

# The Project Gutenberg eBook of Adventures and Recollections, by Bill o'th' Hoylus End

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\*\*\* START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK ADVENTURES AND RECOLLECTIONS \*\*\*

Transcribed by Steven Wood from the Keighley Herald (1893).

## ADVENTURES and RECOLLECTIONS OF BILL O'TH HOYLUS END.

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TOLD BY HIMSELF.

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### CHAPTER I. [1]

[Bill o'th Hoylus End might be termed a local Will-o'th-Wisp. He has been everything by turns, and nothing long. Now, a lean faced lad, "a mere anatomy, a mountebank, a thread bare juggler, a needy, hollow-ey'd, sharp looking wretch;" now acting the pert, bragging youth, telling quaint stories, and up to a thousand raw tricks; now tumbling and adventuring into manhood with yet the oil and fire and force of youth too strong for reason's sober guidance; and now—well and now—finding the checks of time have begun to grapple him, he looks back upon the past and tells his curious stories o'er again. Verily, as Shakespeare declares in *All's Well*, "the web of his life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together;" and through it all there is a kind of history, just as

"There is a history in all men's lives,  
Figuring the nature of the times deceased."

This son of Mischief, Art and Guile has stooped to many things but to conquer himself and be his own best friend; that is, according to the conception of the ordinary, respectable, get-on folk of the world. He has followed more or less the wild, shifting impulses of his nature—restless and reckless, if aimless and harmless; fickle and passionate, if rebelliously natural; exhausting his youth and manhood in fruitless action, and devoting the moments of reflection to the playful current of the muse's fancy, forsooth, to the delectation of the more prosaic humanity in this his locality. A life of pleasure was ever his treasure, and he agrees, after experience of life's fitful dream, that

E'en Pleasure acts a treacherous part,  
She charms the scene, but stings the heart,  
And while she gulls us of our wealth,  
Or that superior pearl, our health,

[Yet, and these are the two lines he substitutes for the melancholy truth of an old poet],

Yet she restores for all the pains,  
By giving Merit her exchange.

Though the poetic flame has flickered from time to time, it has never been extinguished. There is health and buoyancy still in his muse. It is the one thing essential, the one thing permanent in his nature—ever ready to impart the mystic jingle to pictures of fun and frolic, or perchance judgement and reflection. Thus, as the local Burns, he stands unrivalled. His poetic effusions speak for themselves, but there are other traits in his career which he wished to convey to the public, which might while away an occasional half-hour in the reading of his stories of the tricks of his boyhood, the adventures of his early manhood, and to learn how he became—well, what he is! He has been caught in divers moods and at sundry times, and his words have been taken in shorthand, the endeavour always being to keep the transcript as faithful as circumstances would allow. No pretence is here made to evolve a dramatic story, but rather to present Bill's career simply and faithfully for public perusal; for to use Dr. Johnson's words, "If a man is to write a panegyric, he can keep the vices out of sight; but if he professes to write a life he must represent it really as it was."]

## MY BIRTHPLACE, HOME AND PARENTAGE

It was on the 22nd day of March, 1836, in a village midway between Keighley and Haworth, in a cottage by the wayside, that I, William Wright, first saw light. The hamlet I have just alluded to was and now is known by the name of Hermit Hole: which name, by the way, is said to have been given to it owing to the fact that a once-upon-a-timeyfied hermit abided there. At the top end of the village stood a group of houses which, also, distinguished themselves by a little individuality, and go by the name of "Hoylus End." My parents' house was one of this group. *All* this is about my home. My father was James Wright, at one time a hand-loom weaver, latterly a weft manager at Messrs W. Lund & Sons, North Beck Mills, Keighley, a position which he held for somewhere about half a century. He was the son of Jonathan Wright, farmer, Damems. My mother was a daughter of Crispin Hill, farmer and cartwright, of Harden, and she enjoyed a relationship with Nicholson, the Airedale poet. I can trace my ancestry back for a long period. The Wrights at one time belonged to the rights of Damems. Then according to Whitaker's "Craven" and "Keighley: Past and Present", "Robert Wright, senior, and Robert Wright, junior," ancestors of mine, fought with Earl de Clifford, of Skipton, on Flodden Field. I believe I am correct in saying that since that event the name of Robert has been retained in our family down to the present time—a brother of mine now holding the honour. Several of my ancestors, along with my grand father, are buried in the Keighley Parish Church-yard, at the east end. But it strikes me that I'm going astray a little.

## A MUSICAL FATHER

Many old townfolk—especially those musically inclined—will remember my father, who was a vocalist of no mean repute;—at least, this was said of him in general. Possessing a rich tenor voice, he was in great demand, both publicly and privately. He occupied the position of leading singer in the Keighley Parish Church Choir, at the time when the late Mr. B. F. Marriner and other gentlemen were prominently associated with the Church. His services were often requisitioned on the occasion of anniversaries of places of worship, &c. In those days, mind you, "t'anniversary Sunday" was regarded as a big and auspicious event. Great preparations were made for it, and when the service did take place people attended from miles around; I believe the singing was relied on as the chief "fetching" medium. But somehow or other I never did care much for singing—I really didn't. Nevertheless I ought to say we had an abundance—I was going to say over-abundance—of singing in our house; indeed, the word used is not nearly sufficiently expressive—I had singing to breakfast, singing to dinner, singing to supper, singing to go to bed—Ah! My pen was going further, but I just managed to stop it. One really must, you know, represent things as they stand.

## A MISCHIEVOUS BOYHOOD

But, as I have told you, I didn't take to singing. I would ten times ten rather be "away to the woods, away!" I recollect that when I was a little boy—my parents *said* I was a little naughty boy—I got into endless scrapes. But people will talk. Roaming in the woods had an especial charm for me; and Peace Close Wood was my favourite haunt. Some people had the bad grace to let me hear that my visits to the wood were not very much sought for. It was said that I had a habit of peeling bark off as many trees as I could conveniently—sometimes it got to be inconveniently—manage, and, in fact, doing anything that wasn't exactly up to the nines. I now feel rather sorry that I should have given my father and mother so much uneasiness, and cause my father so much expense. Of course the keeper of the wood soon got to know me and my eccentricities; it was a bad day for me when he did. It's a sad thing for you when you get suspected of aught; if all doesn't go like "square" you may look out for squalls. In my case, my father had to "turn-out" and pay for the damage I was said to have done to the trees; those upon which I left my mark had generally to come down—young trees—trees with plenty of life in them I took immensely to. But I have since thought they needn't have pestered my father as much as they did. I had many a narrow "squeak" in my boyish days. When I was about an octave of years old, I remember very feelingly an escapade which I was engaged in, as a wind-up to one of my devastating expeditions to Peace Close Wood. The steward dogged my footsteps and waylaid me, and, by Jove! he pursued me! Fortunately for me, perhaps, there was a house near the wood, the roof of which, at the rear, sloped almost to the ground. I mounted the roof and walked along the rigging. The steward took it into his "noddle" to follow suit. He did so. It was an exciting chase. I ran to the extreme edge of my elevated platform and then actually jumped—I remember the jump yet, I do—

onto the road below. The result was a visit to Baildon, to a celebrated doctor there, for an injury to my heels which I sustained by my fall. Of course the steward had more sense than to follow me. He complained, I believe, to my father; but my revered father, and mother too—how I bless them for it!—gave all attention to their little darling. I recovered. I was sent to school, which was carried on in the “Old White House,” near our house. It provided for the education of all the young blood of the village—my little self included. This school, I must say in passing, turned out some very good scholars: there was no set teacher—the “learned ‘uns” of the neighbourhood came forward and gave their services. It used to be said I was a wild dog, a harem-scarem; and I was often caned for my pranks. Caricaturing the teacher was one of my favourite attractions and principal offences—at least I had to smart most for it. But I got over it, as all boys seem to have done. Perhaps the best description of my antics before I was ten years of age will be found in the following “opinion” of the old wives of the villages of Fell-lane and Exley-head; the lines came from my pen more than thirty years ago:—

### O! HE’S A’ ILL ‘UN

Dancin’, an’ jumpin’, an’ fair going mad—  
What can be done with this wild, wicked lad?  
Plaguin’ t’poor cat till it scratches his hand,  
Or tolling some door wi’ a stone an’ a band;  
Rolling i’t’ mud as black as a coil,  
Cheeking his mates wi’ a “Ha’penny i’t’ hoil;”  
Slashin’ an’ cuttin’ wi’ a sword made o’ wood,  
Actin’ Dick Turpin or bold Robin Hood—  
T’warst little imp ‘at there is i’t’ whole street:  
O! he’s a shocker is young Billy Wreet!

Playin’ a whistle or drummin’ a can,  
Seein’ how far wi’ his fingers can span:  
Breakin’ a window wi’ throwin’ a stone,  
Then ligs it on Tommy, or Charley, or Jone;  
Mockin’ a weaver when swingin’ his spoils,  
Chief-engineer of a train made o’ stoils;  
Last out o’ bed, an’ last in at neet—  
O! he’s a imp is that young Billy Wreet!

Ridin’ a pony wi’ a rope round its neck,  
Tryin’ to cross a ford or a beck,  
Lettin’ off rockets or swingin’ a gate,  
Walkin’ on t’riggin’ on t’top of a slate;  
Out a birds’ nestin’ an’ climbin’ up trees,  
Rivin’ his jacket an’ burstin’ his knees;  
An’ a body can’t leave ought safe out o’t’ neet,  
But what it’s in danger o’ daft Willie Wreet!

Breakin’ down hedges, an’ climbin’ up trees,  
Scalin’ the rocks on his hands an’ his knees,  
Huntin’, or skatin’, or flying a kite,  
An’ seein’ how much he can take at a bite;  
Plaguin’ a donkey, an’ makin’ it kick,  
Prickin’ its belly wi’t’ end of a stick;  
An’ you who are livin’, you’ll yet live to see’t,  
That something will happen that scamp Billy Wreet!

### A FALSE ALARM

About this time the country was in a state of great turbulency on account of the Plug Drawing and the Chartist Riots. Soldiers were stationed at Keighley, where the late Captain Ferrand had a troop of yeoman cavalry under his charge. One day, I recollect, the Keighley soldiers had a rare outing. This is just how it came about. An old inhabitant, with the baptismal name, James Mitchell, but the locally-accepted name, Jim o’th’ Kiers, saw what appeared to him to be the “inimy” on Lees Moor. “Nah,” thought Jimmy, “we’re in for’t if we doan’t mind;” and he straightway went down to Keighley and raised the alarm. It was Sunday, and the soldiers, as luck had it, happened to be on a Church parade. Captain Ferrand at once gave the command—like any dutiful general would do—“To arms!” “To arms!” The soldiers thereupon proceeded to the indicated scene of action; I saw the noble warriors gallop past our house “in arms and eager for the fray.” But upon reaching the spot marked out by Jim o’th’ Kiers, the soldiers were somewhat puzzled and “sore amazed” to find no enemy—that is to say, nothing to mean aught. Jimmy couldn’t understand it: he rubbed his eyes to see if he was awake, but rubbing made “not a bit of difference.” The nearest thing which they could even twist or twine into “the inimy” was a poor old man with a pair of “arm-oil” crutches. Jimmy having been severely questioned as to the sincerity of his motive in “hevin’ t’sowgers aht,” the poor old fellow whom they had fallen upon came in for a turn; but the only explanation he could give was that they had been holding a Ranters’ camp-meeting, and that he, not being able to get away as rapidly as he could have wished had been left behind. Now they did make a fool of Jim o’th’ Kiers, they did that, and the soldiers were jeered and scoffed at a good deal by the crowd. I, a little, wandering, curiosity-

seeking specimen of humanity, was among the latter, and I trow I had as much fun out of the affair as was good for me.

## A REMOVAL

Soon after this skirmishing—you will have to excuse the absence of any dates, I didn't bethink me to keep a diary—my parents removed from Hoylus-end, and went to live at a farm called Wheat-head, in Fell-lane, now known as the Workhouse Farm.

## CHARACTER SKETCHES

My stay at Wheat-head Farm, which lasted about ten years, was to me a very interesting one. I cannot refrain from making a passing allusion to my acquaintance with a character who created quite a sensation at the time. This "character" was no other than "Old Three Laps"—an individual who at his baptism was known as William Sharp. This singularly eccentric specimen of humanity lived at Whorl's Farm, and, as it will be generally known took to his bed through being "blighted" in love. He kept to his bed for about forty years. During the period he was "bed-fast," I often used to go and peep through the window at this freak of nature—for I can scarcely call it anything else. Then, while I was a lad, we had such a thing as a hermit in Holme (House) Wood. The name of this hermit I used to be told was "Lucky Luke." For a score of years did "Luke" live in Holme Wood. I remember my mother giving the old man his breakfast when he used to call at our house. His personal appearance frightened me very much. He wore the whole of his beard, which was of iron-grey colour and reached down to his waist. His garb was composed of rags, tied to his body by the free use of rope. He once told my mother that he had more than once changed clothes with a scarecrow. Sometimes this queer person would never be seen by mortal man for months together, unless it were that I disturbed his solitude occasionally; but then, of course, I was only a boy. "Luke" had a bad name amongst us lads. I know people couldn't fairly make out where he lived; he was wonderfully "lucky," and no doubt he had a comfortable lair somewhere among the rocks and caves. Still the fact remains that farmers often found occasion to complain of pillaging being carried on by night in their gardens and turnip fields. This seems indisputable proof that "Luke" was a vegetarian—maybe, such a one as the Keighley Vegetarian Society might be glad to get hold of! Old Job Senior was not a vegetarian; he went in for a higher art—music. It used to be the boast of the Rombald's Moor hermit that he had been a splendid singer in his day—could sing in any voice. Job frequently came as far as Keighley and tried to earn "a' honest penny" by singing in the streets. His legs were encased in straw and ropes, and although at times I own I'm rather backward incoming forward, I hasten to say that Job's "outer man and appendages" charmed more people than his singing did. But, then, "it's all in a life-time."

## THE POET'S "PRENTICE HAND"

During my sojourn at Wheat-head Farm I took a fancy to trying my "prentice hand" at writing poetry. I got a little encouragement in this at home. My father held singing classes, and gentlemen from the neighbourhood used to meet at our house to have their "lessons." I remember that the present Mr. Lund, of Malsis Hall, was one of my father's principal pupils. Some very good "talent" was turned out in the way of glee parties particularly, and just before Christmas my father used to be very busy training singers for carolling. I often wrote a little doggerel-rhyme to please those who came to the classes. One of my earliest efforts was a few verses anent my first pair of britches, which I, in common, I suppose, with other juveniles, regarded with a great amount of pleasure and pride. I must apologise for introducing three verses of the piece I wrote and styled

### "MY FIRST PAIR O' BRITCHES"

Aw remember the days o' mi bell-button jacket,  
Wi' its little lappels hangin' dahn ower mi waist;  
And mi grand bellosed cap—noan nicer, I'll back it—  
Fer her et hed bowt it wor noan without taste;  
Fer shoo wor mi mother, an' I wor her darlin',  
And offen sho vowed it, an' stroked dahn mi' hair;  
An' sho tuke me ta see her relations i' Harden,  
I't' first pair o' britches 'at ivver aw ware.

Aw remember the time when Aunt Betty an' Alice  
Sent fer me up ta lewk at mi clooas,  
An' aw walked up as prahd as a Frenchman fra Calais,  
Wi' mi tassel at side, i' mi jacket a rose,  
Aw sooin saw mi uncles, both Johnny and Willy,  
They both gav' me pennies an' off aw did steer;  
But aw heeard 'em say this, "He's a fine lad is Billy,  
I't' first pair o' britches 'at ivver he ware."

Aw remember one Sabbath, an't' sun it wor shinin',  
Aw went wi mi father ta Hainworth ta sing,  
An't' stage wor hung raand wi' green cotton linin',  
An't' childer i' white made t'village ta ring.

We went to old Mecheck's that day to wur drinkin',  
Tho' poor ther were plenty, an' summat ta spare;  
Says Mecheck, "That lad, Jim, is just thee awm thinkin',  
I't' first pair o' britches 'at ivver tha ware."

## CHAPTER II.

### A ROMANTIC AND NOMADIC YOUTH

Anything that bordered on the romantic and nomadic style of life had an especial fascination for me. Many a time and oft have I bestridden horses that had been peacefully pasturing, and ridden them bare-back around the fields, in a kind of Buffalo Bill style, you know. I got "nabbed" occasionally, and then I was candidly told that if I continued "ta dew sich a dangerous thing ony more, ah sud be sewer to catch it."

### DIVERS PRANKS

Of course I had divers other pranks, as all boys have—albeit to the anxiety and sorrow of many up-grown, and, therefore, unsympathising persons. "Tolling" doors was another favourite occupation of mine. Modern-time boys have not generally the same opportunities for "tolling" as boys had in my time. Our folks provided an everlasting amount of apparatus for me to carry on my "professional duties," and that unknowingly. My mother was a heald knitter, and there was always plenty of band throwing about. One night's "tolling" I remember with particular liveliness. I thought what a "champ" thing it would be to have a "lark" with "Jim o' Old Jack's"—an eccentric old man who lived by himself in an old thatched dwelling in our locality. I had no sooner turned the thought over in my mind than I resolved to "have a go" at the old chap. Poor old Jim went out to his work during the day-time, returning home at night. So I took advantage of his absence by hammering a stout nail into the cross-piece over the doorway. When night approached, and Jim returned to his homestead—poor old fellow! it makes me long to ask his forgiveness as I recount this incident—I hooked a fairish-sized stone, by means of a piece of string, to the nail which I had placed over the doorway. Near the stone I next fastened a longer length of string, and then I ensconced myself on the opposite side of the road. It so happened that the house stood on one side of a narrow lane, the opposite side of which was on a much higher level than the roof of the house, and, besides, faced by a wall. This suited me to a T. All serene! Having allowed Jim nice time to get comfortably sat down to his evening meal, I gently pulled the string, with the result that there was a gentle tapping at the door. Jim naturally answered my knock, and he seemed rather put about to find that his ears had evidently deceived him. So he slammed the door to and went inside—I guessed to resume his seat at the tea table. Then I "tolled" again and once more Jim came out. He must have felt a little "nasty" when he found that no one wanted him at the door.

### THE INNOCENT SUFFER FOR THE GUILTY

However, he again closed the door. Before I had time to pull the string again, I actually heard a knock myself at the door. I could also see that a person was standing outside. Now Jim must have determined to drop on somebody, and stationed himself behind the door, for as soon as he heard the knock which I also heard, he hurriedly opened the door, bounced into the open, and commenced to belabour mercilessly, with a stout cudgel, of which he had possessed himself, the "wretch" at dared to knock at 'is door like that." I sincerely congratulated myself that it wasn't my tender carcass that Jim o' Jack's was playing with. The visitor hadn't had time to announce himself: Jim didn't allow that; but by-and-bye he managed to let Jim know who he was, and it turned out that he was a near neighbour. I believe they managed to "mak' it up ageean." At other times I would "toll" the door, and the poor old chap would rush unceremoniously into a gooseberry bush which I had before-hand placed on the door-step to give him a sort of porcupine reception.

### BILL AND THE DONKEY

Still further, I recollect fastening a donkey to the handle of the door. I knocked, and got the donkey into *my* way of thinking: Billy would pull for dear life and Jim also would pull to the same end, and would remain a prisoner in his own citadel. I now feel sorry for Jim o' Jack's, I do. But a life of all play and no work would tend to make Bill a bad boy.

### SCHOOL LIFE

I was packed off to school—the National School at Keighley, of which Mr. Balfrey was master. He was no doubt a learned man, having written several works, including a useful book, entitled "Old Father Thames," which he published while he was at Keighley. For some time the master regarded me as his favourite pupil, but by writing uncouth verse and drawing questionable pictures bearing upon himself, during school hours, I got very much into disfavour with him. I

don't wish to say anything mean of Mr. Balfrey, but still he didn't encourage native talent as he might have done: he might have been jealous, there's no telling!

### **SENT TO THE MILL**

After leaving the day school, I was sent to Lund's mill, where my father was manager over the weft department. My school career did not finish at the National School, however. I attended a night school, which was held in a thatched cottage in Greengate and kept by a man of no small ability in the person of Mr. John Garnett. He was, I believe, of Scottish extract, and a great admirer of Burns into the bargain.

### **TAKING TO BURNS**

He had generally a volume of Burns' poems at his finger-ends and it was through him that I began to "take to" Burns and long to pay a visit to the Land o' Cakes. I had subsequently the pleasure of fulfilling that visit.

### **TWIN COMPANIONS AT NIGHT SCHOOL**

Severing my connection with the school in Greengate, I attended a night school in Fell-lane—much nearer home. This was kept by an elderly personage known as Mr. John Tansey, and under the guidance of that gentleman, the present Mayor of Keighley (Alderman Ira Ickringill) and myself spent a portion of our time in obtaining knowledge. His Worship and myself were twin companions, I may say, being both born on the same day—March 22nd, 1836.

### **AMONG THE HAND WOOLCOMBERS**

I spent a good deal of time in my youth in the workshops of the woolcombers in our locality, as, I believe, Ira Ickringill did. Hand woolcombers, by-the-bye, were rare hands (no pun) at telling tales, and I listened to these with great relish. With all my boyish pranks, I was generally a favourite among the combers. There used to be an Irishman named Peter O'Brady who lived not far from our house. His wife was a good singer, and what is more, she had a varied selection of good old Irish and Scotch songs. She was occasionally good enough to sing for me. This woman taught me the song "Shan Van Vocht," and other Irish Gaelic songs.

### **LEARNING TO BE AN ACROBAT**

A visit to Pablo Franco's circus, which came to Keighley, led me into the belief that with a little practice I should make a passable trapezist, or tight-rope walker. So when I got home the first thing I did was to procure some rope &c. With this apparatus I constructed a kind of trapeze and tight-rope in my bed chamber. I used to practice nightly just before jumping into bed. But my ambition was one night somewhat damped, when I fell from the bar and hurt myself. This small beginning ended badly for me; for my father learned that part of his homestead had been converted into a circus; he was, or pretended to be, greatly displeased with the discovery, and he straightway cut down the ropes and things. Then I had to find some other means of following up my practice. When you once start a thing it's always best to go on with it. So I got a lad about the same age as myself into my confidence, and one Saturday we resolved to have a night's "circusing" on our own account in a barn. We had had a fair round of trapezing, rope walking, turning somersaults and the like—wearing special costumes, you know, for the occasion—when in the wee sma' hours of the morning the old farmer, who claimed the ownership of our circus—in other words barn—suddenly came upon us. He had evidently heard us going through our rehearsal. His unannounced appearance startled Jack and myself very much indeed. The old farmer bade us in language certainly more forcible than polite—to "Come down, ye rascals." Jack and I naturally hesitated a little, but that irritated the farmer, and he said that if we wouldn't *come* down he would *fork* us down—he was evidently thinking of hay-time. We two, perched on the haystack, did not take the words at all with a kindly meaning. However, I told Jack in an under-tone to pack up our clothes and get away, suggesting that I would spring down and tackle the old man. Jack obeyed and got away, and I seized the farmer and held him tightly in a position by no means agreeable to him. He soon promised that if I left loose he would let me go away. I released him and doubled after Jack, finally landing at Cross Lane Ends, where Jack was waiting for me. We put on our usual garments and departed each on his own way. During the day I went to a neighbour's house. I was rather startled on seeing the old farmer there; but exceeding glad was I when he failed to recognise me. He was telling the family about two "young scoundrels," and how one had attacked him in his own barn early that morning; he little thought that a little "scoundrel" in that house was the "attacker" he wished to get hold of. Little Willie Wright could not help but smile interestingly at the old man's vivid description of the incident. That incident, I may say in passing, served to mark the termination of my career as a circus hand.

### **TRYING THE FIDDLE**

Instrumental music next turned my head, or, more definitely—a violin. I bought a fiddle on my own account. Of course my father saw the instrument; if I could keep it out of his sight I could not very well keep it out of his hearing. Then, besides, little boys should not be deceptive. He

says: "What are you going to do with that?" I says: "I'm going to learn to play it." Then he asked me where I had bought it, and I told him like a dutiful son—"Tom Carrodus's in Church Green." He summoned my mother and asked: "Mally, what dos'ta think o' this lot?" She—good woman—said it was only another antic of her boy's, and "let him have his own way." But my father, on the contrary, got rather nasty about the matter, remarking that if I didn't take the thing away he would put it into the fire. He said he was sure it would only turn out a public house "touch," and informed me that it was only one in a thousand who ever got to be anything worth listening to. He endeavoured to impress upon me what a nuisance the old fiddler was on the Fair Day; and "concluded a vigorous speech" by again reminding me that if I didn't take the fiddle out of his *sight* he would burn it. He did give me the chance to play out of his sight; but, knowing, young as I was, that the unexpected sometimes happens, I decided to get rid of "the thing," as my father was pleased to call it. Fiddle and I parted company the very day after we came to know each other.

## THE "NIGGER" BUSINESS

next fascinated me; and I induced several lads and lasses in the village to form a "troupe." We got up a show—not a very showy show, but a nice little show—and charged a reasonable sum for admission—only a half-penny! The "company" managed, by working together, to possess itself of a creditable wardrobe. But the "Fell-lane Nigger Troupe" did not live long. I, for example, began to soar a little higher, that is to the dramatic stage; but my father evidenced the same bad grace as he did in regard to my fiddle.

## A STROLLING, ROLLICKING PLAYER

I had somehow or other scraped together close upon a couple of hundred reprints of plays, which cost me from 6d to 2s a-piece. He said he would have no acting in his house. I pleaded it was only a bit of pastime; but it was all in vain, and what was more he threw all my books on the fire. This greatly disheartened me—I should be about 14 years old at this period;—but though my father burned my play-books he did not quell my ardent ambition to go on the stage. A few days after, a theatrical man, called Tyre, visited Keighley. (Oh! how I have blessed that man!) He advertised for some amateur performers to play in a temperance drama of the title "The seven stages of a drunkard," at the old Mechanics' Hall (until recently the Temperance Hall). The piece was to be played nightly for a fortnight. I mentioned to my father that I should very much like to take part in the performance. He asked the advice of somebody or other as to the character of the play, and being informed that it was a temperance piece, he consented to my serving a fortnight with the company. I applied, and was gladly accepted. The part of a boy—a boy who, in manhood, was a drunkard—was allotted to me. The company played for a fortnight before crowded houses. But my stage career was not destined to end there. Tyre, seeing that the Keighley public appreciated the efforts of his local talent, arranged for the performance of another piece, styled "Ambrose Guinnett." He asked me to take a part in that piece also, and I agreed on the spot to do so. I was put in as a sailor, and I purchased in the Market-place a sailor's suit and a black wig, on "tick"—you see I was determined to have them. By-and-bye, it reached the ears of my father that I was going "reight in for t'business." However, the day fixed for the first performance came round, and then the performance commenced.

## TRICKING POLICEMAN LEACH

The curtain had risen and all was going on nicely when on the stage, behind the wings, appeared a policeman—a real policeman—a policeman to the heart, into the bargain! "Robert" turned out to be nobody else than my old friend, Mr James Leach, now of Balmoral House, The Esplanade, Keighley: this, I ought to mention, was my first meeting with Mr Leach. My father it seemed, had heard definitely that I should be acting that night, and so he had induced Police-constable Leach (No. 5678, X division, A.1.), to look after me. Well, as I said before, P.C. Leach came on the stage. I happened to be the first soul he encountered. Says he to me: "Have you got a young man here called William Wright?" [I saw he did not "ken" me.] Says I to him: "I have not." Says he to me: "I want that lad, wherever he is; his father has sent me for him, and if he won't go home I have to take him to the lock-up." The last word rather frightened me; but I managed to say to him: "To save you a deal of trouble, sir, young Wright isn't going to play in this piece at all," and, with that, directed him down the staircase. I was allowed to go on with my acting without interruption after that; but I hadn't to go on the stage another night. My parents then put their heads together to keep me out of mischief.

## MILL LIFE AND POETRY

I was packed off to Lund's Mill—the late Mr William Lund was at the head of the firm at the time, and Benjamin Lamb and I became favourites with him. Mr Lund often used to take us into the staircase at the mill, provide us with chalk, and tell us to draw animals or anything we liked. He would offer a prize for the best production. We had also to try our hands at "making" poetry, and for this Mr Lund would give rewards. Ben could generally "best" me at drawing, but I managed to get the poetry prizes all right. One day Ben signed teetotal, and I remember I wrote a few lines of doggerel on the occasion. It is rather uncouth, but here it is:—

Benjamin signed teetotal

He signed from drink and liquors;  
And it gave him such an appetite  
Begum he swallow'd pickers.

## MAKING AND SAILING SHIPS

Ben and I also took a fancy to making various models, especially ships. Mr Lund caught us at the job, and, taking an interest in our work, he offered a prize for the one of us who made the best-sailing three-rigged vessel. We made our ships and gaily decorated them. The day fixed for the trial was regarded with keen interest by the mill-hands. The trial trip was to take place in the mill dam, and the banks of the dam were crowded with workpeople. The conditions were that we should sail the ships, with the aid of a warp thread, from the head to the foot of the dam. And the contest began. Ben's ship had scarcely been launched when it upset, being side-heavy. But my ship sailed gallantly before the breeze, right on to the finishing post. The spectators cheered lustily; I felt very proud, I did. I got the prize, and was made quite a "hero" of for a few days. But they little knew the grand secret of my success. I had driven a spindle into the keel, so as to allow it to protrude downwards into the water; with this in it, it was almost impossible for the ship to upset!

## CHAPTER III

### TO THE STAGE AGAIN

Notwithstanding the kindness which I received at the mill, I could not settle down. I had a strong inclination to get out into the world and see something. My ambition again returned to the stage. I began to visit travelling theatres which came to Keighley, staying in Townfield Gate. I joined an amateur dramatic society, composed of Keighley people. The names of the members were:— Arthur Bland, John Spencer, William Binns, Mark Tetley, Thomas Smith, Thomas Kay—all of whom, I believe are dead—and Joshua Robinson, James Lister, Sam Moore and myself. There were also a number of females, who must be all dead by this time. We had weekly Saturday night performances in an old barn in Queen-street, which is now used as a warehouse by Messrs W. Laycock & Sons, curriers. After a short course of training in the society, Arthur Bland, John Spencer, and myself became rather—ambitious I suppose I shall have to call it—and joined the profession altogether. I should be about sixteen years old; and I was about the youngest member in the company. My companions and I joined Wild's Travelling Dramatic company. I was called the "juvenile," owing to the fact that I was the youngest member of the company. We fulfilled engagements at Bradford, Halifax, Dewsbury, Keighley, and other towns in the district. I considered (myself) that I made a "rare fist" at acting, but the advice was unsympathisingly hurled at me—"Come home to your parents and start afresh." Well, I took the advice, and went home to my parents. I often think it was very good of them to allow their errant son to come home as often as they did. I returned to my position as a warpdresser at Lund's mill, being about eighteen years old at the time. Things went on very peaceably and agreeably for another little while, but I—just verging on the age of manhood—again felt a strong desire to go out into the world.

