to be seen. But down beneath me in a cleft of the hills there was a circle of the old stone huts, and in the middle of them there was one which retained sufficient roof to act as a screen against the weather. My heart leaped within me as I saw it. This must be the burrow where the stranger lurked. At last my foot was on the threshold of his hiding-place—his secret was within my grasp.

As I approached the hut, walking as warily as Stapleton would do when with poised net he drew near the settled butterfly, I satisfied myself that the place had indeed been used

as a habitation. A vague pathway among the boulders led to the dilapidated opening which served as a door. All was silent within. The unknown might be lurking there, or he might be prowling on the moor. My nerves tingled with the sense of adventure. Throwing aside my cigarette I closed my hand upon the butt of my revolver and, walking swiftly up to the door, I looked in. The place was empty.

But there were ample signs that I had not come upon a false scent. This was certainly where the man lived. Some blankets rolled in a waterproof lay upon that very stone slab upon which neolithic man had once slumbered. The ashes of a fire were heaped in a rude grate. Beside it lay some cooking utensils and a bucket half-full of water. A litter of empty tins showed that the place had been occupied for some time, and I saw, as my eyes became accustomed to the chequered light, a pannikin and a half-full bottle of spirits standing in the corner. In the middle of the hut a flat stone served the purpose of a table, and upon this stood a small cloth bundle—the same, no doubt, which I had seen through the telescope upon the shoulder of the boy. It contained a loaf of bread, a tinned tongue, and two tins of preserved peaches. As I set it down again, after having examined it, my heart leaped to see that beneath it there lay a sheet of paper with writing upon it. I raised it, and this was what I read, roughly scrawled in pencil:—

"Dr. Watson has gone to Coombe Tracey."

For a minute I stood there with the paper in my hands thinking out the meaning of this curt message. It was I, then, and not Sir Henry, who was being dogged by this secret man. He had not followed me himself, but he had set an agent—the boy, perhaps—upon my track, and this was his report. Possibly I had taken no step since I had been upon the moor which had not been observed and repeated. Always there was this feeling of an unseen force, a fine net drawn round us with infinite skill and delicacy, holding us so lightly that it was only at some supreme moment that one realized that one was indeed entangled in its meshes.

If there was one report there might be others, so I looked round the hut in search of them. There was no trace, however, of anything of the kind, nor could I discover any sign which might indicate the character or intentions of the man who lived in this singular place, save that he must be of Spartan habits, and cared little for the comforts of life. When I thought of the heavy rains and looked at the gaping roof I understood how strong and immutable must be the purpose which had kept him in that inhospitable abode. Was he our malignant enemy, or was he by chance our guardian angel? I swore that I would not leave the hut until I knew.

Outside the sun was sinking low and the west was blazing with scarlet and gold. Its reflection was shot back in ruddy patches by the distant pools which lay amid the Great Grimpen Mire. There were the two towers of Baskerville Hall, and there a distant blur of smoke which marked the village of Grimpen. Between the two, behind the hill, was the house of the Stapletons. All was sweet and mellow and peaceful in the golden evening light, and yet as I looked at them my soul shared none of the peace of Nature, but quivered at the vagueness and the terror of that interview which every instant was bringing nearer. With tingling nerves, but a fixed purpose, I sat in the dark recess of the hut and waited with sombre patience for the coming of its tenant.

And then at last I heard him. Far away came the sharp clink of a boot striking upon a stone. Then another and yet another, coming nearer and nearer. I shrank back into the darkest corner, and cocked the pistol in my pocket, determined not to discover myself until I had an opportunity of seeing something of the stranger. There was a long pause which showed that he had stopped. Then once more the footsteps approached and a shadow fell across the opening of the hut.

"It is a lovely evening, my dear Watson," said a well-known voice. "I really think that you will be more comfortable outside than in."

(*To be continued.*)

A King's Gallery of Beauty.

BY S. K. LUDOVIC.

KING LUDWIG I. OF BAVARIA, who died in 1868, and to whom the renowned collection of the Gallery of Beauties at the Royal Castle at Munich is due, was a man of exquisite gifts. Being a great connoisseur, his influence was of the utmost importance on the development of art in Germany. One of his first acts when he came to the throne was to restore what was left, in the quaint old Bavarian towns, of moated walls, towers, and abbeys which French vandalism had so gravely injured in 1813. His greatest interest was centred in the study of history, and his love of art was the outcome of his thorough knowledge of the classics. By artists he was truly loved. They appreciated his fine understanding and his critical opinion even more than his kindness. Ludwig Schwanthaler, the celebrated pupil of Thorwaldsen, owes his whole career to King Ludwig's encouragement and help. It is said that Schwanthaler's figures above the portal of the "Walhalla" at Ratisbon are the finest sculptures since the antique. When Ludwig was Crown Prince he was much in the society of artists, and was often seen at the Café Greco, the chief place of meeting among the Munich painters. He was one of the gayest among them. In the new Pinakothek is a picture in which the artist-Prince is depicted sitting with his friends at a Weinkneipe and partaking of a hearty breakfast.

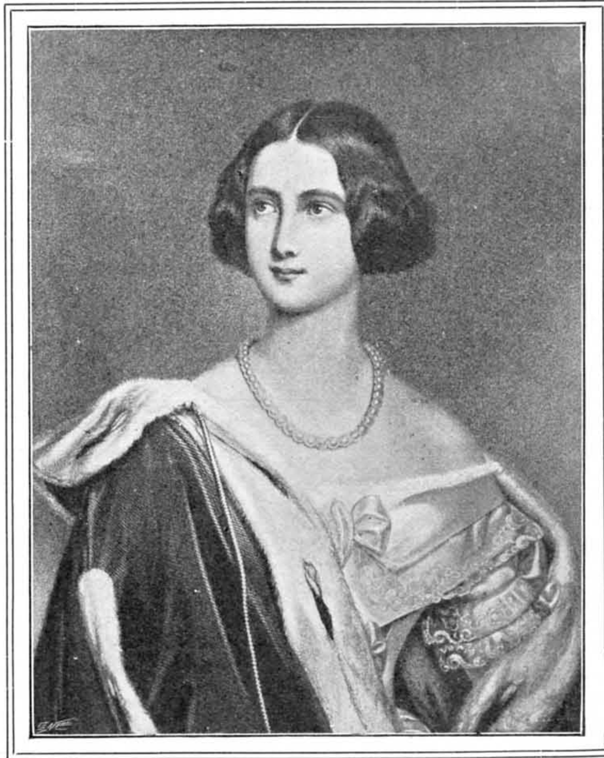
KING LUDWIG I. OF BAVARIA.

The collection of portraits of beautiful women was not suggested with a view to pay compliments to the bearers of great names, though it is to a great extent a highly aristocratic bevy of beauties which has been immortalized by the subtle brush of Joseph von Stieler, the Court painter. The King desired to collect these portraits independent of rank and position. During his lonely walks he succeeded in discovering many a subject for his collection. Wherever he saw a lovely woman's face he sent his faithful Stieler with a request for the necessary sittings to secure a portrait. No woman resisted such a compliment paid to her beauty, and thus it came about that in the same room with the portrait of Queen Marie of Bavaria we find one of a girl who served the foaming Bavarian beer to the guests at her father's inn. These two pictures are, perhaps, among the most beautiful of the collection; but individual taste has always more to do with the decision of the question of beauty than all the rules of art.

We will now proceed to reproduce, we believe for the first time in this country, a selection from the portraits in this unique gallery.

Queen Marie of Bavaria

was a Prussian Princess and the wife of King Maximilian II., the son of Ludwig I. She was the mother of Ludwig II. and Otto I., the two young Bavarian Kings so sadly afflicted with insanity. Ludwig II. was of chief interest to the world through his great influence on the life of Wagner. During the sad years of 1870–71 she occupied herself most zealously with the comfort of the wounded. Every day during many weeks she went to the Odéon—a large building where the famous Court concerts take place—and helped the ladies of the town to sew garments and make bandages and lint for the wounded. From that time dates an amusing little anecdote, which goes to show that even Queens may sometimes say things which one would rather have left unsaid. One lady whose portrait was painted for the Gallery of Beauties about the same time as Queen Marie's also came to these charitable meetings. On being presented to the Queen the latter looked puzzled, as if trying to fix some recollection. Then she remembered and said, with one of her sweet smiles: "Are you not the beautiful Fräulein Vetterlein whose portrait is in the Gallery of Beauties?" The lady, much flattered, replied in the affirmative. The Queen, looking at her with an absent air, pensively remarked: "It is astonishing! One would hardly have believed it." No one knew whether she was ever aware of having expressed aloud her innermost thoughts about the elderly beauty. Possibly the little story was merely owing to the poor lady's former beauty having roused the jealousy of rivals.



QUEEN MARIE OF BAVARIA.

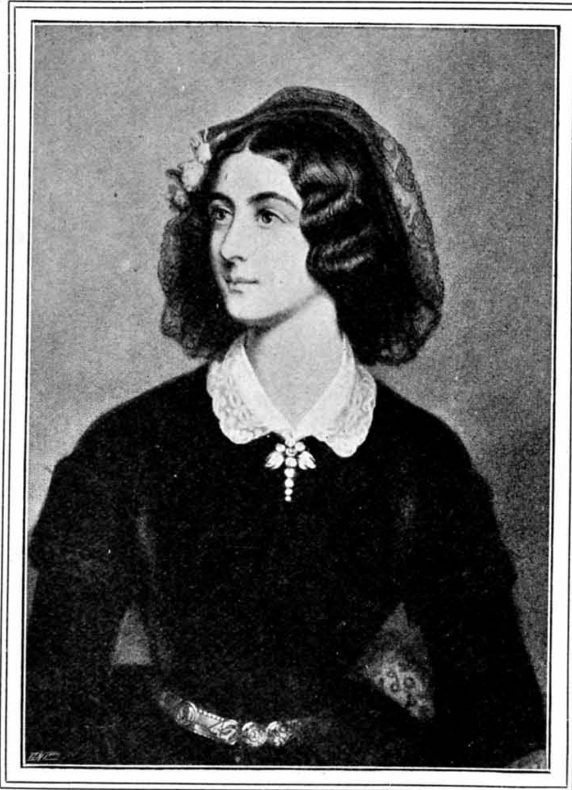
Anna Kaula,

known in her family circle as Nannie or Nanette, was remarkable for her great beauty. She was a gentle, sweet woman, not very brilliant, and seemed hardly aware of her loveliness. Her father was a banker in Vienna, but it is believed that he left her no particular fortune. She and her sister were brought up in Munich by an aunt. She was seventeen years old when the King desired her portrait, and on becoming more widely known, as was always the case when a girl was beautiful enough to be painted for the celebrated collection, she had a great many suitors. She seemed not to care for marriage. At last, when her family believed that she had decided to remain single, she chose a man, much her senior, who could not offer her any worldly advantages and was in no way remarkable. "*L'amour, ou va-t-il se nicher!*"

ANNA KAULA.

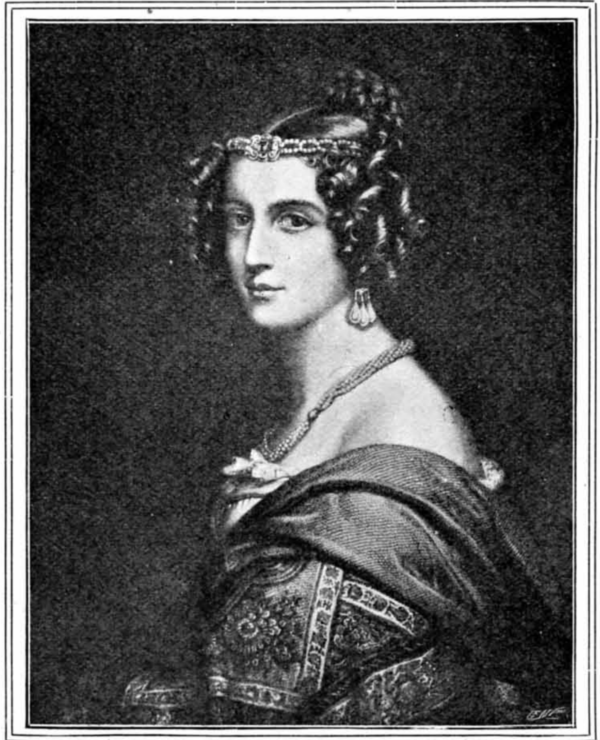
LOLA MONTEZ.

To those who still remember the freaks and escapades of this strangely-fascinating woman her presence among the noble dames of the Royal House may seem to be, to say the least, a little strange. The younger generation, who may have but a dim idea as to who Lola Montez really was, may be interested in the following sketch of the career of that remarkable adventuress. Lola was born at Limerick, Ireland, in 1818, her mother being a Creole of notable beauty. After having passed the early years of her life in an English boarding-school at Bath, her beauty and vivacity of spirit attracted a young Anglo-Indian officer, Captain James, who married her and took her with him to the Far East. But Lola found Eastern life rather dull and, secretly leaving her husband, she embarked for Europe. Struggling poverty assailed the adventuress in London, and after a most chequered career as a street singer Lola went to Madrid. She obtained an engagement in the ballet at the Porte St. Martin Théâtre, in Paris, in 1839, but the director found himself bound to dismiss the irrepressible ballerina. We hear of her again in Berlin, where, mounted on a spirited thoroughbred, she assisted at some grand military manœuvres, at which the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Russia were present. The firing of the cannon frightened the animal, which bolted among the suite of the Emperor of Russia. A zealous policeman caught hold of the horse's head just in time to stop its mad flight, but, not content with having done his duty, he felt called upon to administer a rebuke to the fair rider. Immediately the hot-blooded Lola belaboured the astonished guardian of the law with such a shower of blows from her whip that he had to call for assistance. She escaped imprisonment on the plea of severe provocation, but had to leave Berlin. Paris, the scene of her former exploits, was of course her goal. Press and public received her with acclamation, and Pillet engaged her as *première danseuse* at the Opéra. Soon, however, the old spirit of recklessness broke loose, and when in a fit of daring she threw one of her satin slippers among the public she got hissed off the stage. She returned to Germany. Ludwig II. of Bavaria, meeting her apparently by chance at the house of a courtier, expressed a wish to see her dance a fandango. Completely fascinated by her feline grace and witty repartees, the Royal enthusiast presented her to his Court as "my best friend." She was made Baroness von Rosenthal and Countess Landsfeld. A pension of 20,000 florins and a magnificent villa gave suitable atmosphere to the newly-created titles. But when he proposed that Queen Therese should invest her with the dignity of a *Chanoinesse* of the Theresian Order all the King's Ministers sent in their resignations and were replaced by new ones chosen by Lola herself. The student corps Allemania saw in Lola a sort of goddess of liberty and espoused her cause. This led to such riots that all lectures at the University had to be suspended. Lola, with her usual dare-devil temperament, ventured to walk right through the excited street mob. She was greeted with hisses and groans, and only escaped violent treatment thanks to the



LOLA MONTEZ.

King's protection. He had seen from one of the windows of the Royal castle what happened, and leaving the assembled company came to Lola's rescue, leading her on his arm to a place of safety. Incensed by the violent manifestations of his hitherto faithful burghers the King ordered the University of Munich to be closed for one year. But this was the last straw: at first a mere riot, matters now assumed the proportions of a revolution to demand the expulsion of the foreign adventuress. At last the King yielded and a decree of expulsion was signed. Returning to England, she married an officer in the Guards—a Mr. Head, a gentleman of large fortune. The charge of bigamy brought forward by his family she dodged by giving bail for £1,000 and going to Spain. There she separated from her husband, and two years afterwards he was found drowned near Lisbon. The artist Mauclerc was said to



AMALIE VON SCHINTLING.

MAXIMILIANA BORZAGA.

have been her third husband, but he denied the charge. In America she married finally the editor of a San Francisco journal, only to separate from him again. She died in 1861 in New York, where "she led an exemplary life and died as a good Christian." The portrait of Lola Montez is supposed to be the best of the collection. After King Ludwig's death it was expelled from the gallery and put into the lumber-room of the New Pinakothek, whence Herr Eugen von Stieler, after an assiduous search for it, restored it to the gallery once more.

MAXIMILIANA BORZAGA came to Germany through King Otto I. of Greece. King Otto was King Ludwig I.'s second son, and during his lifetime a continual influx of Greeks took place into Munich, where they found sympathy and congenial surroundings.

AMALIE VON SCHINTLING belonged to an old aristocratic family, and was one of Queen Therese's ladies-in-waiting.

LADY JANE ERSKINE.

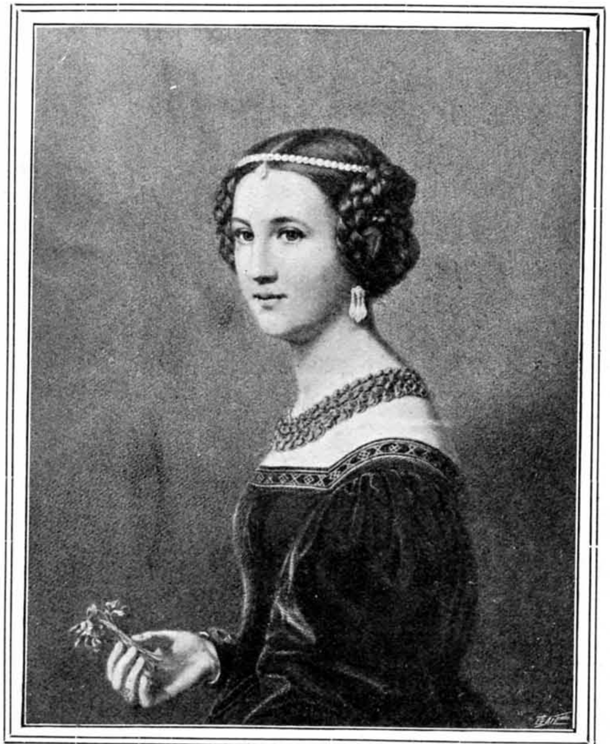
very original conversations sometimes took place. When he saw the pretty Fräulein Vetterlein he approached her: "Are you from Munich, my pretty child? You should not wear a veil. It is a pity." Whilst he spoke the elderly aunt was struggling hard with the flimsy net which covered her faded visage. The King turned to her and said, with his politest bow: "Pray do not trouble; such a veil is a good thing." History is silent about the friendly relations between aunt and niece after this little incident. But when Herr von Stieler appeared after a few days with the well-known request from the King, Cornelia's parents were by no means surprised. Ludwig I. sometimes came in during these sittings to give his opinion and to have a friendly chat with the artist and his subject, but if the chosen chaperon was more than usually plain he could not always conceal his outraged sense of beauty.

LADY JANE ERSKINE.

In all probability the portrait bearing the name of Lady Jane Erskine represents really the wife of Lord Edward Morris Erskine, C.B., who was Her Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the King of the Hellenes from 1864 till 1872. She was married in 1817, and probably known to King Ludwig through the Grecian Court.

CORNELIA VETTERLEIN

was a young girl of good family, and well brought up. Her parents lived in a neighbouring town, and one day when she went to Munich with her elderly maiden aunt the King saw her in the Ludwig-Strasse, where he often took his walks alone. It was then customary for ladies to stand still, lift their veils, and when the King passed to make a deep curtsy, which he always most politely acknowledged. It often happened that he addressed the people in the street, and some



CORNELIA VETTERLEIN.

LADY ELLENBOROUGH.

There is nothing known about Ianthe, Lady Ellenborough, *née* Lady Digby. The peerage gives no such name, but it is possible that, through the carelessness of the officials, a wrong or misspelled name was put under the picture.

HELENE SEDLMAYER.

It is interesting to observe the difference in the dress of Regina Daxenberger and Helene Sedlmayer. Both wear the pretty and becoming "Riegelhäubehen," but the dress of Regina is that of a fashionable lady of the time, whilst Helene wears the exact Bavarian national costume, which is unfortunately no longer seen in Munich. A German beerhouse is hardly the soil for a flower of beauty and purity to grow. Nevertheless, Helene Sedlmayer, with her sweet, girlish face and the expression of a saint, grew up in her father's inn. Near the old Isaarthor in the "Thal," where Munich still preserves its mediæval aspect, in one of the small side-streets, was Helene's humble home. She helped in the house, which means that she worked like a servant-girl, and served beer to her father's guests in the evening. Every three years a quaint old custom, "the Schefflertanz," takes place in this part of the town. The butchers and coopers dance in quaint mediæval costume round the fountain in the "Thal"; this festivity lasts three days and provides much amusement and gaiety for the working classes. King Ludwig, who was wont to mix among his subjects and whose kind-heartedness rejoiced in seeing their mirth, was there in the midst of the crowd and saw the beautiful Helene craning her pretty neck to see what was going on round the fountain. He sent his aide-de-camp to find the pretty maid a better place of vantage and to

LADY ELLENBOROUGH.

HELENE SEDLMAYER.

help her out of the crowd, and the next day her father was asked to let her go in her best finery to Stieler's studio, where she would be painted for the King's collection. At one of the sittings the King, according to his wont, dropped in and chatted with the painter and Helene. He soon found out that the poor little girl had a sweetheart, who was now going to give her up because he thought she would be too great a lady for him, as he was so poor. "Do you love him, little Helene? Would you not rather become a lady? I think I could find you a husband among my Court officials who would make you a lady. I might give you a little dowry, because you are not only a pretty but also a good girl." No consideration for her pose, no fear to incur the displeasure of the painter, could keep the girl back; she knelt at the King's feet and kissed his hand, with tears in her gazelle-like eyes: "Oh, would your Majesty let me marry Hans? I don't want anyone else." King Ludwig kept his promise, and sent his private secretary to Hans with the command to marry Helene as soon as the picture was finished. Hans did not want much persuasion, and on their wedding-day Ludwig I. sent the bride a handsome present and the deed which made Hans the proprietor of a lucrative little hostelry. The little hostelry soon changed into a well-kept hotel, through the careful management of the young couple and the interest which the Royal family bore them. Helene's son, a godchild of the King, has not remained in the humble rank of life of his parents. A scholar and a good soldier, he is now in the front rank among Bavarian officers.

REGINA DAXENBERGER.

Regina Daxenberger.

This beauty was also discovered by the King during one of his walks. She was the daughter of a rich Munich burgher and master coppersmith. The lovely Regina was born in 1811. She must have been about nineteen when her portrait was painted for the King's collection. Through this event she made the acquaintance of her future husband, who was King Ludwig's confidential secretary. Heinrich Fahrenbacher was nearly seventeen years older than his beautiful *fiancée*, but his splendid career and great intellectual gifts formed a fit equivalent to his wife's great beauty and fortune. The King loved children and young people, and would sometimes appear suddenly at some harmless little social gathering. Frau Regina Fahrenbacher often related to her grandchildren how gaily he played "blind-man's buff" with her and her friends. She was married in 1832, and became the mother of three sons and two daughters. Her children are all in good positions, and one of her brothers is still the proprietor of the now famous old business in Munich. Frau Fahrenbacher died in her native town at the age of seventy.

Julie Baroness von Krüdener

attracted much attention in her day, not only on account of her beauty and charm, but particularly through the great influence she exercised for some time over the Czar Alexander II. Books have been written about her, and Governments have been in terror of her influence. Hers was a restless, ardent nature whose whole life seemed to

pass in a storm of excitement. She was born in Riga, 1764, and died also in Russia in 1824. She came of a rich and distinguished family, and married, in 1783, Baron von Krüdener, who took her to Venice, where he was Russian Ambassador. About 1777 Julie's principal attraction lay in the fact that she was one of the richest heiresses of Livonia—for she was still an overgrown, undeveloped, silent girl, with a rather long nose and uncertain complexion, but with ample promises of future beauty in her large blue eyes and chestnut hair, and in her singularly well-shaped hands and arms. When sixteen she had many suitors, and at eighteen she married Baron Krüdener, who was twenty years her senior. The Baron was a clever diplomatist, a refined man of the world, but by no means a hero of romance. The brilliant young Ambassadress soon formed the centre of attraction. When Baron Krüdener became Russian Ambassador in Denmark she changed from a romantic girl into a brilliant society woman. Alexander de Stakieff, her husband's adjutant, killed himself for love of her. The remembrance of this romance in her own life inspired her to write the romance "Valérie." Under pretext of health considerations she went to France, and cultivated there the society of writers. In 1802 she became a widow; then she published "Valérie"—a book which is worth reading. She wrote several other novels with more or less success. Her veritable mission did not show itself until later. When her youth and beauty vanished her ardent heart turned to religion and to the good of her fellow-creatures. Her courage and her eloquence made her an apostle of her convictions. After some years of sojourn in Livonia, where she was noted for her benevolence, she thought herself called on to regenerate the world. She provoked persecution by preaching humanitarian and socialistic doctrines. After 1814 her tendencies turned to prophecy. She foretold that Napoleon would return from Elba and take the throne again. The success of this prediction made the Czar Alexander II., who was much addicted to religious exaltation, wish to see her. He received her in 1815, and was quite subjugated by her enthusiasm. He desired her to follow him to France. Installed at the Hotel Montchenu near the Palais d'Elysée, where he lived, she was for several months, so to speak, his prophetess. But the favour of the Czar began to decline. She went to Switzerland and there preached her socialistic doctrines. She had crowds of listeners, partly owing to her eloquence and partly to her liberality. She was expelled from Switzerland, and, being banished for three years from Russia, she died at Karasou Bazar, where she had gone for her health.

JULIE BARONESS VON KRÜDENER.

A NEW YEAR'S GIFT

By Winifred Graham.

I.

ORNA woke with a start and, springing out of bed, ran to her brother's room. She bent over the sleeping face, flushed and chubby on the pillow.

"Wake up!" she whispered, and her small fingers pulled at his curls. "Wake up, Jack!"

He stirred, rubbing his eyes.

Lorna skipped to the window and drew aside the blind; the bright morning light streamed into the room.

Jack collected his thoughts.

"It's New Year's Eve," he said.

"Oh! it's something better than that," cried Lorna, dancing about in her excitement. "It's Daddy's day! You surely hadn't forgotten?"

"Rather not!"

He was fully awake now and his eyes sparkled.

"Can you believe it?" said Lorna, perching herself on the foot of the bed and looking straight at Jack; "can you believe Daddy is really coming home to-day?"

"It seems as if we must be dreaming," Jack replied.

Both were silent for a moment, and a thoughtful expression crept over their faces. The six months Captain Hamilton had been away at the war appeared like a six years' absence to the two waiting children, who worshipped the ground he trod on. The very name of South Africa filled them with vague, uncontrollable fears. Jack drew a very crumpled piece of paper from under his pillow and smoothed it out tenderly on his knee, the telegram his father sent him from Southampton — last thing before starting. During all those weary months of separation the treasured telegram had never left Jack for a single moment.

"I don't know how we shall get through the morning," he said. "Daddy won't come till this afternoon. But we had better dress quickly now, because I want to talk to Bowler. We must meet Daddy in the dog-cart; he likes it so much better than the carriage."

Jack scrambled into his clothes and ran to the stables, singing and shouting as he skipped along. He could hardly feel the ground under his feet, so buoyant were his spirits.

"Bowler," he cried, seizing the fat, elderly coachman, "look! I've got a piece of ribbon to put on our whip to-day, red, white, and blue, for the Captain. And, oh! please meet him with Benedict, because, you know,

he loves Benedict more than any of the other horses, and, coming from so far, he'll like to see an old friend."

Bowler fell in with all the young master's wishes, for it was Bowler who had found six months ago a sobbing, tear-stained child huddled up at the back of the hay-loft, dazed with grief, and half dead from the violence of his emotions.

"You will be round at the door for us very early, won't you?" said Jack. "We should like to get to the station a long time before the train comes in. Lorna and I are both going—girls do look on things funnily, don't they, Bowler? Lorna says she shall 'insist'—yes, that was the word she used—insist on being dressed in all her best clothes. As if clothes mattered; but I ought to get my breakfast soon, the bell rang a long time ago. I suppose you know there is a mystery going on indoors?"

Bowler shook his head; his ignorance fairly staggered Jack.

"I ain't heard of nothing of the kind, sir," answered the stolid voice.

"Why, mother is preparing a New Year's surprise for Daddy and for us—we may not go into the West Wing. We can't think what it can be, because we have had our Christmas-tree, and we don't know of anything like that which might happen at New Year."

Bowler could throw no light upon the subject, so Jack, his heart beating faster at the thought of the wonderful day before him, fled back to the house, the wind ruffling his hair. He and Lorna talked a great deal about the mystery as they breakfasted together in the nursery.

"I hope it is something Daddy will like," Lorna said. "I don't mind for myself. Daddy alone will be quite New Year's treat enough for me."

She heaved a pensive little sigh, adding, proudly: "He has not seen my winter coat—the blue velvet one—with the ermine collar. Both the coat and hat are new since he went away, and the hat matches! I could not meet him in old clothes—on such a great day! Nurse says the tenants are going to hang flags out of their windows, and the village will be decorated. We must take our presents to the station with us, to give him at once; I expect he will like to get them directly."

She slipped off her chair and ran to a drawer; Jack followed. Together they opened it and peered in. Two small parcels tied with red ribbons fully satisfied the children's eager gaze.

"I'll put our presents on my velvet hat, so we can't forget!" said Lorna. "I expect mother's surprise for him will have cost a lot more money, but I daresay he'll like ours a little too."

"He will like ours very, very much," Jack assured her, confident of having made a wise choice.

II.

Bowler declared afterwards he should never forget that drive to the station; it was all he could do to hold the children in the cart, and yet he enjoyed their hilarious excitement, listening amused to a torrent of innocent prattle.

"This telegram," said Jack, feeling in his pocket, "has always stayed in every suit I happened to be wearing since the day Daddy went away. Now it won't be wanted any more (but I never mean to part with it). Have you ever had a telegram that seemed to comfort you to hear it scrunch when you put your hands in your pockets?"

"I don't know that I have," replied Bowler. "Now I come to think of it, telegrams generally bring me bad news."

"Oh! poor Bowler," sighed Lorna—"like the telegram that came from the War Office to say Daddy was wounded! We didn't think then what good news it really was, because it is bringing him home, and he says he is not very ill—only a foot wound; and Daddy doesn't mind pain, because he is a soldier and has learnt to bear it very bravely."

Lorna peeped up so sweetly into Bowler's face that he was inclined to believe every word she said. She looked like a little princess with her hands in her big white muff and her dainty face and round blue eyes beaming at him.

"You see what we are taking Daddy," she continued, displaying the beribboned parcels. "We have each got him a little packet of chocolates; we think he must want that more than anything, because it has always been sent out to him. It was Jack's idea."

Bowler smiled—a smile that came near to a chuckle.

"Look, Lorna, look!" cried Jack, as they approached the village. "The big 'Welcome' is hanging up over the road, which only comes out for weddings; won't Daddy be pleased? Oh, I can see lots of people on the station all waiting for his train." The nearness of this longed-for joy seemed to get into the children's blood and sent them crazy—decorum went to the winds. Jack, hanging half out of the cart, produced from under the seat a large patriotic handker-

chief, which he waved to everyone he knew as they passed, shouting, "The Captain's coming—the Captain's coming in the train."

As the entire village appeared to be comprised of Jack's acquaintances this kept him well occupied till Bowler drew up, and the irresponsible little couple tumbled out, making a dash for the platform.

Bowler caught glimpses of them shaking hands with the station-master and porters, while joining in animated conversation with an

"BOWLER CAUGHT GLIMPSES OF THEM SHAKING HANDS WITH THE STATION-MASTER."

interested crowd. Jack had his torn and faded telegram out, which he showed to a sympathetic circle, while Lorna explained about the chocolate.

"Everyone seems to know it's Daddy's day!" she whispered to her brother; "isn't it nice of them not to have forgotten him, as he's been away such a very, very long time? Of course, we shouldn't forget, but that's different, because nobody could love him like we do!"

They thought the train would never come, and at last a certain breathless silence fell upon them, in strange contrast to their previous mood. Instinctively they stood hand in hand—Jack's fingers felt hot and feverish, despite the frosty bite in the clear winter air. Every nerve was strained to highest tension, as they stared down the blank line, hearts beating furiously under cosy garments.

Suddenly the flood-gates of their eager expectations opened wide. In the dim distance a thin curl of smoke heralded the coming train. Jack had his cap off and was waving at the engine long before he could see the familiar figure of the loved one leaning through the window.

As Captain Hamilton limped out he was greeted with the gifts simultaneously forced upon him.

"See, we've both got a present for you, Daddy!" they cried together, in breathless voices.

His merry laugh rang clear as of old. Then he caught the children in his arms. "How is mother?" he asked, kissing the upturned faces lovingly.

"Mother is quite well," replied Lorna, "but very busy to-day. I don't know if you will be allowed to go into the West

Wing, but we mustn't yet—not till the surprise is ready. She is settling something for New Year."

Jack eagerly untied the chocolate, as friends flocked round to shake Captain Hamilton's hand.

There was nothing for it but he must eat a piece at once out of each packet. The proceeding apparently created much amusement amongst the bystanders, who had already been favoured with a private view of the little packets, representing so much forethought on the part of the happy givers.

To the sound of ringing cheers Captain Hamilton drove away, Lorna nestling at his side and Jack standing up at the back of the cart with both arms round his father's neck. Even Bowler, usually so stolid and immovable of feature, caught the infection—his red face resembled a beaming sun! Benedict went like the wind; it was the merriest, maddest drive the countryside had ever witnessed.

Lorna imparted news in her innocent, childish fashion; she thought he must want to hear all they were going to do for the New Year.

"We begged mother to let us sit up to see the Old Year out—we've never done it before, and she promised we might."

"A splendid idea," said Captain Hamilton. Lorna fancied from his tone his thoughts had travelled elsewhere. So she kept quite still, but let her little velvet-clad shoulders lean heavily against his arm. He was not a bit changed, she told herself; just the same dear, sweet Daddy who had left them ages ago, the Daddy who always smiled, who appreciated their love. Jack's happiness kindled still in jubilant excitement, his blood coursed like quicksilver through his veins. Captain Hamilton fancied he could hear the beating of the boy's heart, as he retained his standing attitude, unable to tear his arms from that fond embrace.

As Benedict turned in at the drive, and the old house loomed before the traveller's eyes, a sigh of deep relief escaped him. He looked first at Lorna, then back at Jack, and though they could not tell what he was thinking, they guessed it must be something exquisitely tender. Perhaps it was the cold, but the children fancied they detected a moisture under Daddy's eyelashes. Such a bronzed, manly face could not, of course, be guilty of a tear.

The little people jumped down, bounding up the steps. Then they turned, and noticed, with a sense of shock, that Captain Hamilton alighted very slowly, the effort apparently causing him pain. He reached for his stick before entering the house.

"I was so excited at the station I never saw his limp," whispered Lorna.

"Nor I," answered Jack, in an undertone. Lorna bent down to touch the foot.

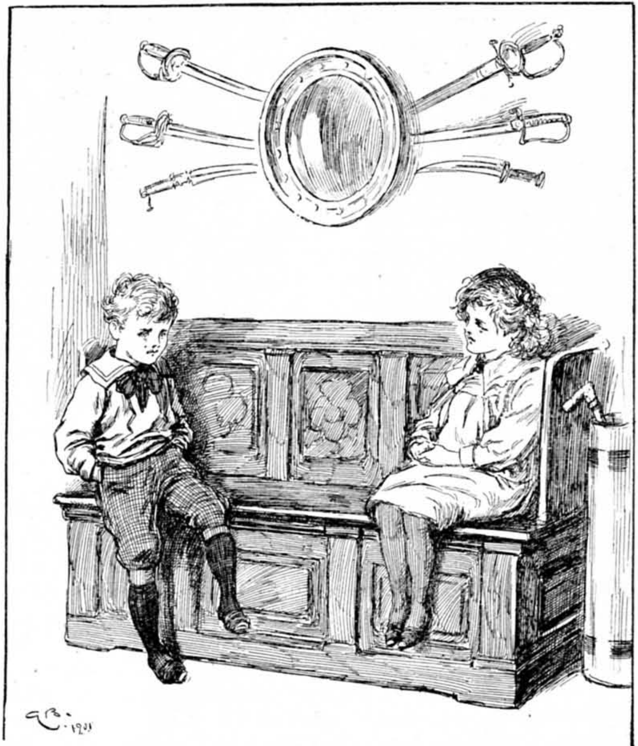
"Does it hurt, Daddy?" she asked, a little tremor in her voice.

"No, pet."

For the first time in her life Lorna did not quite believe him.

They watched him mount the stairs and turn towards the West Wing. "May we come, too?" they asked, hardly able to bear the thought of letting him out of their sight.

"No," he replied, in a very decided voice, which chilled their spirits by its unexpected solemnity. "Run away and play, but let it



"'IT'S VERY ODD,' SAID LORNA."

be quiet play. Mind, you are not to make any noise."

Lorna and Jack exchanged glances, as they nodded their heads in assent. Not to make any noise—not to make any noise when Daddy had come home and all the world should be ringing with the news! They walked away to a corner of the hall and sat down on an old oak seat.

"It's very odd," said Lorna, the corners of her mouth drooping. "I never thought mother would let Daddy come back without being at the door to meet him." Jack sighed deeply, and ran his fingers through his thick, curly hair.

"There is a funny hush about the house. Didn't you feel it, Lorna, directly you got inside? I would much rather give up the surprise for New Year. I thought we should all have such good times together on Daddy's day; it seems to have spoilt everything, mother stopping upstairs. I can't think how she could!" Jack spoke vehemently, and his little face grew red. A sudden painful reaction crept over him. Lorna looked as if she were going to cry.

Certainly Jack was right, the house felt strangely depressing. The absence of their pretty, bright-faced mother became more marked as time crept on; everybody appeared influenced by it, for the servants were flurried and talked in whispers, while even nurse neglected her charges. Lorna had to take off her own coat and hat and ask Jack to brush her hair. When they went down to look for Daddy they could not find him.

"It's a very disappointing evening," said Lorna, with a little sniffle.

"Let us sit on the stairs and wait for Daddy," said Jack, trying to conceal his feelings. "We won't talk."

They sat like two small images, staring through the big window, against which a hurrying snowstorm flung whirling atoms of feathery whiteness.

When at last Captain Hamilton came by he only just waited to pat them on the head, and hurried past looking terribly grave and anxious.

"You saw his face," whispered Jack. "What did you think of it?"

"I don't know, but it seemed to me a sad face, as if he were unhappy about something. He has been to the West Wing, and the surprise has not pleased him. Oh! Jack, what can we do for Daddy? It's dreadful he should come home and look like that! He only ate a very little of our chocolate and left the rest on the hall-table. I expect the chocolate disappointed him. He may have thought there was something inside he would have liked much better."

"Perhaps he wanted it to be tobacco," said Jack. "Mother sent out tobacco just as often as she sent chocolate, but we never thought of it, and I know there isn't any in the house. You may be sure that is making him unhappy! He is looking for just enough to fill one pipe, and can't find a bit. It's New Year's Eve, and—and we've given him the wrong present!"

Jack's voice broke as he made the sorrowful statement; he stood up as if bracing himself to a deed of heroism.

"Lorna," he said, "this can't go on! I must fetch him some tobacco from the village before the Old Year's out. Nurse knows we are sitting up; she won't miss us—she, too, is busy about the surprise."

