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THE IDLER MAGAZINE.

AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY.

March 1893.

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THE IDLERS CLUB.
IS CHILDHOOD THE HAPPIEST OR THE
MOST MISERABLE PERIOD OF ONE'S EXISTENCE?



MR. HENRY IRVING WATCHING A REHEARSAL

The Lyceum Rehearsals.

BY G. B. BURGIN.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. BERNARD PARTRIDGE.

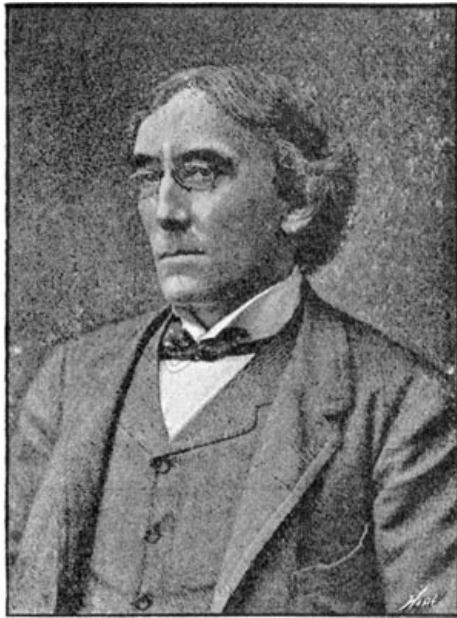
(Photographs by Messrs. Barraud.)

One day a paragraph appears in the papers that a new piece will shortly be produced at such and such a theatre. Paterfamilias lays down the paper and placidly observes that it may be worth while getting seats. Then he goes down to the theatre, books seats, and troubles himself no more about the matter until the first night of the play in question. The world behind the curtain is one with which he is totally unfamiliar. He knows naught of its struggles, its hopes and fears, its arduous work, its magnificent prizes and sore disappointments. So many thousands of pounds have been spent in preparing the play, so many reputations are at stake, so many hearts will be gay and glad to-morrow, or aching with the bitter pain of defeat. But to Paterfamilias these are all the joys or sorrows of another world. As he watches the smooth, easy performance, in which every actor has his place, in which the whole pageant produces itself without apparent effort, he fails to imagine the ceaseless work involved in its adequate realisation. He does not know that for weeks before the production of a new play, say at the Lyceum for instance, Mr. Irving and the wonderful company which he has gathered round him labour over it often far into the night after the audience has left. The general idea of an actor's life is that it is a delightful round of social pleasures tempered by a few hours' light, agreeable work in the evening; to those who think this, a visit to the Lyceum rehearsals would reveal the other side of the shield. Very few men in London labour so indefatigably as Mr. Irving. To watch him directing a rehearsal almost makes one's head ache at the mere idea of such



TENNYSON.

unceasing labour. Every motion, however insignificant, of each individual on the stage, from himself down to the newest and rawest "super," has to be thought out and planned in Mr. Irving's brain. Like an ideal general, he leaves nothing to chance, nothing to subordinates. The turning up or down of every gas jet, the movement of every piece of furniture, the effect of every note of music, has received his most careful thought. One watches him stand hour after hour on the Lyceum stage, without weariness, without impatience, guiding the whole of the great production. And though Mr. Irving never spares himself, he is very considerate to others. When, for instance, a young actor is unable to comprehend the full meaning of an explanation, Mr. Irving walks up and down the stage, one arm on his shoulder, and explains the whole conception of the part. He is not only a great actor, but a great teacher; and his influence pervades and dominates every being in the theatre. He does not merely assert, but gives full and sufficient reason for every action until every one on the stage grasps the exact meaning of the scene as well as he does himself. As an instance of this, let us follow the rehearsals of "Becket."



MR. HENRY IRVING.



MISS TERRY STUDYING HER PART.



MR. WILLIAM TERRISS.

The theatre itself is deserted save by some ghostly caretaker who glides noiselessly through the shadowy gloom, sliding a brush over the upholstery without looking at it, and replacing each covering as she goes. On the stage are two gentlemen wearing picturesque soft hats, and long coats which reach to within half-a-foot of the ground. The taller of the two, Mr. Henry Irving, wears a light drab-coloured coat and dark hat; Mr. William Terriss is attired in a light hat and dark coat. In the centre of the stage, close to the foot-lights, stands a screen; behind the screen is a chair. To the left of the stage (as you look at it from the stalls) is placed a small table with a big gilt cross on it. On the extreme right there is another small table laden with papers, plans of the stage, and letters. At the back of the stage are grouped numerous male "supers," clad in ordinary morning costume and wearing the inevitable "bowler" hat, which does not harmonise very well with the huge spears they carry. It is the scene in the second act of the late Poet Laureate's "Becket," "The Meeting of the Kings," and Mr. Irving is busily engaged grouping some fifty people who are required to pose as barons, French prelates, and retainers. When he has done this, there is still something wanted to complete the picture. Two pages are lacking. "Where's

Johnny?" asks Mr. Irving, and "Johnny" appears. Mr. Irving eyes him critically. "I'm afraid you're too big, Johnny," he says, and "Johnny" disappointedly makes way for a smaller boy.

Mr. Irving stands well in the centre of the stage, absorbing every detail. The French bishops are huddled too near together, and he groups them more naturally. *Becket's* mortal foes, *Fitzurse*, *De Brito*, *De Tracy*, and *De Morville*, are moved lower down towards the audience, so that they can go "off" with greater effect when jeering at *Becket*.



The cameo-cut outlines of Mr. Irving's fine serious features are plainly visible as he turns to look at the wings. "I don't see any necessity for having these 'wings' so forward," he declares, and the wings at once slide gently back, moved by some invisible agency. In response to Mr. Irving's request for another alteration in the scenery (he speaks with an utter absence of effort in a voice which can be heard at the other end of the theatre, although it does not appear to be raised above a conversational pitch), a middle-aged gentleman, attired in a frock coat, his brows carefully swathed in a white pocket handkerchief, comes forward, yardstick in hand, and measures the stage with great assiduity. When this has been done, Mr. Irving sits down with "Please go on." Then he turns to Mr. Terriss: "Shall we go through it first without the dialogue?" "Yes," answers Mr. Terriss; and the whole action of the scene is gone through. Mr. Irving and Mr. Terriss exchanging their direction of the various groups for the assumption of their own parts with an ease and rapidity born of long practice, Mr. Irving moving about from group to group until he is satisfied with the effect of the whole. Mr. H. T. Loveday, the stage manager, being at present ill, Mr. Terriss is kindly assisting Mr. Irving with rehearsal. After the entrances and exits have been arranged for the twentieth time, *Henry's* magnificent voice rings out as *Louis* enters:

"Brother of France, what shall be done with *Becket*?"

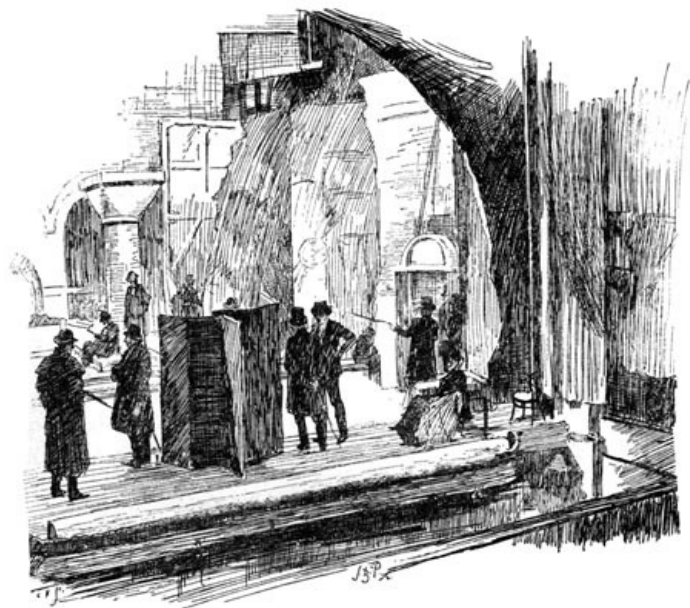
As this is one of the early rehearsals, the actors are not yet word perfect. Each holds his part in one hand, and refreshes his memory as he goes on. When *Henry* and *Louis* have finished their dialogue, and *Becket* is about to enter, Mr. Irving suddenly pauses. "Make a note that before *Becket's* entrance there should be a slow chant—a Gregorian chant—and flourishes. Where are the gentlemen who sing?" "The gentlemen who sing" come on, and practise the chant. "Not quite so loud." Mr. Irving claps his hands (the stage signal for stopping people) and decides to try the effect behind the scenes. "That will do; very good," he declares, as the solemn chant steals slowly in, and then, merging the manager in the actor, kneels at *Henry's* feet.

At this juncture, Mr. Irving becomes the stage-manager again, and turns to the group of *Henry's* followers. "You, gentlemen, are to come up here. You are rather startled, and listen attentively; that's the spirit of it." *King Henry's* followers move up, and jeer at *Becket*, who curses them. Then come the voices of the crowd without:

"Blessed be the Lord Archbishop,
who hath withstood two kings to
their faces for the honour of God."

But Mr. Irving is not satisfied with the crowd. "Slower and more gravely, please. I want the emphasis on 'the Lord Archbishop.'" So! That will be very good."

After this, there is an interval, and Mr. Irving and Mr. Terriss disappear. Before they return, the stage carpenters begin to prepare for the murder scene in the last act. A number of what appear to be canvas-covered trunks are brought in and laid down to represent stones in the choir of Canterbury Cathedral.



THE STAGE FROM THE DRESS CIRCLE.

Meantime, some of the gentlemen who represent the monks in this scene playfully spar at one another, or lunge with walking-sticks at imaginary foes. The carpenters are busy measuring the stage in all directions with tapes in accordance with a plan which one of them holds in his hand. Before Mr. Irving returns, the "supers" group themselves "left" and answer to their names. When he reappears, they look at him expectantly. "I am not going to rehearse this scene to-day," he says, "but will just arrange it. Those who sing, go over right (left from the audience). You sing the

vespers. I want six more with you. Then, twelve of the shortest. You follow them. All the short ones you have, please. Yes, you're short (to a diminutive 'super' who is standing on tiptoe and trying to look seven feet high at least). Don't be bashful. You're none the worse for being short. Come along"; and with unfailing memory Mr. Irving calls each man by name, and indicates his place. When a man fails to quite realise what is required of him, Mr. Irving takes him by the shoulders, and gently moves him along to the required position, very much as if the individual in question were a pawn about to be played in a game of chess. As soon as the monks are grouped to his satisfaction, he steps back. "That's it. Now, you all come down from the choir. There is a loud hammering against the door. I go to open the door, and all of you rush right by me." Then Mr. Irving opens the door to his murderers, and is borne back by the crowd of terrified monks. Five minutes afterwards, he has returned to life, and is rehearsing a scene from "King Lear," with Miss Ellen Terry's understudy, in as natural and unembarrassed a manner as if he had not been working hard for three hours previously.

Especial care is bestowed by Mr. Irving with regard to every detail of the murder scene. On another occasion, the scenery is not ready, but a flight of steep steps, essential to the action, is placed far back in a position to left of the stage. As "Becket" has never been played before, there are no traditions whatever to guide actors or scenic artists, and each movement, phrase, gesture, and intonation, must be "created." Mr. Irving picks up a huge battle-axe and hatchet, and carefully plans the details of his own murder. Having decided how to die, he thoughtfully surveys the steps up which the frightened monks are supposed to rush. "They won't do," says Mr. Irving. "They are too steep; there is no hand-rail; and the monks will fall over and hurt themselves. Take off four steps. It would be too dangerous if anyone fell down. Now, then, *Salisbury* and *Grim*, I enter, forced along by you. Catch hold of me, and put your arms round me this way. That's it. No; I don't like those steps."



A CRITICAL MOMENT.

Mr. Irving again tries the steps personally, and decides what further alterations are required. Then he addresses the monks, who stand by the steps awaiting instructions. "This is a scene, gentlemen, which requires the utmost carefulness and patience, and all the earnestness you can throw into it. Now, gentlemen."

The crowd: "Here is the great Archbishop. He lives! he lives!"

"No, I wouldn't do it that way," says Mr. Irving. "'Here is the great Archbishop.' You're surprised to see me, you know. Then pause. 'He lives! he lives!' in a sort of whisper. Now, go back and chant the service, and do it all over again."

The solemn strains of the organ are heard, as *Rosamond* goes off, the cue for the monks to enter being, "And pass at once perfect to Paradise." But the organ is too loud; so is the chant. After several attempts, the organ sounds more softly, the monks appear, and *Becket* enters, hurried along by his friends. But the monks have not yet caught the spirit of the scene. "You are frightened out of your lives. See," says Mr. Irving, and, in a second, he personates a frightened monk. The next moment, with bewildering rapidity, he is the Archbishop again. "'What do these people fear?' When I say, 'I will go out and meet them,' you must murmur as if to stop me. I tell you, 'Why, these are our own monks who follow'd us,' and you are reassured. Then I open the door, with, 'Come in, my friends, come in.' Yes, that's it. Who leads the monks as they come in? Mr. Belmore? Yes, that's right. You rush in, followed by monks, crying out as if you were thoroughly frightened:



MISS GENEVIEVE WARD AND
MASTER BYRNE REHEARSING.

"'A score of knights all arm'd with swords and axes.'

"Then pause a moment, and shout, 'To the choir, to the choir.' Some of you run half-way up the steps, then come down again as if you had changed your minds, and rush right across the other side. You are confused, and don't know what to do. You, Mr. Bishop, shout out in your tremendous voice, 'To the crypt.'"

This movement is rehearsed some twenty times before it satisfies Mr. Irving. At last, the monks disappear, and *Becket* is left to confront his murderers. "I stand here in the transept, and *Fitzurse* rushes up to me. What's he say? Oh, 'I will not only touch but drag thee hence.' Then I say, 'Thou art my man, thou art my vassal. Away,' and push him off."

Fitzurse falls, and Mr. Irving stops reading from the part. "No, *Fitzurse*, you take hold of me, and I fling you off violently. You must remember that I am supposed to be a strong man—a man who has been a soldier. Like this," and Mr. Irving falls on the

stage with an ease born of long practice. "You pick yourself up, rush at me with drawn sword (it's all one movement), and shout, 'I told thee that I should remember thee.' I say, 'Profligate, pander.' You come on with, 'Do you hear that? Strike! strike!' I cover my face. 'I do commend my cause to God,' and you rush off, drunk with blood, half-horrified at what you've done, and yet braving it out, crying, 'King's men! King's men!' to support your Dutch courage."

The murderers go "off," and Mr. Terriss and Mr. Irving practise a series of different attitudes for the death scene until Mr. Irving is finally satisfied. He has taken off his coat in order to better rehearse the murder scene. Mr. Terriss now helps him on with it again, the monks are recalled, and some dozen more painstaking attempts made to get everything right. "It's very simple, gentlemen," Mr. Irving assures the monks. "Very simple, when you've once caught the spirit of it." This rehearsal has lasted for nearly three hours, during the whole of which time Mr. Irving has superintended everything, thrown himself into each man's part, grouped everyone, created the action, devised suggestions for scenery, as if regardless of the fact that in the evening he will have to undergo the awful stress and strain of *King Lear*. Any other man, with a less intense vitality, would simply collapse under all this pressure. Mr. Irving puts up his eyeglass, takes a last look at the stage, and walks buoyantly off as if the whole thing were mere child's play.



MISS GENEVIEVE WARD. ("ELEANOR")

But where is Miss Ellen Terry? The question answers itself as soon as asked, for a gliding, graceful feminine presence appears on the stage. Miss Ellen Terry is attired in black, with a white fichu at her breast to relieve the monotony of this sombre garb. In her hand she carries a little black basket, and there is a glimmer of steel at her side as if she wore a reticule containing the hundred-and-one trifles which ladies like to carry about with them. So much has been written and said about Miss Terry that it would seem at first sight utterly impossible to say anything new. In five minutes, the difficulty is to say enough. The supreme unconsciousness of Art, or Nature, enables her to assume a hundred changing attitudes; her voice is heard without effort from one end of the theatre to the other; she possesses the most exquisite tact. Watch the skill, for instance, with which she induces some young actor to realise the true meaning of a passage in the play. She seems to be thinking it out to herself as if a new idea had been presented to her. "Yes," she says, musingly, "I wonder if that is what Tennyson meant?" Or, "Wait a minute," she adds brightly, "How would this do?" Then she repeats the passage with the right emphasis, action, and intonation, giving the meaning clearly and fully. "Don't you think that must be what is meant?" she asks questioningly. "Hum-m," says the actor, looking at the lines. "Ah, very likely. Perhaps it is." It is agreed that it shall be spoken that way, and the actor gives a delicate and truthful reading of the part, which will procure him a pat on the back from the critics when the play is produced. In the presence of her intuitive perception, the members of the caste instinctively become energetic and animated. At one moment she bends over to Mr. Meredith Ball in the orchestra, her long black skirt sweeping the stage in graceful folds; at another "moves up" to test a portion of the scenery and confer with Mr. Irving, or, with chair lightly dragging after, walks towards the wings, sits down, and rapidly cons her part. Three minutes after, she has

crossed the stage, and is writing a letter. Before the letter is finished, something else claims her attention. Then she comes back, finishes it, and is consulted by Mr. Irving and Mr. Terriss as to how he (Mr. Terriss) is to jump over a table without forfeiting his kingly dignity. Mr. Terriss has already vaulted over the table some eight times with the agility of a deer, but Mr. Irving wants it done differently. "I think you'd better," he says, "have something on the table, and pick it up before you go over. If you do it this way, it looks rather like Lillie Bridge, you know." Miss Ellen Terry reflects a moment, then asks, in mirthful tones, suiting the action to the word, "What is that jump that makes you go sideways as you fly over hurdles?" Mr. Terriss, like Mr. Winkle's horse, goes "sideways." This method, however, still lacks dignity, and at last it is decided that he shall place both hands on the table, spring over, and so lightly up the steps and exit. Half-way up the steps he is recalled by Mr. Irving's warning voice, "Don't go up there; it isn't safe yet."



MISS ELLEN TERRY.



MR. HAWES CRAVEN AT WORK ON A "CLOTH."

There is one gentleman who plays a very important part in the proceedings, yet never appears on the Lyceum stage in public, and that is Mr. Hawes Craven, the scenic artist. Frequenters of the theatre have for many years past been familiar with Mr. Craven's beautiful scenery, but very few of them know the manner of place where it is produced. Down many deep steps beneath the stage is a winding passage leading past the unornamental bases of what appear to be huge balks of timber, rising up into space. These timbers are interspersed with rubber pipes for lighting purposes. Leaning against the wall is a dilapidated structure, very much like a huge Robinson Crusoe umbrella out of repair, which, on closer inspection, proves to be the hovel used in "King Lear." Close to it is affixed a placard giving directions how to manipulate the celebrated Lyceum thunder. A little beyond is a narrow flight of

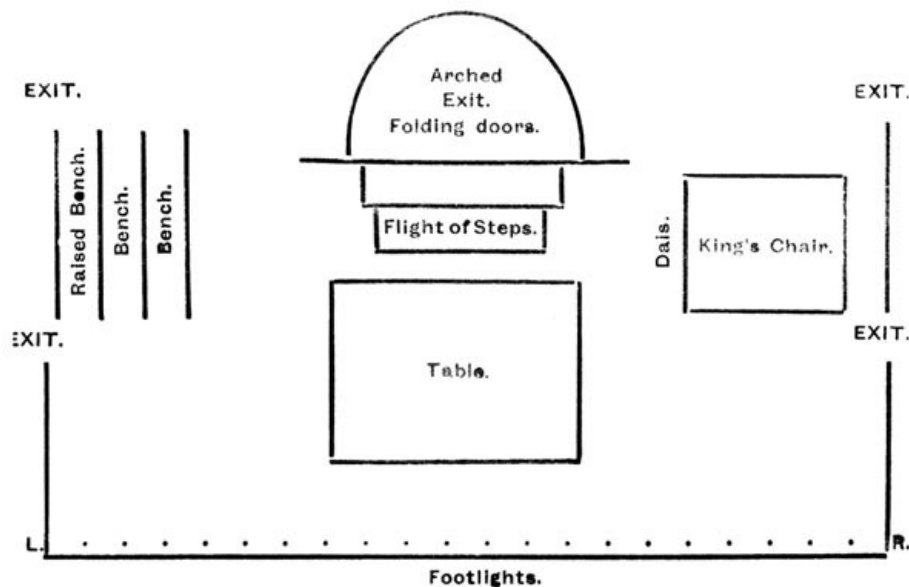
stone steps leading to Mr. Craven's painting room, which is fifty feet long and about thirty feet wide. It is lit by a skylight extending the full width of the roof. On each side of it are stretched huge canvasses, eighteen feet high and forty-seven feet long. These canvasses are extended on frames, which can be raised or lowered by means of a winch to suit Mr. Craven's convenience. Some idea of the expensiveness of the materials for stage scenery may be gathered from the fact that the canvas alone costs a shilling a yard, with an additional charge of one penny for sewing. It takes Mr. Craven and his two assistants four hours to "prime" one cloth ready for painting. In times of emergency, he often works fourteen hours at a stretch. The floor of the room is bespattered thickly with paint: Mr. Craven's clothes are all the hues of the rainbow; so are those of his assistants, one of them unconsciously having decorated himself with a blue nose. The centre of the room is occupied by huge tables, on which stand earthen pots containing paint by the half-gallon, and brushes of all shapes and sizes. Indeed, some of the brushes will hold two pounds weight of paint at a single dip, and Mr.



**MISS TERRY AND MR. TERRISS
RUN THROUGH THEIR SCENE.**

Craven's implement for sketching in outlines is a thick stick of charcoal fastened on a long pole. The artist's method of painting is to walk to the centre tables, take a huge dip of paint, and speed back again to his canvas, which represents a huge ash tree. Mr. Craven, besides sporting as much woad on his person as an ancient Briton, wears a white handkerchief round his brows. When he is very much pressed for time, he exchanges this handkerchief for a red one, and the joke goes round that this means blood. As it is impossible to carry heavy pots of paint about all day, Mr. Craven really performs a kind of "sentry-go," painting as he goes. One curious fact is that his colours dry very quickly about two shades lighter than when they are wet. After Mr. Craven has covered a certain amount of space, he motions to the boy at the winch, and the whole vast canvas moves slowly up some two or three feet. Mr. Craven, in addition to his artistic knowledge, is a perfect ambulatory encyclopædia, his work requiring an intimate acquaintance with architecture, botany, history. He is, above all things, an artist, with an intimate knowledge of the shapes, the hues, the seasons of flowers, the colours and habits of birds, the tints of leaves, their varied forms, and the other thousand and one things which he is called upon to depict at a moment's notice. The rapidity with which he works is simply marvellous. "So sorry I can't talk much," he says; "but I had fourteen hours of it yesterday, and my feet are beginning to give out." "You ought to join the eight hours' movement, Mr. Craven." Mr. Craven makes a semi-circular sweep with a huge brush, the point of which lights on a pendulous ash bough. "Eight hours!" he echoes with genial scorn. "Why, if I did, my profession would (dab! dab! dab!) cease (dab! dab! dab!) to (dab!) exist for me"; and the naked bough is clad in graceful foliage with magical rapidity.

One evening, it is announced that for a couple of days Mr. Irving will not play. Before he has fully recovered, however, he comes down to rehearsal with Mr. Loveday, who is, happily, convalescent. Miss Terry and Mr. Terriss spare him all they can, the latter's Jove-like voice thundering over the stage when Mr. Irving wishes to convey commands to distant groups. But it is evident that Mr. Irving will not be restrained. After the rehearsal begins, the force of habit causes him to be here, there, and everywhere with unabated energy, as the grouping in the third scene of the first act is very difficult. The following rough diagram will give some idea of the stage:



This scene is laid in Northampton Castle. Some fifty people are on the stage, bishops, Templars, knights, and John of Oxford, President of the Council. Mr. Irving runs his eye over the different groups. "Put one man on the steps. Now, a group by the throne. The barons sit round the table, and the rest of you occupy the benches."