### OH! FOR A SAILOR'S LIFE!

I had been reading a book about the life of a sailor—how nice it is to *read* about a sailor's life!—and got the idea that I should like to be a sailor. So, one morning I got up betimes, when lazy people were snoring between the blankets. I clad myself in my best suit—one of splendid black, put on my watch, provided myself with plenty of money—my parents were not badly off—and started in search of a sailor's life. It didn't look like a very good beginning, did it? I tramped to Leeds, and there I had the—misfortune, I may safely say, to fall in with some of my thespian friends. They very willingly helped me to spend my money, so that when I left Leeds I had scarcely a penny in my pocket. But it was, perhaps, all for the best, as things turned. I walked to Goole, and from there to Hull. I lingered about the docks for some time, and then I fell in with the skipper of a vessel who was looking out for an addition to his crew. He asked me who I was. I, of course, told him and said I should like to be a sailor. He smiled when I said that, and said I looked more like a tailor than a sailor. But, then, I have said all along that appearances are deceptive, and that it isn't always wise to rely on the label of the bag. It was simply a matter of taste with the skipper: he saw in me a nice chance of a suit of good clothes, &c., if nothing else. He questioned me: "would you run away if I took you on? You know some of you get tired of the first voyage." I assured him that I wouldn't run away, what other boys did. Whereupon it came to pass that he said that I was a likely young fellow, and I was engaged—I mean to the skipper, of course. I had to say a fond "Good-bye!" to my suit of black, watch, and other articles, and bedeck myself in a canvas suit, with red shirt, belt, and oil-skin cap. The name of the vessel was "The Greyhound," and "The Greyhound" was laden with prepared stone and bound from Hull to London. We started. The voyage was a very rough one, and I was very, very sick the first day. I often think of my first day's sailing; I do that, I do. I was put to all manner of drudgery, such as scrubbing the decks. The cooking for the crew also fell into my hands; there were about a dozen



of us. Fortunately, I had no need to complain of the lack of food. There was plenty of salt pork and biscuits; but, then, biscuits and salt pork and salt pork and biscuits have a tendency to become a little monotonous to the palate. I got very roughly handled by the crew. The voyage to London occupied about six days. We stayed at the English capital about a fortnight, in order to exchange our cargo for one of goods suitable for the Hull trade. Even while we were moored in the Thames, I was very anxious to make my escape, but a too close watch was kept over me. We started on the home journey, during which I was not affected by sea sickness.

## LONGING FOR HOME AGAIN

I determined that as soon as ever I got into Hull I would make straight for Keighley. Many a time on the vessel did I think of Mrs Hemans's beautiful poem "There's no place like home." I shall never forget, I think, the feelings of ecstasy with which I was seized on the vessel sailing into the port of Hull. It was four o' clock on a cold, dreary December afternoon, and I could not help but cry as, going on the quay, I heard an organ grinder giving off the strains "Home, Sweet Home!"

Of all the spots on earth to me  
Is Home, Sweet Home.  
And that dear spot I long to see—  
My Home, Sweet Home.  
Where joyfully relations meet,  
Where neighbours do each other greet.  
If ought on earth there can be sweet,  
'Tis Home, Sweet Home.

It seemed to me as if my father and mother were calling their prodigal son home. I straightened myself up, and says: "Here goes for Keighley, without a ha'penny in my pocket:" the skipper was not by any means kind-hearted, and did not give me even an "honorarium." But my troubles were not by any means past and gone: many who read these lines will, I trow, know what it is to tramp a long distance with a purse, as Carlyle said, "so flabby that it could scarcely be thrown against the wind." My trudge from Hull to Bradford seemed beset with thorny places.

## TRAMPING AND ADVENTURING

Leaving Hull, I walked all night in stormy, winterly weather, and before morning I was on the near bank of Howden Dyke. There was a ferry at the dyke, and, not having the wherewithal to pay the toll, I had to stay where I was—about three miles from Goole. As I afterwards learned, I had gone about eight miles out of the right road. I loitered about for a short time. Then a farmer, with a horse and cart, chanced to come along. I unfolded my tale to him, and he took pity on me; he said he was allowed to take a man with his horse and cart, besides himself, and I could go over as *the* man. And in this way I crossed over on the ferry, which was a sort of raft. When I got into Howden—it was now early morning—it turned out to be the Fair Day. So I wended my way into the fair-ground, thinking that possibly I might meet with some of my former theatrical acquaintances at some of the shows. But I was a doomed man: there were none. There was any number of wild beast shows, fat women shows, art galleries, pea saloons, with the ubiquitous Aunt Sarah, but of "mumming" shows there were none. When I was in this low pitch of despondency, a flashly-clad individual walked up to me and asked me *what* I was. Being a truthful sort of a lad, if nothing else, I told him I was "all sorts," but had been doing a "bit o' sailing" last. He said he kept a boxing show, and asked if I had done anything in the noble defence line. I had to confess that I had done a little at home, with towels round my hands. "Oh (says he) I'll teach you how to box in twenty minutes. I'll introduce you to the public, and if there is any big farmer to tackle I'll tackle him; and I have got a little black man who will stand up for you. I want a man to p'rade outside the show, you know, and you look a likely fellow." After this magnificent speech, how could I but take the job? I did so. Seeing that I had not been over-fed lately, he treated me to a loaf and coffee: that these were welcome I need hardly chronicle; they were decidedly welcome. After a good night's sleep, the next day I was dressed for the occasion. The fair-ground was thronged with people from far and near. A big crowd collected in front of *our* show. I p'raded on the platform outside the show, and the proprietor announced that I was a champion boxer, and that I would "set to" with any man in the whole fair! Some men would have felt honoured at this, but I didn't. The announcement fairly made me tremble, and I should have been very thankful to drop through the boards. But I had to stay where I was. Fortunately nobody came forward, and the only "set to" I had to have was with the little black man. The show commenced, and we went inside; of course we had only exhibition games. One night produced 7s 6d for me. But I had no more sense than spend my money on a number of showmen who had gathered together, as was their wont, in a drinking-saloon on the fair-ground after the night's business. Therefore I was as bad as before. I left the show, and began my walk to Selby. There were two toll bars on the way, at which passengers had each a penny to pay to get through. But I hadn't a penny and at the first "break" the keeper asked me if I had got a "knife or owt." I couldn't boast the possession of either of these. A cotton-hawker chanced to come by and he took pity on me and paid my toll. He reminded me there was another toll-bar about 7 miles further on, and said he was sorry he could not go forward with me, because he had some calls to make by the way. Notwithstanding, I trudged on, and when I got to the second "break" Fortune again smiled upon me; for I came upon a kind-hearted lady, who, when she became acquainted with my position, gave me a sixpence. This coin got me to Selby. From Selby I made to York. Late in the afternoon it began to rain heavily; so I called at a roadside inn for shelter. In the inn I found

seated a company of hunting gentlemen, wearing their bright apparel. They had evidently been driven inside by the wet weather. One of them espied me and conducted me into the room. They chaffed me very much, and one asked me whether I would have a glass of brandy or sixpence. I said I should prefer the sixpence. He said: "Well, if you had said the brandy, I should have given you neither; now you shall have both." And it so happened that I got two things with one asking. Well, after the shower had ceased I resumed my journey, and tramped all night. I wanted, and still I did not want, to get home—you understand me? Next morning I got into York. I had hoped to find a travelling theatre staying there, but the theatre had the day previously moved on to Ripon. Then did I determine to try my hand at earning an honest penny somehow. I had done a little at chalk-drawing. I thought I might become a street artist; so I accordingly got on to the city wall at the top of a flight of steps near the Castle. On the pavement, in chalk and charcoal, I drew bold likenesses of our good lady the Queen and Prince Albert. I sat there on the wall, waiting for passers-by to throw me a copper. I had not waited long when a party of ladies and gentlemen—apparently visitors, like your humble servant—came up. They surveyed my production; then one of the gentlemen threw me a shilling, and the rest made a collection which they presented to me, and for which I thanked them from the bottom of my heart. I did not wait for a second batch of patrons, but straightway turned my back upon York. I had abandoned the idea I at one time entertained of going to Ripon, with the intention of joining the theatrical company there; and the next move was to get to Bradford. So I walked on to Bradford. I was "fairly jiggered up" when I got to that town—one Thursday afternoon I recollect it was. I made up my mind to go to the office of the Keighley firm of Messrs William Lund & Son, for whom I had done a little work. I was scarcely in a presentable condition, travel-stained as I was. After some demur I obtained permission to wash and "tidy" myself at a tavern, and this carried out, I made for Messrs Lunds' office.

### **THE PRODIGAL RETURNS HOME**

Mr James Lund happened to be there. He was not a little surprised to see me, and wanted to know all particulars as to my wanderings. I offered an explanation as best I could. Mr Lund provided me with refreshment, which I badly needed, and paid my railway fair to Keighley. When I got into this "Golden Valley of the West Riding," as Keighley has been called, I had no little difficulty in getting to my home at the North Beck Mills. My feet were intensely sore with my long tramp, and I could scarcely put one before the other—which, of course, is a necessary performance if one wants to walk anywhere. However, I reached home in time—after an absence of something like nine months. I was received there with all the welcome it was possible for a prodigal son to be. My mother said she dreamed the night before I was coming home. I don't exaggerate facts much when I say there were great rejoicings in the camp at my home-coming. Of course, with paternal regard, my father wanted to know where I had been, and, when I had given him a hurried account of my peregrinations, he strongly recommended me to "jump into a peggytubful o' water an' hev a wesh." I accordingly executed the order of the bath, and donned a suit of clothes, which I had left behind me. My father said, "Well, I don't want them to lose anything by you at Hull;" and with those few, but expressive remarks, he took my sailor's suit and pitched it into the North Beck—which ran near by our homestead. I regret I have no proof before me that the clothes ever reached Hull. But we will let bygones be bygones. I was put back to warp-dressing at North Beck Mills, where I remained for a few months.

### **LOOKING FOR A TRADE**

Then my father determined that I should have a trade of some sort. I began to have a little taste for sculpture in a primitive kind of way, and I used to smuggle big stones into my bed-chamber, and, when opportunity offered, try to carve figures, busts, &c., out of them, with tools which, I must confess, were far from having a razor's edge on them. My father came to know of my efforts in this line, and he and my mother held a confab, the result of which was that I was apprenticed to an uncle of mine, a mason named Joshua Hill, of Harden. I remained at this business for a fair time and helped my uncle to build Ryecroft Primitive Methodist Chapel. He gave me every opportunity to become efficient in my new calling if practice goes for anything. When I pass the chapel at Ryecroft I look with some amount of pride on the two stoops, enclosing the door, which I hewed out. After finishing the chapel my uncle Joshua commenced the erection of a tavern, called the "Moorcock," at Harden. But in my new situation my pocket-money was very limited. I didn't appreciate this limitation, and I left the service of my uncle and went to Bingley.

### **ADVENTURING WITH THE SHOWS**

It happened to be the Tide, and going into the Gas Field I fell in with the proprietor of a travelling theatre, a Frenchman, rejoicing in the name of "Billy Shantoney." He asked me to join his company, which I eventually did. At night, before the performance commenced, I paraded on the platform outside as a gay spangled warrior, and while thus engaged I was somewhat astonished to behold my uncle Joshua making his way to what seemed the entrance, but he darted on to me and attempted to drag me, as he himself said, "back home." However, I didn't go back home, and we went on with the performance. At the close of the Tide week, the company went to Idle, and I went with them; and thence to the Bradford Fairground. It goes without saying that when Bill o'th' Hoylus End was playing as a king one night and next morning getting a red herring to his breakfast, there was something radically wrong somewhere. Still I had a hearty reverence for the "silvery fish," as will be apparent from the sentiments in the following

## ODE TO A HERRING

Wee silvery fish, who nobly braves  
The dangers o' the ocean waves,  
While monsters from the unknown caves  
    Make thee their prey,  
Escaping which the human knaves  
    On thee lig way.  
No doubt thou was at first designed  
To suit the palates of mankind;  
Yet as I ponder now, I find  
    Thy fame is gone,  
With dainty dish thou art behind  
    With every one.

. . . . .

When times are hard we're scant o' cash,  
And famine hungry bellies lash  
And tripe and trollabobble's trash  
    Begin to fail—  
Asteead o' soups an' oxtail 'ash,  
    Hail! herring, hail!  
Full monny a time 'tas made me groan  
To see thee stretched, despised, alone;  
While turned-up noses past have gone  
    O' purse-proud men!  
No friends, alas! save some poor one  
    Fra' t' paddin' can.

. . . . .

If through thy pedigree we peep,  
Philosophy from thee can reap,  
To me I need not study deep  
    There's nothing foreign,  
For I, like thee, am sold too cheap,  
    My little herring!

## CHAPTER IV

### PLAYING THE CLOWN AND EVADING THE IMPOSSIBLE

I left the employ of my friend the Frenchman, and joined "Mother" Beach's "grand theatrical combination." The business was formerly owned by Mr Beach, and at his death the widow undertook the management of the concern, with assistance from her son William, whose stage cognomen was "Little Billy Beach." Mr Beach, junior, was a better class comedian. The company consisted of, in addition to the last-named, Tom Smith, Jonas Wright, Edward Tate, Jack Buckley, John Spencer, Arthur Bland and myself, and a quartette of ladies, viz.—"Bella," afterwards Mrs William Beach; Ann Tracey, afterwards Mrs John Spencer; and Mrs Wright and "Mother" Beach, who were sisters. Certainly not a very powerful company as regards numbers! We visited such towns as Batley, Adwalton, Gomersal, &c. Well do I remember being with the company at the Roberttown Races. Races were not actually run there at the time of our visit, but they had been, and the name was kept up. It was really the Feast or Tide, for which Roberttown was somewhat notorious, and the old race course was used for the fair ground. There was a conglomeration of scores of twopenny circuses, penny "gaffs", round-about, swings, cocoa-nut shies, shooting ranges, &c. People flocked from far and near to the Fair. Our company made a great "hit." It was the custom for a few of us, myself included, to promenade in front of the assembled crowd, in "full dress," and then, after we had executed a picturesque Indian dance, the manager would strongly recommend the people to "Come forward, ladies and gentlemen, the show's just a-going to begin." The performance consisted of a short play, a comic song by "Billy," and a portion of the pantomime, "Jack and the Beanstalk," the whole lasting under half-an-hour. We gave about a score performances a day: it was very hard work, and, what was more, hot weather. I don't want to figure in these pages as a champion boozier—for I know that the *Herald* is a warm advocate of temperance principles;—but it is nevertheless a fact that one hot day I drank no less than three shillings' worth of "shandy-gaff," at a penny per pint. It was dry work I can tell you, and made a dry stomach. Just before the close of the fair, strangely enough, there was a split in our ranks owing to the "matron" having engaged new blood, in the shape of three fellows—Harry McMillan, Tom Harding, and Paddy Crotty—who were to play the leading parts. It has always been said that much jealousy exists among the theatrical profession, and jealousy existed and caused an "eruption" among us. We had a "regular rumpus," and Spencer, Buckley, and myself seceded and "set up" on our own account. In the evening of the very day of the upheaval, we made a pitch on

the greensward opposite to the theatre we had seceded from. Spencer, I ought to mention here, was "the great man of strength;" Buckley, the "marvellous jumper;" while I myself filled a double role—being both the "clown" and "cashier" of the establishment. The latter is generally a safe post to hold. Spencer would willingly allow a stone to be broken on his chest with a sledge hammer, bend bars of iron across his arm, and the like; and Buckley would volunteer to jump over as many as five boat horses. But now it comes to myself. I have to confess I was always rather backward at coming forward. Suffice it to say that I didn't make a bad clown; which, perhaps, is not so much to be wondered at seeing that I was said to have been "born so." Our entertainment took immensely. We removed to Skelmanthorpe, near Denby Dale, where we put the inhabitants into a state of great excitement. On a large board we writ in chalk that on such a night we would "give a wonderful entertainment" in the backyard of the tavern at which we were staying; John Spencer, the great man of strength, would pull against five horses, and as a grand *finale*, Jack Buckley would jump over five horses, and a cab thrown in. I, albeit the poor clown, saw that this was a gigantic fraud, and, fearing unpleasant consequences, I cast about for some scheme to make our position safe. I arranged with a policeman, by putting half-a-crown into his hand (from behind, of course) for him to show himself in the backyard just as that part of the performance was commencing, and solemnly pretend to stop the performance in the course of duty. Well, the entertainment was begun before a crowded "house," and when the particular part in question was coming off, Mr Policeman, true to his promise, stepped forward, and said he would not see anybody killed. Spencer had got ready to draw against *one* horse when he was interfered with by the gentleman in blue—good soul! There's many a warm heart beats beneath blue cloth and plated buttons. The audience took as gospel the interference on the part of the law, and duly dispersed after witnessing other "harmless" portions of the entertainment.

### **CLOWNS AT A DISCOUNT**

Next morning we were up betimes and on our way to Halifax, where we knew it was the Fair Day. We had an inkling that we might be able to engage ourselves at some of the shows. And so it came to pass. Spencer re-engaged with Wild's, and Buckley got a situation at Pablo Franco's. But clowns were at a discount.

### **SEEKING AND FINDING**

However, there happened to be on the Fair Ground the proprietress of a new theatre. She was in search of "talent"—you know what I mean—eh? Oh, yes! The theatre was a wooden one, in Barnsley. It was not quite finished, but would be ready for opening in a week or so, and the old lady—"Virgin Mary," I believe she was commonly called—wanted to get a company together in time for the opening. She fully explained matters to me, and, as a result I was engaged—that is to say I was professionally engaged by her.

### **FIRST IMPRESSIONS**

She, of course, saw the whole of my personal belongings at first sight. And it is often said that first impressions are lasting. She paid my railway fare and gave me a "lift" of half-a-crown, and also mentioned, by the way, that I might walk over to Barnsley if I liked and expend the amount of the fare on myself. With this understanding we parted company. Next morning I started for my new sphere of life, deciding to utilise

### **SHANKS' PONY**

It was a glorious morning. When I set off, my feet were encased in a pair of high Wellington boots, but as I walked along one of the boots began to pinch my foot very badly, so I stopped somewhere between Halifax and Brighouse and changed the offensive boot for one of my stage pumps.

### **THE GREEN BAG**

The Wellington I deposited in my green bag, which by the way, contained my stage "properties," to wit, tights, tunics, and the like. About this time I was overtaken by a man who would have me believe he had seen me before somewhere. I didn't like the look of that man a bit. He told me he was walking to Sheffield and would have no objections to accompanying me as far as I was going. I should liked to have told him that I was of opinion that "one's company, two's none," yet his request of itself was not in any way a peculiar one. So we jogged on together for some time. He noticed that I limped somewhat, and in consideration thereof, I, on his invitation, allowed him to carry my green bag—my only belongings—my all. We chatted very pleasantly on the road, and it was agreed, with no dissentient, that I should call at the first tavern we came to in Brighouse, and do a bit of busking. He said he did not care to call at the tavern, seeing that he was so shabbily dressed: he would *wait* at the other end of the town. Of course I took in all he said as gospel, or the next approaching it. I entered the first tavern that hove insight, he promising to "stay about."

### **ENTERTAINING STRANGERS**

There was a "druffen Scotchman" in the house, and as soon as he became aware that I had read much about the Land o' Cakes and Barley, he showed a kind of rapturous paternal affection for me. When he learned that I could "recite a wee bit," his delight knew no bounds. I recited several pieces for the entertainment of the company, such as "Young Lochinvar" and "Jock o' Hazeldean," and they rewarded me with fifteen pence for my efforts, besides treating me to some light refreshment.

## THE BAG MYSTERY

But I became anxious to join my travelling companion, whom I had left waiting outside—or who had left me waiting for him. So I bade the company "Adieu!" and quitted the tavern; but loo! my anonymous friend had *vanished* like a vision from my sight. I searched for him high and low in the "publics" at "the other end of the town," but all in vain. Meanwhile it had begun to dawn upon me that the stranger wasn't *my* friend at all. What greatly disheartened me was to know that he had my green bag, containing my stock-in-trade, in his possession wherever he was. This was a great blow to me. Having satisfied myself that he was not in Brighthouse I pushed on my journey. I asked each person I met if he had seen a man with a green bag, but none of them seemed to remember having seen either a green bag or a man carrying one of those articles. I now began to think I was truly on my "last legs."

## AT WARP-DRESSING AGAIN

But I did not utterly forget the sentiment of Shakespeare—"There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune." I stayed the night at a little village called Kirkburton, and the following morning I walked to Clayton West. Here, I found out, a good deal of fancy weaving was carried on; and, looking at my case from all its bearings, I came to the conclusion that it was advisable for me to abandon my theatrical career, for the present at least, and try my hand at warp-dressing again. This was duly resolved upon. Accordingly, I applied at a factory at Clayton West, belonging I believe, to Mr Norton. I got employment without much trouble: luckily they were in want of a "man o'my sort."

## A MINISTERING ANGEL

I started work at noon and worked during the dinner-hour. The first of the hands to return from dinner was a good-looking young wench, a twister-in. She thoughtfully asked if I had had my dinner. Of course I didn't think I had, as it was too far to go home to it. "Oh! but you shall have some dinner" says the big-hearted factory-lass; "for I'll go home and bring you something." "Thank you," said I, and she was gone. But not for long; not many minutes elapsed before she was by my side with a big jug of coffee and a goodly-sized, appetising, real Yorkshire pasty, the size of an oven-tin or thereabouts. I don't want to go into fractions, besides, it isn't at all necessary. Suffice it to say that I presented her with my heart felt thanks.

Bards hev sung the fairest fair,  
Their rosy cheeks an' auburn hair,  
The dying lover's deep despair,  
Their harps hev rung;  
But useful wimmin's songs are rare,  
An' seldom sung.  
Low is mi lot, and hard mi ways  
While paddlin' thro' life's stormy days;  
Yet ah will sing this lass's praise  
Wi' famous glee.  
Tho' rude an' rough sud be mi lays  
Sho'st lass for me.

As to the repast itself—well I enjoyed that with much warmth, as we sometimes say. Then I resumed the work which had been set out for me, and finished by five o'clock in the afternoon. There I left off until next morning. I had obtained in advance a few shillings to tide me over the night.

## CHAPTER V

### "T'OTHER LODGER!"

I went in search of lodgings about the village. In the end I came across an old lady, and, after I had had a consultation with her on the above-mentioned subject, she said she could take me in as a lodger if I cared to sleep with another lodger she had—a young butcher: if I was in by eleven o'clock, she assured me, I should be all right. I accepted her offer. Sometime before eleven o'clock, the "other lodger" came home. He was not by any means what Keighley teetotallers would term a "temperate, upright, law-abiding citizen," for he was as drunk as a pig. When he heard that I was to be his bed-fellow, oh! there was a "shine," and no mistake. He vehemently

declared that he'd never "lig" with me; and, under the circumstances, I sustained his objection, and we parted. Tired and weary as I was I felt that I could well spare all I possessed if only I could get the use of a bed:—

Oh! bed, on thee I first began  
To be that curious creature—man,  
To travel thro' this life's short span,  
By fate's decree,  
Till ah fulfill great Nature's plan,  
An' cease ta be.  
When worn wi' labour, or wi' pain,  
Hah of'en ah am glad an' fain  
To seek thi downy rest again.  
Yet heaves mi' breast  
For wretches in the pelting rain  
'At hev no rest.

## AMONG THE IRISH

However, the butcher and I parted company. I went back to the tavern I had been resting at, and explained matters to the landlady and her good master. He did not receive me very acceptably, and told me that he "could sleep on a clothes-line this weather." I didn't like to contradict him. His wife rather pitied me, and said there were half-a-dozen harvesters in the taproom and I might arrange to spend the night with them. Acting on the principle that half-a-loaf is better than no bread, I allowed the landlord to introduce me to the company in the taproom. The company consisted of half-a-dozen Irish harvesters "on the spree." "Can you take this man as a lodger?" asks the landlord. "Oh, yes, if he behaves himself," one readily exclaimed, and another chimed in, "If he doesn't, be jabers! we'll mak' him." I fully ingratiated myself into their good graces for the night by "standing a gallon round." I took part in the general amusement, and sang for them the song, "Shan Van Vocht," in Irish Gaelic, until they all swore I was a countryman of theirs. The night wore on with song and clatter, And ah! the ale was growing better.

## THE BARN DORMITORY—THE FIRE

Sometime late at night we retired to rest—or to try to rest. The prospective scene of our slumbers was a barn at the back of the tavern. By the light of a candle we had with us, I saw there was a depth of almost twelve inches of straw on the floor of the barn. One of our lot fixed the candle on a projecting stone in the wall, and I guess it was not long before we were all asleep. I could not have been asleep long, however, when I was awakened by great noise and unbearable heat. On "turning over," I heard groans and shouts, and, by Jove! saw that the barn was on fire! I was dumbfounded for the instant, and scarce knew how to act. Being greatly fatigued by my previous day's journey, I was not over wideawake; I was by no means the first to awake; in fact I believe I was the last. I had taken my coat and boot and slipper off, but there was no time to look for any of my apparel, and when I recovered my senses, I beat a hasty retreat.

## MY ESCAPE FROM THE FIRE

It's always a safe plan to look before you leap. I didn't look before I leaped, with the result that jumping through a loophole in the wall at the rear of the barn, I found myself on alighting outside with the star-bespangled firmament above me, and—what do you think under me—I hardly like to say, but nevertheless it was a *manure heap*! I was booked to remain in this—perhaps more healthy than agreeable—predicament for some time; for, despite my struggles to regain liberty of thought and action, I could not extricate myself.

## HOW THE PEOPLE RECEIVED ME

Meanwhile, the alarm of fire had been given, and a number of people from the neighbourhood appeared, in response, on the scene. I could not see them, being at the rear of the building, but could hear their shouts. The half-dozen Irishmen, I afterwards learned, all answered the roll-call, but I was missing. On this occasion, if it had never occurred before or since, my absence caused indescribable consternation. Many thought I had been burned to death or killed, for the roof of the barn had fallen in. After some little time, however, and after much struggling on my part, I was able to allay their fears by appearing before them. It required no small amount of pluck—as I call it—to face them—bootless, coatless, vestless, hatless, penniless, and, withal, with my feet and trousers besmeared with cow dung. But there is a time in every man's life when he shall come to evoke sympathy from his fellows. "He's coming!" they said, "Here he is!" they shouted, and as I passed along the ranks I was the object of universal sympathy in my woe-bestricken condition.

## A CHATTY, QUIZZY, KINDLY POLICEMAN

A policeman came up to me and said they thought I was in the flames. I rashly told him that I might as well have been, considering my appearance. "Oh, you will get over that," said the gentleman in blue cloth. "Where do you belong to?" I said I was a native of Keighley. "Who is your police superintendent?" he queried. "Mr Cheeseborough," I replied. "That's true," he said.

"Know you any in the force there?" "Yes," I said, "I know Sergeant Kershaw, and another little ill-natured dog, Jack o' Marks. Jack goes about in plainclothes, and is about as fly as a box of monkeys." "All right," returned Mr Policeman. "Now that you have told me the truth, were any of you smoking in the barn?" "No, we were all asleep," said I. Then he said that would do, and as he had no orders to arrest me, I could go—till further orders. I learned from him that Mr Norton—the gentleman for whom I had been working at the mill—owned the barn, but he was away and would not be home that day.

## THE RESULT OF THE FIRE

The merciless fiend did its work, and before the arrival of anything worthy the designation "fire extinguishing apparatus," the barn had been razed. A farmhouse joined up to the barn, and a portion of this building, along with some of the furniture, was damaged. The morn was now breaking, and there was the usual gathering of quizzing onlookers. It turned out that I was the last man out of the barn. Some of my bed-fellows, I found, were as guilty as myself in disregarding the force of the proverb "Look before you leap," for one of them, in making his hurried exit, jumped through the first opening he came across to find himself in the stables—"in a manger for his bed." Through the fall he sustained a broken arm. One or two of the others were a little hurt.

## CLOTHING THE NAKED

But to return to myself. As I said a short time ago my person carried no other covering than a pair of trousers, and these were almost worse than nothing in their present condition. If my friend Isaac had been about, his second-hand clothes shop (for no "monish") would have come as a boon and a blessing. I didn't ken him, however. But a cloth weaver thoughtfully came up to me and put it to the crowd, "Nah, weear can t'poor beggar goa in a staate like this?" "Aye, aye," says my friend the policeman; "An' if ye hev a heart in yer belly, ye'll get him some clothes, for I'm sure he's spokken t'truth ta me." Upon this "fetching" speech, several persons in the crowd were observed to leave by the "back way." In a very short time they returned, each bringing some part of a man's wearing apparel. Together, they brought the different items I was *minus*. There were waistcoats and to spare. For this display of kindness to a fellow in distress, I thanked them heartily. Having attired myself, I walked away with the policeman, who proved a true friend to me. He thoughtfully mentioned that if I stayed in the place there was a probability I should be arrested on a charge of "sleeping out." So I took the hint so kindly offered me, and after bidding my friend "Robert" a cordial good-bye, I made my exit from Clayton West.

## ON THE WAY TO BARNSLEY

I was only about eight miles from Barnsley, and I decided to make for that town, cutting across the fields. I passed the house, I remember, where the father of Bosco, (best known as "Curley Joe"), the famous conjuror, was born. I walked into Barnsley about eight o'clock the same morning. After weighing the matter over in my mind, I sought out and made for the wooden theatre in connection with which I had accepted an engagement at Halifax the week previous.

## A FRESH RIG-OUT

I saw the old lady, but she would not believe at first that I was the actor she had engaged. I related my wanderings and troubles, but with a' that it occupied some time to convince her that I was *the* man. When she did come round a bit, she taunted me that I had sold my clothes for drink. However, we came to terms, and I was "put on." By-and-bye, she sent me to a second-hand clothes shop, where I rigged myself out in a sort of la-di-dah style, my habiliments comprising a pair of white linen trousers, a double-breasted frock coat, with military peak cap, and a few other little accessories, so that I was a perfect (or imperfect) swell again, despite the fact that my wardrobe did not amount in value to more than 5s of lawful British money.