Lorna glanced fearfully at the ever-thickening snowstorm. It was quite dark outside: a wild, terrible night. In the house were great fires, hot-water pipes ran through the walls, all was snug; King Frost and Queen Snow could find no entrance, but the world, the other side of the front door, was a place of chill desolation! Lorna clutched Jack's arm. "People are sometimes lost in the snow," she told him. "I shouldn't like anything to happen to you, Jack, even for Daddy's sake!"

"I don't mind the snow," he said, though his heart sank a little at the sight. "I shall be sure to find my way all right. Isn't it worth going out, to please Daddy? Why, Lorna, you know it is."

His eyes glowed with enthusiasm. Lorna caught the infection of his unselfish desire.

"I shall come, too," she said. "It's awful lonesome for one person to be out of doors in the dark; and if you got buried in the snow I should be there to scrape it away."

"Perhaps I ought not to take you, Lorna," he murmured.

"I'm coming," she replied, gathering her courage together and forcing a faint smile. "You are not taking me. I've got twopence upstairs. Will that be enough to pay for the tobacco?"

"I expect so. I'll owe you a penny; we must go shares. Isn't it wonderful I should just have thought what Daddy wanted? We will get our things on at once."

It was easy to talk of that long, lonely walk in the snow, with the hearth fire crackling within earshot and the warm light filling the house. The children had yet to realize the difference of being actually exposed to the

biting storm, with darkness all round them and wind-driven flakes blinding their eyes.

Unseen they opened the big front door and staggered out, fighting the elements breathlessly.

"I didn't think it would be so cold," Lorna confessed, clutching Jack's arm. "I can feel the snow tumbling into my boots; I seem to slip such a long way down at every step."

"That is only because you are so short," said Jack, cheerily. "It isn't so very deep, really."

He knew in his heart the night was dangerous, for the wind blew the snow into great drifts, and darkness hung over the earth like a pall. Lorna leaned so heavily upon him that he stumbled a good deal and had some difficulty in keeping to the path.

"It doesn't matter," he kept saying, half to himself. "It's for Daddy we are going."

"IT'S FOR DADDY WE ARE GOING."

The words had a marvellous effect upon Lorna's chilled spirits. No sacrifice for Daddy could be too great! So they battled on manfully, their faces cut by the wind and their little figures covered from head to foot in a thick coating of heavy whiteness.

On the verge of exhaustion they reached the village, and a gasp of horror escaped the boy.

"Lorna, the shop is shut!"

She leant against the wet door, thrusting both knuckles in her eyes.

Jack pulled them sharply down. "Don't cry," he said; "there must be some way of getting it. Look," pointing across the road, "at those lights in the Bull and Horn! A man is singing a song; lots of people are laughing. Come, Lorna, they are sure to sell tobacco there!"

"Oh! but I mustn't go into a public-house; mother wouldn't like it," said Lorna, drawing back.

"You can stay in the porch; I'll go and ask. Give me the twopence." A queer little figure came suddenly into the light of the Bull and Horn. At first the proprietor failed to recognise the youthful pilgrim under his weight of snow.

Jack put down the money on the counter, and looked up hopefully.

"Please," he said, "can you give me some tobacco for that? My Daddy has come home from South Africa, and we forgot about his perhaps wanting to smoke. We never thought of it till we saw him looking very sad. My sister is waiting on the doorstep, and she's rather damp, so perhaps you could oblige me with the tobacco quickly."

"Lor'!" murmured the proprietor, "it's the little master from the Manor, and the young lady outside such a night as this! Did anyone ever hear the like?"

A silence fell on the assembly. All eyes were turned to the small, weather-beaten wanderer.

"I should just think I could let you have some tobacco for the Captain!" continued the kindly voice; "the best my house affords, and long may he live to enjoy a pipe of peace!"

The landlord went to his own private drawer, and presented Jack with a goodly sized bundle, which set the boy's heart beating quickly with delight. All the terrors of the storm faded under the soothing influence of success.

Stoutly declining the offer of an escort home, Jack rejoined Lorna, finding her

"'LOR'!' MURMURED THE PROPRIETOR, 'IT'S THE LITTLE MASTER FROM THE MANOR.'"

seated on the doorstep, half asleep, in the snow. It took so much shaking to wake her, and she seemed so tired and numbed, that the long road ahead filled Jack with fresh pangs.

The path home led up-hill—a weary white journey, under starless skies. What matter the cold creeping into their systems; what matter the weariness and the pain, since between them they carried that precious parcel containing the whole love of two fond hearts?

The snow blew up from the ground into their faces. Jack found Lorna very heavy to pull along; it seemed an unending walk! Jack thought surely the morning would come before they reached the familiar old garden.

At last they saw the bright lights of home twinkling in the windows. A carriage stood in the drive; the front door was set open.

"Let us slip in and hide behind the big curtains," whispered Jack. "We don't want anyone to see us like this. I wonder who the visitor can be?" peering curiously into the hall. "Richard is helping him on with his coat—now's our chance!"

Well-skilled in the game of hide-and-seek, the truants reached the shelter of the window-curtains unobserved. A white-haired gentleman in a fur-coat passed out, and Richard fastened the door again.

III.

"Are you ready, Lorna?" said a voice from the passage.

"Yes—come in, Jack."

The boy entered the nursery on tiptoe. Lorna in dry clothing stood before him, warm, smiling, contented in the firelight. "Got over the hot-ache?" he asked, touching her hands.

She nodded reassuringly. "See, I can move my fingers quite well now. What have you done, Jack?"

"I persuaded Richard to take our parcel to Daddy. Richard said he wouldn't at first, the Captain was in the West Wing, and must not be disturbed, but I got round him. The New Year will be here very soon, and we are to listen for the bells. Come downstairs and let us see if we can find Daddy."

Jack had changed into a white sailor suit he wore for parties. He felt sure the surprise would be ready with the New Year.

On their way to the hall they suddenly paused and peeped through the banisters. A thrill of excitement shook Lorna. She pinched Jack's arm violently.

There below stood the Captain, his whole manner changed, his face radiant, his eyes alight with a new joy, and in his hand the packet of tobacco they had risked so much to gain!

"We were right! we were right!" gasped Jack, and started running down the stairs.

"Oh! Daddy," he cried, "we guessed what you wanted, and we're so glad you are happy again!"

The Captain looked at their present, knowing nothing of the journey to the village, and, laughing light-heartedly, thanked them with much warmth and fervour for their kindly thought.

"It was the very thing I needed to cheer me up," he said, with a little twinkle, and, despite his lameness, he tossed Jack on to his shoulders.

"Will you take us to the West Wing now?" they asked, breathlessly.

"Yes, but you must still be very quiet."

As Lorna followed in wondering expectation she pictured the passing of the Old Year. She wished she could have shaken hands with him. It seemed sad he should be obliged to go out like a candle at bedtime, when she fancied perhaps he had a soul. The New Year, for sure, must be something very young and small, something you wanted to kiss and cuddle and make much of!

Captain Hamilton led the way to one of the many spare rooms in the West Wing.

"Look! he said. "This is a New Year's gift to me."

His voice had a strange, sweet note in it, which set the children's pulses beating faster. They stared in speechless surprise at a white berceaunette.

Lorna was the first to peep curiously between the muslin curtains.

"Why, Jack," she whispered, "there's the New Year inside!"

"'WHY, JACK,' SHE WHISPERED, 'THERE'S THE NEW YEAR INSIDE!'"

As she spoke the joyous pealing of bells rang out across the country. "Listen, they are ringing a welcome!" said the sun-bronzed warrior, bending over the cot to kiss the tiny atom of humanity.

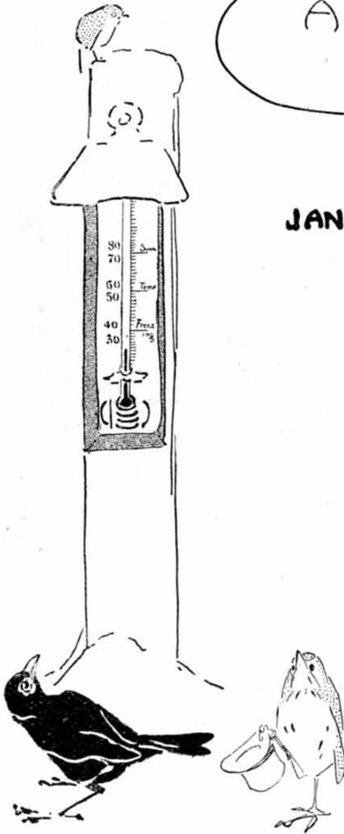
"The bells are chiming for us—for us!" gasped Jack, excitedly, "for we've got the New Year here in our house!"

"And the white-haired gentleman in the fur coat must have been the Old Year going out at the hall-door," replied Lorna, softly.

Captain Hamilton nodded and smiled. He would not for the world have disturbed the pretty idea.

By E. D. Cuming

and J. A. Shepherd.



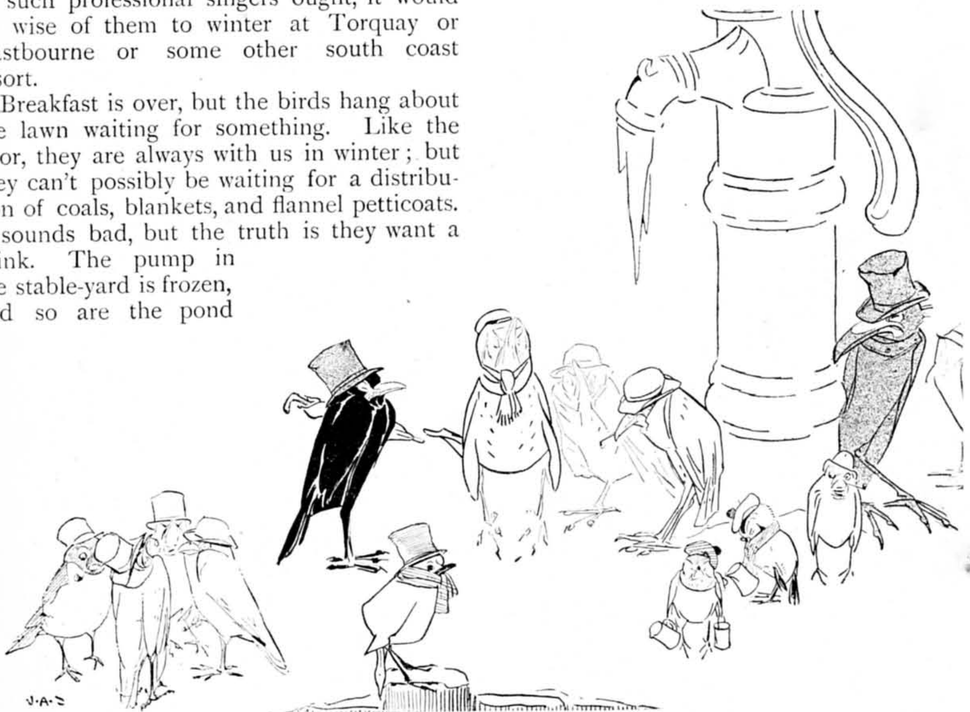
A FOOT of snow on the ground and 10deg. of frost. Wild birds are become tame birds: blackbirds, song-thrushes, starlings, chaffinches, tits, hedge-sparrows, and half-a-dozen more stand outside on the snow-bound lawn, mute applicants for outdoor relief. None of them speak; hungry they are and very cold, as you may see by the way they fluff out their feathers like overcoats, but they will not beg aloud. You might imagine that they were "on the rates" and ashamed of it, or had fear of the police regulations concerning beggars before them, so silent are they. A pied wagtail, smallest of our walking birds, swaggers about restlessly; many of his kind go abroad for the winter, and those that remain with us seem sorry they didn't go, too, in weather like this. Three or four rooks and jackdaws blot the snow in the background, making shallow pretence of being here merely out of curiosity. The robin, self-appointed spokesman of the crowd, is on the window-sill: there is no false shame about the robin, hungry or satisfied, and he taps on the window as impatiently as if he had ordered breakfast over-night and paid for it in advance. He won't trouble you to throw out crumbs for *him*, thanks; if you will just open the window he will come in and help himself from the table.

The curiosity of the rooks and jackdaws becomes uncontrollable when they see the other birds busy with the crumbs, and they stalk resolutely forward with the air of guests who haven't been asked, but feel sure the omission was an oversight. One song-thrush swallows his breakfast in rather more of a hurry than the rest, pounces on a big scrap a rook had his eye on, and flies away with it to the shrubbery, leaving the rook surprised and angry. The conduct of the thrush needs explanation: the fact is he and his wife fell into a mistake which is often made by birds who are guided by weather and not by the almanac. It was so mild up to Christmas that that pair of thrushes concluded winter had somehow slipped out of the calendar

"TAKING CARE OF THEIR THROATS."

altogether, so they nested, and there is the unfortunate thrush shivering on five eggs and wondering how in the snow-bound world she is going to provide for a family ten days hence. Probably the eggs will catch cold in the meantime; or, what is equally likely, the magpies, who love eggs for breakfast and are not particular about their being new-laid, will relieve the anxious parent of all responsibility. Some authorities believe that a proportion of the thrushes go south for the cold weather. If they take care of their throats, as such professional singers ought, it would be wise of them to winter at Torquay or Eastbourne or some other south coast resort.

Breakfast is over, but the birds hang about the lawn waiting for something. Like the poor, they are always with us in winter; but they can't possibly be waiting for a distribution of coals, blankets, and flannel petticoats. It sounds bad, but the truth is they want a drink. The pump in the stable-yard is frozen, and so are the pond and the horse-trough. A pan of water will make you as many friends as there are birds. And having slaked their thirst they disperse to go and sit in the sun as little boys cuddle down over a baker's grating. The wiser among the brethren seek the chimney-stacks. A barn owl one cold January night frightened a respectable family into fits by hooting down the chimney: it was so nice and warm, he thought it was a whiff of summer coming up from the dying



"THE PUMP IN THE STABLE-YARD IS FROZEN."

"A WHIFF OF SUMMER."

ashes below, and welcomed it after the manner of his kind.

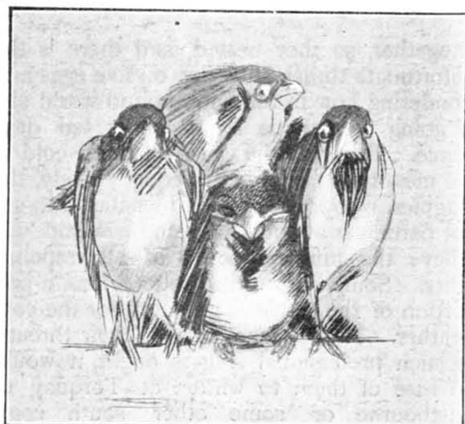
The high bodily temperature of birds goes far to enable them to dispense with the extra clothes we chillier creatures wear in winter. A bird's temperature read by the human standard would suggest that the patient was in a dangerously high fever, for 104deg. to 108deg. is the avine normal — it varies in different species — but they suffer cruelly at night. It is cold work perching alone on one leg, so the birds make up sleeping parties : great tits have been seen hopping one after the other into a favourite bedroom, where they slept all together and kept one another warm. The sparrows go around about sunset and invite their friends to "come and stay the night" in the ivy against the kitchen chimney : —

"COLD WORK!"

On a very cold night it's a very good plan
 To give "dinner and sleep" invitations
To friends, who at bedtime you put, if you can,
 In judiciously picked situations.

With an intimate friend on each side and behind,
 And a fourth on your back, if he'll stop.
It is snug in the middle, you're certain to find
 It so warm that you sleep like a top.

The host's thoughtful arrangement for his own comfort is marred by the circumstance that each of his guests wants an inside place : whence the screaming and scolding you may hear after dark and the spectacle of abusive sparrows tumbling out of the ivy in bunches.



"DINNER AND SLEEP."

Other birds other methods—and manners too, in the social sense.

The sheep, in their well-fleeced persons, advertise "Good Beds," and the starlings, whose welcome labours to relieve the sheep of ticks promotes good feeling between them, are in the habit of roosting among the flock. Sometimes the bird wakes in the morning to find his feet entangled in his host's wool ; then there is unpleasantness : the starling scolds volubly, declaring the sheep caught him on purpose. The sheep looks at him in mild reproach, and other sheep crowd round to see the fun. Moorhens and such shy fowl will seek shelter in a rabbit - hole when the

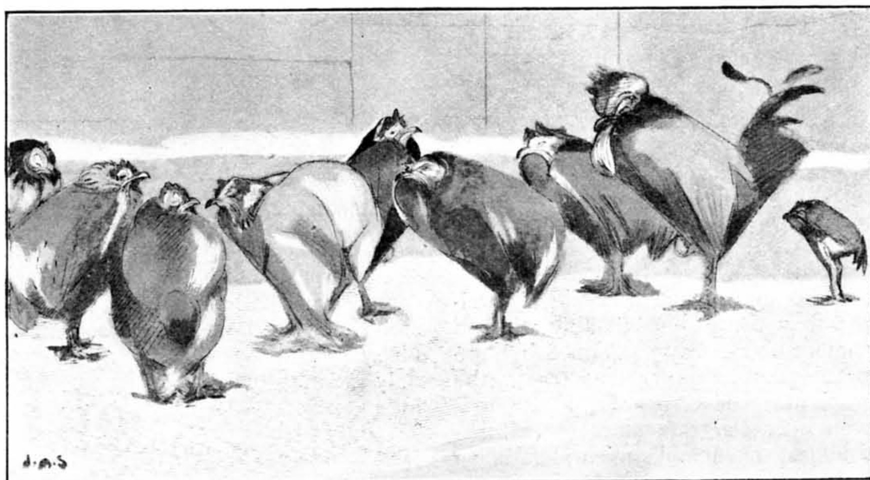
weather is very bad: they don't go right indoors and disturb the family; they step into the hall as it were and sit down quietly, as if they had come with a message and were waiting for the answer.

"THE SHEEP ADVERTISE 'GOOD BEDS.'"

The idle, melancholy hens gather in groups and comment in querulous undertones upon the weather. They are out on strike: give them warm food, and you shall have eggs; no warm food, no eggs. This is the established rule in the egg-producing industry, and must be upheld.

Happy the creatures whom Nature orders to bed for the whole winter. The common bats are sound asleep, hanging from the roof in the darkest corner of the loft or inside some hollow tree. On a fine, mild day the bat may come out for a bit, but there is nothing much for him to do if he does come out in winter, so he does not stay long abroad. The long-eared bat is thorough in his hibernation: he folds his vast ears, nearly as long as himself, back along his sides, gives his heart a rest, and becomes cold and torpid. So profound is his slumber that it takes him about a quarter of an hour to wake up properly.

The lizards, slow-worm, common snake, and viper are all abed underground. The snake and viper must find it hard to get to sleep as they can't shut their eyes, having no movable eyelids. That is where the slow-worm has the pull over them: he is more nearly related to the lizard family, and ability to shut his eyes and wink betrays the fact that he is highly connected, quite apart from his elementary limbs. The frogs are comfortably asleep in the mud at the bottom of the horse-pond, indifferent to the cold; the robust frog can withstand the most Arctic weather; he makes nothing of being frozen stiff for a few days; he thaws out again and smiles. Yes! hibernation has advantages:—



"EGGS IS HOFF."

You solve the weighty secret of avoiding winter ills,
The flights to the Riviera, the colds in chest and head,
The chilblains, bursting water-pipes, the waits, and Christmas bills,
By getting fat in autumn and just stepping into bed!

"MR. AND MRS. BROWN-RAT AND FAMILY COME TO TOWN."

The rat doesn't go to bed in winter; he is a highly civilized creature, the rat, and when the cold weather comes on shuts up his pleasant country-house in ditch, bank, or hedgerow to take up quarters in his town-

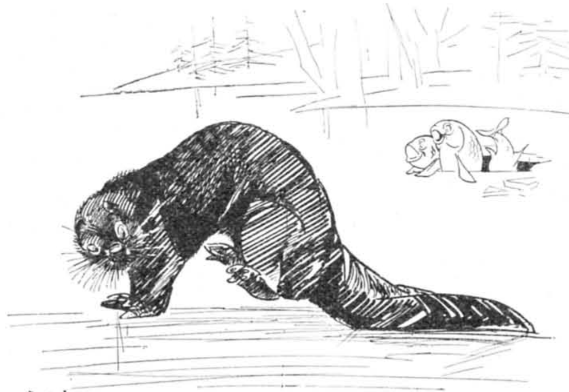
"NO MUSIC TO-DAY."

house. Sewer and cellar are not ideal dwellings, but they compare favourably with an establishment which may be flooded by rain-water or blocked by snow; then, again, the near propinquity of corn-stack, larder, and store-room offers large facilities for earning that dishonest livelihood which has such charms for the rat. He takes pride in his profession as a thief, as witness the ingenuity with which he uses his tail to get the contents of an oil-bottle. The seasons make no difference to the mouse: winter and summer alike he pursues his joyous way, marrying and giving in marriage and rearing at your expense large families of children which you don't want.

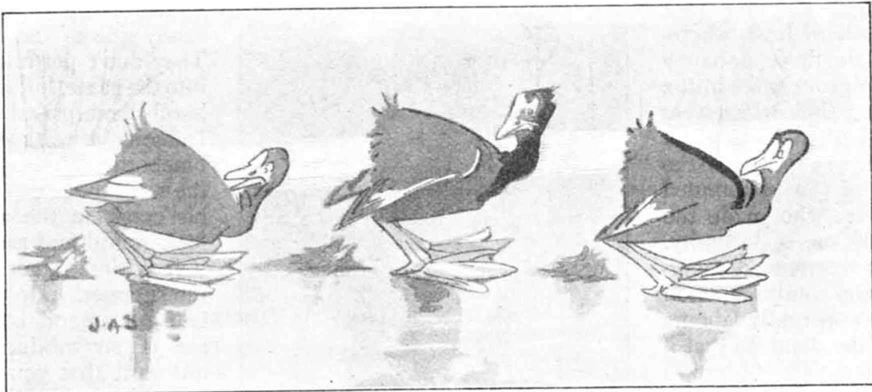
There is little music in these days: the robin in mild weather perches on some naked bough, depresses his tail, and pipes up mournfully. The song of the robin is the song of the sorrowful, but there is no reason to suppose this bird is more harassed with care than his neighbours; on the contrary, pugnacity and impudence combined rarely suffer from want, and the robin has more than his share of both. The hedge-sparrow, who, by the way, is not a sparrow at all, sings also on a fine day, but feebly; the blackbird gets out his music on occasion, and the thrush practises now and again; so does the skylark towards the end of the month; but wind and rain, or a fall of snow, reminds them that the concert season is a long way off yet, and they stop singing with an abruptness that suggests they were only waiting for an excuse. The only bird who really sings in earnest at this season is the song-thrush's cousin, the missel-thrush: his spirits rise with the wind; when other birds, so to speak, are hurriedly put-

"THE MISSEL-THRUSH'S TURN."

ting up their umbrellas and winding mufflers round their throats and running under cover, the missel-thrush takes his stand on some high and exposed bough and sings with all the power of his voice, the howling wind as his accompaniment; no wonder they call him the storm-cock.



"THE OTTER IN TROUBLE."



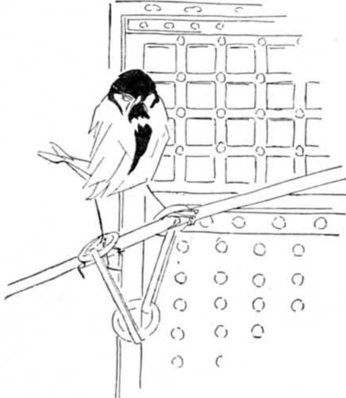
"THEY LEFT THEIR TAILS BEHIND THEM."

The winter for me! On the top of a tree,
While the north wind is playing at driving the sleet
So briskly and free. I should just like to see
The north wind who'd manage to whistle down me!
A fig for the spring! For a delicate thing
Like the blackcap or nightingale sunshine is meet;
But the bird who *can* sing and make echoes to ring,
Dons sou'-wester and oilskins and now has his fling.

He is the only professional vocalist who does not mind bad weather; all the others are very particular about the conditions under which they sing.

Incautious birds and beasts get into dangerous scrapes in severe weather. The snipe affecting marshy ground wakes to find himself frozen to the earth; a tumbler pigeon who perched on a stone rick-post discovered quite a number of new and original tumbles before he was released from the ice which his warm feet had melted and which froze again while he stood there. Sparrows and other small birds sitting still too long on iron gates, stones, or lumps of snow are trapped in the same way. An otter fishing one very cold day from the edge of the ice on the Irfon, in Wales, grew so absorbed in his sport, or in hopes of it, he never noticed that his tail was frozen fast to the ice—a misfortune which wrought that sportsman's undoing at the hands of a passing labourer. You would think that the coot could keep his apology for a tail out of such difficulties; but a flock of some two hundred once sat thinking on the ice, regardless of possible chilblains, till their tails froze to it, and when frightened into getting up every bird left his tail behind him. Less common is the curious fate which once cost numerous wood-pigeons their lives: they went to bed wet—a rash thing for anybody to do—and during

"WHAT A FOOT FOR A CHILBLAIN!"



"THE FELON TIT."

the night the rain gave way to hard frost, whereby when those unhappy wood-pigeons woke in the morning their wings were frozen over their tails, and they fell in a shower on the head of an astounded passer-by, who made the most of the opportunity. The inexperienced moorhen who ventures upon the ice apparently labours under the delusion that if he seek with haste he will find open water; he finds reason to regret that he never learned to skate. But in much worse case is the misguided heron who alights on smooth black ice under the impression that it is water; he offers an object-lesson in the unwisdom of trying to slide on stilts.

"I'M NOT THE BLUEBOTTLE I WAS."

The sprightly great tit joins the other birds on the lawn at breakfast-time, but finds nothing to please him on the *menu* unless there be a scrap of fat. What he loves above all things is a bit of suet hung by a string to a bough, in which situation he is almost the only bird who can get at it. It speaks volumes for his digestion that he should be able to dine standing upside down. The carrion crow is the only bird who is likely to dispute the great tit's right to his meal. You may see him sometimes perch on a convenient branch puzzling over the problem.

"Look," says he to the tit, "at that beautiful bit
Of fat, where the humans have set it.
It is safe from the cat, but the trouble is that
I cannot make out how to get it."

Says the tit to the crow: "Why, there's nothing I know
So easy as getting at suet.
You just perch upside down, like a gymnast or clown;
The veriest nestling can do it."

Gymnastics are not in the crow's line at all, but he has brains: he is the cleverest of a clever family. Give him time and he will discover how to pull up the suet by the string with beak and claw. The engaging manners of the great tit mask a disreputable character. If the King's writ ran in the bird-world he would be indicted and hanged as murderer and cannibal. He kills smaller birds than himself in order to eat their brains; the wren is a frequent victim.

Gnats and other insects on fine days come out of the crannies where they have been hiding to play on the sunny side of the hedge. They don't put much life into the game, but one can hardly be surprised at that. Indoors, a weak-minded bluebottle, deceived by the warmth, comes out of his crack in the wall to look round and ascertain if it is time to get up for the summer. He is not half awake, and his bearing is so subdued and awkward that you hardly recognise in him the loud and joyful insect of July. He totters in his walk; his wings are dusty, and one is bent as if he had gone to sleep with it doubled under him. He blunders round the room and settles

"THE BLUEBOTTLE IN SUMMER."

on your hand; rubs his head doubtfully; and, strolling off your knuckles, is surprised to find that he can't walk on air. After a while it dawns upon him that he must have made a mistake in getting up so soon, and he staggers across the carpet, wondering if he can possibly find his way back to bed. The spider appears, too, and practises throwing his web, but he seems rheumatic and uncertain of aim.

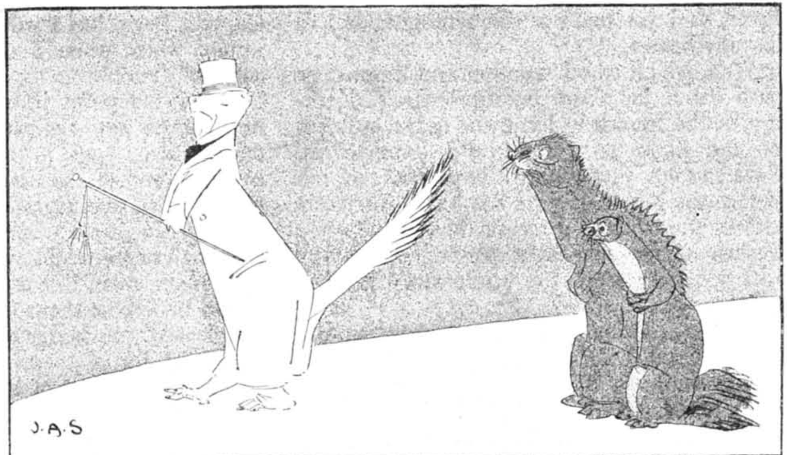
"WELL BROUGHT UP."

The lobster is in season now. The lobster's attractions on the table are great, but it is in its domestic capacity, as father, mother, or child, that the lobster best repays study. No crustacean is more carefully brought up by its mother than the young lobster, who is kept at home until he reaches months of discretion, under the eye of an affectionate parent. The angry eye of the paternal lobster, set as it is on a stalk, must, by the way, be an awful thing for his erring son to face; but these be matters pertaining to the future, as are the private affairs of the prawn, now also in season, and everywhere held in esteem—particularly in curry.

"TEN DEGREES OF FROST."

The fox ought to enjoy severe weather. Can't you imagine him scanning the "Hunting Appointments" in *The Field* and chuckling over the fact that this frost is going to cancel them all as it did last week? Hounds are in kennel and won't come out, except for road exercise; and if he likes he can go and drive the whole pack to frenzy by grinning at them through the bars. Then, too, he can spend the night out, as his habit is, without finding his front door "stopped" against him in the interests of hunting, when he comes home in the small hours. It is maddening to find the door locked at four in the morning.

The stoat is alert and active in winter; famine among birds means high carnival for him, and he and his cousins the marten weasel and polecat enjoy themselves and grow fat. The stoat must regard his cousins as poor relations: he changes his summer coat for a white one in winter, retaining only the black tip to his tail, while they wear the same clothes all the year round. It is not worth the stoat's while to make the change in the comparatively mild winter of the south of England, so he doesn't generally go to the expense; in the north he does it as a matter of course, even as do the mountain hare and the ptarmigan.



"BEAU STOAT."

The House Under the Sea.

BY MAX PEMBERTON.

CHAPTER V.

STRANGE SIGHTS ASHORE, AND WHAT WE SAW OF THEM.

OW, when Seth Barker cried out that a ship was ashore on the dangerous reefs to the northward of the main island, it is not necessary to tell you what we, a crew of British seamen, were called upon to do. The words were scarcely spoken before I had given the order, "Stand by the boats," and sent every man to his station. Excited the hands were, that I will not deny; excited and willing enough to tell you about it if you'd asked them; but no man among them opened his lips, and while they stood there, anxious and ready, I had my glass to my eye and tried to make out the steamer and what had befallen her. Nor was Mister Jacob behind me, but he and Peter Bligh at my side, we soon knew the truth and made up our minds about it.

"There's a ship on the reef, sure enough, and by the cut of her she's the *Santa Cruz* we spoke this afternoon," said Mister Jacob, and added, "a dangerous shore, sir, a dangerous shore."

"But full of kind-hearted people that fire their guns at poor shipwrecked mariners," put in Peter Bligh. I wouldn't believe him at first, but there was no denying it, awful truth that it was, when a few minutes had passed.

"Good heavens," cried I, "it can't be so, Peter, and yet that's a rifle's tongue, or I've lost my hearing."

Well, we all stood together and listened as men listen for some poor creature's death-cry, or the sounds which come in the stillness of the night to affright and unnerve us. Sure enough, you couldn't have counted ten before the report of guns was heard distinctly above the distant roar of breakers, while flashes of crimson light playing about the reef seemed to tell the whole story without another word from me.

"Those demons ashore are shooting the crew," cried I; "did man ever hear such bloody work? I'll have a reckoning for this, if it takes me twenty years. Lower away the boats, lads; I'm going to dance to that music."

They swung the two longboats out on the davits, and the port crew were in their seats, when Mister Jacob touched my arm and questioned my order, a thing I haven't known him do twice in ten years.

"Beg pardon, sir," said he, "but there's no boat that will help the *Santa Cruz* to-night."

"And why, Mister Jacob—why do you say that?"

"Because she's gone where neither you nor me wish to go yet awhile, Mister Begg."

I stood as though he had shot me, and clapping my glass to my eye I took another look towards the northern reef and the ship that was stranded there. But no ship was to be seen. She had disappeared in a twinkling; the sea had swallowed her up. And over the water, as an eerie wail, lasting and doleful, came the death-cries of those who perished with her.

"God rest their poor souls and punish them that sent them there," said Peter Bligh; but Mister Jacob was still full of his prudent talk.

"We're four miles out, and the moon will be gone in ten minutes, sir. You couldn't make the reef if you tried, and if you could, you'd find none living. This sea would best the biggest boat that ever a ship carried—it will blow harder in an hour, and what then? We've friends of our own to serve, and the door that Providence opens we've no right to shut. I say nothing against humanity, Captain Begg, but I wouldn't hunt the dead in the water when I could help the living ashore."

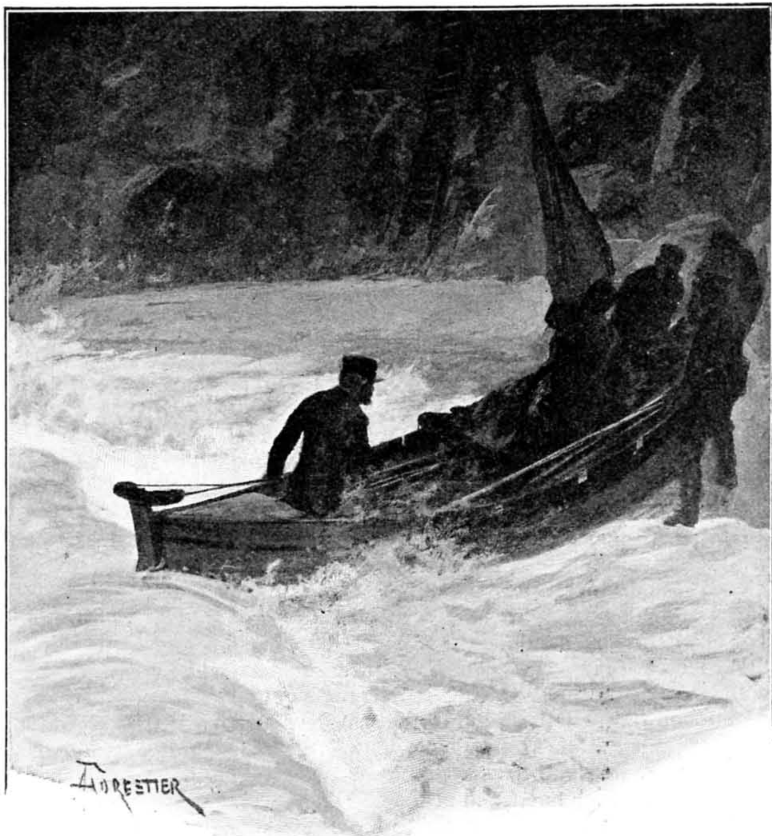
I saw his point in a moment, and had nothing to say against it. No small boat could have lived in the reefs about the northern end of the island with the sea that was running that night. If the demons who fired down upon the poor fellows of the *Santa Cruz* were still watching like vultures for human meat, like as not the main island would be free of them for us to go ashore as we pleased. A better opportunity might not be found for a score of months. I never blame myself, least of all now, when I know Ruth Bellenden's story, that I listened to the clear-headed wisdom of Anthony Jacob.

"You're right, as always, Mister Jacob.

I've no call to take these good fellows on a fool's errand. And it's going to blow hard, as you say. We'll take in one of the boats, and those that are for the shore will make haste to get aboard the other."

This I said to him, but to the men I put it in a few seaman's words.

"Lads," I said, "no boat that Southampton ever built could swim in yonder tide where it makes between the reefs. We'd like to help shipmates, but the chance is not ours. There's another little shipmate ashore there that needs our help pretty badly. I'm going in for her sake, and there's not a man of you that will not do his duty by the ship when I'm gone. Aye, you'll stand by Mister Jacob, lads, I may tell him that?"



"I HAVE ALWAYS ACCOUNTED IT MORE GOOD LUCK THAN GOOD SEAMANSHIP THAT BROUGHT US TO THE COVE AT LAST."

They gave me a rousing cheer, which was a pretty foolish thing to have done, and it took all my voice to silence them. Lucky for us, there was a cloud over the moon now, and darkness like a black vapour upon the sea. Not a lamp burned on the *Southern Cross;* not a cabin window but wasn't curtained. What glow came from her funnel was not more than a hazy red light over the waters; and when five of us (for we took Harry Doe to stand by ashore) stepped into the longboat, and set her head due west for the land, we lost the steamer in five minutes—and, God knows, we were never to see her again on the high seas or off.

Now, I have said that the wind had begun to blow fresh since sunset, and at two bells in the first watch, the time we left the ship, the sea ran high, and it was not over safe even in the longboat to be cruising for a shore we knew so little about. I have always accounted it more good luck than good seamanship that brought us to the cove at last, and set us all, wet but cheerful, on the dry, white sand about the ladder's foot. There was shelter in the bay both for man and ship, and when we'd dragged the longboat up on the beach we gave Harry Doe his orders and left him to his duty.

"If there's danger fire your gun," said I—"once, if you wish to call us; twice, if you think we should stand off. But you won't do that unless things are at the worst, and I'm hoping for the best, when you won't do it at all."

He answered, "Aye, aye," in a whisper which was like a bear's growl; and we four, Peter Bligh, Seth Barker, and the lad Dolly, besides myself, climbed the ladder like cats and stood at the cliff's head. To say that our hearts were in our mouths would not be strict truth, for I never feared any man.

beast, or demon yet; and I wasn't going to begin that night—nor were the others more ready, that I will answer for them. But remembering the things we had seen on the reef, the words which Ruth Bellenden had spoken to me, and that which happened to the lad and myself last time we came ashore; remembering this, it's not to be wondered at that our hearts beat a bit quicker, and that our hands went now and again to the pistols we carried. For, just think of it—there we were at nine o'clock of a dark night, in a thick wood, with the trees making ghosts about us, and the path as narrow as a ship's plank, and no knowledge of who walked the woods with us nor any true reckoning of what was to follow down below. What man wouldn't have held his tongue at such a time, or argued with himself that it might end badly, and he never see the sun again? Not Jasper Begg, as I bear witness. Not he, by all that's truthful.

Now, I put myself at the head of our fellows and, the better to find the track, I went down on my hands and my knees like a four-footed thing, and signalling to those behind with a bosun's whistle, I led them well enough through the wood to the wicker-basket bridge; and would have gone on from there straight down to the house but for something which happened at the clearing of the thicket, just as I stood up to bid the men go over. Startling it was, to be sure, and enough to give any man a turn; nor did I wonder that Peter Bligh should have cried out as he did when first he clapped eyes upon it.

"Holy Mother of Music," says he, "'tis the angels singing, or I'm a dirty nigger!"

"Hold your tongue," says I, in a whisper; "are you afraid of two young women, then?"