As the groups arrange themselves in obedience to Mr. Irving's directions, his somewhat elderly fox-terrier moves slowly "on," and superciliously surveys the general effect. As the barons give vent to angry murmurs, the dog howls. Sometimes, when Mr. Irving walks up the steps after bidding defiance to the barons, the dog follows stiffly after him to lend the weight of his moral support. Satisfied that all is well, the dog returns to Miss Terry, and goes to sleep on her dress. Now and then he wakes up, stretches himself, and evinces the most profound contempt for John of Oxford's speech by yawning in the orator's face. Seeing, at last, that the rehearsal will be longer than usual, he resigns himself to the inevitable, and goes to sleep again.

After Mr. Irving has grouped the men on the benches, he steps back and looks at the table. "We ought to have on it some kind of mace or crosier," he says—"a large crosier. Now for the 'make up.' All the barons and everyone who has a moustache must wear a small beard. All the gentlemen who have no beards remain unshaven. All the priests and bishops are unshaven. The mob can have slight beards, but this is unimportant. Now, take off your hats, gentlemen, please. Some of you must be old, some young. Hair very short;" and he passes from group to group selecting the different people. "Now, I think, that is all understood pretty well. Where are the sketches for dresses?"

The sketches are brought, and he goes carefully through them. Miss Terry and Mr. Terriss also look over the big white sheets of paper. The fox-terrier strolls up to the group, gives a glance at them, and walks back again to Miss Terry's chair with a slightly cynical look. Then Mr. Irving returns to the groups by the benches. "Remember, gentlemen, you must be arguing here, laying down the law in this way," suiting the action to the word. "Just arrange who is to argue. Don't do it promiscuously, but three or four of you together. Try to put a little action into it. I want you to show your arms, and not to keep them glued to your sides like trussed fowls. No; that isn't half enough action. Don't be frightened. Better make too much noise rather than too little, but don't stop too suddenly. Start arguing when I ring the first bell. As I ring the second bell, you see me enter, and stop." The dog stands one bell, but the second annoys him, and he disappears from the stage altogether, until the people on the benches have finished their discussion.



THE FIGHT AT NORTHAMPTON.

Mr. Irving next tries the three-cornered stools which are placed around the table, but prefers square ones. The dog returns, walks over to the orchestra, looks vainly for a rat, and retreats under the table in the centre of the stage as if things were getting really too much for him. But

his resting place is ill-chosen, for presently half-a-dozen angry lords jump on the table, and he is driven forth once more. After a stormy scene with the lords, Mr. Irving walks up the steps again. "When I say 'I depart,' you must let me get up the steps. All this time your pent-up anger is waiting to burst out suddenly. Don't go to sleep over it." He looks at the table in the centre of the stage, and turns to a carpenter. "This table will never do. It has to be jumped on by so many people that it must be very strong. They follow me. (To Miss Terry) They'd better catch hold of me, up the steps here."

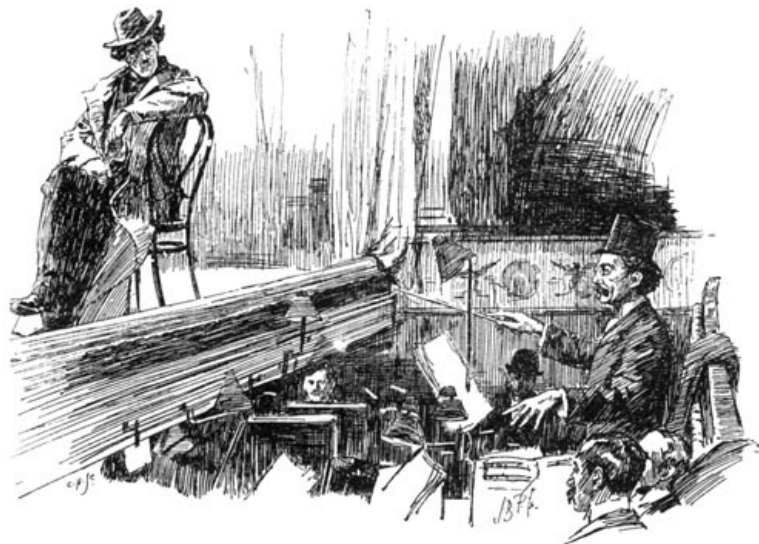
Miss Terry: They must do something. They can't stand holding you like that.

Mr. Irving: No. The door opens suddenly at top of steps, and discovers the crowd, who shout, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

The doors open and the crowd shout, but the effect is not good.

Miss Terry: It would be better if it were done at the foot of the steps. The people needn't show their faces as they do it, and the effect will be so much better.

The effect is tried, and found to answer admirably. Then the carpenters carry away the scenery, and the stage is "set" roughly for the Bower scene in the second act. Mr. Terriss fetches a screen from the left, and places it behind Miss Terry's chair; Mr. Irving sits facing Miss Terry, backed by another screen to keep off draughts; Mr. Terriss sits a little way back, and the dog goes to sleep in the centre of the group. In the background appear three or four costumed specimen monks and retainers waiting to be inspected, one frivolous being trying to balance a yard measure on the tip of his nose in a manner which ill accords with his monkish vestments. The "music cues" are very difficult to get right. Nearly an hour is consumed in trying different effects. Miss Terry insists that the whole scene entirely depends upon the action, and that the music must be subordinated to it. When the music drowns her voice, she suddenly stops with a despairing gesture, "We couldn't speak through this any more than the dead. Can't it begin loudly, Mr. Ball, then die away?" Then she turns to Miss Kate Phillips, who is her maid in the play. "Please try your song at the back there, Miss Phillips."



MR. IRVING CONSIDERING THE INCIDENTAL MUSIC.

Miss Phillips sings a very pretty but sad little song, and Miss Terry listens attentively.

"It's an Irish wail," says Mr. Irving. "You don't want an Irish wail here, but a merry song. You should have a mirthful, running accompaniment," and the song is changed. "That is enough for to-day."

The dog thinks so too. The "Irish wail" has been the last straw. He precedes everyone towards the wings with joyous barks which quite belie his air of long-suffering cynicism. It is lunch time.

At the first full-dress rehearsal, the Lyceum stage resembles a bee-hive with its swarms of busy occupants. Huge pieces of scenery move about, propelled by perspiring carpenters in shirt-sleeves; whole skies suddenly float up into "the flies"; the prompter converses amicably with a mail-clad baron; then, more scenery glides majestically down from the roof or springs up suddenly through the stage, which is literally full of "traps" for the unwary. The "tum-tum-tum" of the fiddles in the orchestra sounds weirdly as the composer of the incidental music, Professor Stanford Villiers, leans over from the stalls and chats with Mr. Meredith Ball, or makes a mysterious statement to him that "the *staccato* should be a little more *staccato*." Presently, Professor Villiers remarks to the orchestra, "Instead of playing two short quavers, please play the crotchet in three time." The orchestra respond vigorously, but are stopped with a further request to "play the first chord in the second bar as a dotted minim instead of a quaver," and the Professor wanders about all over the house testing the effect of every note.

The prologue goes off as smoothly as if it had been played for a hundred nights. Miss Terry, clad in *Rosamond's* magnificent robes, sits in the stalls and watches the effect of the lights upon each group. Sometimes a light is too blue, or too yellow, or too white, and in the first act the rehearsal

is stopped several times on this account. When Miss Terry is on the stage, Mr. Irving watches the lights; when Mr. Irving is acting, she studies each flash.

On the whole, there are wonderfully few details which require modification. In the Bower scene, the light is at first too yellow, and has to be altered. Practical experience proves that the bank up which the lovers go is too slippery. A portion of it is cut away, thus avoiding the probability of an awkward accident. Miss Ward trips on the hem of her regal robe, and requests the *costumier* to "take it up a little." Mr. Irving, with unflinching memory, notices that some spearmen are without their spears. But there is little to alter; at the second full-dress rehearsal there will be less; and on the evening of the first performance everything and everybody will have settled down into the right place. Mr. Hawes Craven comes on once or twice to look at his handiwork, and see that it has been properly "set." Then he walks away with a brisk step to his well-earned rest.

Apart from the interest of the Bower scene, it is delightful to watch Miss Terry and Master Byrne, who plays *Geoffrey*. When he comes "on" a little before he is wanted, Miss Terry throws her arms round him and kisses the pretty little fellow tenderly with, "There, run away for a moment, darling; we're not quite ready for you." It is this sweet and all-pervading womanliness of Miss Terry's which fascinates the onlooker. Suddenly, from some dark recess, her voice floats out with an eminently practical suggestion, a shrewd idea as to effect, some playful query. It comes from every quarter of the theatre, and is marvellously thrilling, with all the subtle fascination of what a poet-musician would call its "tone-colour." When the curtain draws up for the Bower scene, and she playfully chides her royal lover, it is more exquisite still. The solitary observer sits and listens to it, the sole representative from the outer world. All this gorgeous pageantry is for him alone; all this wealth of emotion, this story of love and murder, this work of the great poet now passed away—all this is poured into the ears of one man, who sits motionless, entranced, until the tale is told, the play done, and he walks out into the quiet night, quivering with the terrible pathos of *Becket's* end.



"SOMEONE TOUCHED ME ON THE ARM."

A Blessing Disguised.

BY F. W. ROBINSON.

ILLUSTRATED BY A. BIRKENRAUTH AND ST. M. FITZGERALD.

When I came home from my fortnight's holiday, amongst Tom Brisket's cows, in Huntingdonshire—once a year, for just fourteen days, do I unbend from the cares of business and seek relaxation far away from Bermondsey—and let myself in, with my patent latchkey, and walked with my usual confidence into my front parlour, you might have knocked me down with a feather. Any feather would have done it—a butterfly's, say—I was thrown so completely off my guard. I had been so confident. I was not in any way prepared for it.

The house was desolate enough, but that was not it. Mrs. Kibbey had failed to put in an appearance at the end of her holiday, although I had wired to her only yesterday that I should be home at precisely 8.15 p.m.; but it was not the unlooked for absence of Mrs. Kibbey—my housekeeper—that upset me thoroughly, oh, no. The gas was not lighted, and the supper was not likely to come off in the absence of Kibbey, certainly, but these were only minor features of a colossal surprise—bagatelles, or anything you may like to call them. Golden Birch Villa, Streatham, S.E., was simply chaos—that is the mildest and easiest way of explaining the matter to begin with. One word suffices—Chaos. It will take a great many words to explain why my little suburban retreat, on which I had prided myself for so many years of my bachelor life, was a mass of conglomerated wreckage. I will be as brief as I can. I am not a prolix man; I know the value of time, and of other people's time. I should not have had a flourishing business in Bermondsey, if I didn't know. Golden Birch Villa, Streatham, then, had been *burgled*.

Broken into, despoiled and defaced, was my little country retreat from the turmoil of town, and it was this which had confronted me after fourteen days of pastoral simplicity, during which I had got very sick of Tom Brisket, and Tom's wife, and Tom's cows, and Tom's children—especially his children—which palled upon one badly and became unbearable, and beastly personal. The country soon tells upon me, and I am not fond of children—yet a while—because—but this is mere babbling of green fields and babies. In describing my return to Golden Birch Villa that evening, I still feel a confusion in the brain which whirls and whirls gently round with me. It was the greatest surprise of my life, the first chapter in a series of surprises, the reader will say presently. I shall leave the story in his hands, and a remarkable story it is, take it altogether. It illustrates clearly the old axiom, that one never knows what is for the best, and that to be robbed—“cleaned out”—and one's premises generally done for, should turn out to be a blessing in disguise, will not be very clearly apparent to the reader until I have explained the whole affair and he has heard my story to the end.



“MY HOUSEKEEPER.”



“TOM'S CHILDREN.”

At the precise moment of which I write now—8.15—I felt as if utter ruin had overtaken me, as if there were no getting over this gigantic trouble—this shock, as it were, of a moral earthquake. The usual kind of earthquake would have been very much the same kind of article, things a little more askew, perhaps, but not half so “messy.” I staggered into an easy chair—after lighting one of my gas-burners—and took a survey of the situation, with my mouth open, my chin on my chest, my knees knocking gently together, and my hair slowly rising upon my head. All the doors had been locked before the departure of Mrs. Kibbey—my housekeeper—and myself on our separate ways of recreation, and all the doors were now wrenched open, and the locks hanging, as it were, by bits of skin! Everything in the room of any real value had vanished like a beautiful dream, and everything “of no value to anyone but the owner” had been tilted into the middle of the room for the convenience of a hasty analysis before departure. The contents of two desks, of my carved oak sideboard (“late the property of a gentleman”), of my bookcase (to make sure that nothing had been stowed away behind the books), of all the drawers in all the tables, were in one large heap upon the carpet; bills, letters, tablecloths, tablecovers, dinner knives, decanters, chimney ornaments, books, purses, lead pencils, corkscrews, my silver-mounted flute, with all the mounts gone, and the cruets minus

their silver tops. Also all the silver spoons, the electros being turned out upon the heap as “non-negotiables.” The piano had been split open and gutted—it was an unredeemed Grand—the burglar or burglars having been seized with the suspicion that I had secreted articles of value in the body of the instrument. And so I had! one valuable in particular being a favourite hand or carriage-clock mosaic, and a mass of miniature dials, gold-mounted, the dials at one time having been capable of giving all kinds of unnecessary information, before the death of the manufacturer, who departed this life leaving no one skilled enough in the world to undertake the repairs; but it was a great curiosity, and I set great store by it. So did the burglars, for they had found it and carried it away, along with a large quantity of portable property too numerous to mention in the pages of this magazine without changing their appearance to a kind of “Catalogue of Sale.”

Yes—I was robbed. And I had been so very sure that to leave the premises to take care of themselves was so exceedingly wise an expedient. “Cocksure

Kippen" had been my nickname in Bermondsey since I had been in the pawnbroking, just because I had opinions of my own, and did not call on other people to let me know *their* views of a question upon which I had made up my mind. What did I want with other people's opinions, when I knew my own were ever so much better? But I was a little crestfallen on the present occasion—I will say that. And it was my own fault for going down to Tom's—I will say that too. What did I want with country air? I had not been ailing anything. I had always considered a fortnight in Tom Brisket's company a frightful waste of time. I was never without an excellent appetite, and I measured forty-one inches round the chest, one inch for every year of my life, I had said jocosely, only yesterday, before I returned to town, but there was no jocosity in me when I was at home again—if this bear-garden could be called home, that is, or made to look like home ever any more!



"I STAGGERED TO AN EASY CHAIR."



"IT WAS A CLEAN JOB," THE POLICEMAN SAID."

It was a clean job, the policeman said—quite admiringly—when I had strength to reach the front door and call him in. Why had I not gone round to the station-house, the policeman asked, and told the Inspector I was off for a holiday, as other people generally did? Oh, yes, that was very likely! Why had not I insured in a Burglary Company? Oh, yes—and let no end of people know that there was a furnished house at Streatham with nobody inside of it for a fortnight. Did I think I could trust my housekeeper? Trust Martha Kibbey, who was my father's housekeeper before me—dear, deaf, old, palsy-stricken Kibbey, with a sister in the Cookshops Almshouses, Caterham, and with whom she spent her holiday invariably. Kibbey, whom the policeman and I found upstairs in a fit, in her own bedroom, having it all to herself, like a quiet, unobtrusive old soul as she always was. She *had* come into the house in good time, and realising the position, had rushed upstairs to her room, first of all, to see what had been taken of those worldly goods of her own, in which she was more naturally interested than anybody else. And when she discovered that her chest of drawers had been opened with an indifferent chisel, and that a silver watch of her grandfather's—weighing one pound and a quarter—had disappeared, along with an apple-scoop, also of precious metal, belonging to her late husband, who was "gummy," Mrs. Kibbey became a physical wreck, fit for nothing, and comprehending next to nothing. When she understood that I was in the house—safe and sound—she went into

hysterics of thankfulness of so violent a description that I had to leave her with police-constable 906, and run across the road for the doctor.

The police made a great fuss over the robbery. The Inspector called later on and entered all the particulars in a notebook, and looked at the broken doors and the hole in the breakfast parlour shutters, through which admittance had been obtained, and the general turn-out of everything in the middle of each room, and then adding his testimony to the neatness of the job, took his departure, promising to let me know when anything turned up.

"We shall want a complete list of the articles you miss, so that we can send round to the pawnbrokers," he had said before leaving me.

"I'm a pawnbroker myself," I replied.

"Ah! then you'll get one."

"Thankee. Perhaps I shall get one of the thieves too."

"Well, you'll know your own property, I expect, sir," he said, with a most unbecoming grin, as he took himself off the premises. I did not see him again. I hope I never shall, the unsympathetic beast.

Time passed on and brought no tidings of the robbers or the stolen property. I was very much distressed over the whole affair, and my neighbours tried to comfort me by telling me that I could afford the loss, and that it was a good job it had not happened to a poorer man. How did they know I could afford the loss, or that I was not utterly ruined? I had never posed as a wealthy man—I was not wealthy, in the strict sense of the term. I had been only careful, I had spent nothing in waste, and I *had* put by a little money for a rainy day. If people in Bermondsey called me a money-grubber, it was no fault of my own; but there were a few who did, because I held to the strict letter of the law in my contracts. That was praiseworthy, but they could not see it. I believe a few of them were actually glad that I had been robbed.

Some six months after the burglary, in the dusk of an early winter's afternoon, a tall, sunken-cheeked man, with a huge white moustache and a vermilion face, which seemed put on expressly to show it up by, came limping into my shop at Bermondsey. He was very lame, or pretended to be, I thought, to throw me off my guard. As if I, Edwin Kippen, was likely to be off guard in business hours, as if it were possible to be off one's guard and get one's living, Bermondsey way.

I told my apprentice, who was behind the counter polishing up a few window goods for next Saturday, to light up, though there was quite half-an-hour's daylight left in the street. But, somehow—such is instinct—I did not like the get-up of this man. I had never seen him before; he did not look "made in Bermondsey," and he was seedy, and a little nervous, though he talked in strident tones, in a Sir Anthony Absolute kind of manner, which made the gas glasses jingle.

"Do you buy articles outright, Mr. Kippen, as well as lend money on them?" he asked abruptly as he entered.

"Yes, sir, I do."

"And at a fair price?"

"Certainly. May I ask what—"

But he was an impetuous man, and so full of his own mission, that he did not wait for me to conclude my inquiry.



"MY APPRENTICE."

"Then what will you give me for this article, money down?" he asked, producing from his pocket, to my complete astonishment, the identical little carriage clock, all dials and complications and internal irregularities, which I had hidden in my piano before going down to Brisket's farm—the clock that had been stolen from my Streatham villa. The same feeling came over me which I had had in that residence on the night of my return. I was swimmy for a moment, and saw stars, and then thought that a thick fog had broken out in Bermondsey. I recovered myself by a mighty effort of will. Here was to be a battle of the wits. Here was one item of my lost property within a hand's grasp of me. I couldn't keep that hand from trembling as I took the clock from him.



"HE WAS
VERY LAME."

"Don't shake it up like a bottle of medicine," said the old gentleman, irritably; "it's a delicate piece of workmanship, and won't stand bobbing up and down like that; it upsets the mechanism, and it isn't easily set right."

"Is it in working order, then?" I inquired, with suppressed amazement.

"Yes, of course it is."

"Good gracious! is it though?" I said, nearly dropping it in my surprise.

"It tells the days of the month, the dates of the month," he went on, "the phases of the moon, the month of the year, the year of the century, the variations in the weather; it chimes the quarters, halves, and three-quarters; it plays a waltz after it strikes the hour; it acts as a revolver—I mean as a repeater—and it is mounted in solid gold of 20 carat, almost pure gold. A timepiece fit for a prince, and belonged originally to Louis Seize. What is it worth to you, money down—on the nail—as you tradesmen say?"

"I shall want a little time to consider the matter."

"Take your own time, sir, only, for God's sake, look sharp," said the old man irreverently, as he removed his hat and wiped his forehead with a big, old-fashioned silk bandanna.

"A clock of this description cannot be reckoned up in a hurry," I said. "I haven't examined the works yet."

"You'll find them perfect, wonderfully perfect. But don't breathe into them if you can help it. It affects the waltz movement particularly."

"Oh, does it, indeed?" I said, ironically.

I professed to be examining the works with the closest attention, but I was only resolving on my plan of future action. I was playing with my prey—an angler with his "catch," a cat with a mouse. This was the man who had broken into Golden Birch Villa, and walked off with the pick of the property. An ingenious burglar, who was an expert in clocks, and—I smiled grimly at the joke—who had actually put the article into my own hands again in perfect order. I could have imagined that it was a duplicate copy of mine, and in better condition altogether, had it not been for my private mark, which I was focussing now through a single-barrelled magnifier. I could talk to the man better in this fashion; had I looked him straight in his brazen chaps, my virtuous indignation would have betrayed me. And my policy was to dissemble, like the man in a melodrama.

"You have had this a long time in the family, I suppose?" I said



"A TIMEPIECE FIT FOR A PRINCE."

quietly—very quietly—but tentatively.

"It's not new. Any fool can see that it is a Louis Seize clock, and of considerable value."

"It's a valuable thing in its way, no doubt, but it would suit a West End house better than my establishment."

"I know that, sir, as well as you do," was the testy reply, "but I haven't got the time to run to the other side of the water, and I want money in a hurry—in a great hurry, or I should not have come to you," he added bluntly.

"Are you living in this neighbourhood?"

"What business is that of yours?" he cried. "What—yes, I do live in the neighbourhood—round the corner in Tan Yard Road—if you want to know. No. 239 is my address, if it is likely to do you any good, and my name is Youson. I see you have your doubts as to my rightful possession of the article; pawnbrokers are all alike, have exactly the same tricks of the trade. I know their ways, no one better, and I know what you are going to say to me next."

"I really do not think that is possible."

"You'll tell me it is unsaleable—that not one in ten thousand would think of buying such a thing—that at the price of the metal it will be worth to you—well, what the devil is it worth? You have been staring at it long enough to know now."

"I am sorry you are in such a tremendous hurry," I said, nettled a little by his unceremonious deportment.

"I *am* in a hurry. It is a question of life and death to me that I should have that money quickly, don't you see? No—you don't see—how can you see—how can you know anything about me, save that I want money? You see that fast enough. Well, sir, you are welcome to your knowledge," he went on excitedly, "and I am not clever enough to disguise it, though I know you'll take advantage of my extremity—a man of business, and in your line of business, is sure to do that. But give me a fair price. I—I—don't want the money for myself, I don't want a penny of it—shan't take a penny of it, by God!"

This was an odd way of trying to get rid of stolen goods, but it was ingenious, and there was a refreshing novelty in the style of it. But I was not the man to be done. I flattered myself that I was as shrewd as this artful and red-faced old fox, and that I held the trump card in my hand to play at any moment.

"I have a friend only a few doors off who will know the value of this article far better than I," I said; "he is a collector of—of clocks, and will give you a better price than I can afford. This is not in my line at all; I should never get a bid for it. Ten pounds would be too much for me to pay, or even to lend upon it."

"It's worth a hundred pounds, you know that well enough."

"I should not like to say what it is actually worth. I don't buy things like these without Bender's opinion; he's a sleeping partner of mine, and only just round the corner."

"Ah, is he?"

"Heaven forgive me these dreadful lies," I whispered softly to myself.

"Let us go to him," he said, snatching the clock suddenly from my hands. And I had never intended to let the property get out of my possession again! This man was adroit; he might be one too many for me after all, if I betrayed the slightest doubt of him, or made anything like a scene. He was fidgeting with something in the right pocket of his snuffy, old greatcoat too—perhaps there was a pistol there—I was almost sure there was a pistol!

"Yes, let us go to him, Mr. Youson," I said. "I'm sure he or I will make you a handsome offer; he's just the fellow to put down his hundreds. Isaac, get me my hat—any hat or cap, anything you can find—only look alive. I am going round to Mr. Bender's with this gentleman."