## FROM THEATRE TO POLICE COURT

The theatre had been completed in my absence, and, indeed, temporarily opened. Of course, I took part in the performances. We could usually draw full "houses," which were largely made up of colliers and their wives and children. But very soon some of the boys and girls of colliers wanted to go to the theatre oftener than their parents wished, and to this end, it was surmised, carried on a series of petty thefts to enable them to raise the admission fee. In fact, thieving in the town got to such a pitch that the police authorities interfered, and when the licensing sessions were held they opposed the renewal of the theatre license. The proprietress of the theatre, and the company, along with myself, had to appear at the sessions. I had not been in the court very long when my kind benefactor, the policeman from Clayton West, came up to me and shook me by the hand. His sudden intrusion on my confused senses somewhat upset me, for I was afraid of the sight of him;—his parting words to me, after the fire at the barn, that I might be charged with "wandering abroad without any visible means of subsistence," crossed my scattered thoughts. But it was needless fear, for he soon showed me that he was still my friend, not my foe. After we had exhausted the usual preliminaries, I questioned him on the subject of the fire at the barn. "Oh," said he, "You needn't be at all afraid about the fire. When Mr Norton came home he took it all in very good part. He was especially pleased when we told him that no lives had been

lost. You were mentioned as having worked half-a-day at the mill, and he said he would much rather that you had gone on with your work." But a stop was put to our conversation, for our "case" was called on. Superintendent Burke—I mark him now—stood up and denounced the theatre in the interests of the community. He instanced several cases of petty thefts committed by juveniles for the purpose of raising money to go to our theatre. The presiding magistrate—Mr Taylor, I believe his name was—heard all the evidence which was brought against us, and then said that he was very sorry that anyone should go to the expense of putting up a theatre in Barnsley and then be unable to get a license to carry it on. He said he would allow us to continue our performances a fortnight longer, provided admission was refused to children. The decision fairly upset "Virgin Mary." She thanked "Your Worship" as she stood in the box; but in the green room at her theatre she invoked the gods for vengeance on the court—and this in real dramatic style into the bargain. The last day of the fortnight came round. It was a Saturday night, and we were playing "Uncle Tom's Cabin" as a *finalé*. This was a comparatively new production at the time, and we had a packed house. At the close of the performance our spokesman thanked the people for their patronage, and explained why we were going to depart from their midst. He promised that the proprietress would "try again" at some future time.

## A MIDNIGHT ADVENTURE

The old lady paid off her company that night, and each of us was not a little astonished—not to mention pleased—to find his or her emolument 4s in advance of expectations. This was explained to be an "honorarium." Some of the company promised to return when the theatre re-opened, if that should ever come to pass, but I did not promise to do so; I was determined to retire from the stage, being now what I considered "tolerably well off." I obtained permission to sleep in the theatre for the night. Before laying me down, I told the watchman to

"Call me early, watchman dear!"

But my parting with the theatre and stage life was not destined to be an agreeable one by any means. I made a shake-down bed on the stage, and "lay down my weary head." It would be about midnight when I heard a rustling at the drop scene. In a few moments the scene commenced to rise, being rolled up by an unseen hand, and when it had been raised a few inches I was not a little "struck" to see a man's head appearing underneath the curtain. Now this was a bit of real, earnest acting—none of your unnatural, unfinished style. It was so realistic that I scarce knew what to do. I, of course, first of all concluded that I was going to be robbed, or that something of much more consequence to myself was going to take place. The curtain was slowly and noiselessly drawn up—it went higher and higher, until the human head which had at first appeared developed into a human body—a man. My nocturnal visitor wriggled through the opening onto my side of the stage. Fortunately I had by my side my walking-stick. Quickly and quietly I seized that weapon of defence, and before the stranger would have had time—had he even desired—to say "Jack Robinson," I had dealt him a splendid blow on the side of the head with the stick. He groaned and rolled over, getting to the other side of the curtain. Then he resumed the perpendicular and took to his heels, without offering a word of explanation on the matter. I feel no qualm in saying that his exit was more hasty than his approach. I tried to think who my intruder could be, and my thoughts fixed upon the man who had been told off that night to commence watching the theatre.

## RETURNING HOME

There was no more sleep for me that night, after the fore-going. I prepared myself, and in the early morning quitted the place where I spent a very pleasant part of my theatrical life. In the street I came across a policeman on his beat—not the one from Clayton West this time. I wished him "Good morning," and passed on. From Barnsley I walked to Wakefield, and thence to Bradford, forward to Keighley by train.

## A RECOLLECTION OF KEAN, THE ACTOR

On my way to Keighley, I could not but turn over in my mind the thoughts relating to the friendships formed on the stage, or in connection therewith. I remember that one of the Barnsley company was an aged actor, Mr John Copeland. He interested himself very much in me, and gave me from time to time good advice. He told me to leave the stage, and take to some more reliable and permanent employment. He pictured himself as a result of sticking closely to the profession, saying he had had more than half-a-century of experience of its ups and downs. In his old age, though he loved the stage and warmly praised the art of acting, he held that the rewards were not commensurate to the skill employed, and that when these were forthcoming the temptations were so insidious as to be ruinous unless the moral atmosphere of the profession itself was purified. The old man's ideal was high and he was fond of saying that with all its defects—defects which were largely caused by the professionals themselves—the drama and the art of portraying it would last as long as human nature. I was drawn to the old man, and felt for him. I often took his part, especially where he had to appear in a gross character. At his time of life, he did not like to blacken his face, and on one occasion when we were playing "Uncle Tiff," the old man was grateful because I relieved him of that character. It was a pathetic part—a sort of nigger being left in charge of children after the parents' death. Old Copeland was a good actor, and he told me of having travelled with Edmund Kean, the great tragedian. He was then about eighty years of age, and was brimful of anecdote and humour about men and things on the stage. He himself was



an author of many MS. plays, and the most agreeable of company, being an educated man. But we had to part company as I have already stated, and I went home, pondering over his advice. Now, my pen writes these lines descriptive somewhat of the breaking apart from those noble hearts, and that still more noble art of the drama.

Thespis, O! Thespis, founder of that noble art,  
Thou didst convey thy actors in a cart;  
But here the simple Thespian has to pad,  
And, though it makes his heart feel sad  
To leave his friends so far behind—  
Such friendship never more he'll find,  
Yet adieu! a heart-warm fond adieu!  
Companions noble, poor and few!

This, I think, marks the completion of my connection with the stage world, and I cannot but feel that those who have scanned these few recollections of mine will have found them something more than an uneventful and cut-and-dried story.

## CHAPTER VI

### MARIONETTES AT INGROW—AN AMUSING STORY

By this time my appetite for "seeing the world" had got somewhat satisfied, and I stayed at home for a while. I happened to become acquainted with a man of the name of Howard, who went under the nick-name of Harlequin Dick. By trade he was a wood-carver, and a first-class hand at his job. He was a Liverpool man, and during his stay in Keighley he did wood-carving for many firms in the district. Then he was taken into tow by old James Illingworth (now deceased), who ran the Worth Valley Chair Works, at Ingrow, opposite the Worth Valley Hotel. A new stone building now occupies the place of the old structure. Now my friend Howard's great hobby was making marionettes, and performing with them; and of these Lilliputian mummets he made a set, and then discussed ways and means for appearing with them in public. I was by him put into the trinitarian post of scenic artist, advance agent, and stage manager. It devolved upon me to draw up the advertisements. We had some capital wall posters, each figure—its capabilities, recommendations, &c.—being graphically described in rhyme; yes, it was a remarkable bill—so remarkable that parties interested in other marionette shows appropriated its contents for their own shows. When all the paraphernalia were ready, we went round to various schools in the town and neighbourhood, giving entertainments to the school children. I remember one occasion—yes; I shall never forget it—when we exhibited our show in St. John's school-room, Ingrow. The Rev Mr Mayne was then the vicar of St. John's, and he allowed us to have a night with the children. Well, we removed a partition in the school-room dividing the boys' from the girls' department, and made a sort of shake-down stage at one end of the room, and with a scene and proscenium the place looked like a pretty little theatre. There was a crowded audience for our performance, including the vicar and Mrs Mayne, the curate of St. John's (who, by-the-way, was a coloured gentleman), Mr John Butterfield, brother of Mr H. I. Butterfield, of Cliffe Castle, and, indeed, a good many of the *elite* of the district. The show opened: the curtain was rung up. The first part was a representation of "The Babes in the Wood," which went very smoothly, and appeared to suit the general taste of the spectators. Then followed a "skeleton dance," and next we gave with the puppets an amusing harlequinade by clown, pantaloon, and butterfly. Yes, and here the real fun of the evening came in. The butterfly took a great deal of catching. Mr Howard and his good lady and myself were leaning over a rail (behind the scenes, of course) near the front of the stage, energetically working the strings of the figures, when, without any warning, the stage front gave way, and we (still energetically working the figures) were thrown right into the auditorium. Talk about tumbling head over heels! Why, words would only belittle this part of our "performance." Suffice it to say that the wreckage just cleared the front seat, on which the Vicar and his good lady and friends were sitting.

### OUR HUMPTY-DUMPTY SITUATION

was so irresistibly humorous that Mr Mayne burst into a fit of laughter, and, taking up his hat, he left the room, followed shortly after by his wife and the curate, and shortly afterwards by Mr John Butterfield, who, I may say, seemed to enjoy the accident far better than the legitimate performance. The audience roared and roared again with laughter, and, speaking for myself, I can say that I felt "jolly queer." We had only, as it were, pitched the stage together, making it by placing one form above another. Fortunately the people present took the unlooked-for incident in good part, and with a little assistance we managed to improvise another stage, and upon this we went through a little more of our "show."

### AT ADDINGHAM FEAST—A JOKE THAT TOOK

Before we ventured upon a further public appearance with the "dolls" we provided the show with better equipments. These included a tent, which, along with a magic-lantern, we bought for a

trifling matter from a travelling photographer who went by the name of Old Kalo. The first of our second series of entertainments took place at Addingham, where, it being the Feast, we did very brisk "biz." During one of the intervals between the performances, I remember a gentleman coming in and asking me, "Do you think you could study a few lines for me, and introduce them into your play?" "What are they about?" said I. Then my visitor told me that he "had got a little fellow, Jacky Demaine, of Catgill, in the public house opposite, and wanted me to talk about him during the acting." I agreed to carry out his wishes, and my worthy friend, Howard, and I, having been supplied with the "matter," commenced to rehearse the scene we had prepared expressly for Jacky. There were two figures strutting about the stage. "Good morning, Mr Catgill" said one of them. "Why, you are smart this morning." "Well, you know it is Addingham Feast," was the reply of the other figure. "Are you in want of a sweetheart?" "No," said Jacky's double; "I came here to buy some cattle." Upon this the real Jacky Demaine could "stand it" no longer, and he rose from a front seat in the audience and made an "explanation." He wished to know "how the little hound knew him," saying that he never had a pint o' beer with him in his life! Then Jacky wanted to come behind the stage to talk to the "little hound." Of course he was a little fresh. The audience "fairly brought down the house" with their bursts of laughter, and people crowded into the booth and around the entrance anxious to know what was the matter. I have no doubt the little incident would be talked about for a good while in Addingham.

### **"NOT ONE LEFT TO TELL THE TALE"**

After this, we appeared with our show in the old Mechanics' Hall (now the Yorkshire Penny Bank) at Keighley. A travelling auctioneer who was staying there a week engaged us to give our performances during the intervals at his sales. He paid us very well. But Mr Howard was in the habit of taking more drink than was good for him, and he dispensed with the "mummers" one by one, until there was scarce one of our celebrated actors left to tell the tale and carry on the show.

### **THE WAR PIG AT HAWORTH—A LAUGHABLE STORY**

The marionettes having come to their end, and your humble servant being now practically out of a situation, he began to bestir his imagination for some other line which he might enter into in the show business. It was one morning while I was walking along Back-lane, at the top end of the town, that I "fell in luck." Old John Malloy kept a grocer's shop there—the Ship Inn now marks the spot—and I heard from him that he had a small litter of pigs. I saw them, and found among them a black pig—a puny, rickety, and most dejected-looking creature. I asked John what he would take for the best and the worst, and although he did not wish to part with the best pig, he was not very particular in that respect with regard to the worst—"the leetle blackie." For this he said he would take a shilling, and after bargaining with John I got the pig for ten-pence. I took the pig away with me in an empty herring-box, and consulted my friend, John Spencer. I said, "John; we'll take this pig to Haworth, and show it as the War Pig from South America." John laughed at the idea, but heartily agreed with it. In the next place I got "on tick" a piece of calico several yards long, and with some lampblack I painted in bold type on the calico the words, "Come and see the War Pig from South America, 2d. each." Then Spencer and I engaged the large garret at the Fleece Inn, Haworth. It was a large room, holding, I should think, a couple of hundreds of people, and was entered by a staircase in the back-yard, separate from the public house proper. Mrs Stangcliffe was the landlady, and she readily allowed us to have the room, I having taken it of her once before. Well, to get to business.

### **THE EXHIBITION**

We displayed the calico signpost at the front of the inn, and at the appointed hour in the evening we had a crowded audience in the room. I must give my comrade Spencer more credit than myself for the "show;" for he would have two strings to his bow. While he and I were entering the place, he picked up a black cat belonging to some poor neighbour, and quickly stowed it away in one of his capacious pockets. The cat will appear later. As John put pussy away, he said, "If t'War Pig doesn't satisfy 'em, I'll show 'em something else." We commenced the performance. I brought the pig out of the box, and exhibited the animal on a small table in the middle of the room. The audience was on the tiptoe of expectation, and crowded towards the table to see the famous war pig, which, after its long confinement, and also, of course, from its natural condition, was hardly able to stand. In a few words I introduced the war pig—"Ladies and gentlemen,—In opening the performance this evening, I have to show you the famous war pig from South America," &c., &c.

### **THE COBBLER'S DISCOVERY**

There was an old fellow at the back of the room wearing a leather apron and red cap, with his blue shirt sleeves rolled up—a typical old cobbler. He pushed up to the table, and, after "eyeing" the "exhibit" somewhat critically through his spectacles, he held forth as follows:—"Nah, dus ta call that a war pig?" in the vernacular peculiar to the natives. I said, "Did ta ivver see a war pig i' thi life?" "Noa," said he blankly "it's t' *warst* pig I ivver set mi een on." And then the audience saw where the "war" pig came in, and they laughed heartily over the joke. It was a relief to me when they did put the best face on the affair. Under cover of the diversion I stole from the room, and prepared to leave the place. I met Mrs Stangcliffe at the foot of the staircase. She said "she did not know what to think about us, but there had been a fearful noise, and she took it that we had pleased the company." With this I left the inn, and got away to a place where I had arranged

to wait for Spencer.

## TIPPO-SAHIB—THE INDIAN CAT

Yes; you will be wondering what has become of Spencer. Well; he stayed behind to continue the show. As he told me afterwards, he appeared before the screen and said, "Ladies and Gentlemen, —You don't seem to be quite satisfied with the war pig from South America. I can assure you that I have here a cat which I brought from India; they call her Tippo-Sahib. She can tell fortunes. Tippo has told the fortunes of all the Indian kings and princes, and I have brought her here expressly to tell the ladies present their fortunes. Now, Tippo (introducing the Haworth-bred cat to the audience), walk round the room and tell the ladies their fortunes." Puss had no sooner been liberated than she bounded out at the open door. Spencer said hastily, "I believe the climate of England is too cold for Tippo; but I'll fetch her back." Upon this he darted out of the door, and down the stairs after the scared cat; and this was the way Spencer effected his escape. Of course, the audience tumbled to it that the whole concern was a swindle, but they "bore up" well, and even seemed satisfied with the swindle, for they had many good laughs out of it. Spencer joined me on the road just out of Haworth, and together we returned to Keighley.

## AT HAWORTH AGAIN—FUNNY STORIES

As I remarked in the earlier part of the above incident, I had on a former occasion figured in the large room attached to the Fleece Inn. This occasion turned out a kind of "slope," though not so bad a one as that already described. There happened to be staying in Keighley Wild's Theatre, and John Spencer and I thought we could manage a bit of "business" at Haworth. So we borrowed two costumes. Mine was a monkey dress—a kind of skin covering for the whole body—which I had lent to me by "Billy Shanteney." Spencer obtained the loan of a clown's dress. At this time there was a drummer who lived in Wellington-street. He was well known to Keighley folk as "Old Bill Heblett." Bill used to march the streets in company with bands of music, and caused some amount of wonder and amazement by throwing his drum-sticks into the air and catching them between the beats. On this occasion we induced Heblett to lend us his famed drum; so that with a monkey's and a clown's costumes, and a drum, we were in a fair way of business. We had intended that the show should consist of Spencer lifting heavy weights, and I was to amuse the audience with jokes and funny stories. We went up to Haworth, engaged the rooms from Mrs Stangcliffe, and borrowed the landlady's bed-curtains to hang across the room to form a screen and so make the place look something like a show-room. For footlights we fastened candles on the floor, placing each candle between three nails.

## THE BELLMAN'S SHAKESPEARE!

Then we engaged a fiddler who went by the name of Billy Frenchman—a well-known character in Haworth at the time. Bill had been in the army for some years. In his old age he had been appointed town's herald or crier of Haworth. It was in this capacity that we engaged him to "cry" our show about Haworth, before we turned out on parade. Billy told us to write down what we wanted him to say, and this was our programme—"This is to give notice to the public of Haworth and the surrounding neighbourhood that a company of dramatic performers will appear tonight at the Fleece Inn Garret. The performance to commence with Shakespeare's comedy, 'Katharine and Petruchio; or, The Taming of the Shrew;' to be followed by 'Ali Pasha; or, The Mussulman's Vengeance,' and tricks by the monkey, and comic sketches." These were the words Billy had written on his paper, but through some misunderstanding *these* were the words I heard him cry out: he gave them in broad Haworth dialect:—"This is ta gie noatis ta t'publick o' Howarth et ther's bahn ta be sum play-acters at t'Fleece Inn Garritt, and ther bahn ta act 'Catherine fra t'Padding Can, er Who's ta tak t'screws;' ta be follered bi 'Alpaca, er t'smashing up o' t'engines.'" But Billy's blunder was perhaps for the best; for, seeing that this was about the time when hand woolcombing was on the decline, and engines were being brought out, the people had an idea that the announcement had some startling reference to their trade. Myself, I could not help but laugh heartily over this choice specimen of bellman's oratory.

## BILL PLAYS THE STREET MONKEY

About 5.30 in the evening Jack put on his clown's costume, and I put on the monkey's garb, and Jack, taking the drum and leading me by a chain, paraded up the main street of Haworth. Opposite the White Lion we "pitched," and the customers soon came out of the public-house, and passers-by stopped to see "whoa we wor." I distinctly heard one of the onlookers say that "if it wor a real un, it wor t'biggest monkey ut he'd ivver seen." Then a few of the folks standing together held a hurried confab., and as a result one of them announced, "I'll tread on his tail, an' if he squeaks it'll be a reight un." Suiting his words to action the joskin advanced and trod on the end of the monkey's tail. Of course the monkey squeaked. Jacko also turned round suddenly, and, with a horrid grin on his features, sprang on the shoulders of his intruder. The poor fellow screamed, and his first words on finding himself out of danger were "Oh! he's a reight monkey." Within the next few minutes another native came up, and inquired of Spencer "Ah say—can thy monkey chew bacca?"—producing a tobacco-box, the size of which was awe-inspiring. "Try it," said Spencer, "Give him the box—he's very careful." So the big-hearted joskin handed his big tobacco-box to the monkey. I was wearing a mask, which allowed for a large mouth, and I popped the box into the "yawning cavity." "By gow," said the at-one-time owner of the box, "What a

stummack!—he’s swallered t’box an all!” With such an uncomfortable article as a tobacco-box in his mouth, the monkey could not do very much in the way of performing, so the return was made to the Fleece Inn Garret. People—particularly the disappointed owner of the tobacco-box—followed us down, and by opening-time we had

## A DENSELY-CROWDED HOUSE

The old fiddler—a host in himself—was the orchestra. He knew about three tunes, and these he played o’er and o’er. I forgot to mention that we had not an appointed door-keeper, or cashier, so I undertook that superior office myself. “My word,” said some of the people as they came in, “just lewk at that monkey; it’s t’moast remarkable monkey et ivver wor knawn i’ Howarth; it’s soa mich sense woll it can tak t’brass at t’door.” Well, the house became so crowded that there was scarcely any room left for us to perform. The time for commencing arrived, and we appeared before the curtain, though we felt at a great loss to know how we were going to manage to perform in the space there was left; for it must be known that we did actually intend to give a performance. We had gone through a few “feats”—Spencer lifting and performing with 56lb. weights, and I doing a few tricks at tight-rope walking and dancing. Spencer was behind the curtain waiting his “turn,” and when I retired he said: “It’s no good; we cannot give satisfaction here.”

## THE VANISHING TRICK

“There isn’t room for you to work, never tell of me;” adding, “You had better go and get you right clothes on. Bring the drum and all our belongings you can get hold on, and slip out at the back door the best way that you can.” I obeyed. The “orchestra” was discoursing diverting music. I went down to exchange monkey for man, so to speak, and, this done, and having collected our properties, I made my way, happily undetected, out of the house, and cut across the fields. Weighed down as I was with the copper taken at the door, and in my anxiety to look after everything and get away as fast as I could, I let the drum slip from my grasp. It rolled down a steep field, and for a short time I had a fine chase after it. “But where was Jack Spencer?” readers will be wondering. Yes; I had forgot all about Jack for the minute. As he afterwards told me, he got away all right except for a little mishap which befell him just after he had left the place. Opposite the Fleece Inn was a cartwright’s shop (I believe the shop is there now), and behind the wall skirting the roadway was placed an old cart. Spencer knew not of either of these things, and when he lightly mounted the wall and leaped—before he had looked—it was to find himself in the cart, or, to be more precise, falling through the bottom of it. He rather lamed his leg, and had to limp up to Merrall’s mill, where I was waiting for him. Together, we made for Keighley, and on arriving there we “put up” at the Lord Rodney Inn, in Church Green, which was then kept by Mrs Fox. Safe in the hostelry, we counted up our spoil, and, perhaps, congratulated ourselves that we had got off so easily. Jack told me that before leaving the entertainment he told the fiddler to play up “special,” as he was going to do a “fine trick.”

## THE AUDIENCE DISCOVER THE “SLOPE.”

Next day we learned from a young man whom we came across at Wild’s theatre how affairs had developed at Haworth the previous night. He said that for half-an-hour the fiddler went on playing his favourite tune, “Rosin the bow.” By-and-bye, the audience manifested signs of active curiosity as to the position of affairs, and one man said he would go behind the curtain and see for himself, adding, “There must be something wrong.” He went to the front, and pulled the screen on one side to find—nothing! The audience generally bore up with good heart, but one determined-looking individual said, “I’ve paid my two-pence, an’ I’m bahn ta hev a cancell for it, if nowt else.” And with that he stalked up to the front, and possessed himself of one of the candles which had been in use as footlights. Others then made a rush for the remaining candles, and in the disorder the poor fiddler fared rather badly, for he got his fiddle broken. But Spencer and I afterwards visited him, and made good the loss he sustained. I must say that we never intended the affair to be a swindle, and, borrowing one of my friend Squire Leach’s forcible expressions, I may say we “started with good intentions, whatever came out of ’em.” Perhaps I may be excused for introducing the following verses of my own, entitled “Haworth Sharpness,” to close this chapter:—

Says a wag to a porter i’ Haworth one day,  
“Yer net ower sharp—ye drones o’t’ railway;  
For fra Keighley to Howarth I’ve been oft enough,  
But nivver a hawpenny I’ve paid yer, begoff.”

The porter replied, “I varry mich daht it,  
But I’ll gie thee a quart ta tell all abaht it;  
For it looks plain ta me tha cuddn’t pass t’snicket,  
Without tippin’ ta t’ porter thi pass or thi ticket”

“Tha’ll write up ta Derby, an’ then tha’ll deceive me.”  
“I willn’t, this time,” said t’porter, “believe me.”  
“Then aht wi’ thi brass, an’ let us be knocking.  
For I’ve walked it a fooit-back all raand bi t’Bocking.”

## CHAPTER VII

Perhaps it will not be out of place for me to introduce a few recollections I have of several gentlemen who were about this time of my life prominently before the public.

### ABOUT OLD JOE FIRTH

I have heard Oastler speak of the tyranny of factory life in Keighley. I remember hearing him speak at the "Non. Con." Chapel in Sun-street, when Joe Firth, an old Keighleyite, rose from the gallery and began to address the meeting. Mr Oastler invited Firth to the rostrum. He went and delivered a vivid description of factory life. He was an illiterate man, and spoke in his native dialect. His speech was so telling that it was well reported, a column appearing in the *Leeds Weekly Times*. Firth was fond of speaking of the way his speech was reported and dressed up so that he really could not recognise his own words. Firth was afterwards called to London to give evidence, and he saved enough money out of his allowance to enable him to abandon hand wool-combing, and set up as a hawker of tea and coffee. He never looked behind him after that, and, being a great "spouter," he got onto the Keighley Local Board. He was one of the opponents of the Baths and Washhouses Scheme, and, in fact, he liked opposition in many things. He was a staunch teetotaler. He died leaving some property.

### TH' CROOKED LEGGED 'UNS O' KEIGHLEY

It was about this time that the people of Keighley got the by-name of "th' crooked legged 'uns." It was not a mere local name, but became a general stigmatic description of Keighley folks throughout the country. The great agitator, the late Richard Oastler, was agitating for the Ten Hours Bill at this time. Many of the young people of Keighley were then "knock o' kneed" and otherwise deformed. This fact was represented to Mr Oastler by the local poet, Abraham Wildman. The latter was interested in the working folk, and had published some poems reflecting on their hard life. Oastler took up the case of the children, twelve of whom with crooked legs he had exhibited in the House of Commons. Wildman's poem, descriptive of these poor young folk, was submitted to the Duke of Wellington. His grace commended the poet, saying England would be in a deplorable condition if this were to be a fair sample of the soldiers that were to be sent from her factories. The term "crooked legged 'uns" stuck to these specimens through life; and, in fact, some of them still survive.

### "WHITE SLAVERY"

Asked as to his recollections of early factory life, Bill said he believed that parents took the children to work in the mills from the very early morning till late at night; and in some cases they even allowed them to work on Sunday. One manufacturer allowed the children to work all night, but one father, who was accustomed to travelling away from home, returned to Addingham, and found three of his children undergoing this horrible white slavery. He went to the factory, demanded his children, and assaulted the caretaker. The matter was brought to a trial at Bingley, Oastler backing the father. The poor man was fined for assault, but Captain Ferrand, who had been disgusted with factory oppression, assisted in taking the case further. The upshot was that the manufacturer was fined. Captain Ferrand's interest in the relief of the poor was deep and abiding, and he did a great and mighty work in connection with the factory laws. It was said at the time by the Radicals that his work was dictated by political expediency rather than by pure humane feelings. However, Bill is of opinion that the Radicals were mistaken. The Captain was a stern disciplinarian, but, under a rough exterior, Bill was sure there beat a warm heart for the weal of the poor, and especially of pity for those confined so long in factories.

### OASTLER ON FACTORY LIFE

In volume II of *Cobbett's Magazine*, there is an article on "Doctrinaire Government and the factory system," and a quotation is made from a speech by Oastler, asserting that "the factory system has caused a great deal of the distress and immorality of the time, and a great deal of the weakness of men's constitutions." Oastler said he would not present fiction to them, but tell them what he himself had seen. "Take," he said, "a little child. She shall rise from her bed at four in the morning of a cold winter's day—before that time she awakes perhaps half-a-dozen times, and says, 'Father, is it time—father, is it time?' When she gets up she feels about her for her little bits of rags, her clothes, and puts them on her weary limbs and trudges on to the mill, through rain or snow, one or two miles, and there she works from thirteen to eighteen hours, with only thirty minutes' interval. Homewards again at night she would go when she was able, but many a time she hid herself in the wool in the mill, not being able to reach home; at last she sunk under these cruelties into the grave." Mr Oastler said he could bring hundreds of instances of this kind, with this difference, that they worked 15 instead of 18 hours.

This was delivered a few years before Bill was born, but it held good in some cases, he was sure, in his early boyhood. There were then some cotton mills in Keighley district, and the young were allowed to submit to toil which was far too exhausting to allow of nature battling for the support of the human frame. Hence, Bill's own description of the poor little factory girl is an apt

corroboration:—

They are up in the morning reight early,  
They are sometimes afore leet;  
Ah hear ther clogs they are clamping,  
As t'little things go dahn the street.

They are off in the morning reight early,  
With ther basket o' jock on ther arm;  
The bell is ting-tonging, ting-tonging,  
As they enter the mill in a swarm.

They are skapering backward and forward,  
Ther ends to keep up if they can;  
They are doing ther utmost endeavours,  
For fear o' the frown o' man.

. . . . .

And naw from her ten hours' labour,  
Back to her cottage she shogs:  
Ah hear by the tramping and singing,  
'Tis the factory girl in her clogs.

An' at night, when she's folded i' slumber,  
She's dreaming o' noises an' draws;—  
Of all human toil under-rated,  
'Tis our poor little factory girl.

### THE LATE REV. W. BUSFIELD

I may add that the late Rev W. Busfield, rector of Keighley, was a staunch supporter of the Ten Hours Bill, when it had not many friends among the political Liberals, and when Cobden and Bright opposed it stoutly on Political Economy pleas. The rector supported Lord Ashley, Mr Ferrand, and Mr Oastler, and he lived to see the result of the advocacy of his friends.

### RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LATE MR BUSFEILD FERRAND

The late Mr Busfeild Ferrand was a typical English squire. In life he was the owner of the St. Ives' estate at Bingley. He sprang from an aristocratic family, who had ever been loyal to monarchy and country. Trained as a lawyer, he, however, like many other English gentlemen, did not follow his profession for gain or popularity. This training served him well in public life, and augmented the many sterling qualities of his character and his utility in the unpaid public service. He was a soldier, a civil administrator, an ardent and exceedingly able politician—Tory, of course, to the back-bone. He was a leading advocate for the "Ten Hours Bill." The champions of that great movement were Fielding, Ferrand, and Oastler. Mr Ferrand was instrumental in passing the Truck Act, which did so much service to working men, in removing the deceptions and impositions of indirect payment of wages. He was a great advocate of allotments for working men, and set the first example to the wealthy and willing to provide the people with ground for healthy open-air recreation. As an agriculturist he was an enthusiast, and all who had tenancy of land under him found all well so long as they observed strictly the conditions of their tenancy, but woe to them and to all concerned if they infringed in the slightest degree the iron rule of discipline set down by Mr Ferrand. In every capacity of life, he was a disciplinarian who could not brook any breach of rule. Poaching, and every offence that interfered with the rights of the preserves on his estate, called forth prosecution for the offence. My first recollection of Mr Ferrand dates from the general election when this part of the country was contested by Messrs Morpeth and Milton. I was about eight years old at the time. The two politicians visited every part of the district, and on one occasion the Tory party came through Hoylus End. I, and my "mates" were wearing party favours; but they were all "yellow," while I was "blue." Mr Ferrand was with the electioneers, and he must have noticed that I was the most conspicuous Tory youngster; for he drew from his pocket a big handful of coppers and threw them down to me. From that day, I can say, I have been a Tory. During the campaign the local rhymesters and writers were very busy concocting electioneering "squibs;" and, young as I was, I tried my 'prentice hand along with the rest. It was with astonishment and amazement that my parents and my companions received the following doggerel:—

Morpeth and Milton went a baking pies,  
Milton gave to Morpeth two black eyes.