"Of three," says he, "which being odd is lucky. When my poor father——"

"Confound your father," says I; "hold your tongue and wait."

He lay low at this, and the rest of us gaped, open-mouthed, as though we were staring at a fairy-book. There, before us, coming down from the black rocks above, leaping from step to step of the stone, were three young girls; but, aye, the queerest sort that ever tantalized a man with their prettiness. You may well ask, the night being inky dark, how we managed to see them at all; but let me tell you that they carried good resin torches in their hands, and the wild light, all gold and crimson against the rocks, shone as bright as a ship's flare and as far. Never have I seen such a thing, I say, and never shall. There were the three of them, like young deer on a bleak hillside, singing and laughing and leaping down, and, what's more, speaking to each other in an odd lingo, with here a word of French and there a word of German, and after that something that was beyond me and foreign to my understanding.

"God be good to me—saw man ever such a sight? And the dress of 'em, the dress of 'em," whispers Peter Bligh. But I clapped my hand upon his mouth and stopped him that time.

"The dress is all right," said I; "what I'm wondering is how three of that sort came in such a place as this. And well born too, well born, or I don't know the meaning of the term!"

They were pretty creatures, and their dress was like the rest of them. Short skirts all looped and frilled with flowers, toggery above cut out of some white skin, with caps to match and their hair falling in big romping curls about it—they were for all the world like the dancers you see at a stage play and just as active. And to hear their voices, sweet and musical, floating from ravine to ravine like a choir singing in a place of echoes, aye, that was something you might not soon forget. But what they were doing in such a place, or how they came there, the Lord above alone knew, and not a plain seaman like Jasper Begg.

"What are they saying, Peter—what do you make of it?" I asked him, under my breath.

"'Tis the French lingo," says he, foolish-like, "and if it's not that, 'tis the German—leastwise no Christian man that I know of could distinguish between 'em."

"Peter," says I, "that's what you learn in the asylum. 'Tis no more the French lingo than your own. Why, hearken to it."

Well, he listened, and soon we heard a pretty echo from the valley, for they'd gone down toward the gardens now; and one word repeated often had as nice a touch of music as I remember hearing. It was just this: "Rosamunda—munda—munda," and you can't think how fresh the young voice sounded in that lonely place, or what a chill it gave a man when he remembered the demons over at the reef and what they'd done to the crew of the *Santa Cruz*. As far as that goes, I do believe to this day that our fellows believed they'd seen nothing more nor less than an apparition out of the black rocks above them,

"THEY WERE FOR ALL THE WORLD LIKE THE DANCERS YOU SEE AT A STAGE PLAY."

lads, right down ashamed of you!"

They plucked up at this, and Peter he made haste to excuse himself.

"If they was Christian men with knives in their hands," says he, "I'd put up a bit of a prayer, and trust to the Lord to shoot 'em; but them three's agen all reason, at this time of night in such a lone place."

"Go on with you, Peter," chimes in Dolly Venn; "three ripping little girls, and don't I wish they'd ask me in to tea! Why, look, they're down by the house now, and somebody with them, though whether it's a man or a woman I really don't pretend to say."

"I'm derned if I don't think it's a lion," says Seth Barker, asking my pardon for the liberty.

We all stood still at this, for we were on the hillside just above the house now, and down on the fair grass-way below us we espied the three little girls with their torches still burning, and they as deep in talk with a stranger as a man might have been with his own mother. A more remarkable human being than the one these little ladies had happened upon I don't look to see again the world around. Man or lion—God forgive me if I know what to call him. He'd hair enough, shaggy hair curling about his shoulders, to have stuffed a feather bed. His dress was half man's, half woman's. He'd a tattered petticoat about his legs, a seaman's blouse for his body, and a lady's shawl above that upon his shoulders—his legs were bare as a barked tree, and what boots he had should have been in the rag-shop. What was more wonderful still was to see the manner of the young ladies towards him—for I shall always call them that—they petted him and fondled him, and one put a mock crown of roses on his head. Then, with that pretty song of theirs, "Rosamunda—munda—munda," they

and it wasn't until I'd spoken to them in good honest English that I got them to go on again.

"Flesh or spirit, that's not a lot to whiten a man's gills," cried I; "why, thunder, Peter Bligh, you're big enough to put 'em all in your pocket, and soft enough they'd lie when they got there. Do you mean to tell me," said I, "that four hale and strong men are to be frightened out of their wits by three pretty girls?—and you a religious man, too, Peter! Why, I'm ashamed of you, that I am,

all ran off together toward the northern shore and left us in the darkness, as surprised a party of men as you'll readily meet with.

"Well," says Peter Bligh, and he was the first among us to speak, "yon's a nice shipmate to speak on a quiet road. So help me thunder, but I wouldn't pass round the tin for him in a beauty show, no, not much! Did ye see the hair of him, captain—did ye see the hair?"

"And the girls kissing him as though he were Apollo," cries Dolly Venn, who, I don't doubt, would have done the kissing willingly himself. But I hushed their talk, and without more ado I went straight down to Ruth Bellenden's house. All the strange things we'd seen and heard, the uncanny sights, the firing on the reef, the wild man ashore, the little girls from the hills—all these, I say, began to tell me my mistress's story as a written book might never have done. "She's need of me," I said, "sore need; and by God's help I'll bring her out of this place before to-morrow's sun."

For how should I know what long days must pass before I was to leave Ken's Island again?

CHAPTER VI.

JASPER BEGG MEETS HIS OLD MISTRESS, AND IS WATCHED.

I HAD made up my mind to take every due precaution before going up to the house where my mistress lived; and with caution in my head I left Seth Barker, the carpenter, a little way up on the hill path, while I set Peter Bligh at the gate of the garden, and posted Dolly Venn round at the northern side, where the men who had looted the *Santa Cruz* might be looked for with any others that I had no knowledge of. When this was done, and they understood that they were to fire a gun if the need arose, I opened the wicket-gate and crept up the grass path for all the world like an ill-visaged fellow who had no true business there. Not a sound could I hear in all that place; not a dog barked, nor a human voice spoke. Even the wind came fitful and gusty about the sheltered house, and so quiet was it between the squalls that my own footfall almost could scare me. For, you see, a whisper spoken at the wrong time might have undone all—a clumsy step have cost us more than a man cared to think. We were but four, and, for all I knew, there might have been four hundred on Ken's Island. You don't wonder, therefore, if I asked myself at times whether to-morrow's sun would find us living, or what our misfortune might spell for one I had come so far to serve.

It was very dark in the garden, as I have told you, but two of the windows in the house were lighted up and two golden rings of light thrown out upon the soft grass I trod. I stood a long time debating which window to knock upon—for it was a fearful lottery, I must say—and when I'd turned it over and over in my head, and now made out that it was this window and now plumped for the other, I took up a pebble at last and cast it upon the pane nearest to the door—for that seemed to me the more likely room, and I'd nothing else but common sense to guide me. You may judge of my feelings when no notice was taken of my signal except by a dog, which began to yap like a pup and to make such a scare that I thought every window and every door must be opened that very instant and as many men out on top of me. I said, surely, that it was all up with Jasper Begg that journey; but odd to to tell it, the dog gave over at last, and no one showed himself, neither was there any whistle from my company; and I was just making ready to throw another stone when the second light was turned out all of a sudden and, the long window being opened, Ruth Bellenden—or, to be more correct, Madame Czerny—herself came out into the garden, and stood looking round about as though she knew that I was there and had been waiting for me. When at last she saw me she didn't speak or make any sign, but going about to the house again she held the window open for me, and I passed into the dark room with her, and there held her hand in mine, I do believe as though I would never let it go again.

"Jasper," says she, in a whisper that was pretty as the south wind in springtime; "Jasper Begg! How could it be anyone else? Oh, we must light a candle, Jasper Begg," says she, "or we shall lose ourselves in the dark."

"Miss Ruth," said I, "light or dark, I'm here according to my orders, and the ship's here, and as I said to you before the yellow boy to-day, we're waiting for our mistress to go aboard."

She had her back to me when I said this, and was busy enough drawing the curtains and lighting the lamp again. The light showed me that she wore a rich black gown with fluffy stuff over it, and a bit of a sparkle in the way of diamonds like a band across her parted hair. The face was deceiving,

now lighted up by one of the old smiles, now hard set as one who had suffered much for her years. But there was nothing over-womanish in her talk, and we two thrashed it out there just the same as if Ken's Island wasn't full of demons, and the lives of me and my men worth what a spin of the coin might buy them at.

"You mustn't call me Miss Ruth," says she, when she turned from the lamp and tidied up her writing on the table; "of course you know that, Jasper Begg. And you at my wedding, too—is it really not more than twelve long months ago?"

A sigh passed her lips, such a sigh as tells a woman's story better than all the books; and in that moment the new look came upon her face, the look I had seen when the yellow man changed words with her in the morning.

"It's thirteen months three weeks since you went up with Mr. Czerny to the cathedral at Nice," was my next word; "the days go slow on this out-of-the-way shore, I'll be bound—until our friends come, Miss Ruth, until we're sure they haven't forgotten us."

I had a meaning in this, and be sure she took it. Not that she answered me out and away as I wished; for she put on the pretty air of wife and mistress who wouldn't tell any of her husband's secrets.

"Why, yes," she said, very slowly, "the days are long and the nights longer, and, of course, my husband is much away from here."

I nodded my head and drew the chair she'd offered me close to the table. On her part she was looking at the clock as though she wished that the hands of it might stand still. I read it that we hadn't much time to lose, and what we had was no time for fair words.

"Miss Ruth," says I, without more parley, "from what I've seen to-night I don't doubt that any honest man would be glad to get as far as he could from Ken's Island and its people. You'll pardon what a plain seaman is going to say, and count him none the less a friend for saying it. When you left money in the banker's hands to commission a ship and bring her to this port, your words to me were, 'I may have need of you.' Miss Ruth, you have need of me—I should be no more than a fool if I couldn't see that. You have sore need of me, lady, and if you won't say so for yourself, I take leave to say it for you."

She raised a hand as though she would not hear me—but I was on a clear course now, and I held to it in spite of her.

"Yes," I said, "you've need of your friends to-night, and it's a lucky wind that brought them to this shore. What has passed, Miss Ruth, in these months you speak of, it's not for me to ask or inquire. I have eyes in my head, and they show me what I would give my fortune not to see. You're unhappy here—you're not treated well."

"HER LITTLE HEAD WENT DOWN ON THE TABLE AND SHE BEGAN TO SOB."

I waited for her to speak; but not a word would she say. White she was, as a flower from her own garden, and once or twice she shivered as though the cold had struck her. I was just going on to speak again, when what should happen but that her little head went down on the table and she began to sob as though her heart would break.

"Oh, Jasper Begg, how I have suffered, how I have suffered!" said she, between her sobs; and what could I do, what could any man do who would kiss the ground a woman walks upon but has no right or title to? Why, hold his tongue, of course, though it hurt him cruelly to do any such thing.

"Miss Ruth," said I, very foolish, "please don't think of that now. I'm here to help you, the ship's here, we're waiting for you to go aboard."

She dried her tears and tried to look up at me with a smile.

"Oh, I'm just a child, just a child again, Jasper," cries she; "a year ago I thought myself a woman, but that's all passed. And I shall never go away on your ship, Jasper Begg—never, never. I shall die on Ken's Island as so many have died."

I stood up at this and pointed to the clock.

"Little friend," I said, "if you'll put a cloak about your shoulders and leave this house with me I'll have you safe aboard the *Southern Cross* in twenty minutes by that clock, as God is my witness."

It was no boast—for that I could have done as any seaman knows; and you may well imagine that I stood as a man struck dumb when I had her answer.

"Why, yes," she said, "you could put me on board your boat, Captain Jasper, if every step I took was not watched; if every crag had not its sentinel; if there were not a hundred to say 'Go back—go back to your home.' Oh, how can you know, how can you guess the things I fear and dread in this awful place? You, perhaps, because the ship is waiting will be allowed to return to it again. But I, never, never again to my life's end."

A terrible look crossed her face as she said this, and with one swift movement she opened a drawer in the locker where she did her writing, and took from it a little book which she thrust, like a packet, into my hands.

"Read," she said, with startling earnestness, "read that when you are at sea again. I never thought that any other eyes but mine would see it; but you, Jasper, you shall read it. It will tell you what I myself could never tell. Read it as you sail away from here, and then say how you will come back to help the woman who needs your help so sorely."

I thrust the book into my pocket, but was not to be put off like that.

"Read it I will, every line," said I; "but you don't suppose that Jasper Begg is about to sail away and leave you in this plight, Miss Ruth! He'd be a pretty sort of Englishman to do that, and it's not in his constitution, I do assure you!"

She laughed at my earnestness, but recollecting how we stood and what had befallen since sunset, she would hear no more of it.

"You don't understand; oh, you don't understand!" she cried, very earnestly. "There's danger here, danger even now while you and I are talking. Those who have gone out to the wreck will be coming home again; they must not find you in this house, Jasper Begg, must not, must not! For my sake, go as you came. Tell all that thought of me how I thank them. Some day, perhaps, you will learn how to help me. I am grateful to you, Jasper—you know that I am grateful."

She held out both her hands to me, and they lay in mine, and I was trying to speak a real word from my heart to her when there came a low, shrill whistle from the garden-gate, and I knew that Peter Bligh had seen something and was calling me.

"Miss Ruth," says I, "that's old Peter Bligh and his danger signal. There'll be someone about, or he wouldn't do it."

Well, she never said a word. I saw a shadow cross her face, and believed she was about to faint. Nor will anyone be surprised at that when I say that the door behind us had been opened while we talked, and there stood Kess Denton, the yellow man, watching us like a hound that would bite presently.

CHAPTER VII.

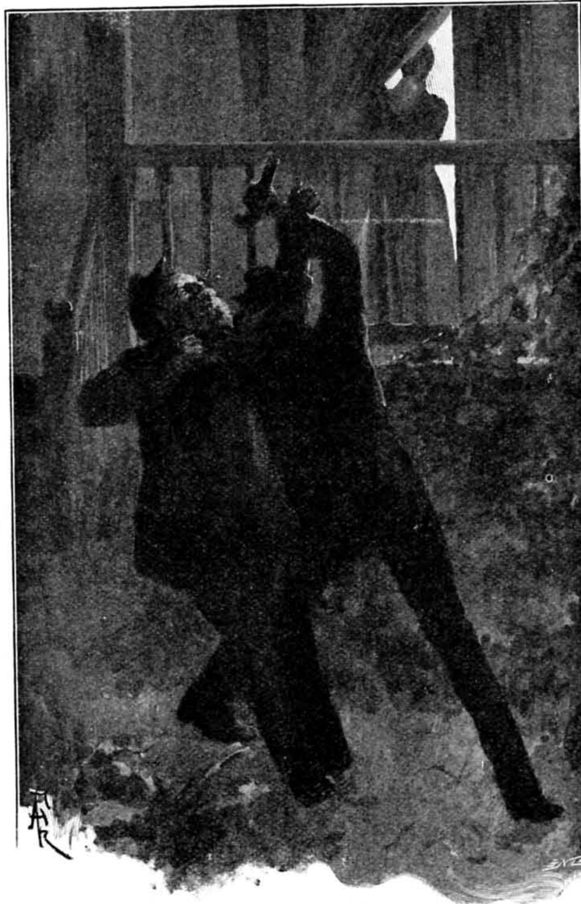
IN WHICH HELP COMES FROM THE LAST QUARTER WE HAD EXPECTED IT.

Now, no sooner did I see the yellow man than my mind was fully made up, and I determined what harbour to make for. "If you're there, my lad," said I to myself, "the others are not far behind you. You've seen me come in, and it's your intention to prevent me going out again. To be caught like a rat in a trap won't serve Ruth Bellenden, and it won't serve me. I'm for the open, Kess Denton," said I, "and no long while about it, either."

This I said, but I didn't mean to play the startled kitten, and without any token of surprise or such-like I turned round to Miss Ruth and gave her "good evening."

"I'm sorry you're not coming aboard, Madame Czerny," says I; "we weigh in an hour, and it will be a month or more before I call in again. But you sha'n't wait long for the news if I can help it; and as for your brother, Mr. Kenrick, I'll trust to hear from him at 'Frisco and to tell you what he thinks on my return. Good-night, madam," said I, "and the best of health and prosperity."

I held out my hand, and she shook it like one who didn't know what she was doing. The yellow man came a step nearer and said, "Halloa, my hearty." I nodded my head to him and he put his hand on my shoulder. Poor fool, he thought I was a child, perhaps, and to be treated as one; but I'd learnt a thing or two about taking care of myself in Japan, and you couldn't have counted two before I had his arm twisted under mine, and he gave a yell they must have heard up in the hills.



"I WRENCHED THE PISTOL FROM HIS GRASP."

"If you cry out like that you'll ruin your beautiful voice," said I; "hasn't anyone ever asked you to sing hymns in a choir? Well, I'm surprised. Good-night, my boy; I shall be coming back for your picture before many days have passed."

Upon this I stepped toward the door, and thought that I had done with him; but no sooner was I out in the garden than something went singing by my ear, and upon that a second dose with two reports that echoed in the hills like rolling thunder. No written music was necessary to tell me what sort of a tune that was, and I swung round on my heel and gripped the man by the throat almost before the echoes of the shot had died away.

"Kess Denton," said I, "if you will have it, you shall!" and with that I wrenched the pistol from his grasp and struck him a blow over the head that sent him down without a word.

"One," said I, to myself, "one that helped to make little Ruth Bellenden suffer"; and with that I set off running and never looked to the right of me or to the left until I saw Peter Bligh at the gate and heard his honest voice.

"Is it you—is it you yourself, Mr. Begg? Thank God for that!" cries he, and it was no longer in a whisper; "there's men in the hills, and Seth Barker whistling fit to crack his lips. Is the young lady coming aboard, sir? No?—well I'm not surprised neither, though this shore do seem a queerish sort of place——"

I cut him short, and Dolly Venn running round from his place in the garden I asked him for his news. The thing now was to find a road to the sea. What could be done for Ruth Bellenden that night was over and passed. Our chance lay on the deck of the *Southern Cross*, and after that at 'Frisco.

"What have you seen, Dolly Venn? Be

quick, lad, for we can't linger," was my question to him so soon as he was within hail, and for his answer he pointed to the trees which bordered the garden on the eastward side.

"The wood is full of armed men, sir. Two of them nearly trod upon me while I was lying there. They carry rifles, and seem to be Germans—I couldn't be sure of that, sir."

"Germans or chimpanzees, we're going by them this night. Where's Seth Barker—why doesn't he come down? Does he think we can pass by the hill-road?—the wooden block! Call him, one of you."

They were about to do this when Seth Barker himself came panting down the hill-path, and, what was more remarkable, he carried an uncouth sort of bludgeon in his hand. I could see he'd had a bit of a rough and tumble on the way, but that wasn't the time for particulars.

"Come aboard, sir," says he, breathing heavy; "the gangway's blocked, but I give one of 'em a bit of a knock with his own shillelagh, and that's all right."

"Is there any more up there?" I asked, quickly.

"May be a dozen, may be more. They're up on the heights looking for you to go up, captain."

"Aye," said I, "pleasant company, no doubt. Well, we must strike eastward somehow, lads, and the sooner the better. We'll hold to the valley a bit and see where that leads us. Do you, Seth Barker, keep that bit of a shillelagh ready, and, if anyone asks you a question, don't you wait to answer it."

Now, I had resolved to try and get down to the sea by the valley road and, once upon the shore, to signal Harry Doe, if possible; and, if not him, then the ship herself as a last resource. Any road seemed to me better than this trap of a house with armed men all about it and a pistol bullet ready for any stranger that lingered. "Aboard the ship," said I, "we'll show them a clean pair of heels to 'Frisco and, after that, ask the American Government what it can do for Ruth Bellenden and for her husband." We were four against a hundred, perhaps, and desperate men against us. If we got out of the scrape with our skins we should be as lucky a lot as ever sailed the Northern Pacific Ocean. But should we—could we? Why, it was a thousand to one against it!

I said this when we plunged into the wood; and yet I will bear witness that I got more excitement than anything else out of that venture, and I don't believe the others got less. There we were, the four of us, trampling through the brushwood, crushing down the bushes, now lying low, now up a-running—and not a man that wouldn't have gone through it twice for Ruth Bellenden's sake. If so be that the night was to cost us our lives, well, crying wouldn't help it—and those that were against us were flesh and blood, all said and done, and no spirits to scare a man. To that I set it down that we went on headlong and desperate. As for the thicket itself, it was full of men—I could see their figures between the trees; and we must have passed twenty of them in the darkness before one came out plump on our path and cried out to us to halt.

"Hold, hold," shouts he; "is it you, Bob Williams?"

"It's Bob Williams, right enough," says I, and with that I gave him one between the eyes and down he went like a felled ox. The man who was with him, stumbling up against Seth Barker, had a touch of the shillelagh which was like a rock falling upon a fly. He just gave one shuddering groan and fell backwards, clutching the branches. Little Dolly Venn laughed aloud in his excitement; and Peter Bligh gave a real Irish "hurrugh"; but the darkness had swallowed it all up in a minute, and we were on again, heading for the shore like those that run a race for their very lives.

"Do you see any road, Peter Bligh?" asked I, for my breath was coming short now; "do you see any road, man?"

"The deuce a one, sir, and me weighing fourteen stone!"

"You'll weigh less when we get down, Peter."

"And drink more, the saints be praised!"

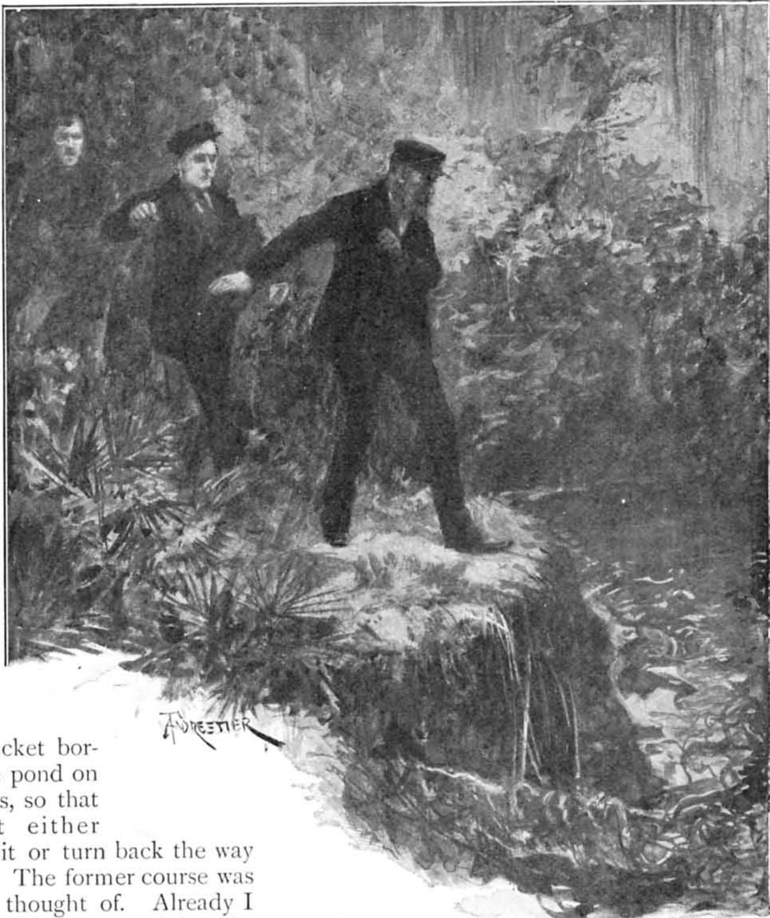
"Was that a rifle-shot or a stone from the hills?" I asked them a moment later. Dolly Venn answered me this time.

"A rifle-shot, captain. They'll be shooting one another, then—it's ripping, ripping!"

"Look out, lad, or it'll be dripping!" cried I; "don't you see there's water ahead?"

I cried the warning to him and stood stock-still upon the borders of as black a pool as I remember to have seen in any country. The road had carried us to the foot of the hills, almost to the chasm which the wicker-bridge spanned; and we could make out that same bridge far above us like a black rope in the twilight. The water itself was covered with some clinging plants, and full of ugly, winding snakes

which caused the whole pool to shine with a kind of uncanny light; while an overpowering odour, deadly and stifling, steamed up from it, and threatened to choke a man. What was worse than this was a close thicket bordering the pond on three sides, so that we must either swim for it or turn back the way we came. The former course was not to be thought of. Already I could hear footsteps, and boughs snapping and breaking not many yards from where we stood. To cross the pond might have struck the bravest man alive with terror. I'd have sooner forfeited my life time over than have touched one of those slimy snakes I could see wriggling over the leaves to the bottom of the still water. What else to do I had no more notion than the dead. "It's the end, Jasper Begg," said I to myself, "the end of you and your venture." But of Ruth Bellenden I wouldn't think. How could I, when I knew the folks that were abroad on Ken's Island?



"THE WATER WAS FULL OF UGLY, WINDING SNAKES."

I will just ask any traveller to stand with me where I stood that night and to say if these words are overmuch for the plight, or if I have spoken of it with moderation. A night as black as ink, mind you; my company in the heart of a wood with big teak trees all round us, and cliffs on our right towering up to the sky like mountains. Before us a pool of inky water, all worming with odd lights and lines of blue fire, like flakes of phosphorus on a bath, and alive with the hissing of hundreds of snakes. Upon our left hand a scrubby thicket and a marsh beneath it, I make sure; Czerny's demons, who had shot the poor folks on the *Santa Cruz*, at our heels, and we but four against the lot of them. Would any man, I ask, have believed that he could walk into such a trap and get out of it unharmed? If so, it wasn't Jasper Begg, nor Peter Bligh, nor little Dolly Venn, nor Seth Barker with the bludgeon in his hand. They'd as good as given it up when we came to the pool and

stood there like hunting men that have lost all hope.

"Done, by all that's holy!" says Peter Bligh, drawing back from the pond as from some horrid pit. "Snakes I have seen, nateral and unnateral, but them yonder give me the creeps——"

"Creeps or no creeps, the others will be up here in five minutes, and what are you going to do then, Peter Bligh, what then?" asks I, for as I'm a living man I didn't know which way to turn from it.

Seth Barker was the one that answered me.

"I'm going to knock some nails in, by your leave," says he, and with that he stood very still and bade us listen. The whole wood was full of the sound of "halloaing" now. Far and wide I heard question and answer, and a lingering yodle such as the Swiss boys make on the mountains. It couldn't be many minutes, I said, before the first man was out on our trail, and there I was right, for one of them came leaping out of the wood straight into Peter Bligh's arms before I'd spoken another word. Poor fellow—it was the last good-night for him in this world—for Peter passes him on, so to speak, and he went headlong into the pond without anyone knowing how he got there. A more awful end I hope I may never hear of, and yet, God knows, he brought it on himself. As for Peter Bligh, the shock set him sobbing like a woman. It was all my work to get him on again.

"No fault of ours," said I; "we're here for a woman's sake, and if there's man's work to do, we'll do it, lads. Take my advice and you'll turn straight back and run for it. Better a tap on the head than a cry in yonder pool."

They replied fearsomely—the strain was telling upon them badly. That much I learnt from their husky voices and the way they kept close to me, as though I could protect them. Seth Barker, especially, big man that he was, began to mutter to himself in the wildest manner possible, while little Dolly burst into whistling from time to time in a way that made me crazy.

"That's right, lad," cried I, "tell them you're here, and ask after the health of their women-folk. You've done with this world, I see, and made it straight for the next. If you've a match in your pocket, strike it to keep up their spirits."

Well, he stopped short, and I was ashamed of myself a minute after for speaking so to a mere lad whose life was before him and who'd every right to be afraid.

"Come," said I, more kindly, "keep close to me, Dolly, and if you don't know where I am, why, put out your hand and touch me. I've been in worse scrapes than this, my boy, and I'll lead you out of it somehow. After all, we've the ship over yonder, and Mister Jacob isn't done with yet. Keep up your heart, then, and put your best leg forward."

Now, this was spoken to put courage into him—not that I believed what I said, but because he and the others counted upon me, and my own feelings had to go under somehow. For the matter of that, it looked all Lombard Street to a China orange against us when we took the woodland path again, and so I believe it would have been but for something which came upon us like a thunder-flash, and which Peter Bligh was the first to call our attention to.

"Is it fireflies or lanterns?" cries he all at once, bringing out the words like a pump might have done; "yonder on the hill-side, shipmates—is it fireflies or lanterns?"

I stood to look, and while I stood Seth Barker named the thing.

"It's lanterns," cries he; "lanterns, sure and certain, captain."

"And the three ripping little girls carrying them," puts in Dolly Venn.

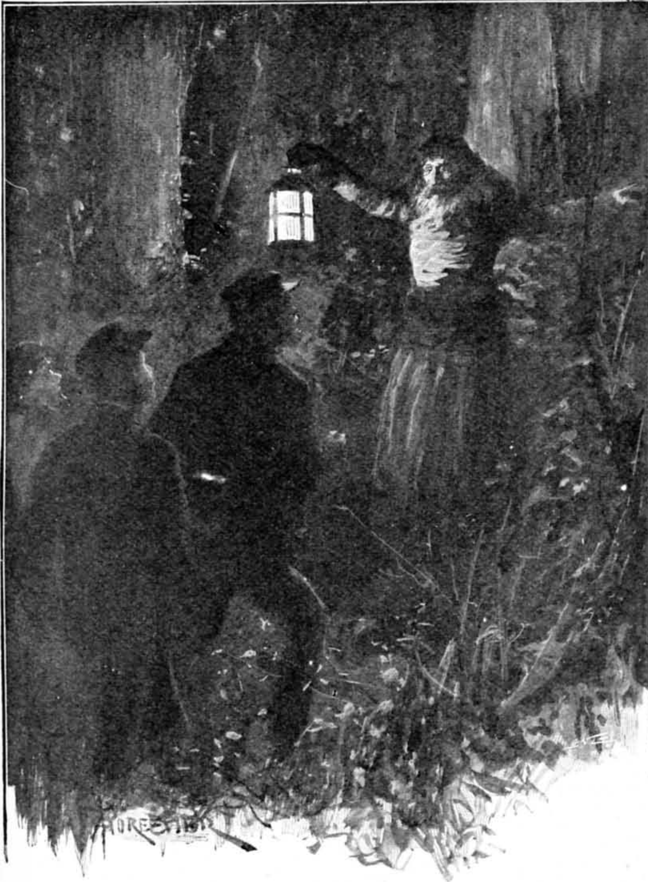
"'Tis no woman ever born that would hunt down four poor sailor-men," cries Peter Bligh.

"To say nothing of the he-lion they was a-fondling of," from Seth Barker.

"Lads," said I, in my turn, "this is the unlooked for, and I, for one, don't mean to pass it by. I'm going to ask those young ladies for a short road to the hills—and not lose any time about it either."

They all said "Aye, aye," and we ran forward together. The halloaing in the wood was closing in about us now; you could hear voices wherever you turned an ear. As for the lanterns, they darted from bush to bush like glow-worms on a summer's night, so that I made certain they would dodge us after all. My heart was low down enough, be sure of it, when I lost view of those guiding stars altogether, and found myself face to face with the last figure I might have asked for if you'd given me the choice of a hundred.

For what should happen but that the weird being whom Seth Barker had called the "he-lion," the old fellow in petticoats, whom the little girls made such a fuss of, he, I say, appeared of a sudden right in the path before us, and, holding up a lantern warningly, he hailed us with a word which told us that he was our friend—the very last I would have named for that in all the island.



"'JASPER BEGG,' CRIED HE, 'FOLLOW CLAIR-DE-LUNE.'"

still and cold on the mountain-side, and you could hear even a stone falling or the drip of water as it oozed from the black rocks to the silent pools below. What light there was came down through the craggy gorge, and it was not until we had climbed up and up for a good half-hour or more that we began to hear the sea-breeze whistling among the higher peaks like wild music which the spirits might have made. As for the path itself, it was oftentimes but a ledge against the wall of some sheer height, and none, I think, but seamen could have followed it, surely. Even I remembered where I was, and feared to look down sometimes; but danger bridges many a perilous road, and what with the silence and the fresh breezes and the thought that we might live through the night, after all, I believe I could have hugged the wild old man who led us upward so unflinchingly.

I say that he went on unflinchingly, and surely no goat could have climbed quicker than he did. Now standing over an abyss which made you silly to look down into; now pulling himself up by bush or branch; at other times scrambling over loose shale as though he had neither hands nor knees to cut, he might well have scared the coolest who had met him without warning on such a road. As for the four men he had saved from the fiends in the thickets below, I don't believe there was one of them who didn't trust him from the first. The sea is a sure school for knowing men and their humours. If this old Frenchman chose to put a petticoat about his legs, and to wear a lion's mane down his back, we liked him all the better for that. What we had seen of the young girls' behaviour toward him made up for that which we did not know about him. He must have had a tender place somewhere in his heart, or three young women wouldn't fondle him like a dog. Like a ship out of the night had he crossed our path; and his port must be our port, since

"Jasper Begg," cried he, in a voice that I'd have known for a Frenchman's anywhere, "follow Clair-de-Lune—follow—follow!"

He turned to the bushes behind him, and, seeming to dive between them, we found him when we followed flat on his stomach, the lantern out, and he running like a dog up a winding path before him. He was leading us to the heights, and when I looked up to the great bare peaks and steeple-like rocks, up-standing black and gloomy under the starry sky, I began to believe that this wild man was right and that in the hills our safety lay.

But of that we had yet to learn, and for all we knew to the contrary it might have been a trap.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BIRD'S NEST IN THE HILLS.

THERE had been a great sound of "halloaing" and firing in the woods when we raced through them for our lives; but it was all

we knew no other. That's why, I say, we followed him over the dangerous road like children follow a master. He was leading us to some good haven—I had no doubt of it. The thing that remained to tell was, had we the strength and the breath to reach it?

You may imagine that it was no light thing to run such a race as we had run, and to be asked to climb a mountain on the top of it. For my part, I was so dead tired that every step up the hill-side was like a knife in my side; and as for Peter Bligh, I wonder he didn't go rolling down to the rocks, so hard did he breathe and so heavy he was. But men will do wonders to save their necks, and that is how it is that we went up and still up, through the black ravine, to the blue peaks above. Aye, a fearsome place we had come to now, with terrible gorges, and wild shapes of rocks, like dead men's faces leering out of the darkness. The wind howled with a human voice, the desolation of all the earth seemed here. And yet the old man must push on—up, up, as though he would touch the very sky.

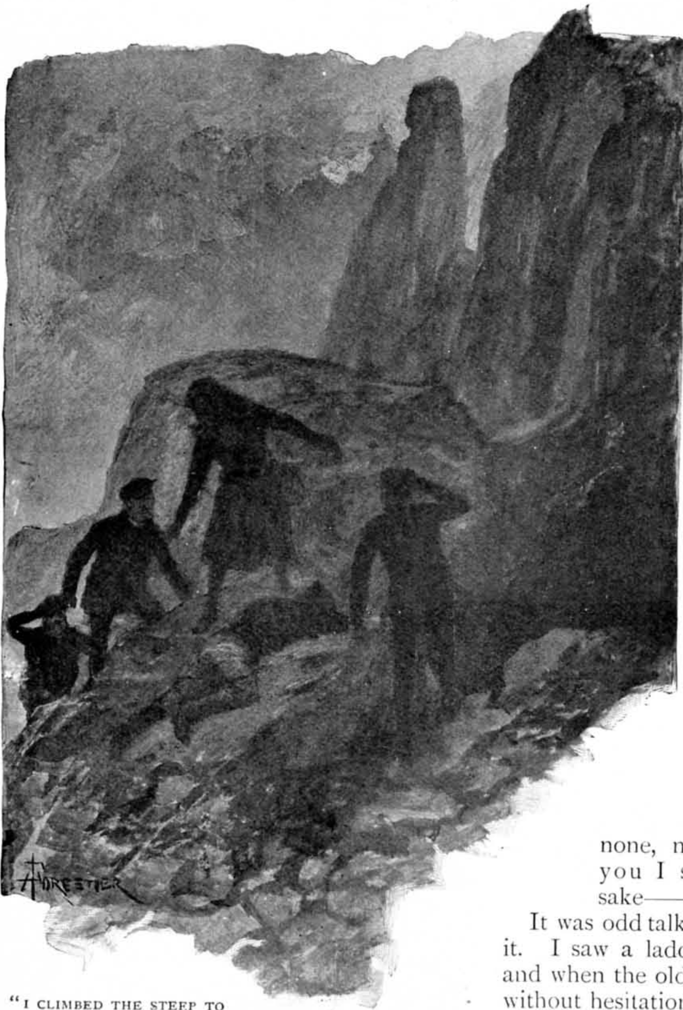
"The Lord be good to me," cried Peter Bligh, at last; "I can go no farther if it's a million a mile! Oh, Mister Begg, for the love of Heaven, clap a rope about the wild man's legs."

I pushed him on over a sloping peak of shale, and told him to hold his tongue.

"Will you lie in the pool, then? Where's your courage, man? Another hundred yards and you shall stop to breathe. There's the old lion himself waiting for us, and a big bill of thanks he has against us, to be sure."

I said no more, but climbed the steep to the Frenchman's side, and found him waiting on the bank of that which seemed to be a great cup-like hole, black and bottomless, and the last place you'd have picked for a camp on all the hillside. Dolly Venn was already there, and Seth Barker, lying on the stones and panting like a great dog. Old Clair-de-Lune alone was fresh and ready, and able in his broken English to tell us what he wished.

"Messieurs," he said, "speak not long but go down. I myself am shipmate too. Ah, messieurs, you do wise to follow me. Down there no dog bark. I show you the ladder, and all be well. To-morrow you speak your ship—go home. For me, never again—I die here with the children, messieurs; none shall come for old Clair-de-Lune, none, never at no time—but you, you I save for the shipmates' sake——"



"I CLIMBED THE STEEP TO THE FRENCHMAN'S SIDE."

It was odd talk, but no time to argue about it. I saw a ladder thrust up out of the pit, and when the old man went down I followed without hesitation. A lantern lighted in the darkness showed me a hollow nest 20ft. deep,

perhaps, and carpeted over with big brown leaves and rugs spread out, and in one corner that which was not unlike a bed. Moreover, there was a little stove in the place and upon one side an awning stretched against the rain, while cooking pots and pans and other little things made it plain at a glance that this was the man's own refuge in the mountains, and that here, at least, some part of his life was spent. No further witness to his honesty could be asked for. He had brought us to his own home. It was time to speak of thanks.

"What you've done for us neither me nor mine will ever forget," said I, warmly. "Here's a seaman's hand and a seaman's thanks. Should the day come when we can do a like turn to you, be sure I'll be glad to hear of it; and if it came that you had the mind to go aboard with us—aye, and the young ladies, too—why, you'll find no one more willing than Jasper Begg."

We shook hands, and he set the lantern down upon the floor. Peter Bligh was lying on his back now, crying to a calendar of saints to help him; Seth Barker breathed like a winded horse; little Dolly Venn stood against the wall of the pit with his head upon his arm, like a runner after a race; the old Frenchman drew the ladder down and made all snug as a ship is made for the night.