"Where's Ben——" began that stupid ass of a boy, but I checked him with a malevolent and meaning glance, and the youth, looking frightened, dived into the back parlour in search of my head-gear. He came out with a straw hat, with a ticket on it, but I did not notice anything in my excitement. I pined to be in the open with this miscreant, who had put the clock into his pocket. With a policeman in view, on the far horizon at the end of the street, my happiest hour would have arrived.

We sallied forth together, I keeping very close to him, lest he should grow suspicious and make up his mind to run. Every minute did I expect that he would plunge into the middle of the road and tear madly down the street. And it was a trouble to keep by the side of him; the people were streaming home from work, were out marketing, looking for something cheap for tea or supper to be bought off the barrows which were flanking the kerbstones. Side by side, we got jostled occasionally, the pavement being narrow and the people thickish, and twice I caught surreptitiously at the hem of his garment when I thought that we were going to be separated. And, as usual, there was not a policeman on the beat anywhere—no sign of official force—nothing but men and women, boys and girls, the boys terribly in the way, and after the girls!



**"PEOPLE WERE STREAMING
HOME FROM WORK."**

"Do you call this a few doors off?" said Youson, snappishly, at last.

"Comparatively—oh, yes."

"It looks like half-a-mile," he grumbled.

"Another minute or two, Mr. Youson. I am sorry you are so pressed for time."

"So am I. Not but what I have had about enough of your company, with that ridiculous hat of yours over your eyes," he added, ungraciously. "I wish I had never come near your infernal shop. You are about the slowest tradesman I have ever encountered."

"It does not pay to be too fast in my line of business."

"Oh, I don't blame you, I don't blame you, sir; I only say I wish——what are you jumping at? Ain't you well? Are you subject to anything?" he asked. "Spasms or twitches?"

I had seen a policeman on the other side of the way, standing under the shop-blind of a cheesemonger's shop, talking to the young man with the apron who was in charge, grinning from ear to ear with him, and grossly neglecting his duty, which was to keep a sharp look out at what was going on up and down the

street.

"Where are you off to now?" asked Mr. Youson.

"Bender's is over the way."

"What, the buttermen's?"

"No, no, but just by there. Come along. Mind this horse and cart; I should not like you to get run over with *that* in your pocket," I said, almost incoherently.

Mr. Youson gave a short double-knock sort of a laugh.

"What, you are getting anxious about the clock, after all?"

"I am indeed."

We had reached the other side of the way, and the policeman had turned his back upon us—just like him!—and was staring straight into the shop. There was a row of egg-boxes full of eggs of all sizes and prices and ages in front of the premises. Suddenly, I sprang like a panther upon my prey, flung my arms round Youson's neck, and yelled, at the top of my lungs, for "Help!" and for the "Police!"

"Damn—confound it, sir—what!"—gurgled forth Youson, in his supreme astonishment; then we both staggered, our feet went from under us, and, locked in each other's arms, we sat down, all of a heap, in the "28 a shilling, not warranted," compartment, and a hideous crackling, as of a subdued and squashy landslip, went on beneath our writhing forms.

"Oh, good Lord!" exclaimed the young buttermen, throwing up both arms in his despair, "here's a go!"

"Here—hullo—what the blazes are you two blokes hup to?" cried the policeman, catching us both by the collars of our coats and shaking us; "this is a nice place to begin larking, I must say."

"It is not larking," I exclaimed, getting on my feet, a hideous mass of egg-shells and indifferent egg-flip; "it's highway robbery! This man is in possession of my property—proceeds of a burglary—I'm Kippen, the pawnbroker, No. 319; he's got my clock in his pocket now. I—I give him in charge, constable, I give him in charge! Why don't you catch hold of him?"

"The man's mad!" ejaculated Mr. Youson, "raving mad. Somebody catch hold of *him*."

There was a big crowd round us—it doesn't take long to get up a mob in Bermondsey—and the proprietor of the cheesemonger's shop, who had emerged from his caves of double Gloucester, was wanting to make a case of his own out of it all, and run the two of us in. The policeman was bewildered, and Mr. Youson was beside himself with ungovernable rage.

"He has got the clock in his pocket," I repeated.

"Yes, I know I have a clock in my pocket," he spluttered, "you—you rascal—you unmitigated——"

"It's my clock. I can swear to it," I yelled. "I've plenty of witnesses to prove it's mine."

"You'd better both come round to the station-house," said the policeman; "do you charge him with taking your clock, sir?" he added to me.

"I do."

"Very well."

We went off to the station-house, Mr. Youson and I, the policeman and the cheesemonger, and a grand procession in the rear of about fifteen hundred persons with nothing to do. The cheesemonger and I conversed amicably *en route*, when he had become thoroughly convinced that I was a brother tradesman, resident at the far end of the street. He understood the case then—he grasped the situation—but he could not for the life of him make out, he said, why we had sat down in the middle of his eggs to argue the point. Who was answerable for all the damage, he should like to know? I didn't know, I told him, and I was damaged materially so far as wearing apparel went, I delicately intimated, by the indifferent quality of his eggs. That you cannot get reliable eggs for twenty-eight a shilling in the winter season, in Bermondsey, is a miserable fact, and discreditable to the reputation of French poultry.

I had never been in such a mess in my life, but I was in a greater mess the next day. It's a long story, that of the examination at the police station, and I will spare the reader the harassing details. Mr. Youson, in his confusion, made a very rambling statement of how he came into possession of the clock, prejudiced the Inspector against him, and got himself locked up, and I was told to call the next day at the Police Court in Blackman Street and explain matters, and bring my witnesses. I did so, and brought a neighbour or two who had seen the clock upon my mantelpiece at Streatham, and I clinched the argument with Mrs. Kibbey, who shed copious tears during the evidence, till the magistrate asked her sharply what she was snivelling at, when she fainted dead away under the reproof, and had to be carried from the witness-box into the fresh air to recover.

It was a clear case, however, against Mr. Youson, everybody considered, and he was remanded for a week, without bail, whilst enquiries as to his antecedents were to be vigorously made. There was a very grave suspicion, the Inspector whispered confidentially into my ear, along with some strong puffs of gin and peppermint which impregnated his breathing apparatus dreadfully, that Youson was one of a desperate gang of Lambeth burglars, for whom the police had been searching for some time.

There was a woman's scream in court when Youson was remanded, and the magistrate, who was certainly in a bad temper that morning, said that he would commit anybody for contempt who made such a noise as that again, and then the next case was called, and I was outside in Blackman Street, Borough.

I had, with some difficulty and a little pleasure, lodged the hysterical Mrs. Kibbey in a Streatham omnibus, and was making my way thoughtfully down King Street to my Bermondsey premises, when someone touched me on the arm. I looked round, and was considerably surprised to find a pale, grave young woman of some thirty years of age, poorly but neatly clad, keeping step with me on the narrow pavement.

"I beg pardon, sir, but you are Mr. Kippen, I think?"

"Yes, my name is Kippen."

"I wanted to speak to you. I wanted so much to see you before this case came on. My name is Youson, Lucinda Youson," she said, hurriedly.

"God bless me, is it though? You are——"

"Mr. Youson's daughter."

"My good woman, I hope you are not going to bother me," I said, imploringly; "the case is out of my hands. I am bound over to prosecute. It was a shameful robbery."

"My father did not rob you, Mr. Kippen. Does he look like a thief?"

"I don't know what he looks like."

"You don't know the truth," she said quickly. "Perhaps you don't know what kindness is, or charity—some people don't. You would not wait for him to explain, and you have nearly killed us with anxiety. We—we did not know what had become of him."

"Killed *us*," I repeated, vacantly; "are there many of you?"

"My sister-in-law and her little boy, and myself. And the boy is dying—that's the worst of it—oh!



"OUR FEET WENT FROM UNDER US."



"MRS. KIBBEY SHED
COPIOUS TEARS."

poor little chap, that is the worst of it! And his grandfather was so fond of him; he was selling the clock so that the boy and his mother should go away to Madeira, the only chance to save him, sir. The only chance that was left.



"THE BOY IS DYING."

"And so he thought he would sell something valuable that did not belong to him, and go to Madeira at my expense, and——"

"You must not say my father stole it—you dare not!" she cried, and her eyes literally flashed fire at me. This young woman was as impulsive as her felonious father. Here was another scene likely to spring up in the street if I were not particularly careful, and I had had enough of demonstrations in the public highway.

"My good woman, what is it that you want with me?"

"I want you to hear how that clock came into my father's possession, and then—and then prosecute him if you can. And at your peril, sir—please to understand, at your peril, though I utter no threats."

"It strikes me you do."

"No—no—I don't mean that," she cried. "Heaven help me, I am almost distracted, I am not myself to-day, and you will listen? It will not cost you anything to listen to me, sir, will it?"

She laid her hand upon my arm entreatingly—she had very earnest brown eyes, and I was not, as I thought, wholly unsusceptible to the influence of brown eyes upon the nervous system. And as she had delicately intimated that listening would not cost me anything, why should I object to listen to her? We were both going the same way. Of course, I should hear a good roundabout story—a second edition of her father's rigmarole which had prejudiced the magistrate against him—but I was not bound in any way to believe a word that she said.

It sounded uncommonly like truth though, and took me very much aback when she said suddenly —

"Yes, that clock was stolen from you. We knew it was stolen—and who stole it."

"But you just said——"

"That my father did not steal it. God bless him, no. He did not know—did not dream that we knew—did not know anything about it in any way—does not to this day. It was his property, he thought—all that was left of any value in the world to him; and it had belonged to his son—his eldest son, my half-brother, who——"

"Who was the thief. The infernal——"

"Please don't, sir. He is dead."

"Oh! I beg your pardon. I didn't—know," I found myself saying in an apologetic manner which really surprised myself.

"Yes, sir, he was the thief," she said, sinking her voice into a whisper almost. "He committed suicide two months ago abroad, but we have kept the truth back from father. He wasn't to know—it would have broken his heart, he was so proud of his son, always. But before my half-brother died—he had gone to Canada, to make a home for Kitty and her boy, he said—he wrote to Kitty that he was a repentant man, and that, unknown to any of us, he had been for years in bad hands, working with them, stealing with them. Our poor father thought he was a traveller for a Manchester firm, and so did we, until that terrible confession came across the sea to us. We were not to tell father—we were to make all the restitution that we could presently; he would send full instructions what we were to do by the next mail, he wrote, and the next mail only told us of his death."

"And your father?"

"Kitty and I have fought hard to keep the truth from him—the truth would have broken his heart. Why the news of his son's death nearly did, sir. And he has had so much trouble—so many losses too—and we have been for the last six months so very hard driven to live. Of late days father wished to sell this clock, but we would not let him—we were sure it had been stolen, and we hoped to find the owner some day."



"MR. YOUSON'S DAUGHTER."

"But not like this, I suppose?"

"Oh! no, not like this. But when little Willie got very ill; when residence abroad for a few months might save him, the doctor said—it was only yesterday he told us that—father took the clock out of the house unknown to us, and—and came at once to you. He is so very impetuous, poor father."

"Ah! is he? And who put the clock in working order, may I ask?"

"I did."

"You!"

"I was brought up to the watch-making—I am rather clever at it, they say."



"I WAS ALWAYS HANDY WITH MY FINGERS."



"WENT TO MADEIRA WITH KITTY AND THE BOY."

"Clever. By George, I should think you were! Why, in a business like mine you would be invaluable."

"I was always handy with my fingers."

"So was your half-brother—it seems to run in the family."

"Oh!"

"I beg pardon," I said, for the second time. "I—I did not mean to say that. It slipped out promiscuously."

"Never mind, sir—never mind," she said hurriedly. "What are you going to do? Pray tell me what you think of doing when I prove the truth of this."

"If it's all true—and I believe it is already, Miss Youson—I—I am going to withdraw from the prosecution, and ask your father to bring an action against me for illegal detention."

"Oh! he would never think of such a thing."

And he never did. The story was quite true, every word of it, and we arranged to keep it from the old man, so far as the peculiar profession of his first-born was concerned. He never knew *that*. I got rather intimate with the Youson family by degrees, although our acquaintance had begun so inauspiciously. Rather intimate, I say—well, very intimate,

rather! would be a clear expression, if a trifle inelegant.

For I married that girl, and pensioned off Mrs. Kibbey, and I never did such a fine stroke of business in all my life. The old man—he was a fine old fellow, too—went to Madeira with Kitty and the boy, and I bore Lucinda off to Streatham. She is one of the best of wives, and so very handy in the business too—saves me a heap of money. It was a lucky day for me when that rascal of a half-brother of hers broke burglariously into Golden Birch Villa, and took away everything that had an atom's worth of precious metal in its composition. It was a blessing very much in disguise, but it has answered its purpose thoroughly well. I am as happy as the day is long—and so is Lucinda. Everybody tells me that I secured a treasure when I took her for better, for worse. Everybody but Mrs. Kibbey—past housekeeper, and living with her sister now in the Cookshops Almshouses at Caterham—and she says I could have done much better for myself, long before, if I had only looked about me in a sensible and practical sort of way.



"LIVING WITH HER SISTER NOW."



MR. GEORGE NEWNES.

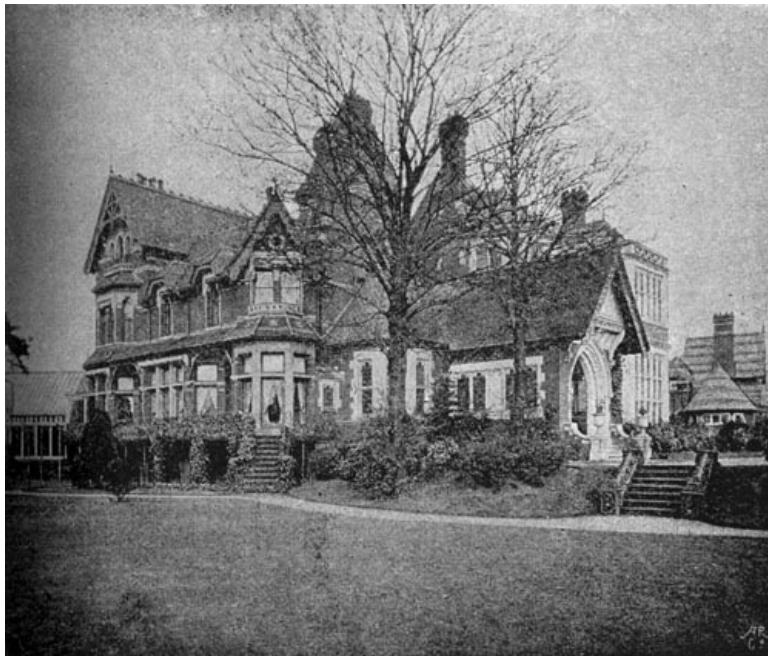
"Lions in Their Dens."

III.—GEORGE NEWNES AT PUTNEY.

BY RAYMOND BLATHWAYT.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEO. HUTCHINSON.

(Photographs by Messrs. Fradelle & Young.)



MR. NEWNES'S HOUSE AT PUTNEY.



THE OBELISK IN THE GARDEN.

As I toiled up the hill which leads to Putney Heath, I met a small boy, of whom I asked the way to Mr. George Newnes's house. To my astonishment he did not know where it was. I gazed at him more in sorrow than in anger. "What! not know where *Tit-Bits* lives!" a smart lad standing by ejaculated, as he pointed out to me the right direction in which to go. "George Newnes! 'im wot writes *Tit-Bits*! wy I thought everyone knowed w'ere 'ee lived!" I thanked him, and wandered on half-a-mile or so until I reached the beautiful house which the "writer" of *Tit-Bits* built for himself some years ago. Here I was received by Mr. George Newnes with a welcome which left nothing to be desired in the way of hearty kindness. Mr. Newnes is a man of middle height, very good-looking, with auburn beard, and hair dashed with grey. Though exceedingly wealthy, he is not, as somebody has well expressed it, "beastly rich." No feeling of the oppression of newly-acquired wealth flooded my soul as I walked about the pretty house and grounds in his company. He and his surroundings have the good taste not to obtrude themselves upon the casual visitor. The man is simplicity itself, and the most genial and cordial of hosts. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit, nor was it without infinite interest, for George

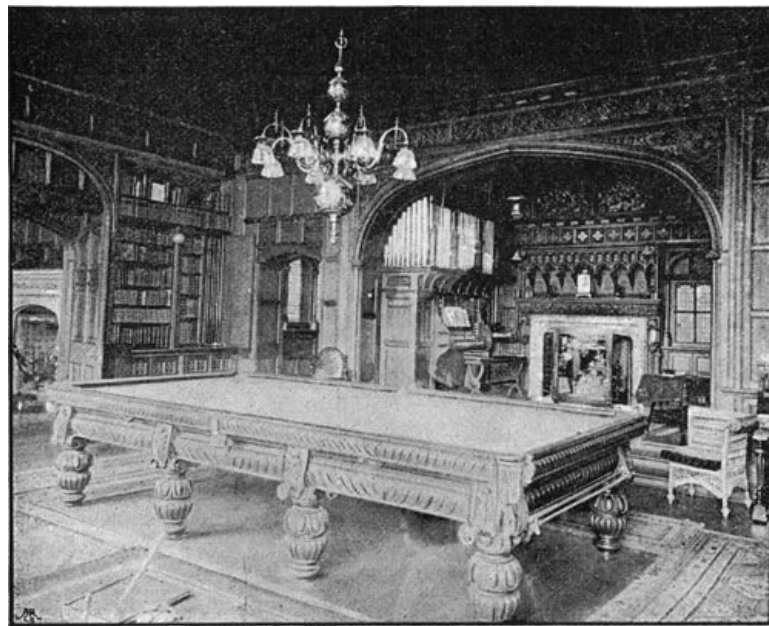
Newnes is a companion always amusing, and with always something new and original to say. As we wandered through the beautiful grounds, some of which are reclaimed from the wild heath which stretches for miles round the house, he pointed out to me the curious obelisk, grey and time-worn, which still perpetuates the memory of the historic mansion once known as "Fireproof." For it was here that George III. and Queen Charlotte once breakfasted in peace in the drawing room upstairs, whilst the dining-room below was purposely ignited to prove that the house was really fireproof. Upon one side of the house stand the stables, just beyond them a beautiful covered lawn-tennis court lighted by electricity and heated with hot water, in which play can go on by night as well as by day, in winter just as much as in summer. "We miss this tennis court dreadfully when we are in Devonshire," said Mr. Newnes, as we quitted the beautiful hall for the house. "I am myself devoted to tennis and golfing, and, indeed, I sometimes think it is that that has helped me to get through so much work. Good players generally make good workers," he added, with a laugh. "Now will you come and join our party at luncheon?" and as he spoke he led the way into a handsome dining-room. At luncheon the conversation dealt chiefly with sport and games, to my own great relief be it added, for the dweller in the tents of the literary world hears but little of the ordinary topics of conversation, and becomes suffocated, if he be not to the manner born, with the nauseating cant and self-sufficiency which is so typical of the literary world of to-day, and more especially typical of its younger members. But at George Newnes's house you hear but little shop. We discussed golf and its rapidly increasing popularity, the newest "serve" at tennis, and some of the most remarkable cricket scores made during the past season.



MR. NEWNES.



MRS. NEWNES.



THE BILLIARD-ROOM.

The host joined eagerly in our talk until interrupted by the servant, who brought in a message. Quitting us for a moment, he returned with a smiling apology, and told me that in that brief space of time he had transacted a piece of business which certainly was not without its interest. A gentleman, it appeared—the son of a celebrated *littérateur* of a past day—had called to show some beautiful drawings by the celebrated “Dicky” Doyle, a relation of Dr. Conan Doyle. With Mr. Newnes—and it is thoroughly characteristic of the man—to close with a good bargain is but the work of a moment, and therefore I was not surprised, as he placed the dainty pictures before me, to learn that he had purchased them for reproduction in his world-famed magazine. After luncheon, Mr. Newnes suggested that we should retire to his billiard-room, to reach which we had to pass through his own special sanctum in which he dictates his letters, &c., to his private secretary—energetic Mr. William Plank, who has been with him for five hard working years—while he walks up and down the room. “I can always think better whilst I walk,” he explained to me; “indeed, I have recently had the study lengthened to give me more room.” By this time we were in the billiard-room, wherein stands a large English organ with upwards of four hundred pipes. And in this room, prowling round and round the billiard-table like a couple of wild beasts—for I also, like my host, think best upon my legs—and occasionally cannoning up against one another and recoiling with a laugh and a start, George Newnes told me the history of his interesting and successful life.



THE CONCEPTION OF “TIT-BITS.”

“My father,” he began, “was, at the time of my birth, the minister of Glenorchy Chapel, Matlock

Bath. He was a very able man, and the best informed man you could meet. He kept me at school till I was about sixteen. I finished up at the City of London School, and, curiously enough, I am going to-night to reply for the House of Commons at a banquet given by the John Carpenter Club in honour of the Home Secretary, who was a City of London School boy. My father put me into a house of business in the City, at which I remained for a number of years, and then I went down to Lancashire to open up a branch of the business there. I settled in Manchester and married, there. One night, in 1880, when I was sitting at home reading the *Manchester Evening News*—and, by the way, it has never occurred to me before,” added Mr. Newnes, as a sudden thought flashed into his mind, “the very people who printed that paper were the same people who afterwards printed *Tit-Bits* for ten years—I came across a story, or some interesting account, which very much pleased me. I read it to my wife and said, ‘There, that’s what I call a real ‘tit-bit.’ This paper, but for it, is to-day decidedly dull, because there is absolutely no news to put in it. Now, why cannot a paper be brought out which should contain nothing but ‘tit-bits’ similar to this?’”

“And that really,” said I, much interested, as Mr. George Newnes paused for a moment in his journey round the billiard-table, and gazed absently at me while I lit a cigar and threw myself into an armchair, “and that really is how *Tit-Bits* came to be first thought of?”



THE STUDY.

“Yes,” he replied, as he started off once more, and I rose to follow in his track, “that was the *first* idea of my little green paper. But I was a whole year before I was able to carry it out. I was very busy in other matters, and had not much time to attend to it. But I never lost sight of the idea, and ever and anon the word ‘tit-bits’ would come to me with the force of a warning dream. I worked continually at the idea in my mind, and all my leisure thoughts were given up to it. In fact, I was constantly afraid—so convinced was I that the idea was a good one—that someone would bring it out before I could do so, and every Saturday morning, the usual day for new weekly papers, I used to look almost with painful anxiety to see whether there was a placard announcing that such a paper had appeared. But, however, nothing of the sort was brought out. The more I thought of it the more enamoured I became of the idea, till, in October, 1881, the first number appeared.” And as he spoke Mr. Newnes handed me the very first number of the now celebrated paper. “As soon as it was fairly started,” continued my host, “I gave up my other business and devoted myself to the editing and publishing of the paper. At first, the chief pieces in it were selected from books and periodicals—any sources, in short, that were not copyright. I would get an anecdote from one book, and something else from another, anything interesting, in fact, from wherever I could pick it up; of course, now we have a large list of original contributors, but at first that was the way in which it was compiled. In the early days, naturally enough, its circulation was confined chiefly to Manchester. There it simply ‘caught on’ immediately, and sold like wildfire. Why, the newspaper boys’ brigade,” continued Mr. Newnes, now fairly excited at the memory of that eventful Saturday morning, “sold something like 5,000 copies in two hours of the first number in Manchester alone. They came rushing back to the office, where I sat anxiously awaiting their news, full of the wonderful result. *Tit-Bits* was then, I felt certain, an assured success, and the public used to write to me to tell me of its popularity. I receive letters to this day, and especially from ministers and clergymen, who write to say that they recommend it because of the information it contains, and its instructive character, and, above all, because of the purity of its contents. Yet there are some clergymen who think there is some *double entendre* in the title *Tit-Bits*, and from its title that it is probably a paper they ought to speak against; and often, solely on account of its title, I believe they bracket it with all kinds of other literature of a low-class type, and in this way I suffer from the name.”

“And how was it you came to inaugurate your system of insurance against railway accidents?” I asked Mr. Newnes, after a brief



THE BIRTH OF
"TIT-BITS."