### THE KEIGHLEY RIOT

About the year 1852—at the time of the Keighley Fair—there was some poaching in Bingley Wood. A gamekeeper had come across the poachers, who seized and tied him to a tree; suspicion fell upon some factory workers, and they were taken before the court at Keighley. Mr Ferrand was in the court, but took no part in the judicial consideration of the case, which lasted nearly the whole of the afternoon. A barrister, who resided at Settle, was for the defence. It proved a case of wrong identity, and the prosecution was dismissed. The real poachers had escaped, some from

the country. A rowdy element excited the people against Mr Ferrand, and they even went so far as to create a riot, aiming their missiles in the street at Mr Ferrand. It was a case of one brave man and a mob. At last, after pursuing his way fearlessly of their missiles, he was blocked, and had to read the Riot Act at premises now used by Messrs Laycock & Sons, curriers. The police-constables were of no avail against the mob, and soldiers were procured from Bradford. The roughs found the soldiers unwelcome visitors on the scene, and the streets were soon cleared. No prisoners were made. Capt. Ferrand took part in leading the soldiers, and those who were so valiant before were now no longer to be seen defiant; they had fled. Mr John Garnett, school-master, wrote some lines on the affair, called "The Baron's Revenge."

## **A CHANGE OF LIFE**

Begging pardon for this digression, and returning to recollections of my own life, I may say that a longing had now come over me for a quiet term of life, and I accordingly settled down at home. Work was once more found for me at Messrs Lund's mill; indeed, I have often since thought that the late Mr William Lund must have stipulated in his will that work was at all times to be found for me. Off and on, I must have worked at North Beck Mills some score times, and each time there was a sort of welcome reception for me. Perhaps my father's life-long connection with the firm had something to do with it. Be that as it may, I settled down, determined to make an entire alteration in my course of life. A visit paid to William Sugden, and I was possessed, I thought, of one of the grandest suits of clothes there ever was.

## **JOINING THE SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Then my parents had a talk with me as to joining the Sunday school, and, after some hesitation, I connected myself with the Wesleyan Sunday school at Exley Head. Mr Edward Pickles, manufacturer, Holme Mill (now living, I believe, at Bradford), was the superintendent of the school, and other of the officers were Mr John Dinsdale, who had the distinction of being a local preacher, and the late Mr Thomas Bottomley, of Braithwaite. For some six months I attended the school with the regularity of the Prince Smith Clock, and was not absent a single Sunday. Fellow scholars of mine were, William Scott, Hannah Holmes (afterwards married to a missionary, named Kaberry, with whom she went to Africa), Midgley Hardacre, Thomas Binns, John Pearson, and James Smith, locally known as "Jim o' Aaron's," who met his death by falling down a lime kiln. Sunday school work interested me greatly, and it was with much "happiness at heart" that I looked forward to Sunday. I was not long a scholar ere I was made a teacher. Possessed as I was of what I may call a "theatrical" voice, acquired during my career on the stage, the people liked to hear me read, and I was kept fully occupied in reading chapters from the Bible. Yes; the time I spent at the Sunday school was a very happy one.

## **LED ASTRAY BY POLITICS**

But, unfortunately, a few of my companions got me to bother my head with local politics. There was a Local Board election approaching at Keighley, and some new-made acquaintances led me, as it were, to contract the prevailing political fever; and, as events turned, it was not meet that I should do so. My sinning friends were Bill Spink, better known as "Old Bung;" "Porky Bill," Jonas Moore, and others. I struggled hard for the particular party which I favoured, writing "squibs" and all kinds of doggerel, until I became literally saturated with politics. In the meantime I had continued my attendance at the Sunday School, though my duties were entered into with less zest and enjoyment than formerly. I well remember Mr Pickles, the superintendent, saying he had no doubt I should be a great man some time. But the insinuating influences of certain companions acquired during my political career soon told upon me; the old saw says "Show me your comrades and I will tell you who you are." I got associated with people older than myself, many of them wool-combers from Bradford and other places—men who had seen the world in all its dodgy and dark ways, and who knew how to take advantage of people who hadn't. I had plenty of money, and I found plenty of friends to help me to spend it. I began a retrograde movement, finally severing my connection with the Sunday school, a step which gave my parents great uneasiness. I attribute my falling off entirely to the bad companionship into which I was led. They were too "old" for me, and I was rather too "soft" for them. Many were the scrapes into which they brought me, and it was in consequence of one of these that I and a female companion whose acquaintance I had made started one morning on the tramp for Middlesborough.

## **CHAPTER VIII**

### **A WOOLING EXPEDITION AND ITS SEQUEL**

In the last chapter I told how I started on "the tramp" with a female companion to Middlesborough. It was early in the morning when we turned our backs upon Keighley for the North. We trudged by road to Otley, Ripley, and Ripon, Thirsk and on to Stockton-on-Tees. Here my petticoat companion was so tired and weary that I left her, having secured her lodgings with an old lady, who agreed to take care of her until my return; my intention being to get work and a

home in Middlesborough, and then to fetch my partner thither.

## **FAMILY TROUBLES AT MIDDLESBOROUGH**

I pushed on to Middlesborough, but was "flabbergasted" to find the girl's uncle and several cousins—male, and all upgrown (!)—awaiting my arrival! It turned out that they had been apprised of my probable arrival by a letter from the girl's parents at Keighley. It was "blood and thunder" for a few minutes when they saw me, and the uncle was fairly exasperated to find that his niece was not with me. "What have you done with her?" he asked, excitedly. "Have you drowned her?" I besought him to "be quiet," and then I would tell him all about it. So he was quiet, and I told him where I had left the girl. There were three sons with the uncle, and the four received my story with distrust—they would see their cousin that night they declared. Thus, my position was getting pretty hot, and there was nothing for it but to return to Stockton. This conclusion vexed me sore, for with my tired and weary frame I was well-nigh ready to drop; but I saw there was no other way out of the situation. I had already met three friends I knew in Middlesborough, the three brothers O'Gorman—I had made their acquaintance some time previously at Keighley—and they agreed to walk back with me to Stockton-on-Tees. The girl's uncle and her three cousins made the party into eight—a veritable cavalcade in quest of a poor, defenceless woman. We got to Stockton all right, and the uncle and his sons took the girl in charge, while I was left with my three friends, the O'Gormans, to do as I liked. What was more, I was robbed of all opportunities of communing with the "erstwhile companion of my choice"—

Who afterwards became, I trow,  
A partner in my weal and woe.

My newly-found friends and I went back to Middlesborough. Going on the quay one morning, I fell in with two men, whom I asked if there was any chance of a job. After scanning me o'er and o'er they asked what I was able to do—what trade I was at last. Out of my thousand and odd "qualifications" I decided that I "had done a bit o' sailing." "Can you do anything in the dockyard?" asked one of them. "Yes," I thought I could. Then was I engaged.

## **AS A DOCK-YARD LABOURER**

The salary was fixed by my employers at £5 per month, though I was told that I should have to work a month "in hand;" which was rather hard for me, seeing that I was without money. Soon after I again fell in with the O'Gormans, and was introduced to the family. The head of the household was Peter O'Gorman, who had been in America and understood dock-yard business a good bit. Well, I got on fairly well as docker—a free labourer, I think I was,—although the work was not by any means regular, depending as it did on the arrival of timber-laden vessels from Norway and Sweden. Having a good deal of time hanging on my hands I visited various parts of the town, and it was one morning, while on an errand of this sort, that one of the O'Gormans came up to me and showed me an advertisement inviting applications for the execution of certain excavating work in connection with the Middlesborough new cemetery.

## **ACTING THE NAVY CONTRACTOR**

The advertisement gave great prominence to the instruction, "No Irish need apply." Now, my friend O'Gorman was an Irishman, and he was desirous of applying for the job. So he asked me if I would be good enough to don myself in his labourer's clothes and try to secure the contract. I said I should be glad to do so. After receiving due instruction as to how to proceed in the application, I went and presented myself to the contractor. That individual, I found out, was a Scotchman of the name of Macpherson. He put different questions to me as to whether I was capable of doing the work, &c. One of his inquiries had reference to my abilities for drawing. Could I draw? "Yes," I thought I could, and on a sheet of paper which Mr Macpherson supplied, I tried my hand at drawing. My production was satisfactory. "Can you find men?" he asked. "Yes," said I. "What about the tools?" "Oh!" I had to reply, "I have no tools." This notwithstanding, he said, I might start on the job next morning, and bring all my men. I completed my arrangements with the Messrs O'Gorman, and next morning my (?) workmen were "at it," spades, picks, &c, being provided by Mr Macpherson. What may seem more surprising, I continued at my own work in the dockyard, besides acting (though really but nominally) as sub-contractor in the excavating work at the cemetery. In about a week, however, Mr Macpherson "smelt a rat," and found out that the job was a hoax so far as I was concerned; nevertheless the work went on all right. The land was very soft and easily worked, being mostly formed of sand and pebbles; and the contract was completed within five weeks. The payment ran to 10s per day per man, all of us having agreed to go in share and share alike. So that with this and my work at the dock-yard I did very well, and "got on to my feet" again. Indeed, to make a long story short I had got to be a regular "masher."

## **FALLING AMONG KEIGHLEY FRIENDS**

I made up my mind to come back to Keighley, and let my folks see how I was getting on.

Home of my boyish days, how can I call,  
Scenes to my memory that did befall?  
How can my trembling pen find power to tell



The grief I experienced in bidding farewell?  
Can I forget the days joyously spent  
That flew on so rapidly, sweet with content?  
Can I then quit thee, whose memory's so dear,  
Home of my boyish days, without one tear?

Can I look back on days that have gone by,  
Without one pleasant thought, without one sigh?  
Oh, no; though never these eyes may dwell  
On thee, old cottage home I love so well;  
Home of my childhood, wherever I be,  
Thou art the nearest and dearest to me.

Accordingly I gave up my situation at the dockyard, and having bid adieu to Middlesborough, I took train for Bradford. In Bradford, I have to say to my sorrow, I fell in with some of my Keighley friends, and within a very short time I had been induced to part with all my money, and, in fact, some of my clothes. When I recovered my senses—for I must have lost them to act as I did—I found myself in a sad and sorry plight.

## ENLISTING IN THE ARMY

The time chanced to be about the outbreak of the Crimean War, and they were “drumming up” for the army. There were recruiting sergeants to be met with at every turn. It is said that even a worm will turn when trodden on, and it did not require much of the sergeant's persuasive oratory to induce me to take the Queen's shilling and enlist in the West York Rifles.

I left yon fields so fair to view,  
I left yon mountain pass and peaks;  
I left two e'en so bonny blue,  
A dimpled chin and rosy cheeks.  
For a helmet gay and suit o' red  
I did exchange my corduroy;  
I mind the words the sergeant said  
When I, in sooth, was but a boy.

## CHAPTER IX

### MY MILITARY CAREER

Now I commence a brand new era of my life. I am one of the Queen's great body-guard—I am 'listed—sworn, and all. Why this? Was it because I wanted to “follow to the field some warlike lord?” No; it was simply a thirst to see fresh fields and pastures new—fresh places and fresh faces. It was not long before I found that my desire was to be gratified, for I learned that the regiment to which I belonged—or soon was to belong—was already on the road from Aldershot to Edinburgh. I saw that my long-cherished desire to visit the Land o' Cakes and Barley was to be fulfilled. I believe that I shall have to confess that the thought of getting to see bonnie Scotland was the all-powerful reason for my joining the army. When I 'listed I told the sergeant that he had better take me to the headquarters in Bradford at once, as I was so well known in the town, and did not want to figure as a recruit in the “publics,” where it was the custom to keep the recruits until a batch had been got together. Still the sergeant kept me there, until I threatened that if he did not send me off at once I would desert and leave the town. I was the only recruit he got in Bradford. He took me to Pontefract, where there were more recruits in waiting.

### EMBARKING FOR SCOTLAND

I stayed in Pontefract a couple of days, and then I was moved with the other recruits to the port of Hull, where we embarked one splendid autumn afternoon in a screw steamer for Leith, in Scotland. I shall never forget the incidents which happened during this short voyage. There were many passengers on board, not the least important being a couple of London sharpers. There was an escort of soldiers who were taking a deserter back to his regiment, and there was a young man-o'-war's man belonging to the good ship “Cornwallis.” He was going to Scotland to see his mother in Edinburgh. Then there was an elderly gentleman, who, judging by his bronzed countenance, had been in a foreign clime for a long time. He was returning to his native heath. Another passenger was a dashing young gentleman, whose father, he told us, was an hotel-keeper in Rotherham, near Sheffield. This one had his fingers gaudily ornamented with rings and diamonds. Of course there isn't much to be said of us recruits, except, perhaps, that we were regarded as so many “raw lads.” Nevertheless we passed our time during the day very agreeably in various ways—games, &c.—until darkness settled over the ship, and then we retired into the cabin.

### THIEVES ON BOARD

At night, I recollect, the wind was very boisterous, and the sea very rough. All we recruits—or the majority of us—were quite ready for Morpheus to take us in his arms when retiring-time came. The men's sleeping apartment was one common room. Stillness and silence—save and except, perhaps, the snoring—reigned with us until about one after midnight, when (I remember I was thinking of "Home, Sweet Home" at the time) I saw two men gliding stealthily about the cabin. One of the men carried a lighted taper, which he shielded with his hand, and his companion, I saw, was in the act of robbing the sleeping passengers; taking anything that came in their way—provided, of course, that it was worth taking. I overheard one of the two say, "Let's get to the other side, them recruits'll have nothing." Then did they steal across to the other side of the cabin. I saw them take money from the old gentleman first. He was hard asleep. Then they took rings from the fingers of the young masher, and next turned their attention to the young sailor lad further on. His money was in a little bag tied round his neck, beneath his shirt breast. The robbers cut the bag away, and took it with them; it contained the savings of the lad and his passport. All this I saw done, and did not dare to move or speak for fear of being "done" by the rascals. Having stripped the cabin of all that appeared to be in their line, they left and went up the stairs onto the deck, feeling, I suppose, cocksure that they had had their rascality to themselves. The morn dawned, and the first to give the alarm that they had been robbed were those two London "prigs," who swore vengeance upon the whole of us. One of them declared that he had been a rogue all his life—a sentiment to which I said "aye," "aye" in my own mind,—but added that if he could find the man who had taken 28s from his pockets he would forgive him. The other thief said he had lost his watch, but he, too, would forgive the man who would acknowledge and return it. Then there was a general hulabaloo among the passengers, and everybody began to be alarmed. Each felt in his pockets and examined his belongings, and with very few exceptions all who had had anything to lose *had* lost it. The captain came across the bow, and was told that there were thieves on board and he ought to have the passengers searched. The captain said he could hardly do that on the high seas: it was against all sea-faring law; but he suggested when they arrived at the port of Leith the authorities would do their best to find out the guilty ones. He also pointed out that it behoved anyone on board, if he had the slightest suspicion, to give information to him.

### **HOW THE THIEVES WERE TRAPPED**

I knew full well I was the one able to do this, but I did not step forward, being somewhat at a loss which way to go about it. However, as we were coasting Fifeshire, I slipped down into the steward's room, when all the passengers were basking in the sun on the deck, and told the steward all I knew about the affair. I got him to promise to tell the captain in such a way that it should not be known until we had disembarked that I had given the information. He transferred the information to the captain, and presently the steward came and beckoned me to follow him down to his cabin, remarking that nobody would see me. I saw the captain, and told him what I knew of the matter. The robbery continued to be the sole topic of talk the rest of the journey. Clearing the coast of Fife, we soon came in sight of Edinburgh, and, sailing up the Forth, we finally landed at Leith. It was Sunday afternoon, and there were large numbers of people about to watch us land. The majority of the people ran for the first pier, but the captain ordered the vessel to land at the second pier, which disappointed the people. Two Scottish policemen were stationed at the bottom of the gangway. The escort with their prisoner were allowed to pass; also the recruits, with the exception of myself. Next the passengers filed off, and, in turn, came the two cockney "prigs." The captain ordered them to be searched by the policeman; and searched they were, though not without some show of resistance. Everything that was missing was found upon them, with the exception of the young sailor's passport.

### **THE TRIAL AND IMPRISONMENT**

The twain were handcuffed and taken to Carlton Gaol, at the top end of Edinburgh, and the next morning they were tried before the Lord Provost, and each sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment with hard labour. I was called to give evidence in the court, and chagrined the two London sharpers must have felt to find out how they had been caught red-handed. This was my first appearance in a police court.

### **AT EDINBURGH—BILL TELLS THE COLONEL SOMETHING**

On the night of our arrival, the deserter was taken to Edinburgh, and put into the guard-room. The recruits and myself were drawn up in line before the Colonel, and we were asked particularly who we were and whence we came. My turn arrived. "Well, and who are you?" says the Colonel. "You seem to have had a better time than these Sheffielders." I told him that I was from Keighley, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. "Is that somewhere near Bingley?" asked the Colonel. "Yes," replied I, "about four miles away." "Do you know a gentleman in the neighbourhood called William Busfeild Ferrand?" "Yes, sir," replied I. "He lives at St. Ives; I know him very well." "Have you (queried the Colonel with a merry twinkling in his eye) ever had any of his hares and rabbits?" "No," replied I, "I'm not a poacher." "Well," remarked the Colonel, "I think you will do well; perhaps it's the best thing you ever did. But of these Sheffielders I have no high opinion; they're a bad sample of soldiers indeed, and if I had my way I would petition Government to have no Sheffielders at all in the Army." Then we retired from the Colonel's presence, the sergeant in charge being instructed to take us on the following morning before the regimental doctor for examination. Set at liberty for the time being, we recruits made for the canteen. There we found

all classes of soldiers—Highlanders, Lancers, Artillerymen—all supping their ale and making merry.

## **A RED-LETTER DAY IN MY LIFE**

Next morning the recruits were brought before the doctor, who duly examined and passed us—all but two men. The next move was to the quarter-master's stores; and now, for the first time in my life, I donned the Queen's uniform. This, I can truly say, was a red-letter day in my career: I felt a proud man for the moment, and I remember the thought suggesting itself, "Now, where will this land you, William Wright?" I had a longing to see the city and its surroundings—Holyrood Palace, Roslin Castle, John Knox's house, &c.; so I asked the quarter-master for the necessary leave. But he said that before I could leave the barracks I must get quit of my civilian's clothing—you see they were frightened I should desert. I was told that there was a Jew in the bottom corridor of the castle who bought second-hand clothing.

## **"JEWED" BY A JEW**

I accordingly paid a visit to my friend Isaac, and asked him, "What will give me for this suit o' clothes? They cost me £3 10s in Bradford only three weeks ago, and, besides, these boots are nearly new." "Well, my frent," said the old *Jew* "tem poots will be sixpence, an' tees cloas vill pe von shillin'; an' (speaking with warmth) I vill not gif you von penny more for tem—not von penny." "I'll be blessed if I'll take that" said I, also speaking with some fervour; "You vile dog of a Jew! No wonder that your race is hated in every clime, for you would rob a saint of his shoe strings!" But the Jew had been tempered to these oft repeated "blessings," as was proved by the coolness with which he said: "Howefer, dat is vhat I vill gif you, an' not anoder farding." Seeing that parleying was useless with this worldly extortionizer, and seeing, also, what a fix I was in, I eventually parted with my clothes and shoes.

## **BEFORE THE DRILL-SERGEANT**

After that I was at liberty to leave the barracks; which I did, and made my way down into the city—into Canongate. On my return to barracks it was time for recruits' drill. The drill-sergeant had a voice like unto a growling buffalo. He said: "Now, then, ye recruits, Ye're not at home now—a lot of sucking pigs with your mothers. Ye've got good pay and rations, and by the bokey ye'll have to drill." This was the order of the day for two months, and at the end of that time I had made pretty fast progress with my drill, and I was shortly placed in the ranks as a full-blown soldier.

## **A PROMOTION**

One morning, soon after this, I was called to the orderly-room. I was told that it had pleased my superiors to promote me to the rank of a lance-corporal. I made some objection to this, saying I did not yet know private's duty, as I had only been a private for two months. But the colonel told me that I could well learn the duties of both private and lance-corporal at the same time. Therefore, I accepted the promotion, though I was quite content to stay as I was, and I got a stripe to put on my tunic and "shell" jacket; also on my great coat. My first duty as a lance "Jack" was as escort of a coal fatigue in the castle. I had under me a squad of old soldiers, whose duty it was to carry boxes of coals from the basement to the upper story in the building. Although I was very forbearing with the men, they were ever and anon grumbling and growling, and in the course of one of their little outpourings I heard a veteran exclaim that he never knew a fool in his life but what was lucky!

## **A WARNING AND ITS EFFECT**

After superintending the coal fatigue, I was put in charge of a dozen privates, young and old, in one of the bottom rooms of the castle. Some of the young bloods were very generous in their fault-finding and acts of disobedience. One of the old fellows actually point-blankly refused to wash and scrub the benches in the room—which I had ordered him to do. By this time their pleading and other things had somewhat "softened my heart towards them," and the thought came into my head, "don't be so hard on the poor old chaps; you're abler to do the work than some of them." Thus my feelings prompted me to take my turn with them, and, divesting myself of my jacket, and rolling up my shirt sleeves, I set myself to scrubbing the benches. But, by Jupiter! no sooner had I commenced my self-imposed task than in popped Captain Clifford Lloyd, who was on his rounds. "What are you doing there, corporal?" he bellowed forth when he saw me. "Oh, I am just scrubbing the forms, sir, for a bit of exercise" said I. "D... you and your exercise," retorted the captain sternly. "Now, don't let me catch you at it again. Here's an old lazy hound behind you who knows very well that it is his duty, and I shall take that stripe off your arm if I catch you at this job again." Of course, as a non-commissioned officer, I took the warning to heart, and kept to my own duties for the future—the warning having taken effect with the old soldiers as well as myself.

## **HOAXED BY THE SERGEANTS**

Of course I came in for hoaxes from the sergeants. I mind one incident which happened one

evening. During the day I had been in charge of the cook-house. Sergeant Murphy, an old soldier, came to me and said I was wanted by the sergeant-major immediately. "What's the matter? There is nothing wrong with me, is there?" I asked, noticing that the messenger looked rather concerned. "Don't you know?" I asked again, and then the sergeant said, "If *you* don't know, you soon will do. The fact is, you have spoiled the coppers in the cook-house, you have burned the bottoms out of them." "They were all right when I left" I retorted, beginning to feel rather "queer." If I had never been one before I felt a coward then; but, come what might, I thought, they can only reduce me in rank. So with "firm step" I marched to the sergeant-major's quarters. To my surprise—and in a manner which at once put me at my ease—the sergeant-major bade me a cheerful "Good evening." He told me that he had a job for me—he wanted me to accompany fifteen recruits to the theatre, and strictly enjoined me to see them back to barracks after the theatre closed. I took the men to the play-house, and brought them all back safe and sound, and the sergeant-major expressed himself very pleased with my abilities as a *chaperon*.

## BANQUET AT EDINBURGH CASTLE

Shortly after there was to be a grand festival in the Castle given by Captain Darnall, who was severing his connection with the Castle. I was relieved of all soldier's duties for nine days, and told off with others to decorate certain rooms on the premises in preparation for the festival. The event came off in due course; it was a grand affair, and was made the most of on all hands. Captain Darnall presented the oldest soldier with a silver cup.

## CHANGE OF VENUE

It was not long ere I was made a full Corporal, and commenced to receive double pay. Now I felt a hero, and no mistake. All this time I had been a keen observer of both men and manners, and I had really seen all there was to be seen in Edinburgh and neighbourhood. It was, therefore, with pleasurable feelings that I heard that No. 7 Company, to which I belonged, was to be sent to the military garrison at Greenlaw—a bonny little village some ten miles from Edinburgh. I think the scenery in this district is about the most picturesque and romantic in all Scotland. Roslin Castle is only a short distance away. The neighbourhood is divided into little villages, and to one of these—Milton Bridge—I paid frequent visits during my sojourn at Greenlaw. At Milton Bridge there was a tavern, known by the sign of "The Fishers' Tryst," kept by a cheery old gentleman and his daughter. I got on very friendly terms with the landlord and his lassie, and entrusted to them the secret as to who I really was;—for I had joined the regiment under a *nom de plume*. In my communications with my friends at Keighley I gave them to understand that I was working as an ordinary individual for my living. I dated all my letters from "The Fishers' Tryst," in the name of "William Ferdinand Wright," and for three years I avoided identification.

## CHAPTER X

### A CHAT WITH "DUNCAN DHEW"

It was one beautiful summer afternoon, while strolling along the pleasant country lanes, which looked charming with their avenues of stately oak trees, whose branches were tenanted by scores of squirrels, that I came upon an elderly gentleman who was sitting smoking. I bade him "Good-day," and asked him for a match; which he gave me and invited me to sit down beside him and have a smoke and a chat. In the course of our conversation I discovered that my friend was no common man. When, in reply to his enquiry, I told him that the headquarters of my regiment were at Edinburgh, he said, "and what a disgrace some of the men have brought upon your regiment." Every one of the guards at Holyrood Palace had been found 'beastly' drunk, excepting one man, who was keeping sentry at the magazine on the top of Arthur's Seat. The circumstance was especially discreditable as His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was staying at Holyrood. "I understand (continued the speaker) that they broke into the wine cellar, and stole some fifty bottles of port and champagne. Most of that they drunk, until when found they were 'blind palatic'." "Yes, sir" said I, "I believe it is all true. All the men are put back for court-martial except the man at the magazine, who held his post all night without being relieved." "Serves the rascals right," retorted the old gentleman. "In my time of soldiering every man jack of them would have been shot—the sergeant as well." "Then, sir," said I, "you have been in the Army?" "Yes," he replied, "I have served a little time, and took part in the Peninsular War." But beyond this my unknown friend would tell me nothing about his military career.

### A VISIT TO THE "BIG HALL"

We next fell to talking about the big hall which lay in front of us. My friend asked me if I should like to look over it, and on my saying that I should, he directed me on the way to the mansion, telling me to go a little further up the lane, then turn in at the wicket gate and follow the footpath across the lawn. "Then," said he, "you'll come to the kitchen door. Knock, and ask for a horn of beer." "But whose word shall I give?" I asked, "Tell them an old gentleman called Duncan Dhew, in black knee breeches and leggings has sent you, and it will be all right. And then (added he) if

you wish it you can go further into the park by crossing another path over the lawn." I thanked the kind old gentleman, and took my departure.

## **THE SCOTCH LASSIE'S REGRET**

It was not long before I was at the old hall. I rapped at the kitchen-door according to orders, and a woman of about forty summers made her appearance. When I mentioned the name given me by the old gentleman she laughed heartily, and said that if I would come in I should have a horn or two of beer—if I liked. She was a pleasant-spoken Scotchwoman, and before I took my leave she said chaffingly that it was a pity she wasn't twenty years younger, for then she might have been "my lassie."

## **A BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE**

Quitting the house I took into the park, and to say that I was delighted with the scene is not in anywise doing justice to the feelings I experienced at the time. I can truly say that I have never seen anything so lovely since—the splendid walks, with their long avenues of wide-spreading and noble-looking trees; the bright gardens and sparkling fountains; the babbling burns, crossed here and there by pontoon bridges; and last, but by no means least, the panoramic bits of the distant landscape visible through the openings in the trees—all these went to make up a veritable Arcadia. Then, as I walked further into the park I saw numbers of wild deer, which looked up at me as I passed by as much as to say, "What business have you to intrude on our sacred rights?" Well, I walked and walked, until I thought I was not coming to the end of the park that day. But soon the path dropped, and disclosed a little valley, in which were located about a half-dozen thatched dwellings. Here, I found, lived the gamekeeper and a few farm labourers. At the house I called at the wee laddies and lassies wondered whatever I was; they had never before seen a "walking target." The gamekeeper told me that if I was stationed at Greenlaw Barracks I had walked in a very curious direction, for I was thirteen miles, by the ordinary road, out of my course. I was exceedingly ill at ease to hear this pronouncement, and told him that it would be "hot" for me if I was not in before the "tattoo," or the "last post." The keeper, I found, was a true Scotchman, and of a very obliging nature. He proffered to take me through the wood to a place called Milton Bridge. We started, and were soon at the village mentioned, where, at the "Fishers' Tryst," we had a "drappie o' whuskey" over the matter. Then we parted, and I got into barracks in time.

## **BACK TO AULD REEKIE**

The very next morning after this interesting day the order came that our company was to return to Edinburgh, and give place for another company. My stay at Greenlaw had extended over six months. Now for "Auld Reekie!" Soon after we arrived there was a great review at the Castle, the Queen and Prince Albert Victor inspecting the troops.