"No one come here," he said, "no one find the way. You sleep, and to-morrow you signal ship to go down where I show. For me and mine, not so. This is my home; I am stranger in my own country. No one remember Clair-de-Lune. Twelve years I live here—five times I sleep the dreadful sleep which the island make—five times I live where others die. Why go home, messieurs, if you not have any? I not go; but you, you hasten because of the sleep."

We all pricked up our ears at this curious saying, and Dolly Venn, he out with a question before I could—indeed, he spoke the French tongue very prettily, and for about five minutes the two of them went at it hammer and tongs like two old women at charing.

"What does he mean by sleep-time, lad? Why shouldn't a man sleep on Ken's Island? What nonsense will he talk next?"

I'd forgotten that the old man spoke English too, but he turned upon me quickly to remind me of the fact.

"No nonsense, monsieur, as many a one has found—no nonsense at all, but very dreadful thing. Three, four time by the year it come; three, four time it go. All men sleep if they not go away—you sleep if you not go away. Ah, the good God send you to the ship before that day."

He did his best to put it clearly, but he might as well have talked Chinese. Dolly, who understood his lingo, made a brave attempt, but did not get much farther.

"He says that this island is called by the Japanese the Island of Sleep. Two or three times every year there comes up from the marshes a poisonous fog which sends you into a trance from which you don't recover, sometimes for months. It can't be true, sir, and yet that's what he says."

"True or untrue, Dolly," said I, in a low voice, "we'll not give it the chance. It's a fairy tale, of course, though it doesn't sound very pretty when you hear it."

"Nor is that music any more to my liking," exclaimed Peter Bligh, at this point, meaning that we should listen to a couple of gun-shots fired, not in the woods far down below us, but somewhere, as it seemed, on the sea-beach we had failed to make.

"That would be Harry Doe warning us," cried I.

"And meaning that it was dangerous for us to go down."

"He'll have put off and saved the long-boat, anyway. We'll hail him at dawn, and see where the ship is."

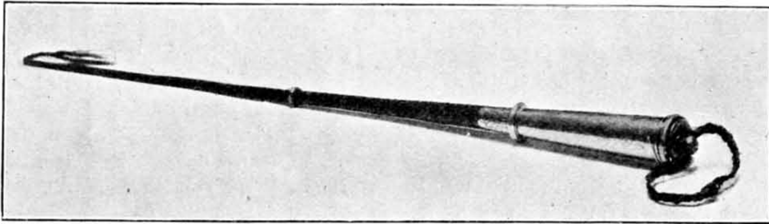
They heard me in silence. The tempest roaring in the peaks above that weird, wild place, our knowledge of the men on the island below, the old Frenchman's strange talk—no wonder that our eyes were wide open and sleep far from them. Dawn, indeed, we waited for as those who are passing through the terrible night. I think sometimes that, if we had known what was in store for us, we should have prayed to God that we might not see the day.

(To be continued.)

Sporting and Athletic Trophies.

By Hugh B. Philpott.

THE gentle art of "pot-hunting" is held in somewhat low esteem among sportsmen and athletes of the better sort. And rightly so; for nothing—except the spirit of gambling—is so inimical to the best interests of sport. I say nothing against those who openly and avowedly make some form of sport a means of livelihood; but whenever among amateurs the prize is the first consideration, it is a sure sign that the healthiest and most vital elements have departed from their sport. The ambition, however, to possess some tangible object as a symbol and memento of a sporting victory is a perfectly legitimate thing, and the interest we take in these trophies is as healthy in its way as the interest in a collection of war medals or of tattered flags.


THE NEWMARKET WHIP—THE OLDEST SPORTING TROPHY IN EXISTENCE.
From a Photo. by Henry Irving, Bromley.

Athletic trophies are as old as athletic contests. The victors at the Olympic games were rewarded with a garland of wild olive, and this was valued as one of the highest distinctions a man could obtain. Modern custom favours something more durable; but still the idea survives —and long may it remain, for it is one of the life principles of genuine sport — that the prize should be regarded, not as payment for the effort put forth, but as a certificate of achievement or a memorial of a worthy contest.

Speaking generally, then, a collection of sporting and athletic trophies is interesting by reason of what the trophies represent rather than of what they are. Here and there one may demand attention on account of its exceptional beauty, or curious form, or intrinsic value; but, as a rule, it is as the silent memorials of sporting or athletic contests that they interest us; and obviously the gorgeous and glittering cup that has only just been presented for competition must yield in interest to the much humbler-looking trophy that can speak of a long succession of exciting contests.

THE NEWMARKET CUP.
From a Photo. by Henry Irving, Bromley.

The interest of antiquity belongs emphatically to the two most famous racing trophies, the Newmarket Whip and the Newmarket Cup. The Whip is undoubtedly the most ancient sporting trophy in existence. So old is it that we have no record of its foundation, nor of its history for the first hundred years of its existence. On the handle, however, is a silver plate bearing a coat-of-arms which has been identified as that of Lord Dacre, who was created Earl of Sussex in 1674. Probably, therefore, Lord Dacre was the donor of the Whip, and it is quite likely that among the spectators of the earliest contests for its possession would be his sacred and sportive Majesty, King Charles II. The first race for the whip of which the *Racing Calendar* contains any mention took place in 1764, when the trophy was won by the Duke of Cumberland's Dumpling. Shortly

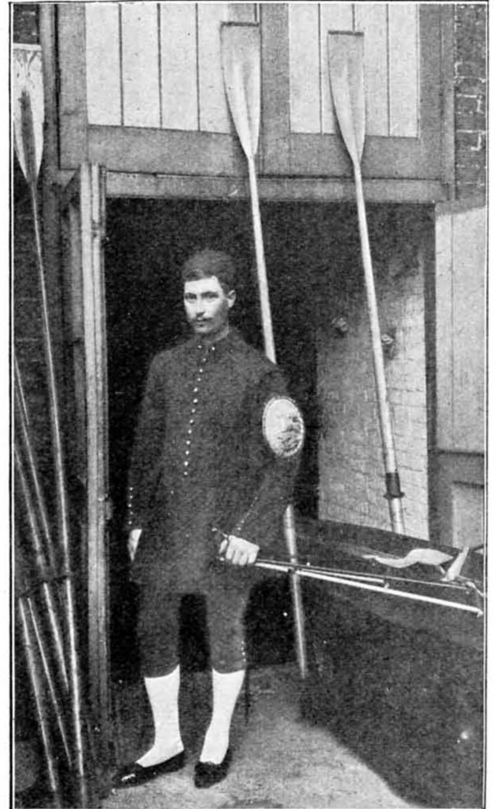
WEST NORFOLK HUNT STEEPLECHASE CUP—PRESENTED BY HIS MAJESTY THE KING.
From a] [*Photo.*

after this time the sporting world was excited by the doings of an extraordinary horse named Eclipse. Our ancestors had a pleasant, easy way of recording sporting events in round numbers, knocking off odd seconds and stretching seven furlongs into a mile, so that we are not obliged to believe—what the records of its performances would imply—that never before or since was there a horse that could compare with Eclipse. There is no doubt, however, that he was by far the best horse of his day, and it was a happy thought on the part of someone—very likely the Duke of Cumberland himself—to perpetuate the fame of this admirable animal by attaching a lock of hair from his tail to the handle of the Newmarket Whip, where it remains until this day.

Of the origin of the Newmarket Cup a more precise account can be given. It was purchased in 1768 by subscription amongst members of the Jockey Club and of the Jockey Club Rooms at Newmarket. It is a handsome cup, and, apart from the interest of its history, would be valuable as a good specimen of eighteenth century silversmiths' work. A condition attaching to both these ancient trophies is that they may not leave this country. In each case the holder keeps the trophy until it is challenged for. The Cup has only been the occasion of eight races during the whole period of its existence, but the challengers for the Whip have been more numerous. The Cup is at present held by Lord Durham and the Whip by Sir Ernest Cassel.

From the very old we turn to the very new. The West Norfolk Hunt Club's steeplechasing cup is an example in the style known as *l'art nouveau*, and has been carried out by Messrs. Mappin Brothers. It was presented to the Club by His Majesty the King in April last, and is specially interesting as being the first public presentation made by His Majesty since his accession.

The oldest trophy that has been competed for year after year without intermission is to be found in the domain of aquatic sport. This is Doggett's Coat and Badge, which was instituted by one Thomas Doggett, an actor, in the year 1716, and has been competed for every 1st of August—unless that day happened to be Sunday, when the race was held on the following day—down to the present time. The "coat" is, in fact, a complete uniform of the style in vogue among watermen in Doggett's day, and the "badge" is of silver and is worn on the arm; it bears an impression of a wild horse—the coat of arms of the House of Hanover—and an inscription.



DOGGETT'S COAT AND BADGE.
From a Photo. by Henry Irving, Bromley

What, it may be asked, had an actor to do with watermen, or the House of Hanover with either? The connection is closer than might at first sight appear. In Doggett's time, and long before, the Thames watermen were a very numerous and important class. The Thames was in those days much more generally used as a highway for passengers, and the waterman discharged most of the functions of the modern "cabby." A large portion of his business consisted in conveying passengers to and from the riverside theatres, and it is not surprising that Doggett and many another actor regarded the watermen, who brought them their audiences, as their very good friends.

The demise of Queen Anne is one of the few events in English history with which everyone is familiar, but not everyone, perhaps, fully realizes the significance of that event. One result of it was that the House of Hanover, in the person of George I., ascended the throne of England, much to the gratification of Thomas Doggett, who was a keen politician. To signalize the auspicious event, and at the same time do the watermen a friendly turn, Doggett offered a substantial prize for competition amongst them. "This being the day," ran his proclamation, which was set up on London Bridge on August 1st, 1716, "of His Majesty's happy accession to the Throne, there will be given by Mr. Doggett an orange-coloured livery with a badge representing Liberty, to be rowed for by six watermen that are out of their time within the year past. They are to row from London Bridge to Chelsea. It will be continued annually on the same day for ever." These conditions of the competition are still faithfully adhered to, and the Fishmongers' Company, who have the management of the race, still announce it as "in memory of the accession of the family of his present Majesty to the Throne of Great Britain."

THE AMERICA CUP.
From a Photo. by West & Son, Southsea.

Interesting though the race for Doggett's Coat and Badge is from an historical point of view, it excites but little public attention nowadays. Undoubtedly the factor which more than any other arouses popular interest in athletic contests is the presence of foreign competitors. Several of our great sporting contests have become international events, and where this is the case there is never any lack of popular interest. Thousands who concern themselves very little with athletic contests in a general way—business and professional men who declare they have something more important to do than trouble about sports, ladies who don't know whether a mile ought to be run in three minutes or in ten—all find themselves, on the occasion of an international contest, drawn into the vortex of popular excitement and fervently hoping for the victory of the Englishman, the English team, or the English boat.

When Sir Thomas Lipton set out on his gallant though unsuccessful attempt to "lift"—as the current phrase has it—the America Cup we all felt that he and Captain Sycamore and his gallant crew were as really the representatives of England—though in quite a friendly and sporting sense—as if they had been an army going to fight our battles. And whatever the degree of our ignorance about yachting matters, we did not fail to scan eagerly the long cablegrams reporting all the details of the famous struggle. Never, it may safely be said, in the whole history of sport has such widespread interest been taken in a sporting contest. Everybody felt a personal interest in the result, from His Majesty the King, who visited the *Shamrock* before she left these shores, down to the little Board school boy who wrote the following essay on the race: "Sir Thomas Lipton who has a shop in Angel Lane and another at Forest Gate is going to try and win the cup with his yot, it is called the *Shamrock*, and is painted

green. If Sir Thomas Lipton wins I shall ask mother to buy her grocery off him all except jam."

But apart from the international aspect of the affair there were in truth many other features about this race well calculated to

CUP FOR YACHTING DESIGNED BY THE GERMAN EMPEROR.
From a Photo.

strike the imagination and rouse sympathetic interest. It was exactly fifty years since the cup, first given by an English yachting club, had been carried across the Atlantic by the yacht *America*, and all attempts to win it back had hitherto failed. The competing yachts were beyond question the finest examples of scientific yacht building the world had seen. The contestants were prepared, in Sir Thomas Lipton's phrase, "to shovel on the £5 notes" if, by so doing, they could add ever so little to the speed of their crafts. It has been calculated that the attempt to win this £100 silver cup has cost Sir Thomas Lipton £100,000, and that the Americans have had to expend £150,000 in order to retain it. It was, in truth, a case of Greek meeting Greek. Another thing which aroused popular sympathy was the friendly and sportsmanlike spirit which prevailed, in happy contrast with the wretched bickerings that marred a former contest for the cup. The attitude of Sir Thomas Lipton throughout the whole of the contest was in accord with his first letter of challenge sent in 1899, in which he wrote: "I have too high an opinion of our American cousins to seek to make any terms; what they may propose I shall accept as generous measure of our rights." It is pleasant to know that this friendly spirit was fully reciprocated by the other side. What wonder, then, that the two great sport-loving nations of the world watched the great struggle with sympathetic and admiring eyes? Another specially interesting yachting trophy is the cup which was presented by the German Emperor to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen

THE GRAND CHALLENGE CUP—THE CHIEF CONTEST AT HENLEY REGATTA.
From a Photo. by Henry Irving, Bromley.

Victoria. The cup was designed by the Emperor himself.

The international element also appeared last year in the contest for the Grand Challenge Cup, the principal race at Henley Regatta. There are those who hold that the presence of foreign crews at Henley is to be deprecated, as tending to alter the character which Henley has so long held as the favourite meeting-place for British rowing men and a delightful social function into the bargain. Our crews, it is said, will have to train more seriously and to devote their whole attention to one race in order to hold their own against the best foreign crews. In short, they will have to make more of a business of what has hitherto been a pleasant recreation. Others hold that it is more sportsmanlike to welcome competition from any quarter, and look to the presence of foreign crews to raise the standard of British oarsmanship. Whichever of these views be the more reasonable, there can be no doubt that the great event of last year's Henley Regatta was the exciting struggle in the final for the Grand Challenge Cup between our premier rowing club, Leander, and the crew from Pennsylvania University. After a keenly contested struggle, which aroused immense interest among the large crowd of spectators, many of whom were Americans, Leander won by a good length, thus retaining the fine challenge cup which they have won several times before.

From a Photo. by] THE TENNIS AND CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIPS. [*Messrs. Elkington.*

There was quite an invasion of American athletes last summer, and if they had been successful in all the contests in which they took part the number of notable trophies remaining in this country would have been considerably reduced. Not only at Henley Regatta, but at the Tennis Championship meetings at Wimbledon and at the Amateur Athletic Association Championships at Huddersfield our American cousins were very much to the fore. At the last-named meeting they carried off the challenge cups for the 100 yards, the 120 yards hurdles, and the high jump, with the championship title for those events. In the pole jump the American representative, J. K. Baxter, tied with his opponent, and would probably have won outright had he not omitted to provide himself with a jumping-pole. As the English champion, in a very churlish and unsportsmanlike spirit, declined to lend his pole, Baxter had to improvise one from a flag-pole on the ground. In the quarter-mile the American champion was defeated, and in the longer distances the Americans did not even challenge our men. In the race for the mile championship—won by F. G. Cockshott, of Cambridge University—it is interesting to note that a Frenchman finished third.

In the lawn-tennis world the American visitors, Messrs. J. D. Davis and H. Ward, made a bold bid for the championship cups. They succeeded in defeating all their opponents until they came to the final round, when they were matched against the English champion pair, Messrs. R. F. Doherty and H. L. Doherty. The game was keenly contested, and some fine play was seen on both sides; but in the end the Englishmen won by three sets to one, and the names of the Brothers Doherty were engraved for the fifth year in succession on the doubles championship cup.

THE ONE MILE AMATEUR RUNNING CHAMPIONSHIP.
Form a Photo. by G. Fox, Huddersfield.

The net result, then, of the American invasion, so far as the sports of the past year are concerned, is that the Yankees have beaten us in yachting, sprinting, and jumping, but we have held our own in long-distance running, in rowing, and and in lawn-tennis, though not until we had fallen back on our last lines of defence — to wit, the Leander Club and the Brothers Doherty. These are not results which make for national complacency, for, although we may fairly pride ourselves still on being the premier athletic people of the world, recent events have shown that our sportsmen and athletes will have their work cut out during the next few years if we are not to see the America Cup and the sprinting and jumping championship cups followed across the Atlantic by a procession of our most highly-cherished trophies.

THE ENGLISH ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL CUP.
From a Photo. by J. Pettingall, Chingford.

Apart from those events which have an international character, there is no doubt that the most interesting event of the year to the majority of the sport-loving public is the final match for the English Association Football Cup. Last season the excitement attending this contest was greater than it has ever been before; indeed, it may be doubted whether any sporting contest, except the race for the America Cup, has ever in this country caused so much interest. The fact that the first match resulted in a draw and had to be re-played tended to enhance the excitement, and for Londoners there was a special element of interest in the speculation whether the cup would or would not, after its long wandering in the North, return to the Metropolis. The victory of the Tottenham Hotspurs settled that question, for a year at any rate, to the complete satisfaction of Metropolitan football devotees.

There is another football trophy that deserves a place in our collection, because it was given, and is annually competed for, in the sacred cause of charity. The Dewar Shield, as it is called, was presented by Mr. T. R. Dewar, M.P., as a perpetual trophy to be competed for by amateur and professional football teams, the

THE DEWAR FOOTBALL SHIELD—PROCEEDS GO TO LONDON CHARITIES.
From a Photo.

proceeds of the matches to be devoted entirely to charities. The matches are played at the Crystal Palace, and Metropolitan charities receive the greatest benefit from them, but a certain portion of the proceeds is given to hospitals, etc., in the district from which the visiting team comes.

While public interest in football has been decidedly increasing of late years, the interest in cycle races has quite as decidedly been decreasing. One reason for this is the practice, which has become prevalent, of refusing to take the lead, so that races have often degenerated into a leisurely procession with a desperate spurt at the end. There is still, however, some good sport to be seen on the cycle-track, and there is no lack of trophies to be competed for. The highest honour obtainable in amateur cycling is the possession of one of the National Cyclists' Union's championship medals. The mile championship, held this year by C. Pease, of Dublin, is generally regarded as the "blue riband" of the cycling track.

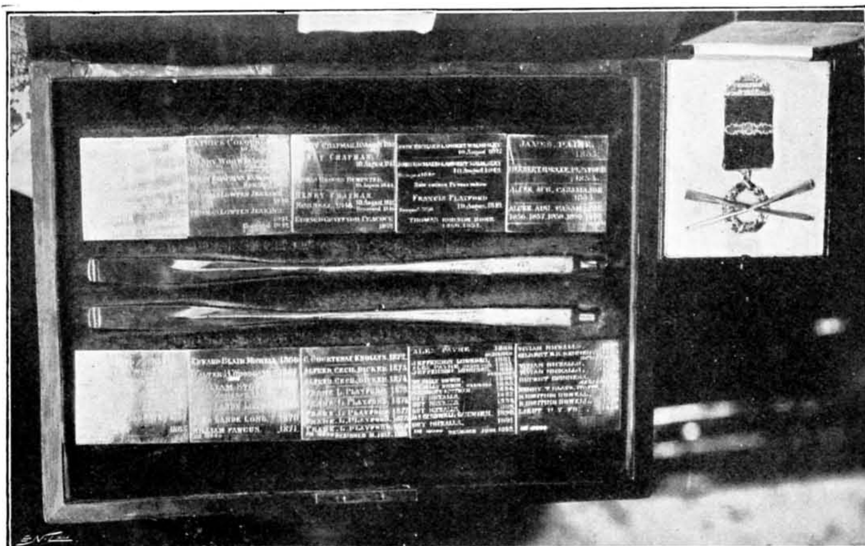
Of the more elaborate trophies none is more interesting than the Dibble Shield, formerly known as the Anchor Shield, which perpetuates the name of a very good friend of thousands of cyclists, the late Mrs. Dibble, of the picturesque old Anchor Inn at Ripley. Mrs. Dibble gave the shield in 1886 for competition at the Southern Cyclists' Camp. When the Camp ceased to be held the shield was returned, after the donor's death, to the Misses Dibble, by whom it was presented to the London County Club, and it is now held as a challenge trophy by the winner of the twelve hours' path race held annually at Herne Hill.

THE DIBBLE SHIELD—A FAMOUS CYCLING TROPHY.
From a Photo. by R. W. Thomas.

CYCLING CHAMPIONSHIP MEDAL—THE "BLUE RIBAND" OF THE CYCLING TRACK.
From a Photo. by G. W. Austen, Highbury.

One sometimes wonders, in looking at a collection of sporting trophies, that the designers have shown so little inventiveness

and resource in giving them a distinctive character. The same stereotyped forms reappear again and again, and often there is little to suggest the nature of the sport for which the trophy is awarded. Such a criticism certainly cannot be urged against the Wingfield Sculls, the trophy that carries with it the title of Amateur Sculling Champion of the Thames. This trophy takes the very appropriate form of a pair of silver sculls, about 9in. long, placed in a box adorned with silver plates on which the names of the winners are engraved. These names include those of most of the greatest amateur scullers of the past seventy years, and to be numbered amongst them is an honour indeed. There is also a smaller pair of crossed sculls fastened with a laurel wreath and a clasp, on which the word "champion" is engraved.



From a Photo. by] THE WINGFIELD SCULLS—AMATEUR SCULLING CHAMPIONSHIP. *[B. F. Hunt, Windsor*

The trophy is held this year by that fine oarsman, H. T. Blackstaffe, who won it with the greatest ease by twelve lengths. A very different sort of race was the fierce struggle for the Wingfields in 1898, when Blackstaffe was just beaten by B. H. Howell. The race was one of the keenest ever seen on the Thames; so desperate were the efforts put forth by each of the competitors that they both stopped, completely rowed out, some fifty yards from the winning-post, and the boats simply drifted over the line. Howell managed to get in one last stroke which gave him the victory. Both men were lifted out of their boats thoroughly exhausted.

"PEWTER POTS"—AWARDED IN OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE COLLEGE BOATRACES—AN OLD CUSTOM.
From a Photo. by G. W. Austen, Highbury.

Some of the most interesting of trophies are those awarded in the College boat-races at Oxford and Cambridge. True to that genuine amateur spirit of which the great Universities have always been the foremost exponents, the spirit which "counts the game above the prize," the custom begun in some remote past (no one quite knows how long ago) of awarding pewter pots as prizes has been continued down to the present day. Every member of the winning crew gets a pot, which, of course, is of very little intrinsic value, and he has to get it engraved at his own expense.

The most noteworthy point about the trophies of the Amateur Swimming Association is that a large proportion of them are

A.S.A. 500 YARDS' SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIP OF ENGLAND.
From a Photo. by Lafayette.

held, and have been for several years, by one great swimmer, J. A. Jarvis. A few years ago J. H. Tyers was enjoying a similar run of almost uniform success. The 500 yards championship cup, which we illustrate, is notable from the fact that it was in this race that the spell of Tyers's invincibility was broken by J. H. Derbyshire. This cup was presented to the Amateur Swimming Association in 1896 by the secretary of the Association, Mr. George Pragnell. All the challenge prizes of the A.S.A., it is worthy of note, are perpetual trophies, the Association holding that it is contrary to the true amateur spirit for a trophy of great intrinsic value to be won outright.

CUP AWARDED TO LONDON CLUBS FOR ATHLETIC PRE-EMINENCE.
From a Photo. by R. W. Thomas, Cheapside.

Quite unique in character is the fine trophy presented by Sir Reginald Hanson for "athletic pre-eminence." The cup is competed for by clubs affiliated with the City of London Athletic and Swimming Associations, which practically means all the clubs connected with the great business houses in the City. The "pre-eminence" is determined by a series of inter-club contests in cricket, football, swimming, life-saving, athletics, and tennis. The first team in each class of sport scores one point, the second two, and so on. Obviously, therefore, the club with the lowest total, taking all the competitions together, is the best all-round club. This distinction has belonged for the past three years to the Ravensbourne Club, which is connected

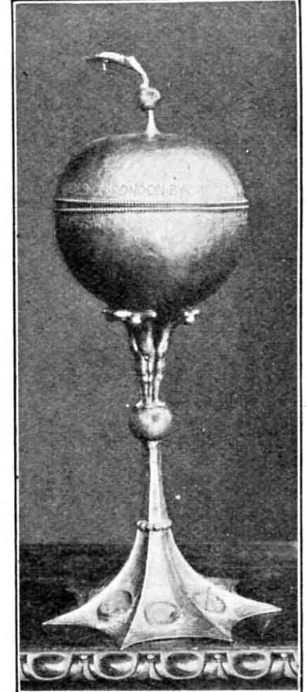
NATIONAL PHYSICAL RECREATION SOCIETY'S SHIELD FOR CHAMPION GYMNASTIC TEAM.
From a Photo.

"DAILY CHRONICLE" SHIELD—PRESENTED TO LONDON SCHOOLS.
From a Photo. by A. W. Wilson & Co., Stoke Newington.

with the great house of Cook, Son, and Co., in St. Paul's Churchyard.

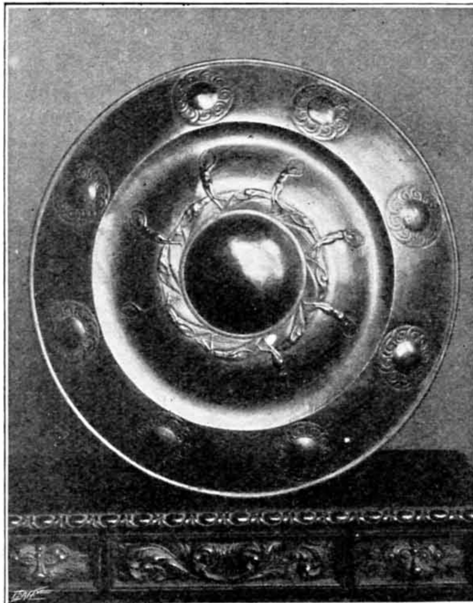
In the gymnastic world the chief prize is a large silver shield valued at 200 guineas, which is presented by the National Physical Recreation Society. The shield is competed for by teams of eight gymnasts, and the competitions are so arranged that each member of the team must exhibit a high degree of all-round excellence.

There are no better sportsmen than the boys in our public schools, and there is no pleasanter sight to those who value and would perpetuate the best elements in our British sports than (say) the Stamford Bridge ground when one of the schools has taken possession of it for its annual sports, or a public swimming bath when the London Schools Swimming Association is holding a competition.



THE ASHBEE CUP FOR BEST BOY SWIMMER UNDER 15.
From a Photo. by A. W. Wilson & Co., Stoke Newington.

The association just named does an admirable work in encouraging swimming and life-saving drill in elementary schools, and its trophies deserve notice, if for no other reason, on account of their genuine artistic merit. The shield presented by the proprietors of the *Daily Chronicle*, and awarded to the school which shows the greatest success in the teaching of swimming, was designed by Mr. Walter Crane. The Ashbee Cup, awarded to the best boy-swimmer under fifteen, and the Fabian Shield, awarded to the team of boys which shows the greatest proficiency in life-saving drill, have both been designed by Mr. C. R. Ashbee, and are admirable examples of what athletic trophies should be. Artistically they are immeasurably superior to many of the more costly and pretentious trophies.



THE FABIAN SHIELD FOR LIFE-SAVING DRILL IN SCHOOLS.
From a Photo. by A. W. Wilson & Co., Stoke Newington.

Beauty and appropriateness, rather than a high intrinsic value, are the qualities to be sought in an athletic trophy, whether it be for a schoolboy or for the greatest athlete in the world.

BY ROBERT BARR.

NO fast train stopped at Stumpville, so Tom Fenton changed cars at Tenstrike City and took the slow local which followed the express. When at last he reached Stumpville he stood on the planks which formed the railway platform and looked about him with a sinking of the heart. Here was a come-down for a young man who had been telegraph operator in a large city, holding one of the best positions in a numerous company of light-fingered gentlemen manipulating the electric keys. Stumpville presented an unattractive appearance. The chief building, some distance from the depôt, was an unpainted two-story board structure whose signboard bore the high-sounding title, "The Star of Empire Hotel," which had evidently taken its way this far westward. To the left of the tavern stood a big saw-mill, whose sides were open to the winds of heaven and whose roof was composed of sawn slabs with the bark on. Up from this roof rose a tall iron smoke-stack. All down the side-track leading from the single line of railway to the mill huge square piles of sweet-smelling lumber had been built, and several flat cars were being laden with the boards. From the mill itself came the ripping roar of a great circular saw tearing its way through a log, and this deep bass note was accompanied by the shriller scream of a vicious little edging-saw trimming the planks. Grouped around mill and hotel lay a rude assemblage of shanties, each shanty seemingly made from the refuse of the saw-mill: shaky, knot-filled boards and shaggy slabs with the bark on.

To the east the flat lands had been denuded of pine timber, and hideous stumps showed where the trees had stood. To the west the primeval forest still seemed intact, except where the railway made a bee-line through it, straight as an arrow's flight, extending so far that the trees seemed to come together as young shrubs at the distant end. Down this level canyon with its dark green sides of tall timber the despised local was rapidly lessening, and its departure gave Tom a sudden pang of loneliness which he would not have believed possible when he boarded the train two hours before in bustling Tenstrike City. "Call you this backing of your friends? A plague on such backing!" said Falstaff to Prince Hal, and, reversing the Shakespearean saying, so thought Tom Fenton. He had backed his friends, and Stumpville was the result. Practically all telegraphic America had gone out on strike. The young man had never believed in the possibility of success, but when his comrades quitted their work he quitted with them. He was the last to go out and was the last in attempting a

return. His employers, illogical enough, resented his action more than they did that of the loud-mouthed demagogues who had led the telegraphers into a hopeless contest. Tom found his place taken and himself out of employment. The friends he had backed found their situations again—he had the privilege of looking for a new one. Railroading and telegraphing were the only things he knew, and the fact that he had been one of the army of strikers proved less efficient as a recommendation than a line or two written by a train-dispatcher who had last given him employment. The line or two from the train-dispatcher he did not possess; the fact that he had been one of the strikers he could not deny; so it was five months before he was offered the mean situation of operator at Stumpville, on the newly-opened branch of the C. K. & G. His resources were at an end, and he had been very glad to accept the position tendered him; but now, face to face with the reality, he could not help contrasting it with the berth he had lost. However, he possessed the grit typical of the young American, and with one final sigh for opportunity forfeited, he set his teeth with determination and resolved to do the best he could at the foot of the ladder once more.

The station-master, who seemed to be switchman, yardman, and everything else, had kicked a clutch out from the iron-toothed wheel to the west of the platform, which caused a momentary rattle of chains and the uplifting of the red arm of a signal behind the departing train. He now approached the lone passenger with a friendly expression of inquiry on his face.

"My name is Fenton," said the young man, before the other had time to address him. "I'm the new operator."

"All right," growled the station-master. "My name's Sam Sloan, and I do pretty much everything that's required round this shanty except telegraphing. Jim Mason has been working the keys here this while back, and I guess he'll be mighty glad to slope. He says he's been expecting you these last two or three days. He's got a raise, has Jim, and he's going to Tenstrike City. He says he's had enough of the excitement of Stumpville to last him all his life, and I think he's just yearning to give us the shake."

"I don't blame him," said Fenton, with a momentary lack of diplomacy. The station-master shrugged his shoulders, laughing good-naturedly, and his reply had a touch of that optimism with which every citizen regards his own town no matter how backward it may appear to a stranger's eye.

"Oh, well, I guess there's worse outfits than Stumpville. Two years ago there wasn't a house in the place, and last week they staked out a planing-mill, and they're talking of puttin' up a new hotel."

"You are going ahead," commented Tom.

"You bet your life," said Sam Sloan, complacently. "Come on in and I'll introduce you to Jim, then you can take over the ticker."

Jim departed, joyously, on the returning local that evening, and Tom found himself master of a plasterless room of pine-boards with a little window projecting out over the platform, which gave him a view up and down the line when he stood within it. The telegraph instrument was on a bench near this window, and there was one wooden chair beside it. The door opening from the waiting-room was ornamented by a big card labelled, "No Admittance," to which injunction no one in the locality paid the slightest heed. Against the wall was a ticket-case, the product of some city cabinet shop, whose polished walnut was in striking contrast to the rough pine that surrounded it. Between the telegraph office and the waiting-room was cut, breast high, a rounded opening which had a little shelf at the bottom, and through this aperture it was part of Tom's duty to sell tickets to any inquirer twice a day: in the morning when the local went west and in the evening when it returned east.

Fenton took over Jim's abandoned room in The Star of Empire Hotel, and found the fare in that place of entertainment not nearly so bad as he had expected. The pumpkin-pie was particularly good and the doughnuts a lesson to Delmonico's.

Tom settled down to his work, and he soon found that the task required of him was anything but a severe one. Stumpville was an unimportant station, and the amount of telegraphing to be done there at any time was not extensive, so a man was more apt to die of *ennui* than overwork at that post. Luckily he had brought some books with him, and by-and-by made an arrangement with the conductor of the local whereby he received a morning paper each day, and this sheet kept him from imagining that all the world was standing still just because he was.

Sam, the man-of-all-work of the station, was a good-natured employé, who spent most of his time at the bar-room of the Star, except when the locals came or there were

some cars of lumber to be attached to an eastern-bound freight. Tom always knew where to find him in case of emergency, but emergencies never happened.

As the bar-room had no attractions for Tom he got more and more into the habit of spending nearly all his time in the telegraph office, coming there even on Sundays when there was nothing to do; liking the place for its quietness and freedom from interruption. Now and then he gave himself some quiet amusement and a little practice in his own line of business by sending messages along the line at the rate of speed to which he had formerly been accustomed. On these occasions he was pleased to find there was not a man on the branch who could take his messages. He was delighted once, when answering an inquiry from the train-dispatcher's office at Tenstrike, to find that even the city operator had to break in on him three times during his discourse and beg him to go slower. On the third interruption Tom surmised that the train-dispatcher himself took off the message, because he got a curt command to "Go ahead," which he did, and there was no further appeal for a more moderate pace until he had finished what he had to say. After a pause there came to him a message almost as fast as the one he had sent in.

"I WAS MERELY SENDING ALONG MY COMPLIMENTS."

"Say, young fellow, are you qualifying as the demon operator of this line? You must remember you are only a branch, and although we have some express trains going over the rails you have all the time there is during the rest of the day. Don't throw us into a fever so far away from a doctor."

"Thanks," replied Tom, over the wires. "I am glad to know there is at least one man in Tenstrike who knows how to handle a key."

Fenton was pleased with this incident. "There," he said to himself, "they'll know at head-quarters where to get a good operator if they want one, and in order to keep my hand in, I think I'll wake up my next-door neighbour." So he began rattling on the machine the letters "Cy—Cy," which was the call for Corderoy, seventeen miles farther west, and presumably still deeper in the woods than Stumpville. When the call was answered he poured forth a stream of chattering letters calculated to make the hair of the other operator stand on end. In a moment or two there came the expected break:—

"I haven't the remotest idea what you are talking about," remarked the bewildered operator at Corderoy; "but if it's anything important, I beg you to telegraph slowly."

"All right," replied Fenton, "that was merely my fancy speed. I practise it now and then so that people along the line won't fall into the idea that Stumpville is a slow place. I was merely sending along my compliments and asking you what sort of a settlement Corderoy is."

"Oh, you're the new man at Stumpville, are you? I heard there was going to be a change. How do you like it?"

"Not very well; still, it isn't as bad as it looked when I came here the other day. How about Corderoy? Have you a saw-mill there or any modern improvements?"

"No, we are just a little neck of the woods. Four or five shanties and a blacksmith shop for the lumbermen."

"What, haven't you even a tavern?"

"No."

"Oh, we're away ahead of you. I'm boarding at The Star of Empire Hotel. Where do you stay?"

"In one of the shanties, of course. Did you think I camped out?"

"I didn't know. That's why I asked."

After a few moments' pause Corderoy inquired:—

"Was that real telegraphing you were doing a moment ago, or were you only trying to shatter the instrument?"

"Couldn't you tell it was real?"

"No. You frightened the life out of me. I thought there was a disaster of some kind impending, or that the lightning had struck the wires."

"Well, Corderoy, you are farther in the woods than I thought. Listen to this. I'll repeat it again and again and see if you can make head or tail of it."

The key flew up and down for a few seconds, then paused.

"How's that, umpire?" he said.

"I couldn't make you out. You were saying what-——"

"I was asking, what's your name? Give me an introduction."

"Jack Moran. What's yours?"

"Tom Fenton."

"Well, Tom Fenton, how is it that so good an operator is cooped up in a place like Stumpville? Drink?"

"No; strike. I went out on that strike six months ago and didn't get in again; that's all."

"Let me condole with you. Had you a good situation before?"

"First-rate, but didn't know enough to hang on to it."

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-three. How old are you?"

"Oh, if you're only twenty-three, then the world's before you. I shouldn't get discouraged if I were you."

"I'm not. I've just been shaking up the train-dispatcher's office, and they broke in on me three times"

"Good. You'll make those people in the city have some respect for this backwoods settlement."

"That was my intention But you haven't answered my question, which was—how old are you?"

"Me? Oh, I'm only seventeen."

"Good gracious! Do they put a kid like you in such an important position as Corderoy?"

"Now you are sneering, Mr. Thomas. Corderoy, of course, is only a kind of section-house, with a long switch where we side-track freight trains. There isn't much doing here."

"How do you pass your time?"

"Oh, just grin and bear it, that's all."

"Say, I can send you along some books if you would like to read, and I can give you a newspaper the day after."

"Thanks. I'll be very much obliged."

"I say, Jack, seeing you're a youngster, will you take some good advice?"

"Send it along, and if I don't like it I'll return it."

"All right. You ought to brush up your telegraphing a little. You are pretty slow, you know."

"Yes, I know I am. Will you send over the wire something at a good speed now and then, so that I may practise?"

"I shall be delighted. You see, now's your time to pitch in and learn; then, when you get the offer of a better situation, you are ready for it."

"Thank you ever so much."

This ended their first conversation, for a freight train came in, but they had many another. Tom grew to be very fond of his western neighbour, who seemed so anxious to learn. There was a downy innocence about the youth that pleased the elder man, and under instruction the boy became a creditable operator. Fenton invited Jack to come and have dinner with him some day when he could get away, but the westerner never seemed able to quit his post, for, of course, there was no one who could act as substitute. Fenton sent him books and the newspaper, which were gratefully received, and told him story after story of the town and all its fascinations. "I must brighten up the kid's intellect," he said to himself; and indeed the kid proved an apt pupil. He had an alert sense of humour and keenly appreciated the good things that were sent over the wire to him. This companionship between two persons who had never seen each other made a dull life more interesting for both of them, and Tom saw with pleasure that Jack's telegraphic style was improving greatly by the practice he was getting.

One Sunday, however, an unexpected incident occurred which, as the novelists say, changed the tenor of Tom Fenton's life for him. Sunday was a drowsy, lazy day in Stumpville, with nothing going on, and Tom was spending it as usual in his telegraph-room, seated on the wooden chair tilted back against the wall, with his feet elevated to the bench on which the silent instrument rested. A text-book on electricity had been thrown aside, and Tom was absorbed in a ten-cent novel. The door, slightly ajar, was quietly

pushed open, and the young man, glancing up, was amazed to see standing in the vacancy a strikingly handsome young woman, dressed in the dainty fashion that betokened the city.

