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# THE IDLER MAGAZINE.

AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY.

April 1893.

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## CONTENTS.

No. 1.—THE QUEEN'S ANIMALS.

by G. B. Burgin and E. M. Jessop.

PEOPLE I HAVE NEVER MET.

by Scott Rankin.

THE RECLAMATION OF JOE HOLLEND'S.

by Robert Barr.

MY FIRST BOOK.

DAWN.

by H. Rider Haggard.

TOLD BY THE COLONEL.

XII. THE CAT'S REVENGE.

by W. L. Alden

“LIONS IN THEIR DENS.”

J. L. TOOLE.

by Raymond Blathwayt.

NOVEL NOTES.

by Jerome K. Jerome.

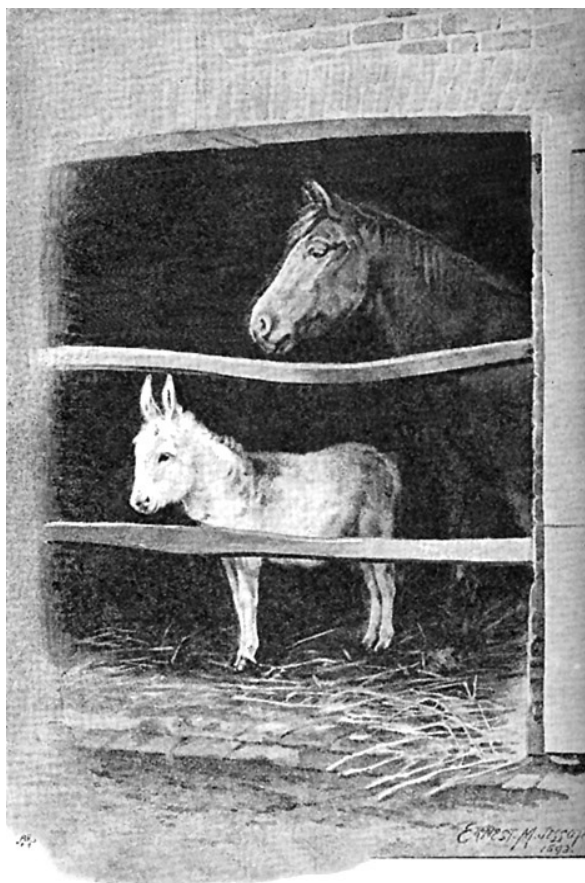
THE STORY OF AN HOUR.

by Hilda Newman.

RUM PUNCH AT PODBURY'S.  
by Eden Phillpotts.

THE IDLERS CLUB.  
"AWKWARD PREDICAMENTS."

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CHESTNUT CHARGER OF THE LATE EMPEROR  
FREDERIC OF GERMANY, AND "NINETTE," THE  
PRINCESS VICTORIA'S LITTLE WHITE DONKEY.

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**No. 1.—THE QUEEN'S ANIMALS.**

BY G. B. BURGIN AND E. M. JESSOP.

The February wind blows keenly, as we lean from the window of our railway carriage, and watch dismantled house-boats, drawn up on the river bank just outside Windsor, being prepared for the forthcoming season. Some Eton boys—it is evidently a holiday—stand looking on with lively interest. Several people get out of the train, walk into the quaint old-fashioned street, and disappear. We follow them, charter a hansom, and are driven along a picturesque road in the direction of the late Prince Consort's Shaw Farm. This road is almost deserted, save for half-a-dozen cavalymen who come riding down it, their brilliant red uniforms lighting up the dull air through which the sunlight vainly endeavours to struggle. Their horses are bespattered with mud; there is mud everywhere—a thick, glutinous mud; but when we enter the precincts of the Shaw Farm everything gives place to an ordered and dainty neatness which is thoroughly characteristic of the Royal domains.

We are received by Mr. W. Tait, the Queen's Land Steward at Windsor, whose handsome stalwart figure is so well known to all leading agriculturists, and conducted to a natty little office decorated with water-colour drawings of prize cattle, and various other reminiscences of past triumphs. Mr. Tait's drawing-room, in common with those of his *confrères* at Windsor, is embellished by various signed portraits of Her Majesty and the Royal family.

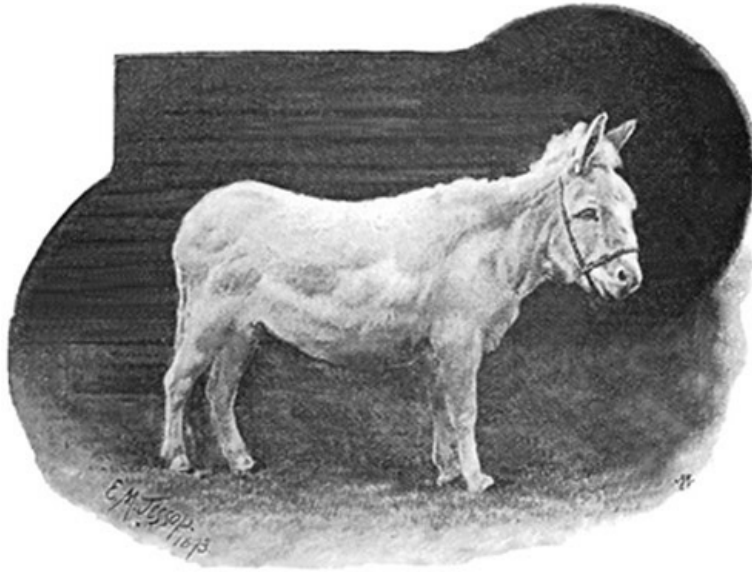
From here, we cross the road and enter a stable where two beautiful old grey carriage horses are being prepared by one of the farm hands for our inspection, to a continuous accompaniment of sibilant ostler language. They have evidently been running wild in the park for some time; each white coat is stained with mud, and burrs stick tenaciously to their long tails. An attendant at the farm is rubbing them down, talking to them, and making them generally presentable. He is evidently on good terms with his charges, for one playfully nibbles his broad back, whilst the other tries to steal his red pocket-handkerchief. "Flora" and "Alma" were presented to Her Majesty by the late King Victor Emanuel of Italy. They are about fourteen hands high, tremendously powerful, and beautifully shaped. One of them has also been used to draw the Queen's chair about the grounds; but they are both now regarded as honoured pensioners, and do no work at all.

The kindness and affection with which Her Majesty speaks of favourite animals in her various writings may well assure us that in the midst of state and family cares, manifold though they be, her old pets, even after death, are not forgotten. Of this we have evidence later on.

The next shed to that of the old greys is occupied by a magnificent chestnut charger over seventeen hands high, once the property of the late Emperor Frederic of Germany. In appearance, this charger is as fresh and vigorous as a horse of five. It was given by the Emperor to Prince Christian, who rode it for four years. The charger has a sprightly, though somewhat incongruous, companion in the shape of "Ninette," a little white donkey which was purchased at Grasse by Her Majesty, and presented to the Princess Victoria of Connaught, for whose use it is now being broken in. Directly the donkey is taken out of the stable for educational purposes, the charger becomes restless and unhappy, races round the paddock attached to his loose box in evident distress, and refuses to be comforted until his beautiful little companion returns. Then he playfully nibbles her back, joyfully flings up his heels, and careers wildly round the paddock, neighing shrilly as he goes, his long tail floating in the breeze. What will happen when "Ninette" leaves her companion it is difficult to say. At present she takes little notice of this exuberant display of affection, beyond running beneath the charger's belly, and playfully trying to plant her tiny heels in his lofty side. When they have been twice round the paddock, "Ninette" plodding gamely on, a long way in the rear, the couple halt at the shed entrance, and look at us with exuberant curiosity, the donkey's long ears shooting backwards and forwards with great rapidity.

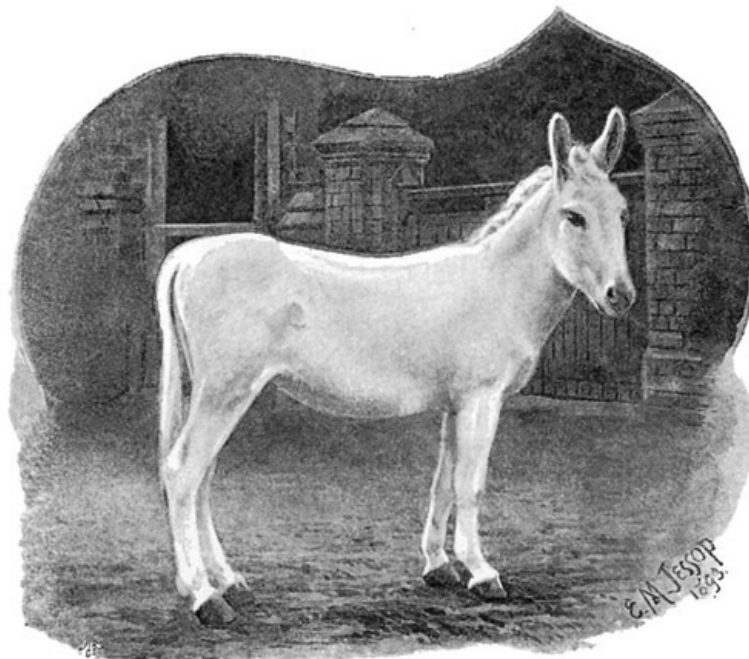
After inspecting this somewhat incongruous couple, we are taken to another stable to see "Jenny," a white donkey, twenty-five years old. "Jenny" belongs to the Queen, and was bred at Virginia Water. Her Majesty saw "Jenny" when she was a foal, had her brought to Windsor and trained, and there the docile old animal has remained ever since. She is pure white in colour, with large, light, expressive grey eyes. One

peculiarity about her is an enormous flat back, soft and almost as wide as a moderate-sized feather bed. A handsome chestnut foal is temporarily quartered with her. This foal was bred from a mare belonging to the late Mr. John Brown, and promises to grow into a very beautiful animal.



"JENNY."

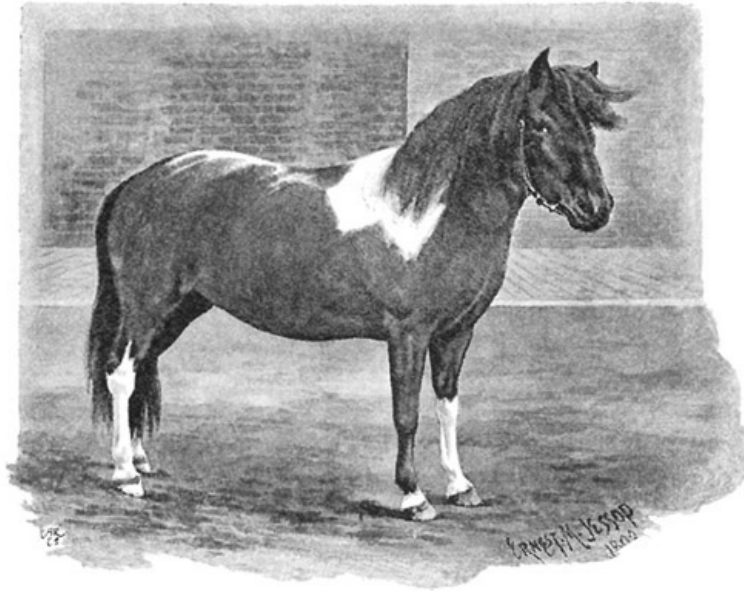
"Jenny," although rather reserved, affably condescends to partake of a biscuit, pensively twitching her long ears after us as we depart along the road leading to the Royal dairy. As we leave the trimly built and picturesque outbuildings there is a brave burst of sunshine; chaffinches "chink-chink" in the trees around, producing a sharp, clear sound as if two pebbles were struck against each other; rooks sail majestically overhead, their sentinels, posted in the trees around, giving notice of our approach; and the pale petals of a rather primrose gleam shyly out from a sheltering hedge. The park is filled with Scotch cattle with beautiful heads and matted, shaggy hides. In the next paddock a handsome Jersey cow thrusts her head over the intervening rails and licks the shaggy frontlet of a small dun bull, who gives a gentle low of satisfaction, and endeavours to follow us as we pass through the gate in the direction of the Queen's dairy. At this section of the farm, in the buildings, we find "Tewfik," a very fine white Egyptian donkey, with large black eyes and tremendous ears.



"TEWFIK."

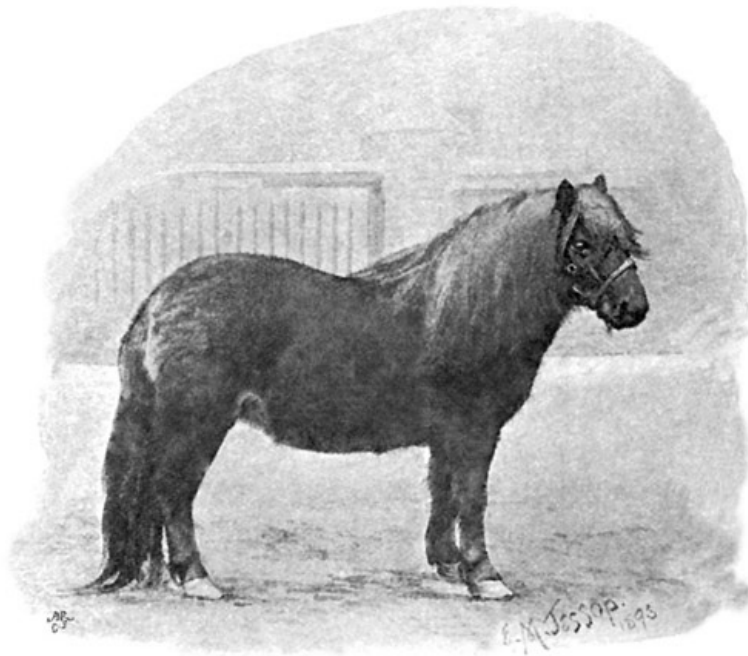
He is one of those enormous asses which are so greatly esteemed in the East for their powers of endurance. It is a curious fact that a donkey of this kind will do as much work as a horse, last twice the time on a long march, and never break down. "Tewfik" was purchased by Lord Wolseley in Cairo, and sent to England, gay with magnificent Oriental trappings, and clipped all over in most extraordinary patterns, resembling

Greek architectural ornaments. These patterns are a source of great trouble to the unsophisticated traveller in the East. He learns one side of his donkey by heart, and never thinks of looking at the other; consequently, when he sees the hitherto unknown side of the animal, he is inclined to think that some wight has been playing a practical joke, and substituted a different beast for the one he has bestridden. "Tewfik" was much admired at the Jubilee Agricultural Show in Windsor Great Park, and seems really a very amiable, well-mannered, aristocratic animal. He is delighted to see us, and prefers sweet biscuits to plain. Indeed, it is with regret that he watches us depart. His long mobile ears shoot out from the stable door as he endeavours to follow us into the box of his neighbour, a dainty Shetland pony, some three feet six inches high, which is usually known as "The Skewbald."



"THE SKEWBALD."

This diminutive little lady welcomes us in the most charming manner, and is as frolicsome as a kitten, romping about and playing all sorts of tricks. Her mission in life, besides being everyone's pet, is to draw a small two-wheeled cart for Her Majesty's grandchildren. The dainty, trim, little brown-and-white beauty possesses enormous strength, and takes existence very philosophically. The first time she was put into harness she acted as if she had been accustomed to it all her life, and never required the slightest breaking in. There is another Shetland pony in one of the neighbouring paddocks, but she is dark brown in colour, and, with her long-flowing mane and tail, looks like a miniature carthorse. Like most of Her Majesty's animals, she is fond of society, and objects to be separated from a large handsome grey donkey which was bought on one of the Continental journeys, and now occupies the same paddock as the Shetland. In order to take the pony's portrait comfortably, it was found necessary to invite the donkey to be present as a spectator.



"THE SHETLAND MARE."

The next pet to be inspected is an animal which most people would prefer to cultivate at a distance, being none other than the enormous bison named "Jack," a magnificent specimen of his race, who was obtained in exchange from the Zoological Society. The Canadian grew savage, and had to be sent away. "Jack," in spite of his immense strength, is of a very peaceful, almost timorous, disposition. Strictly speaking, he can hardly be called a pet, as the artist prudently takes his likeness from behind a high wall. All friendly overtures to this last of his race are vain. He remains pensively gazing at the opposite wall, a tear trickling down his broad nose. Even the joyful bellow of his next-door neighbour, a half-grown Jersey bull, fails to attract his attention, although the animal, as it recognises its keeper's step, climbs half over the wall to be fondled.



Here we must not pass without examination some most beautiful little Jersey calves with silky coats and great wondering eyes, which look as if the world was a charming mystery to them.

In the next stall to the Jersey bull stands an eccentric-looking little animal called "Sanger," a pony presented to Her Majesty by the well-known circus proprietor of that name. "Sanger" is now nine months old. This strange little animal's breed is

practically unknown, and his appearance most eccentric; indeed, his legs show a tendency to stride to all points of the compass. In colour he is cream; his eyes are grey, with pink lids; and he has white eyelashes like an albino. His manners are not demonstrative, but coldly courteous.



"SANGER."

Outside, in the park, is another pet, which was presented to Her Majesty by Lord Wolseley, a peculiarly tall, deerlike-looking animal, a Zulu cow, bred from a bull which was originally the property of Dabulamanzi, Cetewayo's brother. Cetewayo, curiously enough, when paying a visit to the Shaw Farm, saw his brother's cattle, but did not appear to admire them much when compared with the English. A well-bred English cow has four times the substance and breeding of her Zulu sister.

Attention may also be called to some magnificent red Spanish cattle, whose noble heads and gigantic horns are in themselves a study for the artist.

It should be mentioned here that when Her Majesty drives through the private road which leads from the Castle past the kennels and dairy to the Shaw Farm, she likes to see

the animals as they come up to the railings, and is thus able to observe how former favourites bear the burden of their years. The Queen names most of them herself, and never forgets an old friend.

Before going on to the kennels, by permission of the courteous manageress, we enter the beautiful Royal dairy, which was built under the direction of His Royal Highness the late Prince Consort in the twenty-first year of Her Majesty's reign. It is more like an apartment in fairyland than a dairy. The walls and ceiling are composed of exquisitely shaded Minton tiles, the dairy itself being about forty-five feet long and thirty wide. Long marble tables run right round the sides and up the centre. On these tables are some 90 white earthenware pans, each of which contains about seven quarts of milk. The butter is sent to Osborne every day, and averages about twenty pounds weight in winter and forty in summer. A small supply for the Queen's own breakfast table is also made in a special churn every morning.

Around the walls of the dairy are medallions of the Royal family, with the monogram V.R. between. At each end of the dairy stands a beautiful fountain; there is also one at the side. All these fountains came from the Exhibition of 1851; the design is a stork supporting a lily leaf into which the water falls. The roof is supported by three pairs of arched pillars, and the windows are double, the inner set being stained with designs of Tudor roses, hawthorn, primroses, white marguerites, the rose, shamrock, thistle, and Scotch harebell. The outer windows are plain glass. Beyond the glass is another window of wire gauze, so minute that in hot weather both windows can be thrown open to admit the air, and yet all intrusive insects kept at a distance. The Royal herd generally consists of about fifty cows when they are all in milk, principally shorthorns and Jerseys, twenty-five of each. Last year there were fifty-four cows in milk, but the number usually averages about fifty.

The recesses in the dairy walls are filled with lovely old Crown Derby and Worcester, together with a few Oriental china plates and dishes. There is also a dish bearing the inscription, "Chamberlain, Worcester, Manufacturer to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent." Close to the dairy, stands an apartment devoted to churns and huge milk-cans. Each milk-can bears the following inscription on the top:—



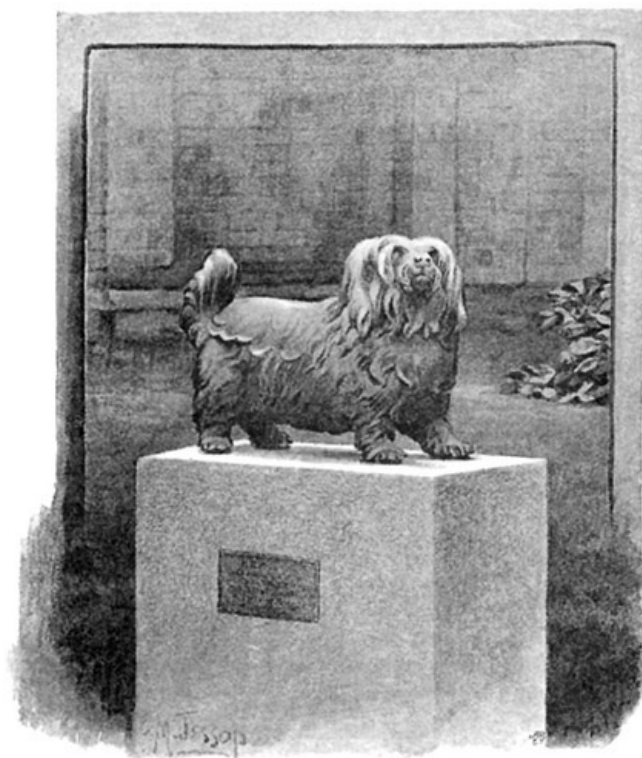
Home Park, Windsor.

After exhausting the wonders of the Royal dairy, we pass out into the sunshine once more, but, before leaving the shrubbery, notice two little monuments to the memory of long-deceased favourites, the inscriptions on which are as follows:—



BOY,

Died February 20, 1862,  
Aged five years.  
The favourite and faithful dog of the Queen and  
Prince Consort.



BOZ,



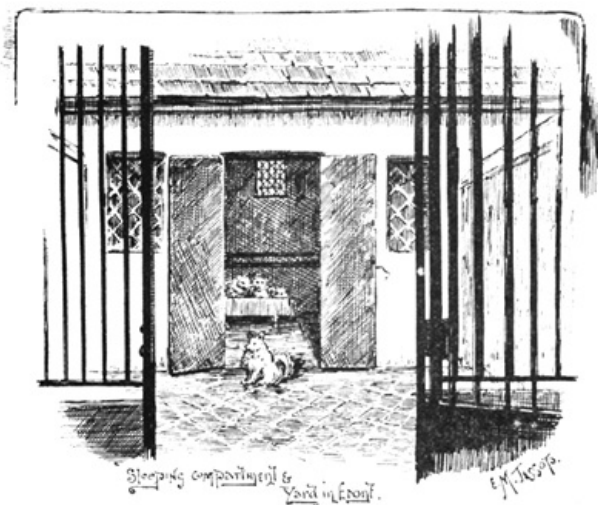
The favourite Scottish terrier of the Duchess of Kent, to whom he had been given in 1857 by the Queen and Prince Consort.