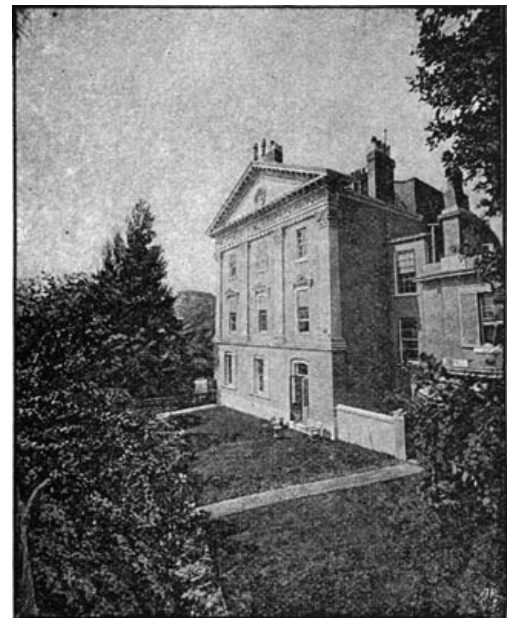
discussion on the ridiculous and narrow-minded behaviour of these worthy clerics. "It was in this way," he replied, as he brought himself to an anchor against the billiard-table, where he rested for a brief moment. "It was in this way: A woman wrote to me saying that her husband had been killed on the railway, and as he had a copy of *Tit-Bits* upon him at the time, she asked whether I would make her some allowance of money. At once the idea of an insurance system occurred to me, and you know now how widespread this system has become."

I smiled as I noted how in each case his wonderful successes are owing not more to the flash of a striking idea than to the wonderful promptitude which follows on the thought; how remarkable an instance his whole career affords of the benefit and wisdom of striking while the iron is hot.

"And then after *Tit-Bits* came the *Review of Reviews*, I suppose?" I queried, as my host jotted down some notes in his pocket-book.



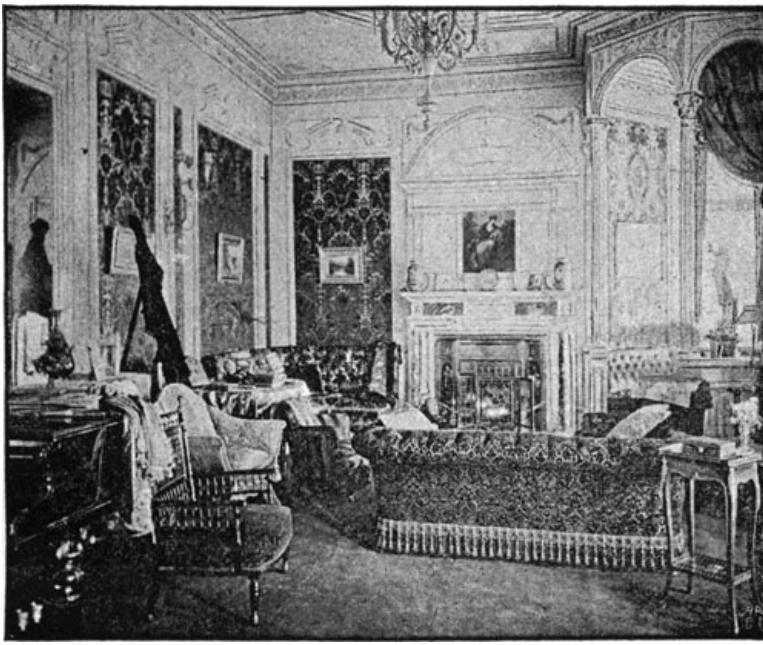
"Yes," he replied, as he once more took the floor. "That was one of the quickest arranged things I have ever heard of. It was all done in a month. I was staying down at Torquay, where I have a house for the winter, and Mr. Stead wrote to me to say he contemplated leaving the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and would like to be associated with me in some journalistic scheme. He sent descriptions of three which were passing through his mind, asking if I would care to take either of them into consideration. I replied by return, saying that I did not care for two of them much, but that I was delighted with the third. I then and there told him the terms upon which I would work with him. He wrote back, saying that he would accept them, and I came to London the following week, in order that I might make arrangements, and in thirty days from the first proposal of the idea, the *Review of Reviews* was published. At first it was decided to call it *The Sixpenny Monthly*, with a sub-title, *A Review of the Reviews*; as such, indeed, it appeared upon the cover till the day before going to press, which was a Sunday. I was so convinced that the title ought to be reversed, and that it should be *The Review of Reviews, a Sixpenny Monthly*, that I went over and waylaid Mr. Stead as he was coming with his family out of church. I explained my views to him, and in a few minutes he agreed that I was right, and the title was altered to that which has now become so familiar. Well, when the *Review of Reviews* went out of my field of vision, I had made certain arrangements with people for publishing magazine work, and so on, and I wanted something to take its place. Then came to me a very old and favourite idea of mine—the idea of a *magazine with a picture on every page!* I engaged the services of Mr. Greenhough Smith, now my assistant editor on the *Strand Magazine*, who had the idea of largely producing translations from foreign authors, and as soon as the *Review of Reviews* had gone, I was at work on the new venture."



HESKETH HOUSE, TORQUAY.

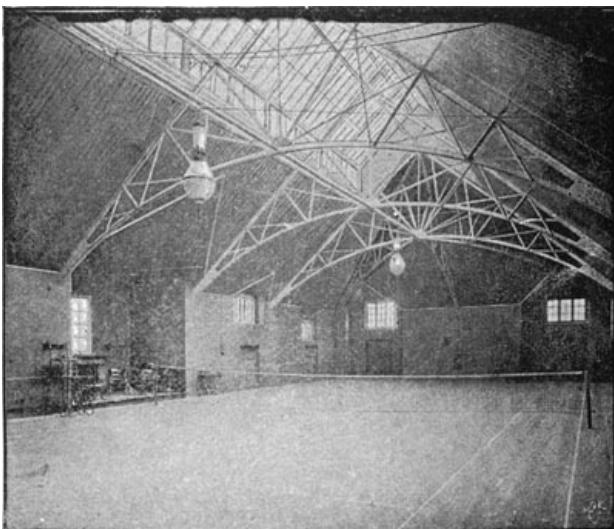
"And, with regard to its title, Mr. Newnes," said I, "you are great on titles, are you not?" "I attach great importance to them, certainly," he vigorously replied. "I thoroughly agree with Shakespeare that there is much in a name. Why, indeed, should names be valueless? They are as great facts as anything else in the constitutions of humanity. And in the journalistic world a name is half the battle. *The Strand* was a good title, it appeared to me, short, and at the same time attractive. After all, it is through the *Strand* itself that the tide of life flows fullest and strongest and deepest. I felt that with a good picture on the cover it would sell well on the book-stalls. The picture was rather difficult, and much depended on that picture. At first I did not succeed in getting the artist to embody my idea of a picture of a street. Now I had here at home an oil painting which I thought would help him." And as he spoke, Mr. Newnes led me to the staircase and showed me a very charming perspective of some street in an English town. "I showed Mr. Haite this picture," he continued, "and I asked him if he could do a similar perspective of the *Strand*."

The Picture Magazine, which started with this year, is likely to be nearly as successful as *The Strand*. After we had discussed



THE DRAWING-ROOM.

more modest man, or one more reluctant to speak of himself and his doings walks this earth—"well, though I don't want to boast about it, yet the simple fact is, I work very quickly, and I get through my business much faster than most men do. I make up my mind, form my plans, and arrive at conclusions very rapidly. With regard to my editorial work, for instance, all 'copy' for the papers is sifted for me at the office, then it is sent up here, where I work three days a week, selecting that which I think shall go in, and marking it for press. I dictate the 'Answers to Correspondents' page to my private secretary. This page always takes up three hours a week. I get through my editorial, parliamentary and business work, and manage to get a good deal of leisure besides. Golf, tennis and chess take up my leisure. When I am in the country I have all my work sent there. The fact is, *I work hard and I play hard*, and I believe each is equally necessary for good health and real happiness. Curiously enough, I do not believe that naturally I am of a very systematic nature, but so much business forces me to be so."



THE TENNIS COURT.

source of satisfaction to me that I should have inaugurated a popular paper which should be taken largely by the masses, and which is absolutely pure. When I came out with *Tit-Bits* there was not a single popular paper containing fun or jokes or anything of the kind—except the illustrated ones—but what relied more or less upon prurient matter to tickle the fancies of prurient minds. Besides, my idea is that, just at present, the Board Schools tend to a certain hardness and narrowness of character, which is perhaps softened down by the development by these papers of the lighter side of human nature. *Tit-Bits*, I have reason to know, has in many cases induced the study of some science or literature on the part of a man or boy who has read some interesting 'tit-bit' on one of these subjects, and has desired, naturally enough, to know

the position and the prospects of the new paper which Mr. Newnes has started to fill the place in the Radical journalistic ranks of the *P.M.G.*, we drifted into a general conversation on his habits of life, his occupations, and the varied qualities which go to the making of a successful business man, the future of popular journalism, and the like. "How do you manage to keep all your irons hot?" I asked my host; "you edit three papers, you are a member of Parliament, you build railways up the cliffs of popular watering-places, you play games, you do everything. How is it all done, pray, Mr. Newnes? What is the secret of your life?" "Well," he slowly replied, and with a certain shy hesitation, for though prompt and energetic enough in actual business, no



"And as to the future of

"I WORK VERY QUICKLY."

journalism generally, and of such papers as yours in particular, Mr. Newnes?" I queried. "With the spread of education and the increase of Board Schools, there is a great change coming over the masses, is there not?" "I think this," he replied, "that many of the papers of the day are developing too much the gambling and lottery spirit, which I regard as a very evil one, and would not for a moment countenance. I think, as you say, that the Board Schools have immensely increased the number of buyers of papers of this kind, and it is a great

more about it."



THE CONSERVATORY.



IN THE BILLIARD-ROOM.

"Will it ever be possible, Mr. Newnes, do you think, to provide the masses with the higher journalism, with a sort of *Saturday Review*, or *Nineteenth Century*?" I asked. "I don't think," he slowly replied, shaking his head, "I don't think, Radical as I am, and absolute believer in the sovereignty of the people, that the masses will ever take to any paper which consists mainly of essays or leaders. They want things served up with other interesting matter, and with as much of the personal element as it is possible to give them. The masses still incline entirely to the lighter side of literature. They work hard enough in everyday life, their recreation and their literature *must*, therefore, be as light as possible."

"And now, Mr. Newnes, for one more question—a good long one," I laughingly added. "Having all your life been so successful yourself, as you look round London, with the struggle for existence, and the mingling of classes which makes that struggle for existence still harder, how do you really account for your own wonderful success, and how would you recommend others to be successful too, even though only in a small way?" "I really don't know how I can answer that question," he replied. "The only thing is, I have always been struck with the fact that so many people go about with their eyes shut, and do not see the chances which may be before them. They have no idea of doing anything beyond what they may have seen done before, and what they are told to do. They are frightened by originality lest it might be disastrous. I suppose I have been inclined to do things differently rather than the same as other people, and I have always struck while the iron was hot. That, I think, to put it very briefly, is the secret of any

success which has attended my efforts."

Novel Notes.

BY JEROME K. JEROME.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HAL HURST AND J. GÜLICH.

PART XI.

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"LIGHTING HIS PIPE."

Said Brown one evening, "There is but one vice, and that is selfishness. Selfishness is the seed of all sin."

Jephson was standing before the fire lighting his pipe. He puffed the tobacco into a glow, threw the match into the embers, and then said:

"And the seed of all virtue, also. Don't let us forget that."

"Sit down and get on with your work," said MacShaugnassy from the sofa where he lay at full length with his heels on a chair; "we're discussing the novel, *Paradoxes* not admitted during business hours."

Jephson, however, was in an argumentative mood. "Selfishness," he continued, "is merely another name for Will. Every deed, good or bad, that we do is prompted by selfishness. We are charitable to secure ourselves a good place in the next world, to make ourselves respected in this, to ease our own distress at the knowledge of suffering. One man is kind because it gives him pleasure to be kind, just as another is cruel because cruelty pleases him. A great man does his duty because to him the sense of duty done is a deeper delight than would be the ease resulting from avoidance of duty. The religious man is religious because he finds a joy in religion; the moral man moral because with his strong self-respect, viciousness would mean wretchedness. Self-sacrifice itself is only a subtle selfishness: we prefer the mental exaltation gained thereby to the sensual

gratification which is the alternative reward. Man cannot be anything else but selfish. Selfishness is the law of all life. Each thing, from the farthest fixed star to the smallest insect crawling on the earth, fighting for itself according to its strength; and brooding over all, the Eternal, working for *Himself*: that is the universe."

"Have some whiskey," said MacShaugnassy; "and don't be so complicatedly metaphysical. You make my head ache."

"If all action, good and bad, spring from selfishness," replied Brown; "then there must be good selfishness and bad selfishness; and your bad selfishness is my plain selfishness, without any adjective, so we are back where we started. I say selfishness—bad selfishness—is the root of all evil, and there you are bound to agree with me."

"Not always," persisted Jephson; "I've known selfishness—selfishness according to the ordinarily accepted meaning of the term—to be productive of good actions. I can give you an instance, if you like."

"Has it got a moral?" asked MacShaugnassy, drowsily.

Jephson mused a moment. "Yes," he at length said; "a very practical moral—and one very useful to young men."

"That's the sort of story we want," said MacShaugnassy, raising himself into a sitting position. "You listen to this, Brown."

Jephson seated himself upon a chair, in his favourite attitude, with his elbows resting upon the back, and smoked for awhile in silence.

"There are three people in this story," he began; "the wife, the wife's husband, and the other man. In most dramas of this type, it is the wife who is the chief character. In this case, the interesting person is the other man.

"The wife—I saw her once: she was the most beautiful woman I have ever seen, and the most wicked-looking; which is saying a good deal for both statements. I remember, during a walking tour one year, coming across a lovely little cottage. It was the sweetest place imaginable. I need not describe it. It was the cottage one sees in pictures, and reads of in sentimental poetry. I was leaning over the neatly-cropped hedge, drinking in its beauty, when at one of the tiny casements I saw, looking out at me, a face. It stayed there only for a moment, but in that moment the cottage had become ugly, and I hurried away with a shudder.

"That woman's face reminded me of the incident. It was an angel's face, until the woman herself looked out of it: then you were struck by the strange incongruity between tenement and tenant.

"That at one time she had loved her husband, I have little doubt. Vicious women have few vices, and sordidness is not usually one of them. She had probably married him, borne towards him by one of those waves of passion upon which the souls of animal natures are continually rising and falling. On possession, however, had quickly followed satiety, and from satiety had grown the desire for a new sensation.

"They were living at Cairo at the period; her husband held an important official position there, and by virtue of this, and of her own beauty and tact, her house soon became the centre of the Anglo-Saxon society ever drifting in and out of the city. The women disliked her, and copied her. The men spoke slightly of her to their wives, lightly of her to each other, and made idiots of themselves when they were alone with her. She laughed at them to their faces, and mimicked them behind their backs. Their friends said it was cleverly.



"SHE LAUGHED AT THEM."

"One year there arrived a young English engineer, who had come out to superintend some canal works. He brought with him satisfactory letters of recommendation, and was at once received by the European residents as a welcome addition to their social circle. He was not particularly good-looking, he was not remarkably charming, but he possessed the one thing that few women can resist in a man, and that is strength. The woman looked at the man, and the man looked back at the woman; and the drama began.

"Scandal flies swiftly through small communities. Before a month, their relationship was the chief topic of conversation throughout the quarter. In less than two, it reached the ears of the woman's husband.

"He was either an exceptionally mean or an exceptionally noble character, according to how one views the matter. He worshipped his wife—as men with big hearts and weak brains often do worship such women—with dog-like devotion. His only dread was lest the scandal should reach proportions that would compel him to take notice of it, and thus bring shame and suffering upon the woman he would have given his life to. That a man who saw her should love her seemed natural to him; that she should have grown tired

of himself, a thing not to be wondered at. He was grateful to her for having once loved him, for a little while.

"As for 'the other man,' he proved somewhat of an enigma to the gossips. He attempted no secrecy; if anything, he rather paraded his subjugation—or his conquest, it was difficult to decide which term to apply. He rode and drove with her; visited her in public and in private (in such privacy as can be hoped for in a house filled with chattering servants, and watched by spying eyes); loaded her with expensive presents, which she wore openly, and papered his smoking den with her photographs. Yet he never allowed himself to appear in the least degree ridiculous; never allowed her to come between him and his work. A letter from her, he would lay aside unopened until he had finished what he evidently regarded as more important business. When boudoir and engine-shed became rivals, it was the boudoir that had to wait.

"The woman chafed under his self-control, which stung her like a lash, but clung to him the more abjectly.

"'Tell me you love me!' she would cry fiercely, stretching her white arms towards him.

"'I have told you so,' he would reply calmly, without moving.

"'I want to hear you tell it me again,' she would plead with a voice that trembled on a sob. 'Come close to me and tell it me again, again, again!'

"Then, as she lay with half-closed eyes, he would pour forth a flood of passionate words sufficient to satisfy even her thirsty ears, and afterwards, as the gates clanged behind him, would take up an engineering problem at the exact point at which half-an-hour before, on her entrance into the room, he had temporarily dismissed it.

"One day, a privileged friend put bluntly to him this question: 'Are you playing for love or vanity?'

"To which the man, after long pondering, gave this reply: "Pon my soul, Jack, I couldn't tell you.'

"Now, when a man is in love with a woman who cannot make up her mind whether she loves him or not, we call the complication comedy; where it is the woman who is in earnest the result is generally tragedy.

"They continued to meet and to make love. They talked—as people in their position are prone to talk—of the beautiful life they would lead if it only were not for the thing that was; of the earthly paradise—or, maybe, 'earthy' would be the more suitable adjective—they would each create for the other, if only they had the right which they hadn't.

"In this work of imagination the man trusted chiefly to his literary faculties, which were considerable; the woman to her desires. Thus, his scenes possessed a grace and finish which hers lacked, but her pictures were the more vivid. Indeed, so realistic did she paint them, that to herself they seemed realities, waiting for her. Then she would rise to go towards them only to strike herself against the thought of the thing that stood between herself and them. At first the woman only hated the thing, but after a while there came an ugly look of hope into her eyes.

"The time drew near for the man to return to England. The canal was completed, and a day appointed for the letting in of the water.



"SHE LAY WITH HALF-CLOSED EYES."

down, and shuddered; the man was standing by her side.

"How deep it is,' she said.

"Yes,' he replied, 'it holds thirty feet of water, when full.'

"The water crept up inch by inch.

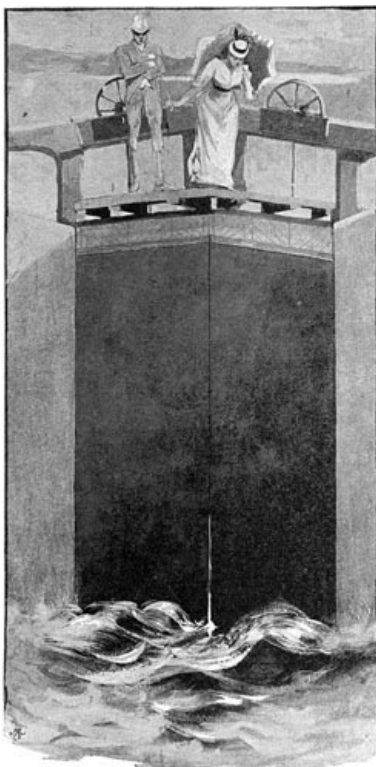
"Why don't you open the gates, and let it in quickly?' she asked.

"It would not do for it to come in too quickly,' he explained to her; 'we shall half fill this lock, and then open the sluices at the other end, and so let the water pass through.'

"The woman looked at the smooth stone walls and at the iron-plated gates.

"I wonder what a man would do,' she said, 'if he fell in, and there was no one near to help him.'

"The man laughed. 'I think he would stop there,' he answered. 'Come, the others are waiting for us.'



"IF A MAN FELL IN, AND THERE WAS NO ONE NEAR TO HELP HIM?"

The man determined to make the event the occasion of a social gathering. He invited a large number of guests, among whom were the woman and her husband, to assist at the function. Afterwards the party were to picnic at a pleasant wooded spot some three-quarters of a mile from the first lock.

"The ceremony of flooding was to be performed by the woman, her husband's position entitling her to this distinction. Between the river and the head of the cutting had been left a strong bank of earth, pierced some distance down by a hole, which hole was kept closed by means of a closely-fitting steel plate. The woman drew the lever releasing this plate, and the water rushed through and began to press against the lock gates. When it had attained a certain depth, the sluices were raised and the water poured down into the deep basin of the lock.

"It was an exceptionally deep lock. The party gathered round and watched the water slowly rising. The woman looked

"He lingered a moment to give some final instructions to the workmen. 'You can follow on when you've made all right,' he said, 'and get something to eat. There's no need for more than one to stop.' Then they joined the rest of the party, and sauntered on, laughing and talking, to the picnic ground.

"After lunch the party broke up, as is the custom of picnic parties, and wandered away in groups and pairs. The man, whose duty as host had hitherto occupied all his attention, looked for the woman, but she was gone.

"A friend strolled by, the same that had put the question to him about love and vanity.

"Have you quarrelled?' asked the friend.

"No,' replied the man.

"I fancied you had,' said the other. 'I met her just now walking with her husband, of all men in the world, and making herself quite agreeable to him.'

"The friend strolled on, and the man sat down on a fallen tree, and lighted a cigar. He smoked and thought, and the cigar burnt out, but he still sat thinking.

"After a while he heard a faint rustling of the branches behind him and peering between the interlacing leaves that hid him, saw the crouching figure of the woman creeping through the wood.

"His lips were parted to call her name, when she turned her listening head in his direction, and his eyes fell full upon her face. Something about it, he could not have told what, struck him dumb, and the woman crept on.

"Gradually the nebulous thoughts floating through his brain began to solidify into a tangible idea, and the man unconsciously started forward. After walking a few steps he broke into a run, for the idea had grown clearer. It continued to grow still clearer and clearer, and the man ran faster and faster, until at last he found himself racing madly towards the lock. As he approached it he looked round for the watchman who ought to have been there, but the man was gone from his post. He shouted, but if any answer was returned, it was drowned by the roar of the rushing water.

"He reached the edge and looked down. Fifteen feet below him was the reality of the dim vision that had come to him a mile back in the woods: the woman's husband swimming round and round like a rat in a pail.

"The river was flowing in and out of the lock at the same rate, so that the level of the water remained constant. The first thing the man did was to close the lower sluices and then open those in the upper gate to their fullest extent. The water inch by inch began to rise.

"Can you hold out?' he cried.

"The drowning man turned to him a face already contorted by the agony of exhaustion, and answered with a feeble 'No.'

"He looked around for something to throw to the man. A plank had lain there in the morning, he remembered stumbling over it, and complaining of its having been left there; he cursed himself now for his care.

"A hut used by the navvies to keep their tools in stood about two hundred yards away; perhaps it had been taken there, perhaps there he might even find a rope.

"Just one minute, old fellow!' he shouted down, 'and I'll be back.'

"But the old fellow did not hear him. The feeble struggles ceased. The face fell back upon the water, the eyes half closed as if with weary indifference. There was no time for him to do more than kick off his riding boots and jump in and clutch the unconscious figure as it sank.

"Down there, in that walled-in trap, he fought a long fight with Death for the life that stood between him and the woman. He was not an expert swimmer, his clothes hampered him, he was already blown with his long race, the burden in his arms dragged him down, the water rose slowly enough to make his torture fit for Dantë's hell.



"HE BROKE INTO A RUN."



"HE FOUGHT A LONG FIGHT WITH DEATH."

"At first he could not understand why this was so, but in glancing down he saw to his horror that he had not properly closed the lower sluices; in each some eight or ten inches remained open, so that the stream was passing out nearly half as fast as it came in. It would be another five and twenty minutes before the water would be high enough for him to grasp the top.