"I beg your pardon," she said, hesitatingly.

Tom's feet came down to the floor with a crash, and he arose in some confusion.

"THE YOUNG MAN, GLANCING UP, WAS AMAZED TO SEE STANDING IN THE VACANCY A STRIKINGLY HANDSOME YOUNG WOMAN."

"I wanted to know," she continued, "when there is a train for Tenstrike?"

"For Tenstrike? Bless my soul, there's no train until to-morrow evening!"

The girl made what seemed to be a gesture of despair.

"Till to-morrow evening," she echoed. "Is there no way of getting to the city before then?"

"Not unless you walk along the track," said Tom.

"Aren't there any freight trains that would take a passenger who was in a hurry?"

The young man shook his head.

"Sunday's a day off on the branch," he explained. "We have rarely any Sunday freights except in the autumn when the wheat is moving."

The young lady was evidently troubled at this lack of enterprise on the part of the branch, and her smooth brow wrinkled in perplexity. "If I walked down the line to Ross," she said at last, "could I get a train there? Ross is the next point east, is it not?"

"Yes, but you would be no better off there. There is nothing from Ross going east which you could take before to-morrow evening. So you see there is no help for it but to wait where you are, Miss——"

He hesitated at the word "Miss," and looked up inquiringly with a semi-smile hovering about the corners of his lips. The girl blushed very prettily, then said:—

"Miss De Forest is my name."

"A good name for this locality," rejoined Tom, easily.

"Oh, but I don't live in this locality," replied the girl, drawing herself up with some touch of scorn in her tone for the neighbourhood, which her auditor so sympathized with that he did not resent it.

"I knew you didn't," he answered, hastily. "Will you come in and sit down, Miss De Forest?" and seeing she was in some doubt about accepting the invitation, he continued: "If you knew how lonesome it was for a person to live here, who sees nobody he cares to speak to from one week's end to another, you would have compassion, and, by the way, my name is Fenton. I shall be glad if you will consider us formally introduced."

The girl smiled, made no objection, and took the chair he offered her.

"Are you the station-master here?" she asked.

"Oh, occasionally. I'm telegraph operator always; ticket-seller when anyone wants to buy; signalman and switch-tender in an emergency; and general Pooh-Bah of the woods."

"It must keep you busy," she ventured.

"No; it doesn't. Really the situation

sometimes fills me with despair, Miss De Forest. I dare not leave this machine for fear something important might come over the wire, and yet nothing important ever does come. I see no one but a lot of ignorant freight-train brakemen and the conductor of the local twice a day. Then society is varied by communion with the mill-hands at meal-times. It seems rather hopeless to a man who has been accustomed to the bustle and importance of a city office. If it wasn't for Jack Moran I don't know what I would do."

"Oh! Who is Jack Moran?"

"He is the operator at the next station farther west. He is only a boy, but an awful nice fellow, and I've kind of taken him under my wing, teaching him rapid telegraphy. He is getting on splendidly, and will be one of the best operators on the line before long."

"Always excepting yourself, I suppose?" said Miss De Forest, looking up archly at him as he sat on the telegraph-table, swinging his foot to and fro, gazing down with much interest at her.

"Yes, always excepting myself," replied Tom, with honest confidence. "If I ever get again into as good a position as I held before I'm going to have Jack as my assistant."

"Perhaps that is why he is so industrious," said the young woman.

"Oh, no, there's nothing self-seeking about Jack. Besides, he has no notion of my intention. I am not going to put ideas into the youngster's head that I may not be able to fulfil."

"He is a lucky boy," said the girl, musingly, "to have such a good friend and never suspect it. What sort of a looking fellow is he?"

"I have never seen him."

"Then how did you two get acquainted?"

"Oh, over the wires. We chatter to each other when the line isn't working on official business, which is most of the time."

Tom's visitor proved deeply interested in telegraphing, and he explained the workings of the instrument, the grounding of wires, the care of batteries, and other electrical particulars. Never had teaching been such an absorbing, fascinating pursuit before. At last the girl jumped up in a panic.

"I must be going," she said.

Fenton looked at his watch and saw how time had fled.

"I'll tell you what you must do, Miss De Forest," he said; "you're coming with me to the hotel for dinner."

"Oh no, no, no," cried the girl, visibly terrified by the proposal.

"Why, yes, you are. It's all right. It looks rough on the outside, but I tell you the cook's pie is worth coming to Stumpville to get a slice of. I'm afraid our dried pumpkin is all gone and the fresh fruit hasn't come into season yet, but we are promised to-day a strawberry shortcake that will be a dream of delight. You must come."

"I really couldn't think of it. I have no desire to meet your employés of the saw-mill."

"That's so," said Tom, taken aback. "Still, though they're rough chaps, they're a good lot. I'll tell you what we'll do. You stay here and I'll go over to the hotel and bring a meal for us both, and we'll enjoy it here in comfort and alone."

The girl was about to protest when he continued, impetuously enamoured of his new scheme:—

"You see, the folks with whom you are staying think you are gone; in fact, I am amazed that there is anyone in Stumpville who doesn't know there are no trains from here on Sunday. Where are you staying, by the way?"

Either this question or the proposal to lunch together had so perturbed Miss de Forest that she answered hastily, and rather inconsequently:—

"But what if someone should come here when you were gone?"

"Oh, there is no danger of that," cried Tom. "No one ever comes here."

"You are sure it won't be too much trouble?" she asked, breathlessly.

"Trouble? No trouble at all—a delight. Then that's settled," he added, hurriedly, fearing she might change her mind. "What will you drink, tea or milk?"

"Milk, if you please."

Next instant he was gone. The young woman moved quickly to the window and looked up and down the track with alarm in her eyes as if she contemplated flight. Then she went to the door, but stopped on the threshold; with some effort recovered her composure and sat down again.

Presently the amateur waiter came in jubilantly with a broad tray carrying all the components of a substantial meal. They had a jolly lunch together, and at the end of it she rose and said that now she must surely go.

"Well, if you must, you must," he murmured, with a sigh. "I'll walk down town with you, if I may."

She stood opposite him and held out her hand, with an appealing look in her liquid black eyes.

"I wish you wouldn't," she pleaded. "You have been very kind to a stranger, so please do not embarrass me by coming with me. I'd much rather you wouldn't."

He was holding her hand and said, with a trace of disappointment in his tone:—

"I shall do exactly what you wish, but I will see you to-morrow when you go east on the local."

"You will see me when I go east on the local," she repeated after him.

"Won't you give me your address?" he pleaded.

"I'll give it to you to-morrow; and if I forget it then I will send it to you. Good-bye, and many, many thanks!"

She was gone, and the day seemed to darken with her departure. He made a motion to follow her, but arrested himself and sat down in the wooden chair.

The girl walked hurriedly through the village until she was out of sight of the station, then she turned eastward into the forest. After tramping for two miles or more with a directness which showed an intimate acquaintance with the wood she came upon the railway at a point where a light hand-car had been lifted from the track. She took a wooden lever that lay on the car and with an expertness that would have amazed her new acquaintance she prised the wheels on to the rail. She pushed the car towards the west, sprang on board, and sped away toward the declining sun, working the walking beam with all the skill of an old railway hand. As she approached the long switch of Corderoy she stopped, unlocked it, and side-tracked her little car. She went direct into the telegraph office, perched herself on the stool there, placed her capable hand on the key, and rattled forth the letters, "St—St—St—St," the call for Stumpville.

"SHE SPED AWAY TOWARD THE DECLINING SUN."

Tom quickly answered.

"Is that you, Jack? I was trying to call you up a while ago. What are you doing there on Sunday?"

"Oh, I just happened in. I thought you might be there and thought I would call you up. I have nothing at all to say except to wish you good-day."

"Oh, but I have heaps to tell," answered Tom. "I beg to inform you, Jack, that I have had a visit from an angel. Imagine the existence of a girl in the universe who thought trains left Stumpville on Sunday! However, it was very lucky for me, and we've had the most charming conversation, which, now that it is ended, makes this place seem duller than ever. She was the prettiest girl I ever saw."

"Really. How was she dressed?"

"Dressed! What a question for a kid like you to ask! What do you know about dress? I don't remember how she was dressed, but the effect was stunning. Dressed? Why she looked like a girl from Paris."

"What is her name?"

"Miss De Forest. A rattling fine girl. How in the world she ever drifted to this abandoned spot I don't know. She is going east to-morrow on the local. I shall merely

exist until the local comes in. I hope it will be two hours late, and that she will be here an hour too soon."

"Did you fascinate her, Tom?"

"See here, kid, that's not the way for an infant to talk. You don't understand anything about these things. Wait till your time comes, and then you won't try to say cynical things. Be a good boy, and some time a nice girl will come to see you; or, what's the same thing, you'll go to see her."

"Where does she live? In Tenstrike?"

"I don't know yet, but I'll find out to-morrow. I rather think she does, and if that is so I'm going to move heaven and earth and the railway company to get promoted to Tenstrike. I flatter myself the young lady won't object to seeing me there."

"Tom, don't get conceited."

"Kid, don't be impertinent. If Miss De Forest comes early to-morrow I'll be conceited in spite of all you can say. If she comes just in the nick of time I'll be in despair, and so will ask for whatever consolation you can give."

"All right, Tom; I'll stand by you, whatever happens. Remember, if the girl ignores you, you have me to fall back upon."

"That's very comforting, Jack, but it doesn't quite make up, you know."

The young woman laughed at this answer as it was ticked off to her.

"Oh, doesn't it?" she said to herself, and then bade good-bye to Stumpville.

When the local came in next evening Tom tried to hold it on one pretence or another, looking down the sandy street, but no Miss De Forest comforted his anxious eyes, and from that day on she disappeared as completely from his cognizance as if she had been a spirit of the forest. In vain he made inquiry. No one in Stumpville had ever seen anyone resembling her. He put an advertisement in the Tenstrike morning paper: "Will the young lady who called upon the telegrapher kindly send him her address?" But this stood for a week unnoticed; Tom rubbing his eyes and wondering if he had fallen asleep that Sunday and dreamt it all. Then happened a series of events which had an important bearing on his future, and almost drove the remembrance of the lady of mystery from his mind.

"ALL RIGHT, TOM; I'LL STAND BY YOU, WHATEVER HAPPENS."

No. 6, the west-bound express, sped through Stumpville each day about noon. At some siding to the west, whose situation was determined by the train-dispatcher, based upon a mathematical calculation depending upon the lateness of either or both trains, the express passed No. 11, a fast freight going east. One day the problem was complicated by the intervention of a special, presumably carrying some of the officers over the road, and, as usual, in a great hurry. The express was late, and the fast freight ridiculously on time. Hazily Fenton gathered from the chattering of the instrument that the special was to run ahead of the express, but that no one of the three trains was to stop at Stumpville, so the young man paid but little attention to the message not intended for him.

Presently the nervous call, "St—St—St—St," woke him from his reverie and he sprang to the instrument. There was something insistent in the sharp click of the sounder. The message that hurriedly followed was sufficiently amazing, and he knew by the rapidity of it, if for no other reason, that it was Jack Moran who was telegraphing.

"Stop everything east and west of Stumpville. Set the signals at once and return instanter."

"Sloan!" shouted the young man, making the station ring with his stentorian call. "Set the signals against east and west."

But there was no reply. Sloan was not within hearing, so Fenton himself ran out on the platform, saw at a glance that the line was open both ways, and kicked away the clutches that allowed the semaphores to swing out over the line in each direction a prohibitive red arm. He calmed down as he saw no trains in sight and returned to the telegraph-office. The call for his station was vibrating impatiently in the air. He checked the chatter and listened.

"Telegraph instantly to Ross and tell them to hold No. 6 until you release her. Use the train-dispatcher's signature."

"Hold on, Jack," replied Fenton. "I can't do *that*, you know. I'm not running the line."

"In God's name," came the appeal, "do as I tell you at once. I will explain later. Every moment is vital. There will be a smash if you delay."

Now, for an ordinary operator to make Ross or anyone else think that a train-dispatcher was communicating with him when he wasn't, is an offence in railway circles that is unforgivable. Forgery outside that circle is of little matter compared with what Fenton at once set himself to do. He ordered the express stopped at Ross, and used the cabalistic letters which signified that the order came from the train-dispatcher, then he turned to Corderoy for explanation, rattling out his knowledge of the crime he had committed.

"Why didn't you telegraph to Ross yourself?" he asked Moran.

"You have a firm touch on the key, and I haven't," was the answer. "There would have been inquiries, and then it would have been too late. Here is what has happened. The train-dispatcher ordered me to hold 11 until the special passes. No. 11 had just gone out of the station as the message began to come. I knew that the special had left Ross, so I told you to hold both trains at Stumpville, but the special thinks it has a clear right-of-way, and No. 6 is to follow it. If your telegram wasn't in time to stop No. 6 at Ross you must look out she does not telescope the special at Stumpville. There is just one more thing I want to say. I want you to take the responsibility of everything that has been done, as if you did it yourself."

"That's rather a large order," said Fenton. "You cause me to break every rule of the road, and then calmly ask me to take all responsibility."

"I beg you to do it," pleaded Corderoy. "You see, I'm only seventeen; you are a grown man and accustomed to the railroad business."

"All right, Jack, don't worry. I'll stand the brunt of it. If the lay-out is as you say, they can't make very much fuss, unless about the train-dispatcher's signature, but I'll stand the racket." Tom said to himself, as he turned away, "I got bounced once before for sticking by my comrades, and if it happens again, well, Stumpville won't be a big loss."

There was now little time for meditation. Away to the east an angry engine was swearing. The short toot, toot said as plainly as words:—

"What the dickens are you stopping us here for? Do you know who we are?"

Fenton strode out to the platform and saw dimly in the distance to the west the fast freight coming on, while the special, slowed down, was breaking all regulations by passing the eastern semaphore, very cautiously, however, and approaching the station for an explanation. This was exactly what Fenton wanted, for the still standing signal would arrest the express if she had passed Ross before his telegram reached there. Sloan came puffing up from the tavern, having heard the indignant whistle of the special, and therefore knew that something was wrong.

"Here, you confirmed loafer!" cried Fenton. "Get a move on you. Open the upper switch and side-track No. 11."

"All right, Mr. Fenton," said the culprit, as he trotted down the track toward the west.

The short special came cautiously up alongside the platform, and a stout man with red face and white side-whiskers, and no very pleased expression on his countenance, stepped off.

"Who is in charge here?" he demanded.

"I am, sir."

"Why have you stopped this special?"

"That's the reason, sir," said Fenton, waving his hand towards the approaching freight. "The order to side-track No. 11 at Corderoy arrived too late. I therefore had to stop you until I could side-track No. 11. You won't be delayed two minutes, sir."

"Oh," said the stout gentleman, as he glanced toward the west, where he saw the fast freight swing in like a serpent to the

switch. The situation needed no explaining to a railway man.

"I also took the liberty of telegraphing to Ross, and I used the train-dispatcher's code-word."

"The deuce you did," growled the stout man, glancing keenly at him.

"Yes, sir; I had to hold No. 6 at Ross, or there was a danger of her telescoping your car."

"Couldn't you have done that without pretending to be the train-dispatcher?"

"COULDN'T YOU HAVE DONE THAT WITHOUT PRETENDING TO BE THE TRAIN-DISPATCHER?"

"I could, sir, but it would have been a risk, and there was no time to lose."

"What's your name?"

"Thomas Fenton."

"You have a good deal of confidence in yourself for a backwoodsman."

"I was not always in the backwoods, sir; I was in the train-dispatcher's office on one of the Vanderbilt lines. You have a clear right-of-way now, sir."

"All right. I hope you haven't smashed anything somewhere else."

"I hope not, sir."

"Good-day."

The stout man mounted his car without a word of either thanks or censure, and the special sped to the west. Fenton released No. 6, holding No. 11 on the side-track until the express had passed.

Three days later Jim Mason swung off the morning local. He glanced around at Stumpville with an expression of unmodified disgust, and he greeted Fenton with boisterous familiarity.

"Here's a couple of letters for you, old man. I believe there's a chin-chin ahead of you at the governor's office, so I don't envy you; but keep a stiff upper lip, and get back here as quick as you can, for I have to take your place meanwhile, and I tell you I don't want to be held up at Stumpville any longer than is necessary."

One letter was from the general manager, who curtly ordered Fenton to report at the head office, Tenstrike City, next day at ten o'clock. The other note was marked private, and Fenton saw with amazement that it was from the train-dispatcher, who asked Tom to call on him that evening as soon as he reached the city, and say nothing to anybody in the interval. Fenton saw at once that the train-dispatcher was trembling for his position, and he expected an appeal from that official because it must have been through his neglect that the tangle of the three trains had arisen. This reasonable surmise, however, proved utterly erroneous. He found the train-dispatcher an alert, capable man, who received him with abrupt good nature.

"I know all the details of this matter," he said, "and I thought I would give you a point or two before you see the old man. You imagine, I suppose, that I was to blame for the tardy dispatch to Corderoy? That is not the case. It was the fault of my assistant, who was on duty at the time. My position has been made very difficult by the fact that my assistant is the old man's nephew. Everybody in the general offices knows that the nephew isn't worth his salt except the old man, and I guess this has shaken him up a

bit, because he has removed his nephew to the accountant's department, so he won't smash anything but figures. That leaves the office of assistant vacant, and, at the moment, I haven't anybody that I care to put into the place. Now, you're the man I call the demon telegrapher. Have you had any experience in train office work?"

"Yes, I was assistant to Galloway."

"You don't tell me! How did you come to quit?"

"The strike."

"Ah, I see. Well, I'm to meet the old man to-night, and I'll ask him to let you come on as assistant. He's a rather crusty old gentleman, but a first-rate railway man, except where his nephew is concerned. Now, I want to give you a word or two of advice. Don't drop a hint about the mistake, or who caused it, or anything of that kind. Just hold to it that you were resolved to save the special and the express, and that you *did* save them."

Fenton knew, of course, that by "the old man" the train-dispatcher referred to the general manager, and he asked if that was the gentleman who was in the special.

"Yes. He was taking a turn over the road, and he had his wife and two daughters with him, so he didn't want a wreck. You've got things all your own way if you work it right and keep your temper."

"I'll try," said Tom, "for I'm tired of Stumpville."

Next morning's interview was brief and to the point.

"Well, young man," said the general manager, "I suppose you've discussed this affair with various friends? What conclusion have you come to?"

"I have no friends, sir, along this line."

"But I understand you operators communicate with each other over the wires. Have you told them up and down how near we came to having an accident?"

"No, sir."

"Didn't you telegraph to Ross and apologize for using the train-dispatcher's signal?"

"No, sir. I owed whatever explanation there was to be made to you or to the train-dispatcher, and to no one else."

"Quite right," said the old man. "I like to meet a person now and then who can keep his mouth shut. Spencer tells me you have been in Galloway's office. Is that true?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then you understand the work?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very well. Report at once to Spencer, and I think he'll have no difficulty in finding a place for you."

"Thank you, sir."

"I may add that no disaster occurred through your quite unwarranted use of Spencer's signature."

"I am very glad to hear it, sir."

"Good-day," snapped the general manager, and Fenton went to find Spencer.

Fenton's first pleasure after the conclusive interview with the train-dispatcher was to write a long letter to Jack Moran. He detailed all that had taken place, then said: "So you see, Jack, I am in a position that by rights belongs to you. If you understood the work of this office as I do I would at once tell the whole truth and have you put here in my place; but, even if I were deposed now, you are not qualified to accept the position if it were offered you. So here's what I'm going to do. I shall fit in here and make friends. I don't want to ask any favours of Mr. Spencer until I show him I'm a person to be trusted; then I shall tell him the progress you have made in telegraphing in the past two months, and I shall ask him to give you the best place he has vacant in the office."

To this he received a somewhat unexpected answer: "I implore you not to do anything in the line of getting me a situation in the city," wrote Jack, "where, even if you succeeded in getting me promotion, I would not accept it. I am perfectly contented where I am and refuse to be removed. This is why I asked you to take the responsibility of my order. I knew that if there was any sense at head-quarters the saving of these two trains would lead to your promotion, and, strange as it may seem to you, promotion is the one thing I wish to avoid, and I suppose I am the only operator on the line of whom that can be said. My attitude, however, will be easy to understand when I tell you that my father, who lives at Corderoy, owns about a thousand acres of pine-timbered land in this district, which we expect some day will be valuable. The work here is not difficult, and I live at home and help him. So, you see, I have no wish to move, and I beg of you not to speak on my behalf to the train-dispatcher, or to anyone else. If I change my mind I will write to you."

So it came about that the first favour Fenton asked from Spencer was a day off, getting which, he boarded the local in the morning with a pass in his pocket for

Corderoy and return. He wanted to see Jack anyway, and expected very speedily to show the foolish young fellow that the real way to help his father was to come to town on a much better salary than he was getting.

As he stepped off at the platform of Corderoy he could scarcely resist a shout as he recognised, standing in the doorway, the young woman who had so mysteriously disappeared from his view at Stumpville that never-to-be-forgotten Sunday. She saw him at the same moment and instantly whipped out of sight.

"Oh, you don't do that a second time," cried Tom, springing forward.

The waiting-room was empty, but the door of the telegraph-office had closed with a bang, so Tom precipitated himself against it and it gave way before his impetuosity.

The girl he had so long sought in vain stood with her back against the telegraph table, facing him resolutely but with flaming cheeks.

"Why, Miss De Forest," he said, "what are you doing in Corderoy?"

"Why shouldn't I be here? This is my home," gasped the girl.

"Your home? I thought you lived in Tenstrike!"

"I never said so."

"Do you mean to tell me that you—that you—you are Jack Moran?"

"Jacqueline De Forest Moran, if you will have the whole name, Mr. Fenton," said the girl, with a nervous little laugh. "It seems rather an imposing title for such a place as this, doesn't it? So my friends all call me Jack. You see," she exclaimed, breathlessly, "we are of French extraction, and that perhaps accounts for it, as well as for my boldness in daring to visit you uninvited."

"Well, now I'm visiting you uninvited, and I can tell you, Miss Jack, I'm very glad I came. Won't you say you're not sorry?"

"I certainly wanted to see you again. You understand now," she continued, hurriedly, "why it was of no use to speak to the train-dispatcher about me. You selfish men don't allow girls to have a good situation in your city offices."

"Oh, I don't know about that," said Tom, slowly. "I'm glad, though, I didn't speak to Mr. Spencer, because I'm going to offer you a situation myself. You heard what I said, Jacqueline? I told you when you visited me that I was resolved to have Jack Moran for my assistant. If I was fixed in that purpose then, I am ten times more so now. Are you resolved never to leave Corderoy, Jacqueline?"

The girl turned her burning face away from him, her fingers nervously agitating the key, and quite unconsciously repeating the call: "St—St—St."

"It depends altogether on who sends the message—Tom," she said, at last.

"'IT DEPENDS ALTOGETHER ON WHO SENDS THE MESSAGE—TOM,' SHE SAID, AT LAST."

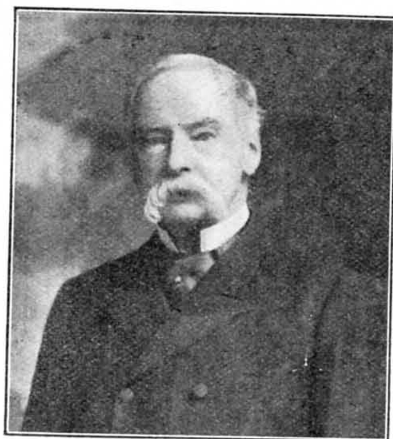
Our Graphic Humorists.

THEIR FUNNIEST PICTURES AS CHOSEN BY THEMSELVES.

BY FREDERICK DOLMAN.

T is related of Sir John Tenniel that when in his early manhood he was offered a place on the staff of *Punch* his first feeling was one of indignation. "Do they suppose there is anything funny about me?" he is said to have inquired of his nearest and dearest friends. On second thoughts, however, the artist, whose aspirations were for classic painting, saw that the work for *Punch* had its serious dignity; and now at the close of his long career Sir John Tenniel must feel that his early ambition has been by no means altogether frustrated. Has he not on innumerable occasions given to the cartoon the classic power of national feeling expressed in lines of severe accuracy and restraint?

At the same time, the sequel has shown that Mark Lemon, the then Editor of *Punch*, must have known young Tenniel better than he knew himself. In a graphic humorist no technical ability can take the place of a sense of humour, and in that meaning there must have been "something funny" about the artist chosen to succeed the celebrated Richard Doyle. Sir John Tenniel has always denied that he was a caricaturist, but he confesses to a very keen sense of humour, and to a belief that his drawings are sometimes really funny. The words of this confession suggest an interesting question as to the relationship between the artist's and his public's sense of humour. With this question upon my lips I have been making a round of calls upon our leading graphic humorists, asking each artist to mention his most successful effort, as it seems to him, for reproduction in THE STRAND MAGAZINE.



SIR JOHN TENNIEL.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

I first saw Sir John Tenniel himself at his Maida Vale house, in a room which, it is of significance to note, is adorned by engravings from the works of Van Dyck, Rubens, Reynolds, and other of the great masters. In answering my question Sir John consulted a volume of his cartoons recently issued from the office of *Punch*. This volume of selections covers the whole period of his connection with the paper, beginning with the opening of the Great Exhibition on May Day, 1851, and ending with "Time's Appeal" on New Year's Day, 1901—Sir John's last *Punch* cartoon.

Sir John went through the volume in a way which surprised me when I remembered that he was a man of eighty-one who many years ago had lost the sight of an eye as the result of a fencing accident; only once or twice did he ask for my assistance with the smaller print.

The cartoon which appears in these pages as the choice of its author was the result, it will be observed, of one of Sir John's rare digressions from the world of *la haute politique*. What it was which led him from his usual path he did not seem to remember — perhaps it was the too-sonorous voice of a passing costermonger, perhaps the activity of the L.C.C. in a less difficult region than that of street noises. Be that as it may, the cartoon in its comic spirit had two competitors in the sphere of Imperial statesmanship. One of these was the memorable "Mosé in Egetto," which appeared in December, 1875, about the time when Lord Beaconsfield had bought for this country the Khedive's shares in the Suez Canal Company. Lord Beaconsfield is drawn standing

OUR MASTERS' MASTERS.—NEWSPAPER HAWKER: "Shout away, Bill! We're safe enough as long as we votes 'Progressive'!!"
By permission of the] BY SIR JOHN TENNIEL. [*Proprietors of "Punch."*

I spent an hour or so with Mr. Furniss one evening in his studio at Regent's Park, observing, but not assisting in—I was very careful about that—the process of selection. We were surrounded by volumes of these publications, as well as by not a few of the originals, and, if prolonged, the task was an entertaining one—at any rate for me. Mr. Furniss's first choice was rather in favour of a caricature of Gladstone, which had indirectly received high praise from Mr. John Morley. Then it leaned for a few moments to a memorable *Punch* picture on the subject of Sir William Harcourt; it was entitled "Harcourts All," and was suggested by a speech of Lord Randolph Churchill, who had banteringly alluded to the possibility of the House of Lords consisting entirely of Sir William Harcourts.

"But the drawing of the picture is so bad," Mr. Furniss protested, as I laughed over the humour of its idea. "It was done rather in a hurry, I remember, at Felixstowe, where I was recuperating. Lucy wired the subject down to me there, and the picture was done in the midst of a match at golf."

Mrs. Furniss, Miss Furniss, and even Master Furniss were called into council. Miss Furniss, who is herself an art student at Heatherley's, strongly urged the claims of one of her father's "Swelled Heads" series, the original drawing of which had been given to her as a birthday present, and it certainly embodied, I thought, one of the artist's funniest conceptions. But Mr. Furniss was not to be "rushed" by the young lady's enthusiasm.

Quite suddenly, when we were all reduced to despair, Mr. Furniss had his inspiration.

"Other artists," he exclaimed, "may think fit to choose one of their most elaborate cartoons. But for my part, I will stand or fall in your STRAND MAGAZINE article by my little 'Black Beetle.'"

Mr. Furniss's "Black Beetle" was famous in the pages of *Punch* during a considerable

on the Egyptian desert, with his finger at the side of his nose, looking at the Sphinx, on whose features there is a delightfully expressive wink. In the second cartoon, which was published in August, 1878, after the Berlin Conference, we have Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury dancing a "*pas de deux*," from "the Scène de Triomphe in the Grand Anglo-Turkish Ballet d'Action." But without much hesitation Sir John rejects both these efforts of his sense of humour in favour of "Our Masters' Masters."

Mr. Harry Furniss had the greatest possible difficulty in complying with my request. This arose, of course, from the fact that for more than twenty years his pencil has been as versatile in its humour as it has been prolific. Mr. Furniss made a calculation of the number of his contributions to *Punch* during his twelve years' membership of its staff, and it ran into several thousands, and since then he has made innumerable drawings for *Lika Joko*, the *New Budget*, *Fair Game*, and other periodicals, alive and extinct.

part of his connection with the paper, making its first appearance in "The Essence of Parliament" on March 19th, 1881.

MR. HARRY FURNISS.
From a Photo. by See & Epler, New York.

"One day," said the caricaturist in explaining the birth of the creature, "I watched Captain Gosset, the Serjeant-at-Arms, from the Press Gallery walk up the floor of the House in Court dress, his knee-breeches showing off his rather bandy legs, elbows akimbo, and curious gait; his back view at once suggested the beetle, and as 'The Black Beetle' he became known."

THE BLACK BEETLE.—BY MR. HARRY FURNISS.
By permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

It was said that the caricature gave great offence to the official, but Mr. Furniss assures me that he has reason to know that this was not the case. An M.P. one day introduced him to Captain Gosset in the Serjeant-at-Arms' private room, and there on the wall among many portraits of Parliamentary leaders was a row of "Black Beetles" cut out from *Punch*.

Mr. A. S. Boyd, who is now so well known by the humorous drawings which he contributes to *Punch*, was at the beginning of his career a painter of landscape and *genre* subjects, and afterwards under the pseudonym of "Twym" was the author of comic illustrations in *Quiz* and *The Bailie*, of Glasgow.

MR. A. S. BOYD.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

It was with Mr. Boyd I spent a most agreeable time at his "Hut" in the Boundary Road, St. John's Wood, whilst he cross-examined himself on the question submitted to him and rummaged through a large collection of *Punch* and other drawings. Mr. Boyd was busy at his drawing-board—with some book illustration, I believe—but he turned gaily aside from a half-finished sketch and entered heartily into the spirit of my inquiry. After much turning over of proofs and originals the artist's choice was eventually reduced to three.

In the first the joke was concerned with a little Scotch lassie and her mother. As a Scotsman Mr. Boyd evidently preferred it, but the artist and the humorist asserted themselves in him, and it was reluctantly discarded. The second candidate had a testimonial from Mr. W. W. Jacobs, who was strongly of opinion that it was the funniest thing he had done—a small drummer-boy walking by the side of his inamorata, a big, buxom 'Arriett, whom he is solemnly scolding for disrespect to the etiquette of the Army. The third drawing, which is here reproduced, was favoured by Mrs. Boyd, and on reflection the artist found

A SURPRISED PARTY.—"Why the d-d-doose don't you ring your bell?"—BY MR. A. S. BOYD.
By permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

that his matured opinion agreed with that of his wife.

"Mrs. Boyd," he remarks, "may be prejudiced in favour of this subject because it was originally suggested by her, although the treatment of it, arrangement of the figures and so forth, are my own. As a rule, the ideas for my humorous pictures arise out of my own personal experiences. Yes, this was the case with the drawing you were laughing at just now."

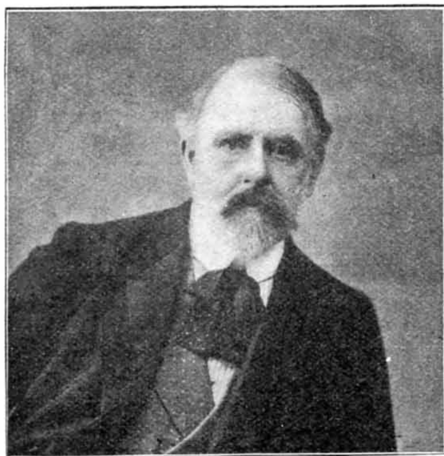
This was a little *Punch* picture which many readers will doubtless remember as well as I did. An old gentleman suddenly turning a corner and coming into collision with a little girl's hoop, with the result that—with the cycling fiend in his mind—he impulsively exclaims, "Why the deuce didn't you ring your bell?" A day or two before this drawing was made Mr. Boyd had been walking in St. John's Wood and had a child's hoop driven up against him in much the same way. It was typical of the way in which he can turn the little incidents of daily life to humorous pictorial account.

"Blush! Me blush! Garn! I couldn't if I tried. Blush yourself if yer wants to."
BY F. C. GOULD.
From the Westminster Gazette.

Although Mr. Boyd is forty-seven, it is only ten years since he made his home in London, and it was in 1894 that he was admitted into the pages of *Punch*. Even now, with all the success which London has given him, I should say that he had the strongest "Auld Lang Syne" feeling for Glasgow and Glasgow life. Whilst Mr. Boyd is absent for a few minutes from the studio at "The Hut" I put my hand upon a mass of papers and magazines, and the first which it brings forth is the last-published number of *The Bailie*, the little Glasgow weekly on which his spurs were won as a humorous draughtsman.

As a caricaturist Mr. F. C. Gould's fame is now indissolubly associated with the personality of Mr. Chamberlain. I was not surprised, therefore, on calling at the *Westminster Gazette* office to find that his choice had fallen on one of his inimitable presentments of that right hon. gentleman. It wavered for a moment, however, on a recent cartoon, wherein the Colonial Secretary figured in company with the Prime Minister, Mr. Balfour, and the Duke of Devonshire, in the guise of "Our Pierrots" performing on "the sands of history."

The cartoon reproduced on this page, as "F.C.G." reminded me, is one of a series which had its origin in a remark which was made by Mr. Chamberlain when speaking to a Staffordshire audience at Lichfield during the General Election of 1900: "If it were really true that I was responsible for the war I should say that it was a feather in my cap.'' Mr. Chamberlain as a Red Indian was followed by Mr. Chamberlain as a coster-girl.



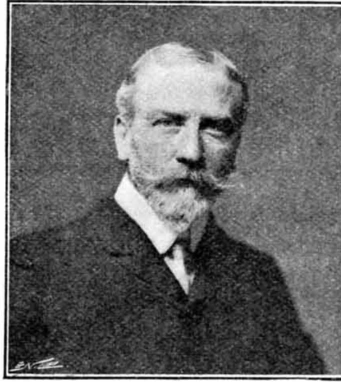
MR. F. C. GOULD.
From a Photo. by Fradelle & Young.

It is characteristic of Mr. Gould's work, I may add, that this caricature should have been suggested by a speech. He is a close

student of speeches both in and out of Parliament, and I remember his once telling me that he considered a careful study of politics to be as necessary to the cartoonist as to the leader-writer. At the same time his happiest efforts in the general estimation are the result of a flash of inspiration rather than of a train of thought. In the case of "Unblushing," as usually, "F.C.G." at once "spotted" the passage in the speech which became the text to the picture.

As is well known, the originals of Mr. Gould's cartoons find a ready sale, and in the course of our conversation I asked him who were the most frequent purchasers, but he replied that as they were very often Conservative readers of the *Westminster Gazette* they might not care to have their identity disclosed.

Mr. Gould is, of course, well known to every reader of this Magazine, as his drawings have illustrated Mr. Lucy's papers "From Behind the Speaker's Chair" for many years.



MR. E. T. REED.
From a Photo. by Henry Van der Weyde.

Mr. E. T. Reed"s telegraphic address, I observed on his notepaper, is "Prehistoric." Although he is now installed in Mr. Furniss's place as *Punch's* Parliamentary artist, I quite expected, as I wended my way to Mr. Reed's West Kensington flat, that his choice would be made from those "Prehistoric Peeps" for which Mr. Reed has become famous. The choice of "Prehistoric Mixed Bathing" was not at once made, however, Mr. Reed sending it by post a few days subsequent to my call. The drawing, which was one of a series of three called "The Stone Age Revisited," appeared only last summer in "*Punch's* Holiday Book."

"There is no particular story about it," Mr. Reed assures me. The first of the "Prehistoric Peeps" appeared in the Christmas number of 1893, three years after his appointment on the staff of *Punch*: this was "The First Hansom." The original idea seems to have arisen in Mr. Reed's mind from visiting museums and examining their evidences of prehistoric life. Of prehistoric

MIXED BATHING IN PREHISTORIC TIMES.—BY MR. E. T. REED.
By permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

animals Mr. Reed made a careful study in the South Kensington Museum, as well as in books, but, of course, much imagination has entered into his presentments of extinct monsters and their relationship to man.

his selection is made. As regards "The Desperate Householder," reproduced here, he states that there is nothing to be told—adding: "I rather think—though I am not sure—that the idea was not my own." Mr.

DESPERATE HOUSEHOLDER WRITES OUT ADVERTISEMENT: "To be disposed of, a Monkey. Very comical and playful. Lively companion; full of fun. Would exchange for Gold Fish, or anything useful."
By permission of the] BY MR. BERNARD PARTRIDGE. [*Proprietors of "Punch."*

Mr. Reed's first *Punch* picture, it may be of interest to recall, had for its subject the three judges of the Parnell Commission enjoying themselves up the river. But his first caricature he cannot quite remember. At Harrow he had shown a sense of humour in his pencil, and Mr. Reed tells a story how one day a master—as a punishment for caricaturing himself—ordered him to furnish caricatures of all the other masters in the school.

Mr. Bernard Partridge is perhaps most favourably known in the pages of *Punch* as the illustrator of Mr. Anstey's "Voces Populi" and "Jabberjee," but it is from neither of these most amusing series that

MR. BERNARD PARTRIDGE.
From a Photo. by Russell & Sons.

Partridge, who, I may remind my readers, is a successful actor as well as artist under the name of "Bernard Gould," confesses that, generally speaking, what may be called the literary ideas in his drawings are furnished by the Editor of *Punch* or others. "I can hardly ever invent a joke," he will frankly tell you.

This being so, the pictorial humour of such pictures as "The Desperate Householder" is the more remarkable. Mr. Dudley Hardy had just told me — and his experience is usual in his profession — that however funny a story sounded to him in the telling, it was seldom that much could be made of it in the pictorial form. The idea had

to spring from his own consciousness—the incident had to be seen with his own eyes.

Mr. Linley Sambourne, who has taken Sir John Tenniel's place, has on his door-front at Kensington a brass tablet, "Not at Home," to warn away visitors on Thursday and Friday when he is in the throes of the principal cartoon for *Punch*, as arranged at the staff dinner on Wednesday evening. Calling another morning, however, I find Mr. Sambourne quite at leisure for a chat.