On March 16, 1861, he was taken back, and from that time till he died, Oct. 26, 1864, remained the faithful dog of the Queen.

Surely, two touching and blameless little records!

Leaving these pets to their well-earned rest, we walk along the trimly-kept private road leading to the Royal kennels. Here, when Her Majesty drives along, she can see the Spanish oxen and other pets as they come up to the railings and peer curiously over, the long horns of the oxen especially making a formidable show which is entirely belied by their peaceful disposition.

At the Royal kennels we are received by Mr. Hugh Brown, the manager, and his able assistant, Mr. Hill, and shown into the apartment which is sometimes occupied by Her Majesty when visiting the kennels. It is a quaint, medium-sized room, with old oak rafters and oak furniture, comfortable chairs and foot-rests predominating. The curtains are a warm, deep red, the carpet to match, and a couple of little oak tables occupy the centre of the room. But the unique feature about this apartment is the number of dog portraits on the walls.



There are dogs of every race, shape and colour; dogs large and small; dogs lying down or standing up; dogs in oils; dogs in watercolours; all of them labelled with the animal's name and the artist who painted it. One or two special favourites have a lock of their hair let into the woodwork of the frame.

Outside, the tiled walk called the "Queen's Verandah" is covered over as a protection against the weather. Her Majesty is accustomed to walk up and down here, and inspect the various occupants. There are several dogs in every compartment. Each front yard measures ten feet by twelve; the sleeping compartment is ten feet by ten.

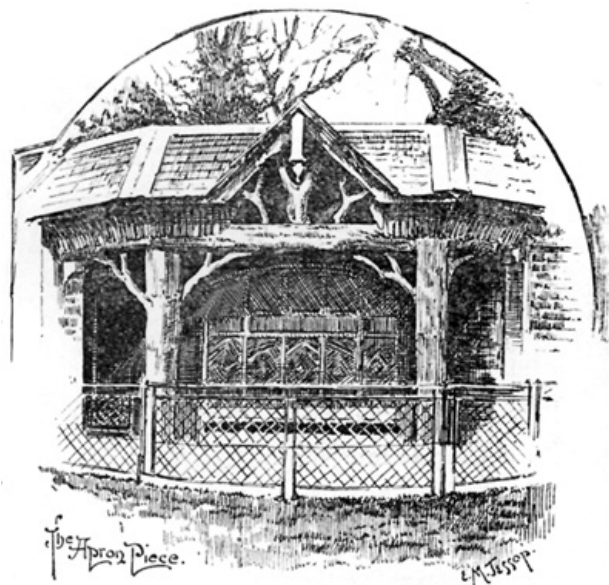
The wall in front stands nearly three feet high, and has a rail on the top. Each yard is paved with red and blue tiles. In the sleeping compartments, which are warmed by hot-water pipes, are benches raised about a foot from the ground. Facing the "Collie Court," as it is called, is a large paddock which contains the bath—a curious aperture in the ground, with sloping sides, so that a dog can run down, swim through the middle, and walk up again on the other side. The sides of this bath are lined with little round stones. There is also an umbrella-shaped structure of wood, under which the dogs can lie and sun themselves after the bath. Near the road is a curious looking seat called "The Apron Piece," with a railing in front. The Queen sometimes sits here and watches the gambols of the dogs when they are let loose in the paddock.

There does not appear to be any hard and fast rule as to the housing of the dogs. It all depends how they agree with each other. For instance, in one compartment will be found a collie, Spitz, and dachshund; in the next, three Spitzes and a pug; then two Skye terriers, three pugs, one dachshund; then two lovely white collies; then one solitary collie whose coat is out of order, and who comes up with big, beseeching eyes, as if imploring us to put an end to her solitude. The most attractive sight is, of course, the twelve or thirteen beautiful collies in one big compartment. In all there are about fifty-five dogs, fifty-four of whom are in

robust health, the hospital containing one whippet. A beautiful little black Pomeranian "Zeela" inhabits a huge cage in solitary state, and barks herself all over it at once. In the paddock outside her cage are four beautiful black and tan collie pups, all eager for a romp.

Every dog in the Queen's kennels is exercised twice a day, morning and afternoon. The little dogs generally go out first, and then give place to the big ones. Feeding time for the whole establishment is four o'clock in the afternoon, but during very cold weather each animal is given some dry biscuit every morning. The food is prepared in a kitchen reserved expressly for this purpose, and consists of soaked biscuits,

vegetables, meat, bullock's head, pluck, and sometimes a little beef. Oatmeal is also added to this *olla podrida*. The dogs are all in hard condition, and look the picture of health. It is difficult to tear oneself away from the collies, especially the two lovely white ones and the little buff-coated Pomeranians, with tightly curling tails and small, sharp ears.



"ROY."

Her Majesty's love for dogs is so well known that it would be superfluous to dwell upon such a topic. Wherever the Queen goes, she is accompanied by "Spot" (a fox-terrier), "Roy" (a black and tan collie), and a lovely little brown Spitz called "Marco." Her favourite dogs are collies, and she possesses a magnificent specimen in "Darnley," who is now being exhibited at the Agricultural Hall dog



"SPOT."

show. "Darnley" is a beautiful black and tan in colour, with heavy white ruff. He has a most curious habit, inherited from his father, of wrinkling up the skin of his nose and showing all his teeth when pleased. Another animal away at the show is the little eight-months old Skye terrier, "Rona." "Rona" is iron-grey in colour, has a very long body, and is extremely intelligent and good natured.

On one of the artist's visits, "Beppo," a white Pomeranian, was brought out to have his portrait taken. Dog-like, he at once pretended, when required to sit still, that it was an excessively difficult operation causing great physical discomfort. Talking did not interest him, shaking of keys and rolling of coppers had lost their charm; in fact, tail between legs, he voted existence a mistake. Just then, up strolled dear little "Rona," and with bright intelligent eyes seemingly enquired into the matter. In a few seconds everything was put right again. The sun once more shone, and the portrait was taken. Surely, these little Skyes are the most lovable and intelligent of all dogs. To any one who has read "Rab and his Friends," however, such a remark is unnecessary.

In appearance, little tiny "Gena" bears the palm from all the Pomeranians. She is one mass of white, silky wool, and has the most charming manners. With one tiny paw uplifted she immediately decides that artists are not as photographers, and may be trusted to take portraits without the intervention of any snappy and nerve-shaking apparatus. "Gena" and "Glen," an old black and tan collie, live in the house, the inseparable companions of genial Mrs. Hugh Brown.

The late Prince Consort's favourite dogs were dachshunds, a specimen of which



"MARCO."

invariably accompanied him on his walks. The Prince of Wales favours the odd-looking bassets, of which he has many fine specimens.



"BEPPPO."

But the kennels, with all their joyousness, have sad little tragedies at times. For instance, after the death of the late well-loved Emperor Frederick, two of his favourite Italian dogs, charming creatures, something like Italian greyhounds, were



"GENA."



"GENA."

sent to Her Majesty, but, unfortunately, did not long survive their illustrious master. Many old pets have tombs in various parts of the Royal domain. Among others which may be seen on the Slopes is that of "Sharp," a handsome collie, who lies, as in life, guarding the Queen's glove.

It is related of "Sharp" that he was greatly attached to the late Mr. John Brown, whose room he jealously guarded. If, by chance, strangers entered during Mr. Brown's absence they were not allowed to leave until his return, and under no circumstances must anything be taken from the room while "Sharp" was on guard. A housemaid, indeed, once picked up some little article with the intention of putting it on the table, and the dog, although he knew her well, refused to allow her to leave the room.



In noticing the display of prize certificates won by the dogs, we hear of another instance of Her Majesty's thoughtfulness for her pets. Although frequently exhibited for the pleasure of her subjects, they are never allowed to pass the night from home, being taken to and from the place of exhibition each day by their careful guardians, Messrs. Brown and Hill.

After an inspection of the well-kept stud-book, we at last turn to leave the happy scene, a process viewed, evidently, with much relief by a funny little, black-faced pug, to whom our presence and proceedings throughout have seemingly caused the greatest astonishment.

But we have still Her Majesty's pets at the stables to look at before returning to town, so we walk blithely down Herne's Walk toward the Castle, putting up a huge hare,

who leisurely retreats as if feeling secure within the Royal precincts. As we go down the walk, we notice a comparatively juvenile-looking tree in marked contrast to the giants around. At its foot is the following inscription:—

This tree was planted by  
Her Majesty Queen Victoria  
To mark the spot where Herne's Oak stood.  
The old tree was blown down  
August 31st, 1863.

There is an old tale goes that Herne the Hunter,  
Some time a keeper here in Windsor Forest,  
Doth all the winter time at still midnight  
Walk round about an oak.

—*Shakespeare.*

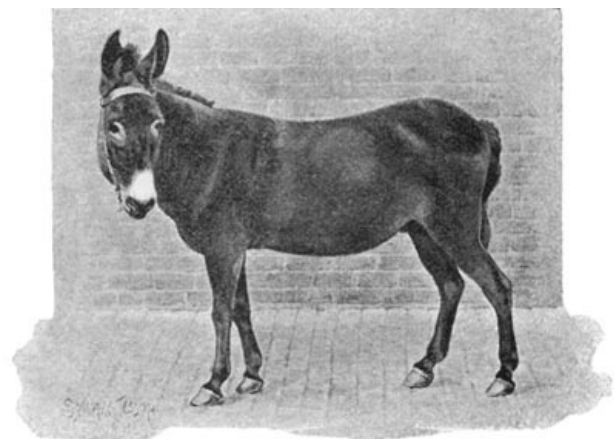
After lunch at the nearest hostelry, we walk up to the Castle, and enquire for Mr. John Manning, the superintendent of the Royal mews. Mr. Manning first takes us to the harness-room, a well-lighted, pleasant building with sanded floor, a stove burning brightly in the centre of the room, and all round the walls harness and saddles symmetrically arranged. The first set of double harness which he shows us is seldom used, and is made out of black leather, richly embroidered in designs of the Royal Arms, &c., with split porcupine quills, the work of some Tyrolese artists who visited this country many years ago. Next to the porcupine harness hangs a set of Russian leather sledge harness, beautifully mounted with silver, and as soft as a kid glove. High over the saddles (the saddles are hung up with what is known as a crutch) are the collars of the Queen's carriage horses. In order to prevent confusion, the name of each horse is printed above the collar, *i.e.*, "True," "Ronald," "Sheridan," "Beau," "Force," "Belfast," "Middy," "Bashful," and so on.



Next door to the harness-room is a huge coach-house containing the Queen's carriages, among them being a landau, sociable, driving landau, waggonette, and a driving phaeton with curtains, which was much used by the late Prince Consort. In one corner is a covered perambulator belonging to Her Majesty's grandchildren, and close to it stands the vehicle which is generally known as "the Queen's Chair," although it is in reality a little four-wheeled carriage, with rubber tyres, and a low step, the interior lining and cushions being a plain dark blue in colour.

This vehicle is much used by Her Majesty when driving about the grounds, and is drawn by an exceedingly strong, handsome donkey called "Jacquot," in colour a very dark brown, with white nose and curiously knotted tail. "Jacquot," who is a very intelligent animal, with a rather strong objection to work, and a great love of good living, accompanies Her Majesty whenever she goes abroad, his next destination being Florence.

In an adjoining paddock stands a nice, pleasant-looking grey donkey, who munches an apple philosophically while having his portrait drawn. He is a great



"JACQUOT."

favourite, the son of Egyptian "Tewfik," and takes his share of garden work and in carrying the Queen's grandchildren.

The adjoining stable contains eighteen harness horses, most of them grey. The stables themselves are beautifully kept, one groom being generally allowed to every two horses. At the edge of each stall is an artistically plaited border of straw. Close by is the riding school, a handsome building sixty-three yards in length and eighteen yards wide. The roof is supported on handsome oak brackets; at one end is a balcony where it is said Her Majesty and the late Prince Consort were accustomed to sit and watch the horses being exercised. In this gallery are medallions of favourite horses, the frames containing locks of their hair. The riding school is lit with gas, and the lower part of the walls lined with kamptulicon, which never wears out, and prevents a horse being much injured should he by any chance kick or fall against it. The centre of the tan-covered floor is occupied by a mounting block.



A SON OF "TEWFIK."

This school is occasionally used for circus performances, and, splendidly decorated, was the scene of the grand entertainment given to the Belgian volunteers some years since.

In a solitary loose box, warmly wrapped in rugs, her own natural coat being like very thick, soft, black plush, placidly stands "Jessie," the Queen's favourite old riding-mare. With her splendid coat, silky mane and tail, lofty crest, and soft mild eyes, she looks indeed worthy of her Royal mistress. "Jessie's" pedigree is unknown to us, but she was bred near Balmoral. She is about fifteen hands three inches in height, black as a coal, and with peculiar white markings on forehead and back. She is now twenty-six or twenty-seven years old, and, until within the last twelve months, has carried Her Majesty for many years. The Queen is very fond of "Jessie," who, although now, from old age, past work, is invariably sent to the Castle for inspection when Her Majesty is at Windsor.

A very different-looking animal is the grey Arab in the next stable. This magnificent horse was presented to Her Majesty by the Thakore of Morvi, and does not bear the best of stable reputations, but when mounted he is docility itself, and a very faithful worker. The grey's wardrobe, when he came to England, consisted of the following gorgeous trappings:—Saddle of red and green cloth, under felt, pad for saddle, embroidered saddle-cloth, embroidered bridle, plume, hood in cloth of gold, leg-ring and pad, embroidered neckpiece, embroidered quarter-piece, four bunches of woollen tassels, and a silk scarf. Arrayed in all this splendour and ridden by a native attendant, he was brought into the Grand Quadrangle at Windsor to be presented to Her Majesty with due and appropriate ceremonies. He is tall for an Arab, with whitish body, dark grey legs, pink muzzle, and silky black mane, which hangs over the near or left side of his neck.

In the next stable stand twelve beautiful brougham horses, ranging from dark brown to light chestnut in colour. Next to the brougham horses are four brown ponies, about fourteen hands high. These animals were all bred from a



pony called "Beatrice," which the Princess Beatrice was accustomed to ride.



THE GREY ARAB.

In the next carriage-house stands a gorgeous *char-à-banc*, presented to Her Majesty by Louis Philippe. Then come the carriages of the household, weighing about fifteen hundredweight each. The most curious-looking vehicles, however, are the long-shafted Russian droschkies, meant to be drawn by three horses abreast.

In another carriage-house is a vehicle replete with historical and pathetic interest. This is none other than the post-chaise in which Her Majesty and the late Prince Consort travelled all through Germany about seven years after their marriage. It is fitted up with a writing-case, and all sorts of conveniences, and hung on C springs.

The cheerful tap-tap of a hammer, and a keen, pungent scent as of something burning, warn us that we are in the vicinity of the Royal smithy. A handsome grey carriage-horse is being shod, one hoof doubled up between the farrier's legs, as that worthy, with quick taps, drives in a long nail, and

makes the shoe fast.

The Royal mews, which were built in 1841, cover a space of no less than four acres of ground, and, together with those at Buckingham Palace, are under the able supervision of Colonel Sir George Maude, K.C.B., R.A., &c., who also purchases most of Her Majesty's horses. It is no light testimonial to the care of their management when we hear that, although sometimes as many as one hundred horses are accommodated at Windsor, the veterinary surgeon's account only amounts for the year to a most insignificant sum.

We cannot take our leave, for the present, of the Royal pets without again returning our hearty thanks to all with whom we have been brought in contact, for their kindness, courtesy, and desire to assist us in our mission. To all loyal subjects who wish to see a model of a good Queen's home we can give no better advice than to go to Royal Windsor.



(The Editors of *The Idler* return their most sincere thanks to General Sir Henry Ponsonby, G.C.B., &c., &c., for his kind correction and revision of the above article.)

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## People I Have Never Met.

BY SCOTT RANKIN.

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HEINRIK IBSEN.



“We are all of us ghosts.... It is not only what we have inherited from our father and mother that ‘walks’ in us. It is all sorts of dead ideas, and lifeless old beliefs, and so forth. They have no vitality, but they cling to us all the same, and we can’t get rid of them. Whenever I take up a newspaper I seem to see ghosts gliding between the lines. There must be ghosts all the country over, as thick as the sands of the sea.”—IBSEN.

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## The Reclamation of Joe Hollends.

BY ROBERT BARR.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. GREIG.

The public-houses of Burwell Road—and there were many of them for the length of the street—were rather proud of Joe Hollends. He was a perfected specimen of the work a pub produces. He was probably the most persistent drunkard the Road possessed, and the periodical gathering in of Joe by the police was one of the stock sights of the street. Many of the inhabitants could be taken to the station by one policeman; some required two; but Joe’s average was four. He had been heard to boast that on one occasion he had been accompanied to the station by seven bobbies, but that was before the force had studied Joe and got him down to his correct mathematical equivalent. Now they tripped him up, a policeman taking one kicking leg and another the other, while the remaining two attended to the upper part of his body. Thus they carried him, followed by an admiring crowd, and watched by other envious drunkards who had to content themselves with a single officer when they went on a similar spree. Sometimes Joe managed to place a kick where it would do the most good against the stomach of a policeman,



"THE WRONGS OF THE WORKING MAN."

and when the officer rolled over there was for a few moments a renewal of the fight, silent on the part of the men and vociferous on the part of the drunkard, who had a fine flow of abusive language. Then the procession went on again. It was perfectly useless to put Joe on the police ambulance, for it required two men to sit on him while in transit, and the barrow is not made to stand such a load.

Of course, when Joe staggered out of the pub and fell in the gutter, the ambulance did its duty, and trundled Joe to his abiding place, but the real fun occurred when Joe was gathered in during the third stage of his debauch. He passed through the oratorical stage, then the maudlin or sentimental stage, from which he emerged into the fighting stage, when he was usually ejected into the street, where he forthwith began to make Rome howl, and paint the town red. At this point the policeman's whistle sounded, and the force knew Joe was on the warpath, and that duty called them to the fray.

It was believed in the neighbourhood that Joe had been a college man, and this gave him additional standing with his admirers. His eloquence was undoubted, after several glasses varying in number according to the strength of their contents, and a man who had heard the great political speakers of the day admitted that none of them could hold a candle to Joe when he got on the subject of the wrongs of the working man and the tyranny of the capitalist. It was generally understood that Joe might have been anything he liked, and that he was no man's enemy but his own. It was also hinted that he could tell the bigwigs a thing or two if he had been consulted in affairs of State.

One evening, when Joe was slowly progressing as usual, with his feet in the air, towards the station, supported by the requisite number of policemen, and declaiming to the delight of the accompanying crowd, a woman stood with her back to the brick wall, horror-stricken at the sight. She had a pale, refined face, and was dressed in black. Her self-imposed mission was among these people, but she had never seen Joe taken to the station before, and the sight, which was so amusing to the neighbourhood, was shocking to her. She enquired about Joe, and heard the usual story that he was no man's enemy but his own, although they might in justice have added the police. Still, a policeman was hardly looked upon as a human being in that neighbourhood. Miss Johnson reported the case to the committee of the Social League, and took counsel. Then it was that the reclamation of Joe Hollends was determined on.

Joe received Miss Johnson with subdued dignity, and a demeanour that delicately indicated a knowledge on his part of her superiority and his own degradation. He knew how a lady should be treated even if he was a drunkard, as he told his cronies afterwards. Joe was perfectly willing to be reclaimed. Heretofore in his life, no one had ever extended the hand of fellowship to him. Human sympathy was what Joe needed, and precious little he had had of it. There were more kicks than halfpence in this world for a poor man. The rich did not care what became of the poor; not they—a proposition which Miss Johnson earnestly denied.

It was one of the tenets of the committee that where possible the poor should help the poor. It was resolved to get Joe a decent suit of clothes and endeavour to find him a place where work would enable him to help himself. Miss Johnson went around the neighbourhood and collected pence for the reclamation. Most people were willing to help Joe, although it was generally felt that the Road would be less gay when he took on sober habits. In one room, however, Miss Johnson was refused the penny she pleaded for.

"We cannot spare even a penny," said the woman, whose sickly little boy clung to her skirts. "My husband is just out of work again. He has had only four weeks' work this time."

Miss Johnson looked around the room and saw why there was no money. It was quite evident where the earnings of the husband had gone.

The room was much better furnished than the average apartment of the neighbourhood. There were two sets of dishes where one would have been quite sufficient. On the mantelshelf and around the walls were various unnecessary articles which cost money.

Miss Johnson noted all this but said nothing, although she resolved to report it to the committee. In union is strength and in multitude of counsel there is wisdom. Miss Johnson had great faith in the wisdom of the



committee.

"How long has your husband been out of work?" she asked.

"Only a few days, but times are very bad and he is afraid he will not get another situation soon."

"What is his trade?"

"He is a carpenter and a good workman—sober and steady."

"If you give me his name I will put it down in our books. Perhaps we may be able to help him."

"John Morris is his name."

Miss Johnson wrote it down on her tablets, and when she left the wife felt vaguely grateful for benefits to come.

The facts of the case were reported to the committee, and Miss Johnson was deputed to expostulate with Mrs. Morris upon her extravagance. John Morris's name was put upon the books among the names of many other unemployed persons. The case of Joe Hollends then came up, and elicited much enthusiasm. A decent suit of clothing had been purchased with part of the money collected for him, and it was determined to keep the rest in trust, to be doled out to him as occasion warranted.



"WE CANNOT SPARE EVEN A PENNY."

Two persuasive ladies undertook to find a place for him in one of the factories, if such a thing were possible.

Joe felt rather uncomfortable in his new suit of clothes, and seemed to regard the expenditure as, all in all, a waste of good money. He was also disappointed to find that the funds collected were not to be handed over to him in a lump. It was not the money he cared about, he said, but the evident lack of trust. If people had trusted him more, he might have been a better man. Trust and human sympathy were what Joe Hollends needed.