"He noted where the line of wet had reached to on the smooth stone wall, then looked again after what he thought must be a lapse of ten minutes, and found it had risen half an inch, if that. Once or twice he shouted for help, but the effort taxed severely his already failing breath, and his voice only came back to him in a hundred echoes from his prison walls.

"Inch by inch the line of wet crept up, but the spending of his strength went on more swiftly. It seemed to him as if his inside were being gripped and torn slowly out: his whole body cried out to him to let it sink and lie in rest at the bottom.

"At length his unconscious burden opened its eyes and stared at him stupidly, then closed them again with a sigh; a minute later opened them once more and looked long and hard at him.

"Let me go,' he said, 'we shall both drown. You can manage by yourself.'

"He made a feeble effort to release himself, but the other held him.

"Keep still, you fool!' he hissed; 'you're going to get out of this with me, or I'm going down with you.'

"So the grim struggle went on in silence, till the man, looking up, saw the stone coping just a little way above his head, made one mad leap and caught it with his finger-tips, held on an instant, then fell back with a 'plump,' and sank; came up and made another dash, helped by the

impetus of his rise, caught the coping firmly this time with the whole of his fingers, hung on till his eyes saw the grass, till they were both able to scramble out upon the bank and lie there, their breasts pressed close against the ground, and their hands clutching the earth, while the overflowing water swirled softly round them.

"After a while, they raised themselves and looked at one another.

"'Tiring work, that sort of thing,' said the other man, with a nod towards the lock.

"'Yes,' answered the husband, 'beastly awkward not being a good swimmer. How did you know I had fallen in? You met my wife, I suppose?'

"'Yes,' said the other man.

"The husband sat staring at a point in the horizon for some minutes. 'Do you know what I was wondering this morning?' said he.

"'No,' said the other man.

"'Whether I should kill you or not.'

"'They told me,' he continued, after a pause, 'a lot of silly gossip which I was cad enough to believe. I know now it wasn't true, because—well, if it had been, you would not have done what you have done.'

"He rose and came across. 'I beg your pardon,' he said, holding out his hand.

"'I beg yours,' said the other man, rising and taking it; 'do you mind giving me a hand with the sluices?'

"They set to work to put the lock right.

"'How did you manage to fall in?' asked the other man, who was raising one of the lower sluices, without looking round.

"The husband hesitated, as if he found the explanation somewhat difficult. 'Oh,' he answered carelessly, 'the wife and I were chaffing, and she said she'd often seen you jump it, and'—he laughed a rather forced laugh—'she promised me a—a kiss if I cleared it. It was a foolish thing to do.'

"'Yes, it was rather,' said the other man.

"A few days afterwards the man and woman met at a reception. He found her in a leafy corner of the garden talking to some friends. She advanced to meet him, holding out her hand. 'What can I say more than thank you,' she murmured in a low voice.

"The others moved away leaving them alone. 'They tell me you risked your life to save his?' she said.

"'Yes,' he answered.

"She raised her eyes to his, then struck him across the face with her ungloved hand.

"'You damned fool!' she whispered.

"He seized her by her white arms, and forced her back behind the orange trees. 'Do you know why?' he said, speaking slowly and distinctly; 'because I feared that with him dead you would want me to marry you, and that, talked about as we have been, I might find it awkward to avoid doing so; because I feared that without him to stand between us you might prove an annoyance to me—perhaps come between me and the woman I love, the woman I am going back to. Now do you understand?'

"'Yes,' whispered the woman, and he left her.

"But there are only two people," concluded Jephson, "who do not regard his saving of the husband's life as a highly noble and unselfish action, and they are the man himself and the woman."

We thanked Jephson for his story, and promised to profit by the moral, when discovered. Meanwhile, MacShaugnassy said that he knew a story dealing with the same theme, namely, the too close attachment of a woman to a strange man, which really had a moral, which moral was: don't have anything to do with inventions.

Brown, who had patented a safety gun, which he had never yet found a man plucky enough to let off, said it was a bad moral. We agreed to hear the particulars, and judge for ourselves.

"This story," commenced MacShaugnassy, "comes from Furtwangen, a small town in the Black Forest. There lived there a very wonderful old



"CAUGHT IT WITH HIS FINGERTIPS."



"STRUCK HIM ACROSS THE FACE."

something more than a mere mechanic; he was an artist. His work was with him a hobby, almost a passion. His shop was filled with all manner of strange things that never would, or could, be sold—things he had made for the pure love of making them. He had contrived a mechanical donkey that would trot for two hours by means of stored electricity, and trot, too, much faster than the live article, and with less need for exertion on the part of the driver; a bird that would shoot up into the air, fly round and round in a circle, and drop to earth at the exact spot from where it started; a skeleton that, supported by an upright iron bar, would dance a hornpipe; a life-size lady doll that could play the fiddle; and a gentleman with a hollow inside who could smoke a pipe and drink more lager beer than any three average German students put together, which is saying much.

"Indeed, it was the belief of the town that old Geibel could make a man capable of doing everything that a respectable man need want to do. One day he made a man who did too much, and it came about in this way.

"Young Doctor Follen had a baby, and the baby had a birthday. Its first birthday put Doctor Follen's household into somewhat of a flurry, but on the occasion of its second birthday, Mrs. Doctor Follen gave a ball in honour of the event. Old Geibel and his daughter Olga were among the guests.

"During the afternoon of the next day some three or four of Olga's bosom friends, who had also been present at the ball, dropped in to have a chat about it. They naturally fell to discussing the men, and to criticising their dancing. Old Geibel was in the room, but he appeared to be absorbed in his newspaper, and the girls took no notice of him.

"There seem to be fewer men who can dance at every ball you go to,' said one of the girls.

"Yes, and don't the ones who can give themselves airs,' said another; 'they make quite a favour of asking you.'

"And how stupidly they talk,' added a third. 'They always say exactly the same things: "How charming you are looking to-night." "Do you often go to Vienna? Oh, you should, it's delightful." "What a charming dress you have on." "What a warm day it has been." "Do you like Wagner?" I do wish they'd think of something new.'

"Oh, I never mind how they talk,' said a fourth. 'If a man dances well he may be a fool for all I care.'

"He generally is,' slipped in a thin girl, rather spitefully.

"I go to a ball to dance,' continued the previous speaker, not noticing the interruption. 'All I ask of a partner is that he shall hold me firmly, take me round steadily, and not get tired before I do.'

"A clockwork figure would be the thing for you,' said the girl who had interrupted.

fellow named Nicholas Geibel. His business was the making of mechanical toys, at which work he had acquired an almost European reputation. He made rabbits that would emerge from the heart of a cabbage, flop their ears, smooth their whiskers, and disappear again; cats that would wash their faces, and mew so naturally that dogs would mistake them for real cats, and fly at them; dolls, with phonographs concealed within them, that would raise their hats and say, 'Good morning; how do you do,' and some that would even sing a song.

"But he was



"HE HAD CONTRIVED A MECHANICAL DONKEY."

“Bravo!’ cried one of the others, clapping her hands, ‘what a capital idea!’

“What’s a capital idea?’ they asked.

“Why, a clockwork dancer, or, better still, one that would go by electricity and never run down.’

“The girls took up the idea with enthusiasm.

“Oh, what a lovely partner he would make,’ said one; ‘he would never kick you, or tread on your toes.’

“Or tear your dress,’ said another.

“Or get out of step.’

“Or get giddy and lean on you.’

“And he would never want to mop his face with his handkerchief. I do hate to see a man do that after every dance.’

“And wouldn’t want to spend the whole evening in the supper room.’

“Why, with a phonograph inside him to grind out all the stock remarks, you would not be able to tell him from a real man,’ said the girl who had first suggested the idea.

“Oh, yes, you would,’ said the thin girl, ‘he would be so much nicer.’

“Old Geibel had laid down his paper, and was listening with both his ears. On one of the girls glancing in his direction, however, he hurriedly hid himself again behind it.

“After the girls were gone, he went into his workshop, where Olga heard him walking up and down, and every now and then chuckling to himself; and that night he talked to her a good deal about dancing and dancing men—asked what they usually said and did—what dances were most popular—what steps were gone through, with many other questions bearing on the subject.

“Then for a couple of weeks he kept much to his factory, and was very thoughtful and busy, though prone at unexpected moments to break into a quiet low laugh, as if enjoying a joke that nobody else knew of.

“A month later another ball took place in Furtwangen. On this occasion it was given by old Wenzel, the wealthy timber merchant, to celebrate his niece’s betrothal, and Geibel and his daughter were again among the invited.

“When the hour arrived to set out, Olga sought her father. Not finding him in the house, she tapped at the door of his workshop. He appeared in his shirt-sleeves, looking hot but radiant.

“Don’t wait for me,’ he said, ‘you go on, I’ll follow you. I’ve got something to finish.’

“As she turned to obey he called after her, ‘Tell them I’m going to bring a young man with me—such a nice young man, and an excellent dancer. All the girls will like him.’ Then he laughed and closed the door.

“Her father generally kept his doings secret from everybody, but she had a pretty shrewd suspicion of what he had been planning, and so, to a certain extent, was able to prepare the guests for what was coming. Anticipation ran high, and the arrival of the famous mechanist was eagerly awaited.

“At length the sound of wheels was heard outside, followed by a great commotion in the passage, and old Wenzel himself, his jolly face red with excitement and suppressed laughter, burst into the room and announced in stentorian tones:

“Herr Geibel—and a friend.’

“Herr Geibel and his ‘friend’ entered, greeted with shouts of laughter and applause, and advanced to the centre of the room.

“Allow me, ladies and gentlemen,’ said Herr Geibel, ‘to introduce you to my friend, Lieutenant Fritz. Fritz, my dear fellow, bow to the ladies and gentlemen.’

“Geibel placed his hand encouragingly on Fritz’s shoulder, and the lieutenant bowed low, accompanying the action with a harsh clicking noise in his throat, unpleasantly suggestive of a death rattle. But that was only a detail.

“He walks a little stiffly’ (old Geibel took his arm and walked him forward a few steps. He certainly did walk stiffly), ‘but then, walking is not his forte. He is essentially a dancing man. I have only been able to teach him the waltz as yet, but at that he is faultless. Come, which of you ladies may I introduce him to as a partner. He keeps perfect time; he never gets tired; he won’t kick you or tread on your dress; he will hold you as firmly as you like, and go as quickly or as



OLGA SHOWING HIM WHAT STEPS WERE GONE THROUGH.

slowly as you please; he never gets giddy; and he is full of conversation. Come, speak up for yourself, my boy.'

"The old gentleman twisted one of the buttons at the back of his coat, and immediately Fritz opened his mouth, and in thin tones that appeared to proceed from the back of his head, remarked suddenly, 'May I have the pleasure?' and then shut his mouth again with a snap.

"That Lieutenant Fritz had made a strong impression on the company was undoubted, yet none of the girls seemed inclined to dance with him. They looked askance at his waxen face, with its staring eyes and fixed smile, and shuddered. At last old Geibel came to the girl who had conceived the idea.

"It is your own suggestion, carried out to the letter,' said Geibel, 'an electric dancer. You owe it to the gentleman to give him a trial.'

"She was a bright, saucy little girl, fond of a frolic. Her host added his entreaties, and she consented.

"Herr Geibel fixed the figure to her. Its right arm was screwed round her waist, and held her firmly; its delicately-jointed left hand was made to fasten itself upon her right. The old toymaker showed her how to regulate its speed, and how to stop it, and release herself.

"It will take you round in a complete circle,' he explained; 'be careful that no one knocks against you, and alters its course.'

"The music struck up. Old Geibel put the current in motion, and Annette and her strange partner began to dance.

"For a while everyone stood watching them. The figure performed its purpose admirably. Keeping perfect time and step, and holding its little partner tight clasped in an unyielding embrace, it revolved steadily, pouring forth at the same time a constant flow of squeaky conversation, broken by brief intervals of grinding silence.

"How charming you are looking to-night,' it remarked in its thin, far-away voice. 'What a lovely day it has been. Do you like dancing? How well our steps agree. You will give me another, won't you? Oh, don't be so cruel. What a charming gown you have on. Isn't waltzing delightful? I could go on dancing for ever—with you. Have you had supper?'

"As she grew more familiar with the uncanny creature, the girl's nervousness wore off, and she entered into the fun of the thing.

"Oh, he's just lovely,' she cried, laughing, 'I could go on dancing with him all my life.'

"Couple after couple now joined them, and soon all the dancers in the room were whirling round behind them. Nicholas Geibel stood looking on, beaming with childish delight at his success.

"Old Wenzel approached him, and whispered something in his ear. Geibel laughed, and nodded, and the two worked their way quietly towards the door.

"This is the young people's house to-night,' said Wenzel, so soon as they were outside; 'you and I will have a quiet pipe and a glass of hock, over in the counting-house.'

"Meanwhile the dancing grew more fast and furious. Little Annette loosened the screw regulating her partner's rate of progress, and the figure flew round with her swifter and swifter. Couple after couple dropped out exhausted, but they only went the faster, till at length they remained dancing alone.

"Madder and madder became the waltz. The music lagged behind: the musicians, unable to keep pace, ceased, and sat staring. The younger guests applauded, but the older faces began to grow anxious.

"Hadn't you better stop, dear,' said one of the women, 'you'll make yourself so tired.'

"But Annette did not answer.

"I believe she's fainted,' cried out a girl who had caught sight of her face as it was swept by.



"FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS HE KEPT TO HIS FACTORY."

"One of the men sprang forward and clutched at



"MY FRIEND, LIEUTENANT FRITZ."

the figure, but its impetus threw him down on to the floor, where its steel-cased feet laid bare his cheek. The thing evidently did not intend to part with its prize easily.

"Had anyone retained a cool head, the figure, one cannot help thinking, might easily have been stopped. Two or three men acting in concert might have lifted it bodily off the floor, or have jammed it into a corner. But few human heads are capable of remaining cool under excitement. Those who are not present think how stupid must have been those who were; those who are reflect afterwards how simple it would have been to do this, that, or the other, if only they had thought of it at the time.

"The women grew hysterical. The men shouted contradictory directions to one another. Two of them made a bungling rush at the figure, which had the result of forcing it out of its orbit in the centre of the room, and sending it crashing against the walls and furniture. A stream of blood showed itself down the girl's white frock, and followed her along the floor. The affair was becoming horrible. The women rushed screaming from the room. The men followed them.

"One sensible suggestion was made: 'Find Geibel—fetch Geibel.'

"No one had noticed him leave the room, no one knew where he was. A party went in search of him. The others, too unnerved to go back into the ball-room, crowded outside the door and listened. They could hear the steady whir of the wheels upon the polished floor as the thing spun round and round; the dull thud as every now and again it dashed itself and its burden against some opposing object and ricocheted off in a new direction.

"And everlastingly it talked in that thin ghostly voice, repeating over and over the same formula: 'How charming you are looking to-night. What a lovely day it has been. Oh, don't be so cruel. I could go on dancing for ever—with you. Have you had supper?'

"Of course they sought for Geibel everywhere but where he was. They looked in every room in the house, then they rushed off in a body to his own place, and spent precious minutes in waking up his deaf old housekeeper. At last it occurred to one of the party that Wenzel was missing also, and then the idea of the counting-house across the yard presented itself to them, and there they found him.

"He rose up, very pale, and followed them; and he and old Wenzel forced their way through the crowd of guests gathered outside, and entered the room, and locked the door behind them.

"From within there came the muffled sound of low voices and quick steps, followed by a confused scuffling noise, then silence, then the low voices again.

"After a time the door opened, and those near it pressed forward to enter, but old Wenzel's broad shoulders barred the way.

"'I want you—and you, Bekler,' he said, addressing a couple of the elder men. His voice was calm, but his face was deadly white. 'The rest of you, please go—get the women away as quickly as you can.'

"From that day old Nicholas Geibel confined himself to the making of mechanical rabbits and cats that mewed and washed their faces."

We agreed that the moral of MacShaugnassy's story was a good one.

(To be continued.)





On Pilgrims
 and the
 Pilgrim
 Spirit
 by
 Adams Martin.

"Then longe folk to go on pilgrimages,
 And palmers for to seeke strange strands
 To ferne hallows couth in sundry lands."

In the good old times, when a man wanted a little change from the bosom of his family—in those days a somewhat restricted bosom—he went on a crusade, or a pilgrimage.

What if he did spend his time and substance on that which, from a worldly standpoint, profited not—absenting himself from home and friends for periods of time lengthy enough to afford a modern wife good grounds for a divorce—was it not all meritorious? Heaven, he fondly believed, would more than pay his travelling expenses by a large cheque to his credit on the next world, whilst he had the pleasure of the journey in this: an ingenious method of seeing something of both! And so he donned his pilgrim weeds, and his "cockle hat and shoon"—as all good chroniclers tell us—and hied him off to Canterbury or Cologne, Rome, Jerusalem, or Timbuctoo. Mrs. Pilgrim was left at home to play "patience," and to keep the house and bairns. She was generally a long-suffering creature, but sometimes she *did* get into mischief. She could not *always* spin yarn, so she occasionally varied her task by weaving nets—traps for the unwary who was *not* a pilgrim.

But if she got into mischief, she paid the penalty; my lord invariably cut off her head with his scimitar when he returned home—if she waited for that—and there was an end of the matter. There was no Divorce Court in the good old days, and a woman's head did not count for much. But these slight casualties never diminished the ardour of the pilgrim spirit: the pilgrim increased and multiplied, and sought new shrines as well as new wives. To slightly vary the words of the poet, "*Shrine after shrine* his rising raptures fill. But still he sighs—for *shrines* are wanting still." The law of supply and demand, however, worked as surely then as now; and as pilgrims increased to venerate, objects increased to be venerated. There is a good story told by the Arabs—it was given by Dr. Samuel Jessup in one of his contributions to "Picturesque Palestine" some years ago—and it is an apt illustration of this supply and demand principle.

There was a certain Sheik-Mohammed who, once upon a time, was the keeper of a "wely" or shrine, supposed by the faithful to be the tomb of an eminent Saint, and so largely frequented by them that the Sheik grew rich from their costly offerings. His servant Ali, however, receiving but a small share of the profits, ran away to the south of the Jordan, taking with him his master's donkey. The animal died on the way, and Ali, having covered his body with a heap of stones, sat down in despair. A passer-by enquired the cause of his sorrow, and Ali replied that he had just found the tomb of an eminent Saint; the man kissed the stones, gave Ali a present, and passed on his way.

The news of the holy shrine spread throughout the land, and pilgrims thronged to visit it: Ali became rich, built a fine "Kubbeh" (Dome), and was envied by all the Sheiks.

Mohammed, hearing of the new shrine, and finding his own eclipsed by it, made a pilgrimage to it himself, in hopes of finding out the source of its great repute. Finding Ali in charge, he asked, in a whisper, if he would tell him the name of the Saint whose tomb he kept charge of. "I will," replied Ali, "on condition that you tell me the name of your Saint." Mohammed consented, and Ali then whispered, "God alone is great! This is the tomb of the donkey I stole from you."

"Mashallah!" cried Mohammed, "and my 'wely' is the

tomb of that donkey's father!" Methinks Palestine has not a monopoly of the long-eared and long-suffering race, either living or dead!

But we have changed all that; as we have a good many other things. Saints and their shrines are out of fashion. "It is an age of seeing, not believing," we say complacently; and we laugh with superior wisdom at the follies of our forefathers, and the relics they went so far to adore—relics which, like the fabled frog, by trying to swell themselves to greater and still greater dimensions, ended in growing a little too extensive for their ultimate good. Saints, like sinners, can only have two legs apiece, we all know; but the saints of our ancestors, if their relics spoke truly, must have been saintly centipedes: of making new limbs there was no end, and, as their numbers increased, reverence waned, till hey!—the bubble of credulity burst at last, as did the frog!

But if the heavenly profitability was cut off by this collapse of superstition, or eclipse of faith—call it which you will—the habit of pleasurable moving remained; stronger by the force of repeated custom throughout all past times: we keep the shell, but we cunningly substitute a new kernel in the place of the exploded core of heretofore.

We go a pilgrimage still, but your modern spirit is now the pilgrim of Health, Pleasure, Science, Art, and such-like—all high-sounding names to conjure by; and the world, that old time-server, ever seeking to accommodate itself to the new ways of its inhabitants, is ever supplying us with a new Spa, a new "old master," or masterpiece, a newly dug-up ruin, or hieroglyph, or Dark Continent, or—for even the humblest "tripper" is not forgotten—a new Mudport-on-Sea.

The shrines of our forefathers' worship have crept back into favour by hiding themselves in the voluminous draperies of History or Art. Our appetite for shows is omnivorous, and we don't object to a shrine if it has a Gothic moulding sufficiently "cute," or a Byzantine roof, or some other attraction—are we not pilgrims of *Art*?—though if called upon to define our roof or moulding many of us might be considerably nonplussed, taking refuge in describing one as a "thing with a round top," and the other as "a sort of stone trimming, don't you know."

I remember once reading a child's tale—I have forgotten where, for it was many years ago—but the drift of the story was too good to forget. It was about a small pig who lived with his mother in a sty which possessed but a limited front yard. Piggy had the pilgrim spirit, and sighed to escape to pastures new, to see what lay beyond his little wall. One day his chance came—he escaped somehow, and made a pilgrimage round the farmyard, where the strange things he saw either frightened him dreadfully, or were utterly unintelligible to his piggish mind. He was so frightened by the roaring of a bull that he fled with great precipitation home, where he gave a glowing account of his travels to his mother.

"Yes," he said, "I have seen the world. It is square, and it has a wall all round it, to keep the pigs from falling off, of course. I saw some queer white pigs, with only two legs—think of that! They said 'Quack, quack'—that is what they say in the world, you know, but, of course, *you* don't understand. Then I saw a great red pig, who cried, 'Mou-e-e-e!' There is but *one* such pig in the world, and *I* have seen it. I am content to live quietly now, for I have seen the whole world!"

Who has not seen that smug satisfaction of small souls as reflected by piggy?

There is a great deal in *looking* wise even if you don't feel so. Talk always of your "dones," and leave out the "undones."

Most of us have heard of the apocryphal American who "does Europe" in a fortnight! I cannot say that I have actually met that gentleman, but I have met pilgrims, both English and American, who will tell you grandly that they have "done"—say Rome, in two, nay in one day! All the antiquities, of *course*, and the Museums; and then comes a string of names of churches, and galleries, until you gasp for breath! You go away and lean against something to recover your breath, and your gravity, but the pilgrimage is an accomplished fact. They have a right to stick to the cockle-shell in their cap, so to speak, and go home saying, "Oh, yes! We have done Rome, or Italy, or Egypt, *thoroughly*; missed nothing!"

If one could take an impression of one of these pilgrim's brains by "Kodak," one would get some queer results in chaos, rather like the game of family post—the Raphael frescoes transferring themselves to Karnak, and the Sphinx hiding in the Catacombs, whilst pictures, statuary, and shrines of "cult" executed a Bacchanalian dance on a gigantic scale all round.

But results do not alter facts; and in these busy days people are generally content to *see* your tree of knowledge; they have no time to climb its branches to look for the fruit of wisdom!

We have changed our pilgrim weeds for an ulster of the latest cut, and our Missal for a "Murray" or "Baedeker," but are we really so much



"RAN AWAY WITH HIS MASTER'S DONKEY."



"PILGRIMS OF ART."



"ECCO, SIGNOR!"

wiser than our forefathers?

Alas! we have but changed the object, and human nature, gullible ever, sees no reason why it should not flock in thousands to drop a visiting card into the tomb (so called) of "Juliet" at Verona, with as fond credulity as their fathers, when they deposited their candle at the tomb of some miracle-working saint; with this difference, however—that the latter was deposited for the glory and praise of the saint, and the former of the sinner *himself*. Who could say, after that, that he had not seen it!

I happened, when there, to make some irreverent remarks about that tomb. I had walked out to see it on a hot afternoon, and I found it inconveniently far. One is accustomed to have these places "grouped," and I was displeased with *Juliet* for not being buried nearer home—it was an oversight—but perhaps it had been arranged for the benefit of the carriage-drivers. *Juliet* was public-spirited, and thought of all classes, and their interests. I did not think of all these extenuating circumstances then, however, and so I said unbelieving things about her tomb.