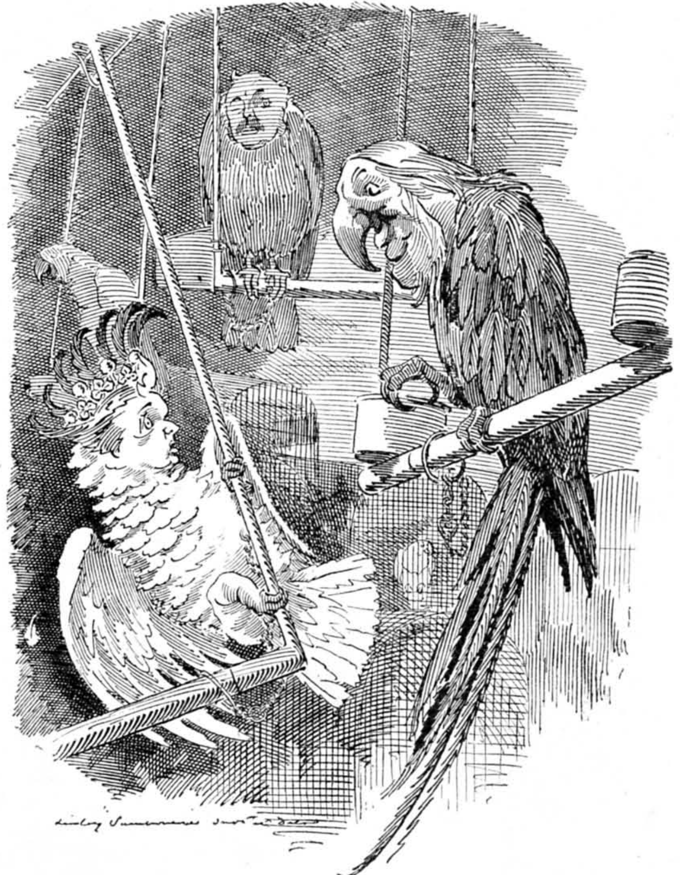
From a Photo. by] MR. LINLEY SAMBOURNE. [*Elliott & Fry.*

At the outset the artist mentions "In the Parrot-House" as his best-remembered example of the comic spirit, although he has to go through the *Punch* volume for the first half of 1899 before he can fix the date of the cartoon. And before "In the Parrot-House" is finally decided upon several other volumes are run through. Mr. Sambourne's fancy lingers for a few moments upon an earlier picture relating to the German Emperor, but it is dismissed on the reflection that its humour is now out of harmony with English feeling towards that monarch.

"Yes, the idea of 'The Parrot-House,'" Mr. Sambourne says, in reply to my interrogation, "was entirely my own, and if I remember rightly it was at once accepted at the *Punch* dinner. I know I took a lot of trouble over the drawing, first going to the Zoo to make some studies of the birds. I had many offers for the original, and it was sold to one of the Canons of Winchester whose offer arrived first."

After much Continental wandering Mr. Dudley Hardy has once more found an abiding-place in London, his house in Gloucester Road, Kensington, being but a few minutes' walk from Mr. Linley Sambourne's, in Stafford Terrace.

Mr. Hardy's face, when I asked him for his funniest drawing, was a picture of perplexity. "I forget my work as soon as it appears," he



A Row in the Parrot-House.—The C-mpb-ll-B-nn-rm-n Bird: "What a noise they're making! I can hardly hear myself shriek!"

By permission of the] BY MR. LINLEY SAMBOURNE. [*Proprietors of "Punch."*

exclaims; "it comes out in so many different places, and I have never taken the trouble to file my pictures. I often wish I had, because it would sometimes save

"BARGAINING FOR THE LAST FISH—VENICE."—BY MR. DUDLEY HARDY.
From the "Sketch."

me a lot of trouble. But wait a moment; let me think as to which is the most humorous thing I can recall."

To assist his reflection Mr. Hardy takes a cup of coffee and a cigarette, and slowly in the little clouds of smoke is evolved the reminiscence of a *Sketch* drawing in its "Light Side of Nature," the drawing of two Venetian fishermen quarrelling as to the proprietorship of the last fish in a great haul they had just landed.

"It appeared," said Mr. Hardy, "some time in 1894, when I was rambling about the South of Europe picking up little out-of-the-way subjects for the *Sketch* and other papers. I drew this incident as I actually saw it on the quayside at Venice, and, slight as the drawing is, I think it contains as much real humour as anything I've ever done.

"Wherever I find myself," Mr. Hardy said, a little later in our conversation, "I am always on the look-out for such incidents. Only yesterday, for instance, going to Notting Hill Gate Station I passed two urchins carrying a big basket of linen, and I heard one say to the other, 'And she nearly broke my 'art.' This revelation of the poor little chap's love affairs struck me at the time as being irresistibly funny, and I daresay I may make something of it. I put these suggestions into my sketch-book, and I have scores of them always at hand. It is the one thing, perhaps, that I am methodical about."

As I left Mr. Hardy at the gate he gave me an actual example of the quickness of his eye for "the light side of Nature." On the opposite pavement a respectable-looking young woman was making pictures for the entertainment of the passers-by. She had taken up her position there an hour or two before, and Mr. Hardy had already interviewed her.

"She calls herself," he remarks, "the first

MR. DUDLEY HARDY.
From a Photo.

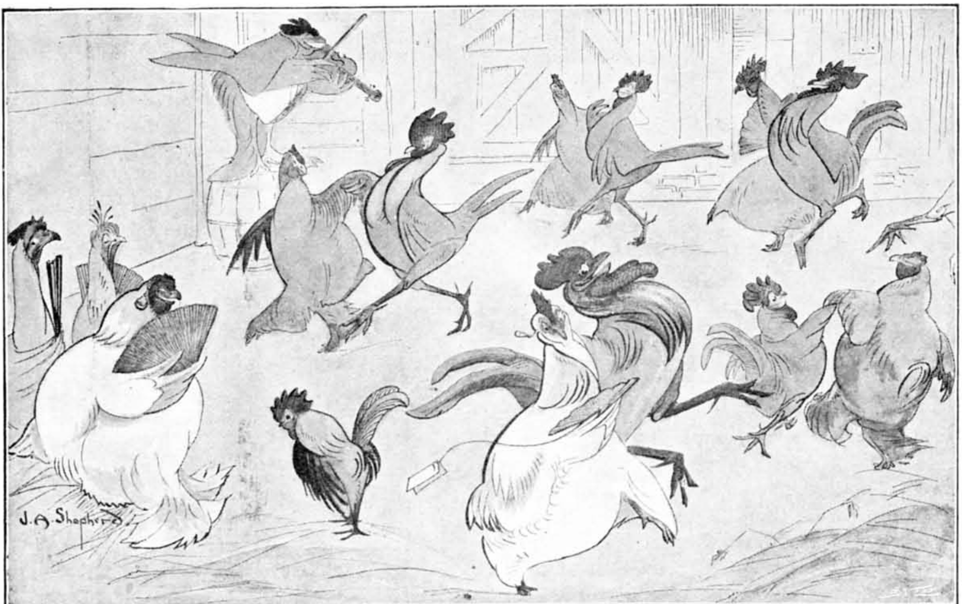
woman pavement-artist, and when I told her that I was in the same line of business she simply replied, 'On canvas, I suppose?' So I dropped a couple of shillings into her bag, and I think I must now make a sketch of her."

MR. J. A. SHEPHERD.
From a Photo. by Fradelle & Young.

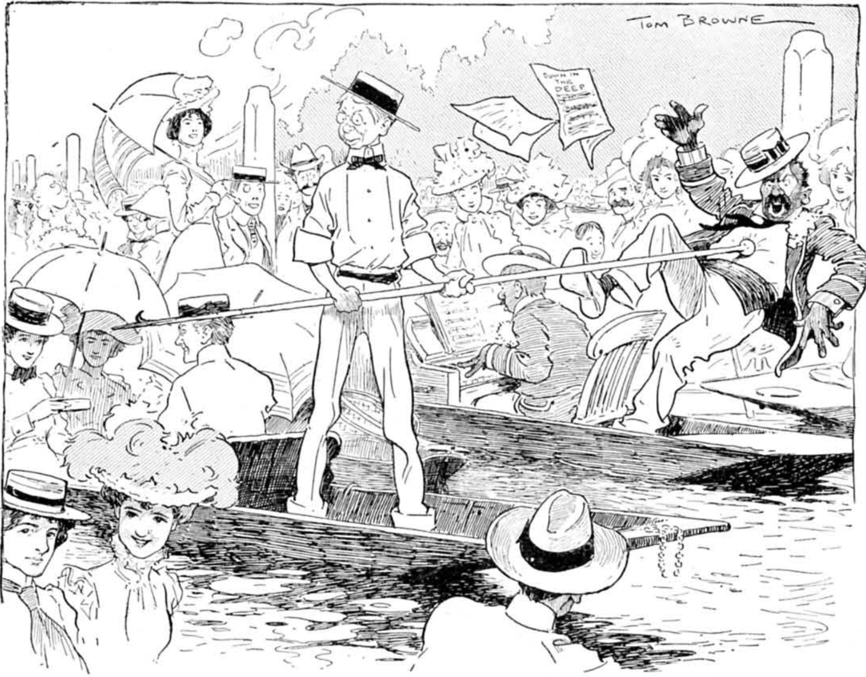
Mr. J. A. Shepherd, whose "Zigzags at the Zoo," "Fables," and other works have formed memorable features of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, rusticates at Horley, in Surrey. As admirers of his work will suppose, Mr. Shepherd has spent a good deal of his time in the farmyard, and it is by a travesty of feathered life that he has chosen to be represented in this article.

"I had been making studies of chickens all day at a poultry show," Mr. Shepherd tells me, not in illustration of the fidelity of his artistic method, but in explanation of the origin of this picture. "In the evening I was at a dance. Looking on at the company and being full of my work I began seeing resemblances in my work to my late models (my amusement and business at all times), and when the barn dance struck up—there was the notion!"

"The Barn Dance," I believe, like all Mr. Shepherd's work, was very rapidly drawn. In fact, with a reputation made at twenty-five, and such a record of work as he now has at thirty-five for THE STRAND, *Punch*, and other publications, the artist has clearly never wasted much time. First at Bromley, Kent, and now at Horley, Surrey, Mr. Shepherd has collected quite a menagerie of models for his distinctive "line" of work, including a number of bulldogs, the rearing of which has been a very successful hobby with him.



By permission of the] THE BARN DANCE.—BY MR. J. A. SHEPHERD. [*Proprietors of "Punch."*



FUN AT HENLEY REGATTA.—BERTIE ATTEMPTS TO EXTRICATE HIS PUNT FROM THE CROWD.

By permission of the] BY MR. TOM BROWNE. [*Proprietors of "Punch."*

Mr. Tom Browne, R.I., sent me his pen and ink drawing, "Henley," from the *Punch Almanack* of 1900. This picture may be said to be the outcome of much boating experience on the Upper Thames, for Mr. Browne, who now lives at Blackheath, has been in his time an enthusiastic oarsman. His time has been only seven years—that is as far as London is concerned, for it was only in 1894 that he left his native Nottingham to win fame as a black and white artist.

The career of Tom Browne is quite a little romance of art, and as it is not yet generally known I should like to tell it here. Born in 1872, educated at a National school, employed for three years as an errand-boy in the Nottingham Lace Market—that is the first chapter. Apprenticed to a firm of lithographic printers, his artistic talent excited in this somewhat favourable atmosphere, drawing at night for obscure comic papers, attending the Nottingham School of Art—second chapter. End of his apprenticeship at the age of twenty-one, a bold descent upon London, a hard struggle to obtain a foothold in London illustrated journalism, decisive success with the *Graphic*, *Sketch*, *Punch*, *The King*, and other leading periodicals—third chapter. Mr. Browne, who has been elected a member of both the Royal Institute and the Royal Society of British Artists, may at the age of thirty confidently look forward to the further chapters in his brilliant career. He has travelled a good deal in France, Spain, and Holland. Indeed, the rustic Hollander, with his balloon-like trousers and huge wooden clogs, is one of his favourite subjects.

MR. TOM BROWNE.
From a Photo. by Morgan & Kidd, Greenwich, S.E.

Mr. L. Raven-Hill, who combines the cultivation of art with the practice of agriculture on his estate in Wiltshire, sent me the following reply :—

"As good a thing as any of mine came out about a year ago last August or September. Fat old woman getting into 'bus. Driver says: 'Try zideways.' She says: 'Lar' bless 'ee, I ain't got no zideways.' Actually overheard in the market-place."

From a] MR. RAVEN-HILL. *[Photo*

The market-place, I presume, was Devizes, near which town Mr. Raven-Hill dwells in a house where Napier wrote his history of the Peninsular War. In thus being based upon fact this picture resembles nearly all those pictorial jests with which this artist unfailingly sustains the gaiety of the nation.

He received his artistic training at first in London and afterwards in Paris, where he learned his art from Bougereau and Morot, the battle painter. Morot's great lesson was to apply generally the method which he applied specially to horses. His system was to close the eyes until the retina became a blank and then to take a flash glimpse—a rapid opening and shutting of the lids—and in this way an impression of action can be retained for several seconds. Mr. Raven-Hill aims for that instantaneous record of all he sees. But it was not for some time that he had an opportunity of making his gifts known. He returned from Paris, and, to use his own words, painted acres of pictures that didn't sell. He did all kinds of work, and used to go round to the newspaper offices with a portfolio of drawings; and the editors kindly told him how to draw, and what art meant, and gave him hints about design, and were hurt when he said that he could carry out

CARRIER: "Try zideways, Mrs. Jones, try zideways!" MRS. JONES: "Lar' bless 'ee, John, I ain't got no zideways!"

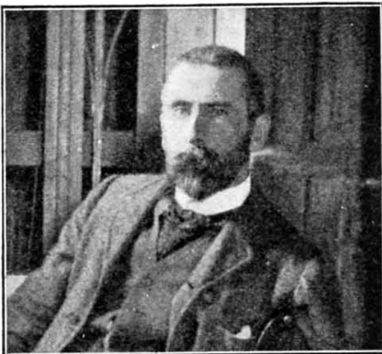
By permission of the] BY MR. RAVEN-HILL. *[Proprietors of "Punch."*

their ideas with a fork and a pat of butter. But success was bound to come; and few men have been more successful than the present genial member of Mr. Punch's staff. Mr. Raven-Hill generally invents his own jokes, but sometimes, as in the case of the drawing he has here selected, he takes a hint from life. He is one of the best living observers of rustic character and rural types, and his humour has a touch of subtlety and refinement all his own.

"THE GREAT WATER JOKE."—BY MR. J. F. SULLIVAN.
By permission of Messrs. Downey & Co.

I found Mr. James F. Sullivan in the throes of removal from one Wimbledon villa to another, and was disappointed therefore of the quiet little chat I had pleasantly anticipated with the delineator of "The Queer Side of Things"—that most amusing series of papers which originally appeared in the pages of this Magazine. I hope to get some consolation when Mr. Sullivan gives us his sketch of the pantechnicon men at work, for it was in his troubles as a householder, I find, that Mr. Sullivan found inspiration for what he himself considers to be about his funniest picture.

"The vagaries of the water companies," Mr. Sullivan tells me, "in charging for water not supplied in consequence of drought or frost, or for other reasons, first gave me the idea for 'The Great Water Joke'; also their contention that a bath is not for domestic purposes and must be paid for extra."



MR. J. F. SULLIVAN.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

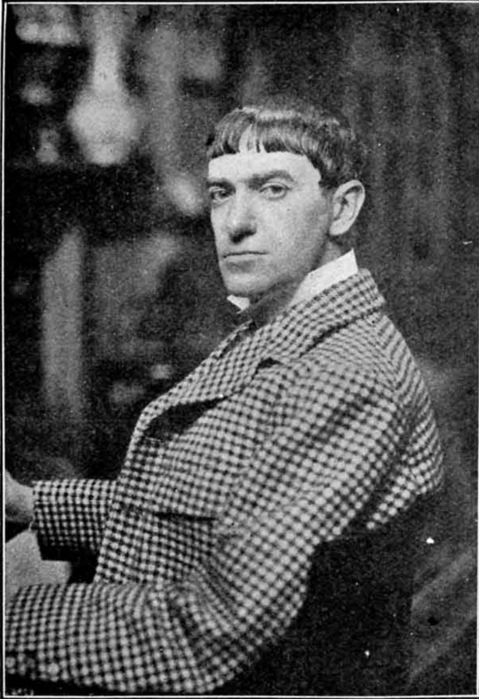
"The Great Water Joke" was both written and illustrated by Mr. Sullivan, who quaintly signs himself, by the way, "Jassef Sullivan." It appeared in a Christmas number of *Pearson's Magazine*, and has been republished in book form by Messrs. Downey.

The incident which Mr. Sullivan has chosen to represent his most humorous work is described in the following lines taken from his book just mentioned:—

"I'm sorry!" said the Company; "I'm perfectly distraught
To think you haven't water, but it happens there's a drought."

"I'm sorry!" said the Company; "my grief is very great:
The Winter's frozen up the mains; but kindly pay the rate."

In the course of talk over the *Punch* volumes Mr. Linley Sambourne had spoken of Mr. Phil May's drawing in the number for August 21st, 1897, "The Fisherman and the Lunatic," as that which he would personally select as representative of his colleague's rich humour.



MR. PHIL MAY.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

Curiously enough, when I called upon Phil May, in St. John's Wood, a day or two later, this was the picture he selected after a minute's consideration.

"I had been to Wakefield just before," he remarked, "and noticed a lunatic asylum there which overlooks a river where there are generally a number of people fishing, especially on Saturday afternoon. They never catch anything—the river is probably too dirty to contain any fish. This is how I got the idea, and I may say that most of my jokes arise in this way from things that I see."

Phil May finds most of his subjects in the East-end of London among the coster girls, guttersnipes, and other types which he has rendered immortal. But all his models have not belonged to the lower orders, and once he even had a Bishop sitting to him. "The Bishop had a splendid head and shoulders," says the artist, "but the lower part of his body and his legs were 'a bit off,' so I made a prize-fighter sit for the body and legs, to the huge satisfaction of the Bishop and his friends."

Another of his jokes came to him in this way. He went into an oyster saloon and ordered a dozen natives, when another man entered and gave a similar order, inquiring anxiously of the proprietor if the oysters were fresh. "Fresh!" echoed the bivalve merchant. "Fresh! Why"—indicating Phil May with a wave of his hand—"the first oyster that gentleman took up bit his lip!"

LUNATIC (suddenly popping his head over wall): "What are you doing there?" BROWN: "Fishing." LUNATIC: "Caught anything?" BROWN: "No." LUNATIC: "How long have you been there?" BROWN: "Six hours." LUNATIC: "*Come inside!*"

BY MR. PHIL MAY.

By permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

The Stroh Violin.

By D. Donovan.

HEN, about three hundred years ago, some daring spirit cut down a treble viol and converted it into a "violino," or little viol, he probably never dreamed that he was giving to the world an instrument that should ever afterwards rule as king in the vast domain of music. The potentialities of the transformed viol were at once perceived, and the construction of fiddles became an art. During the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries there were masters whose names were mint-marks of excellence, and a genuine instrument by one of these makers is at the present day worth an almost fabulous sum.

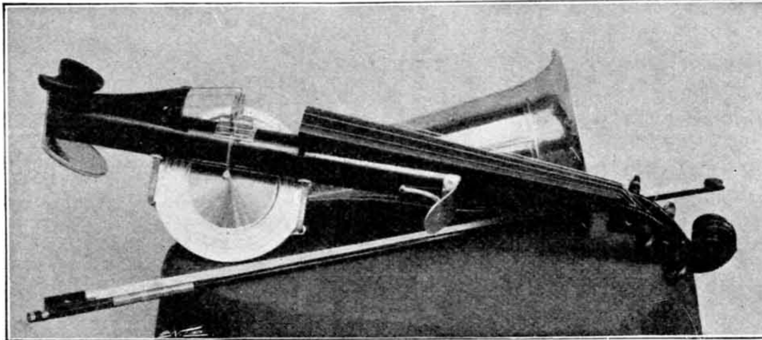
When it is remembered, however, that in those times of long ago the old makers of violins knew nothing of the scientific laws of sound, the wonder is they were able to produce such marvellous results. And with the dawn of the twentieth century a new instrument, constructed on purely scientific lines and called the "Stroh Violin," after the name of its inventor, is added to the great string family. As a mere mechanical invention it deserves more than a passing notice; while for power and quality of tone it is safe to predict that it will take a high place.

From a] THE STROH VIOLIN BEING PLAYED. [*Photo.*

The inventor, Mr. A. Stroh, a gentleman eminent in the world of science and an expert in all matters of acoustics, conceived the idea that he could produce a stringed instrument of the violin class which should be dependent for its tone and quality on an entirely new arrangement. He worked out his theory in a series of experiments, and ultimately gave it practical shape. His beautiful instrument is quite a new departure; and although the technique and method of fingering are exactly the same, the Stroh violin, as will be seen by the illustrations, bears little resemblance to its predecessors.

The new fiddle differs as much from the ordinary violin as a cornet differs from a trumpet. The scroll, neck, and finger-board are alike, but having said that one has said all, as in every other essential the Stroh is different. The inventor began by discarding the usual box as unnecessary, and here he was confronted with the problem — How were the vibrations of the four strings to be conducted *viâ* the bridge to a resonator, without devices that must necessarily interfere with the quality of tone, and more or less destroy the timbre of the strings? In solving this problem he never lost sight of well-recognised laws of musical sound. The slightest check to perfectly free vibration would be detrimental to the quality of tone, a very important factor in connection with the violin; and if the enormous pressure of the strings — something like 62lb. when tuned to pitch—were allowed to rest upon a bridge that was in direct contact with the device which he decided should take the place of the belly of the violin, the vibration would certainly be interfered with. His knowledge of repeating and recording instruments in connection with telegraphy induced him to try a diaphragm, or disc, and he was soon convinced that he had solved the problem. The result of this research was the production of a corrugated aluminium diaphragm, of which we give an illustration.

The vibrations of the strings are conducted by means of an ordinary violin-bridge, which rests upon a rocking lever, to this diaphragm and resonator.

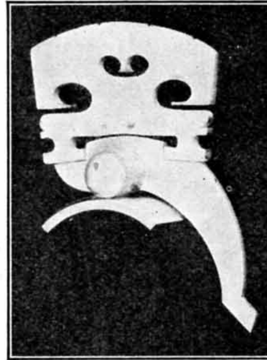


From a] THE STROH VIOLIN. [*Photo.*

The rich, mellow tones, hitherto supposed to require a century to mature and perfect them, are very noticeable in the Stroh. The slightest contact with the bow will produce them, and with such ease and fluency do they flow that the player, whether he be professional or amateur, can hardly fail to appreciate this very distinctive characteristic.

Much has been written about what is termed the "reserve" force of a Joseph Guarnerius. As a matter of fact a Stroh has the reserve power of three "Josephs," and is as loud as four ordinary violins. The G-string is a dream. It possesses the deep, rich quality of a fine 'cello A, but there is no unevenness in the strings. The harmonics are loud and pure, and what is of great importance is an entire absence of "scrape." This is a point that solo-players will value highly. Of course, the idea of a new violin that can be played upon immediately it is finished, and that will produce marvellous tone and quality of sound, will possibly come as a shock to old-fashioned people, to whom the original violin has been a cherished idol; but the spirit of invention respects no one's prejudices. And it may

The lever supporting the bridge oscillates laterally upon the body of the instrument, the end being attached to the aluminium disc by a small connecting link. The diaphragm is held in position between two indiarubber cushions by means of a specially designed holder, fixed also upon the body of the violin by two brackets. Attached to this holder is a trumpet or resonator, which augments the sound.

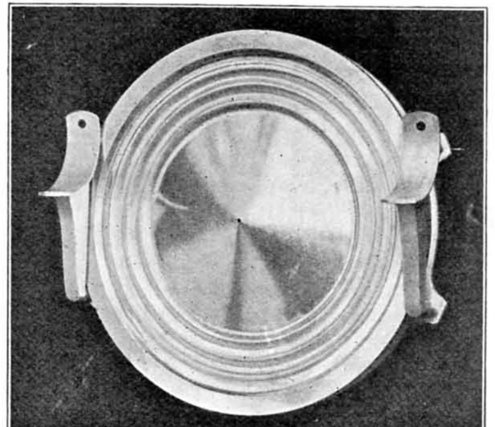


THE ROCKING BRIDGE AND LEVER.
From a Photo.

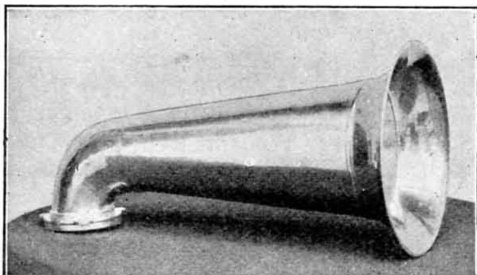
The body or cylinder of the instrument is in no way employed for sound purposes. Its main object is to hold the various parts of the violin together, and to sustain the enormous pressure of the strings when tuned. The disc, which represents the belly of an ordinary violin, is perfectly free to vibrate, so that when the strings are set in motion by the bow the bridge and rocking-lever vibrate in unison, and every vibration is transmitted to the diaphragm. The diaphragm sets in motion the air contained in the resonator, this resonator acting as a distributor of the sound waves. The disc is of peculiar construction, and its possible application to the phonograph may lead to very important results in the future.

The mechanism of the Stroh violin is marvellously simple, as will be seen from the illustrations, and cannot easily get out of order.

Each part can be seen at a glance, and in the manufacture of the instrument a standard gauge will be observed, so that in the event of accident the damaged part can be easily procured. Although the diaphragm is made from aluminium there is an absolute absence of metallic sound, even to ears long accustomed to the tones of the wooden violin.



From a] THE VIBRATING DIAPHRAGM. [*Photo.*



From a] THE TRUMPET OR RESONATOR. [*Photo.*

not be out of place here to quote the well-known writer, Mr. Pain, who in "Grove's Dictionary of Music" says:—

"A good deal of enthusiasm has been lavished by connoisseurs on the beauty of design and varnish of the old Cremona violins, and even in some useful and reputable works on the subject this enthusiasm has been carried to a point where it can only be described as silly and grotesque. A fiddle, after all, even a Stradivarius, is not a work of pure art like a piece of painting or sculpture: it is as merely a machine as a watch, a gun, or a plough. Its main excellencies are purely mechanical, and though most good fiddles are also well designed and handsome, not a few are decidedly ugly."

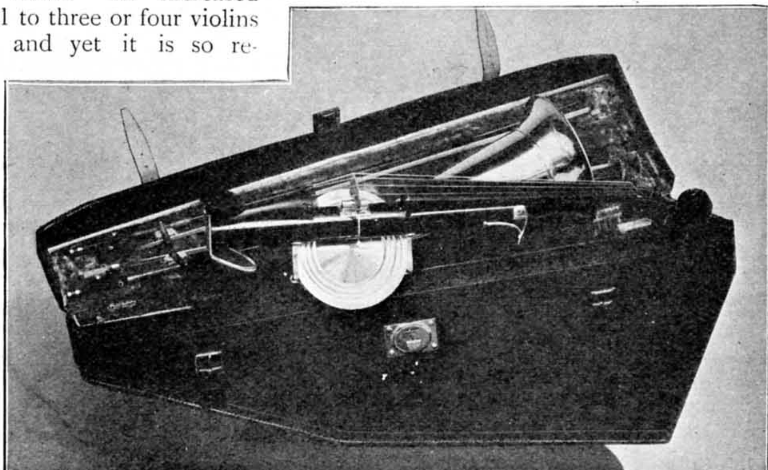
No one who examines the Stroh, however critically, can fail to admit, if he be honest, that it is a wonderful piece of mechanism, which in the hands of a trained player is capable of great things; while for the mere amateur or the beginner it possesses advantages which are peculiar to itself and cannot be overrated.

In weight it is only a few ounces heavier than the ordinary violin. Its increased power makes it equal to three or four violins of the old pattern, and yet it is so remarkably sensitive that it can be played so as to produce delicate *pp* and *ppp* passages with scarcely any pressure on the bow. As a solo instrument it fulfils all the requirements of the most exacting virtuoso; at the same time it will be of great value in small orchestras. Two Stroh violins and one Stroh viola would be equal to eight or nine wooden fiddles.

The Stroh has already received the approval of some very eminent musicians. And at a recent concert in London a distinguished and critical audience pronounced it an unqualified success; while competent authorities predict a great future for it.

But even if the merits of the instrument, merely as a violin, were less conspicuous than they are, it must, as an exponent of certain principles of acoustics, be regarded with wonder. In loudness, pitch, and timbre, or, as the Germans term it, *Klang-farbe*, it is without an equal in its class. Tyndall most expressively terms this *Klang-farbe* "clang-tint," and nothing could better convey the true meaning of the word, for timbre is, if the expression is allowable, the very soul and colour of sound. It is quite distinct from loudness and pitch, which, in order to convert them into musical sound, must be associated with timbre. In a very eminent degree these three qualities are represented in the new invention; and Mr. Stroh has succeeded in blending them with such delicacy and artistic effect that one is almost led to believe he has reached the ultimate limit in this respect, and that further improvement is impossible.

The Stroh violin is certainly the creation of a man of genius and the result of long study of the laws by which we obtain the true poetry of sound. And it will, I venture to predict, in spite of prejudice, ultimately be recognised not only as a triumph of creative skill, but as worthy of taking its place with those instruments which depend for their effect upon attuned strings.



From a] THE VIOLIN IN ITS CASE. [*Photo.*

Some Wonders from the West.

BY E. LESLIE GILLIAMS.

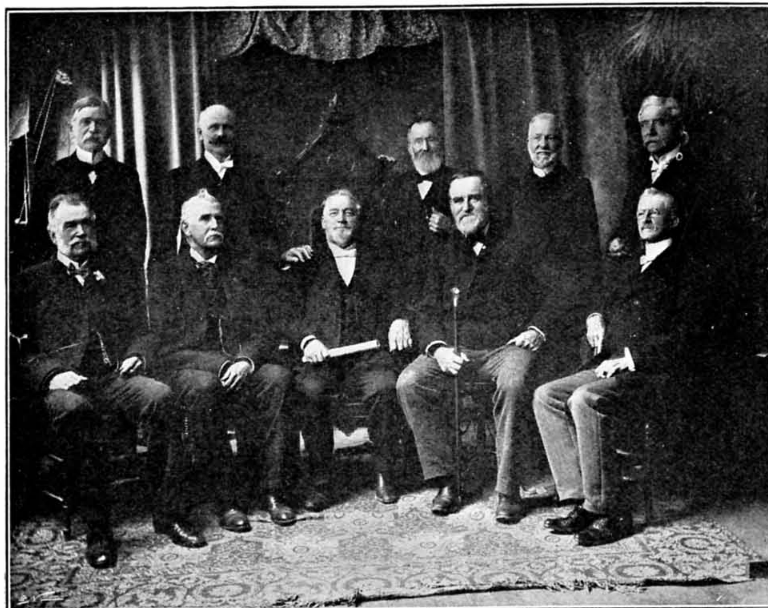
XXXVII.—AN "OLD MEN'S SINGING CLUB."

ONE of the most remarkable clubs of modern times has its head-quarters in Almeda, California, U.S.A. It is known as the "Old Men's Singing Club," no one being admitted to it who has not the gift of song and who has not passed at least his sixty-fifth birthday. The club has 101 members with an aggregate age of 6,666 years.

It has been a source of regret to those who love classical music and the tuneful melody of old-time ballads that "coon-songs" and nigger ditties are the only style of music popular with the younger generation. To this want of appreciation of old-fashioned tunes may be traced the birth of the "Old Men's Singing Club."

This club has been in existence for about one year, and has been entirely successful, the membership list increasing each week. It has a president and officers and a musical director—Herr Theodore Vogt. The members of the club believe in the old adage that "A woman is as old as she looks; a man as old as he feels." And they say that they feel no older than they did forty years ago; and they believe that they can sing as well now as they did in the days of "Auld Lang Syne." Herr Theodore Vogt, who was connected with the Royal Conservatory at Stockholm, after a year's experience with these hoary-headed vocalists says that they possess voices of remarkable quality and strength.

The "Old Men's Singing Club" was formed when Fritz Boehmer celebrated his seventieth birthday. Mr. Boehmer is a prominent member of the Almeda German Colony, and, as all the Germans in Almeda would be ashamed not to be musical, he decided to organize a singing club. He made some inquiry among his friends, and, to his horror, he found that nearly all the musicians who were on his calling list were of the nigger-song variety. He noticed that most of them wore open-work socks and fancy waistcoats and played comic opera songs on banjos and mandolines. There was no room in their repertoire for the old-time melodies of the younger days of Mr. Boehmer. The old man swore a mighty oath that if he could not find the music of the old days in the soul of the young men of the city he would turn for what he sought to his companions in years—and so the "Old Men's Singing Club" came to be. No one was eligible who parted his hair in the middle, or who had any parting at all, or any hair on the top of his head to part; or who wore low patent leather shoes and gaudy hosiery, or gay neckties or fancy waistcoats.



From a] OFFICERS AND ORGANIZERS OF THE "OLD MEN'S SINGING CLUB." [*Photo.*

Having organized the club a set of rules was next in order. It was decided that no one younger than sixty-five years could become a member. Fortunately, the greater number who have applied for entrance have been nearly seventy. The sole exception

was made in favour of the Hon. E. K. Taylor, secretary of the organization, who is barely forty.

For nearly a year they met and practised, gaining steadily in numbers and in excellence; then they announced their intention of giving a concert for the benefit of the poor of Almeda. The only lady artist was the Señora Benina Barone, aged 103 years, who danced and sang "La Tolla."

This old Spanish woman was born in Mexico in 1798; she danced in the Spanish City of Mexico while in the first blush of maidenhood, and the picturesque cavaliers of those times pelted her with roses. To the tinkling accompaniment of a guitar they sang love-songs underneath her window. Those, she says, were merry days. The weary feet, which at their owner's request danced once more in order that a few extra dollars might be added to the fund for the poor, were as light as in the bygone days, and if the aged voice quavered, no one noticed it. She was accompanied on the guitar by a Spanish youth—Señor Joseph Balderamos.

SEÑORA BENINA BARONE, WHO AT 103 IS A CHARMING DANCER AND SINGER—SHE IS THE ONLY FEMALE MEMBER OF THE CLUB. *From a*] [*Photo.*

The old men were in splendid voice. Their tones rang out in sonorous cadence, and long before the evening was over the jingling airs of music-hall and vaudeville were voted as soulless as the blasts from a tin trumpet. Fritz Boehmer hailed himself as the musical saviour of the city on the bay.

"The people can't love what they don't know," he said. "If you would have citizens who like and appreciate good music, let them grow up with a knowledge of it. In order to do this melody must be breathed in with the air. It must be lived. The children must be brought up with music. In order to be musical one must be born of a town and State and nation where music is not only an honoured profession, but a matter of course. The Germans are a musical race, and to that potent influence I lay much of the love of home, the sweetness of domestic relations, that are so much a part of its people. If we of America were to gather oftener in our homes, and together raise our voices in song, it would be better for us."

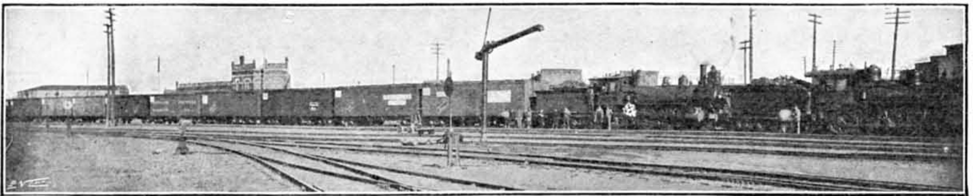
This concert brought this remarkable club before the public, and it gained fame in a single night. Several of the leading musical organizations in both San Francisco and Oakland have sought to absorb it, but it declines to be taken into any glee club, or sangerfest, or other such frivolous crowd. It will continue as it began, an organization for old men and old songs, but it is ambitious to grow to a club of five hundred members. Fancy it! Five hundred old men, each one with a voice that, had he chosen, might have made him rich and famous—for none but those with fine voices are welcomed by the old men, who claim that to the balmy climate of California they owe their gift of song.

The officers of the club are as follows: President, Fritz Boehmer, aged 71; secretary, Hon. E. K. Taylor, aged 40; treasurer, F. W. Greeley, aged 79; vice-presidents, David Martin, aged 78; E. B. Dunning, aged 66; Henry Epstein, aged 72; Judge E. A. Swasey, aged 79; L. W. Downs, aged 67; J. E. Blanding, aged 70.

XXXVIII.—A TRAIN-LOAD OF TWO MILLION EGGS.

THE most remarkable cargo in the world—a train composed of twelve refrigerator cars containing about 2,000,000 eggs—was recently gathered by one firm in the vicinity of Newton, Kansas, and shipped to San Francisco, California, U.S.A. The express went as a special over the Sante Fé road, and was the first instance of a train with a cargo consisting exclusively of eggs passing into the State of California.

The twelve cars composing the train in which was this fragile cargo were constructed in a manner best calculated to preserve the entirety of the breakable and delicate freight. They were built upon a plan which enabled the shippers to pack great numbers of crates so that every available bit of space in the cars was utilized. The story concerning the method of bringing this enormous quantity of eggs to one firm for shipment and the care exercised in conveying them thousands of miles through desert and mountain is most interesting.



From a] THE TRAIN WHICH CARRIES A CARGO OF TWO MILLION EGGS. [*Photo.*

This section of country, which is called the Middle West, is prosperous, for the egg industry is a most important factor in the business of the vicinity, and employment is given to hundreds of farmers who make their livelihood by raising chickens. For miles surrounding the town of Newton, Kansas, are heard the cackling of hens and the fluttering of the barnyard fowl. Hens, hens, everywhere, until the traveller is disposed to believe himself in Bedlam, and wonders how many miles he will have to drive in order to find peace and quiet. It is estimated that about 90 per cent. of the farmers within a radius of twenty miles from the town raise hens for laying purposes and ship their products to Newton. In order to make the work of distribution as systematic as possible, the firm has divided the country into sections, each portion bringing in its weekly supply at a stated period, thus preventing confusion. But every day in the early morning droves of farmers with large, lumbering waggons slowly make their way into town toward the storehouse, and to the observer, unacquainted with local customs, the question immediately arises, "What is the meaning of this cavalcade—is a population moving?"

The storehouse is a large brick building, oblong in shape, several stories high, and capable of housing three millions of eggs at one time. A valuable feature which distinguishes it from all other storage places is the inclined plane, connecting floor with floor, that does away with the jerking and jolting of elevators, thus preventing mishaps in moving the eggs to different sections of the building. At this terminus, or egg-depôt, about fifty alert clerks are ready to receive consignments of eggs from the husbandmen. In order to preserve harmony and prevent confusion each farmer must report to the clerk representing his section of the country; in this way knowledge of the condition of eggs shipped can easily be traced if certain lots are not up to the standard.

The eggs are then placed in pasteboard boxes, containing compartments for each one, and these boxes are placed in crates ready for shipment. After the problem of finding a suitable home for the storage of eggs had been solved the difficulty arose as to the method of transporting them safely. Ingenious minds, after much trouble and delay, devised what is now the most complete and easiest-going storage car in America. These cars were especially constructed for carrying their fragile cargo, and are divided into compartments so that the proper amount of cold air is distributed evenly to each crate. Beneath every car are springs that enable it to proceed over the ties with as little jolting as is afforded the luxurious passenger of the Pullman. The value of the shipment aggregated about £5,000, including freight charges, which amounted to over £1,000.