The two persuasive ladies appealed to Mr. Stillwell, the proprietor of a small factory for the making of boxes. They said that if Hollends got a chance they were sure he would reform. Stillwell replied that he had no place for anyone. He had enough to do to keep the men already in his employ. Times were dull in the box business, and he was turning away applicants every day who were good workmen and who didn't need to be reformed. However, the ladies were very



"THE LADIES WERE VERY PERSUASIVE."

persuasive, and it is not given to every man to be able to refuse the appeal of a pretty woman, not to mention two of them. Stillwell promised to give Hollends a chance, said he would consult with his foreman, and let the ladies know what could be done.

Joe Hollends did not receive the news of his luck with the enthusiasm that might have been expected. Many a man was tramping London in search of employment and finding none, therefore even the ladies who were so solicitous about Joe's welfare thought he should be thankful that work came unsought. He said he would do his best, which is, when you come to think of it, all that we have a right to expect from any

man.

Some days afterwards Jack Morris applied to Mr. Stillwell for a job, but he had no sub-committee of persuasive ladies to plead for him. He would be willing to work half-time or quarter-time for that matter. He had a wife and boy dependent on him. He could show that he was a good workman and he did not drink. Thus did Morris recite his qualifications to the unwilling ears of Stillwell the box maker. As he left the place disheartened with another refusal, he was overtaken by Joe Hollends. Joe was a lover of his fellow-man, and disliked seeing anyone downhearted. He had one infallible cure for dejection. Having just been discharged, he was in high spirits, because his prediction of his own failure as a reformed character, if work were a condition of the reclamation, had just been fulfilled.

"Cheer up, old man," he cried, slapping Morris on the shoulder, "what's the matter? Come and have a drink with me. I've got the money."

"No," said Morris, who knew the professional drunkard but slightly, and did not care for further acquaintance with him, "I want work, not beer."

"Every man to his taste. Why don't you ask at the box factory? You can have my job and welcome. The foreman's just discharged me. Said I wouldn't work myself, and kept the men off theirs. Thought I talked too much about capital and labour."

"Do you think I could get your job?"

"Very likely. No harm in trying. If they don't take you on, come into the Red Lion—I'll be there—and have a drop. It'll cheer you up a bit."



"HE FOUND HOLLEND'S READY TO WELCOME HIM."

Morris appealed in vain to the foreman. They had more men now in the factory than they needed, he said. So Morris went to the Red Lion, where he found Hollends ready to welcome him. They had several glasses together, and Hollends told him of the efforts of the Social League in the reclamation line, and his doubts of their ultimate success. Hollends seemed to think the ladies of the League were deeply indebted to him for furnishing them with such a good subject for reformation. That night Joe's career reached a triumphant climax, for the four policemen had to appeal to the bystanders for help in the name of the law.

Jack Morris went home unaided. He had not taken many glasses, but he knew he should have avoided drink altogether, for he had some experience of its power in his younger days. He was, therefore, in a quarrelsome mood, ready to blame

everyone but himself.

He found his wife in tears, and saw Miss Johnson sitting there, evidently very miserable.

"What's all this?" asked Morris.

His wife dried her eyes, and said it was nothing. Miss Johnson had been giving her some advice, which she was thankful for. Morris glared at the visitor.

"What have you got to do with us?" he demanded rudely. His wife caught him by the arm, but he angrily tossed aside her hand. Miss Johnson arose, fearing.

"You've no business here. We want none of your advice. You get out of this." Then, impatiently to his wife, who strove to calm him, "Shut up, will you?"

Miss Johnson was afraid he would strike her as she passed him going to the door, but he merely stood there, following her exit with lowering brow.



**"TOLD HER EXPERIENCE."**

The terrified lady told her experience to the sympathising members of the committee. She had spoken to Mrs. Morris of her extravagance in buying so many things that were not necessary when her husband had work. She advised the saving of the money. Mrs. Morris had defended her apparent lavish expenditure by saying that there was no possibility of saving money. She bought useful things, and when her husband was out of work she could always get a large percentage of their cost from the pawnbroker. The pawnshop, she had tearfully explained to Miss Johnson, was the only bank of the poor. The idea of the pawnshop as a bank, and not as a place of disgrace, was new to Miss Johnson, but before anything further could be said the husband had come in. One of the committee, who knew more about the district than Miss Johnson, affirmed that there was something to say for the pawnbroker as the banker of the poor. The committee were unanimous in condemning the conduct of Morris, and it says much for the members that, in spite of the provocation one of them had received, they did not take the name of so undeserving a man from their list of the unemployed.

The sad relapse of Joe Hollends next occupied the attention of the League. His fine had been paid, and he had expressed himself as deeply grieved at his own frailty. If the foreman had been less harsh with him and had given him a chance, things might have been different. It was resolved to send Joe to the seaside so that he might have an opportunity of toning up his system to resist temptation. Joe enjoyed his trip to the sea. He always liked to encounter a new body of police unaccustomed to his methods. He toned up his system so successfully the first day on the sands that he spent the night in the cells.

Little by little, the portable property in the rooms of the Morrises disappeared into the pawnshop. Misfortune, as usual, did not come singly. The small boy was ill, and Morris himself seemed to be unable to resist the temptation of the Red Lion. The unhappy woman took her boy to the parish doctor, who was very busy, but he gave what attention he could to the case. He said all the boy needed was nourishing food and country air. Mrs. Morris sighed, and decided to take the little boy oftener to the park, but the way was long, and he grew weaker day by day.

At last, she succeeded in interesting her husband in the little fellow's condition. He consented to take the boy to the doctor with her.

"The doctor doesn't seem to mind what I say," she complained. "Perhaps he will pay attention to a man."

Morris was not naturally a morose person, but continued disappointment was rapidly making him so. He said nothing, but took the boy in his arms, and, followed by his wife, went to the doctor.

"This boy was here before," said the physician, which tended to show that he had paid more attention to the case than Mrs. Morris thought. "He is very much worse. You will

have to take him to the country or he will die."

"How can I send him to the country?" asked Morris, sullenly. "I've been out of work for months."

"Have you friends in the country?"

"No."

"Hasn't your wife any friends in the country who would take her and the lad for a month or so?"

"No."

"Have you anything to pawn?"

"Very little."

"Then I would advise you to pawn everything you own, or sell it if you can, and take the boy on your back and tramp to the country. You will get work there probably more easily than in the city. Here are ten shillings to help you."

"I don't want your money," said Morris, in a surly tone. "I want work."

"I have no work to give you, so I offer you what I have. I haven't as much of that as I could wish. You are a fool not to take what the gods send."

Morris, without replying, gathered up his son in his arms and departed.

"Here is a bottle of tonic for him," said the doctor to Mrs. Morris.

He placed the half-sovereign on the bottle as he passed it to her. She silently thanked him with her wet eyes, hoping that a time would come when she could repay the money. The doctor had experience enough to know that they were not to be classed among his usual visitors. He was not in the habit of indiscriminately bestowing gold coins.

It was a dreary journey, and they were a long time shaking off the octopus-like tentacles of the great city, that reached further and further into the country each year, as if it lived on consuming the green fields. Morris walked ahead with the boy on his back, and his wife followed. Neither spoke, and the sick lad did not complain. As they were nearing a village, the boy's head sunk on his father's shoulder. The mother quickened her pace, and came up to them, stroking the head of her sleeping son. Suddenly, she uttered a smothered cry and took the boy in her arms.

"What's the matter?" asked Morris, turning round.

She did not answer, but sat by the roadside with the boy on her lap, swaying her body to and fro over him, moaning as she did so. Morris needed no answer. He stood on the road with hardening face, and looked down on his wife and child without speaking.

The kindly villagers arranged the little funeral, and when it was over Jack Morris and his wife stood again on the road.

"Jack, dear," she pleaded, "don't go back to that horrible place. We belong to the country, and the city is so hard and cruel."



"HERE IS A TONIC FOR HIM."

"I'm going back. You can do as you like." Then, relenting a little, he added, "I haven't brought much luck to you, my girl."

She knew her husband was a stubborn man, and set in his way, so, unprotesting, she followed him in, as she had followed him out, stumbling many times, for often her eyes did not see the road. And so they returned to their empty rooms.



"IT WAS A GLORIOUS VICTORY."

that would show it. It therefore took more liquor than usual to bring him up to the point of good comradeship that reigned at the Red Lion. When he and Joe left the tavern that night it would have taken an expert to tell which was the more inebriated. They were both in good fighting trim, and both were in the humour for a row. The police, who had reckoned on Joe alone, suddenly found a new element in the fight that not only upset their calculations but themselves as well. It was a glorious victory, and, as both fled down a side street, Morris urged Hollends to come along, for the representatives of law and order have the habit of getting reinforcements which often turn a victory into a most ignominious defeat.

"I can't," panted Hollends. "The beggars have hurt me."

"Come along. I know a place where we are safe."

Drunk as he was, Jack succeeded in finding the hole in the wall that allowed him to enter a vacant spot behind the box factory. There Hollends lay down with a groan, and there Morris sank beside him in a drunken sleep. The police were at last revenged, and finally.

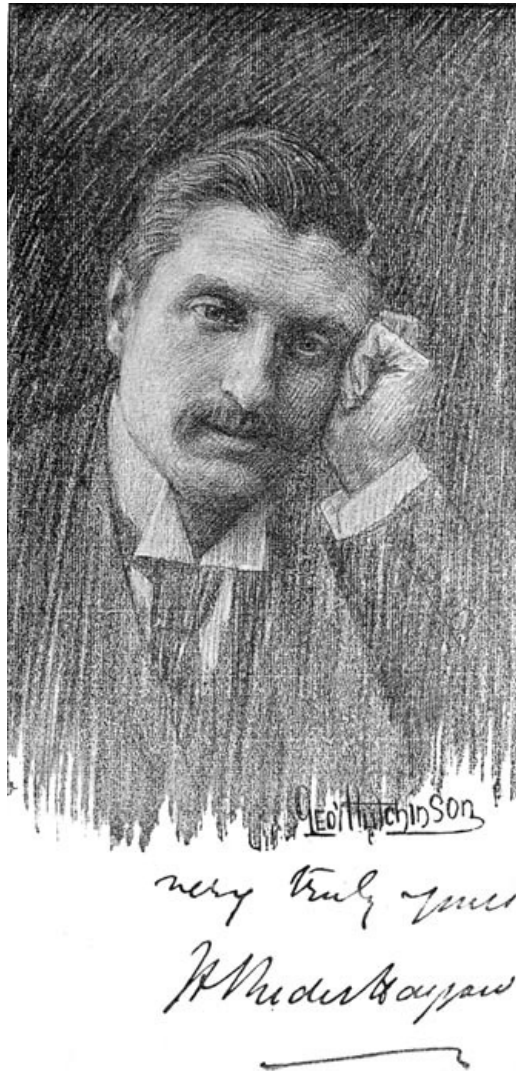
When the grey daylight brought Morris to a dazed sense of where he was, he found his companion dead beside him. He had a vague fear that he would be tried for murder, but it was not so. From the moment that Hollends, in his fall, struck his head on the kerb, the Providence which looks after the drunken deserted him.

But the inquest accomplished one good object. It attracted the attention of the Social

Jack Morris went to look for work at the Red Lion. There he met that genial comrade, Joe Hollends, who had been reformed, and who had backslid twice since Jack had foregathered with him before. It is but fair to Joe to admit that he had never been optimistic about his own reclamation, but, being an obliging man, even when he was sober, he was willing to give the Social League every chance. Jack was deeply grieved at the death of his son, although he had said no word to his wife

League to Jack Morris, and they are now endeavouring to reclaim him.  
Whether they succeed or not, he was a man that was certainly once worth saving.

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## MY FIRST BOOK.

DAWN.

By H. RIDER HAGGARD.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY G. AND B. HUTCHINSON.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MESSRS. FRADELLE AND YOUNG.

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I think that it was in an article by a fellow-scribe, where, doubtless more in sorrow than in anger, that gentleman exposed the worthlessness of the productions of sundry of his brother authors, in which I read that whatever success I had met with as a writer of fiction was due to my literary friends and "nepotic criticism." This is scarcely the case, since when I began to write I do not



THE FRONT GARDEN.

think that I knew a single creature who had published books—blue books alone excepted. Nobody was ever more outside the ring, or less acquainted with the art of “rolling logs,” than the humble individual who pens these lines. But the reader shall judge for himself.

To begin at the beginning: My very first attempt at imaginative writing was made while I was a boy at school. One of the masters promised a prize to that youth who should best describe on paper any incident, real or imaginary. I entered the lists, and selected the scene at an operation in a hospital as my subject. The fact that I had never seen an operation, nor crossed the doors of a hospital, did not deter me from this bold endeavour, which, however, was justified by its success. I was declared to have won in the competition, though, probably through the forgetfulness of the master, I remember that I never received the promised prize. My next

literary effort, written in 1876, was an account of a Zulu war dance, which I witnessed when I was on the staff of the Governor of Natal. It was published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and very kindly noticed in various papers. A year later I wrote another article, entitled “A Visit to the Chief Secocoeni,” which appeared in *Macmillan*, and very nearly got me into trouble. I was then serving on the staff of Sir Theophilus Shepstone, and the article, signed with my initials, reached South Africa in its printed form shortly after the annexation of the Transvaal. Young men with a pen in their hands are proverbially indiscreet, and in this instance I was no exception. In the course of my article I had described the Transvaal Boer at home with a fidelity that should be avoided by members of a diplomatic mission, and had even gone the length of saying that most of the Dutch women were “fat.” Needless to say, my remarks were translated into the Africander papers, and somewhat extensively read, especially by the ladies in question and their male relatives; nor did the editors of those papers forbear to comment on them in leading articles. Shortly afterwards, there was a great and stormy meeting of Boers at Pretoria. As matters began to look serious, somebody ventured among them to ascertain the exciting cause, and returned with the pleasing intelligence that they were all talking of what the Englishman had written about the physical proportions of their womenkind and domestic habits, and threatening to take up arms to avenge it. Of my feelings on learning this news I will not discourse, but they were uncomfortable, to say the least of it. Happily, in the end, the gathering broke up without bloodshed, but when the late Sir Bartle Frere came to Pretoria, some months afterwards, he administered to me a sound and well-deserved lecture on my indiscretion. I excused myself by saying that I had set down nothing which was not strictly true, and he replied to the effect that therein lay my fault. I quite agree with him; indeed, there is little doubt but that these bald statements of fact as to the stoutness of the Transvaal “fraus,” and the lack of cleanliness in their homes, went near to precipitating a result that, as it chanced, was postponed for several years. Well, it is all done with now, and I take this opportunity of apologising to such of the ladies in question as may still be in the land of life.

This unfortunate experience cooled my literary ardour, yet, as it chanced, when some five years later I again took up my pen, it was in connection with African affairs. These pages are no place for politics, but I must allude to them in explanation. It will be remembered that the Transvaal was annexed by Great Britain in 1877. In 1881 the Boers rose in rebellion and administered several thrashings to our troops, whereon the Government of this country came suddenly to the conclusion that a wrong had been done to the victors, and subject to some paper restrictions, gave them back their independence. As it chanced, at the time I was living on some African property belonging to me in the centre of the operations, and so disgusted was I, in common with thousands of others, at the turn which matters had taken, that I shook the dust of South Africa off my feet and returned to England. Now, the first impulse of an aggrieved Englishman is to write to the *Times*, and if I remember right I took this course, but my letter not being inserted, I enlarged upon the idea and composed a book called “Cetewayo and his White



THE BACK GARDEN.

Neighbours." This semi-political work, or rather history, was very carefully constructed from the records of some six years' experience, and by the help of a shelf full of blue books that stare me in the face as I write these words; and the fact that it still goes on selling seems to show that it has some value in the eyes of students of South African politics. But when I had written my book I was confronted by a difficulty which I had not anticipated, being utterly without experience in such affairs—that of finding somebody willing to publish it. I remember that I purchased a copy of the *Athenæum*, and selecting the names of various firms at hazard, wrote to them

offering to submit my manuscript, but, strange to say, none of them seemed anxious to peruse it. At last—how I do not recollect—it came into the hands of Messrs. Trübner, who, after consideration, wrote to say that they were willing to bring it out on the half profit system, provided that I paid down fifty pounds towards the cost of production. I did not at all like the idea of parting with the fifty pounds, but I believed in my book, and was anxious to put my views on the Transvaal rebellion and other African questions before the world. So I consented to the terms, and in due course *Cetewayo* was published in a neat green binding. Somewhat to my astonishment, it proved a success from a literary point of view. It was not largely purchased—indeed, that fifty pounds took several years on its return journey to my pocket, but it was favourably, and in some instances almost enthusiastically, reviewed, especially in the colonial papers.



MR. RIDER HAGGARD AND DAUGHTERS.

About this time the face of a girl whom I saw in a church at Norwood gave me the idea of writing a novel. The face was so perfectly beautiful, and at the same time so refined, that I felt I could fit a story to it which should be worthy of a heroine similarly endowed. When next I saw Mr. Trübner I consulted him on the subject.

"You can write—it is certain that you can write. Yes, do it, and I will get the book published for you," he answered.

Thus encouraged I set to work. How to compose a novel I knew not, so I wrote straight on, trusting to the light of nature to guide me. My main object was to produce the picture of a woman perfect in mind and body, and to show her character ripening and growing spiritual, under the pressure of various afflictions. Of course, there is a vast gulf between a novice's aspiration and his attainment, and I do not contend that Angela as she appears in "*Dawn*" fulfils this ideal; also, such a person in real life might, and probably would, be a bore—

"Something too bright and good  
For human nature's daily food."



Still, this was the end I aimed at. Indeed, before I had done with her, I became so deeply attached to my heroine that, in a literary sense, I have never quite got over it. I worked very hard at this novel during the next six months or so, but at length it was finished and despatched to Mr. Trübner, who, as his firm did not deal in this class of book, submitted it to five or six of the best publishers of fiction. One and all they declined it, so that by degrees it became clear to me that I might as well have saved my labour. Mr. Trübner, however, had confidence in my work, and submitted the manuscript to Mr. John Cordy Jeaffreson for report; and here I may pause to say that I think there is more kindness in the hearts of literary men than is common in the world. It is not a pleasant task, in the face of repeated failure, again and again to attempt the adventure of persuading brother publishers to undertake the maiden effort of an unknown man.



THE HALL.

Still less pleasant is it, as I can vouch from experience, to wade through a lengthy and not particularly legible manuscript, and write an elaborate opinion thereon for the benefit of a stranger. Yet Mr. Trübner and Mr. Jeaffreson did these things for me without fee or reward. Mr. Jeaffreson's report I have lost or mislaid, but I remember its purport well. It was to the effect that there was a great deal of power in the novel, but that it required to be entirely re-written. The first part he thought so good that he advised me to expand it, and the unhappy ending he could not agree with. If I killed the heroine, it would kill the book, he said. He may have been right, but I still hold to my first conception, according to which Angela was doomed to an early and pathetic end, as the fittest crown to her career. That the story needed re-writing there is no doubt, but I believe that it would have been better as a work of art if I had dealt with it on the old lines, especially as the expansion of the beginning, in accordance with the advice of my kindly critic, took the tale back through the history of another generation—always a most dangerous experiment. Still, I did as I was told, not presuming to set up a judgment of my own in the matter. If I had worked hard at the first draft of the novel, I worked much harder at the second, especially as I could not give all my leisure to it, being engaged at the time in reading for the Bar. So hard did I work that at length my eyesight gave out, and I was obliged to complete the last hundred sheets in a darkened room. But let my eyes ache as they might, I would not give up till it was finished, within about three months from the date of its commencement. Recently, I went through this book to prepare it for a new edition, chiefly in order to cut out some of the mysticism and tall writing, for which it is too remarkable, and was pleased to find that it still interested me. But if a writer may be allowed to criticise his own work, it is two books, not one. Also, the hero is a very poor creature. Evidently I was too much occupied with my heroines to give much thought to him; moreover, women are so much easier and more interesting to write about, for whereas no two of them are alike, in modern men, or rather, in young men of the middle and upper classes, there is a paralysing sameness. As a candid friend once said to me, "There is nothing manly about that chap, Arthur"—he is the hero—"except his bull-dog!" With Angela herself I am still in love; only she ought to have died, which, on the whole, would have been a better fate than being married to Arthur, more especially if he was anything like the illustrator's conception of him.

In its new shape "Dawn" was submitted to Messrs. Hurst and Blackett, and at once accepted by that firm. Why it was called "Dawn" I am not now quite clear, but I think it was because I could find no other title acceptable to the publishers. The discovery of suitable titles is a more difficult matter than people who do not write romances would suppose, most of the good ones having been used already and copyrighted. In due course the novel was published in three fat volumes, and a pretty green cover, and I sat down to await events. At the best I did not expect to win a fortune out of it, as if every one of the five hundred copies printed were sold, I could only make fifty pounds under my agreement—not an extravagant reward for a great deal of labour. As a matter of fact, but four hundred and fifty sold, so the net proceeds of the venture amounted to ten pounds only, and forty surplus copies of the book, which I bored my

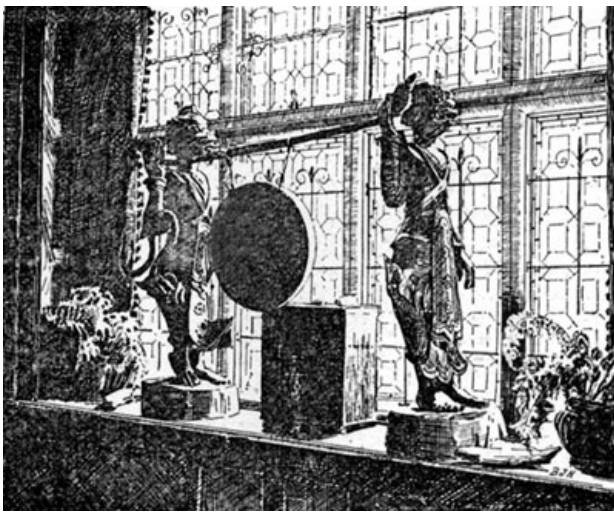
friends by presenting to them. But as the copyright of the work reverted to me at the expiration of a year, I cannot grumble at this result. The reader may think that it was mercenary of me to consider my first book from this financial point of view, but to be frank, though the story interested me much in its writing, and I had a sneaking belief in its merits, it never occurred to me that I, an utterly inexperienced beginner, could hope to make any mark in competition with the many brilliant writers of fiction who were already before the public. Therefore, so far as I was concerned, any reward in the way of literary reputation seemed to be beyond my reach.