The *custode* was deeply pained, as an orthodox *custode* ought to be. He remonstrated with me first, and then he pointed to the wall. "*Ecco, Signor! è scritto, è scritto è verissimo!*"

And there indeed it was written, in good set terms, and in two or three languages, for the benefit of all non-literary or unbelieving pilgrims.

I have often thought since how many people there are, like my friend the *custode*, to whom the magic "it is written" is sufficient ground for their faith, without further consideration as to *when* and *how*.

Some time ago a friend of mine encountered a portly Western American tourist at Kenilworth. He came in a hurry, and asked to be shown the part "wrote up" by Scott. He gazed for a few minutes, and then departed as quickly as he came. To him Kenilworth was merely a place "wrote up" by Scott, and no doubt he had Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon to see that same afternoon, before going on to Liverpool.

There are pilgrims who certainly carry a feeling of duty into all things. Wherever they go they mean work!

This quality pre-eminently distinguishes the English-speaking world, and it always fills our Continental, or Oriental, neighbours with lazy wonder. "Oh, these Englishwomen! they have legs and stomachs of bronze!" I once heard an Italian say.

We are inclined to overdo it. I think an occasional rest-day is as necessary to the tired brain as the photographer's dark room is to the development of the negative impression—without it the brain would, indeed, record a "*negative impression*."

But I am straying from *Juliet's* tomb, and the subject of unlimited faith. Only make a thing possible, and, *if there is an undercurrent of desire to believe it*, the large majority will swallow almost anything with what theologians call "simple faith." The "if" is an important one—the key to the situation. We believe readily when it is agreeable to do so, and all pilgrims have ever sought to heighten the attractions of the objects of their interest. It adds to their own enjoyment of them, and, after all, is it not a reflex compliment to ourselves? If "there is but *one* such pig in the world," have not *I* seen it?

Have you ever noticed the effect of the expression, "They say?" If we say "Tom," or "Dick," or "Harry," says "so and so," "Tom" is no better authority than "Dick," nor are both together much better than "Harry." But if we say, indefinitely, "*They* say" "so and so," there is a mysterious potency in the unknown quantity which leads, if not to universal belief, at least to universal transmission.



"LURED MEN TO DESTRUCTION."

dimness, which glorifies the past if it clouds it; and which softens off the hardness of our prosaic modern life, as a summer haze our English landscape.

We are delighted to get hold of an ancient legend, whether of headless horseman or housekeeper, pixie or wizard. Even in that "happy hunting ground" of the Modern Spirit, the United States of America, the old legends linger still, if but faintly. The soil of a new country does not grow sentiment of this sort readily, but the plant is indigenous to the human heart; and its fair flowers have been gathered and wreathed around their pages by many an essayist and poet. We cannot do without the element of mystery in our life, however we may represent it. It is part of the spirit within us, and we find it in everything around us. It is the veil of "Isis" which science, her worshipper, is ever trying to lift, but cannot. The muse of Inspiration pours forth her melodious voice, like the nightingale, in the darkness and the shady covert. We listen to her song with entranced ears; a few whose spirits are "finely touched," try to repeat it; but who has ever seen her; the soul that animates, the spirit that inspires! Our life itself is a mystery—the Past and Future—are they not the wings of the Spirit of Time which are brooding over our Present? When they are lifted—when the mighty pinions are outspread for flight—*then* the shadows will flee for ever, for the great Daybreak of Eternity will have begun!

Without the spirit of mystery, the mother of enquiry—of romance, the days of pilgrimage would be ended. If it is a mere matter of rest, and of oiling the wheels of the machine for a fresh grind, Mudport-on-Sea will do well enough; but Mudport-on-Sea can never satisfy the hunger of the curious soul for the beautiful; the marvellous; all that is in itself lovely, or that has lived in the past, and caught a brighter glow from its rainbow reflections. One spot of ground may content the naturalist, or the Buddhist sage, for one can find a world of wondrous thought in the smallest leaf—a microcosm in a dew-drop; and the other can send his soul off on aerial pilgrimages, though his body may be in chains! But we are not all either natural or transcendental philosophers; our appetite requires not one leaf, but many, for our powers of assimilation are not great enough to draw spiritual sustenance from one alone; and so, like the caterpillar, when we have finished our leaf, we crawl to another.

"But this spirit of curiosity, or unrest, is all owing to lack of self-culture," cry some. Perhaps it is—some of it. No doubt the cocoon stage of rest and self-development is higher, and nearer to the ultimate perfection—the winged creature which soars above where others crawl—but until we are fit to be cocoons, and evolve butterflies, we must be content with our caterpillar instincts.

People speak scornfully of "mere curiosity," but it is only worthless when it bears no fruit. Curiosity, in itself, is a healthy, natural instinct, which we see to perfection in the small child. Toddie's speech in "Helen's Babies," "Want to shée wheels go wound," is the pilgrim spirit epitomised. We hear of the watch, and we want to see it; we see it, and then we want to hold it; we hear it tick, and we want to open it; and then we would like to "shée wheels go wound" constantly, and if we cannot, we kick at the prohibition!

Curiosity may be a worthless element in life when idle, but when otherwise, is it not the mainspring of the watch? Think of the manifold results of "mere curiosity," when rightly persevered in! But then we change the name—it becomes insight—research—it becomes a power which can climb the dizziest height, and dive the deepest depths, to bring to us their treasures—the star—the pearl!





SCIENCE LIFTING THE VEIL OF ISIS.



A College Idyl.

By S. GORDON.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY A. H. FISHER.

Night it was—nay, nearer morning,
Snores and nightmares whisked about,
And the pallid moon gave warning
That her lamp was nearly out.
Twain we sat, and ruminated

On the world, its joys and ills,



What we loved, and what we hated,
 Woman, wine—exams and bills.

Often,
 too,
 with
 short-
 lived



splendour,
 Flashed the ready epigram,
 Thoughts we uttered, soft and tender,
 Ending in a smothered "—";
 All the truths and lies of ages
 Compassed we in one short breath,
 Flouted whims of priests and
 sages,
 Lightly toyed with life and death.



Men and manners, saints and sinners,
 All and more we touched upon,
 How the worst were ever winners,
 For we yet had never won;
 And we cursed at superstition,
 Villain smiles, and sects, and cant,
 Hurling to ruin and perdition
 All the tribe of sycophants—

Queried, thinking of cold faces,
 Colder hearts of living stone,
 Why our lot within such places,
 Why upon such days was
 thrown;
 In our years' maturing crescent
 Spied we how our fate was
 fraught,
 Spanned the future and the
 present
 With the flimsy bridge of
 thought.



So the morn came, pale and haggard,
 Lighting up our sunken eyes,
 And we rose and thither staggered
 Whence we would but slowly rise;
 Plain our footsteps, weak and frisky,
 Told their moral—speak who can—
 Midnight words and midnight whiskey
 Play the devil with a man!

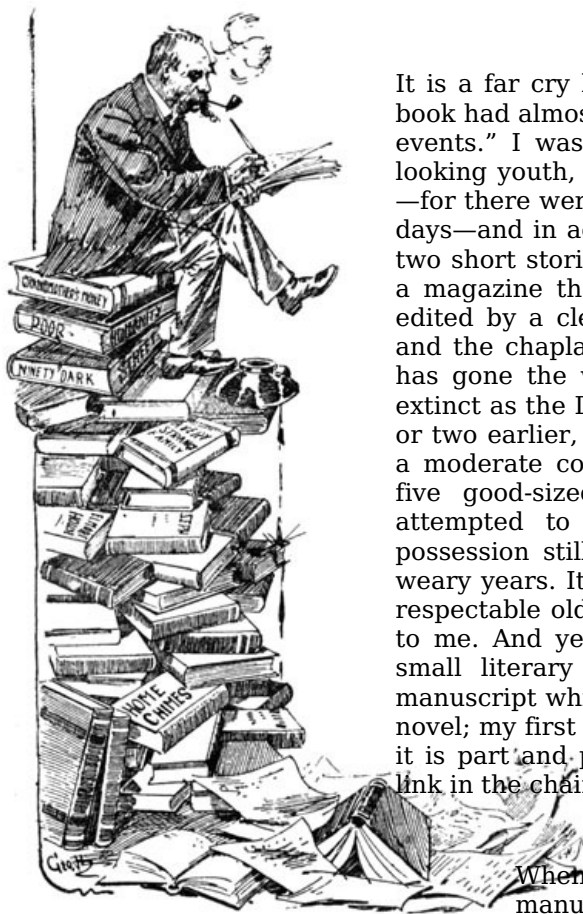


(FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY
MESSRS. ELLIOTT AND FRY.)

My First Book.

BY F. W. ROBINSON.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEO. HUTCHINSON.



It is a far cry back to 1853, when dreams of writing a book had almost reached the boundary line of "probable events." I was then a pale, long-haired, consumptive-looking youth, who had been successful in prize poems—for there were prize competitions even in those far-off days—and in acrostics, and in the acceptance of one or two short stories, which had been actually published in a magazine that did not pay for contributions (it was edited by a clergyman of the Church of England, too, and the chaplain to a real Duke), and which magazine has gone the way of many magazines, and is now as extinct as the Dodo. It was in the year 1853, or a month or two earlier, that I wrote my first novel—which, upon a moderate computation, I think, would make four or five good-sized library volumes, but I have never attempted to "scale" the manuscript. It is in my possession still, although I have not seen it for many weary years. It is buried with a heap more rubbish in a respectable old oak chest, the key of which is even lost to me. And yet that MS. was the turning-point of my small literary career. And it is the history of that manuscript which leads up to the publication of my first novel; my first step, though I did not know it, and hence it is part and parcel of the history of my first book—a link in the chain.



ELMORE HOUSE.

When that manuscript was completed, it was read aloud, night after night, to an admiring audience of family members, and pronounced as fit for publication as anything of Dickens or Thackeray or Bulwer, who were then in the full swing of their



AT TWENTY.

capacities. Alas! I was a better judge than my partial and amiable critics. I had very grave doubts—"qualms," I think they are called—and I had read that it was uphill work to get a book published, and swagger through the world as a real live being who had actually written a novel. There was a faint hope, that was all; and so, with my MS. under my arm, I strolled into the palatial premises of Messrs. Hurst and Blackett ("successors to Henry Colburn" they proudly designated themselves at that period), laid

my heavy parcel on the counter, and waited, with fear and trembling, for someone to emerge from the galleries of books and rows of desks beyond, and enquire the nature of my business. And here ensued my first surprise—quite a dramatic coincidence—for the tall, spare, middle-aged gentleman who advanced from the shadows towards the counter, proved, to my intense astonishment, to be a constant chess antagonist of mine at Kling's Chess Rooms, round the corner, in New Oxford Street—rooms which have disappeared long ago, along with Horwitz, Harrwitz, Loewenthal, Williams, and other great chess lights of those far-away times, who were to be seen there, night after night, prepared for all comers. Kling's was a great chess house, and I was a chess enthusiast, as well as a youth who wanted to get into print. Failing literature, I had made up my mind to become a chess champion, if possible, although I knew already, by quiet observation of my antagonists, that in that way madness lay, sheer uncontrollable, raging madness—for me at any rate. And the grave, middle-aged gentleman behind the counter of 13, Great Marlborough Street, proved to be the cashier of the firm, and used—being chess-mad like the rest of us—to spend his evenings at "Kling's." He was a player of my own strength, and for twelve months or so had I skirmished with him over the chessboard, and fought innumerable battles with him. He had never spoken of his occupation, or I of my restless ambitions—chess

players never go far beyond the chequered board.

"Hallo, Robinson!" he exclaimed, in his surprise, "you don't mean to say that you——"

And then he stopped and regarded my youthful appearance very critically.

"Yes, Mr. Kenny—it's a novel," I said, modestly; "my first."

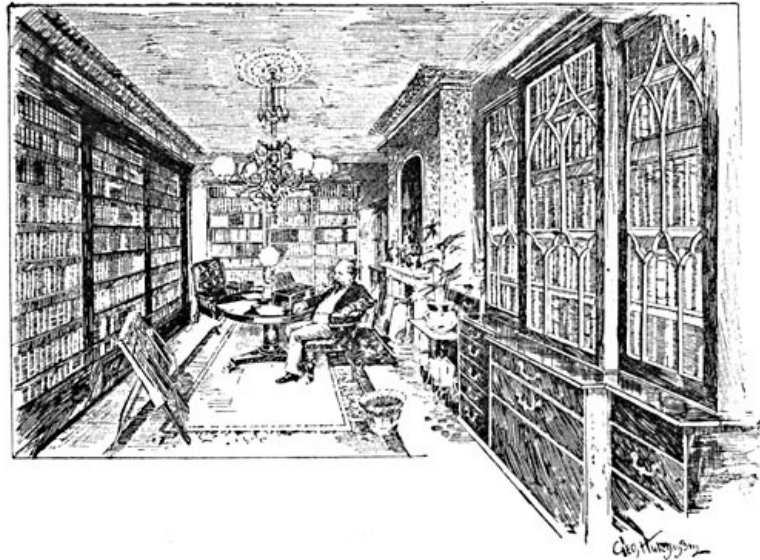
"There's plenty of it," he remarked, drily. "I'll send it upstairs at once. And I'll wish you luck too; but," he added, kindly, preparing to soften the shock of a future refusal, "we have plenty of these come in—about seven a day—and most of them go back to their writers again."

"Ye-es, I suppose so," I answered, with a sigh.

For awhile, however, I regarded the meeting as a happy augury—a lucky coincidence. I even had the vain, hopeless notion that Mr. Kenny might put in a good word for me, ask for special consideration, out of that kindly feeling which we had for each other, and which chess antagonists have invariably for each other, I am inclined to believe. But though we met three or four times a week, from that day forth not one word concerning the fate of my manuscript escaped the lips of Mr. Kenny. It is probable the incident had passed from his memory; he had nothing to do with the novel department itself, and the delivery of MSS. was a very common everyday proceeding to him. I was too bashful, perhaps too proud, an individual to ask any questions of him; but every evening that I encountered him I used to wonder "if he had heard anything," if any news of the book's fate had reached him, directly or indirectly; occasionally even, as time went on, I was disposed to imagine that he was letting me win the game out of kindness—for he was a gentle, kindly soul always—in order to soften the shock of a disappointment which he knew perfectly well was on its way towards me.



AT THIRTY.



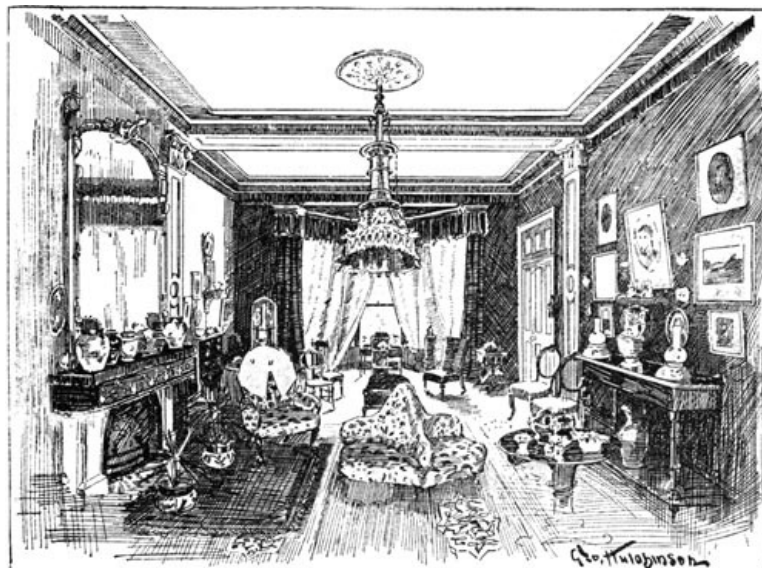
MR. ROBINSON'S LIBRARY.

Some months afterwards, the fateful letter came to me from the firm, regretting their inability to make use of the MS., and expressing many thanks for a perusal of the same—a polite, concise, all-round kind of epistle, which a publisher is compelled to keep in stock, and to send out when rejected literature pours forth like a waterfall from the dusky caverns of a publishing house in a large way of business. It was all over, then—I had failed! From that hour I would turn chess player, and soften my brain in a quest for silver cups or champion amateur stakes. I could play chess better than I could write fiction, I was sure. Still, after some days of dead despair, I sent the MS. once more on its travels—this time to Smith and Elder's, whose reader, Mr. Williams, had leapt into singular prominence since his favourable judgment of Charlotte Brontë's book, and to whom most MSS. flowed spontaneously for many years afterwards. And in due course of time, Mr. Williams, acting for Messrs. Smith and Elder, asked me to call upon him—for the MS.—at Cornhill, and there I received my first advice, my first thrill of exultation. "Presently, and probably, *and with perseverance*," he said, "you will succeed in literature, and if you will remember now, that to write a good novel is a very considerable achievement. Years of short story-writing is the best apprenticeship for you. Write and re-write, and spare no pains." I thanked him, and I went home with tears in my eyes of gratitude and consolation, though my big story had been declined with thanks. But I did not write again. I put away my MS., and went on for six or eight hours a day at chess for many idle months before I was in the vein for composition, and then, with a sudden dash, I began "The

House of Elmore." It was half finished when another strange incident in its little way occurred. I received one morning a letter from Lascelles Wraxall (afterwards Sir Lascelles Wraxall, Bart., as the reader may be probably aware), informing me that he was one of the readers for Messrs. Hurst and Blackett, and that it had been his duty some time ago to decide unfavourably against a story which I had submitted to the notice of his firm, but that he had intended to write to me a private note urging me to adopt literature as a profession. His principal object in writing at that time was to suggest my trying the fortunes of the novel which he had already read with Messrs. Routledge, and he kindly added a letter of introduction to that firm in the Broadway—an introduction which, by the way, never came to anything.



THE GARDEN.



THE DRAWING-ROOM.

Poor Lascelles Wraxall, clever writer and editor, pressman and literary adviser, real Bohemian and true friend—indeed, everybody's friend but his own—I never think of him but with feelings of deep gratitude. He was a rolling stone, and when I met him for the first time in my life, years afterwards, he had left Marlborough Street for the Crimea; he had been given a commission in the Turkish Contingent at Kertch; he had come back anathematising the service, and "chock full" of grievances against the Government, and he became once more editor and sub-editor, and publisher's hack even at last, until he stepped into his baronetcy—an empty title, for he had sold the reversion of the estates for a mere song long ago—and became special correspondent in Austria for the *Daily Telegraph*. And in Vienna he died, young in years still—not forty, I think—closing a life that only wanted one turn more of "application," I have often thought, to have achieved very great distinction. There are still a few writing men about who remember Lascelles Wraxall, but they are "the boys of the old brigade."

It was to Lascelles Wraxall I sent, when finished, "The House of Elmore," the reader may very easily guess. Wraxall had stepped so much out of his groove—for the busy literary man that he was—to take me by the hand, and point the way along "the perilous road"; he had given me so many kind words, that I wrote my hardest to complete my new story before I should fade wholly from his recollection. The book was finished in five weeks, and in hot haste, and for months again I was left wondering what the outcome of it all was to be—whether Wraxall was reading my story, or whether—oh, horror!—some other reader less kindly disposed, and more austere and critical, and hard to please, had been told off to sit in judgment upon my second MS.

I went back to chess for a distraction till the fate of that book was pronounced or sealed—it was always chess in the hours of my distress and anxiety—and I once again faced Charles Kenny, and once again wondered if he knew, and how much he knew, whilst he was deep in his king's gambit or his giuoco-piano; but he was not even aware that I had sent in a second story, I learned afterwards. And then at last came the judgment—the pleasant, if formal, notice from Marlborough Street that the novel had been favourably reported upon by the reader, and that Messrs. Hurst and Blackett would be pleased to see me at Marlborough Street to talk the matter of its publication over with me. Ah! what a letter that was!—what a surprise, after all!—what a good omen!

And some three months afterwards, at the end of the year 1854, my first book—but my second novel—was launched into the reading world, and I have hardly got over the feeling yet that I had actually a right to dub myself a novelist!



AT FORTY.



MR. ROBINSON AT WORK.

When the first three notices of the book appeared, wild dreams of a brilliant future beset me. They were all favourable notices—too favourable; but *John Bull*, *The Press*, and *Bell's Messenger* (I think they were the papers) scattered favourable notices indiscriminately at that time. Presently the *Athenæum* sobered me a little, but wound up with a kindly pat on the back, and the *Saturday Review*, then in its seventh number, drenched me with vitriolic acid, and brought me to a lower level altogether; and finally the *Morning Herald* blew a loud blast to my praise and glory—that last notice, I believe, having been written by my old friend Sir Edward Clarke, then a very young reviewer on the *Herald* staff, with no dreams of becoming Her Majesty's Solicitor-General just then! And the "House of Elmore" actually paid its publishers' expenses, and left a balance, and brought me in a little cheque, and thus my writing life began in sober earnest.

Told by the Colonel.

XI.

HOSKINS'S PETS.

BY W. L. ALDEN.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY R. JACK.

"Yes!" said the Colonel, reflectively, "I've been almost everywhere in my time except in gaol, and I've been in a great deal worse places than a first-class American gaol with all the modern improvements. The fact is, that philanthropic people have gone so far in improving the condition of prisoners, that most of our prisons are rather better than most of our hotels. At any rate, they are less expensive, and the guests are treated with more respect.

"I never could understand the craze that some people have for prisoners. For instance, in New York and Chicago, the young ladies have a society for giving flowers to murderers. Whenever a man is convicted of murder and sentenced to be hung, the girls begin to heave flowers into his cell till he can't turn round without upsetting a vase of roses, or a big basin full of pansies, and getting his feet wet. I once knew a murderer who told me that if anything could reconcile him to being hung it would be getting rid of the floral tributes that the girls lavished on him. You see he was one of the leading murderers in that section of country, and consequently he received about a cartload of flowers every day.



"HEAVE FLOWERS INTO HIS CELL."

"I had a neighbour when I lived in New Berlinopolisville who was the President of the Society for Ameliorating the Condition of Prisoners, and he was the craziest man on the subject that I ever met. His name was Hoskins—Colonel Uriah Hoskins—and he was the author of the Hoskins Bill that attracted so much attention when it was before the Legislature, though it never became a law. The bill provided that every prisoner should have a sitting room as well as a sleeping room, and that it should be furnished with a piano, a banjo, a library, a typewriter, a wine cooler, and a whist table; that the prisoner should be permitted to hold two weekly receptions, to which everybody should be allowed to come, and that he should be taught any branch of study that he might care to take up, books and masters being, of course,

supplied free. Colonel Hoskins used to insist that the only thing that made a man go wrong was the lack of kindness, and that the sure way to reform a criminal was to treat him with so much kindness that he would grow ashamed of being wicked, and would fall on everybody's neck and devote the rest of his life to weeping tears of repentance and singing hymns of joy.



"DREW UP A BEAUTIFUL NOTICE."

"While Colonel Hoskins was fond of all styles of criminals, burglars were his particular pets. According to him, a burglar was more deserving of kindness than any other man. 'How would you like it,' he used to say, 'if you had to earn your living by breaking into houses in the middle of the night, instead of sleeping peacefully in your bed? Do you think you would be full of good thoughts after you had been bitten by the watch-dog and fired at by the man of the house, and earned nothing by your labour except a bad cold and the prospect of hydrophobia? There is nothing more brutal than the way in which society treats the burglar, and so long as society refuses to put him in the way of earning an easier and less dangerous living, he cannot be blamed if he continues to practise his midnight profession.'

"I must say this for Colonel Hoskins. He did not confine himself to talk, like many other philanthropists, but he was already trying to carry out his principles. He really meant what he said about burglars, and there isn't the least doubt that he had more sympathy for them than he had for the honest men of his acquaintance. When people asked him what he would do if he woke up in the night and found a burglar in his house, and whether or not he would shoot at him, he said that he would as soon think of shooting at his own wife, and that he would undertake to reform that burglar then and there by kindness alone. Once somebody said to Hoskins that he ought really to let

the burglars know his feelings towards them, and Hoskins said that he would do it without delay.