XXXIX.—A LADY'S GLASS DRESS.

THE most marvellous and beautiful dress in the world is owned by Miss Ellene Jaqua, a famous singer and well-known society belle of Brooklyn, New York, U.S.A. It is a costume made of spun glass, and its shimmering folds dazzle the eyes and bewilder the brain of all who gaze upon the creation.

The material for this valuable and wonderful gown took five months to spin—or, more correctly speaking, to blow—and was made in Dresden, Germany; the gown was cut in Paris, and does credit to the designer.

The colour effects of the dress under a strong light are wonderful. Delicate shades of pale green, blue, and silver-white blend into each other with bewildering rapidity as the light falls upon the folds, presenting an aspect of unusual charm, lustre, and richness. Although the gown does not sparkle, the indescribable sheen which it throws out dazzles the eye for the moment. The entire effect is of rays of moonlight cast upon a satiny silver surface. The cloth or body and the trimmings of the dress consist of millions of extremely fine and delicate strands of pure spun glass, and it is only upon careful examination that an adequate idea of the great amount of labour put into the weaving of the material can be gained. It was a most delicate and difficult task to blow the glass until the strands or threads were strong and yet pliable enough to be woven into a cloth which would be serviceable and permit of being cut and handled.

MISS ELLENE JAQUA, WEARING HER GLASS DRESS.
From a Photo. by Stacy, Brooklyn, N.Y.

At the Chicago Exposition in 1893 there was a glass dress exhibited, which became the property of the Infanta Eulalie, but this gown was only for show, and could not be worn, for so fragile were the strands of glass that the slightest effort to bend them would cause them to snap and splinter into a thousand pieces.

Miss Ellene Jaqua is therefore the first person to possess a glass-gown which can actually be worn, and not once only. It possesses a constitution which will enable it to live the usual space of time allotted to the ball-gown of a lady.

The style of this dainty dress was designed after the latest Parisian fashion. The skirt, being of a demi-train, hangs like a soft richness of brocade, cut in simple fashion with full gathers at the back and chaste and simple in the front, outlining the figure in graceful folds. The bodice, cut low, clings to the figure with all the pliancy of silk. About the neck is a full ruching, finished by fringe of spun glass; the full fringe of glass which finishes the corsage is repeated in effect about the skirt in a flounce with three bands of glass braid, which scintillates in the light.

It may also be interesting to know that it took over fourteen yards of extra wide glass cloth, thirty-five yards of spun glass braid, and twenty-five yards of glass fringe — in all, seventy-four yards of material—to make up this garment. Many would suppose that this great quantity of cloth, braid, and fringe would make it a rather heavy article of wearing apparel, but it does not weigh any more than an ordinary evening gown of the softest material. Its minute strands are so artistically woven and interwoven that it is perfectly

THE ENTIRE DRESS AND ITS TRIMMINGS ARE OF PURE SPUN GLASS.
From a Photo. by Stacy, Brooklyn, N.Y.

flexible and pliable, and can be worn with as perfect comfort and freedom as any evening gown.

The process by which the glass is spun remains a secret with the spinner, but some idea is given in saying that specially prepared glass was melted and made into tube forms of various lengths and colours. These tubes were run through flames to a concentrated point of intense heat, reducing them to a semi-melted state in order to make them pliable before coming in contact with the large spinning-wheel, which is several feet in circumference, having numerous small grooves around the outside band, and revolving several thousand feet a minute. The machine was turned and operated by hand. The tubes when in the required state were then placed on the wheel, where the grooves, catching the ends of the tubes, spin them into strands of great fineness until they lose their brittleness, coming from the wheel even finer than a hair and as soft as silk. These strands are hollow and so minute that it requires a microscope to detect the holes in the ends.

After this process of spinning was completed the threads were gathered and placed in a hand-loom and woven into glass cloth several yards in length, in the same manner as any other material.

Miss Jaqua, who is the proud owner of this wonderful dress, is an eminent artiste, having a wide reputation as a singer not only in her own city, but throughout the Eastern States.

THE DAZZLING DRESS AS IT APPEARS IN A STRONG LIGHT, SHOWING THE BEAUTIFUL MOONLIGHT EFFECT.
From a Photo. by] [Stacy, Brooklyn, N.Y.

At Sunwich Port.

By W. W. Jacobs.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE two ladies received Mr. Hardy's information with something akin to consternation, the idea of the autocrat of Equator Lodge as a stowaway on board the ship of his ancient enemy proving too serious for ordinary comment. Mrs. Kingdom's usual expressions of surprise, "Well, I never did!" and "Good gracious alive!" died on her lips, and she sat gazing helpless and round-eyed at her niece.

"I wonder what he said," she gasped, at last.

Miss Nugent, who was trying to imagine her father in his new *rôle* aboard the *Conqueror*, paid no heed. It was not a pleasant idea, and her eyes flashed with temper as she thought of it. Sooner or later the whole affair would be public property.

"I had an idea all along that he wasn't in London," murmured Mrs. Kingdom. "Fancy that Nathan Smith standing in Sam's room telling us falsehoods like that! He never even blushed."

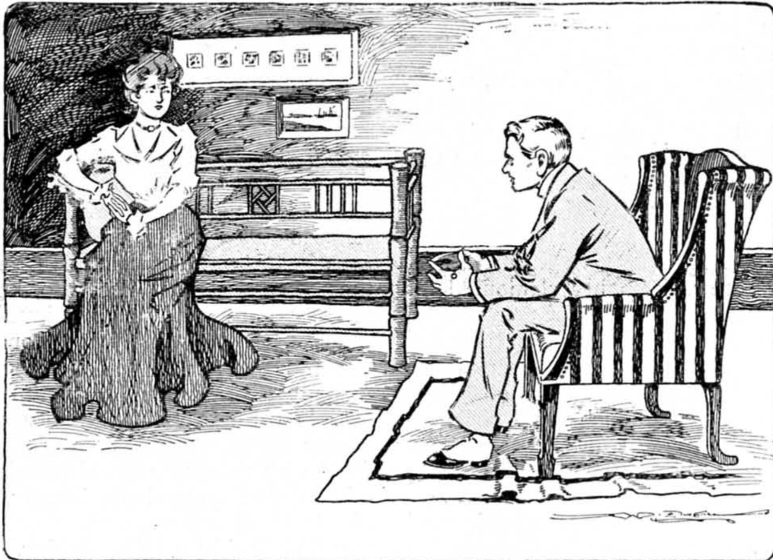
"But you said that you kept picturing father walking about the streets of London, wrestling with his pride and trying to make up his mind to come home again," said her niece, maliciously.

Mrs. Kingdom fidgeted, but before she could think of a satisfactory reply Bella came to the door and asked to speak to her for a moment. Profiting by her absence, Mr. Hardy leaned towards Miss Nugent, and in a low voice expressed his sorrow at the mishap to her father and his firm conviction that everything that could be thought of for that unfortunate mariner's comfort would be done. "Our fathers will probably come back good friends," he concluded. "There is nothing would give me more pleasure than that, and I think that we had better begin and set them a good example."

"It is no good setting an example to people who are hundreds of miles away," said the matter-of-fact Miss Nugent. "Besides, if they have made friends, they don't want an example set them."

"But in that case they have set us an example which we ought to follow," urged Hardy.

Miss Nugent raised her eyes to his.



"'WHY DO YOU WISH TO BE ON FRIENDLY TERMS?' SHE ASKED."

"Why do you wish to be on friendly terms?" she asked, with disconcerting composure.

"I should like to know your father," returned Hardy, with perfect gravity; "and Mrs. Kingdom—and you."

He eyed her steadily as he spoke, and Miss Nugent, despite her utmost efforts, realized with some indignation that a faint tinge of colour was creeping into her cheeks.

 Copyright, 1901, by W. W. Jacobs in the United States of America.

She remembered his covert challenge at their last interview at Mr. Wilks's, and the necessity of reading this persistent young man a stern lesson came to her with all the force of a public duty.

"Why?" she inquired, softly, as she lowered her eyes and assumed a pensive expression.

"I admire him, for one thing, as a fine seaman," said Hardy.

"Yes," said Miss Nugent, "and——"

"And I've always had a great liking for Mrs. Kingdom," he continued; "she was very good-natured to me when I was a very small boy, I remember. She is very kind and amiable."

The baffled Miss Nugent stole a glance at him. "And——" she said again, very softly.

"And very motherly," said Hardy, without moving a muscle.

Miss Nugent pondered and stole another glance at him. The expression of his face was ingenuous, not to say simple. She resolved to risk it. So far he had always won in their brief encounters, and monotony was always distasteful to her, especially monotony of that kind.

"And what about me?" she said, with a friendly smile.

"You," said Hardy, with a gravity of voice belied by the amusement in his eye; "you are the daughter of the fine seaman and the niece of the good-natured and motherly Mrs. Kingdom."

Miss Nugent looked down again hastily, and all the shrew within her clamoured for vengeance. It was the same masterful Jem Hardy that had forced his way into their seat at church as a boy. If he went on in this way he would become unbearable; she resolved, at the cost of much personal inconvenience, to give him a much-needed fall. But she realized quite clearly that it would be a matter of time.

"Of course, you and Jack are already good friends?" she said, softly.

"Very," assented Hardy. "Such good friends that I have been devoting a lot of time lately to considering ways and means of getting him out of the snares of the Kybirds."

"I should have thought that that was his affair," said Miss Nugent, haughtily.

"Mine, too," said Hardy. "I don't want him to marry Miss Kybird."

For the first time since the engagement Miss Nugent almost approved of it. "Why not let him know your wishes?" she said, gently. "Surely that would be sufficient."

"But you don't want them to marry?" said Hardy, ignoring the remark.

"I don't want my brother to do anything shabby," replied the girl; "but I shouldn't be sorry, of course, if they did not."

"Very good," said Hardy. "Armed with your consent I shall leave no stone unturned. Nugent was let in for this, and I am going to get him out if I can. All's fair in love and war. You don't mind *my* doing anything shabby?"

"Not in the least," replied Miss Nugent, promptly.

The reappearance of Mrs. Kingdom at this moment saved Mr. Hardy the necessity of a reply. Conversation reverted to the missing captain, and Hardy and Mrs. Kingdom together drew such a picture of the two captains fraternizing that Miss Nugent felt that the millennium itself could have no surprises for her.

"He has improved very much," said Mrs. Kingdom, after the door had closed behind their visitor; "so thoughtful."

"He's thoughtful enough," agreed her niece.

"He is what I call extremely considerate," pursued the elder lady, "but I'm afraid he is weak; anybody could turn him round their little finger."

"I believe they could," said Miss Nugent, gazing at her with admiration, "if he wanted to be turned."

The ice thus broken, Mr. Hardy spent the following day or two in devising plausible reasons for another visit. He found one in the person of Mr. Wilks, who, having been unsuccessful in finding his beloved master at a small tavern down by the London docks, had returned to Sunwich, by no means benefited by his change of air, to learn the terrible truth as to his disappearance from Hardy.

"I wish they'd Shanghaid me instead," he said to that sympathetic listener, "or Mrs. Silk."

"Eh?" said the other, staring.

"Wot'll be the end of it I don't know," said Mr. Wilks, laying a hand, which still trembled, on the other's knee. "It's got about that she saved my life by 'er careful nussing, and the way she shakes 'er 'ead at me for risking my valuable life, as she calls it, going up to London, gives me the shivers."

"Nonsense," said Hardy; "she can't marry you against your will. Just be distantly civil to her."

"'Ow can you be distantly civil when she lives just opposite?" inquired the steward,

querulously. "She sent Teddy over at ten o'clock last night to rub my chest with a bottle o' liniment, and it's no good me saying I'm all right when she's been spending eighteen-pence o' good money over the stuff."

"She can't marry you unless you ask her," said the comforter.

Mr. Wilks shook his head. "People in the alley are beginning to talk," he said, dolefully. "Just as I came in this afternoon old George Lee screwed up one eye at two or three women wot was gossiping near, and when I asked 'im wot 'e'd got to wink about he said that a bit o' wedding-cake 'ad blowed in his eye as I passed. It sent them silly creeturs into fits a'most."

"HE SAID A BIT O' WEDDING-CAKE 'AD BLOWED IN HIS EYE."

"They'll soon get tired of it," said Hardy.

Mr. Wilks, still gloomy, ventured to doubt it, but cheered up and became almost bright when his visitor announced his intention of trying to smooth over matters for him at Equator Lodge. He became quite voluble in his defence, and attached much importance to the fact that he had nursed Miss Nugent when she was in long clothes and had taught her to whistle like an angel at the age of five.

"I've felt being cut adrift by her more than anything," he said, brokenly. "Nine-an'-twenty years I sailed with the cap'n and served 'im faithful, and this is my reward."

Hardy pleaded his case next day. Miss Nugent was alone when he called, and, moved by the vivid picture he drew of the old man's loneliness, accorded her full forgiveness, and decided to pay him a visit at once. The fact that Hardy had not been in the house five minutes she appeared to have overlooked.

"I'll go upstairs and put my hat and jacket on and go now," she said, brightly.

"That's very kind of you," said Hardy. His voice expressed admiring gratitude; but he made no sign of leaving his seat.

"You don't mind?" said Miss Nugent, pausing in front of him and slightly extending her hand.

"Not in the least," was the reply; "but I want to see Wilks myself. Perhaps you'll let me walk down with you?"

The request was so unexpected that the girl had no refusal ready. She hesitated and was lost. Finally, she expressed a fear that she might keep him waiting too long while she got ready—a fear which he politely declined to consider.

"Well, we'll see," said the marvelling Miss Nugent to herself as she went slowly upstairs. "He's got impudence enough for forty."

She commenced her preparations for

seeing Mr. Wilks by wrapping a shawl round her shoulders and reclining in an easy-chair with a novel. It was a good story, but the room was very cold, and even the pleasure of snubbing an intrusive young man did not make amends for the lack of warmth. She read and shivered for an hour, and then with chilled fingers lit the gas and proceeded to array herself for the journey.

Her temper was not improved by seeing Mr. Hardy sitting in the dark over a good fire when she got downstairs.

"I'm afraid I've kept you waiting," she said, crisply.

"Not at all," said Hardy. "I've been very comfortable."

Miss Nugent repressed a shiver and, crossing to the fire, thoughtlessly extended her fingers over the blaze.

"I'm afraid you're cold," said Hardy.

The girl looked round sharply. His face, or as much of it as she could see in the firelight, bore a look of honest concern somewhat at variance with the quality of his voice. If it had not been for the absurdity of altering her plans on his account she would have postponed her visit to the steward until another day.

The walk to Fullalove Alley was all too short for Jem Hardy. Miss Nugent stepped along with the air of a martyr anxious to get to the stake and have it over, and she answered in monosyllables when her companion pointed out the beauties of the night. A bitter east wind blew up the road and set her yearning for the joys of Mr. Wilks's best room.

"It's very cold," she said, shivering.

Hardy assented, and reluctantly quickened his pace to keep step with hers. Miss Nugent with her chin sunk in a fur boa looked neither to the right nor the left, and turning briskly into the alley, turned the handle of Mr. Wilks's door and walked in, leaving her companion to follow.

The steward, who was smoking a long pipe over the fire, looked round in alarm. Then his expression changed, and he rose and stammered out a welcome. Two minutes later Miss Nugent, enthroned in the best chair with her toes on the fender, gave her faithful subject a free pardon and full permission to make hot coffee.

"And don't you ever try and deceive me again, Sam," she said, as she sipped the comforting beverage.

"No, miss," said the steward, humbly. "I've 'ad a lesson. I'll never try and Shanghai anybody else agin as long as I live."

After this virtuous sentiment he sat and smoked placidly, with occasional curious glances divided between his two visitors. An idle and ridiculous idea, which occurred to him in connection with them, was dismissed at once as too preposterous for a sensible steward to entertain.

"Mrs. Kingdom well?" he inquired.

"Quite well," said the girl. "If you take me home, Sam, you shall see her, and be forgiven by her, too."

"Thankee, miss," said the gratified steward.

"And what about your foot, Wilks?" said Hardy, somewhat taken aback by this arrangement.

"Foot, sir?" said the unconscious Mr. Wilks; "wot foot?"

"Why, the bad one," said Hardy, with a significant glance.

"Ho, that one?" said Mr. Wilks, beating time and waiting further revelations.

"Do you think you ought to use it much?" inquired Hardy.

Mr. Wilks looked at it, or, to be more exact, looked at both of them, and smiled weakly. His previous idea recurred to him with renewed force now, and several things in the young man's behaviour, hitherto disregarded, became suddenly charged with significance. Miss Nugent looked on with an air of cynical interest.

"Better not run any risk," said Hardy, gravely. "I shall be very pleased to see Miss Nugent home, if she will allow me."

"What is the matter with it?" inquired Miss Nugent, looking him full in the face.

Hardy hesitated. Diplomacy, he told himself, was one thing; lying another. He passed the question on to the rather badly-used Mr. Wilks.

"Matter with it?" repeated that gentleman, glaring at him reproachfully. "It's got shootin' pains right up it. I suppose it was walking miles and miles every day in London, looking for the cap'n, was too much for it."

"Is it too bad for you to take me home, Sam?" inquired Miss Nugent, softly.

The perturbed Mr. Wilks looked from one to the other. As a sportsman his sympathies were with Hardy, but his duty lay with the girl.

"I'll do my best, miss," he said; and got up and limped, very well indeed for a first attempt, round the room.

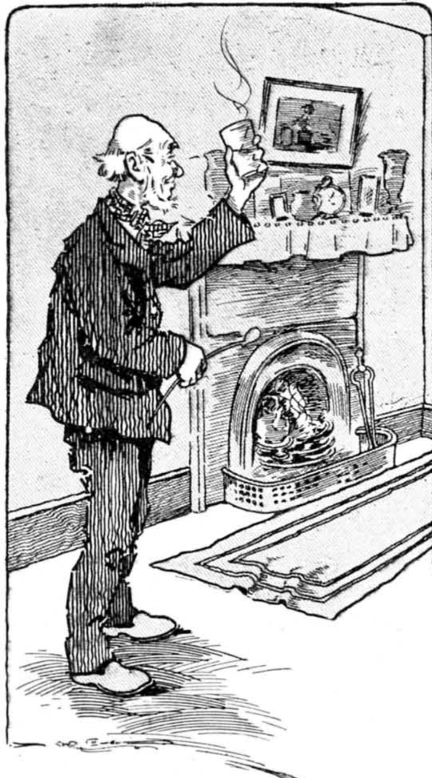
Then Miss Nugent did a thing which was a puzzle to herself for some time afterwards. Having won the victory she deliberately threw away the fruits of it, and declining to

allow the steward to run any risks, accepted Hardy's escort home. Mr. Wilks watched them from the door, and with his head in a whirl caused by the night's proceedings mixed himself a stiff glass of grog to set it right, and drank to the health of both of them.

The wind had abated somewhat in violence as they walked home, and, moreover, they had their backs to it. The walk was slower and more enjoyable in many respects than the walk out. In an unusually soft mood she replied to his remarks and stole little critical glances up at him. When they reached the house she stood a little while at the gate gazing at the starry sky and listening to the crash of the sea on the beach.

"It is a fine night," she said, as she shook hands.

"The best I have ever known," said Hardy. "Good-bye."



"MR. WILKS DRANK TO THE HEALTH OF BOTH OF THEM."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE weeks passed all too quickly for James Hardy. He saw Kate Nugent at her own home; met her, thanks to the able and hearty assistance of Mr. Wilks, at Fullalove Alley, and on several occasions had the agreeable task of escorting her back home.

He cabled to his father for news of the illustrious stowaway immediately the *Conqueror* was notified as having reached Port Elizabeth. The reply—"*Left ship*"—confirmed his worst fears, but he cheerfully accepted Mrs. Kingdom's view that the captain, in order to relieve the natural anxiety of his family, had secured a passage on the first vessel homeward bound.

Captain Hardy was the first to reach home. In the early hours of a fine April morning the *Conqueror* steamed slowly into Sunwich Harbour, and in a very short time the town was revelling in a description of Captain Nugent's first voyage before the mast from lips which were never tired of repeating it. Down by the waterside Mr. Nathan Smith found that he had suddenly attained the rank of a popular hero, and his modesty took alarm at the publicity afforded to his action. It was extremely distasteful to a man who ran a quiet business on old-fashioned lines and disbelieved in advertisement. He lost three lodgers the same day.

Jem Hardy was one of the few people in Sunwich for whom the joke had no charms, and he betrayed such an utter lack of sympathy with his father's recital that the latter accused him at last of wanting a sense of humour.

"I don't see anything amusing in it," said his son, stiffly.

Captain Hardy recapitulated one or two choice points, and was even at some pains to explain them.

"I can't see any fun in it," repeated his son. "Your behaviour seems to me to have been deplorable."

"What?" shouted the captain, hardly able to believe his ears.

"Captain Nugent was your guest," pursued the other; "he got on your ship by accident, and he should have been treated decently as a saloon passenger."

"And been apologized to for coming on board, I suppose?" suggested the captain.

"It wouldn't have been amiss," was the reply.

The captain leaned back in his chair and regarded him thoughtfully. "I can't think what's the matter with you, Jem," he said.

"Ordinary decent ideas, that's all," said his son, scathingly.

"There's something more in it than that," said the other, positively. "I don't like to see this love-your-enemy business with you,

"A POPULAR HERO."

Jem; it ain't natural to you. Has your health been all right while I've been away?"

"Of course it has," said his son, curtly. "If you didn't want Captain Nugent aboard with you why didn't you put him ashore? It wouldn't have delayed you long. Think of the worry and anxiety you've caused poor Mrs. Kingdom."

"A holiday for her," growled the captain.

"It has affected her health," continued his son; "and besides, think of his daughter. She's a high-spirited girl, and all Sunwich is laughing over her father's mishap."

"Nugent fell into his own trap," exclaimed the captain, impatiently. "And it won't do that girl of his any harm to be taken down a peg or two. Do her good. Knock some of the nonsense out of her."

"That's not the way to speak of a lady," said Jem, hotly.

The offended captain regarded him somewhat sourly; then his face changed, and he got up from his chair and stood before his son with consternation depicted on every feature.

"You don't mean to tell me," he said, slowly; "you don't mean to tell me that you're thinking anything of Kate Nugent?"

"Why not?" demanded the other, defiantly; "why shouldn't I?"

Captain Hardy, whistling softly, made no reply, but still stood eyeing him.

"I thought there was some other reason for your consideration besides 'ordinary decent ideas,'" he said, at last. "When did it come on? How long have you had it?"

Mr. Hardy, jun., in a studiously unfilial speech, intimated that these pleasantries were not to his taste.

"No, of course not," said the captain, resuming his seat. "Well, I'm sorry if it's serious, Jem, but I never dreamt you had any ideas in that quarter. If I had I'd have given old Nugent the best bunk on the ship and sung him to sleep myself. Has she given you any encouragement?"

"Don't know," said Jem, who found the conversation awkward.

"Extraordinary thing," said the captain, shaking his head, "extraordinary. Like a play."

"Play?" said his son, sharply.

"Play," repeated his father, firmly. "What is the name of it? I saw it once at Newcastle. The lovers take poison and die across each other's chests because their people won't let 'em marry. And that reminds me. I saw some phosphor-paste in the kitchen, Jem. Whose is it?"

"I'm glad to be the means of affording you amusement," said Jem, grinding his teeth.

Captain Hardy regarded him affectionately. "Go easy, my lad," he said, equably; "go easy. If I'd known it before, things would have been different; as I didn't, we must make the best of it. She's a pretty girl, and a good one, too, for all her airs, but I'm afraid she's too fond of her father to overlook this."

"That's where you've made such a mess of things," broke in his son. "Why on earth you two old men couldn't——"

"Easy," said the startled captain. "When you are in the early fifties, my lad, your ideas about age will be more accurate. Besides, Nugent is seven or eight years older than I am."

"What became of him?" inquired Jem.

"He was off the moment we berthed," said his father, suppressing a smile. "I don't mean that he bolted—he'd got enough starch left in him not to do that—but he didn't trespass on our hospitality a moment longer than was necessary. I heard that he got a passage home on the *Columbus*. He knew the master. She sailed some time before us for London. I thought he'd have been home by this."

It was not until two days later, however, that the gossip in Sunwich received a pleasant fillip by the arrival of the injured captain. He came down from London by the midday train, and, disdaining the privacy of a cab, prepared to run the gauntlet of his fellow-townsmen.

A weaker man would have made a détour, but he held a direct course, and with a curt nod to acquaintances who would have stopped him walked swiftly in the direction of home. Tradesmen ran to their shop-doors to see him, and smoking amphibians lounging at street corners broke out into sunny smiles as he passed. He met these annoyances with a set face and a cold eye, but his views concerning children were not improved by

"HE MET THESE ANNOYANCES WITH A SET FACE."

the crowd of small creatures which fluttered along the road ahead of him and, hopeful of developments, clustered round the gate as he passed in.

It is the pride and privilege of most returned wanderers to hold forth at great length concerning their adventures, but Captain Nugent was commendably brief. At first he could hardly be induced to speak of them at all, but the necessity of contradicting stories which Bella had gleaned for Mrs. Kingdom from friends in town proved too strong for him. He ground his teeth with suppressed fury as he listened to some of them. The truth was bad enough, and his daughter, sitting by his side with her

hand in his, was trembling with indignation.

"Poor father," she said, tenderly; "what a time you must have had."

"It won't bear thinking of," said Mrs. Kingdom, not to be outdone in sympathy.

"Well, don't think of it," said the captain, shortly.

Mrs. Kingdom sighed as though to indicate that her feelings were not to be suppressed in that simple fashion.

"The anxiety has been very great," she said, shaking her head, "but everybody's been very kind. I'm sure all our friends have been most sympathetic. I couldn't go outside the house without somebody stopping me and asking whether there was any news of you. I'd no idea you were so popular; even the milkman——"

"I'd like some tea," interrupted the captain, roughly; "that is, when you have finished your very interesting information."

Mrs. Kingdom pursed her lips together to suppress the words she was afraid to utter, and rang the bell.

"Your master would like some tea," she said, primly, as Bella appeared. "He has had a long journey."

The captain started and eyed her fiercely; Mrs. Kingdom, her good temper quite restored by this little retort, folded her hands in her lap and gazed at him with renewed sympathy.

"We all missed you very much," said Kate, softly. "But we had no fears once we knew that you were at sea."

"And I suppose some of the sailors were kind to you?" suggested the unfortunate Mrs. Kingdom. "They are rough fellows, but I suppose some of them have got their hearts in the right place. I daresay they were sorry to see you in such a position."

The captain's reply was of a nature known to Mrs. Kingdom and her circle as "snapping one's head off." He drew his chair to the table as Bella brought in the tray and, accepting a cup of tea, began to discuss with his daughter the events which had transpired in his absence.

"There is no news," interposed Mrs. Kingdom, during an interval. "Mr. Hall's aunt died the other day."

"Never heard of her," said the captain.

"Neither had I, till then," said his sister. "What a lot of people there are one never hears of, John."

The captain stared at her offensively and went on with his meal. A long silence ensued.

"I suppose you didn't get to hear of the cable that was sent?" said Mrs. Kingdom, making another effort to arouse interest.

"What cable?" inquired her brother.

"The one Mr. Hardy sent to his father about you," replied Mrs. Kingdom.

The captain pushed his chair back and stared her full in the face. "What do you mean?" he demanded.

His sister explained.

"Do you mean to tell me that you've been speaking to young Hardy?" exclaimed the captain.

"I could hardly help doing so, when he came here," returned his sister, with dignity. "He has been very anxious about you."

Captain Nugent rose and strode up and down the room. Then he stopped and glanced sharply at his daughter.

"Were you here when he called?" he demanded.

"Yes," was the reply.

"And you—you spoke to him?" roared the captain.

"I had to be civil," said Miss Nugent, calmly; "I'm not a sea-captain."

Her father walked up and down the room again. Mrs. Kingdom, terrified at the storm she had evoked, gazed helplessly at her niece.

"What did he come here for?" said the captain.

Miss Nugent glanced down at her plate. "I can't imagine," she said, demurely. "The first time he came to tell us what had become of you."

The captain stopped in his walk and eyed her sternly. "I am very fortunate in my children," he said, slowly. "One is engaged to marry the daughter of the shadiest rascal in Sunwich, and the other——"

"And the other?" said his daughter, proudly, as he paused.

"The other," said the captain, as he came round the table and put his hand on her shoulder, "is my dear and obedient daughter."

"Yes," said Miss Nugent; "but that isn't what you were going to say. You need not worry about me; I shall not do anything that would displease you."

(To be continued.)

PRINCESS ROSETTA

H. R. MILLAR. 1901

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

BY MARGARET MAITLAND.

NCE upon a time a King, on his death-bed, sent for his two sons and said to them: "My sons, promise me one thing before I die. Your sister, whom you have never seen, is shut up in a tower, and you must promise never to let her out of it. The day she was born your mother and I put her there, because we were warned she would bring trouble on her brothers."

But, having said this, the King died so quickly that his sons had no time to promise him anything. And directly he died all the great men in the kingdom assembled round the new King and put the crown on his head, and clothed him in the Royal purple mantle sparkling with diamond stars and moons and suns, and cried, "Long live our King."

No sooner was this ceremony ended than the two brothers, who were in the greatest hurry to see their sister, ran to the tower, which had neither door nor stairs, so they jumped into the big basket fastened to a pulley, in which provisions were hoisted up, and went straight to the Princess Rosetta's chamber. She and her little dog Fretillo were sitting there, and the Princess was embroidering a beautiful brocade, but she threw down her work the moment she saw the King in his Royal robes and crown, and, falling at his feet, besought him to let her out of her prison.

"That's just what we've come here for," cried both the brothers together. "We are going to take you away with us and find you a husband and make you happy for ever."

And though there was very little room in the big basket for a King in his Royal mantle and a Prince and Princess and a little dog as well, they all loved each other too much already to bear parting, even for a few minutes, so somehow or other they squeezed in and went down all together.

The tower was in a fine garden, and when

the Princess saw flowers and fruit and fountains, for the first time in her life, she was delighted, and ran hither and thither picking things and playing with Fretillo, who barked and frisked round her as happy as she was. He was a very odd-looking little dog, for he was green and had only one ear, but he was so clever and good-tempered that no one could help loving him.

Presently he ran ahead of his mistress into a wood, and she went after him, and there she saw a peacock with his tail spread out in a huge circle behind him. And he was so handsome that she stood stock-still looking at him until her brothers found her, and then she pointed at the peacock and said:—

"What is it?"

"A peacock," they answered; "a bird that is served at Royal tables on great feast days."

"What," cried Rosetta, "people are wicked enough to kill—to eat such a creature? I for my part vow that I will have no husband but the King of the Peacocks, and he shall pass a law that he who kills or eats a peacock shall die!"

"But, dearest sister," said her brothers, "where shall we go to find you such a husband? We know neither who he is nor where he lives."

The Princess did not know either; so she said: "All that kind of thing I leave entirely to your Majesty. But I will marry no one else."

Then the Princes and their sister and Fretillo and the peacock (whom Rosetta refused to leave) all went to the palace, and the peacock and Fretillo had quarters in the Princess's own room.

All the Court came, of course, to pay her their respects, and the great ladies brought her sugar-plums and tarts and gowns and ribbons, and shoes embroidered with precious stones; and her manners to everyone were so gracious, and she curtsied so politely when thanking people, that the whole kingdom rang with her praises.

But all this time her poor brothers were in great trouble, not knowing in the very least where to turn their steps to find the King of the Peacocks. But they agreed that the first thing to do was to have Rosetta's portrait painted to take with them, and the artist made such a perfect picture of her, that could it but have talked it would have been the Princess herself.

"Good-bye, sister," they said to her; "since you will have no husband but the King of the Peacocks, we will travel all over the world to look for him. If we find him it will make us very glad, and meantime you must govern the kingdom well."

Rosetta thanked them and promised to do what they asked, and said that her only pleasure, while they were away, would be in looking at her peacock and playing with Fretillo.

The two Princes asked everyone they met the same question: "Can you tell us where His Majesty the King of the Peacocks lives?" And everyone answered "No, no." So on and on they travelled until, at last, they got so far away that never had anyone been so far before.

And one fine day they came to the kingdom of cockchafers, where there were shoals and shoals of cockchafers, all buzzing, and buzzing, and making such a noise that the poor King nearly went deaf. But one cockchafer looked rather wiser than the rest, and him the King asked if he could tell him where to find the King of the Peacocks.

"Sire," said the cockchafer, "his kingdom is thirty thousand miles from here, and you have, unfortunately, come a roundabout way to look for it."

"And how do you know that?" asked His Majesty.

"Because we know your Majesty very well indeed," said the cockchafer. "Every year we pay your gardens a visit, and spend three or four months there."

On hearing this the King and his brother felt, at once, that they were among old friends, and they made themselves quite at home with the company and visited all the sights of the kingdom. The smallest little leaf is a curiosity there and worth a great deal of money.

The two Princes now knew the direction to take, so they started on their travels again in much better spirits, and it was not so very long before they found the country they were looking for. They knew, at once, that it was the right place, because on every branch of every tree was perched a peacock, and for miles round they could be heard calling and screaming to one another.

"What shall we do, brother," said the King, "if His Majesty turns out to be a peacock himself? Our sister cannot possibly marry him in that case!"

The Prince was quite as much troubled as his brother by this dreadful idea.

"It is most unfortunate," he replied, "that she ever took this strange fancy into her head. I can't imagine how she could ever have guessed that there was any such a King in the world."

But when they arrived at the chief town in the kingdom they found the inhabitants were real men and women, just like other people, but all dressed in peacock feathers, and wherever peacock feathers could be stuck for ornament, there they were.

The King himself the Princes met, driving in his golden chariot studded with brilliants, and drawn by twelve magnificent and very fleet peacocks; and he was so handsome that they were delighted with him. His hair was fair and curly and his complexion like white marble, and on his head he wore a crown of woven peacock feathers.

He saw the Princes, and knowing by their dress that they were strangers he stopped his chariot and beckoned to them to come and talk to him.

"Sire," said the brothers, "we have travelled far to show your Majesty a picture."

And with that they took Rosetta's portrait out of their carpet-bag.

The King looked at it for a good long time, then said: "I don't believe there is a girl so beautiful in the whole world."

"THE KING THEN SAID: 'I DON'T BELIEVE THERE IS A GIRL SO BEAUTIFUL IN THE WHOLE WORLD.'"

"Ah, your Majesty," they answered, "she is a hundred times lovelier than this picture."

"You are making fun of me," said the King of the Peacocks.

"Sire," said the Prince, "my brother here is a King like you, and I a Prince. This picture is the portrait of our sister, the Princess Rosetta. We have travelled all the way to your kingdom to ask you if you would like to marry her. She is good as well as beautiful, and we will give her a sack full of gold for her dowry."

"Very well," said the King of the Peacocks. "I am quite willing to marry her. I love her very much, indeed, and will give her everything she wants. But I am determined you shall not cheat me about her beauty, and I warn you that, if in the very least thing she is less beautiful than her portrait, I will have you both put to death. Do you agree?"

"Oh, yes," said the Princes, "we gladly agree."

"Go to prison, then, at once," said the King, "and stay there until the Princess arrives."

The two Princes didn't mind this in the least, because they knew for certain that Rosetta was far more beautiful than any picture, and every day the King came to visit them and sent them all they wanted, and they were waited on as became their high rank.

They wrote to Rosetta and told her to pack her things and come at once, because the husband she had chosen was waiting for her. Only they said nothing to her about being themselves in prison for fear of alarming her.

Rosetta was in great delight when she got this letter, and lost no time in announcing to all the King's subjects that the King of the Peacocks was found and was very anxious to marry her.

There were great rejoicings all over the kingdom at this good news, and for a few days there was nothing but feasting and dancing and firing of cannons; and at the palace itself, by order of the Princess, the most delicious drinks and sweetmeats were given to all comers. And as she was going to be married, and wouldn't want her dolls and playthings any longer herself, she gave them all away in the most generous manner.

Besides which she handed the government of the country over to the six wisest men in it, charging them to take great care of it and spend as little and save as much as they could, for her brother when he came back. She also left her peacock in their care and took only Fretillo and the sack of gold and her old nurse and the nurse's only daughter and enough dresses for two changes every day for ten years.

The journey was made in a ship, and the Princess enjoyed it very much, laughing and talking and amusing herself all the day long.

But every morning the nurse used to say to the boatman, "Are we nearly there?"

And he always answered, "Not yet, not yet."

Till, at last, one day he said, "Yes, soon now, soon."

And then the nurse put her mouth close to his ear and said, "Do you wish to be rich?"

"Yes," said he.

"There's money to earn," said she.

"I'm the man for that," said he.

"Then to-night," said she, "we will throw the Princess overboard, and when she is drowned I will dress my daughter in her fine clothes and take her to the King of the Peacocks to be his bride. And for your reward you shall have as many diamonds as you can carry away on your back."

The boatman was not quite so wicked as she was, however, and he answered that it would be a pity to drown such a pretty Princess; and he certainly never would have consented to such a thing if the cruel nurse hadn't given him a drink of some kind that had a very good taste, but made him feel so queer that at last he didn't know when he was saying yes and when he was saying no.

And then she led him to where the Princess lay asleep in her bed, and Fretillo curled up at her feet, sound asleep, too. And the cruel pair lifted up the feather-bed, the mattress, the sheets, the quilt, the pillows, Rosetta, and Fretillo so softly that neither the Princess nor her little dog woke, and threw the whole thing overboard.

But, most fortunately, the bed was stuffed with Phœnix feathers, which are very rare, indeed, and never sink; so the bed floated, and Rosetta and Fretillo were as safe as if they still were on the ship.

The only thing was that the spray of the waves kept dashing over them and at last woke them up, and then they couldn't imagine what made them so wet, nor where they were, nor what had happened to them. Fretillo, whose nose was very sharp, smelt soles and cod, and he barked so loud that he disturbed all the fishes in the sea, and they kept tumbling up against the bed, sending it twisting and turning this way and that, in such an extraordinary manner, that Rosetta thought she had never spent such a queer night in her life, for being dark she didn't see the sea.

The cruel nurse heard the barking too and said: "He's wishing us good luck. Let us hasten to go and be Queens and Princes."

Soon after that the boat landed at the kingdom of peacocks, where fine preparations had been made for the bride's arrival.

A hundred carriages were waiting on the beach drawn by lions, bears, wolves, oxen, asses, eagles, peacocks, and horses. The Princess's own carriage was drawn by six blue monkeys in crimson and gold harness, and dancing all the time on tight-ropes, besides many other wonderful tricks. Round this carriage stood sixty lovely young ladies, chosen by the King himself to wait on his Queen, and dressed in every colour of the rainbow, not to speak of gold and silver.

The wicked nurse had spared no pains in dressing up her daughter. She had Rosetta's diamonds on her head and all over her, and wore the very finest of all Rosetta's seven thousand three hundred dresses. But her finery only made her look uglier than ever. Her hair was dull and coarse, she squinted terribly; she had bandy legs and was humpbacked, and had a nasty cross expression, and never stopped grumbling.