MR. RIDER HAGGARD'S STUDY.

It was on the occasion of the publication of this novel that I made my first and last attempt to "roll a log," with somewhat amusing results. Almost the only person of influence whom I knew in the world of letters was the editor of a certain society paper. I had not seen him for ten years, but at this crisis I ventured to recall myself to his memory, and to ask him, not for a favourable notice, but that the book should be reviewed in his journal. He acceded to my prayer; it was reviewed, but after a fashion for which I did not bargain. This little incident taught me a lesson, and the moral of it is: never trouble an editor about your immortal works; he can so easily be even with you. I commend it to all literary tyros. Even if you are in a position to command "puffs," the public will find you out in the second edition, and revenge itself upon your next book. Here is a story that illustrates the accuracy of this statement; it came to me on good authority, and I believe it to be true. A good many years ago, the relation of an editor of a great paper published a novel. It was a bad novel, but a desperate effort was made to force it upon the public, and in many of the leading journals appeared notices so laudatory that readers fell into the trap, and the book went through several editions. Encouraged by success, the writer published a second book, but the public had found her out, and it fell flat. Being a person of resource, she brought out a third work under a *nom de plume*, which, as at first, was accorded an enthusiastic reception by previous arrangement, and forced into circulation. A fourth followed under the same name, but again the public had found her out, and her career as a novelist came to an end.

To return to the fate of "Dawn." In most quarters it met with the usual reception of a first novel by an unknown man. Some of the reviewers sneered at it, and some "slated" it, and made merry over the misprints—a cheap form of wit that saves those who practise it the trouble of going into the merits of a book. Two very good notices fell to its lot, however, in the *Times* and in the *Morning Post*, the first of these speaking about the novel in terms of which any amateur writer might feel proud, though, unfortunately, it appeared too late to be of much service. Also, I discovered that the story had interested a great many readers, and none of them more than the late Mr. Trübner, through whose kind offices it came to be published, who, I was told, paid me the strange compliment of continuing its perusal till within a few hours of his death, a sad event that the enemy might say was



"CURIOS."

a second novel—"The Witch's Head." This book I endeavoured to publish serially by posting the MS. to the editors of various magazines for their consideration. But in those days there were no literary agents or Authors' Societies to help young writers with their experience and advice, and the bulky manuscript always came back to my hand like a boomerang, till at length I wearied of the attempt. Of course I sent it to the wrong people; afterwards the editor of a leading monthly told me that he would have been delighted to run the book had it fallen into the hands of his firm. In the end, as in the case of "Dawn," I published "The Witch's Head" in three volumes. Its reception astonished me, for I did not think so well of the book as I had done of its predecessor. In that view, by the way, the public has borne out my judgment, for to this day three copies of "Dawn" are absorbed for every two of "The Witch's Head," a proportion that has never varied since the two works appeared in one volume form.

"The Witch's Head" was very well reviewed; indeed, in one or two cases, the notices were almost enthusiastic, most of all when they dealt with the African part of the book, which I had inserted as padding, the fight between Jeremy and the Boer giant being singled out for especial praise. Whatever it may lack, one merit this novel has, however, that was overlooked by all the reviewers. Omitting the fictitious incidents introduced for the purposes of the story, it contains an accurate account of the great disaster inflicted upon our troops by the Zulus at Isandhlwana. I was in the country at the time of the massacre, and heard its story from the lips of survivors, also, in writing of it, I studied the official reports in the blue books and the minutes of the Court Martial.

"The Witch's Head" attained the dignity of being pirated in America, and in England went out of print in a few weeks, but no argument that I could use would induce my publishers to re-issue it in a one-volume edition. The risk was too great, they said. Then it was I came to the conclusion that I would abandon the making of books. The work was very hard, and when put to the test of experience the glamour that surrounds this occupation vanished. I did not care much for the publicity it involved, and, like most young authors, I failed to appreciate being sneered at by anonymous critics who happened not to care for what I wrote, and whom I had no opportunity of answering. It is true that then, as now, I liked the work for its own sake. Indeed, I have always thought that literature would be a charming profession if its conditions allowed of the depositing of manuscripts, when completed, in a drawer, there to languish in obscurity, or of their private publication only. But I could not afford myself these luxuries. I was too modest to hope for any renown worth having, and for the rest the game seemed scarcely worth the candle. I had

hastened thereby. In this connection I remember that the first hint I received that my story was popular with the ordinary reading public, whatever reviewers might say of it, came from the lips of a young lady, a chance visitor at my house, whose name I have forgotten. Seeing the book lying on the table, she took a volume up, saying—

"Oh, have you read 'Dawn'? It is a first-rate novel, I have just finished it." Somebody explained, and the subject dropped, but I was not a little gratified by the unintended compliment.

These facts encouraged me, and I wrote



A STUDY CORNER.



MR. RIDER HAGGARD.

published a history and two novels. On the history I had lost fifty pounds, on the first novel I had made ten pounds, and on the second fifty; net profit on the three, ten pounds, which in the case of a man with other occupations and duties did not appear to be an adequate return for the labour involved. But I was not destined to escape thus from the toils of romance. One day I chanced to read a clever article in favour of boys' books, and it occurred to me that I might be able to do as well as others in that line. I was working at the Bar at the time, but in my spare evenings, more for amusement than from any other reason, I entered on the literary adventure that ended in the appearance of "King Solomon's Mines." This romance has proved very successful, although three firms, including my own publishers, refused even to consider it. But as it can scarcely be called one of my first books, I shall not speak of it here.

In conclusion, I will tell a moving tale, that it may be a warning to young authors for ever. After my publishers declined to issue "The Witch's Head" in a six-shilling edition, I tried many others without success, and at length in my folly signed an agreement with a firm since deceased. Under this document the firm in question agreed to bring out "Dawn" and "The Witch's Head" in a two-shilling edition, and generously to remunerate me with a third share in the profits realised, if any. In return for this concession, I on my part undertook to allow the said firm to republish any novel that I might write, for a period of five years from the date of the agreement, in a two-shilling form, and on the same



THE DRAWING ROOM

third-profit terms. Of course, so soon as the success of "King Solomon's Mines" was established, I received a polite letter from the publishers in question, asking when they might expect to republish that romance at two shillings. Then the matter came under the consideration of lawyers and other skilled persons, with the result that it appeared that, if the Courts took a strict view of the agreement, ruin stared me in the face, so far as my literary affairs were concerned. To begin with, either by accident or design, this artful document was so worded that, *prima facie*, the contracting publisher had a right to place his cheap edition on the market whenever it might please him to do so, subject only to the payment of a third of the profit, to be assessed by himself, which practically would have meant nothing at all. How could I expect to dispose of work subject to such a legal "servitude." For five long years I was a slave to the framer of the "hanging" clause of the agreement. Things looked black indeed, when, thanks to the diplomacy of my agent, and to a fortunate change in the *personnel* of the firm to which I was bound, I avoided disaster. The fatal agreement was cancelled, and in consideration of my release I undertook to write two books upon a moderate royalty. Thus, then, did I escape out of bondage. To be just, it was my own fault that I should ever have been sold into it, but authors are proverbially guileless when they are anxious to publish their books, and a piece of printed paper with a few additions written in a neat hand looks innocent enough. Now no such misfortunes need happen, for the Authors' Society is ready and anxious to protect them from themselves and others, but in those days it did not exist.



THE FARM.

This is the history of how I drifted into the writing of books. If it saves one beginner so inexperienced and unfriended as I was in those days from putting his hand to a "hanging" agreement under any circumstances whatsoever, it will not have been set out in vain.

The advice that I give to would-be authors, if I may presume to offer it, is to think for a long while before they enter at all upon a career so hard and hazardous, but having entered on it, not to be easily cast down. There are great virtues in perseverance, even though critics sneer and publishers prove unkind.



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## Told by the Colonel.

XII.

THE CAT'S REVENGE.

BY W. L. ALDEN.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY R. JACK.

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We had been discussing the Darwinian hypothesis, and the Colonel had maintained a profound silence, which was sufficient evidence that he did not believe in the development of man from the lower animals. Some one, however, asked him plumply his opinion of Darwinianism, and he sententiously replied, "Darned nonsense."

Feeling that this view of the matter possibly merited expansion, the Colonel caused his chair to assume its customary oratorical attitude on its two rear legs, and began to discourse.

"There are some things," he remarked, "which do look as if there might be a grain of truth in this monkey theory. For instance, when I was in France I was pretty nearly convinced that the monkey is the connecting link between man and the Frenchmen, but after all there is no proof of it. That's what's the matter with Darwinianism. When you produce a man who can remember that his grandfather was a monkey, or when you show me a monkey that can produce papers to prove that he is my second cousin, I'll believe all Darwin said on the subject, but as the thing stands I've nothing but Darwin's word to prove that men and monkeys are near relations. So far as I can learn, Darwin didn't know as much about



**"DARNED NONSENSE."**

animals as a man ought to know who undertakes to invent a theory about them. He never was intimate with dogs, and he never drove an army mule. He had a sort of bowing acquaintance with monkeys and a few other animals of no particular standing in the community, but he couldn't even understand a single animal language. Now, if he had gone to work, and learned to read and write, and speak the monkey language, as that American professor that you were just speaking of has done, he might have been able to give us some really valuable information.

"Do I believe that animals talk? I don't simply believe it, I know it. When I was a young man I had a good deal to do with animals, and I learned to understand the cat language just as well as I understood English. It's an easy language when once you get the hang of it, and from what I hear of German the two are

considerably alike. You look as if you didn't altogether believe me, though why you should doubt that a man can learn cat language when the world is full of men that pretend to have learned German, and nobody calls their word in question, I don't precisely see.

"Of course, I don't pretend to understand all the cat dialects. For example, I don't know a word of the Angora dialect, and can only understand a sentence here and there of the tortoiseshell dialect, but so far as good, pure standard cat language goes, it's as plain as print to me to-day, though I haven't paid any attention to it for forty years. I don't want you to understand that I ever spoke it. I always spoke English when I was talking with cats. They all understand English as well as you do. They pick it up just as a child picks up a language from hearing it spoken.

"Forty years ago I was a young man, and, like most young men, I fancied that I was in love with a young woman of our town. There isn't the least doubt in my mind that I should have married her if I had not known the cat language. She afterwards married a man whom she took away to Africa with her as a missionary. I knew him well, and he didn't want to go to Africa. Said he had no call to be a missionary, and that all he wanted was to live in a Christian country where he could go and talk with the boys in the bar-room evenings. But his wife carried him off, and it's my belief that if I had married her she would have made me turn missionary, or pirate, or anything else that she thought best. I shall never cease to be grateful to Thomas Aquinas for saving me from that woman.



**"I HAD AN OLD NEGRO HOUSEKEEPER AND TWO CATS."**

"This was the way of it. I was living in a little cottage that belonged to my uncle, and that he let me have rent free on condition that I should take care of it, and keep the grounds in an attractive state until he could sell it. I had an old negro housekeeper and two cats. One of them, Martha Washington by name, was young and handsome, and about as bright a cat as I ever knew. She had a strong sense of humour, too, which is unusual with cats, and when something amused her she would throw back her head and open her mouth wide, and laugh a silent laugh that was as hearty and rollicking as a Methodist parson's laugh when he hears a grey-haired joke at a negro minstrel show. Martha was perhaps the most popular cat in the town, and there was scarcely a minute in the day when there wasn't some one of her admirers in the back yard. As for serenades, she had three or four every night that it didn't rain. There was a quartette club formed by four first-class feline voices, and the club used

to give Martha and me two or three hours of music three times a week. I used sometimes to find as many as six or seven old boots in the back yard of a morning that had been contributed by enthusiastic neighbours. As for society, Martha Washington was at the top of the heap. There wasn't a more fashionable cat in the whole State of Ohio—I was living in Ohio at the time—and in spite of it all she was as simple and unaffected in her ways as if she had been born and bred in a Quaker meeting-house.

"One afternoon Martha was giving a four o'clock milk on the verandah next to my room. I always gave her permission to give that sort of entertainment whenever she wanted to, for the gossip of her friends used to be very amusing to me. Among the guests that afternoon was Susan's—that was the young lady I wanted to marry—Maltese cat. Now this cat had always pretended to be very fond of me, and Susan often said that her cat never made a mistake in reading character, and that the cat's approval of me was equivalent to a first-class Sunday-school certificate of moral character. I didn't care anything about the cat myself, for somehow I didn't place any confidence in her professions. There was an expression about her tail which, to my mind, meant that she was insincere and treacherous. The Maltese cat had finished her milk when the conversation drifted around to the various mistresses of the cats, and presently someone spoke of Susan. Then the Maltese began to say things about Susan that made my blood boil. It was not only what she said but what she insinuated, and, according to her, Susan was one of the meanest and most contemptible women in the whole United States. I stood it as long as I could, and then I got up and said to Martha Washington, 'I think your Maltese friend is needed at her home, and the sooner she goes the better if she doesn't want to be helped home with a club.' That was enough. The Maltese, who was doing up her back fur when I spoke, stopped, looked at me as if she could tear me into pieces, and then flounced out of the house without saying a word. I understood that there was an end to her pretence of friendship for me, and that henceforth I should have an enemy in Susan's house who might, perhaps, be able to do me a good deal of harm.



"I USED TO FIND OLD BOOTS  
IN THE YARD."

terribly afraid of you all of a sudden. I hope it doesn't mean that you have been doing something that she doesn't approve of.' I didn't make any reply to this insinuation, except to say that the cat might perhaps be going mad, but this didn't help me any with Susan, who was really angry at the idea that her cat could be capable of going mad.

"The same sort of thing happened every time I went to the house. The cat was always in the room, and always expressed in the plainest way the opinion that I was a thief and a murderer, and an enemy of the temperance society. When I asked her what she meant to do, she would give me no reply except a fresh oath, or other bad language. Threats had no effect on her, for she knew that I could not touch her in Susan's house, and she didn't intend that I should catch her outside of the house. Nothing was clearer than that the Maltese was bound to make a quarrel between me and Susan in revenge for what I had said at Martha's four o'clock milk.

"Meanwhile Susan began to take the thing very seriously, and hinted that the cat's opposition to me might be a providential warning against me. 'I never knew her to

"The next time I called to see Susan the Maltese was in the room, and she instantly put up her back and tail and swore at me as if I was a Chinaman on the look out for material for a stolen dinner. 'What can be the matter with poor pussy?' said Susan. 'She seems to be so



"THE SOONER SHE GOES  
THE BETTER."

take such a prejudice against anyone before,' she said, 'except against that converted Jew who afterwards turned out to be a burglar, and nearly murdered poor dear Mr. Higby, the Baptist preacher, the night he broke into Mr. Higby's house and stole all his hams.' Once when I did manage to give the Maltese a surreptitious kick, and she yelled as if she was half-killed, Susan said, 'I am really afraid I shall have to ask you to leave us now. Poor pussy's nerves are so thoroughly upset that I must devote all my energies to soothing her. I do hope she is mistaken in her estimate of you.' This was not very encouraging, and I saw clearly that if the Maltese kept up her opposition the chances that Susan would marry me were not worth a rush.



**"POOR PUSSY'S NERVES ARE THOROUGHLY UPSET."**

"Did I tell you that I had a large grey cat by the name of Thomas Aquinas? He was in some respects the most remarkable cat I ever met. Most people considered him rather a dull person, but among cats he was conceded to have a colossal mind. Cats would come from miles away to ask his advice about things. I don't mean such trifling matters as his views on mice-catching—which, by the way, is a thing that has very little interest for most cats—or his opinion of the best way in which to get a canary bird through the bars of a cage. They used to consult him on matters of the highest importance, and the opinions that he used to give would have laid over those of Benjamin Franklin himself. Why Martha Washington told me that Thomas Aquinas knew more about bringing up kittens than the oldest and most experienced feline matron that she had ever known. As for common sense, Thomas Aquinas was just a solid chunk of it, as you might say, and I got into the habit of consulting him whenever I wanted a good, safe, cautious opinion. He would see at a glance where the trouble was, and

would give me advice that no lawyer could have beaten, no matter how big a fee he might have charged.

"Well! I went home from Susan's house, and I said to Thomas Aquinas, 'Thomas,' for he was one of those cats that you would no more have called 'Tom' than you would call Mr. Gladstone 'Bill'—'Thomas,' I said, 'I want you to come with me to Miss Susan's and tell that Maltese beast that if she doesn't quit her practice of swearing at me whenever I come into the room it will be the worse for her.'

"That's easy enough,' said Thomas. 'I know one or two little things about that cat that would not do to be told, and she knows that I know them. Never you fear but that I can shut her up in a moment. I heard that she was going about bragging that she would get square with you for something you said to her one day, but I didn't feel called upon to interfere without your express approval.'

"The next day Thomas and I strolled over to Susan's, and, as luck would have it, we were shown into her reception room before she came down stairs. The Maltese cat was in the room, and began her usual game of being filled with horror at the sight of such a hardened wretch as myself. Of course, Thomas Aquinas took it up at once, and the two had a pretty hot argument. Now Thomas, in spite of his colossal mind, was a quick-tempered cat, and he was remarkably free spoken when he was roused. One word led to another, and presently the Maltese flew at Thomas, and for about two minutes that room was so thick with fur that you could hardly see the fight. Of course, there could have been only one end to the affair. My cat weighed twice what the Maltese weighed, and after a few rounds he had her by the neck, and never let go until he had killed her. I was just saying 'Hooray! Thomas!' when Susan came into the room.

"I pass over what she said. Its general sense was that a man who encouraged dumb



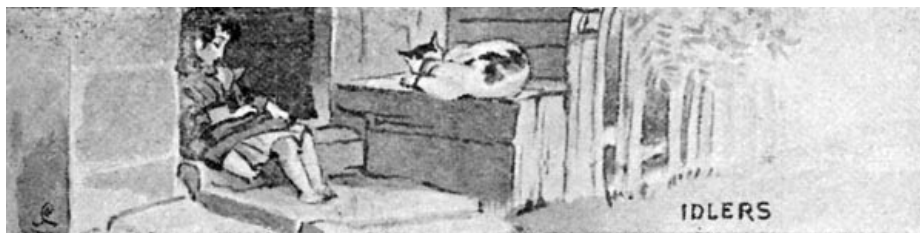
animals to fight, and who brought a great savage brute into her house to kill her sweet little pussy in her own parlour, wasn't fit to live. She would listen to no explanations, and when I said that Thomas had called at my request to reason with the Maltese about her unkind conduct towards me, Susan said that my attempt to turn an infamous outrage into a stupid joke made the matter all the worse, and that she must insist that I and my prize fighting beast should leave her house at once and never enter it again.

"So you see that if it had not been that I understood what the Maltese cat said at Martha Washington's milk party, I should probably never have quarrelled with either Susan or her cat, and should now have been a missionary in Central Africa, if I hadn't blown my brains out, or taken to drink. I have often thought that the man Susan did marry might have been saved if he had known the cat language in time, and had made the acquaintance of the Maltese."

The Colonel paused, and presently I asked him if he really expected us to believe his story. "Why not?" he replied. "It isn't any stiffer than Darwin's yarn about our being descended from monkeys. You believe that on the word of a man you never saw, and I expect you to believe my story that I understand the cat language on my unsupported word. Perhaps the story is a little tough, but if you are going in for science you shouldn't let your credulity be backed down by any story."



"SUSAN CAME INTO THE ROOM."





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## “Lions in Their Dens.”

J. L. TOOLE.

By RAYMOND BLATHWAYT.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY LOUIS GUNNIS.

(Photographs by Messrs. Fradelle & Young, and Falk, of Sydney.)

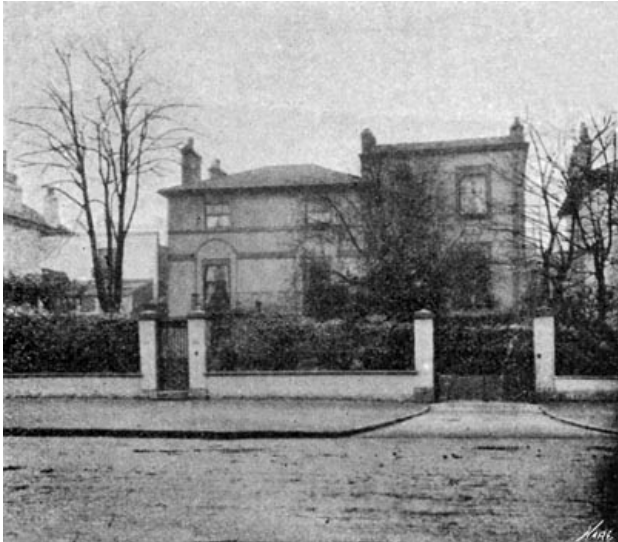
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Every one who writes an article upon Mr. Toole begins by telling his readers how entirely lovable a man he is, and I do not know why I should differ from every one else, for, in this case at all events, what every one says is true. There are few actors, either in the past or present, who have so thoroughly succeeded in placing themselves upon a footing of the most friendly and cordial nature with their audience as Mr. John Lawrence Toole. And not only has he succeeded in establishing such relations between himself and his audience, but he has been to the full as successful in endowing the characters he has undertaken with those same lovable qualities which have endeared him both to the public and to his own private friends. Few actors so entirely breathe into their parts the very spirit of their nature and essence of their being as Mr. Toole breathes into his. With high and low, rich and old, young and poor alike, he is a never-failing favourite, and the moment his kindly face appears upon the stage, and the familiar voice once again awakens the memories of bygone years, a burst of affectionate applause breaks out in welcome of the dear old favourite of our English stage. No matter where a man has been; in the Great Republic over the water, or in the burning lands of India, or in the New World under our feet; when he returns, after years of absence, to the old country, and the



MR. TOOLE IN  
"THE STEEPLECHASE."

familiar faces have passed away, and all things have become new, yet there is still one face that is the same, one voice in which there is still the old familiar ring, and to many such a wanderer old "Johnny Toole" becomes the one connecting line between the dear old past and the cold new present. And who does not know the aspect of the man himself—the short, sturdy figure, the slight limp in his walk, the kind, pleasant face with the mobile mouth and the eyeglass screwed in the smiling eye, and the hair, now sprinkled with grey, brushed back from the broad open forehead? The genial, pleasant manner, the entire ease of the man, and the utter absence of all that detestable putting on of "side" which is too often characteristic of the young actor of the present day, how all these things go towards the explanation of his universal popularity!