## **INTERVIEW WITH THE EMPRESS EUGENIE**

I remember being the sergeant in charge of the guard at Holyrood Palace at the time when the Empress Eugenie was on a visit to Scotland. The French Fleet accompanied her to Scotland, and lay in the Firth of Forth. The crews of the ships comprised some fine sailors, who, I think, were the smartest lot I ever saw. The Empress and her Court stayed a full week in Edinburgh. I remember one eventful day when a party of two ladies and four gentlemen, after inspecting Queen Mary's Room, and the old picture gallery in Holyrood Palace, passed into the guard-room where I was in command. The ladies advanced towards me, bidding me "Good afternoon." The gentlemen remained behind. In the best way I could under the circumstances I asked the two ladies to be good enough to take a seat, apologising for the rude seat which was all I could offer them. They courteously accepted the seat, and, at the older lady's request, I sat down beside them. The talking was confined to one of the ladies, who seemed, I thought at the time, of a very inquisitive nature. In the first place she expressed her wish to know something about the British soldier—how he was fed, whether he was well-clothed, what kind of rations he was provided with, &c. I gave her my opinion on these points as far as I could go. She then asked how long I had been a soldier, and I said only a short time. "Then you cannot tell how you feel when your comrades are being slain on the battle-field?" "No, ma'am, I cannot; but there is a man lying down on the guard-bed who can. He went through the Crimean War." I then advanced to the old soldier's bed, and said, "Francis, there's a lady here wants to know how you feel when you are on the battle-field." "Tell her," said Francis, without looking up, "we see nowt but hell-fire and smoke!" "Well, what does he say?" asked the inquiring lady, who had, fortunately, remained in the background. It would not, of course, have done for me to give the answer as it stood, so I replied, "He says, madam, that he can see nothing but fire and smoke." "Well," said the lady preparing to depart, "you seem to be well clothed and to have plenty to eat." As I was showing her out of the room, she said, "If I were to give you a Scottish pound note, would you share it amongst you and your fellows?" "Yes, ma'am" said I, "when we have dismissed guard." Whereupon she placed the note in my hand, and I thanked her cordially. I had not the slightest idea who the donor of the note was, or who were the people who had been our guard-room guests, until the next day. We were then relieved from guard by the 78th Highlanders, who were only about 300 strong, and had just returned from the Indian Mutiny. It was while upon the esplanade, where there were a thousand of the Waterloo and Peninsular pensioners assembled

for drilling, that I noticed my lady guest and a gentleman reviewing the veterans. They were walking up and down the ranks, and every now and again the lady stopped before an old soldier, spoke to him, and, before passing on, put into his hand a Scottish pound note. It was said that during the week she presented no less than a thousand of these notes to the soldiers. One old hero, I saw, got five pound notes. I asked the captain of the guard who the lady was. He seemed much surprised when I assured him that I did not know who she was; but greater was my surprise on being told that the lady was the Empress of the French.

## **ADIEU! EDINBURGH—A DISAPPOINTMENT**

Orders were issued for our regiment to remove to the ancient town of Ayr—news which delighted me greatly. Next day the regiment, numbering about a thousand men, mustered for the last time in Edinburgh. The inhabitants of Auld Reekie turned out in their thousands to see us march to the railway station and to bid us adieu. The regimental band—which, by-the-bye, included many able musicians from the West Riding of Yorkshire; Wilsden, Haworth and Cowling being among the towns furnishing the band men—played lively airs during our march to the station, such as “Good-bye, sweetheart!” and “The girl I left behind me.” At the station I met a sore disappointment. Since the issuing of the orders of removal to Ayr, I had been buoyantly thinking of what happy times I should have in Ayr, and my feelings can be imagined when I found I was among the detachment which was to be sent on to the barracks at Hamilton—a small town on the Clyde about ten miles from Glasgow. However, I determined to make the best of the matter, and hope for better times. The two companies forming the detachment, numbering about a couple of hundred men, reached Hamilton all right. Within a short distance of Hamilton, is Bothwell and its famous Castle; and during my stay in the locality I paid frequent visits to Bothwell Castle and Bothwell Bridge, at which latter place Sir William Wallace defeated the English in battle. I also visited the magnificent residence of the Duke of Hamilton.

## **IN CHARGE OF DEFAULTERS**

I remember that on the first evening of our arrival in Hamilton I had under me twenty or thirty soldiers, who were on the defaulters’ list in consequence of being absent from barracks the night previous to our leaving Edinburgh. They had to all intents and purposes been out in the city bidding their acquaintances good-bye, and had taken too long a time over it. For this misdemeanour they were confined to barracks at Hamilton. I assembled the men in front of the officer’s quarters, and said, “This is our first evening here and a grand evening it is. I should very much like to visit the town, and I have no doubt that you would. Now, I have a proposal to make if you will all stand by me.”—“We will,” they shouted in one voice. “I propose,” I continued, “to see the captain, and if you will promise that during your stay in Hamilton you will not commit yourselves, I will try to get you dismissed from defaulters’ drill, so that you can go out and enjoy yourselves.” They readily expressed their willingness to carry out the promise. I then made for the officers’ room, and was admitted into the captain’s presence. “Well, what is your wish this evening?” he inquired. “A great favour, captain,” I replied, “not only for myself but for those men outside. There are over a score defaulters, and they wish to speak a word with you.” “Where are they?” said the captain. So I brought him outside before the men. He heard their case stated, and then asked, “Do you all promise that if I dismiss you from pack drill you will not misbehave yourselves during your short stay in this town?” Of course the promise was promptly given; but promises, like pie crusts, are easily broken. Well, every one of the defaulters was dismissed, and sent to his own quarters. They then went out of the barracks and had a pleasant look round the town.

## **A DESPERATE AFFRAY WITH THE POLICE**

All went wisely and well for three weeks, at the end of which period there was a desperate affray between the soldiers and the police. It came about in this way. One of the soldiers while strolling on the banks of the Clyde one Saturday night appeared to have insulted a lady. She gave information to the police, who next (Sunday) morning, accompanied by the informant, came in full force to the barracks. We had just fallen in for church parade. The ranks were opened, and the lady passed among us to see if she could identify the guilty man. Eventually, she pitched upon a man whom all of us knew could not have been at the place mentioned at the time given by the lady. However, despite his protestations of innocence, he was handcuffed, and was about to be marched away by a sergeant of the police when one of the prisoner’s comrades interfered. He did so to a nicety, for he knocked the policeman down. Then another policeman went to the ground, and another, until the whole parade was one scene of commotion. The police were badly worsted, many of them being more or less seriously injured in the *mélée*. Reinforcements were summoned, and many arrests were made by the representatives of the civil power. The barracks’ officers had no control over their men, and two companies of Highlanders were sent for to take the place of our regiment at Hamilton and to escort to Edinburgh Castle those of us who had taken part in disturbance. At the Castle the men were confined to barracks for a fortnight to give the police time to work up their “case” for the court-martial, and in order to see how the wounded policemen, who were being treated in the hospital progressed.

## **I WAS OUT OF THE FRAY**

I happened to be escorting two men from the hospital to the parade when the outbreak occurred.

I was conversing with the regimental doctor, and took advantage of that circumstance to get that gentleman to make me a certificate testifying that I was not "in at the death." However, I was sent for examination with the lot, but I passed through the ordeal successfully, the doctor's certificate undoubtedly freeing me. I may here mention that I have not been a believer in physiognomy since then; for if a man had a rough-looking or repulsive countenance he was as surely ordered to "fall out," and many men were so taken prisoners whom I knew were innocent. In all about fifty were placed under arrest, and taken before the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, who sentenced them to gaol for terms varying from one to eighteen months.

## CHAPTER XI

### IN THE LAND OF BURNS

The incident mentioned in the last chapter ended in all the men who were not committed to prison being released and sent on to head-quarters at Ayr—

Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a toon surpasses,  
For honest men and bonnie lasses.

I was among the "removals," and high were my spirits at the prospect of a sojourn in the hallowed land of Burns. To use a well-turned phrase, it had been the height of my ambition to reach the birth-place of a genius second to none in his way—Bobby Burns, the patriotic bard and ploughboy. For twelve months I stayed in the quaint old town. Scores of times did I visit the cottage where the world-famous poet was born. It was a lowly thatched clay biggin; with two rooms on one floor, and at this time was being used as a public tavern. The building belonged, I believe, to the Shoemakers' Society of Scotland, and scarcely anything but the native whiskey and bottled beer was dispensed at the house. The first room on entering was utilised for cooking purposes, and contained a big kettle—for boiling water, I was told, (whether in good or bad faith) on occasion of extra demand for "whuskey". The farther room served as the parlour, and contained a large oblong table, seated with cane-bottomed chairs. The mud walls of the room had been boarded over, and the roof under-drawn, so that an air of comfort was imparted. In almost every nook of this room were to be seen the initials and names of visitors cut into the wood, and the places appended to some of the names indicated foreign visitors. The walls were completely filled with these "carvings" and writings. I more than once looked round for a little space to put Bill o' th' Hoylus End's initials, but to no purpose—every available inch was taken up with those of my predecessors. A portrait in oils of Burns, said to have been done by Allan Cunningham, one of the bard's friends, occupied a prominent place in the room. This picture, in keeping with the general appearance of the room, was covered with initials and names. A few minutes' walk from the cottage, and situated on a slight eminence commanding a fine view, stands the Burns' Monument, a beautiful Grecian edifice. In the surrounding grounds—which are handsomely laid out—is a little building which contains Thom's statues of "Tam o' Shanter and Souter Johnny." The Auld Brig o' Doon and Alloway Kirk are not far away. On ascending the steps leading into the churchyard the first grave is that of the poet's father, William Burns. An epitaph in the tombstone, written by Bobby Burns, reads:—

Here lies an honest man at rest,  
As e'er God with His image blest;  
The friend of man, the friend of truth,  
The guide of age, the guide of youth.  
Few hearts like his in virtue warmed;  
Few heads with knowledge so informed:—  
If there be another world, he lives in bliss,  
If there be none, he made the best of this.

Going further into the old kirkyard, one sees the graves of many of the bard's friends, whom he has immortalised in verse. At the farther end, close to the river Doon, stands the ancient kirk—

Wi' its winnock bunker i' the east,  
Where sat old Nick i' shape o' beast.

Perhaps this old fane has been made more of in poetry by Burns than anything else. It is inspected by thousands of travellers who visit Ayr.

### BURNS' CELEBRATION

While in Ayr, I remember there was a great demonstration to honour the memory of the national poet. The gathering was held at the Corn Exchange, and the large hall was densely packed. Among an influential company was Sir James Fergusson, M.P., late Post-master General. Various patriotic speeches were delivered, and at one stage, I mind, the meeting was put into great good humour by the action of an elderly gentleman on the platform. Stepping to the front he said "I believe I am the only man in Scotland to-day that ever shook hands with Bobby Burns. He was then—over seventy years ago—an excise man at Dumfries, and I acted as his post-boy, taking his letters." These remarks had scarcely been made than several of the people came forward and

grasped the old fellow by the hand, and, indeed, some all but hugged him. I was prompted to shake hands with the "living memorial."

And well old Scotland may be proud  
To hear her Burns proclaimed aloud,  
For to her sons the world hath bowed,  
Through Burns's name—  
All races of the world are proud of Burns's fame.

## THE PEOPLE OF AYR

I found to be of a very genial and sociable disposition. Their dialect is exceedingly pleasing—a good deal more so than that of many other parts of Scotland; shires and district vary in dialect quite after the manner of our own localities and counties. I made many friends in Ayr, among them being John McKelvey (who, with his daughter, Tina, kept an old tavern at the end of the quay at Ayr), and Billy Miller (of the "Thistle"), another celebrity in his way. Both these were poets, or, perhaps I should say, rhymesters; and whatever the old wives of the present day may think about the poet, of this I can assure them—that in those days "the lassies loved him weel i' bonnie Scotland." But to get to my military reminiscences.

## A FREE FIGHT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

With the exception of one "hitch"—and perhaps that was enough—I passed my time very pleasantly at Ayr Barracks. The incident came about in this way. I was out in the "toon" with the orderly-room clerk, Sergeant Delaney, the money both of us had in our pockets sufficing to put us into high spirits. In our travels we came across a menagerie of wild beasts—Manders', I think it was—and I was not long in observing that the members of the band which was "going it" in front of the show were all men from the Keighley district. The leader of the band, Dawson Hopkinson, was a Haworth man, and his remains lie in Haworth Churchyard, a bugle being engraved on the stone over the grave. Hopkinson had been the landlord of the Golden Lion Inn, at Keighley, previous to travelling with the menagerie. Other members of the band were Bobby Hartley, of Keighley, and another named Joe Briggs; two from Silsden, and one from Wilsden, all of whom were well known at the time as able musicians. I felt in great glee at meeting with these old friends, and marched boldly on the platform to greet them. The result of my visit was that I invited the whole of the band to come and have a drink at the Grossmarket Hotel down the street. When they had played another tune they "struck" and in a body followed me to the hotel; and over glasses of "guid auld Scotch" we told tales of old Keighley until it really seemed that old times had come again. In chatting over some of the eccentric characters, we had many a laugh about Three Laps and Job Senior. But the time was flitting by fast, and my musical guests, it appeared, had not left word at the menagerie where they were going. Thus there was some justification for the line of action which the lady of the show had adopted in rushing into the room and demanding "why her band had given over playing and left the stage." But the bandsmen had supped, perhaps too freely and too well, and consequently they were not able to give a clear answer to her question. Right into the tavern we could hear the growling of the lions, the howling of the wolves, and the squeaking of the monkeys; and yet, forsooth! the bandsmen could afford to laugh at the noises. Delaney and I, despite that we were all out as far "gone" as the rest, saw there was going to be a storm if we did not bestir ourselves; so we set about coaxing the musicians to return to their legitimate duties. After much ado we induced them to quit the tavern, and Delaney and I followed suit, and started for the barracks. "Just for safety's sake" we went arm in arm, and as we passed down the long main street we sang and carried on like the proverbial jolly tars. Things went moderately well with us until we got to a picture shop. Here was a large painting showing General Garibaldi mounted on a white horse; and no sooner did Delaney catch a glimpse of the picture than he drew his sword and with it smashed the window, his intention being to wreak his vengeance upon the offensive canvas.

## IN THE HANDS OF THE POLICE

We were both of us now in a fine mess, and no mistake about it. I stood dumbfounded for about a minute, and before I had time to give my thoughts to deciding what we should do, two big, brawny Scottish policemen had come up from behind and seized Delaney tightly by the arms and deprived him of his sword. They straightway marched their prisoner in the direction of the Town Hall, I following at their heels and expostulating with them, taking up the line of argument that if they only would let John go I would advance the money for the broken window. But the Scottish policemen—like their Keighley comrades, I suppose, would do—held their prisoner firmly, and the only heed they paid to my entreaty was in the shape of a threat—"Gin ye say mich mair ye'll hae ta gang along wi' us." I still continued to beseech the constables to release "poor John," but when near a place known as the Fish Cross one of the twain suddenly gave back and rushed upon me. I drew my sword, and kept him at bay for a few seconds, until a butcher came to his assistance. The butcher stole up behind me and robbed me of my sword. Now I was almost "taken," but no! not just yet. Seeing an opening in the large crowd which had gathered I darted through it and down the street into a yard where I knew there was a blacksmith's shop kept by Louis Gordon. I managed to get into the shop, but my pursuers were almost at my heels. I was overpowered and very soon the "bangles" were on my wrists. I was marched to the Town Hall, followed by a vast and inquiring crowd. One of the milk girls from the barracks wanted to know whatever I had



been doing, and I told her that I had been making love too freely with John Barleycorn. Arrived at the Town Hall, I saw Delaney. We were both locked up for the night, and next morning were brought

## BEFORE THE LORD PROVOST

The captain of the regiment in full-dress uniform was present in court, occupying a seat beside the magistrate. My case was called on first. After the two policemen and certain civilians had had their say, a doctor, whose name, I think, was Montgomery, stepped into the witness-box and spoke in my favour. The captain also gave me a good character; he said this was my first offence, and Delaney was the cause of it. In pronouncing judgement the Lord Provost said that as my captain had spoken so well of me he would "give me the benefit of the doubt," although an offence of attempting to rescue a prisoner from the hands of the police was a very serious one indeed. Under the circumstances, he would fine me 40s and costs, or "saxty days to the talbooth." The charges against poor Delaney were those of doing wilful damage to property, being drunk and disorderly, and, to some extent, causing a riot. John had no defence, and no one to speak a good word for him; indeed, his captain—who was a fellow-countryman, an Irishman—gave him a bad name. The upshot was that Delaney was ordered to pay 40s and costs and to make good the damage to the window, or to go to the talbooth for six months. My fine was paid by subscription among the No. 7 Company, to which I belonged, and I obtained my almost immediate release. The amount in Delaney's case was much larger than mine, and it was not until John had suffered a fortnight's incarceration that his Company (No. 4) succeeded in getting him released. I myself took the ransom to Governor McPherson, who returned me 16s out of a £5 note. Poor John looked well-nigh dead after his sojourn in the police cell, and as soon as we got out of the gaol we made for an eating-house, where I let him have a good meal. We then went back to barracks.

## CHAPTER XII

### REDUCED TO THE RANKS

In the meantime I had been tried by Court-martial, and reduced to the ranks. Sergeant Delaney, on entering the barracks, was put under arrest. He, too, had to undergo a second trial, and he, like myself, was relieved of his serjeantcy and put back to a private's position. To me, however, this was no very great trouble, though to a certain extent it was a mark of disgrace. Dame Fortune soon began to smile upon me. I found a good friend in Captain Clifford Lloyd, the musketry instructor to the regiment. One fine morning, shortly after I was reduced to the ranks, and while I was engaged in preparing myself to mount guard, the Captain passed my room. "Ah!" says he, "you're brushing up, I see." "Yes, sir," I answered; "I'm going to mount guard. This is the first time I have mounted guard since I was reduced to a private." "Ah! well," said Captain Clifford Lloyd, "you see what a fool you have been to get intoxicated. But I always said that any man can have a breakdown in his lifetime; and if ever you have another chance you will mind it?" "Yes, sir; I think I shall," replied I. The Captain then walked away, but he had not gone many paces when he returned and said to me, "I'll tell you what I'll do. One of my attendants, Johnson, wants a six weeks' furlough to see his parents in Nottingham. I will let you have his place during his absence if you will take it. You will not have to wait at the mess, but to accompany me at the targets—fit up the targets, paint them, signal, and see that all is right for shooting." "Thank you, sir," said I, from a heart full of thanks; "I shall be ready when called upon, sir." The Captain then went away, and I proceeded to complete my equipment for going on guard. I was on the first post of the barrack guard. I had not been walking sentry "go" for many minutes ere a relief man came to take my place, telling me that I was wanted by Captain Lloyd. I promptly repaired to the Captain's quarters, and Captain Lloyd told me that he had given Johnson permission to take his leave on the next day. "Go," said he to me, "and tell the serjeant to strike you off the mess, as you are now my fatigue man for two months at least." I followed out the instructions. My new duties were very agreeable in one sense, for while being engaged only three days per week (that being as much as the regiment could put in at ball-firing practice) I had full pay. The next morning we went to business. I hoisted the danger flags to keep trespassers away from the range, and, with help from another man, I got the targets in working order. The range was on the seaward side of Ayr, and the targets had always to be removed before the tide came in. I used to take my paint cans (the paint was used to "face" the targets), danger flags, &c., at night to a fisherman's hut at the mouth of the river Doon. The fisherman and his "guid leddy" were a very hospitable couple, and before I completed my visits to their dwelling, I got on very friendly terms with the family. To please the children I gave them coppers occasionally; of a penny the children thought about as much as a child in Keighley thinks of a shilling. Then I made "bargains" with the wife, exchanging money for "pulls" of brandy and "plugs" of tobacco. Her husband, it would seem, when he met with foreign vessels out at sea, would exchange with them fresh-water fish for brandy, tobacco, &c., so that the family had generally a good stock of these commodities on hand. In my new sphere of duty I had plenty of time hanging on my hands, quite ample to enable me to cultivate my muse. One of the pieces which I wrote was my verses commencing:—

In a pleasant little valley,  
Near the ancient town of Ayr,

Where the laddies they are honest,  
And the lassies they are fair;  
Where the Doon in all her splendour  
Ripples sweetly thro' the wood,  
And on her banks not long ago  
A little cottage stood.  
'Twas there in all her splendour,  
On a January morn,  
Appeared old Colia's genius,—  
When Robert Burns was born.

### BREAKING A FIERY HORSE

With the exception of one rather vivid experience, my career as attendant at the targets was devoid of any particular incident. One afternoon, when I had just finished my preparations for the shooting, Captain Clifford Lloyd came up to me leading an iron-grey horse. "Come here," says he, "and mount this steed; and take her a mile or two down the beach." The horse, it appeared, had just come to hand from Bohemia, and was of a very fiery disposition. The captain said she had not received her baptism of fire. I did according to orders, and took the fiery steed along the coast. She proved a very "wicked" animal, and a few yards prancing and capering made me heartily wish that I was safely on *terra firma*. Suddenly a volley was fired, and as suddenly the horse gave such a lurch that I was within an ace of being pitched where I wanted to get—though not quite so precipitately. Volley after volley was fired, and I lost all command over the snorting steed, which was flitting along at the rate of so many miles an hour. Had it not been for a heavy guard-cloak which I was wearing, and which by wrapping itself about the horse's body assisted me to keep my seat, I should most certainly have been pitched to the ground. In my anxious moments I seriously thought of John Gilpin, and compared his famous ride to my own:—

Away went Gilpin, neck or nought;  
Away went hat and wig;  
He little thought when he set out  
Of running such a rig.

"Circumstances alter cases" we are told, and I compared my experience to that of John Gilpin in the following lines:—

Away went Hoylus, neck or nought,  
In spite of wind or tide;  
He little thought, when he set out,  
Of having such a ride.  
He held the reigns so tight and fast  
As ne'er were held before;  
He took an oath—if he got down  
He'd never mount once more.  
His cloak was like a parachute;  
It kept him on his steed.  
For ne'er a horse from here to Hull  
Ere ran with such a speed.  
He cursed aloud the unlucky star  
That tempted him to roam;  
And wished the de'il had got his horse,  
And he were safe at home.

The horse wheeled, and gradually made towards the starting-point. As I drew within sight of the captain, he evidently comprehended my dangerous position, and came to my aid, shouting as he ran along, "Hold on; halt, if you can." But I could not halt, and it took me all my time to hold on. The animal was about at the fag end, and allowed the captain to take the bridle. When Captain Lloyd told me to dismount, I can truly say that I obeyed his injunction more readily than I did the one to mount. I thanked my stars that I had come off as fortunately as I did. The captain took my place in the saddle. He had had a good deal of experience in horse-riding. Setting his spurs into the animal's sides, he was instantly off like the wind. He went miles on the beach, and when he returned the horse was foaming at the mouth and trembling like an aspen leaf. To be sure, the "wicked" steed had had a successful breaking in if she had never had one before, and, when I ventured to hold the bridle, was as quiet as a lamb.

### BACK TO ENGLAND

I acted as attendant at the targets about six months, and at the end of that time the regiment received orders to leave Ayr, and proceed to England. The day came for our departure, and there were the usual handshakings and embraces at the parting places. Our destination was Pontefract. Half of the number of the regiment accomplished the journey by boat, while the other half—among which was your humble servant—went by rail. As is usual in the circumstances, some of the men had taken unto themselves wives during their residence in Scotland. This they had done in an illegitimate or unsanctioned way, not having sought the sanction of the Colonel of the regiment; so that there was some difficulty in smuggling the Scotch lasses with the regiment. As we were leaving Ayr there was, I remember, a young fellow—a wild, uncouth youth who came

to me and begged me to get him over to England with the regiment. I told him that if he would get his hair cut and tidy himself I would provide him with a soldier's uniform; if he donned himself in that there would be a possibility of getting him over. He accordingly got his hair cut, and when he had put himself into a spare uniform which I had got out, he looked quite a different individual. We all went to the station, and the train started. At Carlisle we were allowed a "hot dinner;" this is usually provided for soldiers when travelling at the end of every hundred miles. But instead of a hot dinner, it turned out this time to be a cold one—sandwiches, &c. In the compartment in which I was riding there were several petticoat followers, and, of course, the commissariat did not provide for their wants. Therefore we set ourselves planning and scheming in order to obtain some dinner for them. When we got to the refreshment room, a few of us went in at the usual entrance, obtained our regular allowance, and retired through the back door. We then went round to the front again, and succeeded in getting a second allowance, thus providing for the wives of the soldiers. One of the women was the Scotch lassie I mentioned previously, and who inquired so anxiously about me as I was showing a policeman the way to the Ayr Town Hall one evening. The journey was resumed, and Pontefract safely reached early next morning. After a few days waiting the remainder of the regiment, who had come over by boat, arrived. They had had a very rough time of it on the sea, and several of them told me they never expected to reach England. The sea was very rough, and during one part of the passage Captain Selborne (of No. 7 Company) was heard shouting to the soldiers to kneel down and pray as the vessel was going to be wrecked. The regiment spent a few days in Pontefract and was then disbanded. I had begun to be rather homesick, and as a favour Captain Clifford Lloyd allowed me to have my pay (which amounted to a nice sum, as, having lived with Captain Lloyd, I had been able to save practically the whole of my allowance) early, and I started for home a day or two in advance of the rest. Wearing my uniform I walked on to Featherstone, where I got into a train, as I thought, bound for Keighley. I happened to get into the compartment where Mr Ripley, of Ripley's dyeworks, Bradford, was riding. We entered into conversation, and when I told him that I belonged to Keighley, he surprised me by saying I had got into the wrong train. The train, as I found, went no further than Bradford, and there was not one forward to Keighley at that late hour. Mr Ripley, however, took me to the Great Northern Hotel, and introduced me to the landlady, telling her that I was a young soldier, and ordering her to provide a bed for me for the night, and to let me have anything I might ask for in the way of food. Next morning I buckled myself up for going forward to Keighley. But, thought I, I must not go home in my regimentals. So I went to a clothier's shop, and exchanged my uniform for a fashionable suit of brown, and then I looked like a thorough foreigner. I have hitherto forgot to mention a Scotch cap which I bought in Edinburgh to serve as a memento of my visit to "Auld Reekie." Up to now I had not worn the cap, but I now put it on, and continued to wear it for a long while. "My old Scotch cap" led me to pen the following verses:—

### MY OLD SCOTCH CAP

I met thee first in happy days,  
 When youthful fire was all ablaze,  
 When lovely sun spread forth its rays  
     On bud and sap.  
 And now with pride I on thee gaze,  
     My old Scotch cap.

Were ever I ashamed at all,  
 In church or chapel, feast or ball,  
 In cottage, park, or famous hall,  
     O' thee, old chap?  
 'Mongst rich or poor, or great or small,  
     My old Scotch cap?

I still remember with a smile  
 When we sailed from the coast o' Kyle,  
 And took a boat for Erin's Isle  
     I took a nap—  
 Thou wert my pillow all the while,  
     My brave Scotch cap.

I mind the night we came across  
 That dreadful common, called the Moss,  
 'Midst wind and rain, and tempest tossed—  
     And thunderclap  
 I did begin to fear thy loss,  
     My old Scotch cap.

And like Ajax, in ancient days,  
 When he defied the lightning's rays,  
 I sought thee, 'midst the glowing blaze,  
     And found thy trap;  
 And caught thee in my fond embrace—  
     My old Scotch cap.

On *terra firma* or on sea,  
 Old cap I ken thy pedigree;

And if we separated be  
Death's cord shall snap—  
For I will ne'er abandon thee,  
My old Scotch cap.

I reached Keighley safely; my parents again killed the fatted calf, and right loyally did they welcome their prodigal son. I kept from the fact that I had been a soldier while I had been away, and for a long time very few people knew what I had really been doing during my three years' absence from my native town. Everybody complimented me on my sleek and robust appearance. In due course I applied to Mr Edwin Hattersley, manufacturer, North Brook Works, for a job at warp-dressing, and he readily provided me with one. For a few weeks I was made a sort of god of among my friends.

## **CHAPTER XIII**

### **BACK TO KEIGHLEY—I BECOME A VOLUNTEER**

When I got home to Keighley, the authorities were busily engaged in forming a corps of Rifle Volunteers in the town. The commanding officer was the late Captain Busfeild Ferrand, of St. Ives, Bingley. I was asked to enlist by sergeant (afterwards captain) Henry Wright (now magistrate's clerk at Keighley), but objected at first, as each Volunteer had to purchase his own clothing and accoutrements. However, I was told that if I would join I should have my uniform, &c., free; and I believe I am correct in stating that I was the first in the Keighley corps to have my outfit on these terms. I became a Volunteer. At this time the gentry of the town and district took a great deal more interest in the Volunteer movement than they do to-day. Tradesmen, especially, readily joined the corps, and it was not long ere the first Company was filled up, and a second Company started in the town. Entertainments were frequently given by the officers.

### **CAPTAIN BUSFEILD FERRAND GIVES A BANQUET**

One of these popular functions was given by Captain Busfeild Ferrand. It took the form of a splendid banquet, which was served at the Devonshire Hotel by mine host and hostess, Mr and Mrs Cheeseborough. (Mr Cheeseborough was subsequently the superintendent of police at Keighley). The fact that the banquet cost the Captain over £1 per head may afford some idea of the scale of its magnificence. The guests comprised the gentry of the neighbourhood, and also many from a distance. Several military officers of high rank were present—Colonel Wombwell, Captain McMurdock, &c. The Rector of Keighley (the Rev. W. Busfeild) was among the guests; also, his two sons, both of them officers in the Army. "After a sumptuous repast," as the newspapers have it, Captain Busfeild Ferrand rose and proposed the health of the Queen, eulogising the excellent qualities of Her Majesty. The Captain was a very loyal subject, as may be judged by the severity of his threat—that if any Volunteer present did not drink to the health of the Queen he would have him struck off the rolls. The Rev. W. Busfeild proposed the "Army and Navy," and, in the course of a felicitous speech, mentioned that he was the proud father of two sons who were now officers in the Army, and of another who was in the Navy—a sentiment which was applauded to the very echo. Other toasts were honoured, and speeches made, and throughout the proceedings the greatest enthusiasm and good feeling prevailed. There was one present whom I shall always remember—the late Mr George Hattersley, the founder of the firm of George Hattersley & Sons, and the father of Alderman R. L. Hattersley. Mr George Hattersley was a volunteer in the days of Wellington and Bonaparte, and was one of the—if not the one—oldest Volunteers present. "Our comrade, Mr George Hattersley," was toasted with musical honours and great cheering by the whole company. During the evening Captain Ferrand gave some very interesting and laughable anecdotes about his military experiences, especially as a Cavalryman during the Plug-drawing and Chartist Riots. He told us that his uncle, Major Ferrand, had commanded the Bingley corps of Volunteers, and Captain Ellis, of Bingley, the Keighley detachment. The time had come to pass, however, when they had exchanged places, Captain Ellis being placed in charge of the Bingley section, and he (Captain Busfeild Ferrand) taking the place of his uncle at Keighley. The Captain went on to tell us how he had a military "head" when he was a boy, and caused roars of laughter by saying he had frequently bestridden a donkey grazing in the field, and set off on the "war path," imagining himself some great general. Throughout, the proceedings were almost inconceivably brilliant and enjoyable, and it was well after the "wee short hour beyont the twal" when the National Anthem was sung.