When the King of the Peacocks' people saw her land from the ship they were struck dumb with amazement, and they were still more astonished (if that were possible) when

"NEITHER THE PRINCESS NOR HER LITTLE DOG WOKE."

the first thing they heard her say, screaming as loud as she could, was this :—

"What does this kind of thing mean? What does it mean? Have you all lost your senses? Here, wretches, bring me something to eat or I'll have everyone of you hanged."

"Oh, oh, oh," cried everybody, "what a horrid creature, as wicked too as she is ugly! Never will our King marry a horrid thing of this sort! It was worth while to send to the end of the world for her, indeed!"

And everything they said made her angrier and angrier, and everyone within reach of her arm she hit at with her fist, as hard as she could, lolling back all the time in her carriage and making believe she was accustomed to one.

It moved along rather slowly, as orders had been given by the King that the people were all to have time to see the bride. But when it passed under the trees, covered with peacocks, waiting to cry, "Long live our beautiful Queen Rosetta!" instead of crying what they intended, they all began to hiss: "Oh! the ugly, ugly thing!"

"Kill them," shrieked the false Princess. "Kill them! Wring their necks, the beasts! They insult me, insult me!"

At which the peacocks flew away as quick as they could, laughing at her.

Meantime the wicked boatman whispered to the nurse: "I say, mother, we haven't managed this affair so cleverly as we should. You ought to have had a prettier daughter for it!"

"Hush, hush, you fool," she answered. "Hold your tongue if you don't want to get us all into trouble."

Messengers had run on ahead of the procession to warn the King that his bride was coming, and the first thing he said to them was: "Did her brothers speak the truth? Is she more beautiful than her picture?"

"EVERYONE WITHIN REACH OF HER ARM SHE HIT AT."

"What! what!" he cried, "those two scoundrels that I have locked safe up in prison have dared to play me a trick? They had the impertinence to invite me to marry a horror of this kind? I'll have their necks wrung, and this wretch's,

"Sire," was the reply, "to be as beautiful, is to be beautiful enough."

"That is true," said the King; "I will be satisfied with that. But I hear a noise in the courtyard. The Princess has no doubt arrived; let us go and welcome her."

There was plenty of shouting and talking. The King could hear the people saying: "Oh, the ugly thing," and words of that sort, but he only thought they were laughing at the Princess's dwarf, or some other queer creature she had brought with her; for, of course, he never dreamt that it was the Princess herself they meant.

The Princess Rosetta's portrait, mounted on a long gold stick and carried like a banner, was borne in front of the King, and he marched in a dignified manner after it, followed by all his barons, all his peacocks, and all the Ambassadors from foreign lands. He was very impatient, indeed, to see his beloved Rosetta; but when he saw the creature that was there in her place he nearly died of grief and rage. He tore his clothes, he stamped his feet, he would not go near her, and she was frightened out of her senses at seeing him in such a passion.

too, and her nurse's, and the old fellow's who came with them! Clap every one of them into the darkest dungeon at the foot of the tower this moment," he said, turning to his soldiers.

Meantime, the real Princess's two brothers in prison, having heard that their sister had come, were waiting, dressed in their very best, to be released. But instead of letting them out their gaoler came with a troop of armed soldiers and thrust them down into a dark cellar, full of noisome reptiles and with water in it up to their necks.

The poor Princes were terribly astonished at this cruel treatment.

"Alas!" they said to each other, "what a wedding feast we are celebrating. What can be the reason we are treated so ill?"

But all the talking in the world didn't explain anything. On the third day, however, the King of the Peacocks came and called out very insulting things at them through a hole.

"Wretches!" he cried. "Impostors! King and Prince indeed! Beggars is really what you are! You thought you'd trick me into marrying your sister, did you? You will be hanged

for it—the rope is being spun to do it with. Your trial won't take long with the judges I mean to give you!"

"King of the Peacocks," said the other King, very angry in his turn, "take care what you do to us, or you'll live to repent. I'm as good a King as you are, and have as good a crown and kingdom and clothes and money. Hang us, indeed! What for, if you please? Have we stolen anything from you?"

But in spite of all they could say the trial took place next day, and the King and his brother were sentenced to be hanged for telling the King of the Peacocks a lie. But when this sentence was read out to them they said so convincingly that they had told no lie, and begged so earnestly for a short delay to give them time to prove their innocence, that at last the King of the Peacocks consented to a week's respite.

To return now to the Princess Rosetta. When daylight came she and her little dog were one as much surprised as the other to find that they were afloat on the wide sea, but it was the Princess who was the most frightened, for Fretillo always had a plan or two up his sleeve.

"Alas! alas!" cried Rosetta. "The King of the Peacocks must have sent orders that I should be drowned. He has changed his mind, and doesn't want to marry me now. But what a pity! what a pity! I should have been a good wife to him, I promise him."

Two whole days they floated on the sea, hungry and drenched to the skin, and so cold that the Princess must have died if Fretillo had not lain in her arms and warmed her as best he could. The only food they had were oysters, which Fretillo particularly disliked.

All night the Princess kept saying to him, "Bark, bark, my little dog, to keep the big fish away, or else they will come and swallow us up."

So all night long Fretillo barked, until at last an old fisherman in his cottage by the sea-shore heard him, and put his head out to see what it was, for no one ever passed that way and he never heard dogs barking. And when he saw the bed floating near the shore he got his long boat-hook and drew it up on the beach high and dry.

"Good man," said the Princess, "we have been two days floating hither and thither on the ocean, cold, and hungry, and wet. Can you give us something to eat and let us dry ourselves by your fire?"

And he took them into his cottage and, being a kind old man, did the best he could for them. And when he began to dry the mattress and feather-bed he saw that the sheets were the finest lawn and the coverlids made of gold and silver thread, and he knew that Rosetta must be some great lady by that and her manners, so he begged her to tell him her history. And when, with many tears, she had told him, he said to her:—

"Princess, you are accustomed to delicate food and beautiful clothes, and can't live in this poor hut with a rough old man like me. With your permission I will go and tell the King of the Peacocks that you are here, and he will hasten to come for you and marry you."

"No, no," said Rosetta, "he will kill me rather. And, as for food, all we need do is to tie a basket to my little dog's neck and he will be sure to bring it back full."

And the old man gave her a basket, and, tying it to her little dog's neck, she said:—

"Go to the best kitchen in the city, Fretillo, and bring me what you find there."

Now, in all the city there was no kitchen so good as the King's, so Fretillo hastened there, lifted the lid off the pot, and slipped all that was in it into his basket, and hurried home again.

And his mistress said to him: "You are a good dog, Fretillo. But hurry back now to the store-room and bring me the best you find there."

So off went Fretillo, and brought home some white bread, some muscat wine, and such a load of sweet things that he could hardly carry his basket.

But when the King's dinner hour arrived there was no dinner in his kitchen and nothing in his store-room, and he fell into a great rage.

"If I can have no dinner," he said, "I will have a good supper at any rate, so put plenty of joints on the spit." That night, however, Rosetta said to her little dog: "Go to the best kitchen in the city and bring me all the roast meat you find there."

And again Fretillo went to the King's kitchen, and when the cooks were not looking that way, he snatched the roast meat off the spits and ran off with it. It smelt so good it was enough to make anyone hungry. And, as before, the Princess sent him straight back to the store-room, and he brought her all the preserves and sugar-plums he found there.

So that day the King of the Peacocks got neither dinner nor supper, and the same thing happened three days running, until at

last his best friend thought, if that sort of thing went on much longer, the King would die, so he went himself to watch in the kitchen what became of all his Royal master's dinners and suppers. What was his astonishment to see a little green one-eared dog softly steal in and lift the lid of the pot, take out what was in it, and run off with it in a basket! He followed him as fast as he could to see where he took it, and on and on he went, away out of the town to the fisherman's hut on the beach. And after that he went and told the King all he had seen.

And the King commanded him to take soldiers and go at once and seize the old man whose dog stole his dinners and suppers and robbed his store-room. And when the courtier and the soldiers came to the hut and found the fisherman, Rosetta, and Fretillo eating up the King's soup, they laid hold of them, bound them with cords, and dragged them away.

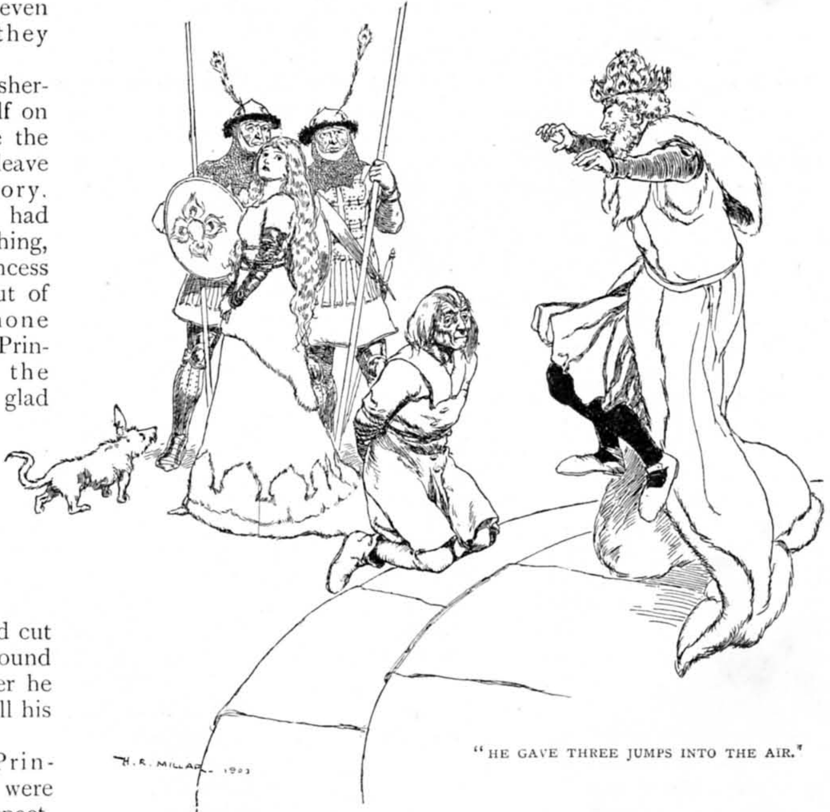
"They shall all be put to death to-morrow," said the King, "together with the two impostors who have not proved their innocence in the seven days' respite they begged for."

But the old fisherman cast himself on his knees before the King and asked leave to tell his story. And when he had told him everything, and that the Princess he had fished out of the sea was none other than the Princess Rosetta, the King was so glad that, weak as he was after his three days' fast, he gave three jumps into the air, and then ran to kiss Rosetta and cut the cords that bound her, and told her he loved her with all his heart.

Then the Princess's brothers were sent for, and, expecting to be hanged, they came looking very miserable. The nurse, the boatman, and the daughter were sent for. And everyone recognised one another, of course.

The Princess embraced her dear brothers. The nurse, her daughter, and the boatman fell on their knees and begged to be forgiven, and in honour of the joyful occasion their lives were spared at Rosetta's request. As to the kind old fisherman, he spent the rest of his days in peace and happiness in the palace.

And for the Princess's brothers, the King seemed as if he didn't know how to do enough to make up to them for his former unkindness. Of course, the Princess got back the sack of gold and the seven thousand three hundred dresses that the nurse had stolen; and the wedding festivities took place with great rejoicing and lasted a whole fortnight, and everyone was happy ever after, not forgetting Fretillo, who had roast partridge wings and breast for his dinner every day all the rest of his life.



"HE GAVE THREE JUMPS INTO THE AIR."

Nearly Roasted Alive in the Great Chandelier of Drury Lane.

BY RUDOLPH DE CORDOVA.

A RING of flaring gas beneath his feet; a ring of flaring gas above his head; and between the two, a boy holding on to the framework of the great chandelier in the centre of the ceiling of Drury Lane Theatre! Into his nostrils he breathed the fumes of noxious gas; in his hands the iron rods by which he supported himself grew hotter and hotter; and between him and the floor of the pit beneath lay a sheer drop of seventy feet of darkness! No melodramatist seeking for a blood-curdling situation ever devised such a scene. No novelist ever imagined the possibility of placing a character in such a position. Yet it is true, absolutely true; evolved by circumstances in the simplest and most direct manner in the world.

As every great sensation scene should, it had a happy ending, for Mr. Frank Parker, Equestrian and Stage Director of the London Hippodrome, was once the hero—or should I say the victim?—of this situation which seemed to have only one possible termination—death.

MR. FRANK PARKER—PRESENT DAY.
From a Photo.

To-day the great auditorium of Drury Lane is lighted, like the stage, by means of electricity, and the turning of a switch makes the whole building ablaze with light or plunges it into complete darkness. Under the early régime of the late Sir Augustus Harris, however, things were quite different, for electricity had not been introduced, and gas was the only means of illumination. Even then, however, instead of having a pilot light by means of which all the burners were lighted rapidly, the work was done by hand, each burner having to be lighted separately.

In those days Mr. Frank Parker, then a mere lad, was made gas-boy, and part of his duty was to light the great chandelier in the middle of the ceiling. The audience naturally paid no heed to the massive structure of iron and glass which illuminated the building, and it will probably surprise those who recall its appearance, through the illustration, to know that even in his most expert days it took Mr. Parker no less than an hour and three-quarters to light it.

In order that the situation may be the better understood, let me first, like a dramatist, describe the scene in which the great sensation is to be performed.

Suspended from strong steel chains was the chandelier, some 12ft. or 14ft. long, with a diameter at the widest part near the bottom of 16ft. or 18ft. At the top near the point of suspension there was a narrow opening, perhaps 2ft. across, through which the pipes for conveying the gas to the burners passed.

Even to reach the chandelier was a task not unattended with danger. The way was up through the flies, over the "gridiron" of the stage, a narrow trellis-work of iron. There, until the gas was lighted, it was always pitch dark, and the boy had to feel rather than see his way, for the only light he had was a spirit torch he carried. This threw a ghostly glimmer rather than a light around him, and revealed the masks of hideous demons which had been used in previous pantomimes, and were stored along the path by which he had to go.

"Very ghostly and rather terrifying did those masks often appear to my childish imagination as in the dead silence of the theatre I slowly made my way along the gridiron, the green light of my spirit torch just serving to bring out the suggestion of horrible, grinning faces and demoniacal expressions," said Mr. Parker to me as he recounted his adventure one day.

Arrived over the chandelier there was first a sort of well to go down. This was placed above the cowl for ventilating purposes, and there was an opening some 6ft. in diameter

down a Jacob's ladder to a grating shaped like a gigantic H. On this the boy, armed with a rod 23ft. long, used to take his stand night after night. At the end of the rod was a sponge, which was dipped in methylated spirit, and by the slow process of touching each burner with the flaming spirit the chandelier was gradually lighted.

"If ever when you're lighting the chandelier, Frank, a piece of the glass festoon should happen to break," said the gas-man, giving the boy instructions when he first took up the work, "you have got to break it off somehow and let it drop into the pit. That must be done at any cost, for if you don't, and the heat makes the copper wire that joins the bits of glass break, the broken swag will fall on the people sitting in the pit and it may kill somebody."

One night, after lighting all the thirteen or fourteen baskets around the widest diameter of the chandelier, the rod got caught in one of the longest swags of glass, and, in trying to get it clear, the force the boy used broke one of the connecting pieces of copper wire, and in another moment the lower end attached to a point at the extreme circumference of the chandelier was hanging suspended over the pit.

Remembering his instructions, the boy set to work with a will to break it off. Try as he would, however, he could not succeed.

"If ever a piece of the glass breaks you've got to get it off somehow," were the words which ran through his mind. That was his duty; that was the thing he had to do. Without another thought he made up his mind how to do the thing. He must climb down into the chandelier, supporting himself against the framework and the pipes until he reached the broken chain, twist it off, and let it drop into the pit, then climb back and set to work again in order that the chandelier might be lighted by the time the doors were opened.

No sooner was the plan conceived than he began to put it into execution. He pulled up the long pole, set it on one side, and started to climb down into the chandelier. A broad-shouldered lad, he had to squeeze himself through the upper opening of the chandelier, round which was set a circle of burners in order to produce the upward draught to carry off the noxious fumes produced by the burning gas. He had his little lighted hand-torch in his hand, and, not thinking for the moment what he was doing, he, inadvertently, in climbing through the aperture, turned on the cock which allowed the gas to escape into the sun-burner. As he went through, his torch lighted the gas of one of the tubes. In another moment the flame had run round the rest, and there was a circle of lighted gas that effectually barred the possibility of return.

Intent on what he had to do, however, the boy did not notice this.

Slowly, carefully, gradually, without a thought of the danger he was running, he made his way from stay to stay, from bar to bar, until he came to the bottom of the chandelier. The hot air from the flaring burners beat up into his face; the noxious fumes of the consumed gas he breathed into his nostrils. He took no heed of them. He had his work to do.

MR. FRANK PARKER AS HE WAS WHEN THE ADVENTURE OCCURRED.
From a Photo.

Slowly, carefully, gradually, he made his way across the whole diameter of the chandelier. Steadying himself on two stays with his feet, and holding on to one bar with his left hand, he twisted round the long festoon of glass until at last he broke the connecting copper wire and the swag dropped down. There was a pause, and up through the silence came the clatter of the glass as it fell on to the floor beneath.

"It's all right," said the boy to himself, and he turned to retrace his steps.

Slowly, carefully, gradually, without a thought except for the work he had to do, he began to climb back to the grated platform from which he had descended. The hot air from the flaring burners beat up into his face; the noxious fumes of the consumed gas he breathed into his nostrils. He took no heed of them. He had his work to do.

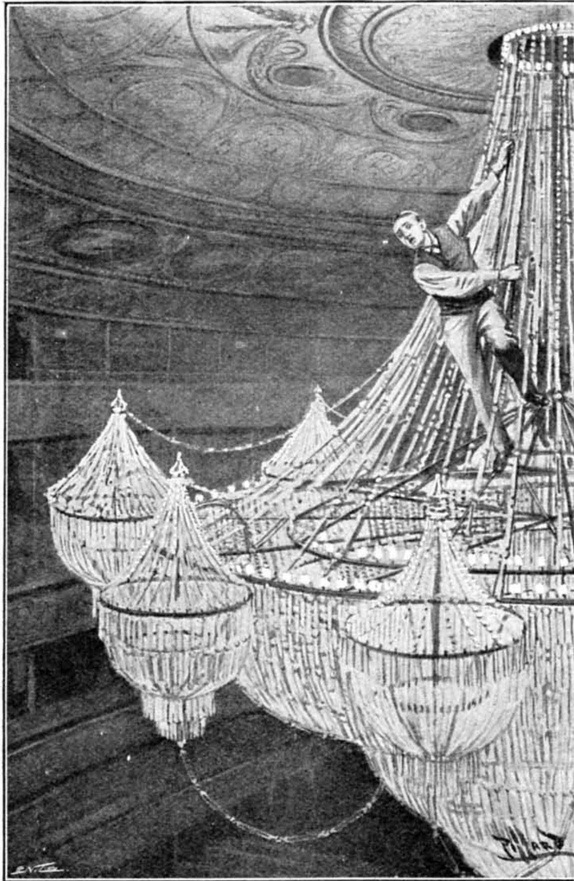
As he climbed, he felt the iron bars get hot beneath his hands. He looked down and saw the blazing ring of fire beneath his feet. He looked up and saw the blazing ring of fire above his head.

In an instant he realized his position. He was trapped. To attempt to escape through the narrow circle of fire was impossible, for even when the gas was not alight he had had a difficulty in getting through. The flare did its duty well. The ventilation was perfect, and a continuous stream of hot, vitiated air swept past the boy to make its escape through

the little ring of flame. Each breath he drew took fresh poison into his lungs, each second he remained his position became more unbearable. The fumes of the gas began to overpower him. There was a choking sensation in his throat. There was a bursting sensation in his head. Unless help came, and quickly, there was only one way out of the chandelier—the drop through the darkness into the pit 70ft. beneath. And then——

"Help, help, help!" the boy screamed, with all his might, holding on with a grim tenacity of purpose to the iron stays around.

Luckily for him the master gas-man was on the stage beneath, looking every now and then through a hole in the wall of the proscenium to see how the lighting of the theatre was progressing. Suddenly he noticed that though the baskets were lighted the greater part of the chandelier was unlit. There must be something wrong with the boy, he thought, and the next instant through the silence came the cry of "Help, help, help!" Without a moment's hesitation the gas-man left the stage to see what was the matter. A shout to the boy that he was coming, and he began to climb from the stage to the flies. He had to grope his way across the gridiron through the pitch darkness of the corridor with its hideous goblin masks until he reached the well above the cowl. Another moment he was on the H-shaped gridiron looking through the opening into the body of the chandelier. "Hold hard, Frank, I am here," he called. The boy, half-suffocated, half-roasted, heard the cheering words and understood them.



"HELP, HELP!"

Another moment still, the man had turned out the sun-burner. "Up you come, lad," said the man. The boy tried to make an effort, but his strength was almost gone. The deadly fumes he had been breathing for so many minutes had almost done their work.

Quick as a flash the man took in the situation. He lay flat down and, stretching out his arms through the opening, he grasped the boy tightly with both his hands. Slowly, steadily, he began to pull. The grip of those strong hands stimulated the boy, and, thus supported, he began to climb. From stay to stay, from pipe to pipe, he moved, still held by those strong hands, until at last his head was once more through the narrow circle of the sun-burner. Partly pushing, partly dragged, he got his shoulders through, and then once more he stood upon the H-shaped iron grid, which was to him as firm ground.

If in moments of great peril people live through years, what must have been the experience of the youth who lived through that ordeal which was reckoned not by seconds but by minutes with a ring of fire over his head, a ring of fire beneath his feet, suffocating fumes of gas overcoming his senses, pipes growing hotter in his grasp, and in his brain the single thought that if he lost his hold for a moment he would fall to certain death?

"Even to-day," said Mr. Parker, "I can't think of that episode without a shudder."

*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

ANOTHER CURIOUS POST-CARD.

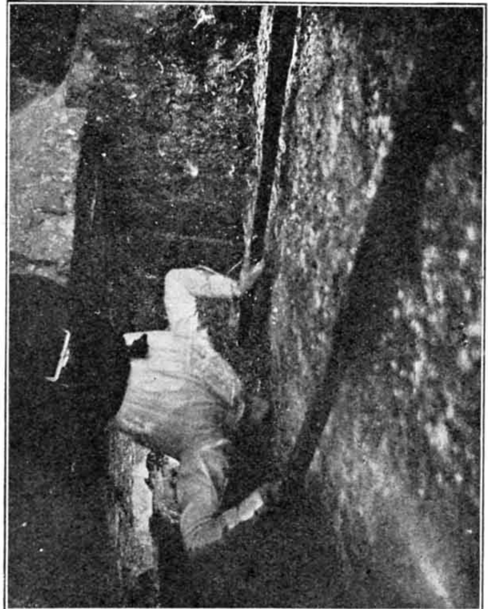
"I have noticed in your 'Curiosity' pages several curious post-cards. The inclosed, I am sure, is rather a novelty. It was delivered to me in the ordinary course. If suitable to appear in your Magazine, I thought it would interest several of your readers."—Mr. Edward B. Lee, 1, Ingham Street, Bury, Lancs.

AN OLD HEAD ON YOUNG SHOULDERS.

"I send you a photograph for your 'Curiosities.' It shows the body of a little boy aged three and the head of an old man aged sixty. I do not remember ever seeing such a striking combination before, and your readers may amuse themselves by arranging such combinations by substituting portraits of their friends—or enemies!"—Mr. H. C. Hall, 8, Second Avenue, Sherwood Rise, Nottingham.

"KISSING THE BLARNEY STONE."

"The photo. I send you may be of interest to your readers. It was taken last Bank Holiday, and represents kissing the Blarney Stone—by lying on your back, catching the two rails, and bending down while someone holds your feet. The illustration represents this process being performed by a lady, a Miss Williams, of London."—Mr. Frank Scanwell, 14, Douglas Street, Cork.



* Copyright, 1902, by George Newnes, Limited.

A NOVEL USE FOR POPPY-SEEDS.

"I send you a comic figure made of poppy-seed heads and their stalks. I also send a teapot, small drinking cup, and epergne made of the seed heads. I trust you may deem these sufficiently interesting to reproduce in your high-class periodical. My daughter, aged fourteen, cut out the basket, etc., and suggested the idea. They are made from the seed vessels of the Shirley poppy, and were cut out when thoroughly dry, but a night's rain softened the remainder in the garden, or we should have made other articles." — Mrs. Beatrice Hay, The Grange, Upminster, Essex.

A VERY REMARKABLE DOG.

"The photograph I send you is of a cross-bred Scotch terrier, having a record of 185 miles in thirty-two hours. My family and I left the ranch sixteen miles west of Rock Springs, Texas, to spend the winter in San Antonio. To reach the railroad we had to make a trip by road of 110 miles in a hack. At Sabinal, seventy miles west of San Antonio, we took the train and the dog was put in the luggage-van. From the station up town he rode in a cab at our feet. On arrival at the hotel I handed him over to the negro porter, who shut him up in a room for the night. Not liking his separation from Jim, my eldest boy, and his sleeping companion on the trip down, he howled most wofully, and was let out. The rest of the night he spent in searching through the hotel to find us, and was seen about 4 a.m. next morning. About that time the cooks came and must have left the doors open, as he was not seen again. This was Friday morning, and about a week later a letter arrived from Mr. F. J. Richardson, my father-in-law, to say that the dog had arrived at the ranch at twelve o'clock noon, Saturday." —Mr. C. S. Green, Rock Spring, Edward's Co., Texas.

SIX PHOTOS. AT ONE EXPOSURE!

"This curious photo. of myself was taken at one exposure by standing between two mirrors. It will be noticed that there are six reflections in perspective." — Mr. A. M. Stephen, 132, Sabine Road, Lavender Hill, S.W.

A BOGUS PUBLIC-HOUSE.

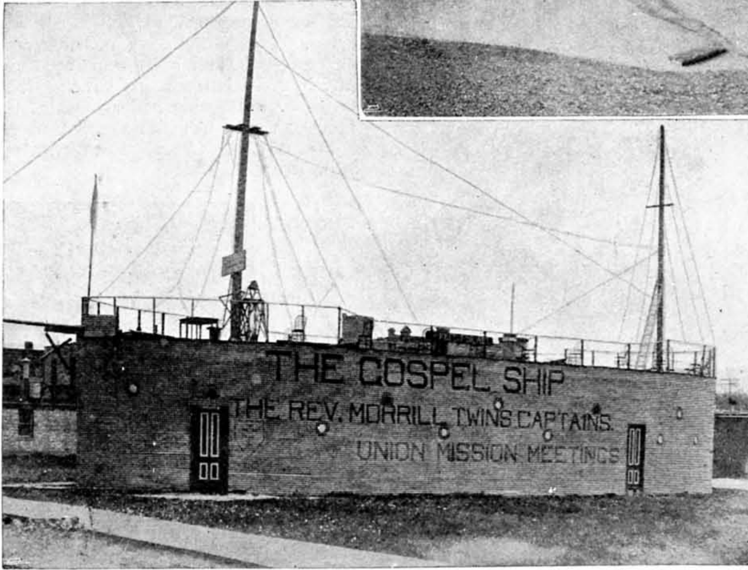
"The public-house shown in the accompanying photograph is an impromptu production made for the purpose of playing a joke. The men in the picture were on their holidays, and were staying near a town in which a friend of theirs had recently had bequeathed to him a public-house called the Cross Keys. This friend had never seen the hostelry in question, although he drew the rent, and he asked the holiday-makers—one of whom was an amateur photographer—to photograph it for him. They converted a barn in the back garden of the place where they lodged into a public-house, as shown in the picture, and presented it to the owner of the real 'house' as a photograph of his property. The joke was a huge success."—Mr. A. H. Goldsmith, 69, Maury Road, Stoke Newington, N.

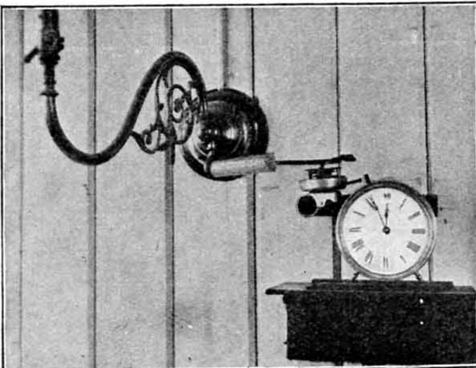
A FOSSILIZED TREE-STUMP.

"I send you a photo. I took of a fossilized tree-stump found in a quarry near here, and now in Lister Park, Manningham. I hope it will be taken as a 'Curiosity.' Its resemblance to an octopus is truly remarkable."—Mr. J. Fulda, Stoneleigh, Bradford.

A SHIP THAT IS NOT A SHIP.

"This curious building, which looks like a stranded vessel, was built in the form of a ship, and is really a church. It is located in the suburbs of Chicago and holds about 1,000 people. It was constructed by two clergymen, who call themselves the Rev. Morrill Twins, and is intended principally for sailors and the lower classes. In connection with the religious services, meals are also served."—Mr. D. Allen Willey, Baltimore.



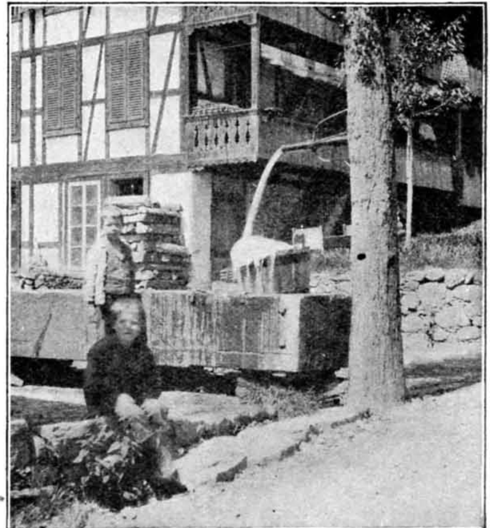


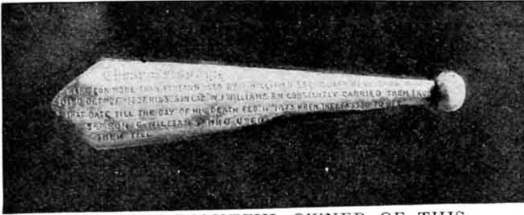
"ECONOMY" IS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION.

"I send you a photo. of an ingenious little invention made by a friend, which I think might be suitable for your 'Curiosity' pages. As it is necessary, in his cycle shop, to have a light burning all night, my friend thought out this idea and put it to practical use, to cut off the light at sunrise, thus saving a considerable quantity of gas. It will be seen in the photo. that the striker of the alarm clock plays on the handle of a cycle bell which is worked by a spring, causing a cogwheel in it to revolve together with part of a rim brake which is attached; this in turn presses against a wooden lever fixed to the gas-tap, thus extinguishing the light at any time the alarm may be set for. Considering the very rough and ready materials used, and the most satisfactory way in which it answers its purpose, this contrivance does great credit to the ingenuity of the maker."—Mr. Sydney Hore, 91, Barcombe Avenue, Streatham Hill, S.W.

WATER FROM A TREE.

"This is a photograph of rather an extraordinary spring. It comes straight up from the ground through the tree, which, at the time of taking, was in full leaf. It is situate in a small village called Gunten, on the Lake of Thun, Switzerland."—Miss. E. Tew, Gunfield, Dartmouth.





WANTED—THE RIGHTFUL OWNER OF THIS CURIOSITY.

"Would you care to try to discover any possible descendants of the original owners of this quaintly-inscribed silver sheath for pair of scissors? If so, you can hand this relic over to them, as it should be of more value to them than to a stranger. It came into my possession about twenty years ago, and was found amongst some old silver bought for re-melting by my father, Thomas Johnson, then of 32, John Street, Bedford Row, W.C. The inscription on the sheath runs as follows: 'These scissors were for more than 40 years used by J. Williams, Esq., Comptroller of Customs, who died Oct. 27, 1827. His third son, Capt. W. J. Williams, R.N., constantly carried them from this date till the date of his death, Feb. 11, 1873, when they passed to his third son, E. Williams, who used them till——'"—Mr. Alfred Laurie, Wandsbeck, Westville, near Pinetown, Natal. We have pleasure in acceding to our contributor's request, and hope that the publication of the above may lead to the discovery of the rightful owner of this strange sheath.

THIS SOVEREIGN SAVED A LIFE.

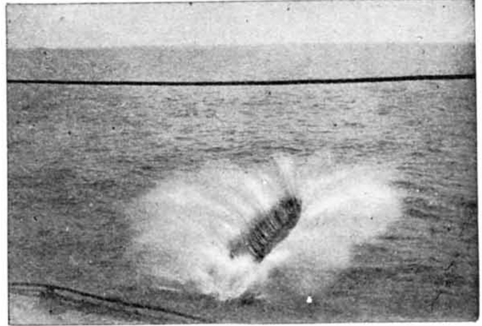
"I'm sending by this mail a photo. of a sovereign which I thought you would like for your 'Curiosity' pages. I was wearing it around my ankle in a little leather money-belt when I was wounded at Warmbad, about seventy or eighty miles north of Pretoria. The bullet (a Mauser) cut the piece clean out and left the sovereign sticking in the wound. Lieutenant Wylly rescued me and gained the V.C."—Corporal E. S. Brown, Tasmanian Imperial Bushman, Penguin, Tasmania.

WHO FIRED THAT SHOT?

"I inclose a photograph of a pipe broken under the most extraordinary circumstances. It happened a few weeks ago in a garden at Newton Abbot. I was innocently smoking it, when my friends and I were startled to hear the report of a rifle, fired at no great distance. Simultaneously my pipe was knocked out of my mouth and broken into two pieces, which fell to the ground, there being some 7ft. between them. The photo., which represents the two pieces, was taken by my friend Mr. A. S. Brookes, of Clifton."—Mr. H. N. Wyman, Caius College, Cambridge.

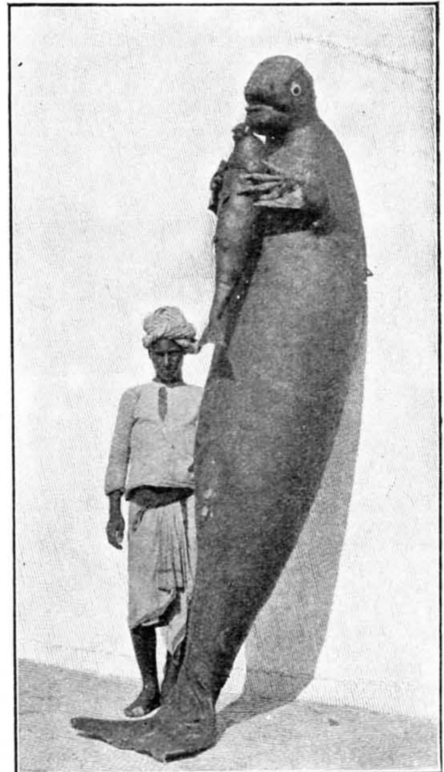
SNAP-SHOTTING A TORPEDO!

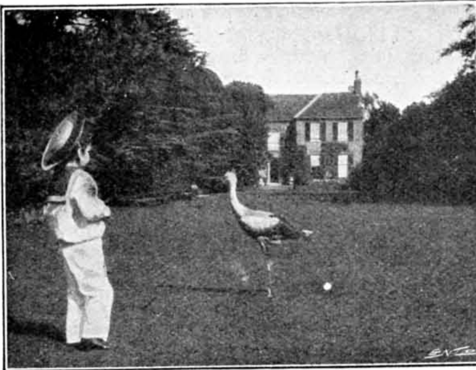
"I inclose a photo. I took of an 18in. torpedo just taking the water, fired from this torpedo-boat destroyer, safe on the upper deck. The ship was steaming at the time fifteen knots. It also shows a modern torpedo taking the water horizontally instead of diving as in the earlier types. Many people who have not seen a torpedo fired might wonder what it was, as the ship is not seen in the photo. at all."—Sub.-Lieutenant Arthur L. Blackwood, R.N., H.M.S. *Otter*, China Station.



A MERMAID AND HER BABY.

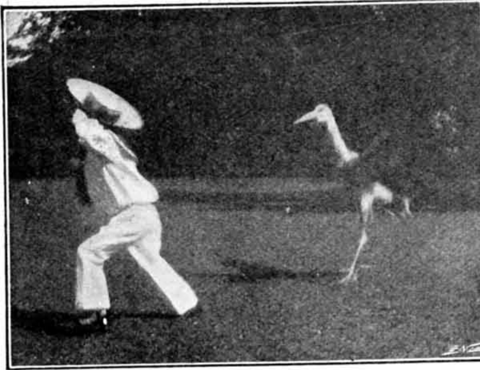
"Here is a dugong, taken by some native fishermen in their nets near Aden. I photographed it with its young baby in its arms. The Arab standing beside it was about 5ft. 6in. in height, which will show the relatively large size of the dugong. They are usually called 'mermaids' locally, and possibly gave rise to the belief in those fabled beings."—Lieut.-Col. H. J. Barnes, R.A.M.C., 112, Military Road, Colchester.



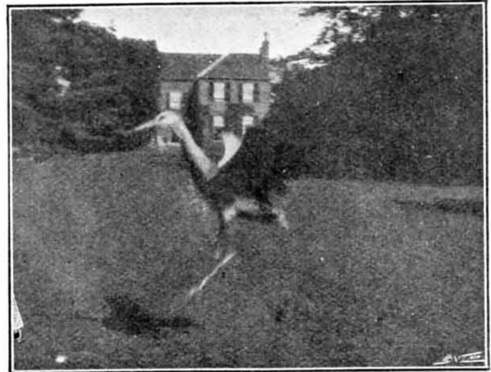


1.—BOY AND STORK.

2.—"CAN YOU DANCE?"



3.—STORK TRIES.



4.—BOY FLIES.

THE DANCE OF THE BOY AND THE STORK.

"I am sending you a series of snap-shots which I have taken of my pet stork and a small nephew, hoping you will accept them for publication. We told the little boy that if he danced to the stork it would dance back to him. He was quite brave as long as the stork remained on one leg, but when it suddenly roused itself and began to dance too, he fled precipitately and, I think, rather wisely!"—Miss Mildred Olivier, Wilton Rectory, Wiltshire.

A MESMERIZED BIRD.

"No animal is more susceptible to mesmeric influence than the common or domestic cock. Catch a bird as quietly as possible, so as to avoid alarming him. Place him on a bare floor or a broad slab of wood, and bend his head down until his beak touches the wood. Then with a piece of chalk draw a broad line from the tip of the beak straight forward. If he has been properly handled he will remain as though paralyzed for several minutes. Another method is to tuck the bird's head under his wing and then, holding him at arms' length in both hands, to swing him gently in a circle a few times. The induced unconsciousness is so complete that he may be stood in shallow water a considerable time before he discovers his position. The awakening is extremely comic."—Mr. A. Williams, 7, New Road, Reading.

SLATE v. STONE.

"This window-sill is situated in the boys' playground at St. Thomas's Church Day Schools, Birmingham, and being at a convenient height from the ground has been used by the scholars for over sixty years for sharpening their slate-pencils on. The result is that the stone in many places has been worn away until almost flush with the brickwork, as is clearly shown in the photo. The managers have now forbidden it to be used, as they want to retain it as a curiosity."—Mr. Herbert J. Mason, Carlton House, Edgbaston.