MR. TOOLE'S HOUSE.

A great sorrow has overshadowed the latter years of his life, a sorrow from which he will never shake himself free, but which has only deepened the tenderness of the nature which is so characteristic of the man. I spent a morning with him very recently in his house at Maida Vale. As he entered the room and I asked him how he was, he replied, "Oh, well, I am pretty middling, thanks; an actor's is such a hard life, you know," he went on, confidentially, as he pushed me into a chair and took one himself upon the opposite side of the hearthrug. "I have just been reading a whole bundle of manuscript plays, and you never saw such rubbish in your life.

And then"—he went on, plaintively

enough—"I lose the things, you know; put 'em into a drawer, or with a lot of other manuscripts and papers, and I can't lay my hands on 'em when they are sent for, and then, oh, goodness! there's the deuce and all to pay; for I can assure you that no mother thinks more of her first-born baby than a young author thinks of his first play, and if you are not of the same opinion he regards you as the biggest idiot in the world." "Well, but," I ventured to remark—"why on earth do you bother about the things?" "Oh, well," said he—"you know I can't



"I CAN'T LAY MY HANDS ON 'EM."

help myself; you never can get away from them. For instance, I go out to a harmless evening party, and a country parson comes up to me, the most unlikely man in all the world, you'd think, and he'll say to me, 'My brother has just written a play, Mr. Toole;

I wish you'd just cast your eye over it.' And I can't say No, Mr. Blathwayt, I can't say No. Well, now you're here," he went on after a moment, "you'll like to have a look round, won't you? I've got lots of interesting things here. Come into what I call my study—although," continued he, with a laugh, "I am afraid I don't get through much study. I am too busy to write, you know," he rambled on in a voice and manner that was amusingly reminiscent of "Walker London." So into the study we went, encountering on our way a big Australian black bird, which was wandering about the house in an aimless and irresponsible fashion, crooning to itself memories of its Antipodean home. Before we entered the study, Mr. Toole drew my attention to a beautiful model of the picturesque old Maypole Inn in "Barnaby Rudge," with a number of the characters in the novel wandering about in front of the house.



MR. TOOLE AND HIS "RAVEN."

There was  
Barnaby  
Rudge  
himself,  
there was  
his



MR. J. L. TOOLE.

supernaturally wicked old raven; old Joe Willet, the landlord, stood smoking in his shirt-sleeves, while pretty Dolly Varden herself was tripping down to town. "There," said my host, "isn't that clever? It stood for many years at the 'Hen and Chickens' in Birmingham, and Dickens used to admire it very much when he used to visit that town on his reading tours." Two little Japanese figures, reposing upon the top of the case which contained this model, looked down upon Mr. Toole as he stood beneath them. He set their arms and heads moving, observing, as he did so, "Often, when I am studying a part, I set those little figures going, they do for the public applauding." In the study itself, the walls were thickly hung with pictorial reminiscences—chiefly of the theatrical past. There were portraits of Macready in character, with his small, neat writing beneath; there was Charles Matthews in some character as a boy, and a portrait of old John Reeve, a celebrated comedian in his day; there was Mr. Toole as *Paw Clawdian*; there was Liston as *Paul Pry*; there were any amount of portraits of his dear old friend Henry Irving. I was much interested in an old theatrical bill of 1813 announcing Edmund Kean's appearance as *Hamlet*. And then Mr. Toole brought in a large framed letter which hung up in the hall. It was a letter from Thackeray to Charles Matthews when he was lessee of Covent Garden Theatre, and it was written on the occasion of the Queen's first state visit to Covent Garden after her marriage in 1840.

A pen and ink sketch by Thackeray adorned a large half of the page, in which he had represented Her Majesty with an enormous crown upon her head, and two or three queer sceptres in her hand, talking to the Prince Consort, who sat with her in the royal box, in the rear of which stood the members of the royal suite. In another corner of the hall there hung a letter, carefully framed, which bore the signature of "Nelson and Brontë," and close beside it there was a clever pencil sketch by George Cruikshank, representing a London 'bus full of people of that period, and with the price, one shilling, marked up in large figures outside it—a curious glimpse of bygone days. In Mr. Toole's dining room we found that clever lady artist, Folkard, who some time ago painted so faithful a likeness of old Mrs. Keeley, engaged in giving the finishing touches to an equally admirable portrait of my genial host himself.



THE HALL.

room, no less than the other room, was crammed with "virtuous and bigoted articles." There was some beautiful old china which had once belonged to Charles Dickens, and some handsome ivory elephants which Mr. Toole had brought with him from Columbo stood upon the sideboard. A



MR. TOOLE IN "ARTFUL CARDS."

very lovely oil painting by Keeley Halswelle, not in the least in his usual style, represented a far stretch of country, over the blue sky of which vast cumuli were massing themselves in snowy piles. There was a portrait, by Clint, of Stephen Kemble, who, like Mark Lemon, used to play *Falstaff* without padding. A painting of Joseph Jefferson, the celebrated American Rip Van Winkle, reminded me of a splendid picture of his which I always used to admire so much in the "Players' Club" in New York, and I observed, as Mr. Toole pointed out a clever sketch by Mr. Weedon Grossmith, that it was curious to notice how many actors were also good painters. "Why, yes," replied Toole with a quizzical smile, "I have painted a good many years myself." "Oh, indeed," said I—not immediately catching his meaning—"may I ask what you have painted?" "My face," said he, with an amused chuckle of much enjoyment at having caught me.



MR. TOOLE IN "OFF THE LINE."

Mr. Toole then pointed out to me James Wallack, the father of the celebrated American actor, Lester Wallack, in his favourite character of *The Brigand*. "Ah!" said Mr. Toole, "that reminds me of an anecdote that's told about James Wallack, and which ought to be a warning to actors never to make speeches from the stage. Wallack was playing *The Brigand*



MR. TOOLE AND HIS JAPANESE AUDIENCE.

one night, and he was in the midst of his great dying scene, when an old gentleman, who was sitting in the stalls, got up and put on his hat, tied a scarf round his neck, and buttoned up his coat with great deliberation. Wallack got very irritated, and just as the old gentleman was going out, he called out to him, "The piece is not finished yet, sir." The old gentleman, who was not in the least disconcerted, replied, "Thank you, Mr. Wallack, I have seen *quite* enough."

When we returned to the drawing room, into which I had first been shown, having specially noted on my way through the hall Keeley Halswelle's sketch of Mr. Toole as *The Artful Dodger* in 1854, and a few pages from Thackeray's MSS. of "Philip" which hung upon the wall, Mr. Toole took out an enormous



MR. TOOLE AS "THE DON."

photographic album which contained the portraits of all the celebrities, big and little—and some of them were very big indeed, and some of them were very small—who had been present at a great banquet which was given in Mr. Toole's honour before he left England for his Australian tour. Everyone was there—noblemen, journalists, and actors; legal luminaries and ecclesiastical dignitaries, people of social prominence and scientific fame; all the principal figures, indeed, that go to the making of this vast body politic. "I told a gentleman on board ship," humorously remarked Mr. Toole, "that these were all the members of my company. I don't know if he believed me or not." Then came albums full of autographs, old playbills, portraits of celebrated actors long since crumbled into the dust, letters the writing of which was fast fading away, a characteristic letter from Charles Dickens acknowledging a beautiful paper knife which Toole had sent him.

One of the letters which Mr. Toole most prizes, and the prayer of which, with Mr. Hollingshead's assistance, he was delighted to grant, is the following characteristic epistle:—

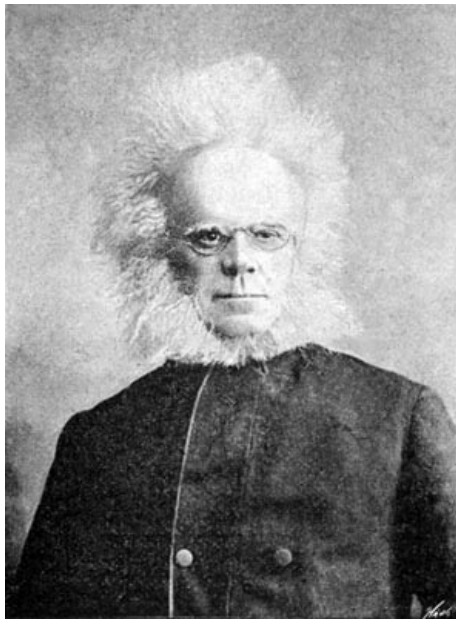
"Belle Vue Mansions, Brighton,

August 6th, 1873.

"My dear Toole,—Were you ever in a mess? If you never were I can explain it to you, having been in several; indeed, I don't mind confessing to you that I am in one now, and, strange to say, you are perhaps the only man who can get me out of it. You need not button up your pockets, it isn't a pecuniary one. Only fancy! after thirty years' practice and experience I have made a mistake in my dates, and for the first time in my life find myself engaged to two managers at the same time. Now, they say a man cannot serve two masters, but I CAN if they will come one after the other, only one at a time, one down, t'other come on; but to play at Bristol and the Gaiety on the same night (and keep it up for a week) I don't see my way to accomplish. In a moment of enthusiasm I engaged to begin with Chute on September 29th, and I had scarcely done so when Hollingshead reminded me that I was booked to begin with him on that date, and that it could not be altered. Conceive my dismay. Chute holds fast—'can't be altered.' So does Hollingshead—'can't be altered.' Now, Toole—*dear* Toole, BELOVED Toole—can't you stay a week longer at the Gaiety? CAN'T you let me begin there on Monday, October 6th (as I thought I did), and get me out of my dilemma? Can't you make this sacrifice to friendship, and put three or four hundred more into your pocket? Virtue is not its own reward, but an extra week of fine business is. Now, Toole—adored Tooley—the best of men—first of comedians—most amiable of your sex—burst into tears—throw your arms and sob out, 'Do with me as thou wilt—play me another week—pay me another three hundred, and be happy.' Breathless with anxiety, yet swelling with hope, I must await your answer. Pity the sorrows of a poor old man, and even telegraph 'Yes,' rather than keep me in suspense. What's a week to an able-bodied low comedian? Child's play! Why, you'll be wanting to throw in morning performances as well to keep you from rusting. It really is a *chance* for you. Avail yourself of it and bless me, and I'll bless *you*, and Hollingshead will bless us both, and Chute will bless us all.

"With my intermediate blessing, ever faithfully yours,

"C. J. MATTHEWS."



MR. TOOLE AS "IBSEN."

This letter Mr. Toole read to me, exactly mimicking the tone and manner of his old friend whom he still misses. I laughed heartily. "Well, now, Mr. Toole," said I, as we settled down for a conversation on the art he loves so well and has served so faithfully, "has the public taste altered much since you first started in your theatrical career?" "No," he replied, "upon my word I don't think it has very much. My dear old friend Irving, however, has effected as great a change as any man, and his influence has always been for good." "And what of the other Henry?" said I, "Hendrik Ibsen?" "Henry *Gibson*?" said Toole, looking up; "why, I never heard of him." "No! *Ibsen*," I explained, "*Ibsen*," smiling as I mentally contrasted the great Norwegian physiologist and social Reformer, and the simple-minded, homely, old-fashioned Englishman whom we all love so well. "Oh! Ibsen, Ibsen," said Mr. Toole, "I didn't catch what you said; I thought you said Gibson, and I couldn't think who on earth you meant. Well," he said, "I don't like his work myself. It's so unwholesome, you know. It seems to me such a vitiated taste. They put it down to my ignorance; but if you ask me what I think," he went on confidentially, "I should say there are very few who really care about him. He happens to be the fashion just at present. I played *Ibsen* in '*Ibsen's Ghost*,'" he continued, "and they said it was a beautiful make-up. I don't know what the old gentleman would have thought of it himself. Have you seen Irving's *Lear*?" he suddenly remarked, after a moment of silence. "I can remember many *Lears*, but I have never seen anything like his. I have been tremendously moved by it; but it is far too great a strain for him."

Mr. Toole then drifted into eulogy of his almost life-long friend, upon whose generosity and the beauty of whose character he never wearies of expatiating. "And how do you think the comedy of to-day compares with that of past years, Mr. Toole?" said I. "Oh, well," he replied; "I don't think things have altered much. It is true that there was a great gap when Keeley, Buxton, Benjamin Webster, Sothern, and Charles Matthews all passed away within a few years of each other. But we've lots of good comedians now, to say nothing of the vast increase in the number of theatres, which, of course, gives far more opportunities to new men than was the case in my early days. For my own part, though I almost invariably play low comedy parts, yet, as a rule, I prefer pathos, I think." And, as he spoke, Mr. Toole handed me a photograph which represented him in that very pathetic character *Caleb Plummer* in "*Dot*." "There," said he, "that's one of my favourite characters, but people come to see me for fun, they don't look much for pathos in me, except, perhaps, in the provinces. Ah! I like the provinces," he continued. "I have many friends in them. The Scotch are a splendid people to play to, but then English people, by which I mean English and Scotch alike, are very clannish, and very tender to an old friend. I always feel when I appear upon the stage that I am in the presence of friends.

I don't think that French actors are so much regarded as English actors. We feel the affection of our people so much. But, then, we go in and out as private friends amongst the people, more than the Frenchmen do. Their best actors go out to a party, and they act for money, just as they would in the theatre. I think that is very *infra dig*. myself. It seems to



MR. TOOLE AS CALEB PLUMMER  
IN "DOT."

me that  
as soon as  
the  
curtain is  
down the  
actor's  
work is  
over for  
the night,  
and when  
you go  
out to a  
man's  
party you  
are his  
guest, but  
you cease  
to be so if  
you take  
his  
money.  
With



TOOLE AND IBSEN.

singers, however, the case is quite different. Some say I am over fastidious, but, mind you," went on Mr. Toole, very earnestly, "I think it would be very snobbish not to join in the fun that is going on as a friend, and help to make everything go pleasantly. As a rule, however, I consider that on this account the English actor's social position is higher than that of a French actor. You ask me about criticism," said Mr. Toole a little later, as we wandered on through different fields of thought, over our wine and cigars. "Well," he continued, "it is very difficult to say whether it has improved or not during late years. In the old days, you know, we had some very good men; there was Oxenford, there was Bayle Bernard, there was Laman Blanchard, all very good men indeed. In the present day, Clement Scott is exceedingly clever, of course; but some of the young men are too much up in the clouds for me—they are very smart, I daresay, but I don't know what they're driving at, you know; all the same, I don't think criticism has any more influence than it had of old, in some cases not so much." And then, branching off on another line, Mr. Toole said—"Did you notice those remarks in the paper the other day about Fanny Kemble's father, and how he came to grief as a theatrical manager? I smiled when I read them. I knew well enough how it was; it was that infamous 'order' system. Kemble actually gave 11,000 orders in one season. It's altogether a rotten, bad system. Hundreds apply to me every week for orders who haven't the slightest claim upon me, and especially wealthy people, who are invariably the greatest offenders in this respect, and yet, when they are refused orders, they at once book seats for the play.





THE LIBRARY.

Of course there are certain people who are thoroughly entitled to orders, and I am only too glad to give them in such cases, but I draw the line at giving them to *any* one who chooses to ask me. *I* can't go into a restaurant and get a dinner for nothing—I wish I could; a tailor won't make me a coat for nothing—why should I play to people for nothing? They cannot have any idea how much it costs to keep up a theatre, or perhaps they'd have a little more consideration for one. It's a rotten, bad system, and it ought to be done away with." Later on in the evening Mr. Toole and I drove down to the theatre together, and we resumed our conversation in his very interesting little dressing-room. I congratulated him on the long run which "Walker London" was having; "but don't long runs tend to artificiality?" I asked.

"No," said Mr. Toole; "a new audience every evening saves you from that, to a great extent, especially with an earnest man. Earnestness is everything in an actor, but if you're apathetic you're lost. Still, I sometimes look at *Paul Pry's* umbrella," continued Mr. Toole, pointing to the quaint, queer, green old article that answered to that description, and which stood by itself in a corner of the room, "and wish I could play *Paul Pry* again, but I don't see much chance of that at present. Why, it will soon be 'Walker's' first birthday. I suppose they'll want me to make a speech. And speech-making always bothers me, for I am very nervous.



MR. TOOLE IN HIS DRESSING ROOM.

But I daresay I shall 'gammon' through somehow." I observed, "Well, I must say you 'gammon' through very well, for I always think you are one of the easiest speakers of the day." To which Mr. Toole replied, "Well, for my part, I think repose is everything. Quiet humour is



IT'S A ROTTEN SYSTEM.

always much more telling than noisy fun, and to feel your part deeply is far more than

mere elocution." "Do you think that the training that young people on the stage get, now-a-days, is as thorough as it was in your early days, Mr. Toole?" "Well," he said, "I don't think that young actors get so much practice as they did in the old days when Irving and I used to be for years together on a stock company in Edinburgh. He and I and Helen Faucit have played all the parts in Shakespeare together. But travelling companies have altered all that now-a-days. Still I think I must say that I've got a very fairly good *répertoire* for my people. Did you ever hear how I took to the stage?" he continued. "I used to be clerk in a wine merchant's office, and I was also a member of the City Histrionic Club.

Well, one night I went to the Pavilion; one of the actors who used to give imitations of popular favourites didn't turn up, and so I was persuaded by a man, who knew that I had been in the habit of giving imitations myself to our little club, to take his place. It was then that I first tasted the sweets of an actor's life. It was then I resolved to quit the merchant's desk for the stage. Do you see that playbill?" he continued, pointing up to an old time-stained paper which hung upon the wall.



THE DINING ROOM.

"There," said he, "that's the first time my name ever appeared on a London playbill. I appeared on that occasion for 'one night only' at the Haymarket Theatre, where a benefit was being given for Mr. Fred Webster, in July, 1852." I glanced round the little room, in which are gathered so many memories of the picturesque past, and in which so many of the best known men of the present day are so frequently to be found having a chat with "Dear Old Johnny Toole." There was an amusing photograph of Toole up to his waist in a hot lake in New Zealand surrounded by a number of Maoris. There was



MR. TOOLE AS  
"REV. AMINADAB SLEEK."

a portrait of himself in his first part in "My Friend the Major." Charles Matthews, in "My Awful Dad," smiled across the room at Paul Bedford and Toole, who were standing within a picture frame together. There was a quaint old coloured print representing Grimaldi—for whom Mr. Toole has a great admiration, and whose snuff-box he regards as quite a treasure—in private life, and in his clown's costume. But to



MR. TOOLE AS "PAUL PRY."

enumerate further the interesting pictures that hang upon the walls of his little dressing-room would be to far exceed my allotted space. I happened on the following night to be delivering a lecture at the Playgoers' Club on the Church and Stage, and before I left I asked Mr. Toole his opinion on the subject. "Why," he said, "I think that the Church and the Stage have a great deal in common, and I think that they ought to

be great friends, but I don't see that we need reforming any more than any other branches of the community. For my own part, I have the greatest respect for the clergy, and a great many friends amongst them, and I always go to church when I can. I am very fond of going to Westminster Abbey. I like the music; it's so solemn, you know—it always stirs me. I was very much amused at an incident which occurred to me the other day. I was playing in York, so on Sunday I went to the Minster as usual; on the following day, a man I knew came up to me and said, quite in good faith, 'Why, I saw you in church yesterday, and you were behaving quite quietly!' Just as though he had expected me to go in costume, and behave as though I were on the stage. But that is one of the ridiculous ideas that people get into their heads about actors. Still, I think, all that kind of thing is dying down now-a-days."



## Novel Notes.

By JEROME K. JEROME. ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. GÜLICH.

### PART XII.

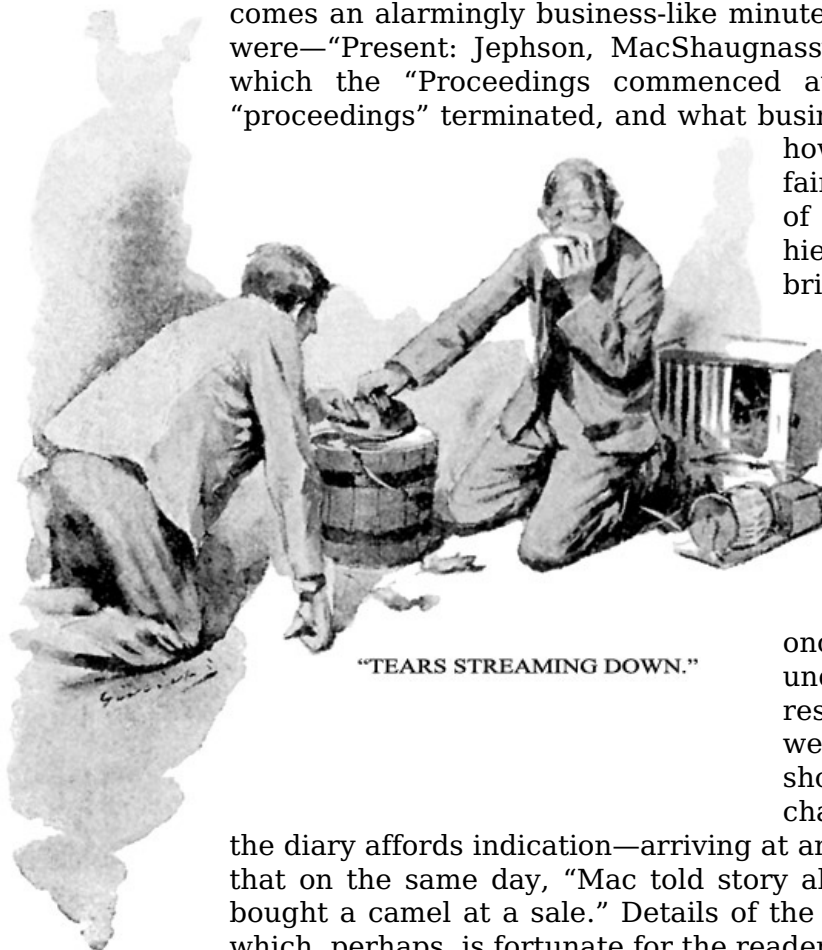
How much more of our—fortunately not very valuable—time we devoted to this wonderful novel of ours I cannot exactly say. Turning the dogs'-eared leaves of the dilapidated diary that lies before me, I find the record of our later gatherings confused and incomplete. For weeks there does not appear a single word. Then comes an alarmingly business-like minute of a meeting at which there were—"Present: Jephson, MacShaugnassy, Brown, and Self"; and at which the "Proceedings commenced at 8.30." At what time the "proceedings" terminated, and what business was done, the chronicle,

however, sayeth not; though, faintly pencilled in the margin of the page, I trace these hieroglyphics: "3·14·9—2·6·7," bringing out a result of "1·8·2."