### **AN UNSUCCESSFUL FIELD DAY AT YORK**

The first field day the Keighley Volunteers had was at York. We formed part of the West Riding Battalion, and the object of the gathering was a grand review by the Duke of Cambridge. Unfortunately the day was a very wet one, and, in consequence, the review turned out a failure. In those days the Volunteers were not provided with great coats, and a torrential downpour soon wet every man to the skin. Reviewing under these conditions would have been decidedly uncomfortable and unsatisfactory; consequently, the whole battalion was dismissed, and told to seek shelter in the best places they could find. The Keighley detachment went in batches into the

city. Drill-Sergeant Chick would have me to go with him into the nearest tavern. The drill-sergeant was a remarkable man in his way, and over a glass of ale he declared, with an unblushing countenance, that he had been in some parts of the world where it had rained ten times heavier for twelve months at a time than it was doing that day. Of course, I, in my modesty kept quiet, and did not challenge the veracity of the statement of this wonderful man. Yes; there were some "fine" boys among the Volunteers in those days. We had some very popular non-commissioned officers who were very kind to us, which made it a pleasure to serve under them.

## REVIEW AT DONCASTER

The next review was at Doncaster, shortly afterwards, when the day was about as hot as it was wet on the occasion of the abandoned review at York. The commissariat was ample for every man, but it was generally thought that an improvement might have been effected by substituting something for the "cayenne pies," *alias* pork pies. Each man had a lb. pork pie and two pints of beer allowed. The pies were hotly peppered, and we all declared that they would have given a dog the hydrophobia. Then the pint pots for drinking ran short—a cruel occurrence on a hot and dry day. Only half-a-dozen of these drinking utensils fell to the Keighley detachment, and they fell into the hands of six of the "smartest" lads in the whole corps—Privates Billy Bentley, Jack Thom, John Hargreaves, Ned Thretten, Jack Wilkinson, and Long Stanhope. I, for one, badly wanted to quench my thirst, but was unable to do so, for the above-mentioned six brave soldiers stuck to their guns—that is, their pint pots, manfully, and there was no prospect of a drink until they had fairly "put the dust down." At last, however, I managed to get a pot, but had it taken from me as I was drinking. Captain Thomas Blakey went up to Private Bentley and asked, "Are you a married man, Bentley?" "Yes," replied Bentley. "Have you got any family?" "I have," said Bentley. "Well," said Captain Blakey, "you'd better take a dozen of these pies home to your children." "Does ta want me ta give 'em t' hydrophobia? Why, I wodn't give 'em ta t' cat!" But at this stage "Fall in" was sounded. The parade went through with satisfaction, and the review was as much a success as that at York was a failure. General McMurdoch was the Commander-in-chief, and he specially commended the Keighley corps for the march past and volley-firing, and said his comments would be forwarded to the proper quarter.

## AN AMUSING INCIDENT ON THE HOME JOURNEY

The time came round for the respective regiments taking part in the review to turn their faces homeward. The detachments from the Keighley and Bradford districts entrained together. Every man was crying out of thirst, and at Normanton one of the officers, belonging to Skipton, had the train stopped. How we blessed him for it! We detrained in a body, and rushed to the big pump on the platform (used to fill the locomotive boilers). The water was turned on, and, besides quenching his thirst on the spot, each Volunteer filled his water-bottle. This was a "movement" which took some time to execute; and it was, I must say, very considerate of the station officials to allow us to spend so much time to have a cheap drink. Major W. L. Marriner and Quartermaster Barber Hopkinson (of whom I shall have something further to say afterwards) were with us, both doing their best to pacify their men until they could have their thirst slaked. Quartermaster Hopkinson "had his hands full" in looking after his "boys." Well, the soldiers, having all got their bottles filled with water, re-entered the train, and the journey forward to Keighley was accomplished without further incident calling for notice.

## THE DRILL-SERGEANT'S DISMISSAL

When the Volunteers reached home there was the inevitable reaction—the "review" men had "a drink at t'head on 't," and another, and another; and for two or three days they were to be seen straggling about the streets. There was one disagreeable incident that occurred to mar the pleasant termination of the review, locally considered. That was the dismissal of Drill-sergeant Chick from the regiment at the instance of Captain Leper, who was the adjutant for the Bradford and Keighley divisional corps. The drill-sergeant's offence consisted, it appeared, in "speaking when not spoken to." I have previously made mention that the Keighley corps were complimented by the commanding officer for their march past and volley-firing. When making his remarks, General McMurdoch wanted to know the name of the corps. Captain Leper (a Bradfordian) replied, "Bradford, sir." Sergeant Chick, in his enthusiasm, and knowing that they were his own men who were alluded to, shouted, "No, sir; it's Keighley." This "flagrant misconduct" on the part of a subordinate incensed Captain Leper—this was seen by the "wicked" impression on the captain's face—who was not long in telling poor Chick that he had been dismissed the regiment. This was a hard blow to the drill-sergeant, who had drilled his men so that they marched as one man; but, to Captain Leper's credit, let it be said that he subsequently endeavoured to get Sergeant Chick re-instated. The dismissal, however had gone through the oracle of the Horse Guards, and to withdraw was impossible. Captain Leper then found employment for him at Bradford in looking after the orderly-room, &c., and with his remuneration from this source, and a small army pension, the ex-drill-sergeant managed to live in comparative comfort.

## A DRILLING INCIDENT

Volunteering at Keighley went on in its own quiet and peaceful way. I might, perhaps, mention one incident which took place while the Keighley companies were drilling in the old Showfield one Saturday afternoon. Lieutenant (or Ensign, I forget which for the moment) Joseph Craven, of

Steeton, was in charge of a squad of us. Now, Mr Craven was somewhat corpulent—there was no mistake about that, and marching about under a hot sun was clearly not accomplished without great exertion and copious perspiration. The members of the squad soon comprehended the position in which their drill-master was, and they determined to give him “quick march.” When he gave the order “Quick march!” from the front, the “boys” did march to some tune. Their commander soon found it necessary to step from the front, and he was left a good distance behind. But he soon discovered their little “game,” and proved himself “quite up to their trick.” By calling out “halt” at intervals, he found himself able to keep up fairly well with the men. In his next drills he was considerably allowed by Captain Busfeild Ferrand to go about on horseback. Mr Craven was known among us as a very genial and sociable officer, and he enjoyed the respect and esteem of those under him. There were circumstances, however, which caused his retirement from the Volunteer corps, after a comparatively short service.

## **CHAPTER XIV**

### **A MONSTER REVIEW AT DOVER**

The Keighley corps, along with the battalion of which it formed a part, and many other regiments from various parts of the country, were next ordered to Dover, to take part in a gigantic review there. In all there would be about 30,000 troops gathered, these including both Regulars and Volunteers of all grades and classes. His Majesty the King of the Belgians was to be present at the review. The Keighley contingent left the town on the Saturday morning before one Easter-Monday, and finally arrived at St. Pancras at 11 o’ clock at night. We marched to the barracks of the Surrey Volunteers, who gave us a right loyal and warm reception, and, indeed, showed us the most extreme kindness throughout our stay with them; and this good feeling between the Surrey Rifles and the Keighley Rifles has, I believe, been continued down to the present moment. Captain Irving evinced a deep interest in us, and he remained with us until a late (or early) retiring-hour, amusing us with his Cockney yarns. In the morning we took part in a

### **CHURCH PARADE TO WESTMINSTER ABBEY**

It was a pleasant Sunday morning, and I was out of the barracks early, taking a few miles’ walk. I was back in readiness for the parade, which saw us at the Abbey in good time, and we were permitted to look through the beautiful edifice, and admire and reverence the interesting national mementoes within its walls. We took our seats in time for the service. Dean Stanley was the preacher, and I regarded it a fine treat to have the privilege of listening to such an eloquent sermon as the Dean delivered on “The Passover.” I must confess that there were certain passages in the rev. gentleman’s discourse which I could not fairly understand; but, perhaps that was owing a great deal to my attention being centred elsewhere. Opposite me sat an elderly gentleman, clean shaven, with close-cut side whiskers. This gentleman was very attentive to the sermon, and likewise to his Prayer-book. Sergeant Midgley (who is at present in Keighley), a fellow-Volunteer, whispered in my ear, “Do you know that old gentleman across the aisle?” “No,” replied I. He told me he was no less a personage than Mr Jefferson Davis, Ex-president of the Confederate States of America. Instantly my mind was involuntarily set a-thinking about the American Civil War, and its four years of human butchery—all brought about by this man in front of me who was now coolly listening to the word of God! However, the service was over, and the Volunteers filed out of the church and marched to the strains of their drum and fife band, which played rollicking tunes to the delight of the rollicking Yorkshiremen. When we got in front of the Bank of England, Captain Allan Brown (commanding the Keighley detachment) halted and dismissed us until seven in the evening.

### **SEEING THE “SIGHTS O’ LUNNON”**

We broke up into parties. Billy Bentley, John Walton, Thomas Ackroyd, William Brown, and Ben Atkinson were in the party which I joined. Bentley had served as a policeman in London, and knew his way about the metropolis fairly well; Ackroyd had worked as a tailor in the big city, and I myself had been there before; so that we were able to find our way about very well. We went through St. Paul’s Cathedral, and then on to Trafalgar Square, passing, on our way, through St. James’ Park, just outside of which we saw the cluster of monuments to the Crimean heroes who fought for “England’s home and beauty.” We also visited the Duke of Wellington’s house, and spent a short time in Hyde Park. Having viewed the extensive block of buildings comprising Buckingham Palace, we passed into Regent-street and here the party broke up.

### **I MEET WITH A KEIGHLEY GENTLEMAN**

It was here that I met with Mr Frederick Carrodus, brother of the eminent violinist, Mr John Tiplady Carrodus, who, by the way, paid a visit to his native town of Keighley a few weeks ago. Mr Fred Carrodus had with him a gentleman whom he introduced to me as Mr Hermann, pianoforte manufacturer, and to whom I was introduced by Mr Carrodus as Bill o’ th’ Hoylus End, the Yorkshire poet. For four or five hours we were bosom friends and comrades, as it were. Mr

Hermann knew his way about London to perfection, and he took me to many places "to see what I could see." He had always his hands down to pay, telling me that he would treat the Yorkshire poet as long as he was with him; and that he did. It was tolerably late at night when Mr Carrodus and Mr Hermann and I said *au revoir* to one another. I made my way as quickly as possible to the Surrey barracks, and my hurried journey must have caused no little wonder and alarm in the minds of the easy-going Londoners whom I met and passed. Seven o'clock was the time when I should have been in the barracks but it was much after that hour. However, an explanation to Captain Brown set matters right.

### OFF TO DOVER—A STORMY MORNING

Next morning, about four o'clock, the bugle sounded the *veille* and soon after we were all in marching order. We proceeded by an early train on the Chatham and Dover Railway, and by nine o'clock in the morning had reached our destination—Dover. It was, I think, one of the coldest and most miserable mornings I ever experienced. The sea was very rough, the waves lashing on the roadway; and the rain came down in torrents. During the night there had been such a storm in the Channel, the natives said, that had not been equalled for half-a-century. The whole of the soldiers were paraded on the Esplanade, but they were again and again forced back from the edge of the shore, until there was really no room to pile arms. General Lindsay saw the situation, and came riding up with several officers, with whom he held a sort of council of war. Before they had arrived at a decision, the waves had come over the beach and dashed right up to where the soldiers were standing. "It's no use," said General Lindsey, "this review is a forlorn hope—I must dismiss the parade." He then gave the whole of the Volunteers orders to dismiss until three o'clock in the afternoon. The men dispersed in various directions, and just as they had got pretty nearly cleared away, up rode the Duke of Cambridge and Prince Arthur (now Duke of Connaught). The two Royal personages drew up in front of a large hotel, and out of curiosity I remained standing by. The Duke was in a very angry mood, and demanded to know who had dismissed the parade. Upon this, General Lindsey made his appearance in the doorway of the hotel, and, addressing the Duke of Cambridge, said:—"Your Royal Highness,—Owing to the severe inclemency of the weather, I have thought fit to dismiss the parade until three o'clock in the afternoon." "You had no business to do such a thing," the Duke hotly replied. "It will be a failure, and His Majesty the King of Belgium will be disappointed. Send out your *aid-de-camp* to bring everyone in—never mind the weather." The storm was still raging. I noticed a couple of steamers in the offing. They were coming from France, and the passengers were Volunteers who had been in that country since Saturday. The vessels could be seen buffeting with the waves, and it was noticed that the funnels of the steamers were missing, having, as we afterwards learned, been blown away by the violent wind and heavy sea. It was about this period that a small vessel—a gunboat, I think it was—the "Ferret," was driven on the rocks in front of the Castle, and dashed to pieces. The crew managed to get off by the boats. For a time it was believed that a boy on the boat had been lost, but he was subsequently rescued. After much delay the two steamers were able to land the Volunteers, who told a terrible tale of their rough voyage across the Channel.

### I PERFORM A MILITARY TACTIC

In the meantime, the Duke of Cambridge was "drilling" General Lindsey for dismissing the troops. Wise, perhaps, in my generation, I stole away on hearing the General instructed to re-collect the troops, and got into the back quarters of the town. I finally found myself in a tavern kept by an old cobbler, and he allowed me to dry my soaked uniform. Through a window in the house I could watch the movements of the troops who had been got together again. Soon after dinner there was a calm in the weather; the rain ceased and the sun came out.

### UP THE HEIGHTS OF DOVER

I could see regiment after regiment ascend the Heights of Dover. Now, a battalion of "stragglers" was being formed, so, after having partaken of refreshment, I emerged from my lair. I found a trooper in waiting at the end of the passage, and he ordered me to double to and fall in quick or he would "prick" me. I joined the "stragglers." We climbed the Heights together, and then each man joined his own regiment. While all this was going on sailors from vessels anchored in the harbour had been dragging big guns up the heights; and, in fact, the preparations that were made favoured the idea that a real engagement was about to take place. When all was in readiness

### THE SIGNAL FOR THE START

was given. There was a tremendous cannonading, which would be heard for some distance. Then there were movements by the cavalry soldiers, who, in their charges, trampled down hedges, corn and, in truth, everything that came in their way. This did really seem to me a ruthless and unjustifiable proceeding. The manœuvres concluded with volley-firing by the respective companies of the various regiments. General McDonald gave the Keighley Volunteers great praise for their efficiency in volley-firing. The sham fight lasted over three hours, and was witnessed with apparent interest by the King of Belgium and his staff. At the conclusion, each regiment went in its own direction. The Keighley contingent returned to the Surrey barracks, arriving about 10 o'clock at night. We found a grand banquet awaiting us, and this, I need scarcely say, was very welcome after a truly hard day's work. The repast was succeeded by an

entertainment, at which there were vocal and instrumental music, and readings and recitations, by several of the Keighley representatives and the Surrey officers. Captain Irving gave readings in the Cockney dialect, which immensely amused the Yorkshiremen. The Haworth Drill-sergeant recited "Cockhill Moor Snake," and Bill o' th' Hoylus End gave "Jack o' th' Syke Hill" and "Come, nivver dee i' thi shell, owd lad,"—the latter of which our townsman, Squire Leach, publicly recited on his marriage day, and a few verses of which I am tempted to introduce here:—

"Come, nivver dee i' thi shell, owd lad,"  
Are words but rudely said,  
Tho' they may cheer some stricken heart,  
Or raise some wretched head;  
For they are words ah love,  
They're music to mi ear;  
They muster up fresh energy  
To chase each doubt an' fear.

Nivver dee i' thi shell, owd lad,  
Tho' some may laugh an' scorn;  
Ther' wor nivver a neet afore ta neet  
But what ther come a morn.  
An' if blind fortune's used thee bad,  
Sho's happen noan so meean;  
To morn'll come, an' then for some  
T' sun'll shine ageean.

Nivver dee i' thi shell, owd lad,  
But let thi motto be—  
"Onward!" an' "Excelsior!"  
An' try for t' top o' t' tree;  
An' if thy enemies still pursue  
(Which ten ta one they will),  
Show 'em, owd lad, thou'rt doing weel,  
An' climbin' up the hill.

Very pleasant hours were those spent with the Surrey Volunteers that night in spite of our tired and wearied condition. Next day we returned to Keighley, only to find that after our week's absence the town had not altered very much!

### A VOLUNTEER DRAMATIC SOCIETY

We had found the Surrey Volunteers possessed a very good dramatic class and a pretty little theatre in the barracks. This led to the formation of a similar organisation at Keighley, and among the members of the society were Sergeant Atty, Private Thomas Ackroyd, Corporal Colley, Sergeant William Brown, Private John Walton, Sergeant Roddy, and Corporal Wright (*alias* Bill o' th' Hoylus End). We got a stage erected in the Drill Hall, and purchased a drop-scene (in the centre of which was worked in silk a representation of the coat of arms of the Cavendish family), and all the necessary accessories. This was all done "on strap." For our first performance we gave the comedy "Time tries all," and there was a large and influential gathering, including Mr Birkbeck, banker, of Settle, and party. Mr Birkbeck afterwards invited the society to repeat the performance at his residence. The proceeds of our first entertainment were £14, and performances on two other nights brought the sum up to £40. It was not long before we had raised £80 and this was sufficient to discharge all expenses incurred in erecting and fitting up the stage, purchasing costumes, &c. The society continued to prosper. Military plays were generally chosen for representation, such as "The Roll of the drum" and "The Deserter." At last, certain difficulties arose which sealed the doom of the society, and the organisation soon dropped into decay. The stage, &c., were allowed to remain, and the hall was let to travelling theatricals and other companies. The dramatic society and the reviews which the Volunteers occasionally attended at London, York, Doncaster and Liverpool all tended to make my connection with the Volunteer corps very pleasant and enjoyable; and I can truly say that in those days it was regarded a great privilege to be a Volunteer. My membership of the Keighley corps extended over fourteen years, and would not then have been severed but for my removal to Bradford. Perhaps I may wind up my Volunteering history with a few verses which I penned on the death of Captain Irving of the Surrey Volunteers:—

Gone is poor Irving, the brave Volunteer—  
The soldier, the man, is now on his bier;  
He was with you all round, as well as the ranks,  
Full of wit, and good humour, and frolicsome pranks.

He could mimic the Cockney at home or abroad,  
He could shoulder a rifle or handle a sword;  
His word of command would put you all right;  
He could talk to a stranger from morning to night.

But, alas! he is gone, and we now mourn his loss,  
For he's gi'en up his sword at the foot of the Cross.  
And if there's an army wherever he's gone,



## CHAPTER XV

### IN SEARCH OF EMPLOYMENT

During my service in the Volunteer corps, I had my ups and downs in connection with securing that employment which is necessary for one's maintenance. I gave up my work at Mr Edwin Hattersley's, warp-dresser, North Brook Mills, and took it into my head that I should like to be a policeman—a real policeman *a la* my friend, Mr James Leach. I learned that Colonel Cobb, the Chief Constable of the West Riding Constabulary, was on a visit to Mr Murgatroyd, a magistrate, at Bingley, and accordingly went over to the Throstle-nest of old England for the purpose of an interview with the Colonel. I was introduced into the Colonel's presence, and stated my errand. Colonel Cobb plied me with questions as to my former career, and when I told him I had been in the Army he wanted to know if I had any references; he particularly wanted to know whether I had risen from the ranks. I told him that I had a good "character" from the colonel of my late regiment, and also that I had worked my way up from a private's position to that of a provost-sergeant. Whereupon the old gentleman said he thought I was a very likely fellow for a policeman, and promised that if I called upon him in a few months I should in all probability be taken on. In the intervening period of waiting my mind underwent a change. I thought it would be safest to have "two strings to my bow;" so, having a hankering after a position as guard on the railway (intending, of course, to commence as a porter) I wrote to the Midland Railway Company at Derby, asking if they had a situation for me at Keighley. I got a reply inquiring for references. Then I went to my cousin, Mr James Wright, the manager for Messrs Butterfield Bros., Prospect Mill. While willing to give me a "character," my cousin strongly advised me to accept neither situation, as he felt that it would not suit me. I should, he said, want to be more at liberty than I should be in either of the positions I intended taking up. He expressed his willingness to find me employment in the mill. I went home and "discussed the out-look." The upshot was that I decided to let the police force and the railway do without me, and I commenced to work with my brothers, who, in a building in Heber-street, did warpdressing for Messrs Butterfield. I stuck to the work for a short time, and then, with the temptation of more wages, I went back to my old position at Messrs Lund's, North Beck Mills. I remember when I was about to leave the Heber-street establishment I was much taunted by two of the foremen, who would have it that I was going to Lund's mill because Mr James Lund was about to give the employees a trip to, and a treat at, his residence, Malsis Hall. On the face of it, it did appear as though their playful accusation was correct, as the great function was to come off in a week's time.

### TRIP TO MAL SIS HALL

Great were the preparations that were made for the affair, which was on nearly everybody's tongue. The spinning and weaving trade was at that time in a very brisk condition, and peace and plenty appeared to reign triumphant. At last, the great day arrived:—

The day wor fine, the sun did shine,  
No signs o' rain to fall  
When t' North Beck hands, i' jovial bands,  
Did visit Malsis Hall.

Up by the hill o' North Beck Mill,  
Both owd an' young did meet;  
To march, I trow, i' two-by-two  
I' procession down the street.

An' Marriner's band, wi' music grand,  
Struck up wi' all ther might;  
Then one an' all, both great an' small,  
Marched on wi' great delight.

Arrived at Keighley Station, the large party took possession of a special train which was in waiting, and were safely conveyed to Crosshills.

This jovial band, when they did land,  
Got off the train so hearty,  
For they all went wi' that intent—  
To have a grand tea-party!

Then to the place, each smiling face,  
Moved on in grand succession.  
The lookers-on did say, "Well done!  
It is a grand procession."

The "grand procession" passed into the park, and up to Malsis Hall. A hymn was lustily sung, and then the people were free to ramble about the grounds to their hearts' content. Gaily-coloured

flags and bunting were displayed in profusion, and with the additional charm of the "pleasing sounds of music creeping into their ears" the quondam mill-workers could well imagine themselves permitted to spend a brief interval in a very paradise. But when the time for the "real" part of the feast was come, lo and behold! there was a great disaster—

All but one sort o' bread ran short,  
but it wor no fault o' t' maister.  
O! Caterer; thy bread an' bun  
An' judgement they were scanty;  
O! what a shame, an' what a name  
For not providing plenty.

O! Billy Brown thou might have known  
To eyt each one wor able,  
The country air did mak' some swear—  
They could ommost eyt a table!

Despite this slight "hitch," we all "made the best of it," and succeeded in enjoying ourselves until the evening, when the closure was unceremoniously applied to the proceedings by a heavy thunderstorm:—

The atmosphere's no longer clear,  
The clouds are black an' stormy;  
Then all the comp'ny away did run  
Like one deserting army.

Like some fast steed, wi' all its speed,  
All seemed as they wor flying;  
To escape the rain, an' catch the train  
Both old an' young wor trying.

The people got into the train all right, and travelled safely to Keighley:—

All satisfied wi' their short ride'  
But sorry for the rain.

### **THE PEOPLE'S "TRIBUNE"**

The above verses are included in a piece I wrote in celebration of the trip. It was about this period I began to spend a good deal of time in writing doggerel and rhyme for publication in the local press. Many of my "efforts" took the form of satires upon defaulting gentlemen—men who, I thought, should be held up to public ridicule and censure. I placed myself at the service of the people, and was always ready to show up their wrongs under my motto, "Right against Might." For my pains in that direction I was often boycotted, and occasionally brought before the magistrates. In the latter case, an indirect charge was invariably brought against me in order that certain individuals might take "revenge out of me." But I flatter myself that I had as often a friend behind me to save me from "durance vile." On one occasion I was hauled up for refusing to quit the old Crown Inn, Church Green. I had occasion to go to the place where, it seemed, there had been a row a few minutes previously; indeed, I met several men in the passage who had taken part in the row and were being turned out. I made my way forward and took a seat in the tap-room. Before I had been seated many minutes a policeman came in and charged me with refusing to quit the public-house when ordered to do so. I endeavoured to convince "Robert" that I had not taken part in the row, and that I had never been asked to quit; but I soon found what a hopeless task I had set myself in trying to "convince a policeman against his will." On the following Friday I was hauled up before the magistrates. I defended myself as best I could, but was told by the presiding magistrate that I was nothing but an "impudent scoundrel." However, the charge against me—preferred by a policeman, and supported by no other witness—was considered proved by the Bench, who mulcted me in a fine of 10s and costs. Greatly incensed at the verdict, but more especially at the manner in which the chairman of the Bench had "sat upon" me, I resolved to take a course of action at the expense of the gentleman mentioned. So the same afternoon, still smarting under a sense of having been unfairly dealt with, I set to work with my pen, and wrote a satire on the magistrate who took the most prominent part in dealing with my case. By the dinner hour on the following day (Saturday) I was in the market-place selling copies of the satire. People bought with avidity, and before Saturday went out I had disposed of a thousand copies at a penny each; which returns enabled me to pay the fine and then make profit out of my prosecution.

### **THE HENPECKED CLUB AND THE KEIGHLEY SHOW**

My next effusion was partly in verse and partly in prose, and was entitled, "The Rules and Regulations of the Henpecked Club." This club was connected with the Agricultural Society's Show, and made its existence felt on the Show Day only. At the time of which I write, the Keighley Agricultural Show was about one of the finest shows in the country. The townspeople, then, took some pride in their show. The public thoroughfare from Church Green along Skipton-road to the Showfield was decorated in a gorgeous fashion. Flags, streamers, and bunting, with scores of appropriate mottoes and devices, were numerous in evidence, and trees were planted on each side of the road and decked with all sorts of fairy lamps. Yes; those were the good old

days of the Keighley Show; thousands of people flocked from all parts of a not very limited area to attend the annual event. But the principal thoroughfares of the town were not the only places which received attention at the hands of the decorators, for the residents of such places as the Pinfold went in for their own particular local celebration of the Show Day. On one occasion I saw a stuffed donkey with a dummy rider on its back, swinging on a rope opposite the Bay Horse Inn. The donkey, which was the source of intense delight to the younger section of the populace, was the property of one Harry Barwick, a tanner by trade. Not far from here—in old Bridge-street, now known as Mill-street—was to be seen a large picture, containing the portraits, rudely executed by myself as artist to the club, of some forty members of the Henpecked Club. The spectacle was of the most laughable description. There was also displayed a gigantic cradle, large enough to hold the biggest person in the world in case of emergency. The cradle was supposed to be used on the occasion of a member of the club being found guilty of ill-treating his wife. The cradle was made by a practical wag, known as Billy Bradley, who attended to it every Show Day. When there was a clean sheet of actual offenders, Bradley contented himself with “rocking” men who volunteered just for the fun of the thing. Finish was imparted to the performance by a fiddler, named Smith Keighley, playing “Rock’d in the cradle of the deep” during the operation. Many were the visitors who came to see the stirrings in this corner of the town. I remember the late Mr John Sugden, of Eastwood House, coming up in his carriage to see the fun and frolic, which were practically the sole objects of the Henpecked Club. On one occasion there was exhibited a picture, almost as large as a stage scene, representing a trial in the Henpecked Club,—a wife charging her spouse, before the President, with neglect of family duty. The counts of the charge were supposed to be—refusing to wash-up, black-lead, clean his wife’s boots, put the clothes-line out, and last, but not least, refusing to take his wife her breakfast upstairs. I recollect one remarkable and unrehearsed incident which happened in connection with the club on one Show Day. A man of the name of Shackleton had joined the club, and his wife was so disgusted that she was almost “wild.” Before the scores of people who had assembled she protested “Ahr Jack isn’t henpecked, an’ ah weant hev him henpecked.” It was, she said, just the opposite—she who had been henpecked. Just as Mrs S. was concluding her harangue a waggonette drove up, and all the members of the club got into it in readiness for a drive round the town “for the benefit of the Order,” as one of them amusingly put it. This Shackleton was among those who entered the conveyance, but no sooner had he taken his seat than his wife went up to him and seized him firmly by the hair of the head, exclaiming, “Come aat, er Ah’ll let ’em see whether tha’s henpecked er no.” She stuck to her spouse with such a tight fondness that he was soon obliged to come out of the waggonette. Shackleton took the incident quite good humouredly, and seemed to enjoy the mirth-provoking situation with as much zest as the crowd of people who were standing by. And this was a sample of the carryings-on in the days of the old Keighley Show. But, alas! there came a day of trouble to the people. In the period preceding one year’s show an epidemic of small-pox broke out in the town and the show had to be abandoned. Unfortunately that proved the deathblow of the old Agricultural Society.

## CHAPTER XVI

### KEIGHLEY’S FIRST SCHOOL BOARD

The agitation for a School Board for Keighley in 1875 was strongly opposed by many of the ratepayers. Both Liberals and Tories were seeking office, and there was a third party which entered into the fray. The Tory party said they would run seven of the nine candidates; the Liberals claimed to run the whole nine; so this third party came up to the scratch and said they would run three candidates for the sole purpose of splitting the votes. The names of those who composed this little party were Joseph Fieldhouse, Bill Spink, “Little” Barnes, Adam Moore, James Leach, Dick Royston and myself. Our meetings were held in Bill Spink’s little cobbler’s shop. There was no very great interest taken in the election by the public until a certain incident happened. Mr Walter McLaren (M.P. for Crewe) and I often met together at Mr Amos Appleyard’s printer’s shop in Church Green on business connected with election literature. On one occasion I went to the printer’s, and during the few minutes’ waiting before I received attention, I had an opportunity of perusing the “copy” for a bill which Mr McLaren had just previously brought in to print. The bill was to call a *private* meeting of Liberals at the Albion Hall to select candidates. Seeing a chance for a good, though, perhaps, unwarrantable “lark,” I altered the word “private” to *public* and, when Mr Appleyard came to attend to me, handed the bill to him and asked him to print it as a poster. He had delivered the bills to me the same night, and I had them posted, with the result that, instead of a hole-and-corner meeting, there was a crowded audience of mixed political opinions. The Liberal leaders were completely non-plussed. The people were asked what business they had in the hall, and were ordered to leave. But they said they had attended by public request, and refused to budge. The proceedings relapsed into a state of confusion, and no business whatever could be done. However this meeting served one good purpose, for it enlisted the interest of the public in the election. The election day at last arrived—March 31st. 1875—and it was found that two of our three candidates (Joseph Fieldhouse and Adam Moore) had been returned; Dick Royston being just thrown. This was the general rule at all the local elections: our little band of “conspirators” were pretty sure to return their candidates, or a good majority of them. Eventually Mr James Leach “put up,” and he was elected to nearly every public body in the town; and this through the agency of the party I have mentioned. At this time great interest was

taken in many of the elections, notably that of the Local Board.