"That same day he drew up a beautiful 'Notice to Burglars,' and had it printed in big letters and framed and hung up in the dining-room of his house. It read in this way: 'Burglars are respectfully informed that the silver-ware is all plated, and that the proprietor of this house never keeps ready money on hand. Cake and wine will be found in the dining-room closet, and burglars are cordially invited to rest and refresh themselves. Please wipe your feet on the mat, and close the window when leaving the house.'

"Colonel Hoskins took a good deal of pride in that notice. He showed it to everyone who called at the house, and said that if other people would follow his example, and treat burglars like Christians and gentlemen, there would soon be an end of burglary, for the burglars would be so touched by the kindness of their treatment that they would abandon the business and become honoured members of society—insurance presidents, or bank cashiers, or church treasurers. He didn't say how the reformed burglars were to find employment in banks and insurance offices, and such, but that was a matter of detail, and he always preferred to devise large and noble schemes, and leave the working details of them to other men.

"One morning, Colonel Hoskins, who was an early riser, went down to the dining-room before breakfast, and was surprised to find that he had had a midnight visit from burglars. Two empty wine bottles stood on the table, and all the cake was eaten, which showed that the burglars had accepted the invitation to refresh themselves. But they did not seem to have accepted it in quite the right spirit. All Hoskins's spoons and forks lay in a heap in the middle of the floor, and every one was twisted or broken so as to be good for nothing. The window had been left open, and the rain had ruined the curtains, and on a dirty piece of paper the burglars had scrawled with a lead pencil the opinion that 'Old Hoskins is the biggest fule, and the gol-darndest skinflint in the country. You set out whiskey next time, or we'll serve you out.'

"Hoskins was not in the least cast down by the rudeness of the burglars. 'Poor fellows,' he said, 'they have been so used to bad treatment that they don't altogether appreciate kindness at first. But they will learn.' So he laid in some new spoons and forks, and added a bottle of whiskey to the wine that he kept in the closet for the burglars, and was as confident as ever that the next gang that might break into his house would be melted into tears and repentance, and would call him their best and dearest friend.



"EVERY ONE WAS TWISTED OR BROKEN."

"A week or two later Mrs. Hoskins was awakened by a noise in the dining-room, and, after waking up her husband, told him that there were burglars in the house, and that he must get out of the back window and go for the police. He told her that he was sorry to see her manifest such an unchristian spirit, and he would show her how burglars ought to be treated. There was not the least doubt that there were burglars in the house, and they were making a good deal more noise than was strictly consistent with the prospect of rising in their profession, for no able burglar ever makes any unnecessary noise while engaged in business, unless, of course, he falls over a coal-scuttle, and then he naturally uses language. St. Paul himself would probably say something pretty strong in similar circumstances. Hoskins was sincerely delighted to have the opportunity to meet his burglarious friends, and he lost no time in dressing and descending to the dining-room.

"He wore his slippers, and the burglars—there were two of them—did not hear him until he was fairly in the dining-room. They were seated at the table, with their feet on the damask tablecloth, and the bottle of whiskey was nearly empty. The Colonel was much pleased to see that they had not damaged his silver-ware, and he was just about to thank them when they saw him. They started up, and one of them caught him by the throat, while the other held a pistol to his head, and promised to blow out his brains if he made the slightest noise. Then they tied him hand and foot, gagged him, and laid him on the floor, and then sat down to finish the whiskey.

"Both the burglars were partly drunk, which accounted for the unprofessional noise they had been making. They talked in rather a low tone, but Hoskins could hear everything they said, and it was not particularly encouraging to a gagged and bound philanthropist. They agreed that he was a fool, and a stingy fool, or else he would have kept money in the house, and would have set out lemons and sugar as well as plain whiskey. They said that any man who treated poor working men in that way wasn't fit to live, and that Hoskins would have to be killed, even if it was not necessary—as it plainly was in this case—to kill him in order to prevent him from appearing at any future time as a witness against them. They admitted that the whiskey was not bad of its kind, but they were of the opinion that Hoskins had left it in their way so that they might get drunk and be caught by the police.

"Colonel Hoskins listened to this conversation with horror, and the prospect that the drunken rascals would be as good as their word, and kill him before they left the house, was only a little more painful than the conviction that his method, appealing to the better nature of burglars, had failed for the second time. When the whiskey was exhausted the men rose up and looked at Hoskins, and a happy thought struck one of them. 'Thishyer idiot,' he said, 'may not have any money in the house, but he's bound to have some in the bank, and he's going to write us a cheque for a thousand dollars, provided we let him off, and don't kick his brains out this time.' The other burglar, who was in that benevolent frame of mind that Irish whiskey and conscious virtue sometimes produce, agreed to the suggestion, and Hoskins was therefore unbound and seated at the table, and told to draw a cheque at once if he had the least regard for his life. As he was

gagged he could not explain to the burglars the kind feelings that he still had towards them, and the fact that they could not draw the money on the cheque without being captured by the police. So he simply signed the cheque, and groaned to think that the poor burglars were so slow to be reformed in the way that he had hoped they would be.

"When this business was over, the burglars tied Hoskins's wrists together again, and then tied him in a chair. Then they set to work to do all the damage they could do without making too much noise. They tore the curtains and hacked the piano with knives, and poured a jug of golden syrup over the carpet. Then they plastered Colonel Hoskins's face with raspberry jam, and emptied a sack of flour over his head, and went away, telling him that if he ever again ventured to trifle with the feelings of poor but self-respecting men, they would put him to death by slow tortures.

"Hoskins sat in the chair for a couple of hours, till his wife timidly crept downstairs and released him. It took him a good hour to get the jam and the flour out of his hair



"CAUGHT HIM BY THE THROAT."



"TIED HIM IN A CHAIR."

and whiskers, and as Mrs. Hoskins said that he was in no state to enter a decent bedroom, and made him wash at the pump in the back yard, he found it a rather cold operation. Perhaps it was the remarks that Mrs. Hoskins addressed to him during the operation that irritated him, for she intimated very plainly that he was no better than a professional idiot, and when a man's hair is stuck together with jam remarks of this sort from the wife of his bosom seem to be lacking in tenderness. However that may be, Colonel Hoskins had no sooner got himself into what his wife condescended to call a state of comparative decency, than he took down his 'Notice to Burglars,' and tore it into a thousand pieces. That day he had an electric burglar alarm put into his house; he bought the savagest dog that he could find, and he stopped the payment of the cheque, which, however, was never presented. He continued to be the President of the Society for Ameliorating the Condition of Prisoners, but he steadily refused to ameliorate a single prisoner convicted of burglary, and while he was always a lunatic in regard to other criminals, he openly maintained that a burglar was the worst of men, and that kindness was utterly thrown away upon him. He never had any more burglars in his house, though the dog now and then lunched off warm leg when some stranger to that

part of the country ventured into the Hoskins's premises at night. Hoskins was very fond of the animal, which was quite right, but his practice of leaving a bottle of whiskey, with an ounce of strychnine in it, on the dining-room table every night, in case a burglar should succeed in getting into the house, was, in my opinion, going a little too far. Antimonial wine would have been much more humane and sufficiently effective. But there is no man who is more severe than a philanthropist who has been turned sour."





"MADE HIM WASH AT THE PUMP."

Experiences of a 'Varsity Oar.

BY AN "OLD BLUE."

(F. C. DRAKE.)

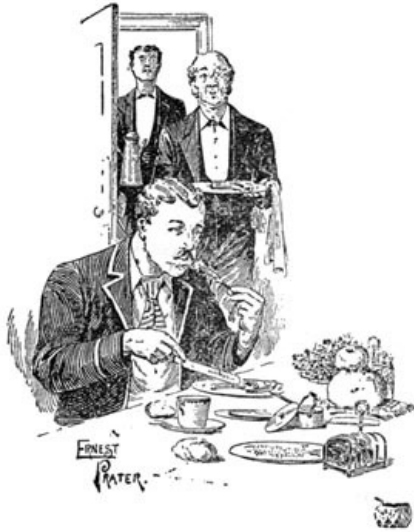
ILLUSTRATIONS BY ERNEST PRATER.

Rowing in the University Boat Race is not a thing to be undertaken lightly. To begin with, it involves great muscular exertion; but this is not unpleasant, and, as I shall presently show, is not dangerous. Further, it ties the aspirant to his oar for at least ten weeks, which is perhaps its greatest disadvantage; and it involves intense application and a pretty good temper under remarks from the "coach" that are sometimes almost more than caustic. But against these drawbacks are to be set the pleasure of gratified ambition, the healthy life, and, best of all, the sensation of the flight of the boat driven by eight men, of whom none are really bad oarsmen, and some are uncommonly good. Putting these side by side, no one need wonder that an old Blue should look on the time he spent at Putney as one of the best in his life.

I will pass over the preliminary work at the University, for it contains nothing novel or interesting, and is mainly consumed in settling the crew who are finally to row, and in getting the men "hard" by long, steady work, to get rid of fat and replace it by muscle. The real interest begins when the crew has been settled, and the men have had their colours given them, and are looking forward shortly to leaving the home waters. By this time they are fairly "fit," and, as they have in all cases of doubt had the very best medical opinions, they are not very likely to go wrong. There is a good deal of nonsense talked about the dangers of this race to health. No man who is not absolutely sound in wind and limb is allowed to begin training at all, for the obvious reason that the captain does not want one of his men to fail him at the last moment. It is about as probable that a man should go tiger shooting without looking to see if his rifle is loaded, as that the President of a University Boat Club should select an oarsman who is likely to "crock up."

It is when the crew leave the home waters that the really enjoyable part of the training begins. The Cambridge crew generally, and the Oxford men not infrequently, go straight to Putney, but a far more pleasant plan is to spend a week or so on the up-river waters before going to the Metropolitan course. Everyone knows Cookham in its summer dress, with a plentiful crowd of holiday-makers on the water; but in the very early spring, before the foliage has begun to appear, and when the light-hearted champagne bottle still nestles in its straw, it has also a very great charm of its own. The fresh air, and the change to new scenes, together with the strong stream caused by winter rains, make the men feel like young bullocks, and the boat moves with twice the spring it had before. The jolly lounging life in between whiles, diversified with songs, saloon-pistols, and the like, the pleasant walk over the hills on Sunday, and the total freedom from all thoughts and cares, beyond the beating of a record over the course next day, all go to make up an Elysian life.

Every now and then the amusement is varied by the rather boisterous humour of the elements. Some five years ago the state of the tide at Putney rendered it necessary to do most of the work early in the morning. It was freezing hard, with occasional showers of snow, and the coxswain absolutely was able to stand his coat up when he took it off. It had got drenched, and was frozen stiff! I have several times been in a boat when we had to land and empty out the water, that had broken over the bow oars in such quantities as almost to sink us. Occasionally, boats have quite sunk from the same cause, while the men stuck to their thwarts, presenting a comic appearance as they rowed away, seated, as it seemed, in the water.



“A WORK OF GENIUS.”

A great consideration in estimating the happiness of such a time as this is the question, “What did you have to eat?” But the answer to this has been given so many times that it would be merely wearisome now to detail the various dishes that are or are not “good for training.” Enough to say that, as everybody knows, the old rigorous system of raw beef and beer is a thing of the past—except the beer. Nowadays, it is considered sufficient to banish all very unwholesome things from the table, while keeping as nearly as possible to each man’s ordinary diet. In point of quantity there are practically no restrictions, unless the Captain considers that any man does not know when he has had enough (which, alas! may occur); in which case he may remonstrate with him gently, but firmly. I have seen a man eat for breakfast a sole and a half, three chops, a poached egg, and some watercress; but I confess that this was regarded as a work of genius. The ordinary man in training eats only about twice as much as any sane person, or perhaps a little more; and as, of course, the system needs recuperating under the great strains that are put upon it, this trifling excess has its justification.

However, the result of this wear and tear and repair of the muscular tissue is that the activity of the mind decreases in inverse proportion to that of the body; and during a hard course of training the rowing man is generally rather sleepy and unintellectual. This matters all the less that studies are forbidden—not a very difficult rule to enforce—during the latter part of the time. But training once over, the strength and health accumulated can certainly do no harm either physical or mental, and a healthy body is the best guarantee for an active mind (see Latin authors and copybooks *passim*).

About three weeks or less before the race a move is made to Putney, where, as a general rule, very comfortable quarters are provided. The pleasantest of all that the Oxford crew have had lately has been the Lyric Club House; but it is not really a good place for the men’s health. Lying, as it does, just down by the river, the air is not half so bracing as that of the higher ground. Still, it is undoubtedly very convenient to have a billiard-table or two to while away the men’s time in the evening. Without something of the kind time is apt to hang very heavily on their hands. Conversation flags, the chairs feel very comfortable after the day’s work, and Morpheus, drowsy god, steals in unawares. Now, this is not only bad hygienically, but is apt to have very awkward consequences of a different kind. One man more wakeful than the rest casts his eye around, seeking for his prey. He spies an unfortunate lapped in profoundest sleep. His hand steals out and clutches a book. He hurls it—and in a moment all is confusion. Each man, starting from his guilty slumbers, springs up to cast the proverbial stone, and in this case usually a book, at his fellow-sinner, vowing that he has been watching the nodding of the victim, and only waiting for the proper moment to visit him with condign punishment. And so, with protestations, objurgations, and such light and cheerful pastime, the hours roll away till the happy 10.30 comes, when all incontinently roll off to bed.



“LAPPED IN PROFOUNDDEST SLEEP.”



“TAKE IT OFF.”

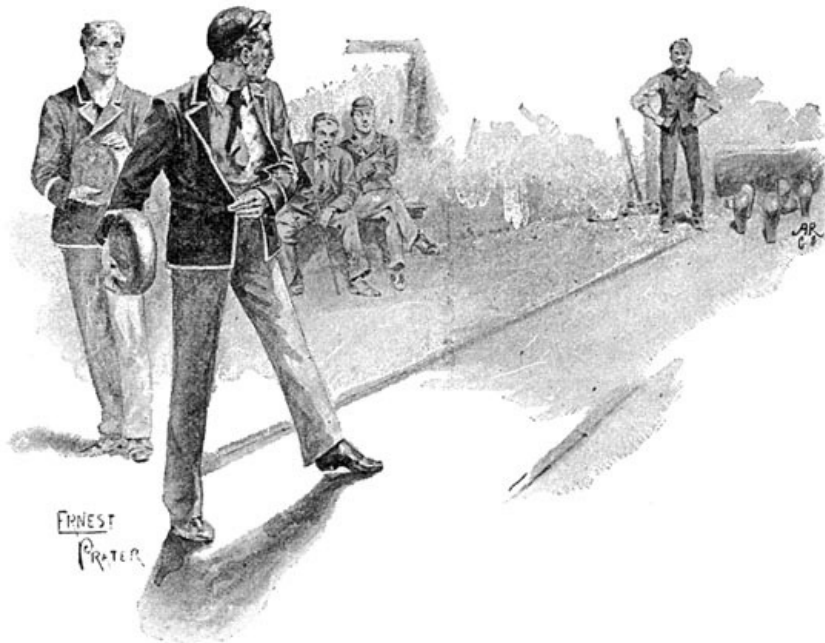
But if the men go to bed early, they make up for it by rising early too; and if they are sleepy at night, they feel delightfully fresh in the morning. A brisk walk over the common sends the human barometer spinning upwards; they feel ready for any fun that comes in their way. And, alas! did not this same buoyancy of spirit not many years ago involve certain respectable oarsmen in a difference with the executive? *Tacenda*, indeed! Yet if a rabbit springs up out of the gorse, and the dogs are off in full cry, can nature in such a mood be stubborn?

In between whiles the men are left almost entirely to themselves, and are free to seek what innocent diversion they please. The choice certainly is not very varied. Beyond paying a visit to the opposing crew, chatting with friends who have come to see the practices, or looking in at the local skittle alley, there is very little to do. But if they lack diversion themselves, they do not fail to cause great delight to the juvenile population of Barnes and Putney. It must be premised, for the benefit of all who are not *habitués* of Putney, that the crews always wear during their training the coat and cap of their University Boat Club, and flannel trousers. There are reasons which make this a very necessary and laudable practice; but in the juvenile mind it gives rise to the most uncompromising scorn, which finds various ways of expressing itself. “Take it off” is one of the most popular of these, and though it certainly suffers from a lack of originality, it appears to give great satisfaction. Another, more recondite, but perhaps ironical, is “Put it on.” “Where’s yer trousers?” “Go it, white legs!” “Who’s yer hatter?” and many similar cries, all testify to the joyous humour of the riverside youth.

Hardly less amusing are the comments of the crowd as the men pass through to their boat-house. “That’s Nickalls,” explains the well-informed gentleman as a Cambridge man goes by. Or, as the lightweight hurries past, “Don’t look as if ‘e could do it,” remarks a bystander, “looks to want a day out at grass for them calves.” Or, “‘Ere, I say, ‘e’s eat a bit of beef in his day, I know,” as the heavy man comes in sight. It is a good-humoured crowd, and if the strong tobacco is a bit offensive when one’s not allowed to smoke oneself, things can’t be always as we should like them to be.



“E’S EAT A BIT OF BEEF IN HIS DAY.”



“GETTING RID OF FAT.”

It is the custom for the Oxford crew to use the London Rowing Club boat-house, while the Cambridge men are accommodated at the Leander Club next door, and there is accordingly a good crowd in front of each at practice times, eager to see the men on whose prowess their own modest half-crowns are staked. Unfortunately, as some of my readers may have experienced, it is not always easy to find out the exact time when the crews are going out. In fact, the Captain is an autocrat on these occasions, who rules alike over crew, critics, and the general public without distinction of persons, and who shows a splendid indifference for the latter’s convenience. He launches the boat at all kinds of wondrous times, not shrinking from starting half-an-hour or more before the time he has arranged, and thus disappointing a number of would-be spectators. It is even said that he often chooses parts of the river for doing the hard work where there are no well-known landmarks, so that no clear “line” can be given to the outside public. This may be so. The workings of the Presidential mind are dark and mysterious. But I doubt if the convenience of the public has sufficient weight with him either one way or the other to influence his plans in that manner. And though perhaps this indifference may be carried too far, yet the idea which underlies it is a perfectly just one. The University Boat Race began as a private match, of a more or less impromptu character (those were the days when they rowed from Westminster to Putney in a huge Noah’s Ark of a boat, and stopped for beer and biscuits on the way down, and when, it is said, the Speaker of the House of Commons used to leave the chair to let the M.P.’s run out and see the start—but we digress). Then, by degrees, it attained to its present position of a great festive gathering of the many-headed, where only about one in every ten cares to glance at the race as it goes by. But, above all things, the race is, and has been, a purely sporting event. The British lion may put on his holiday suit and gamble to his heart’s content on the bank, but the sole concern of the Captain of either crew is to bring his men well up to the scratch, and have a thoroughly good, honest race. He has nothing to do with letting the spectators know the real state

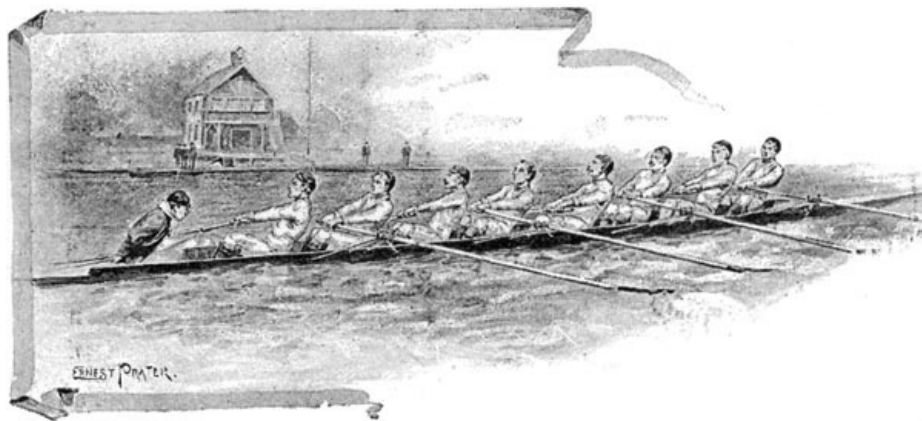
of the odds, or helping them to win their money.

It must be confessed that, in spite of the many pleasures indicated as belonging to this training, one gets very tired of it, just as one might tire of living in Arcadia, if, as is probable, there were no Club or Italian Opera there. It is with considerable joy, therefore, that one hails the approach of the race when it is still a week off; but this feeling is apt to be modified as the days draw on after that. "Funk," of course, attacks everybody more or less; but its violence differs very widely in different men. Many of the most unlikely people are most liable to it; and it would probably astonish a good many people were I to say who is the "funkiest" oarsman before a race that I know. I mean by "funk," not the under-estimating of one's chances—for some of the most nervous men have a very shrewd idea of them—but the irrational excitement which keeps the brain constantly thinking of the impending race, and prevents the sufferer from sitting still or having any comfort, or, in the most serious cases, any sleep, for two or three days before it. It is a real malady, which is most distressing to those who are subject to it, but which, luckily, does not do any harm when once the race is begun.

Of the race itself there is very little to say, except one thing, that could not be said equally well of a hard game of football or a foot race across country. The exertion is, no doubt, considerably greater than is involved in either of these, but the physical sensations are very much the same, and anyone who has entered for any race at all knows the sort of feeling of desperate resolve which is the pleasure that racing gives. Except one thing, I said, and it is that thing which puts boat racing, in many people's minds, far above any other form of sport. It is this, that while in a foot race a man can leave off as soon as he finds the exertion more than the prize is worth, and while in football a man may recover his breath in the scrimmage or justifiably leave the work for a moment to the others, in rowing every man knows that, by a single careless stroke, he may throw the whole boat into a confusion from which they often cannot recover for many hundred yards. Everyone is expected in a boat race, and in a University race as much as anywhere, to row his best and hardest every stroke he takes, and never to slack off at all. If it is considered desirable to save up for a spurt at the finish, the "stroke" will do that by putting in a few less strokes to the minute till the time comes. Every man behind him is bound in honesty to the rest to shove every stroke through "as if there were no hereafter"; and when the "hereafter" comes, as it does about Chiswick Eyot, he will have to rely on the thorough condition he is in to pull him through. It follows that the whole secret of a good crew is that each man rows hard because it would not be fair to his neighbours in the boat if he rowed lightly, not entirely because he wants to win the race. I do not want to disparage other sports in the least degree; pluck enters into them fully as much as into rowing. The difference lies in the incentive.

Boat races, of course, vary very much in the amount of excitement they afford; not differing in this from any other sort of contest. Of the last five races, that of '91 was the most keenly contested, though the '90 race runs it very close. Both of them were ding-dong struggles all the way, now one boat and then the other taking the lead, and neither of them were really won till the post was passed. Closer finishes have been known, though hardly beating these in point of excitement during the race itself. The well-known dead heat of '77 is an instance; on which occasion legend hath it that the ancient umpire had been regaling himself hard by, and arrived on the scene as the boats shot by the post, too flustered to take any very accurate observations. However, as both crews were pretty confident that they had won, his decision displayed no small share of that low cunning that used to make a successful umpire.

But all things have an end. The long training is passed, and you are seated in the boat. The race gets finished, one way or the other, and you are seated at the festive board. The dinner vanishes from the table, and you wake up next morning feeling very glad when you remember you can stop an hour longer in bed. And the vision of an editor is at hand to hint that these reminiscences must not prove an exception to the general rule, but must also come to a conclusion.





Is Childhood the Happiest or the most Miserable Period of One's Existence?