Evidently an unremunerative night.

On September thirteenth, we seem to have become suddenly imbued with energy to a quite remarkable degree, for I read that we "Resolved to start the first chapter at once"—"at once" being underlined. After this spurt, we rest until October fourth, when we "Discussed whether it should be a novel of plot or of character," without—so far as

the diary affords indication—arriving at any definite decision. I observe that on the same day, "Mac told story about a man who accidentally bought a camel at a sale." Details of the story are, however, wanting, which, perhaps, is fortunate for the reader.



On the sixteenth, we were still debating the character of our hero; and I see that I suggested "a man of the Charley Buswell type."

Poor Charley, I wonder what could have made me think of him in connection with heroes; his loveliness, I suppose—certainly not his heroic qualities. I can recall his boyish face now (it was always a boyish face), the tears streaming down it as he sat in the schoolyard beside a bucket, in which he was drowning three white mice and a tame rat. I sat down opposite and cried too, while helping him to hold a saucepan lid over the poor little creatures, and thus there sprang up a friendship between us, which grew.

Over the grave of these murdered rodents, he took a solemn oath never to break school rules again, by keeping either white mice or tame rats, but to devote the whole of his energies for the future to pleasing his masters, and affording his parents some satisfaction for the money being spent upon his education.

Seven weeks later, the pervadence throughout the dormitory of an atmospheric effect more curious than pleasing led to the discovery that he had converted his box into a rabbit hutch. Confronted with eleven kicking witnesses, and reminded of his former promises, he explained that rabbits were not mice, and seemed to consider that a new and vexatious regulation had been sprung upon him. The rabbits were confiscated. What was their ultimate fate, we never knew with certainty, but three days later we were given rabbit-pie for dinner. To comfort him I endeavoured to assure him that these could not be his rabbits. He, however, convinced that they were, cried steadily into his plate all the time that he was eating them, and afterwards, in the playground, had a stand-up fight with a fourth form boy who had requested a second helping.

That evening he performed another solemn oath-taking, and for the next month was the model boy of the school. He read tracts, sent his spare pocket-money to assist in annoying the heathen, and subscribed to "The Young Christian" and "The Weekly Rambler, an Evangelical Miscellany" (whatever that may mean). An undiluted course of this pernicious literature naturally created in him a desire towards the opposite extreme. He suddenly dropped "The Young Christian" and "The Weekly Rambler," and purchased penny dreadfuls; and, taking no further interest in the welfare of the heathen, saved up and bought a second-hand revolver and a hundred cartridges. His ambition, he confided to me, was to become "a dead shot," and the marvel of it is that he did not succeed.

Of course, there followed the usual discovery and consequent trouble, the usual repentance and reformation, the usual determination to start a new life.



"A DEAD SHOT."

Poor fellow, he lived "starting a new life." Every New Year's Day he would start a new life—on his birthday—on other people's birthdays. I fancy that, later on, when he came to know their importance, he extended the principle to quarter days. "Tidying up, and starting afresh," he always called it.

I think as a young man he was better than most of us. But he lacked that great gift which is the distinguishing feature of the English-speaking race all the world over, the gift of hypocrisy. He seemed incapable of doing the slightest thing without getting found out; a grave misfortune for a man to suffer from, this.

Dear simple-hearted fellow, it never occurred to him that he was as other men—with, perhaps, a dash of straightforwardness added; he regarded himself as a monster of depravity. One evening I found him in his chambers engaged upon his Sisyphean labour of "tidying up." A heap of letters, photographs, and bills lay before him. He was tearing them up and

throwing them into the fire.

I came towards him, but he stopped me. "Don't come near me," he cried, "don't touch me. I'm not fit to shake hands with a decent man."

It was the sort of speech to make one feel hot and uncomfortable. I did not know what to answer, and murmured something about his being no worse than the average.

"Don't talk like that," he answered excitedly; "you say that to comfort me, I know; but I don't like to hear it. If I thought other men were like me I should be ashamed of being a man. I've been a blackguard, old fellow, but, please God, it's not too late. Tomorrow morning I begin a new life."

He finished his work of destruction, and then rang the bell, and sent his man downstairs for a bottle of champagne.

"My last drink," he said, as we clicked glasses. "Here's to the old life out, and the new life in."

He took a sip and flung the glass with the remainder into the fire. He was always a little theatrical, especially when most in earnest.

For a long while after that I saw nothing of him. Then, one evening, sitting down to supper at a restaurant, I noticed him opposite to me in company that could hardly be called doubtful.

He flushed and came over to me. "I've been an old woman for nearly six months," he said, with a laugh. "I find I can't stand it any longer.

"After all," he continued, "what is life for but to live? It's only hypocritical to try and be a thing we are not. And do you know"—he leant across the table, speaking earnestly—"honestly and seriously, I'm a better man—I feel it and know it—when I am my natural self than when I am trying to be an impossible saint."



"IN COMPANY THAT COULD HARDLY  
BE CALLED DOUBTFUL."

That was the mistake he made; he always ran to extremes. He thought that an oath, if it were only big enough, would frighten away Human Nature, instead of serving only as a challenge to it. Accordingly, each reformation was more intemperate than the last, to be duly followed by a greater swing of the pendulum in the opposite direction.

Being now in a thoroughly reckless mood, he went the pace rather hotly. Then, one evening, without any previous warning, I had a note from him. "Come round and see me on Thursday. It is my wedding eve."

I went. He was once more "tidying up." All his drawers were open, and on the table were piled packs of cards, betting books, and much written paper, as before, all in course of demolition.

I smiled; I could not help it, and, no way abashed, he laughed his usual hearty, honest laugh.

"I know," he exclaimed gaily, "but this is not the same as the others."

Then, laying his hand on my shoulder, and speaking with the sudden seriousness that comes so readily to shallow natures, he said, "God has heard my prayer, old friend. He knows I am weak. He has sent down an angel out of heaven to help me."

He took her portrait from the mantelpiece and handed it me. It seemed to me the face of a hard, narrow woman, but, of course, he raved about her.

As he talked, there fluttered to the ground from the heap before him an old restaurant bill, and, stooping, he picked it up and held it in his hand, musing.

"Have you ever noticed how the scent of the champagne and the candles seems to cling to these things?" he said lightly, sniffing carelessly at it. "I wonder what's

become of her?"

"I think I wouldn't think about her at all to-night," I answered.

He loosened his hand, letting the paper fall into the fire.

"My God!" he cried, vehemently, "when I think of all the wrong I have done—the irreparable, ever-widening ruin I have perhaps brought into the world—O God! spare me a long life that I may make amends. Every hour, every minute of it shall be devoted to your service."

As he stood there, with his eager boyish eyes upraised, a light seemed to fall upon his face and illumine it. I had pushed the photograph back to him, and it lay upon the table before him. He knelt and pressed his lips to it.

"With your help, my darling; and His," he murmured.

The next morning he was married. She was a well-meaning girl, though her piety, as with most people, was of the negative order; and her antipathy to things evil much stronger than her sympathy with things good. For a much longer time than I had expected she kept him straight—perhaps, a little too straight. But at last there came the inevitable relapse.

I called upon him, in answer to an excited message, and found him in the depths of despair. It was the old story, human weakness, combined with lamentable lack of the most ordinary precautions against being found out. He gave me details, interspersed with exuberant denunciations of himself, and I undertook the delicate task of peacemaker.

It was a weary work, but eventually she consented to forgive him. His joy, when I told him, was boundless.

"How good women are," he said, while the tears came into his eyes. "But she shall not repent it. Please God, from this day forth, I'll——"

He stopped, and for the first time in his life the doubt of himself crossed his mind. As I sat watching him, the joy died out of his face, and the first hint of age passed over it.

"I seem to have been 'tidying up and starting afresh' all my life," he said, wearily; "I'm beginning to see where the untidiness lies, and the only way to get rid of it."

I did not understand the meaning of his words at the time, but learnt it later on.

He strove according to his strength, and fell. By a miracle his transgression was not discovered. The facts came to light long afterwards, but at the time there were only two who knew.

It was his last failure. Late one evening I received a hurriedly scrawled note from his wife begging me to come round.

"A terrible thing has happened," it ran; "Charley

went up to his study after dinner, saying he had some 'tidying up,' as he calls it, to do, and did not wish to be disturbed. In clearing out his desk he must have handled carelessly the revolver that he always keeps there, not remembering, I suppose, that it was loaded. We heard a report, and on rushing into the room found him lying dead on the floor. The bullet had passed right through his heart."

Hardly the type of man for a hero! And yet I do not know. Perhaps he fought harder than many a man who conquers. In the world's courts, we are compelled to judge on circumstantial evidence only, and the chief witness, the man's soul, cannot very well be called.

I remember the subject of bravery being discussed one evening at a dinner party,



"LYING DEAD."

when a German gentleman present related an anecdote, the hero of which was a young Prussian officer.

"I cannot give you his name," our German friend explained—"the man himself told me the story in confidence; and though he personally, by virtue of his after record, could afford to have it known, there are other reasons why it should not be bruited about.

"How I learnt it was in this way. For a dashing exploit performed during the brief war against Austria he had been presented with the Iron Cross. This, as you are well aware, is the most highly-prized decoration in the German Army; men who have earned it are usually conceited about it, and, indeed, have some excuse for being so. He, on the contrary, kept his locked in a drawer of his desk, and never wore it except when compelled by official etiquette. The mere sight of it seemed to be painful to him. One day I asked him the reason. We are very old and close friends, and he told me.

"The incident occurred when he was a young lieutenant. Indeed, it was his first engagement. By some means or another he had become separated from his company, and, unable to regain it, had attached himself to a Landwehr regiment stationed at the extreme right of the Prussian lines.

"The enemy's effort was mainly directed against the left centre, and for a while our young lieutenant was nothing more than a distant spectator of the battle. Suddenly, however, the attack shifted, and the regiment found itself occupying an extremely important and critical position. The shells began to fall unpleasantly near, and the order was given to 'grass.'

"The men fell upon their faces and waited. The shells ploughed the ground around them, smothering them with dirt. A horrible, griping pain started in my young friend's stomach, and began creeping upwards. His head and heart both seemed to be shrinking and growing cold. A shot tore off the head of the man next to him, sending the blood spurting into his face; a minute later another ripped open the back of a poor fellow lying to the front of him.

"His body seemed not to belong to himself at all. A strange, shrivelled creature seemed to have taken possession of it. He raised his head, and peered about him. He and three soldiers—youngsters, like himself, who had never before been under fire—appeared to be utterly alone in that hell. They were the end men of the regiment, and the configuration of the ground completely hid them from their comrades.

"They glanced at each other, these four, and read each other's thoughts in each other's eyes. Leaving their rifles lying on the grass, they commenced to crawl stealthily upon their bellies, the lieutenant leading, the other three following.

"Some few hundred yards in front of them rose a small, steep hill. If they could reach this it would shut them out of sight. They hastened on, pausing every thirty yards or so to lie still and pant for breath, then hurrying on again, quicker than before, tearing their flesh against the broken ground.

"At last they reached the base of the slope, and slinking a little way round it, raised their heads and looked back. Where they were it was impossible for them to be seen from the German lines.

"They sprang to their feet and broke into a wild race. A dozen steps further they came face to face with an Austrian field battery.

"The demon that had taken possession of them had been growing stronger and stronger the further and further they had fled. They were not men, they were animals mad with fear. Driven by the same frenzy that prompted other panic-stricken creatures to once rush down a steep place into the sea, these four men, with a yell, flung themselves, sword in hand, upon the whole battery; and the whole battery, bewildered by the suddenness and unexpectedness of the attack, thinking the entire battalion was upon them, gave way, and rushed pell-mell down the hill.

"With the sight of those flying Austrians the fear, as independently as it had come to him, left him, and he felt only a desire to hack and kill. The four Prussians flew after them, cutting and stabbing at them as they ran; and when the Prussian cavalry came thundering up, they found my young lieutenant and his three friends had captured two guns and accounted for half a score of the enemy.

"Next day, he was summoned to headquarters.

"Will you be good enough to remember for the future, sir," said the Chief of the Staff, "that His Majesty does not require his lieutenants to execute manœuvres on their own responsibility, and also that to attack a battery with three men is not war, but damned tomfoolery. You ought to be court-martialled, sir!"

"Then, in somewhat different tones, the old soldier added, his face softening into a smile: 'However, alertness and daring, my young friend, are good qualities, especially when crowned with success. If the Austrians had once succeeded in planting a battery on that hill it might have been difficult to dislodge them. Perhaps, under the circumstances, His Majesty may overlook your indiscretion.'

"His Majesty not only overlooked it, but bestowed upon me the Iron Cross," concluded my friend. "For the credit of the army, I judged it better to keep quiet and take it. But, as you can understand, the sight of it does not recall very pleasurable reflections."

To return to my diary, I see that on November fourteenth we held another meeting. But at this there were present only "Jephson, MacShaughnassy, and Self"; and of Brown's name I find henceforth no further trace. On Christmas Eve we three met again, and my notes inform me that MacShaughnassy brewed some whiskey-punch, according to a recipe of his own, a record suggestive of a sad Christmas for all three of us. No particular business appears to have been accomplished on either occasion.

Then there is a break until February eighth, and the assemblage has shrunk to "Jephson and Self." With a final flicker, as of a dying candle, my diary at this point, however, grows luminous, shedding much light upon that evening's conversation.

Our talk seems to have been of many things—of most things, in fact, except our novel. Among other subjects we spoke of literature generally.

"I am tired of this eternal cackle about books," said Jephson; "these columns of criticism to every line of writing; these endless books about books; these shrill praises and shrill denunciations; this silly worship of novelist Tom; this silly hate of poet Dick; this silly squabbling over playwright Harry. There is no soberness, no sense in it all. One would think, to listen to the High Priests of Culture, that man was made for literature, not literature for man. Thought existed before the Printing Press; and the men who wrote the best hundred books never read them. Books have their place in the world, but they are not its purpose. They are things side by side with beef and mutton, the scent of the sea, the touch of a hand, the memory of a hope, and all the other items in the sum total of our three-score years and ten. Yet we speak of them as though they were the voice of life instead of merely its faint, distorted echo. Tales are delightful *as* tales—sweet as primroses after the long winter, restful as the cawing of rooks at sunset. But we do not write 'tales' now; we prepare 'human documents' and dissect souls."

He broke off abruptly in the midst of his tirade. "Do you know what these 'psychological studies' that are so fashionable just now always make me think of?" he said. "One monkey examining another monkey for fleas."

"And what, after all, does our dissecting pen lay bare?" he continued. "Human nature? or merely some more or less unsavoury undergarment, disguising and disfiguring human nature? There is a story told of an elderly tramp, who, overtaken by misfortune, was compelled to retire for a while to the seclusion of Portland. His hosts, desiring to see as much as possible of their guest during his limited stay with them, proceeded to bath him. They bathed him twice a day for a week, each time learning more of him; until at last they reached a flannel shirt. And with that they had to be content, soap and water proving powerless to go further."



"COMMENCED TO CRAWL  
STEALTHILY."



"That tramp appears to me symbolical of mankind. Human Nature has worn its conventions for so long that its habit has grown on to it. In this nineteenth century it is impossible to say where the clothes of custom end and the man begins. Our virtues are taught to us as a branch of 'Department'; our vices are the recognised vices of our reign and set. Our religion hangs ready made beside our cradle to be buttoned upon us by loving hands. Our tastes we acquire, with difficulty; our sentiments we learn by rote. At cost of infinite suffering, we study to love whiskey and cigars, high art and classical music. In one age we admire Byron and drink sweet champagne: twenty years later it is more fashionable to prefer Shelley, and we like our champagne dry. At school we are told that Shakespeare was a great poet, and that the Venus di Medici is a fine piece of sculpture; and so for the rest of our lives we go about saying what a great poet we think Shakespeare, and that there is no piece of sculpture, in our opinion, so fine as the Venus di Medici. If we are Frenchmen we adore our mother; if Englishmen we love dogs and virtue. We grieve for the death of a near relative twelve months; but for a second cousin, we sorrow only three. The good man has his regulation excellencies to strive after, his regulation sins to repent of. I knew a good man who was quite troubled because he was not proud, and could not, therefore, with any reasonableness, pray for humility. In society one must needs be cynical and mildly wicked: in Bohemia orthodoxly unorthodox. I remember my mother expostulating with a friend, an actress, who had left a devoted husband and eloped with a disagreeable, ugly, little low comedian (I am speaking of long, long ago).



"REMEMBER FOR THE FUTURE, SIR."



"YOU MUST BE MAD."

"'You must be mad,' said my mother; 'what on earth induced you to take such a step?'"

"'My dear Emma,' replied the lady; 'what else was there for me? You know I can't act. I had to do *something* to show I was an artiste!'"

"We are dressed up marionettes. Our voice is the voice of the unseen showman, Convention; our very movements of passion and pain are but in answer to his jerk. A man resembles one of those gigantic bundles that one sees in nursemaids' arms. It is very bulky and very long; it looks a mass of delicate lace and rich fur and fine woven stuffs; and somewhere, hidden out of sight among the finery, there is a tiny red bit of bewildered humanity, with no voice but a foolish cry.

"There is but one story," he went on, after a long pause, uttering his own thoughts aloud

rather than speaking to me. "We sit at our desks and think and think, and write and write, but the story is ever the same. Men told it and men listened to it many years ago; we are telling it to one another to-day; we shall be telling it to one another a thousand years hence; and the story is: 'Once upon a time there lived a man and a woman who loved him.' The little critic cries that it is not new, and asks for something fresh, thinking—as children do—that there are strange things in the world."

At that point, my notes end, and there is nothing in the book beyond. Whether any of us thought any more of the novel, whether we ever met again to discuss it, whether it were ever begun, whether it were ever abandoned—I cannot say. There is a fairy story that I read many, many years ago that has never ceased to haunt me. It told how a little boy once climbed a rainbow. And at the end of the rainbow he came to the most

wonderful land that was ever dreamt of. Its houses were built of gold, and its streets were paved with silver. Its palaces were so beautiful that no language could describe them, but to merely look at them satisfied all yearnings. And all the men who dwelt in this city were great and good; and the women fairer than the women of a boy's dream. And the name of the city was "The city of things men meant to do."



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## The Story of an Hour.

BY HILDA NEWMAN.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY V. W. NEWMAN.

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And this is the end of it all!

The sharp queries and sullen answers, the sobs, tears, and bickerings are over, and in their stead reigns the cold silence of resolution.



"IDLY LOOKING OUT OF  
THE WINDOW."

How did it all begin? Neither could tell. Yet the torture of an unworthy suspicion, and a pride that scorns to answer the doubts of an exacting love, have apparently sufficed to obliterate the memory of the happiness of three unclouded years of kindness and love.

They are going to separate. There is nothing else to do, She says, and He tacitly agrees, for he knows it is impossible to go on living in this atmosphere of discontent. And they calmly arrange their affairs, as though it were merely a question of a few weeks' absence, instead of the breaking up of their home. He will travel, and She will stay on at their house a little longer, till her mother goes abroad, when she will join her, dismissing all the servants, excepting the old nurse who looks after their child. Ah! it is the thought of their child that makes the separation so hard, and He feels that the last link between them is broken, when he yields that little life into the hands of the wife who does not trust him, thinking bitterly in his heart that he may be taught to hate him.

She sits in the drawing-room, idly looking out of the window, surprised at the dead calm that seems to have come over the house. An organ is playing in the street, and the notes jar on her strained nerves till she could scream; but she sits still with her hands in her lap, trying to believe that she is utterly indifferent to present, past, or future, yet unconsciously listening to the hurried, heavy footsteps overhead, where her husband is packing his portmanteau. She is quite anxious for a moment as she remembers she has put away his fur-lined coat that might be useful if he goes travelling in chilly regions, but she recollects herself with a start, and does not stir from her seat. She lets the bitter thoughts come uppermost in her heart now, for she is convinced, of course, that this parting is the best thing that could take place. Upstairs,

He, quite helpless as to the locality of many necessaries that have hitherto been prepared for him by thoughtful hands, and not feeling able to confront his servant's inquiring eyes, is savagely thrusting linen into an unwilling receptacle, whence ties and collars stick out provokingly at odd corners, and trying to subdue a queer feeling that oppresses him when he thinks of her stony indifference.

So the packing goes on, and the organ grinds merrily, and is inwardly but emphatically cursed by at least two ungrateful people.

At last He is ready, and comes slowly down the stairs, giving some very audible and offhand orders in the hall respecting his particular belongings. A close observer might notice that he speaks and laughs a little too readily. The little, pale woman, sitting motionless in the room, hears him, and in her heart of hearts hears what he strives to hide.

After all, it is a great wrench for a man to leave his—well, then, whose fault is it? And the old arguments and suspicions rise again in her mind and deaden all other feelings.

He comes into the drawing-room, hat in hand, very firm and very calm. She does not move.

"Good-bye," he says, holding out his hand.

"Good-bye," she answers, taking it mechanically.

He pauses at the door, and their eyes meet. "It is much better so," she says, faintly. And he is gone.

Then there is a rushing and singing in her ears. The notes of the organ rise louder and louder, till they swell into a rich anthem—the garish daylight changes to the dim light of a church—she walks up the aisle in a glistening white dress, on which pearldrops shake and tremble. She hears a dim murmur of voices and rustling of garments, and the scent of white flowers is heavy in the air. There rises a clear voice, whose fervour moves her inmost heart, exhorting her to love, honour and obey—and out of the fulness of her soul she promises. *Oh! God, oh! God, she meant to keep that promise.*



"COMES SLOWLY DOWN THE STAIRS."