## REMOVAL TO BRADFORD

For a time my connection with Keighley was severed as I went to reside at Bradford. During my stay I became mixed up with literary characters—Mr J. O. Mee, editor of the *Bradford Observer*; Mr Joseph White, author of a volume of poems and several prose works, and others. I made weekly contributions to the literary column of the *Observer*. I may mention that many of my best productions date from this period, when I was occupying a cellar cottage in Croft-street, Bradford. Perhaps the Editor will pardon me for introducing my verses, entitled “Joe Hobble; or, fra Howorth to Bradferth”:

Fra Howorth tahn the other day,  
Bi t’ route o’ Thornton height,  
Joe Hobble an’ his better hawf  
Went into Bradferth straight.

Nah Joe i’ Bradferth were afore,  
But sho hed nivver been;  
But hahsumivver they arrived  
Safe inta t’ Bowling Green.

They gave a lad a parkin pig,  
As on the street they went,  
Ta point ’em aat St. George’s Hall  
An’ Oastler’s Monument.  
But t’ little jackanape being deep,  
An’ thinking they’d nivver know,  
Show’d Joseph Hobble an’ his wife  
T’ first monument he saw.

As sooin as Joe gat up ta t’ rail,  
His een blazed in his heead,  
Exclaimin’ they mud just as weel  
Ha’ goan an’ robb’d the deead.

But whoivver’s ta’en them childer dahn,  
Away fra poor owd Dick,  
Desarves his heead weel larapin’  
Wi’ a dahn gooid hazel stick.

T’ lad, seein’ Joe froth at t’ mouth,  
He sooin tuke ta his heels;  
For asteead o’ Oastler’s Monument,  
He’d shown ’em Bobby Peel’s!

## PLAY WRITING

It was while in Bradford that I wrote the drama entitled, “The Wreck of the Bella; or, the Life and Adventures of Roger Tichborne.” The drama, which was revised by an old Bradford actor, was written for my friend Joe Gledhill’s benefit. Joe and a company which he got together played the drama at the Drill Hall, Keighley, and the performance turned out a great success. I had not intended any use for my production beyond for Joe Gledhill’s benefit, but he and his company, finding how it “caught on,” performed it up and down the district. But its fate was soon sealed, for while it was being played at Lancaster, I received an edict from the Lord Chamberlain to withdraw the drama from the boards under pain of a heavy penalty, as the last trial of the Tichborne case was pending at the time.

## AS A COMIC AUTHOR

Returning to Keighley, I turned my pen to writing for a comic annual, which I had brought out under the title of “The Haworth, Cowenhead, and Bogthorn Almenak.” This I produced for several years, its contents consisting of rhymes and local dialect sketches. I also started a monthly paper called, “The Keighley Investigator.” After the first issue I enrolled on my staff Theophilus Hayes, a gentleman well known in the town, who assumed the editorship of the journal. He wrote the leading articles, while I supplied the comic matter, satires, dialect letters, &c. The periodical had enjoyed an eight months’ existence when, unfortunately, my worthy friend, Mr Hayes, was served with a writ for libel. He was summoned to Leeds Assizes, and although the paper engaged eminent counsel (Mr Wheelhouse, Q.C., M.P.), we lost our case, and had to pay a fine of £50 and costs. Mr Hayes underwent a night’s incarceration in Armley Gaol, but next morning I managed to secure his release by paying the fine and all costs. The libel action was, I must say, taken with an object by a party of Liberals, through a certain auctioneer in the town. The fact was that the paper was too “hot” to live amongst the mighty men of Keighley. These times were very eventful ones to the town in many ways, particularly in regard to libel actions, for at each of five or six successive Assizes there was a libel case from Keighley—a circumstance which caused the Judge to remark on one occasion that Keighley ought to be called

"The City of Libels." I next turned my attention to writing my celebrated work, "The History o' th' Haworth Railway." I say "celebrated" because the pamphlet ran through so many editions, about 100,000 copies in all, being sold. With the returns I was placed in clover; and now that I look back to the time, I appeared to have money for any purpose except saving it. In collaboration with a young man named Benjamin Hopkinson, son of the late Mr Barber Hopkinson, surveyor of this town, I subsequently undertook the production of "The Keighley Spectator." The paper went on nicely for eleven months, its circulation and our revenue increasing greatly. We had for some time received articles for insertion from a Nonconformist parson in the town, the Rev Mr Gray. The contributions, being on subjects foreign to our non-political and non-sectarian principles, had almost invariably been rejected, until the writer appealed to the printer, who was the proprietor of the paper, and happened to be one of the parson's "flock." The proprietor told Ben and I it was no use—we must insert the Rev Mr Gray's articles. Now, Ben and I were convinced that to publish that gentleman's contributions would be to kill the journal, but the proprietor was firm, and so, as a protest, we resigned our positions as joint-editors. The parson was put in to edit the paper, and when the next number, under his hand, was issued, it was seen that the paper had travelled from Africa to Iceland, as it were—its contents were so cold and watery. This, the first under the Rev. Mr Gray's editorship, proved the last issue of the "Spectator."

## THE GUARDIANS AND THEIR VISIT TO YORK CASTLE

In the years 1875-6 the town—and, indeed, the whole country—was greatly interested in the conduct of the Keighley Board of Guardians with respect to the Vaccination Acts. The Guardians refused to direct their medical officer to enforce the Acts, and the Local Government Board finally appealed to the Court of the Queen's Bench for a mandamus against the Guardians, to compel them to put the Vaccination Acts into force in the Keighley district. The mandamus was granted, but the Guardians persistently refused to obey it, and the consequence was that the Local Government Board applied to the Queen's Bench for a writ of attachment against the eight members of the Board who had by their open votes defied the law—Messrs R. A. Milner (chairman), J. B. Sedgwick, Titus Ogden, John Jeffrey, Hezekiah Tempest, David Normington, James Newbould and Samuel Johnson. Johnson afterwards promised obedience, and was released from the attachment, which was granted by the Court of Queen's Bench. I shall never forget the "rumpus" there was on Friday, the 11th August, 1876, when the High Sheriff and his officers came to Keighley to arrest the Guardians mentioned. Thousands of people were in the streets. The Sheriff's officers secured the Guardians, and conveyed them to the Devonshire Hotel. About 2 o'clock in the afternoon the Guardians came out of the Devonshire yard in a conveyance, which, contrary to expectations, proceeded along North-street. It was originally the intention of the driver to go to Bingley station, but fearing he would not have time for the journey, he pulled up at Keighley station. Here both platforms were besieged with demonstrative crowds. The train was missed, and the crowd unyoked the horses from the conveyance. A number of mechanics seized the shafts, and wheeled the vehicle with its occupants through the streets of the town. Indescribable scenes took place. William Smith, an auctioneer, who was suspected of complicity in the Sheriff's operations, was badly handled. Finally, the Sheriff hoisted a flag of truce, and the Guardians announced that they had been granted another night's freedom on condition that they would leave quietly by train the next day. On Saturday the seven martyrs proceeded to York Castle.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE KEIGHLEY GLORY BAND

Much interest was taken, I remember, in the visit to Keighley of a social and temperance reformer of the name of Captain John Ball. He had two "lieutenants" with him, named Mountain and Roberts, both good at "spouting." Their meeting place was the old Independent chapel in Upper Green, and the services drew large congregations, many people of various denominations attending. The work went on very well for some time, and I believe that a fair amount of good was done; but, unfortunately, Captain Ball "could not stand his corn," and—if Dame Rumour was to be believed—frequently indulged in a "wee drappie," and occasionally overstepped the mark of moderation. Of course the people attending his services made great capital out of the ugly rumours, and one and another commenced to pull the "captain" in pieces. Now, I had all along entertained a certain respect for Captain Ball, so I took it upon myself to defend him, writing a pamphlet in which I gave prominence to the fact that it was the aim of all religion to forget and forgive. The little affair blew nicely over, and the congregation continued to hold together, until John had another fall; and the climax was reached when he committed himself for the fourth time by coming to Divine service "blind" drunk. On this occasion one of his lieutenants, who accompanied him, was not exactly sober. The incident reminds me of the old ballad:—

Robin and Johnny were going down t' street;  
They called at t' first alehouse they chanced to meet.  
While Robin drank one glass, our Johnny drank two,  
An' they both got a drunk as my granny's old sow.

It was truly an awkward position for any man to be in. Captain Bell could not make a defence, and he was excommunicated from the "Glory Band." Perhaps the following verses, extracted from my piece entitled "My Visit to t' Glory Band," will give some idea of the incident. I paid my visit in company with "Owd Jennet, t' Ranter, fra Havercake-row":—

So they prayed, an' they sang, i' ther owd fashioned way,  
Until a gert chap says, "I've summat to say;"  
An', bi t'heart, I'st a fallen dahn sick i' mi pew,  
But I thowt at toan hawf he sed worn't trew;  
Fer he charged Parson Ball wi' bein' drunk i't'street,  
'At he'd been put ta bed three times i' one neet.

"Does ta hear," says owd Jennet, "what t'hullet is sayin'?"  
He's usin' his scandal asteead o' bein' prayin';  
Fer John Ball is respected by ivvery one,  
Soa I salln't believe a word abaat John;  
Fer him an' ahr Robin are two decent men,  
Soa pray yah nah hearken they'll speak fer thersen.

"Soa all wor nah silent,—they mud hear a pin fall;  
Fer nobody wor hissinn' or clappinn' at all.  
Scarce hed long Gomersall spun out his yarn—  
Wi' his two blazin' een he had scarcely sat dahn,  
Than John stood up on his pins in a minute;—  
An' rare an' weel pleased wor I an' owd Jennet.

"My brethren," he sed, wi' a tear in his ee,  
"You sall hear for yourselns my accusers an' me,  
An' if I be guilty—man's liable ta fall  
As well as yer pastor an' servant, John Ball;  
But let my accuser, if faults he hes noan,  
Be t' first, an' no other, ta throw the first stoaan.

"I've drunk wine an' porter, I do not deny,  
But then my accusers hev not tell'd you why;  
So ther false accusation I feel it more keen,  
'Cause I've hed the lumbago i' both o' my een;  
Besides, mi back warked as if it wor broke,  
An' mi throat's been so parched wol I thowt I sud choke.

"I've been soa distracted, an' handled soa bad,  
Wol I thowt monny a time I sud ommost goa mad;  
An't' doctor hes tell'd me ther wor noa other way  
Nobbut going ta Blackpool or else Morecambe Bay;  
An' charged me ta mind, if I sat dahn to dine,  
Ta lig inta t' porter, an't' brandy, an't' wine.

"Soa nah, my accusers, what hev you ta say?  
You can reckon that up in yer awn simple way;  
But if ther's a falsehood in what I hev sed nah,  
I wish mi new hat wod turn into a cah;  
So this is my answer, an' this mi defence."  
"Well done!" sed owd Jennet, "he's spokken some sense."

Soa his speech nah he ended, but it touched 'em i't' wick,  
Fer we all could see plainly it wor nowt but a trick;  
And Jennet declared—tho' she might be too rude—  
If he'd come up to t' dinner he sud hev some home-brewed,  
Fer i' spite o' ther scandal sho wor praad on him yet,  
An' if he drank wine an' porter who'd owt ta do wi' 't.

### WITH THE LATE CHARLES BRADLAUGH, M.P.

It was on Shrove-Tuesday in the year 1862 (I think this is the number of the year; unfortunately I did not keep a diary, and I have nothing but my memory to go by) that I accompanied the late Mr Charles Bradlaugh, M.P., on a Secularist lecturing excursion to Sutton and Silsden. At Sutton Mr Bradlaugh was well received by the Radicals of the village, who invited him into a room, where they entertained him to some refreshment. Mr Bradlaugh "pitched" in front of the Bay Horse Inn, speaking from a chair which I had borrowed from the landlady of the inn. The subject of Mr Bradlaugh's lecture was "More pork and less prayer: more bacon and fewer priests;" and I must confess that he dug his javelin with some vigour into the parsons. The audience was for the most part composed of old men and old women, who seemed delighted with the lecture, especially with the thrusts at the "religious gentlemen." One of the old women exclaimed that they could do with some more bacon if they could get it, and fewer parsons. There were, said she, quite plenty of parsons, there being two of them in that district. At the close of the lecture I went round with my cap, and collected a few shillings. Mr Bradlaugh then went down to Silsden, and in the evening lectured on the same subject in the Oddfellows' Hall, which was crowded at a penny admission

fee. Leaving Silsden, we walked to Keighley—the railway not having yet been laid up the valley. On the way I had many interesting bits of conversation with the man who later in life was to create such a stir in the world—the man who was first errand boy, then coal dealer, Sunday school teacher, free-thought lecturer, soldier, solicitor's clerk, and, finally, Member of Parliament. The conversation ran mostly upon soldiering, Mr Bradlaugh telling me that he had served for three years in the Dragoon Guards, chiefly in Ireland. General Garibaldi also occupied a good part of our talk. Mr Bradlaugh expressed great interest in the Italian patriot, and said he intended to join the foreign legion which was being formed in London to assist Garibaldi's army and help him in his struggles. He strongly pressed me to take a trip to sunny Italy for the same object, and recited some verses which he had composed on Garibaldi. Mr Bradlaugh dwelt very little indeed upon religious matters, only saying that if he were "religious" he should be a Roman Catholic. Thus the time on our journey from Silsden to Keighley sped very pleasantly. It was almost midnight when we got into the town. While at Keighley, Mr Bradlaugh stayed with Mr John Rhodes, who conducted a small temperance hotel in the corner of the Market-place.

### THE HEROIC WATCHMAN OF CALVERSYKE HILL

A good deal was made in the town out of an incident in which the watchman at Calversyke Mills played a "heroic" part. It was this way. William Binns, who lived at Calversyke Hill, just below the Reservoir Tavern, occupied one of the top storey rooms in his house as a work-room for wooden models, &c. One night he was cleaning up, and he burned the shavings and rubbish in the fire place. There happened to be a strong wind, and the sparks were wafted out of the chimney and over towards the mills. The watchman noticed the sparks flying about, and "in the execution of his duty," informed the authorities of the matter, and Binns was hauled before the magistrates, and fined 5s and costs. I may say that in those days few persons summoned before the magistrates escaped a fine or its equivalent. In this case the action of the watchman was generally regarded as ridiculous. Now, Binns was an old friend of mine, we having been on the stage together, and at his earnest solicitation I wrote a satire with the title, "The 'Heroic' Watchman of Calversyke Hill," from which I take the following verses:—

He swore by his maker the flames rose so high,  
 That within a few yards, sir, it reached to the sky;  
 And so greatly it lighted up mountains and dales,  
 He could see into Ireland, Scotland and Wales!  
 And so easily the commons did swallow his pill,  
 That they fined the poor artist at Calversyke Hill.  
 Now, there are some foolish people who are led to suppose  
 It was by some shavings this fire first arose.  
 "But yet," says the 'hero,' "I greatly suspect  
 This fire was caused by the grossest neglect.  
 But I'm glad it's put out, let it be as it will,"  
 Says the "heroic" watchman of Calversyke Hill.  
 So, many brave thanks to this "heroic" knave,  
 For thousands of lives no doubt he did save;  
 And but for this "hero" the disaster had spread  
 And smothered the nation while sleeping in bed;  
 But to save all His people it was the Lord's will,  
 Through the "heroic" watchman of Calversyke Hill!

### CHAPTER XVIII THE GREAT TICKET-OF-LEAVE STRIKE

This great dispute in the iron trade of Keighley, about the year 1871, was known as the "ticket-of-leave" strike. The "Iron Lords" of Keighley amalgamated and practised a system of boycotting upon their workpeople. If a workman left one firm and took up with another, the latter would enquire of the man's late employers what were the reasons of his leaving, &c. The reply took the form of a "Ticket," sent under cover, of course, and practically decided the fate of the workman. Containing as this ticket usually did particulars as to the class to which the workman in question belonged; as to the wages he was worth, &c., the scale of ironworkers' wages in the town got to an unbearably low ebb. The masters held the full sway for a while; then the workpeople broke out in open revolt against the pernicious system of their masters, and thus commenced the great "ticket-of-leave" strike. Early in the dispute I was applied to by the strike authorities to write and expose the unfair dealings of the "Iron Lords" of Keighley, and on the first day of the strike I composed several verses to go to the tune of the National Anthem. This was sung at the first great meeting of the strikers held in the Temperance Hall. The verses were as follow:—

Men of the iron trade,  
 Whose hands have England made  
 Greater than all!  
 How can you quietly stand  
 With the chains on your hands?  
 Hear you not through the land  
 Liberty's call?

Long have you been the slaves  
 Of these conniving knaves

Now's your relief,  
Swear you no longer will,  
Neither in shop nor mill,  
Tremble for pen or quill,  
Or ticket-of-leave!

Strike while the iron's hot,  
And let it not be forgot  
'Tis sweet liberty.  
Stand like true Britons, then,  
Show you are Englishmen,  
Make your shouts ring again,  
"We will be free!"

This is only one of the many effusions I manufactured at the request of the Strike Committee. I wrote pamphlet after pamphlet (some sixteen pages in length) denouncing the unfair system which the masters had put into operation. The strikers went into the outside districts, as far as Bradford and on to Leeds, collecting towards the strike funds. They took with them supplies of my pamphlets and verses, which, so the men told me, won them much sympathy, and, what was infinitely more desirable—much money. But this system of collection to the strike funds was much abused, as has been the case in the present coal strike—men went out begging, ostensibly for the general strike fund, but in reality for their own private funds. Individuals managed to possess themselves of strike "literature," and with its aid found themselves able to rake in the shekels more abundantly than they had been doing by their ordinary work; and so the strike proved a sort of harvest to them. The strikers received much support, I must say, from the publicans. In particular, one Owen Cash the landlord of the "Devonshire Tap," provided free dinners as well as suppers. Then "Bob" Walton and a pork butcher in Upper Green each gave a whole pig; and there were many other gifts in kind for the out o' work workers. Of course there were those among the strikers ever ready to take a mean advantage of a kind action. A good many of the shopkeepers allowed goods on credit; but many of the people to whom they extended this privilege failed to show up again after the strike was settled. When this settlement was arrived at, it was at the expense of the masters. At this juncture the Strike Committee was not altogether without funds, for they had a surplus of something like £40. There were various suggestions made as to the disposal of this money, one of them being that it should be handed to Bill o' th' Hoylus End for his services in the "strike literature department." This suggestion was embodied in a motion, but the proposer got no seconder, and thus there remained wanting a bridge over the chasm existing between the money and myself; but the bridge is still wanting!

### THE PARISH PINDER

Perhaps a reference in my "Recollections" to William Speak (*alias* "Bawk"), the parish pinder, will not be out of place. "Billy," as the gentleman was ordinarily called, occupied the position of pinder for a score of years. He was well known in the town, not merely on account of his official duty in taking care of stray animals, but of personal peculiarities which made him a public character. Yes; he certainly had his eccentricities had Billy Speak. One peculiarity about him in the eyes of the townspeople was that he was seldom, if ever, seen abroad in the daytime; but at night he always appeared to be very busy. Of course rumour is rumour; but some people went so far as to say when his "trade" was slack, Billy would not object to opening a gate and allowing the animals in the field to come out upon the highway, thus affording a nice capture for the pinfold. It was also said that the pinder had received many sound thrashings from farmers whom he had met at night for these little acts of misdemeanour. In this connection I may mention that on one occasion a goose belonging to Jerry Wells was placed in the pinfold (which was then in Coney lane) by Billy. The walls of the pound, however, were so low that Jerry's goose flew over them, and went away—the pinder did not know where. Now, old Jerry Wells was a man who enjoyed a good "lark"; and although his goose had come home, he sued Billy in the County Court, on the 12th January, 1853, for "clappin' his gooise in'tat' pinfowd." How the case ended I forget; but I think it would teach the too ardent pinder a valuable lesson. Now, for a long time Billy had to go without a uniform, but at last Barney McVay and others said it was a shame that anyone holding an official position of this kind should not be provided with a uniform. So that a public subscription was started, and the pinder—to enable him the better to uphold the dignity of his office—was presented with a uniform; and at the same time opportunity was taken to uniform the town's crier, Jack Moore, who kept the "Dusty Miller," at Damside. The question of suitable headgear was a momentous and difficult one, but eventually a helmet was selected for the pinder, with a cocked hat for the town's crier. "Bawk" did not live long to enjoy his uniform. He died in May, 1875, and was followed to the grave by his wife a few days afterwards.

### ADVENTURE WITH A SHARK

It was in 1872 that James Leach and David Hey and myself purchased a large shark at Hull. The shark had apparently been harpooned at sea, and washed into the Humber. It was secured by some fishermen, and they offered it for sale by public auction. A brother of George Swire, of Keighley, chanced to be in Hull at the time, and hearing of the sale, he sent word to us at Keighley about it. My friend Leach—who would be close upon sixty years old at the time—was deputed to Hull to purchase the shark, and he effected the bargain for £3 17s 6d. The shark was seventeen feet in length; it was brought to Keighley by rail, and there were many people to



witness the landing of the monster. We took it to the Burlington laithe (now used as an auction room by Mr T. S. Lister). I painted a glowing scenic piece for the entrance to the exhibition—picturing the shark swallowing a whole boat-load of people! I was also put on to act as showman, and in that capacity—not in my capacity as a private citizen—I told stories of the voracious appetite of the shark when alive. Many blankets had been found in the shark, not to mention a barrel or two of beer. Leach stood at the door turning a box organ, which we had bought cheaply; and David Hey undertook to look after the naphtha lamps, &c. Well, for a week the show went on very well, and we had large numbers of visitors. Towards the end of the week, the fish began to smell, so we paid Joseph Gott, taxidermist, Market-street, £5 to cure the shark. In the meantime we purchased a tent and additional naphtha lamps, and when the curing process was completed, and we had had a box made in which to place the shark, we started on our first expedition, going to Haworth. Our visit here was attended by a slight misfortune. We had got the tent pitched, and a good audience in it, when one of the naphtha lamps exploded and set fire to the canvas top. Luckily we succeeded in extinguishing the flames before they had done more than burn a hole in the canvas top; and the aperture was covered with a shawl, which my friend Leach was wearing. As on the occasion of my visit to Haworth in the garb of a monkey, with Jack Spencer, the Haworth folk thought it a joke, and swore that the shark “wor made o’ leather.” But after they had examined it, I think they were convinced it was the real thing. We next took the show to Clayton, and here we were unable to get lodgings, and had to sleep in the tent along with the shark. Before daybreak we were leaving Clayton for Vicar’s Croft, Leeds. It was moonlight, and I shall never forget an incident which happened on the way. Certainly we must have formed a very curious spectacle. A grey galloway and cart, with Dave Hey as driver; myself on the cart balancing the long box; and James Leach sitting with the box organ on his back. Leach saw our shadow in the strong moonlight, and rather astonished us by exclaiming—“There’s Bill o’ th’ Hoylus theear—he can wag his tongue like a lamb’s tail; and Dave o’ th’ Damside—he can whistle an’ sing an’ he’s a houseful o’ little barns; by gum, I wish I wor at home wi’ ahr Sarah!” The rest of the journey he seemed to be occupied in deep thought; and when we got the tent erected in Vicar’s Croft he “broke out in open rebellion,” and refused to play the organ. “Nay,” says he, “no more organ playing for me; I’m bahn ta dissolve partnership wi’ ye, an’ tak t’ first train ta Keighley.” He suited his words to action and returned home. Of course this rather upset things, but Dave and I determined to go on with the business. Our visit to Leeds brought in a few pounds. Hey then insisted on our going up in the Lake District. I objected strongly, but had eventually to give in, and, to make a long story short, we landed at Windermere. We did very poor business, barely paying expenses; and such was the case when we moved to Keswick and other places around the Lake District. We next shifted to Morecambe, where we passed a very profitable week, and then embarked in a fishing smack which was returning to Fleetwood. We were overtaken by a fearful storm, and the fishermen were fully occupied in keeping their boat right side up. Hey was down in the hold, having left me to take care of the shark. The sea swept over the sides, and I had great difficulty in retaining the box containing our treasure. I shouted to Dave to come and help me, but the only answer I got was that if he was going to be drowned he “wod dee happy.” When we got to Fleetwood, some time elapsed before we were able to land, and when we at last did set foot on the shore, I said to myself, “No more shark showing for me.” Luck seemed to be in the way just then, for a gentleman who came in to see the shark asked me what I would sell it for. I told him I would take £20 for the whole concern—shark, tent, box organ, &c. But he said he only wanted the shark. After much bargaining I brought the price down to £14 for the lot, and he accepted this, and returned the tent, box organ, lamps, &c., and out of these Hey and I made another sovereign. The gentleman purchased the shark for a museum in Fleetwood. Dave o’ th’ Damside and Bill o’ th’ Hoylus End were now rich for once in their lives, but—I almost shrink from telling it—by the time they got to Skipton they had spent every penny of the money, and had to walk to Keighley, from where they had been absent about six months.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE BIG PIKE AND THE PRIZE RAM

It was not very long after our adventure with the shark, described last week, that Dave o’ th’ Damside and I had a “go” with a monster pike. This pike was caught in the old river at Utley by Sam Friar. It was of a tremendous size, and, no doubt, had a good history; for, among other things, the fish was short of one eye. Dave and I obtained possession of the pike, and we had it on exhibition one Saturday in the Market-place. I was again put in to describe the show, and I have no doubt that I made the most of the “recommendations” of the “one-eyed” monster. At night we cut the fish up and sold it; and many would be the Sunday dinners that the big pike would provide. Hey and your humble servant next turned their attention to a fine large ram, which had been purchased by Mr Patrick McShee at a sale of the farm stock of Mr Thomas Brigg, Calversyke Hill. The ram had won many prizes at agricultural shows, and we had it on exhibition in a shop in North-street, now occupied by Mr Whitworth, tobacconist. At the time, the Tichborne case was in the public mind, so we gave the sheep the name, “Sir Roger Tichborne.” Many people came to see the prize ram, the visitors including farming gentlemen of the town and district; so that we fared very well with our show. Then we added a monkey and a bull-dog, and, what with the ram, monkey, and bull-dog, there was a glorious row! But the greater the noise the greater was the desire of the public to pay a visit to the show, and this continued the case, to our

unqualified satisfaction, for some time. The sheep, being a prize animal, had clearly fared wisely and well in Mr Brigg's possession, and, whether it was from heart-ache at the loss of a good home or what else, the animal soon pined away, refusing to eat or drink, and its death, I think, marked the termination of the connection of Dave o' th' Damside and Bill o' th' Hoylus End with "show business."

## MR LEACH AND THE BATHS AND WASH-HOUSES

Soon after my worthy friend, Mr James Leach, betook himself from "show land," he commenced in earnest the study of politics and local affairs. He managed, with my assistance, &c., to obtain a seat on the Board of Guardians, and also on the Local Board of Health. Then, there was a great agitation concerning the health and cleanliness of the people, and it was "ordained by the elders of the Senate that baths and wash-houses should be erected and built throughout the length and the breadth of the land." According to the "Chronicles of Keighley," "the governors of the city did not think it meet to comply with the law of the Senate, and refused so to do. Whereupon other elders of the city gathered themselves together, and determined in their hearts that baths and wash-houses should be built, and that the cost thereof should be defrayed out of the tax imposed on the relief of the poor in the land." This use, or misuse, of the public money caused strife among the people, who for the most part opposed the scheme. A vestry meeting, however, was called, and though very thinly attended, the opportunity was taken to elect the Commissioners of the Baths and Wash-houses, and it was decided to proceed with the erection of the building, the cost of which was estimated at £6,000. But when this money had been expended the baths and wash-houses were far from completed, and, at the request of the Commissioners, another £2,000 was granted for the work. Still this proved sadly insufficient, and "the inhabitants of the land began to be mightily displeased at the conduct of the Commissioners, by reason that they demanded more gold." The people were for the third time called to a vestry meeting, and on this occasion there was a large and animated attendance. The Commissioners asked for £2,500, and this, amid great tumult and shouting, the people emphatically declared they would not lend: "One named Leach swore that no more gold should be granted." After much lively demonstration, the meeting ended with the decision "that the matter should not be entertained until the end of that day twelve months." When that time came round the people were once more called together. The money was still refused, and it was ordered that a poll of the town should be taken. The poll showed a great majority against granting the money, and the result of this decision was that the baths and wash-houses had to remain in their unfinished state for seven years. At the end of the seven years the building was, some way or other, completed; and thus an end was put to one of the greatest farces and pieces of blundering and mismanagement that has occurred in the town—before or after.

## ASTROLOGY AND BUMPOLOGY

It was a co-worker of mine, Joseph Hopkinson ("Joe Hobbler"), a warpdresser, of Haworth, who introduced me to Jack Kay and Harry Mac, two fortune tellers who were in Haworth. Harry Mac had a book with which he told fortunes, and this book, which was an English translation of a Greek work on astrology, Joe Hopkinson borrowed for me. I perused the book in the hope of one day being able to do a little fortune telling. Harry Mac and Jack Kay had done very well out of the book, and their knowledge of it; but my object in learning to presage events, was not as a means of livelihood, but in order to appease my appetite for a bit of fun. It was while I was "reading, learning, and inwardly digesting" the contents of the book that Professor Fowler, the well-known phrenologist, came to Keighley and gave lectures on the science of bumps, or phrenology, in the old Mechanics' Hall—now the Yorkshire Penny Bank. I attended one of those lectures in company with Morgan Kennedy, a Keighley man, who afterwards became a professional phrenologist. When the time came for practical demonstrations the audience called out for me to go on the platform. I complied, and the Professor set himself to "feel my bumps." In the first place he told the audience that "this was one of the few heads that he had had the opportunity of examining," which, of itself, was neither very favourable, nor very unfavourable. But there was suppressed tittering among the audience when he continued, "I have been on the Continent, and have examined the heads of Louis Napoleon, Victor Hugo, Garibaldi, and Louis Kossuth. This head, I may venture to say, rather touches upon those." I felt that the Professor had got out of his reckoning in making these comparisons; for although I had done a little soldiering, and was a poet in my own rough way, I knew that I had no claim whatever to be a governor, seeing that I had never been able to govern myself. However, I got through the ordeal. The result of my visit to Professor Fowler was that I combined the study of bumpology with that of astrology, and I got on very well, and had some nice quiet fun, with telling people—mostly servant girls in public-houses—their fortunes, and describing their bumps. Many people, I know, really thought I was a "naph-hand" in the work. One incident I remember well. A young man of the name of Tom Smith, a warpdresser, one night came to ask me to rule the planets and tell him whether he and his wife would ever live together again. I told my visitor that I could do nothing for him that night, but if he would call the following evening I should then be prepared to "invoke the infernal regions." He was at my house the next night, and asked me whether "ahr Emma" would ever live with him again. I said "Well, Tom, the first thing you will have to do is to go upstairs blindfolded." I placed a bandage over his eyes, and sent him upstairs, having told him to walk quietly across the middle of the chamber floor. I had suspended the beam of a warp-dressing frame from the ceiling. Tom walked against this beam, which swung back upon him, and, apparently, greatly frightened him, for of all the screaming I ever heard, it took place that night in that chamber. Tom was

blindfolded, and, in addition to that, the room was in darkness; and when he was able to pick his way out of the "chamber of horrors," he beat a hasty retreat from the house. This is a sample of the fun I had during my experiences as a humble advocate (?) of the "art of professing to reveal future events in the life of another."