**G. R. Sims
says it
depends
upon the
child.**

It depends so much upon the child. As a child, my greatest delight was to give swagger dinner parties to my brothers and sisters in the nursery on winter afternoons, when we could not go out. The principal delicacy in these entertainments was an orange *sorbet* specially prepared by my own hands. Here is the recipe. Squeeze into a small cup the juice of half an orange, fill up with snow, scraped from the outside window sill, and serve cold. Now, although the preparation of this delightful delicacy gave me an immense amount of happiness, I could rarely induce any grown-up people to partake of it. Then there was a wine which always graced the table at our nursery feasts. We called it currant wine, and made it by putting a handful of grocer's currants into a wineglass, filling up with cold water, and stirring the mixture up with a piece of firewood until the liquid was a rich brown. I have often, in later life, paid fifteen shillings for a bottle of champagne, and not felt half so happy over it as I used to be over a teaspoonful of our own home-made currant wine. In these matters childhood *was* the happiest period of my life. With regard to the enjoyment of "games," I never played many as a child, but as a man I have derived the greatest possible pleasure from them. I never learned to skip till I was thirty, and at thirty-five my greatest delight was a game of battledore and shuttlecock. Now that I am turned forty I have given up violent exercise, and taken to playing with boxes of bricks and tin soldiers. I am sure that I am far happier with them, now, than I was as a child. In my old nursery days I always quarrelled with my brothers and sisters about our toys, and we generally finished up by throwing them at each other. Now I can sit on the floor in the long winter evenings and perform the most wonderful architectural feats with my box of bricks, and nobody thinks of interfering with me. With my soldiers, too, I am much happier. I can place the French and German armies in battle array, and devote my mind entirely to complex strategical operations without having to keep one eye on the armies and the other on the baby. Our baby was always putting my soldiers in his mouth; and, on one occasion, he completely crippled the Russian forces by swallowing their only general at a critical moment. So far as toys are concerned I am sure that childhood was *not* the happiest period of my life. The real charm of childhood, however, is its lack of the sense of responsibility. It is the sense of responsibility which comes with manhood that destroys the charm of life, and makes us think of our irresponsible childhood with regret. A child hasn't to trouble about the rent, or the butcher's bill, or of what the world will think of it, or of the duties it owes to society, to the family, or to itself. At the cost of a few tears or a sustained shriek it can get almost anything it wants, and it is waited on hand and foot at somebody else's expense. It has absolutely no responsibility beyond being occasionally left alone in the nursery with a little brother or sister, with instructions to see that baby doesn't fall into the fire. This, bar the bother of having to grab the baby violently by the hair to keep it from mischief, is ideal happiness; and I have known some children to whom the hair grabbing was a pleasure rather than a duty. It is the "responsibility" which comes with age which always causes us to compare it unfavourably with childhood. In another matter, manhood compares favourably with childhood. A man can be as naughty as he likes, and there is nobody to whip him unless he is a garrotter. Childhood is *not* the happiest period for those who like to be naughty, and naughtiness is the general idea of happiness. If it were not so everybody would try to be good. Up to the time of going to press no really popular movement in that direction has been discovered by

**Miss Clo
Graves
thinks it an
unpleasant
period.**

The first thing a baby does is to howl. If that child knew that he had got a joyous, gamesome time before him, he wouldn't. He would smile. But one of the most endearing characteristics of childhood is its candour, and the baby knows that croup lies waiting round the corner to seize him by the throat, that thrush lurks in the imperfectly-washed feeding-bottle, that wind-spasms and teething convulsions only wait their opportunity to mark him for their prey, and so he howls:

"Ah! (*A pant.*)

Ah-ha! AH! (*A pause to gather forces.*)

Ah-ha! Ah-ha! Ah-ha!

Ah! AH! E'EE!"

(*Fortissimo, crescendo, and ad libitum.*)

The nurse will be likely to say it is a pin, but it is not. It is because the baby guesses what it has got to go through before it grows up. If ever it grows up at all. There is a period between childhood and maturity of which one doesn't want to write. No man likes to remember that he was once a long-legged, red-wristed hobbledohoy, who drowned his freckles in blushes when girls, who did not happen to be his sisters, looked at him, and shaved surreptitiously with his mother's scissors. No woman cares about looking back to the days when she had thick ankles, which her skirts were not long enough to cover; when she wore her hair in a pigtail, because she was too old to wear it loose upon her shoulders, and too young to turn it up; when the front hooks and eyes of her frock were always bursting off, and her sister's sweethearts used to call her "little girl." A humiliating experience altogether, the period of adolescence. But more humiliating still it is to be a mature, grown-up person, and know how far off you are from being the wonderful creature you intended to be, when you began the world. You did not contemplate being exactly beautiful—it is not for everyone to achieve that—but you meant to be commanding. You were going to do everything well: to succeed gloriously—to be distinguished and brilliant—knock lumps off this poor old globe, in fact. And now—well—you haven't! The clay you're made of is the ordinary kind: not the blue earth diamonds grow in. You might make up for your absolute lack of individuality by a brilliant suicide. But you don't. You're too commonplace. You're contented to go on being nobody. This may be a calm state, but it is certainly not a happy one.

**But there
are
exceptions.**

And yet there is a childhood which is, maybe, the happiest period of our existence. Not the time of the shining morning face—of the curled top-knot—for to the excoriating action of the soaped towel was due that facial polish, and the twisting of the damped hair around the long-tailed ivory brush was attended with the shedding of bitter tears of rage and pain. But the second edition of the Book of Infancy, bound in shrivelled yellow leather and printed in faded ink. "The world," say the slippered pantaloons and the mumbling grandame, "was a fine place when we were young." And what is more, they really believe it. He was strong, fascinating and handsome—she was clever and beautiful. Both may say so as often as they like, and everybody credits them—because they are so old. *Comple et amur illam et amemus: plena est voluptatis si illâ scias uti.* Come, gentle Dotage! Shade me with thy kindly wing, lend me thy rose-coloured horn-glasses! Let me view the Past, not as it was, but as I would have had it. So shall the children cluster round my knee, and listen, wide-eyed and envying, as I tell them of the golden days of *my* childhood, and the young people sigh, hearing of the brave and brilliant, beautiful and noble things that never happened in the bygone time when I was young. Only the middle-aged folk look a little doubtful, and Death, leaning over the back of my armchair, laughs outright, and taps me—as a reproving nurse might—on the withered lips with one bony finger-tip. After which I fall asleep, and am carried away to bed.

**Alden
philosophises**

I have not been a child for several years; it is unnecessary to mention the precise number, but I have a clear recollection of the period. My childhood was certainly happy, so far as I was personally concerned, but I will not go so far as to say that it was a source of unmixed happiness to others. As to whether childhood is the happiest or the most miserable part of our existence, there is so much to be said on both sides that I am almost inclined to answer the question in a judicious and statesmanlike way, by saying that I yield to no one in my profound appreciation of the wide-reaching importance of the question, and that the day will certainly come when the awakened conscience of the

nation will demand its settlement in accordance with right and justice. When that time arrives I need hardly say that I shall be found on the side of justice, but I am not yet wholly convinced that the time has fully arrived. In the meantime, however, I do not hesitate to say that in those cases where childhood is happier than mature age there can be but little doubt among thinking men of all shades of belief that maturity is, in some respects, at least less demonstrably happy than childhood. Now that would be eminently judicious, but, on the other hand, it would look like an underhanded attempt to introduce politics into the *Idler*. It will be better, therefore, to treat the subject in a philosophic way. The question which the Editors of the *Idler* ask is, after all, a question as to the relative advantages of Idealism and Realism—spelled with the largest kind of capital letters. The small boy is ordinarily an Idealist, unless, of course, he belongs to the unhappy class of small boys who have to earn their own living when they ought to be at play, and who, having no time for dreaming, become Realists of the most hardened and painful type. In the former case the small boy is happy, for he lives in a world of his own creation, and for the purpose of happiness such a world is far better than the actual world. In the latter case he is generally more or less unhappy, for he is compelled to see the world as it really is, and he finds it not all nice. The realistic small boy can have very little true happiness. Fancy M. Zola's childhood: assuming, of course, that he was then a Realist, which he probably was not, judging from the fact that he is only a Realist professionally at the present day. To the childish Zola, life must have presented itself as a series of human documents. He saw things as they were, not as a small boy should see them. He could have had no genuine longings for a life of piracy, for he saw that the pirate, instead of being a gorgeously-dressed and nobly-chivalrous hero, was only a brutal ruffian travelling on the road to Execution Dock. Tin soldiers could have brought him no happiness, for he knew that they were only lifeless bits of tin, as incapable of fighting as the army of Monaco. It gave him no pleasure to be dressed in a pasteboard helmet and to wear a tin sword, for he knew that grown-up people would not mistake him for a soldier; and that a blue flannel shirt, and a cap with the name of some frigate on a silk ribbon, would not lead foreigners to believe that he was a French admiral at the age of seven. He may have found some little pleasure in playing marbles—not, of course, for the sake of that silly game, but for the reason that marbles are portable property, and that the more marbles a boy wins the richer he is—but for all other boyish diversions he must have felt a profound contempt.

**And
doesn't
know.**

Beyond all doubt M. Zola would say that he is happier to-day (with "Nana" in its 150th thousand) than he was in his childhood, but that is because his childhood was devoid of Idealism. On the other hand, if I may be pardoned for mentioning myself in the same paragraph with the greatest novelist of all time, my own childhood was happy because

I lived purely in a world of the imagination. There never was a bolder or more truly noble pirate than I was during the hour of the Sunday sermon, when I whiled away the good clergyman's discourse by sweeping the seas in my piratical schooner, and harrowing the Spanish Main. My tin soldiers were flesh and blood heroes, my kites flew nearly to the outer limits of the solar system, and I never quite lost the belief that I could dig a tunnel to China with the kitchen fire-shovel, had the cook only had sufficient scientific zeal to be willing to lend it to me for a few hours. I was very happy then, but I am equally happy now. I have never got over the Idealism of my childhood, and I make my own political and social world to-day quite as irrationally and delightfully as I did eighty—well, when I was a child. I do find, I admit, that one cannot be an Idealist in financial matters, which is, after all, the main source of unhappiness in mature life, but if you ask me whether I was happier in childhood than I am now, I should not know how to answer. All of which goes to show that I might have done better if I had stuck to the safe and judicious in my attempted answer, instead of yielding to the temptation to be philosophical.

**Miss
Florence
Marryat
thinks it
the most
miserable.**

If I am to choose one, or the other, extreme, I should say decidedly the most miserable, and made so by the folly, ignorance, or neglect of parents. Not one-hundredth part of the men and women who marry are fit to become fathers and mothers. Who does not pity the wretched little mortal whom one meets, dressed up in some fantastic or grotesque costume, to gratify the vanity of those who own it, forbidden to run or play, for fear of spoiling the velvet tunic, or silken sash—unable to be comfortable even, on account of buttoned boots and kid gloves? A child is simply a young animal. Give it warmth and food and liberty, and it will be happy and hungry and healthy! To dress it up in the fashion, and let it be dragged at the heels of an indifferent nursemaid along a pavement, is tantamount to confining a puppy by a heavy chain to a kennel. I believe the greatest misery of children arises from their being so culpably trusted to the care of servants. A fashionable mother engages a head-nurse, who is well-mannered, respectful, and

experienced, and thereupon delivers over her children to her entire jurisdiction, perfectly content if they appear before her, at stated periods, clean and neat, with smiling faces. She little knows how (in the majority of instances) the poor little creatures are coerced, by nursery discipline, not to betray their real feelings for the woman who has them under her influence day and night.

**And gives
the reason
why.**

At one time, when I walked daily in Hyde Park, I constantly met a nurse whose behaviour to the children under her charge excited my greatest indignation. If one of the little ones lagged behind with the nursemaid, or whimpered, because it was cold or tired, the head-nurse would shake it by the arm, or strike it across the head with such violence as to upset its equilibrium, and her voice at all times was harsh and repellent. I knew it would be useless to speak to her, but one day I followed her home to a house in Park Lane, and, sending up my card, asked if I could speak to the mistress of it. The flunky informed me she was Lady—let us say, “the Lord knows who”—and I was presently admitted to her presence. I did not stand on ceremony with “Lady the Lord knows who.” I told her I made no excuse for disturbing her, because if she loved her children she would be very much obliged to me for telling her, from my personal observation, that she had (unconsciously no doubt) trusted them to the care of a woman who was not fit to take charge of a dog. Her ladyship heard me to the end, and then, rising grandly, touched the bell for her flunky and said, “Many thanks for the trouble you have taken, but I have the utmost confidence in my attendants.” And so I was bowed out again. How many parents live with the little children they have brought into the world? How many teach them, or explain to them, all they want to know? It is too much trouble! All that sort of thing is delegated to hirelings. How often has one heard an intelligent child snubbed for the very questioning which should be encouraged! The bright, eager little brain, just opening, as it were, to all the wonders of living, is bursting to know the why and wherefore of everything it sees, and for answer to its excited enquiries it only gets such rebuffs as “Don’t worry!” “Hold your tongue!” “If you don’t behave yourself I’ll send you out of the room.” Which of us who have brains cannot remember the heart-sickening feeling of having in some unconscious manner done wrong by asking questions which our elders were probably too ignorant to answer? And then followed the intense longing to be “grown-up,” and independent. Can’t we all remember that longing to be “grown-up?” Is it not in itself an answer to the question if childhood is not a miserable period, except perhaps for a favoured few?

**Phillpotts
temporises.**

I fail to see how you can assert or deny upon this question. There are thousands of happy children in the world, and thousands as miserable as any grown-up person. It depends entirely upon those responsible for the individual infant; and a babe’s environment is really unimportant, because, before intelligence sets in, a child wants little more than warmth and good food, and general looking after. At that early period the human young are on much the same level as cats and dogs. My dog is just as happy as the Prince of Wales’s Pomeranian, because I satisfy him; social distinction has no charm for him; bones and literary society are sufficient for a creature devoid of conscious intelligence. In the same way an infant may be happy at a workhouse, perhaps even more so than in a Park Lane nursery—if there are such things as Park Lane nurseries. But it is when intellect dawns, and a child is able himself to say whether he is happy or unhappy, that he becomes interesting. Then, as before, his measure of joy or sorrow must depend upon those fellow-creatures who form his society. Probably the rule that obtains of men and women holds good of children also: the less brain power the more happiness. Intellect—especially a growing intellect—will give a child lightning flashes of joy denied to his more thick-headed brother; but much sorrow must also result from his extra intelligence. If he rises higher, he will sink far lower, too. The placid, ordinary youth thinks less, and digests his food better, and has a pleasanter time, on the whole. A sensitive child feels with a keen freshness that only years can blunt. To see some fool of a man crushing a clever child is heart-rending. By curious, misguided instincts, children always look up to their full-grown companions; and the result is, that any adult ass can nip in the bud precious childish fancies, or make fatuous and crushing replies to childish inquiries, which show in themselves the trembling dawn of an intellect far superior to his own.

**And says
that clever
men loathe**

As a rule, you will find that clever men look back at their childhood with lively loathing, while the average Briton, if Heaven has given him enough memory to recall his earliest youth at all, says that it was all right as far as he can remember. In my own small case (and, after all,

childhood. personal experience is never uninteresting—to the person), I can say that until I went to a day-school at the age of seven, or it may have been less, I had a fairly good time. Open air has a great deal to do with happiness in a child—open air and plenty of wholesome food, and satisfactory parents. Not that the victim cares overmuch for rice-puddings or a good mother; but these things leave their mark. As to mothers, I should say they have got more men and women into Heaven than any bishop, priest, deacon, or professional Churchman whatsoever. Personally, I am still here, and should be the last to make sure of anything, or count my own chickens before they are hatched, but I have the privilege of knowing men and women, to the number of at least five, who are undoubtedly bound for Golden Shores; and it was their mothers' doing in every case. Fathers, too, have their significance, but it is purely temporal, and never much concerns an infant until the child reaches that advanced platform of intelligence whereon questions concerning pocket-money arise.

Mrs. Panton thinks it ought to be the happiest. There would be no difficulty whatever in replying to the question, if it runs, "*Should* childhood be the happiest or most miserable period of our existence?" because, I am sure, we should one and all agree that it most certainly should: for we have no cares then, no responsibilities; our clean pinafores are worn without the least notice of what they cost to wash; our dinners, if unappetising, are regular, and, if they are not paid for, do not weigh upon either our minds or our bodies; while we neither look forward nor backward, and enjoy our existence from day to day with all the freedom from care and anxiety which, we suppose, characterises the life of a puppy or a kitten. But all this presupposes that we are not in the group of tyrants, either in the nursery, schoolroom, or dining-room, and that those who have charge of us remember their own days of childhood: recollect all the dreams, threats, and fancies which can turn them into a period of absolute torture; and, above all, consider that a child is not a sheet of plain blank paper, but that it is a composite arrangement of all the ancestors that one can remember, and of many that one cannot: for unless this is so, no words of mine can describe the misery that can be inflicted on a sensitive, dreamy child, who, to a certain extent, is heavily handicapped in the race of life by the feeble vitality which, as a rule, accompanies such a disposition, and who all too often is made a liar by harsh dealing, and an invalid in life by the hardening process, so dear to the hearts of so many fathers, mothers, and governesses. If, on the contrary, a child is carefully studied—if it be regarded as one by itself and not a sample of a batch, which must be just as are its brothers and sisters—I maintain that childhood must be the very happiest time that we can have: the dreams and happenings, which fill our nights and days, make both equally delightful, while if we are tired to death by lessons and the daily walk, we soon grow out of this, because we can build our own castles in the air out of the driest possible task, and make long and elaborate romances for ourselves out of the—most likely very commonplace—people we meet on our morning scamper. Then, too, was there not the never-to-be-forgotten joy of the yearly visit to the sea, and an equally well-loved return to our usual routine in London, to say nothing of the fascinations of making up one's mind on the subject of what one was going to be, and how one was to benefit and astonish a world that up to the present time has not seemed quite to come up to our expectations on the subject? Undoubtedly then I say, if the child is in proper hands, that childhood is the happiest time we can possibly have.

Barry Pain says childish happiness is a delusion. I have never understood the feelings of those who are sorry that they are full-grown. To different children there is, of course, a different childhood; but, as a rule, the happiness of childhood is a delusion, and the peace of the perambulator a myth. I believe that any brave and intelligent man can count on the fingers of one hand the things that would really hurt him seriously; the longer you live, the more you realise how few things are really important. But the troubles of childhood are numberless. The agony of terror is alone enough to make childhood the most miserable part of one's existence. The dead came out of their graves and walked into my nursery by night; I dared not open my eyes lest I should see them. There was a waiting figure behind every curtain in dim-lit passages. There were pictures in books that haunted me; I knew two or three of them well—I knew the page on which they came. I opened the book and turned almost up to the dreaded page, and then waited; but I had to go on always. I had to see the eyes staring into mine, and the lips writhing. Then I shut the book quickly, and went away to do something or other that would take my mind away from the picture. I am glad that I am grown-up; I should not care to endure such maddening terrors again. I was far too much ashamed of them then to speak of them; that made them worse. I think that no one who, as a child, was afraid of the dark, would look back upon childhood as the pleasantest period of his life. And, if a child has more troubles than a man, he

undoubtedly has fewer pleasures. A child's pleasures are mostly due to its love of acquisition, its vanity, or its appetite being temporarily satisfied. From its natural affection for its parents or friends—if that affection is very strong—it gets far more suffering than pleasure. Any man of average intelligence can do better than that; he has work that interests him, books, or music, or pictures that mean far more to him than any child's pleasure means to the child. It is easy to love children; one of the chief reasons is that pity is akin to love. And on this question of the unhappiness of childhood, I would sooner trust a man's memory than a child's direct statement.

**Barr is
sorry for
the small
boy.**

The small boy, poor little chap, lives under the most galling despotism that exists on the face of the earth. There is no court of appeal for him. His father is at once his judge, his opposing counsel, his public prosecutor, as it were, his jailer, and his executioner. Every man is a natural tyrant. It has taken centuries of bloodshed and martyrdom on the part of the oppressed to obtain even the poor semblance of liberty that we flatter ourselves we possess. Kings have been beheaded, thrones have been overturned, cities have been given to the flames, and countries have suffered pillage and rapine, all to knock it into the head of that tyrannical brute, man, that, on the whole, it is better not to force his despotism on his fellow-creatures. Yet, human nature has not changed in the least, and where man has full sway, he is as much a tyrant to-day as he was five hundred years ago. Nations have been emancipated, but the kingdom of which the small boy is a subject remains what it always was. Nature, who is a well-meaning blunderer, has tried to set things right, first by planting some natural affection for his small boy into the stony heart of the parent, and, second, by making the small boy himself an optimist. Happily, there is always a silver lining to the cloud that hovers over the small boy, even when the cane is descending upon him. Trifles please the poor little fellow and help him to forget the gloom which surrounds him. Coventry Patmore, in that most touching poem, "The Toys," tells of a father who struck his motherless son, and sent him weeping to bed, and, being tardily remorseful, the father looked at the sleeping boy, whose undried tears were still on his cheek, and found that before going to sleep the stricken lad had arranged his trivial toys, all the cherished possessions of his pocket, so that his eyes might rest on them "to comfort his sad heart."

**But the
future
small boy
will have
still more
trouble.**

The small boy does not gain much when he exchanges the tyranny of the home for the tyranny of the school. The schoolmaster is naturally a despot, but he is a despot, limited. To make up for any advantages accruing from the master's limitations, the urchin has to put up with the bullying of the big boy. Possibly there are teachers who have human feelings, as far as the small boy is concerned. We read of such persons in books like "Tom Brown's Schooldays," but it must not be forgotten that these books are works of fiction. The lad who wrote that his master was a beast, but a just beast, may not have been exceptionally lucky, but it is sad to think that the small boy often comes under the dominion of beasts who are not just. But even if masters were all that could be desired, think of the amount of perfectly useless knowledge that a small boy is expected to acquire. How happy was the small boy of 1065 compared with the small boy of 1893. When William the Conqueror, with a man's usual heedlessness of the comfort of small boys, came over in 1066 and popularised that date, he inaugurated a long succession of useless dates that the small boy is compelled to learn. Every monarch has had four figures attached to him, like a picture in an exhibition. Yet was there ever a man stopped in the streets of London, and suddenly confronted with the question, "What year did Henry VIII. come to the throne?" Certainly not. A man would be considered insane who expected any rational being to burden his mind with such trivialities. Yet the small boy is caned if he doesn't know. The only consolation I can offer the unfortunate small boy of to-day is that it will be ever so much worse for the small boy born 3000 years from now. Every day, objectionable and thoughtless men are discovering new things. Then dates will keep accumulating just as they have always been in the habit of doing. Possibly a new specimen of that detestable type of humanity, Euclid, will arise, and perhaps some conscienceless villain may invent a more complicated system of mathematics than algebra. You never can tell what may happen in 3000 years. So the small boy of 1893 may congratulate himself that he is not the small boy of 4893.

**Mrs.
Fenwick
Miller**

Childhood ought to be the happiest period of humanity's course; for children are free from the two great sources of grief and wretchedness—the struggle for money and the consciousness of sex. The children of the poor know a want of many comforts, but this is not a source of

thinks it depends upon the parents.

unhappiness. Absolute necessities of life, the only true wants of childhood, are so few, and all that is really needed by anybody apart from custom or imagination is so cheap, that I do not think that more than a small minority of children are unhappy from actual want. But we, their elders, painfully and acutely want a thousand things because we have tasted them, or because we have imaginations developed to fancy effectively how we should enjoy them; and then we must needs try to get them, and make ourselves wretched in the furious effort after satisfying our desires, and more wretched still because we don't fully succeed. If we could take life as children in this respect, actively wanting only absolute necessities, and not having to ourselves strive for even the money by which that minimum of wants is to be supplied, would not most of our troubles of this actual moment vanish? Those that remained, would they not nearly all (given health) hang on the tragic fact of sex? Oh, that garden of Gethsemane of humanity, with its blighted seedlings and its blasted blossoms! How keen are its sorrows of desires ungratified and desires satiated—its cruel losses and its yet more cruel relics that *will* remain. Oh, that dreadful fact of sex, with its emotional agonies, its moral problems, its intellectual interruptions, its social burdens, and only too often its physical pangs—if we were rid, as children are, of all that, and of the struggle for means to meet the daily material wants, should we not be fairly happy? Then childhood, free of all this, must needs be the happiest time of life!

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