"A WHITE, WILD-LOOKING FACE."

Then comes a confused din of voices and rolling of carriages, but she is only conscious of the strong arm to which she clings, and the clear face that bends so tenderly over hers.

With a little sobbing gasp she opens her eyes. Has she been asleep? No, but the organ has stopped and is rumbling down the street, followed by a crowd of small boys and girls, whose ears are not sensitive to the quality of music.

She rises. Her knees are shaking as she drags herself painfully across the room, catching a glimpse of a white, wild-looking face in the tall pier-glass as she clutches the handle of the door, and then the sight of the empty hat-rack in the hall, the absence of coat and stick, or fragrant whiff of cigar, bring the irrevocableness of the parting home to her more vividly than anything—more than the few words of farewell, the cold handshake, and the slam of the hall door half-an-hour ago. "Was it only half-an-hour?" she murmurs, staring stupidly at the clock; "it seems an eternity! And now he is going farther and farther from me,

never to return—never to tease, and praise and love me, for (she sobs) he did love me once, in spite of everything—never to laugh at me and call me 'little woman'—never to hold my hand or ask my help again! He is thinking of his wasted life and love; yes, he will believe he has wasted it on *me*. He is thinking of our little child—he did not bid him good-bye—how could he bear to?" Ah! there is still something left for her to love; but what is left for him? And with bitter tears she remembers how quietly he gave the child up to her, and how she accepted the sacrifice as a matter of course, though she knew what it cost him.

With beating heart she goes upstairs. The cosy, pretty nursery is empty. The nurse has taken the child to Kensington Gardens as usual. She passes on into their bedroom. It is still in disorder, and she has not the heart to put it straight, though she feels that a little occupation would do her good. The sun shines warmly into the room, but she shivers.

There is nothing but loneliness in the house, and that she cannot bear, for it brings thoughts, and she dares not think.

Hardly knowing what she does, she finds and puts on her hat and gloves, and turns to go, but, at the very threshold, she stumbles over something—why, it is the little silver match-box he always uses—and loses. She must take it to him—then she remembers, and, oh! strange woman, covers it with tears and kisses. She hurries down the stairs,

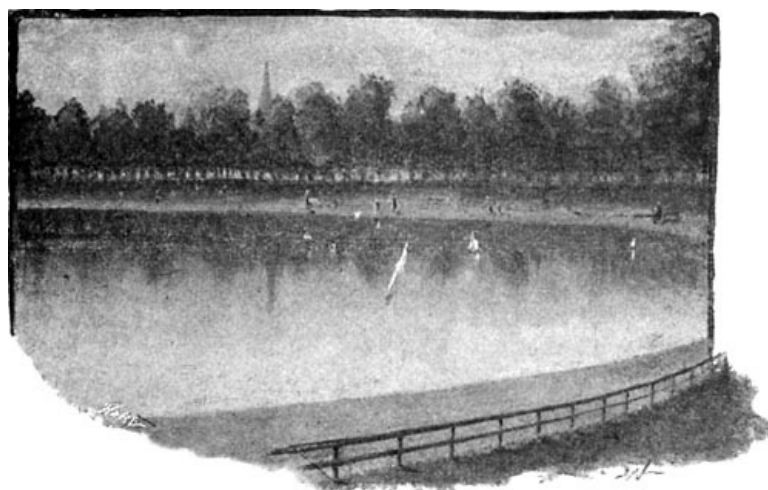
and out of the house, and a long way down the street before she knows that she is hurrying, because she cannot bear to be alone. An awful feeling of restlessness, of reproach, will not let her be still, and yet she was so calm a little while ago.

On—on—regardless of curious looks, for her cheeks are tear-stained, and now and then there is a little catch in her breath, that she cannot repress.

On—past the quaint old red brick palace, whose history they read together, past the pond with its toy navy and anxious captains, past nursemaids, children, and mooning philosophers she hurries, feverishly longing to reach the chosen nook where a joyous welcome awaits her.



"THE NURSERY IS EMPTY."



"THE POND AND ITS TOY NAVY."

Now she is near—but the seat is empty, and the nurse is gossiping in the distance. She runs on angrily—and stops! For, under a sheltering tree, He stands bidding their little

child good-bye. She can hear his gentle words, and the soft, cooing answers, and she dumbly stretches out her arms, as a great wave of love surges in her heart and drowns the bitter thoughts for ever. In a little while he will go, and then this tide of love and repentance will have come too late.

She calls him faintly—and he turns. Her hat is awry, her hair coming down, and she has torn her pretty dress on some projecting branch, yet He thinks she never looked more beautiful, as he answers the mute appeal of those tearful eyes, and takes her in his arms. Deep silence reigns. Then, from the depths of a penitent heart, she sobs out loving, passionate words: "Forgive me—my husband!"



"FORGIVE ME—MY HUSBAND"

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## Rum Punch at Podbury's.

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RONALD GRAY.

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Some West Indian insects have an almost human strength of purpose. For three consecutive nights I suffered from a sort of vampire cockroach, who crept under my pyjamas whilst I slept, and nibbled my chest. When I awoke, I could feel him hurrying off by way of my arm or leg. The moment worn-out nature reasserted itself in me, and I dozed again, that ghoul of a cockroach came back and proceeded with its fell banquet. At length, weakened no doubt by loss of blood and frantic with the thought that a mere piece of determined vermin should thus habitually sup off me, I rose in the dead of a moonless night, turned on the electric light, selected a handy shoe, and then started to have it out, once for all, with that man-eating cockroach. He broke cover from under some curiosities, and went away at a killing pace. But I had stopped his "earths" all round the cabin, and after a ten minutes' burst in the open, he settled down, evidently feeling that I meant business. Though not his equal in pace, I hoped to find myself a better stayer. He caught my eye once, when he was jumping over my sponge with a view to getting into some very difficult country under my bunk. The expression in it evidently alarmed him, and he redoubled his efforts. Twice I had made play with the shoe. Once I nearly

landed him upon the side of his head; the other time I broke a rather valuable curiosity. Finally, the cockroach began to fly; then, for a while, he had matters his own way. I struck out to the right and left with a view to winging him, but he certainly showed great ability in the air, and dodged under the shoe and over it, and then hit me in the face, and was out again before I could get a blow back. Now, from being a sort of fox-hunt, the affair had degenerated into a prize-fight; and it seemed utterly impossible to say who would win. On the one side were ranged weight and science and a shoe; on the other, wings and astounding agility and utter unscrupulosity. After the first round, I heard people in adjacent cabins waking up and murmuring unkind things—not about the cockroach, but concerning me. Then I called "Time," and walked out to the centre of the room. The cockroach did not come. I looked round and saw him sitting in my open port, twirling his moustache and gazing out upon the sea. I said "Time" again, but he paid no attention; so I stole upon him, with the stealth of a wild Indian, and smote him behind. This action was unsportsmanlike, but conclusive. He shot out into the ocean, where probably some not over-particular tropic fish attempted to digest him and failed.

As the "Rhine" approached Dominica, the Fourth Officer, according to his pleasant custom, approached me, armed with facts. On this occasion, however, I had taken measures to be before him. I had read up the island rather carefully, and, knowing that Columbus was always a safe card, had acquired some information on the subject of that great navigator also. So I waited with quiet confidence for the Fourth Officer to start. He said:

"Here we are at Dominica—an interesting and beautiful spot."

"True," I replied, "Christopher Columbus discovered the place in 1493."

The Fourth Officer looked startled and uneasy, but I pushed on:

"The French and hurricanes between them have done much to wreck this island's chances. Matters, however, are more hopeful now. Dominica abounds in sulphur springs, and vast sulphurous accumulations occur inland. Even the bed of the River Roseau is not free from these volcanic outbursts. Formerly the place produced very famous and high-class coffee, but this cultivation was ruined by an insect pest. Now, you shall find that sugar-cane, cocoa, and limejuice are the principal products. The manioc root, of which cassava bread is made, also grows abundantly here, and basket work is rather an important industry too. In the year 1881, there were still a hundred and seventy-three pure aboriginal Caribs left in Dominica, but they have not been counted lately. I don't fancy they like it. The port of the isle is Roseau, named after the river. We shall presently anchor off this town. I don't know that there is anything more to say."

Then I looked at the Fourth Officer inquiringly. He was evidently hurt. He said:

"No, I don't fancy that there is anything more to say." Then he shook his head rather reproachfully, and walked off to the other end of the ship. In fact, he went as far away from me as he possibly could without getting into the sea. I felt sorry, and followed him, and begged him to tell me about his younger days, when he was an apprentice, and first sailed the ocean. This cheered him up, and he recounted a mad freak off Cape Horn by night. It happened that another sailing ship was following his vessel, so he and a friend began hanging out signal lamps to her, and waving green and blue and yellow and crimson lights over the stern of their ship. The approaching barque stood this display for some time, and then, probably under the impression she was running into a chemist's shop, grew frightened, and changed her course, and was no more seen. Our Fourth Officer, I should think rightly, regards this as one of his happiest efforts.



"SMOTE HIM BEHIND."



"THE FOURTH OFFICER LOOKED STARTLED AND UNEASY."

arranged a programme for Roseau. One Podbury dwells there, and this Podbury brews the best rum punch in the West Indies. The Doctor knows and esteems him. My brother is also familiar with the Bishop of Dominica, and says that he is a genial, lovable Irishman of admirable parts, and the best company in the world. It is agreed, therefore, that we first call upon the Bishop, then see the town, and finally cheer our exhausted systems with Podbury's rum punch. Neither the Bishop nor Podbury has invited us, or knows we are here at all; but that is a sort of detail which counts for nothing in foreign parts.

Dominica is very beautiful, with the same beauty as many other islands already mentioned. Great wooded hills rise, peak upon peak, to the clouds, and between them lie deep gorges and fertile ravines. The margins of the sea are fringed with palms; Roseau itself lies glimmering upon the shore, with white walls and red and grey roofs. Inland, winding out under low cliffs behind the town, flows forth the river over a rocky bed to the sea. This stream produces some very noble scenery towards the interior, and is rather a large volume of water for such a small island. As a result Dominica is extremely damp at seasons of much rain, and grows, among other things, frogs of majestic size.

By kind permission of the Captain, I was allowed to avail myself of the mail-boat at all ports; and now, tumbling into this vessel, the Doctor and I soon reached dry land.

"Let us bolt straight off to the Cathedral," he said; "ten to one the Bishop's there; if not, we can go on to his house."

Roseau appeared to be rather a languishing little town. The stony streets were all overgrown with grass; the place generally lacked any air of enterprise; the negro children, who swarmed everywhere, were more than usually destitute of attire.



"THE DOCTOR WAS FUSSING ABOUT."

Upon reaching the Bishop's place of business, we found to our dismay that a funeral was going on. The Cathedral doors were wide open, a crowd was gathered within, and over a flower-laden bier stood the Bishop, singing away, and as fully occupied as a man could be.

I noticed that the Doctor was fussing about, trying to catch his friend's eye. I therefore said:

"Don't; it isn't decent. You can't expect even a bishop to be genial and effusive at a time like this. Consider the survivors."

"He sees me!" whispered my brother.

"Sees you; yes, not being blind he couldn't help it. Everybody in the Cathedral sees you; and they very naturally resent the sight. Come away; you're making the Bishop nervous."

It really was most annoying. There he stood, so close that we could almost touch him, and yet separated from us by a gulf only to be bridged by the end of his burial service.



"WE MET PODBURY."

The Doctor became illogical and childish about it. When I had dragged him away from these last sad rites, he gave it as his opinion that any other bishop would have stopped, just for a moment at least, and been friendly and enthusiastic, if only in an undertone.

"He may get thousands of opportunities to bury people, but he will never have a chance of seeing you again," said my brother. Then he added, as an afterthought, "And very probably you will never get another opportunity of talking to an Irish bishop."

After that he sneered at the local medical practitioner, and said that likely enough the deceased would not have died at all in proper hands.

Then a thought struck me, the horror of which reduced my brother to absolute despair. I said:

"Perhaps the Bishop is interring Podbury. In that case everybody you know on this island will be busy, and we shan't get any hospitality, or punch, or anything."

"Just my luck if he is," answered the Doctor gloomily. He then kept absolute silence for half-an-hour, during which time we walked to the Roseau River and beheld many black laundresses out in mid-stream washing clothes. Turning from this spectacle, he spoke again and said:

"Our present state of suspense is destroying me. I've a terrible presentiment that they *were* burying Podbury. If so, we're done all round. I'm going right away to Podbury's now. I shall see in a moment by the blinds if the worst has happened."

We sought out Podbury's desolate home, and the Doctor asked bitterly why Providence should have snatched away one whose skill in the matter of rum punch was a household word. I said:

"Try and feel hopeful. We cannot yet be absolutely certain that he has gone."

And then we met Podbury in the Market Place. He was thoroughly alive, and apparently in good health.

"Ah, Doctor!" he exclaimed, "back again. Glad to see you. How are the boys on the 'Rhine?' Who's your friend?"

I was made known to Podbury, and explained how the sight of him had turned our mourning into joy, and how I had come out from England as much to taste his celebrated rum punch as anything else. He appeared gratified at this, and led the way to his house.

We asked him who the Bishop was burying, and he did not even know. He said:

"A nigger, for certain. Can't be anybody of much account or I should have heard tell of it."

Then we reached his home, and while he brewed cold punch, we talked to his wife and daughters and some aunts that he had, on his father's side.



The Treasure dropped in too. He knew Podbury well, and Podbury regarded him as an authority on punch. The liquid was presently placed before us. Podbury showed pleasure when I said what I thought about it; but he did not feel quite contented until he had expert's opinion.

"Magnificent!" the Treasure presently declared; "why it's equal to the 1890 brew—you remember."

Podbury's eye brightened at this allusion to one of his greatest past triumphs. He tasted the punch himself, and admitted that it certainly seemed "about right."



With a desire to be

"MAGNIFICENT!"



"THE PUNCH WAS GOOD."

entertaining, I volunteered a fact or two concerning punch generally. I said:

"Our word 'punch,' as you are doubtless aware, is derived from the Hindustani '*panch*' or Sanskrit '*panchan*'; which mean simply 'five.' Punch is a mixture of five ingredients, hence the name."

Everybody was rather impressed with this apposite remark, excepting Podbury. He answered:

"Yes, that's so. I've known it years and years. You bet what I don't know about punch isn't worth knowing."

This I took to be sheer conceit on the part of Podbury. His successes with punch were making the man egotistical. I did not believe that he had heard of these interesting points before, whatever he said to the contrary. At any rate, they were quite new to his wife and daughters and aunts. So I turned my attention to them, and told them several other things worth

knowing. They doubtless retailed my information to Podbury after we had departed. Still the punch was good and cooling, and, with a heart that rises above trifles, I here deliberately bless the man who brewed it. To be thus publicly blessed in print ought to content even Podbury.

When we returned to the "Rhine" night had shaken out her starry skirts, and land and sea were very dark. But great electric eyes glared down from either side of the ship, facilitating the business of loading, and shining upon a struggling crowd of lighters, and a yelling, swearing assembly of negroes. Steam cranes groaned and shrieked and rattled; new passengers were coming aboard, driven to madness with luggage; and sundry Dominica tradesmen bustled about, selling curiosities. These people vended stuffed frogs, the skins of humming-birds, Brazilian beetles, and gigantic Rhinoceros beetles also.

Five or six of them hemmed in the Doctor immediately he arrived, but, finding that he had already laid in frogs and beetles, they turned upon me with grim determination to do business, or perish in the attempt. My knowledge of the "Rhine" enabled me to escape from all save one, but he was as familiar with our vessel as I, and finally, penning me in a corner, he produced a frog as big as a lap-dog, and declared that it was his almost suicidal intention to practically give me the thing for half-a-dollar. I said:

"No, John. I am perhaps as good a judge of a bull-frog as anybody living, and I tell you without hesitation that your frog is worth ten shillings. Don't dream of parting from it for less."

He grinned, and asked:

"Massa gib me ten shillin' for him?"

"Again, no, John. I do not need this Goliath of a frog. I am merely valuing the reptile for your future guidance. Let me see those beetles."

He showed me a weird creature, which looked as if nature had begun an insect and then changed her mind and finished it off like a crab. This thing, with the ferocious claw-like nose and chin, was a female Rhinoceros beetle, so the owner explained. The male beetle appeared to be a

harmless, mild concern of much smaller size, and with no warlike appendages whatever. I never saw any insect of the sterner sex labour under such crushing disadvantages. Personally, did I belong to this order of coleoptera, I should sing extremely small, and remain a bachelor, and creep or fly about quietly after dark, and not affect ladies' society much. Probably, most gentlemen Rhinoceros beetles do so. It must always be Leap Year with these concerns. If the males had to propose, the race would long since have become extinct.

I bought a beetle or two, and then my merchant, with strange pertinacity, returned to the bull-frog. Not far distant stood our Model Man, working for his life. So I said:

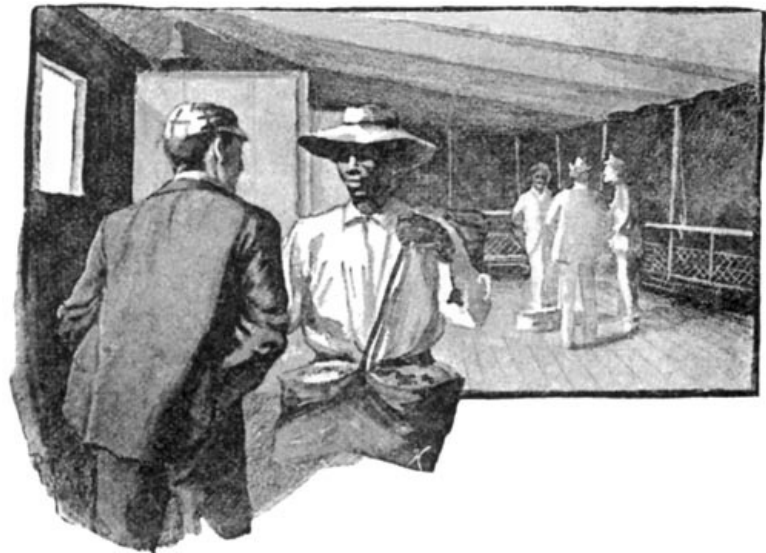
"You see that gentleman there—the one ordering everybody about and making so much noise? Take your frog to him, tell him it is a ten-shilling frog, and he will probably buy it on the spot."

But this frog vendor knew the Model Man from experience. He evidently had no inclination to attempt any business with him.

"Dat gem'man no buy nuffing, sar. He berry sharp wid me 'fore to-day."



"A FULL-BODIED GENTLEMAN."



"'MASSA GIB ME TEN SHILLIN' FOR HIM?'"

Indeed, the near presence of the Model Man discouraged my friend to such an extent that he presently withdrew. I told his enemy afterwards, and the Model Man said:

"Offer his beastly frogs to ME! If he had dared to, I should have pitched him into the sea, stock and all. I did once, when he began bothering people to buy things they had no wish for."

"Ah," I said, "doubtless he alluded to that circumstance when he told me you had been sharp with him before to-day."

Among the passengers who joined us at Dominica was an old friend, an ample, full-bodied, admirable gentleman who travelled from England with us, and found the ocean extremely monotonous and trying upon the voyage out. The

same trouble still dogged his footsteps. He came aboard quite wild and haggard, and declared the universal and appalling lack of variety was telling upon his health.

"Just think of it," he said, "wherever you turn, nothing but negroes and cocoanut palms, cocoanut palms and negroes. Every place is exactly like the last; every palm tree exactly like every other; every negro identical with the rest. I never saw such a monotonous set of islands in my life."

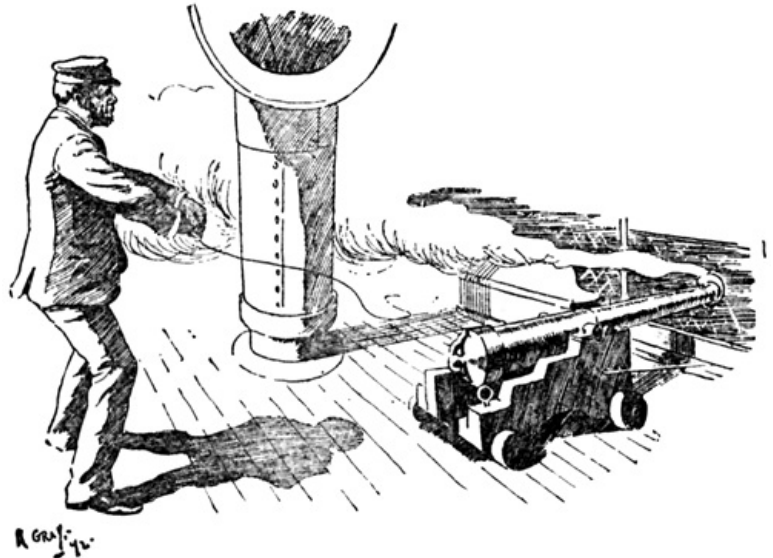
"Look at their beauty," I said.

"I have, until I'm out of all heart with it," he replied. "A pinnacle or two, with clouds round the top; a field of sugar-cane; hundreds of palms, hundreds of blacks; mean houses and a paltry pier—that's a West Indian island. I liked the first; I tolerated the second; I even bore with the third; but the fourth wearied me; the fifth harrowed me; the sixth sickened me; the seventh—that is this one—has absolutely maddened me; and the eighth or ninth will probably kill me."

I said:

"You ought not to have come here. Why did you?"

"I took advice," he answered drearily. "So-called friends assured me that what I wanted was constant change of scene, with variety and novelty. They asserted that these things were to be found in the West Indies, and I believed them. Look at the climate, too; even that never changes. Look at the sky; English people cannot stand this eternal surface of dead blue. They are not accustomed to it, and it frets their optic nerves. In fact, the whole scheme of things here sets the nervous system on edge from morning till night.



"WITHOUT FIRING OFF THEIR WRETCHED BRASS GUNS."

There is a cannon somewhere in this steamer, and it will fire in a moment; for no reason, that I can see, except a nautical love of unnecessary noise. These ships cannot come to a place or depart again without firing off their wretched brass guns."

He went moaning away to his cabin, saying that he never knew one room from another on board ship: they were all so exactly alike; and I proceeded to scan further fresh arrivals.

One party consisted of a man and his wife. They had recently been turned out of Venezuela, upon political grounds, and were now going up to St. Thomas, to meet some friends there and arrange a Revolution. A very pretty little French girl and her mother were also among the passengers. The Treasure knew them well, and, when he heard they were coming, grew excited, and hurried away to shave and change his clothes.

The Treasure's Enchantress was certainly very beautiful, with a slight, trim figure, great wealth of raven hair and flashing eyes. Moreover, she appeared to like him, and told me that he always gave her mother the best cabin in the ship.

There was a scene that night, after we started, between the Treasure and my brother. It happened thus:

The Enchantress proved to be but an indifferent sailor, and sent for the Doctor. He was just starting to comfort her when the Treasure arrived.

"Ill?" he asked. "Ah, I knew she would be, poor girl; she always is. Tell her to drink a pint of salt water. It's the only thing. If that fails, tell her to drink another."

The Doctor immediately showed anger. He said:

"Thanks very much. It saves a medical man such a deal of bother when he has got a chap like you always handy to do the



"THE TREASURE'S ENCHANTRESS."

prescriptions. Should you think two pints of salt water would be enough? Hadn't we better say a bucket of it?"

"You may be nasty, but it's none the less true that salt water is right," answered our Treasure. "Just because the thing is a simple, natural remedy, you doctors turn up your noses at it. I know this case better than you do. The girl has often sailed with us. Sea-water is what she wants to steady her. I told her so before dinner."

The Doctor departed, and when he had gone, I asked the Treasure all about his Enchantress. I said:

"Of course it's no business of mine, but I'm very interested in your welfare, and might be useful. Where does she live?"

He answered:

"She has two addresses: one in Martinique and one in Paris. I know them both; but I hardly think I should be justified in divulging them."

"Certainly you would not," I said. "I should be the very last to suggest it."

"It is a little romance in a small way—I mean her life and her mother's. The father was a French Count, and died in a duel. That shows some French duels are properly carried out. She is awfully rich, and not engaged. At least, she doesn't wear a ring. She likes tall men. Of course that's nothing, but I happen to be fond of small women."

"Merely a coincidence," I said, and he looked rather disappointed.

"We think curiously alike in a good many directions," he continued. "I taught her to play deck quoits, and shot a few things for her with my gun. And she gave me a photograph recently."

"Of herself?" I asked. "Well, no," he admitted, "not exactly that. She takes pictures sometimes in a little pocket camera. She did one of an old negro woman—ugly as sin; but it was not so much the subject as the thought of giving it to me. It argued a friendly feeling—at any rate, a kindly feeling. Don't it strike you so?"

"Undoubtedly it did. You're a lucky man. How far is she going with us?"

"To St. Thomas. She has a temporary address there, by-the-bye. I know that too."

"Go in and win at St. Thomas. I believe it is a certainty for you; I do, indeed."

The Treasure absolutely blushed. He was a very big man indeed, and produced the largest extent of blush I ever saw.

Then my brother came back, looking extremely grave.



"SHE LIKES TALL MEN."

"How is she?" we asked simultaneously.

"Very ill," he answered shortly. "She was all right when we started, and never better in her life; but, after dinner, she drank half a wineglass of salt water, and the natural result has been disaster. I understand some fool urged her to try this as a preventive of *mal-de-mer*. Her mother thinks it must have been a coarse practical joke, and is going to speak to the Captain about it. I wouldn't be the man who prescribed that insane dose for a thousand pounds."

Then an expression of abject dismay stole over the Treasure's face as, despite his great size, he appeared to shrivel and curl up into nothing.



"HE APPEARED TO SHRIVEL AND CURL UP."



**The Rev.  
Dr.  
Parker pays  
a  
visit.**

My "predicament" was first "awkward," then "foolish." "It was all along of" a woman. I may even say a "woman in white." "I was a pale young curate" then, but of a dissenting type. Twenty-two years of age. Very white in the face. Dark brown hair, enough to fill a mattress. Very high collars, compared with which Mr. Gladstone's are mere suggestions. Huge white neckerchief. Black cloth from top to toe. I was sent to visit an invalid lady somewhere in City Road. A total stranger. Place: A shop. Room: At the tip-

top of the house. The last part of the staircase was exceedingly narrow and steep, the stairs themselves little broader than a ladder. Tableau: A lady in bed, the only occupant of the room; a young minister, nearly all head and shirt collar, the rest of him a mere detail; the minister very shy and, as it were, "struck all of a heap" by the novelty of his position. The young minister, nervously shy, sat down, and the woman in white breathed a deep sigh. If my mother could have spoken to me then, it would have been such a comfort. I felt as if up in the clouds and the ladder had been stolen. There was not enough of me to break into perspiration, or I should have broken. I know I should. On this point I will brook no contradiction. There I sat. There were but two of us, and oh! I felt so very high up, and so very far from the police. Even the street noises seemed to be in another world, and that world next but one to this. The silence was painful. At length the young mother, not so very, very young, perhaps, turned her large brown eyes upon me in a fixed and devouring way, and I can tell you what she said. Shall I? Can you bear it? I could not. She said, with malignant slowness, "I feel such a strong desire to kill somebody." I was the only "body" in the room. How that young man got out of the chamber I could never tell. He never revisited it. He was in the City Road as if by magic. Did he pray with the woman? Not a word. Or she might have preyed upon him.

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**Burgin  
recalls  
an  
incident.**

I remember a couple of incidents, both of which gave me unpleasant dreams for some time. The first was in connection with that noble animal which is so useful to man—when it suits him. I was staying out at the Constantinople fortifications with my friend, Colonel A—, in a delightfully picturesque little Turkish village called Baba Nakatch. We had no drains, no amusements, no post—nothing but an occasional death from typhoid to vary the monotony. When we tired of playing chess, we rode out and inspected fortifications, *i.e.*, my friend the Colonel rode into a place with earthworks round it, majestically acknowledged the salutes of the soldiers, and then rode out again. It generally took four or five hours to go the rounds, and I humbly remained outside each fort, only catching distant glimpses of the frowning guns as I sat on an Arab steed at the entrance, and tried to look military. One day, another Colonel, whose horse was pining for that exercise which his somewhat indolent master felt disinclined to give him, suggested that I should ride his grey charger and "take the devil out of him." I couldn't see any devil in the horse when he was brought round. He was apparently calm and sleepy, and tolerated me for about ten minutes. Then, without any warning, the brute swerved round, and bolted back at a mad gallop in the direction of the village. His mouth was like cast-iron, so I soon gave up pulling at it. The gallop was exhilarating. Why trouble to stop? So I simply sat well back, and awaited events. I hadn't to wait very long. We cut round a corner, and dashed up a muddy lane leading to the stables. Ten yards ahead of me, I suddenly noticed a thick telegraph wire stretched across the road, a little higher than a horse's shoulders, which had evidently been diverted from its original uses by an ingenious but unprejudiced Turkish soldiery for the purpose of suspending their washed shirts. Rip! rip! Z—z—z—z! as I ducked to the saddle-bow, and something scraped across my back with a sound as of rending garments. When I was able to reflect, I found the horse standing almost asleep in the yard, with my soldier-servant respectfully holding my stirrup in his hand. "Shall I sew up the back of the Effendi's jacket?" he placidly remarked; and the incident terminated.

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**Also  
another.**

On the second occasion, I was badly scared. I reached Montreal one hot summer night before the English steamer started. She was timed to leave at three in the morning, and all passengers had to be on board the night before. It was so hot that I was nearly suffocated in the close harbour. When I went down to my cabin I left the door open, put my purse and watch at the foot of the bed, under the mattress, and tumbled off to sleep. There was no light in the cabin, as the steamer was moored alongside the wharf. When I awoke, I lay quite still for a moment, vaguely conscious of impending evil. I could hear someone breathe in the darkness—stealthy steps—then a hand groping lightly about feeling for my throat. It rested there for a moment. There was a momentary tightening of the fingers. Should I keep still, or make an effort? I kept still, trying to breathe naturally. The fingers left

my throat, and fumbled under the pillow as if searching for something, then gradually retreated, the breathing of the man became less distinct, and I was alone. With one bound I reached the door, bolted it, and sat down on the floor in a helpless and chaotic condition. The next day a new steward was missing; so were several other things.

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**F. W.  
Robinson  
has a  
predicament.**

Oh, yes, I have had my awkward predicament too—you, gentlemen, have not had it all your own way. It happened in “the dead of the night” at a big hotel in a Lancashire watering-place, and my first notice of the forthcoming event was given to me by a loud hammering at the front door. “Gentleman home late, decidedly noisy, and probably drunk,” I soliloquised, and was about to resume my slumbers when someone ran along the corridor outside, his or her naked feet sounding oddly enough as they pattered, at a great rate, past my door. “Somebody ill,” was my next thought. “Very ill,” was thought number three, as more feet—also in a hurry—went bounding by. “Perhaps a lunatic at large,” was my fourth reflection, as various voices sounded in the distance, several of them in a high falsetto. I got out of bed, opened my door, and looked down the corridor towards the big wide staircase in the distance. There was smoke coming along the passage, a smell of burnt wood, and then a woman’s voice giving out a bloodcurdling shriek of “Fire!” That was quite enough notice for me. Two minutes afterwards I was downstairs in the hall of that sensational establishment.

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**It  
necessitates  
unconventional  
attire.**

I was not alone. I was in a mixed assembly of a hundred men, women, and children, who very quickly became two hundred, presently three hundred, all told; visitors, waiters, chambermaids, hotel officials, huddled together in the most incongruous and comic costumes, and thirty per cent. of them with no costumes at all, unless night-shirts and curl-papers count. I was decorous by comparison. I *had* on a pair of trousers (buttoned up the wrong way, certainly), a billycock hat, a surtout coat, a walking-stick, and no shoes or socks. The hall, being paved with marble, struck exceedingly cold to bare feet, and with a total disregard for other people’s property I took down an ulster from a rack, and stood on it until a gentleman from upstairs, who was singularly distraught, emptied a whole pail of water over the balusters under the impression that we were flaring somewhere below there. The conflagration was on the first floor above a shop, which had caught light to begin with, and burned through to the hotel bedrooms. Here were plenty of smoke, plenty of “smother,” and a few flames in the corner, but no one knew what might be the end of the business, and we were all prepared to march on to the breezy Parade should the fire gain too much sway over the premises.

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**But is not  
very  
serious.**

The characters in this little domestic scene I found highly amusing after my first scare, as I have no doubt I was a very amusing spectacle to others. The most agile of the company tore up and down stairs with utensils of all kinds, full of water, from the kitchen; sometimes they fell up the stairs, or clashed against each other, and an awful mess was the consequence. One lady was brought solemnly down in a large clothes basket, fright having deprived her of the use of her limbs; two men in night-shirts stood against the front door with small portmanteaus under their arms, extremely anxious to be the first to get out alive; one old gentleman, also scantily clad, harangued us from the first landing in a feeble and bleating fashion. “Has any-any-body se-ent for the fiiire brigade?” he asked every two or three minutes, always forgetting that he had been answered in the affirmative. He was sure that the fire brigade had escaped every one’s memory but his own, and presently—it *had* seemed a long while—the firemen in their brass helmets arrived, and brought their hose into the premises and lumbered upstairs with it, and the engines began pumping and thumping in the street. A quarter-of-an-hour finished the proceedings so far as one’s personal safety was concerned, and by twos, threes, and fours we slunk away to our respective rooms considerably ashamed now of our get-up, and thankful in our hearts that the worst was over.

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**Gribble's predicaments have been very common-place.**

Most of my predicaments have been very common-place predicaments, and the ways in which I have got out of them very ordinary and obvious ways. Once, when I was a child in petticoats, I wanted to walk through a tunnel at the same time as an express train, but my nurse ran after me and pulled me back. Once, before I had learnt to swim, I was caught by the tide between Broadstairs and Ramsgate; but some sailors came and took me off in a boat. Once again, I, who cannot claim to be physically robust, was challenged to single combat by a truculent Belgian miner of six foot three, with whom I had refused to drink *pecquet*; but a steam tram happened to pass opportunely, and I escaped in it. Lastly, there was my Alpine brigand. He, with all his faults, was picturesque.

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**With one exception.**

I believe—and I shall be glad to be contradicted if I am mistaken—that I am the only living man who has ever been “stuck up” by a brigand in the middle of a glacier. I had no idea that the man was a brigand until, by behaving as such, he gave himself away; otherwise, I have no doubt I should have risen to the occasion and taken to my heels. As it was, he gave me, as the gods gave Demodocus, “both good and evil.” That is to say, he deprived me of my money, leaving me in exchange a new sensation, and something interesting to write about. If I were to generalise about brigands, I should do so thus: Brigands, I should say, are of medium height, slightly but firmly built; they wear mutton-chop whiskers, and are dressed in brown; they carry their luggage—their shaving tackle, I suppose, and their pyjamas—in red and white handkerchiefs slung behind their backs; their appearance is ferocious, and they go about with guns. They spend most of their time sitting on the lateral moraines, pretending to be chamois-hunters. When they see solitary strangers, they come down on to the glacier and accost them without introduction, their usual form of salutation being, *Donnez-moi tout l'argent que vous avez?* The ideal way to treat a brigand is to arrest him, drag him to the nearest police station, and give him into custody. A more practical plan is to humour him by relieving his necessities, and afterwards to recoup yourself by holding him up to contumely in the press. But you must not expect him to be caught. The Department of Justice and Police will show great energy in sending you his *dossier* in several languages, so that you may be able to give chapter and verse when you denounce him in print. The Chief of the Department may even invite you to drink an absinthe with him in the Sion Casino. But, as for catching your brigand, that request is much too unreasonable to be seriously entertained.

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**Frank Mathew tells the truth.**

I can lay no claim to the honesty that has made the other members of this club so eager to expose their most awkward and ludicrous adventures. Why should I publish my least pleasant memories to strangers? That is a task I would leave to my enemies. Besides, whenever I have come to grief, some other fellow has been to blame. When I fell into Hampton Lock, before the eyes of a multitude, it was because that ungainly lout Jones let the boat swing. Jones laughed then, and many times after when he told the story; but why should I help him to spread it? But that is neither here nor there. If I had been always as lucky as the other members of this club, who seem to have remained dignified in their misfortunes, then I might be less reticent. And if I were so unscrupulous as to speak only of things less bitter to remember, then I might tell how on a Bavarian railway I was once waked at midnight by an excited official who—with an air as if life and death hung on my answers—plied me with questions in spite of my explaining to him that I did not even know what language he was talking, and who at last rushed away leaving me doubting whether he was a mad-man or a nightmare; or how I lost my way among the hills by Bologna—at a time when I knew no Italian—and wandered for hours along dusty roads, cursing the ignorance of the natives; or how, dining at Lugano—in the open air and under a vine-covered trellis—I ordered a cheap wine, new to me, “Château-neuf-du-Pape,” and was delighted when it was brought to me reverently cradled and in an immemorial bottle, and when it proved to be a wine of wonderful merit, and how my blood turned cold when the waiter gave me the bill, for



he had mistaken my order, and I had been drinking Château-something-or-other, a priceless vintage.

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**Alden is  
not  
sure which.**

I am not sure what was my most awkward predicament, for the choice lies between a prayer-meeting and Folkestone. This may seem obscure, but it isn't, as you will presently see. My Folkestone experience was as follows:—The baby—I decline to specify whose baby, for the law of England does not compel any man to confess that he is a grandfather—had been ill for a week, and the physician said that we must take her to the seashore instantly. In half-an-hour we had caught a train for Folkestone, which the baby's mother, remembering her sensations when landing from the Boulogne boat after a rough passage, felt sure was "all that there is of the most seashore," as the French idiom has it. It was just about to rain when we reached Folkestone, and, putting the baby and her attendant slaves in a carriage, I told them to drive at once to the private hotel, which we had selected, and I would follow with the luggage. It took some time to pile a mountain of boxes and bundles on the top of the carriage, but, finally, just as the rain began to pour, a self-sacrificing friend who had remained to help got into the cab with me, and we told the driver to go to number 33, such-a-street. It was at the furthest extremity of the town, and when we reached there, after two or three attempts on the part of the top-heavy cab to upset, I was greeted by the information that no such person as the landlady of whom I was in search lived there. What was worse, nobody had ever heard of her, and no cab containing a baby had called at the house that day. Where then was the baby, and its mother, and my wife, and its other slaves? Obviously, they were lost somewhere in the town of Folkestone, and our two cabs might drive up and down for months without ever once meeting one another. I looked at my companion, and he looked at me in silence. No language could do justice to the occasion, and we both recognised the fact. I told the cabman to go to all the hotels in the neighbourhood, and enquire for a missing baby. He explained that there were nothing but hotels and boarding-houses in Folkestone, and that to visit them all would take the greater part of our lives; still, he would try. So we went to at least a dozen different places, and, although twice a sample of the resident babies was brought out for our inspection, we did not find the one for which we were in search. Then the driver, seeing our despair, said that perhaps he had better drive to the pier, and we said that perhaps he had. I think he had a vague idea that we were lunatics, and could possibly be lured on board the Boulogne boat, and so got rid of. But he thought better of it before reaching the pier, and suggested that if we went back to the station, perhaps the stationmaster might help us. So we went back to the station, merely to be told by the stationmaster that he knew nothing about the missing landlady or the missing baby, and didn't want to, either. Once more the driver suggested the pier, and we told him to drive us anywhere. It was now after dark, and being wet and hungry, as well as devoid of wives and babies, we were beginning to be reckless. All at once, a joyful cry sounded from a passing cab. It was the voice of my wife, who was patrolling Folkestone in the hope of meeting us. Our nightmare was over, and in a few more minutes we were clasped in the arms of the baby—or, at any rate, we would have been had she been old enough to learn the use of her arms. To the unmarried man the experience may not seem quite so dreadful as it did to me, but let a married man mislay a valuable baby, not to speak of a wife and daughter, in a strange town on a stormy night, and he will know how near he can come to having a nightmare without preliminary pork and sleep.

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**And tells of  
a  
prayer  
meeting.**

Once, when I was an undergraduate, a prayer-meeting was held in somebody's room, which I attended. I do not recollect what was the occasion of the holding of this meeting, but I do remember that it was a particularly solemn one. There were about thirty of us in the room, and the meeting had been in progress for about half-an-hour, when it suddenly occurred to me that were someone to burst into a laugh, the astonished expression of the others would be something worth seeing. Then I thought how painful would be the feelings of the man who laughed, and how he would be covered with shame and remorse. All at once an irresistible desire to laugh came upon me. There was nothing whatever to laugh at, and the mere idea of laughing in such a

place filled me with horror, but still the desire—a purely nervous one, of course—to break out in a peal of laughter grew stronger and stronger. I bit my lips, and tried to think of the most solemn and depressing subjects, but that laugh could not be conjured in any such way; presently I knew that I was smiling—a broad, complacent, luxurious smile. Just then, a man sitting opposite to me saw my smile, and a look of cold horror spread over his face. At this I laughed aloud, in a choking, timorous way, but loudly enough to attract the attention of every one in the room. The mischief was now done, and, in the estimation of my comrades, I was disgraced for ever, as the man ought to be who insults pious people at their prayers. Being ruined, I thought that there was no longer any necessity for prolonging that terrible effort to suppress a laugh, and so I leaned back in my chair and laughed loud, long, and, in fact, uproariously. The meeting came to a sudden pause. The first expression on every face was that of amazed horror, but my laugh was contagious, and presently someone else joined in, and before order was restored the room rang with the laughter of a dozen men. All this time I was in an agony of self-reproach in spite of my laughter. I virtually broke up the meeting, and it was not until the clergyman, who presided, had dismissed us, that I could command myself sufficiently to try to explain to him the purely involuntary nature of my laughter. He was kind enough and intelligent enough to understand the matter, but the greater part of those who heard me believe to this day that I was a bold blasphemer of a peculiarly brutal character. I could never begin to tell what mental suffering the affair caused me, but I can safely say that I was never more miserable than I was at the very moment when I was laughing the most thorough and ecstatic laugh that ever came to me.

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**Zangwill  
refuseth  
to be  
drawn, and  
runneth  
amuck.**

I never was in an awkward predicament. I have seen it stated that I once wrote "To be concluded in our next" without having the slightest idea how to extricate my characters from the mess I had got them into, but that is another story. There is not a word of truth in it. An awkward predicament is as unfamiliar to me as a crinoline; I have never been in one. It is absurd, therefore, to ask me what is the *most* awkward predicament I have ever been in; besides, it is always so invidious to select. I really must refuse to pander to editorial flippancy, and to add myself to the April fools who will scribble seriously upon the subject. I think, if this sort of thing is to take the place of our sensible symposia, it is time the Idlers' Club was abolished. The intrusion of ladies has spoiled everything. Once we sat with our feet on the mantelpiece smoking. (My own cigar was always given me by the artist.) Now we never smoke—Angelina won't permit it. Tea replaces the whiskey of yore, and the horizon is bounded by thin bread and butter. We are expected to stick to one predetermined subject—doubtless for fear we might wander off into the improper—and we are almost encouraged to bring our sewing. No more we enjoy those delightful excursions to everywhere—interrupting one another *apropos des bottes*, and capping an appreciation of Wagner with an anecdote about a mad turtle. Yet this is the only natural style of conversation. Who ever keeps to the point in real life? It is bad enough in examinations for the examiners to ask you about Henry II. when you are anxious to tell them about Elizabeth; or to demand your ideas on the manufacture of hydrochloric acid when the subject nearest your heart is the composition of ammonia. But conversation will not bear such inquisitorial pinning down to a particular point. It becomes a dead specimen butterfly instead of a living, fluttering creature. I think someone ought to tell the editors that they are simply ruining the club. I shudder to think what will become of it in five years' time, when nobody will belong to it but ladies and parsons. I would resign at once if it were not for sheer generosity. The generosity of the editors is, indeed, beyond all cavil. But even their generosity has its limits. It is as certain as quarter-day that if I do not fill my allotted space I shall not get paid. And yet, in the absence of any experience of the requisite nature, it is quite impossible for me to say one word on the subject I have been asked to talk about. I don't wish to tell a lie or to throw away money, but it looks as if I must do one or the other. Really, it's the most awkward predicament I was ever in.

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