## ALONE IN LONDON

Many townfolk will remember Jim Blakey. He was a young fellow who had many peculiarities in his composition. One of these was that his mind was for ever bent upon travelling, and, not being short of money, he was often able to gratify his desires. Knowing that I had travelled a little, he would have me to accompany him to London. After certain adventures on the way we got to the big city, and secured lodgings. Blakey was not altogether well, so I left him at our hotel while I went for a walk through some of the parts of London I was already acquainted with. When I got back, however, Blakey had "gone—left no address," and, besides, he was the paymaster, and the only money I had was 2½d. So that I could truly appreciate the situation of being "alone in London." I was wandering about the city all night, and in the morning found myself going towards Fulham. I was wearing a good big overcoat, and had also in my possession a new copy of "Goldsmith's poems:" these I had resolved to leave with my "uncle." On the road, however, I fell in with a wedding party, and disposed of the volume of poems for 3s 6d to the bridegroom, who said he should make a present of it to his bride. Going on to Fulham I fell in with an old friend from Keighley. I stayed a day or two with him, and then sailed from London Bridge to Hull. From Hull I walked to Keighley *minus* my overcoat. I found that Blakey had not come home, but he returned in a day or two, and said he had looked all over London for me. I thought he had deserted me on purpose; so when we were in Edinburgh together shortly afterwards, I arranged with a Leeds guard whom I knew to put Blakey into a North of Scotland train instead of the one for Keighley. This the guard managed all right, poor Blakey being taken 200 miles further from home. When he at last got into the south train he was taken on to Bradford, and he told me that the ten miles' walk from Bradford to Keighley at midnight was worse than travelling the whole 400 miles. Notwithstanding these differences, we continued good friends until he finally left Keighley for Leeds, where he died after a few years.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE LATE MR LEACH IN LONDON

It was in 1872 that Mr James Leach formed one of a deputation from the Keighley Local Board to London on business relating to the erection of a new railway bridge at Keighley Station. Mr Leach was accompanied by his wife. Arrived at the big city, the deputation made for the law offices of the Houses of Parliament, where they were informed that their presence would not be required until the following morning. Then Mr and Mrs Leach separated from the deputation and went their own way, the "Squire" declaring his determination to see all that was to be seen of London.

### IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS

The couple first of all spent a time in the House of Commons listening to the debate, and then they were introduced by Mr (now Sir) Francis Sharp Powell to the (late) Duke of Devonshire. His Grace, Mr Leach told me, seemed mightily pleased to see visitors from Keighley. He stated his desire to "hear t' spekin' i' t' Lords," and his Grace was showing him into the gentlemen's gallery, and Mrs Leach into the ladies' gallery, when Mr Leach objected, exclaiming in by no means suppressed tone:—"Nay, ---, it; they can dew this at t' Keighley Workus, but let me be wi' ahr Sarah." The Duke was good enough to respect the feelings of his visitors, and had Mr and Mrs Leach placed in a private box, where, together, they could listen to the debate going on in the gilded chamber.

### AT A FANCY DRESS BALL

After tea at their lodgings—which were at a large hotel in Westminster—Mr Leach started out with his wife, and eventually landed her into a place where *bal masque* was going on. As the old gentleman described to me on his return, "One o' them hawf donned women com' up ta me, an' puttin' her hand on mi' shoulder sho said, 'Owd boy, you're very welcome.' Then she spied ahr Sarah, an' said 'Is this your wife?' But ahr Sarah said, 'This is noa place for me, Leych, an' ahm net bahn ta stop; soa tha may as weel come.'" With some further persuasion, Mr Leach went out with his wife.

### AT SPURGEON'S TABERNACLE

Next morning Mr Leach found that his presence would not be required that day at the House of Commons. He went to hear the Rev C. H. Spurgeon preach at the Tabernacle. "This wor t' one time I ivver really wept," he said, "an' I resolved ta be a better man i' t' future." Mr Leach next

visited the Hall of Science, where he heard Mr Charles Bradlaugh preach, and afterwards shook hands with him. St. Paul's Cathedral also received a visit from the Keighley "celebrity."

## AN ADVENTURE AT EPSOM RACES

Next day Mr Leach paid a visit to Epsom to see the races. He paid 1s for a stand on a stool, but he had not been in his elevated position many minutes before the stool was kicked from under him, and he was sent sprawling on the ground, this provoking the crowd to great laughter. When Mr Leach looked up he found his stand occupied by another fellow. Smarting from a sense of indignity, the Keighley gentleman "set on" to the intruder, and was struggling to regain possession when the police came up and settled the dispute by saying that neither of the two should stand on the stool. "Ah saw varry little o' t' races," he said, "but ah went back to Lunnon an' saw ahr Sarah."

## ROBBED IN PETTICOAT LANE

On Sunday Mr Leach betook himself on a survey in Petticoat-lane, where Jews, Turks, and representatives of nearly every foreign nation were busily carrying on their sales. Our country friend was warned by the police against venturing into this locality. He said "they wodn't get ower him soa easy," and passed on. But he had not gone far ere he found that his pocket-handkerchief was missing. A gentleman had seen the "trick" done, and drew Mr Leach's attention to a youth who stood a few yards away. Mr Leach had not forgot his duties as a policeman, and he ran after the lad and caught him. The prisoner was handed over to a constable, who was able to arrest two other thieves on the spot. Next day Mr Leach appeared at the police court, and gave evidence, and the trio were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. Our friend was complimented by the Bench for bringing the case forward. One evening Mr Leach found himself in the "seven Dials" neighbourhood in the hope of seeing the famous boxer, Nat Langan (whom he had seen have a "go" with "Brassey," a brass moulder, of Utley). He was in the boxing saloon some time, and when he had occasion to look at his watch, he found that article missing, only a bit of the guard remaining. He raised a "hue-and-cry;" but, of course, nobody knew anything about the theft. And Mr Leach took his departure murmuring, "If this is London, I'm done."

## THE FINAL DAY

The deputation was kept in London day after day, until several weeks had passed. The final day at last arrived, and the deputation was ushered into the gorgeous chamber. The petition was presented, and Mr Leach, in answer to the President, and in a dialect which must have puzzled the Londoners present, said; "We're bahn ta build a brig ower t' railway, an' we think it's nowt but reight 'at we sud hev it. Ther's lots o' horses been lamed at t' level crossing. Why, I were varry near being jiggered mysel one neet." Other members of the deputation having given evidence in support of the petition, the party retired. In the end the bridge was erected. Mr Leach and his fellow members of the Local Board were in London about six weeks, and one cannot help thinking that, with an allowance of £1 per day for expenses, they would thoroughly enjoy themselves. At least Mr Leach told me that he did.

## MR LEACH'S THREE NIGHTS' LECTURES

On his return to Keighley, Mr Leach and, indeed, the rest of the deputation was made a god of, in certain quarters. In Jonas Moore's barber's shop in the Market-place, Mr Leach described his visit to London to a few "favoured" customers, and provoked unlimited laughter. It was Jonas Moore and Joe Town who induced him to give a public lecture on his travels. An elaborate bill was prepared, "almost as big as a house side," informing the burgesses of Keighley that Mr James Leach would give "three nights' lectures in the Temperance Hall, on his life and travels in London during his six weeks' commission from the Local Board of Health." A few frequenters of the barber's shop in the Market-place suggested that Mr (now Sir) Isaac Holden should be asked to take the chair. Mr Holden was accordingly communicated with, and came down to Keighley in his carriage; he finally consented to preside at the lectures. Mr Holden was punctual on the first night of the lecture, when there was an overflowing audience. This was, I believe, Mr Holden's first, or nearly his first, public appearance, and the occasion served to bring his name very widely before the people. He took the opportunity to speak upon local politics. He mentioned that he had not the least doubt that the lecturer's intentions were good and honest. The lecture consisted of all the funny stories Mr Leach could remember concerning his visit to London; these he gave in his well-known quaint style, in broad dialect, and the progress was frequently interrupted by the hilarity of the audience. Mr Holden, I can say, was quite "flabbergasted" with the affair, and he looked as if he would have liked to drop through the stage. For the second night's lecture there was no Mr Holden to preside. It was now Mr Leach's turn to be uneasy. He sought diligently for a chairman. The audience proposed Bill o' th' Hoylus End, as being Mr Leach's right-hand man; but the lecturer objected, saying Bill would most likely be "drukken." Finally, Mr Emanuel Teasdale, a politician of the old school of Radicals, took the chair. After a political speech from the chairman, Mr Leach continued his lecture with the same general acceptance, and to an audience quite as large as that of the previous evening. On the third and concluding night, Mr Leach had even greater difficulty in securing a chairman. There was neither Mr Holden nor Mr Emanuel Teasdale. The audience successively proposed "Bawk" (the parish pinder), "Doad o' Tibs" (bill

poster), Jacky Moore (town's crier), Bill Spink, and others. The lecturer objected to each of these, and, in despair, accepted Bill o' th' Hoylus End. I officiated as best I could, and I utter no untruth in saying that I had a good deal to do; for I had to undertake the greater share in entertaining the large number of people present. Mr Leach had well nigh exhausted his stock of lecture "material" on the second evening, and on the third night I had to fill up the time with telling stories and giving recitations. It can be truly said that the three lectures were regarded as a great treat by those who heard them.

## MR LEACH'S FUNERAL SERMONS

Perhaps the "funeral sermons" which Mr Leach preached on his two wives in the early part of 1891 were as funny as the London lectures. Mr Leach said I should have to be his chairman at the "sermons," but when the day came he said he would do without me, as he "durst bet ah'd bin hevin' whiskey." I went to the Temperance Hall, but was told by Police-superintendent Grayson, who was there with two constables, that he had special instructions not to admit me into the "precincts of that holy place" unless I was perfectly sober. There was an overflow crowd in the street, and I put it to them whether I was drunk or sober. There was a majority that said I was sober, and Mr Grayson allowed me to pass in. When Mr Leach saw me entering the hall, he called out of the police; but finally allowed me to take a seat at the foot of the stage. At the outset he declined to have me on the platform, until he "broke down," and said, "Tha'd better come up here, Bill, for ah'm ommost worn aat. Ah'll gie thee ten minutes ta say summat." I accordingly mounted the platform and recited a few pieces I had written—"Come, nivver dee i' thi shell, owd lad" (one of Mr Leach's favourites), "Biddy Blake," &c. After the lecture, I went with Mr Leach in a cab to his home. When we got there he said "They'll be tawkin' abaat this at t' Devonshire. Tak' this shillin', and go see what they've ta say abaat my lecturer." I went to the Devonshire Hotel, and found several gentlemen talking and laughing over the "sermons." However, Mr Leach had done his best, "an' t' Prime Minister couldn't dew more," as he expressed it. The delivery of the funeral sermons marked the close of his public life. It was not long after that he showed signs of illness, and I went to live with, and wait upon him. I had often to recite my poems for him, and one he frequently asked for was "The pauper's box;" he assured me that he would leave me enough to keep me from being buried in a pauper's coffin:—

Thou odious box, as I look on thee,  
I wonder wilt thou be unlocked for me?  
No, no! forbear!—yet then, yet then,  
'Neath thy grim lid do lie the men—  
Men whom fortune's blasted arrows hit,  
And send them to the pauper's pit.

. . . . .

But let me pause, ere I say more  
About thee, unoffending door;  
When I bethink me, now I pause,  
It is not thee who makes the laws,  
But villains, who, if all were just,  
In thy grim cell would lay their dust.

But yet, 'twere grand beneath yon wall  
To lie with friends,—relations all,  
If sculptured tombstones were not there,  
But simple grass with daisies fair—  
And were it not, grim box, for thee,  
'Twere Paradise, O Cemetery!

## CHAPTER XXI

### MR LEACH AT WAKEFIELD

Continuing my recollections of the late Mr James Leach. I remember accompanying him as "valet de sham"—as the old gentleman was pleased to style me to inquiring friends—to Wakefield. The occasion was the annual visit of inspection which a deputation from the Board of Guardians was making to the asylum there. I recollect Mr Richard Hattersley telling me on the platform at the Keighley station to look well after Mr Leach. The deputation comprised, among others, Mr James Walsh, Mr Middlebrook, Mr R. A. Milner, and Mr R. C. Robinson. On arriving at the Bradford Midland Station, Mr Leach, on the plea of "takin' t' twist out on 'em," sent me for an open landau and a couple of horses and a coachman, and thus he proceeded "in state" to the Lancashire and Yorkshire Station. The train again entered, the journey was soon completed to Wakefield. The deputation in general did the distance to the asylum—about a mile—on foot, but for Mr Leach, I had again to requisition a two-horsed landau. We were driven up to the asylum entrance, and ushered into the reception room. The governor of the asylum asked me who the old gentleman was, and I told him he was "James Leach, Esquire, a Guardian, from Keighley." "He's a funny

fellow," said the governor, "I couldn't tell whether he was coming in as a patient or not." By way of re-assurance I told the governor that Mr Leach had had a stroke, which rather accounted for his "acting funny." The other members of the deputation had now arrived, and the whole were shown into a private room. There the Guardians sat as a Board, with Mr Middlebrook as chairman, and the thirty-six lunatics from the Keighley Union were brought in. One or two of the patients I recognised. Several of them were ready to be discharged, having been passed by the doctor. The inspection over, Mr Leach expressed a desire to see the patients dine. He was introduced into the large dining hall, and took a great interest in "watchin' t' lunies feed," as he put it. At the close of the repast, Mr Leach commissioned me to distribute 1lb. of tobacco among the men—½lb. in twist, and ½lb. in shag. No sooner did the lunatics see the tobacco than they commenced a vigorous attack on me—I had lunatics to the right and to the left of me, and in front, behind, and on top of me. There must have been no less than half-a-dozen on my shoulders at one time, and some of the fellows obtained a good deal more than their share of the tobacco. Mr Leach had apparently witnessed the distribution with much interest, and when I came up to him he said, "been in Wombwell's menagerie, but ah've nivver bin i' sich a furacious attack as this before." He then retired, and on leaving the asylum I heard him ask the governor if he would allow himself and his "valet de sham" to stay a few weeks in the place, promising to pay all dues and demands. The governor, however, said he would not be able to do that without a certificate. So, after bidding the Asylum governor good day, Mr Leach and I took our departure. I had again to obtain an open carriage to take us to the Bull Inn, where dinner was to be served. Dinner was waiting when we got there. "Isn't it a bonny shame" said Mr Leach, "for us to be hevin' a 7s 6d dinner aht o' t' rates?" "Nay," says the landlord, "you do your work for nothing." "Hahivver," said Mr Leach, "Ah'll hev my dinner, but this 'valet de sham' o' mine weant hev owt here; Ah'll be beyont suspicion." With that he handed me 4s and I went down into Wakefield and got a good repast. On my return to the Bull Inn, I found Mr Leach sat on a basket of potatoes at the door. It transpired that he had been turned out of the hotel, and a chair having been denied him on which to sit and wait at the door, he had bought a basket of potatoes from a hawkker who was passing, and utilised it as a temporary seat. Whatever had taken place, Mr Leach was greatly excited, and it was with no little difficulty that I got him to the station. We reached Keighley safely, and then, with the aid of a cab from the station, I was soon able to restore my old friend to "their Sarah." I received 10s for that day's services.

### **SLACK-LANE BAPTIST CHAPEL**

Many people will remember the old shake-down trap which Mr Leach used to run some years ago. He often drove up to Tewitt Hall, Oakworth, and Slack-lane Chapel. For some time he seemed to set his mind on purchasing Tewitt Hall. About the Chapel, he told me some wonderful stories. He used to say that his relatives founded Slack-lane Chapel, and that his mother received in their house the first parson who came to the district.

### **A VISIT TO CLIFFE CASTLE**

Mr Leach, I know, fondly treasured in his memory a visit which he paid to Cliffe Castle, in 1886, on the occasion of the "White Ball" given by Mr Butterfield. I was not a little astonished when Mr Leach told me one morning, "Tha'll hev ta goa wi' me ta t' ball, Bill; ah've bowt thee a ten-an'-sixpenny ticket." However, I did not care to intrude my presence on such a "flash" gathering as I knew there would be, and when the time arrived for my "master" to start, I was missing. Mr Leach was, nevertheless, determined "ta visit t' Cliff," and as a last resort he summoned his old friend "Little" Barnes to accompany him. The two attended the "White Ball;" but I don't think either of them participated in the dancing. Mr Leach afterwards told me that they were nicely entertained by Mr Butterfield, who had a long chat with him, and expressed a wish to have a chat with him at some other time on public matters. One of the topics which engaged Mr Butterfield and Mr Leach was a public park for the town.

### **MR LEACH AND DEVONSHIRE PARK**

It is an acknowledged fact that to Mr Leach was due no small measure of credit in connection with the securing of Devonshire Park for Keighley. His pet idea for a public park was originally the Showfield in Skipton-road. On one occasion Hawkcliffe Wood came into the market, and was suggested as a suitable park for the public. Mr Leach opposed this scheme tooth and nail—"ther wor too monny hoils an' caves abaat. They'd be capt if somebody gat dahn one o' t' hoils an' wor nivver seen ageean." A public meeting was held in the Drill Hall to test the public feeling as to the purchase of Hawkcliffe Wood. Mr W. A. Robinson, I believe, was the principal speaker on the affirmative side, and Mr Leach strongly opposed the scheme of purchase. Next day, however, the question was settled by the announcement that Mr Butterfield (whose estate agent, Mr James Wright, had attended the meeting) had successfully negotiated with Messrs Dixon, of Steeton, for the purchase of the Wood. Having practically scored on this point, Mr Leach next turned his attention very vigorously to the Showfield. He superintended the making-out of a petition to the Duke of Devonshire, asking his Grace to make a grant of the Showfield for a town's park. The petition was numerously signed, and was duly forwarded through the Local Board to the Duke. His Grace could not see his way to accede to the petitioners' wishes, but it was some gratification to Mr Leach to hear that the Duke would probably see his way to do something later—a promise consummated in the presentation to the town of what is known as Devonshire Park. Mr W. Laycock (the Duke's steward) assured Mr Leach that he was the first man whom the Duke of

Devonshire had recognised in this way, and that he was the means of securing the first public park for Keighley.

### MR LEACH'S EPITAPH

The last request which Mr Leach made to me was to write an epitaph to be engraved on the south side of the tombstone over his grave. I have penned the following lines:—

O! Passer-by, pray cast an eye  
Upon this ponderous dome,  
Where lieth one of nature's sons  
Inside the vaulted tomb.

For weel, I wot, it took a lot  
To weigh him from his birth,  
But nature thought she'd send him back  
To join his Mother Earth

So now he's quiet, both day and night,  
No one can hear his speech;  
And waiting to be reckoned up,—  
Alas! poor Mr. Leach.

## CHAPTER XXII

### EXILED FROM KEIGHLEY

With an apology for digressing for the last two weeks from my own Recollections, I now hasten to continue my story. Going back to 1872, it was in that year I passed my second term of residence in Bradford. This time I was, to some extent, an exile—driven from home. It was brought about in this way. I was keeping a grocer's shop in Westgate at the time, and one day, while I was away at my employment for Messrs Lund in Heber-street, a traveller for a Leeds firm of drysalterers called at the shop, and forced upon my wife, who was in charge, several pounds' worth of goods. Of course, when I got home I kicked up a "shine," and distinctly said I should not accept the goods, which I sent back to Leeds. My returning the goods, however, did not mend my case, and I was summoned to Leeds to "show cause," &c. But I treated the court with contempt by not attending, and an execution was issued against me forthwith. I have a keen remembrance of the visit which Mr John Scott, the bailiff at the Keighley County Court, paid to my house. Mr Scott said he had got Sheriff's orders to sell me up or arrest me. I told him that I had a great fear of going to gaol, and asked him if he would go and ask his brother, Mr W. M. Scott, the high bailiff, to allow me until 9 o'clock on the following morning in which to make an effort to raise the money. The "bum" had scarcely got out of sight ere I was in consultation with John Parker, the landlord of the Bay Horse Inn. John rather pitied me. He agreed to lend me his horse, and I borrowed a van from Mr Joseph Wright, cabinet maker, determined to give my would-be captors the "leg bail." Early next morning I was, so to speak, doing a moonlight "flit"—the van, containing my furniture, in charge of two men, was on the road to Bradford. Mrs Wright I left with friends at Keighley, and myself, accomplished the journey by rail. I spent some time at the top of Manchester road, Bradford, looking for a suitable house, and had almost resolved to give up the search in that quarter when I made the acquaintance of an old lady, who said she had a nice house—which vacant house isn't a nice one?—to let at 9s 6d per week. This was a large figure, but, under the trying circumstances, I agreed to rent the house. An hour or so afterwards the van arrived, and having got my goods and chattels into the house, I dismissed the two men, enjoining them to strict secrecy as to my whereabouts. Having got the house into something like ship shape order, I set about devising a *nom de plume* and eventually fixed upon "James Wrightson," which seemed to fit best, seeing that I was James Wright's son.

### IN BRADFORD—AS PATTERN DRESSER

Next day I managed to secure employment as pattern dresser with Messrs Ward and Bottomley, manufacturers. My stay there, however, was only short, owing to a disagreement with my foreman on a political subject. I then called upon Mr Wade, manufacturer, for whom I had worked at Morton. Mr F. S. Pearson, now of Keighley, was the manager of the warp sizing department in the fancy trade. Mr Pearson set me on, and I continued in Mr Wade's employ for about twelve months, having a very profitable situation.

### AS WARP-SIZING INSPECTOR

One day I was met by a gentleman who asked me if I would act as his warp-sizing inspector, promising me a very comfortable salary. This gentleman, or his firm, carried on the business of warp-sizing, and he explained that it would be my duty to go round to different factories to assess the damage, if any, done to warps which had been sent from those factories to be sized. I was

pressed very much to take this position, and ultimately I accepted it. The business, I learned, was in the hands of Mr Ward, and was formerly owned by Mr Titus Gaukroger. My new duties were accompanied with difficulties, though after a time I got along fairly well. I found out many little things, among which were not a few cases of manufacturers—bosom friends, socially—defrauding each other. I had occupied the position of warp-dressing inspector about six months, when the hand of—Fate, shall I say? was again placed upon me. An old friend of mine—Christopher Brown, a native of Haworth—popped in to see me. He had been away for some time in Canada, where he had made a good sum of money. He spoke to my master, and obtained for me two or three days' leave of absence. This proved the greatest breakdown that ever happened to me. I stayed a day or two with Mr Brown, who then suggested that I should extend my holiday. I was always easily persuaded, and this time was no exception. There was plenty of money to go at, and Mr Brown induced me to travel to Middlesbro' with him. From there we visited many places, being absent from Bradford about a fortnight. On returning to my employment, I found that my place had been filled. Mr Ward, after hearing my story, expressed himself very sorry for me. He said he kept my place vacant for eight or nine days, but was then compelled to fill it up.

### **AS "BUM" BAILIFF**

I was thus again a workless worker. But not for long. I fell in with an auctioneer, who set me on as a sort of "bum" bailiff. This auctioneer had Douglas Mills and Victoria Mills, Bradford, on his hands for sale, and required someone to watch them. I was in charge of Douglas Mills for three weeks, and a fine time I had. The spinning frames and other machinery had been sold to Messrs Binns and Masker, brokers, of Keighley, but there were many odds and ends left, which I was given permission to realise. These "odds and ends" included all the leather, cotton waste, and loose wood about the place, and the proceeds from the sale of these, in addition to my weekly wage, tended to a not inconsiderable sum. Perhaps it was this extraordinary "flush" of money that caused me to have sufficient courage to venture back to Keighley. (I may say that I had not during my absence from the town encountered my friend, the drysalter.)

### **BACK TO KEIGHLEY**

It was 1876 when I returned home. It was just before the Liberal club was opened by the Marquis of Hartington. The occasion, I may say, was made a great "to do"—what with the elaborate opening ceremonial, the procession in the street, and the great banquet at Dalton Mills (which had just been built). I wrote some twenty verses descriptive of the event, and these I had printed and ready for distribution before the banquet commenced. I was introduced to the ducal party, which, in addition to the Marquis of Hartington, included his brother, Lord Frederick Cavendish, Lord Houghton, and others. Perhaps I shall not be thought unduly egotistical for mentioning that Lord Houghton, who is a poet of no mean order, commended my verses.

### **THE ORDER OF BUFFALOES**

While in Bradford, I became acquainted with many members of the Royal Order of Ante-diluvian Buffaloes. A lodge was held at the Hope and Anchor Inn, and the meetings were attended by many professional gentlemen, including Walleth, the Queen's jester, at times. Before I left Bradford I was made a "primo" of the lodge. Back to Keighley again, I found that a Shakspeare Lodge of "Bufs" was held at the Ship Inn. The saying is, "Once a Buff., always a Buff.," and I at once allied myself with the lodge in my native town. During my office as primo I initiated upwards of 200 members, among whom I may mention Mr James Walsh, the late Mr David Hudson, Mr Joseph Town, Mr John Fortune, and Mr James Blakey. Being the only officer who could initiate a member, I "had my hands full," and I at last decided to communicate with the Bradford lodge as to the installation of a few primos in Keighley. Accordingly, several primos came down one Sunday afternoon and installed half-a-dozen primos; so that for the future I was relieved of much work in connection with the lodge. There is one very laughable incident I have to chronicle. The townspeople had got across with a certain gentleman, of whom Alfred Harris and I made an elaborate effigy, which we intended to burn. It was a beautiful looking figure and no mistake. We took the effigy to the lodge-room until such time as we required it, hanging it behind the door. One night the landlord (Mr Patrick McShee) had occasion to go into the lodge-room; he knew nothing about the effigy, and as soon as the poor landlord saw the "figure of a man hanging himself behind the door," he gave a series of the most weird and penetrating howls. It was not long before he was downstairs, and asking his wife in an excited voice, "Does ta know whoa wor at t'last lodge meetin' an' didn't cum dahnstairs?" "Noa," said his wife, "What's up?" "Ther's somebody hung thersel a back o' t' door," said the trembling landlord. "Oh! nonsense," said Mrs McShee. Nevertheless, she went up into the room; and fine fun there was, you bet, when it was discovered that the "man" was a dummy. The incident caused unlimited amusement for the customers, but the landlord was not able to appreciate the fun, and, indeed, was some weeks before he got over the shock.

## **CHAPTER XXIII**



## **A TRAMP INTO LANCASHIRE**

After a short stay in Keighley, my roving nature again asserted itself, and I set off on a tramping expedition, with two companions, in to Lancashire. Going over The Moss we were overtaken by a severe thunderstorm, and were soon drenched to the skin by the torrential fall of rain. We made some attempt to dry our clothes at the Monkroyd Tavern, a hostelry immortalised by the Lancashire poets, and then pushed on to Colne, where we were accommodated at the club-house until morning, when I made my way to Burnley. It was there I fell in with my old friend Dave Hey. I obtained a situation in Burnley at a sizing establishment occupied by Mr Alfred Lee, and retained it for seven weeks, by which time I had got thoroughly disgusted with Lancashire life. The people I came across seemed to me to be about forty years behind Keighley folk in many particulars, but especially in regard to dress and general mode of living. So that when I got back to Keighley I resolved in my mind that I would not stir out of the town again.

## **LOCAL ELECTION EPISODES**

On my return I found the town "involved in the trouble and turmoil" of its first Town Council election. I interested myself in the election campaign, and attended a meeting which was held in the West-lane Primitive Methodist School, was in support of the candidature of Messrs W. Mann, I. Emmott, and J. Walsh, for the West Ward. In all there were seven competitors for the three seats in this ward, and in addition to those mentioned there were the other candidates present. I plied each candidate with questions, until one Thomas Hey made a proposition that I should be put out of the meeting if I did not cease asking questions. I insisted on my right to question the candidates, and told Mr Hey that I had only to give the word to my "supporters" behind me and he, instead of me, would find himself ignominiously carried out of the room. The meeting was in such a state of confusion that it was closed without a vote as to the fitness of the candidates being taken. On another occasion the late Mr James Leach, and Bill Spink and myself were the chief means of getting the poor rates put on the property owners. We had a vestry meeting called, and by drumming up our "party" were able to carry the vote.

## **BOYCOTTED!**

For this action Spink and I were time after time subjected to boycotting by aggrieved property owners. Spink had to live in no less than three houses in as many months; as soon as the new landlord found out who his new tenant was—and the word was carefully passed along—poor Spink had to "flit." Finally, however, he managed to get into a house where he could stop. I, also, had to suffer similarly, though not as severely. In return, we practised a system of annoying the public authorities whenever they required a servant by sending in applications.

## **I APPLY FOR SITUATION AS WORKHOUSE MASTER**

When advertisements were out for a master at the Workhouse, I sent in an application along with thirty-nine others. Mr J. W. Laycock was the chairman of the Board. He objected to my application being read, but Mr T. Middlebrook and other members challenged his view, and said the application must be read. It was somewhat as follows:—"Gentlemen of the Board of Guardians.—In applying for the situation of Workhouse master I can assure you that I feel competent for the situation, seeing that I have had much to do with all classes and kinds of people in my travels—both high and low, rich and poor. I know, gentlemen, that you could not do better than engage me, as I have ben so used to living on low commons that I could keep the paupers at 1s 3d per head, whereas you boast about keeping them at 2s 8d or 2s 9d per head. You sit down to a sumptuous dinner, with salmon, &c., every Board day, Mr Leach informs me, for which you pay 1s per head. Now, I think I could provide you with a sumptuous dinner at 3d per head, and I should want that allowance for a little tobacco. It is not, I can assure you, gentlemen, a question of wages, but one of sheer honour that prompts me to apply for the situation of master of the Keighley Workhouse. If this suits your notice, you can reply by return of post.—Your humble servant, Bill o' th' Hoylus End." But I was not appointed; and it is perhaps unnecessary to say that I did not intend to be appointed. My application caused much amusement and stir in the town. After this, Spink and I kept the ball rolling, and one of us applied for almost every public or semi-public office where we thought we could cause a little annoyance to the property owners, &c., on the Boards. Among other posts I applied for were those of nuisances inspector and School Boards curator.

## **"THE POOR MAN'S LAWYER"**

It was during the long spell of spare time that I had on my hands that I became a sort of poor man's lawyer, though I had not, I must say, passed the requisite examination. Scores of people, mostly belonging to the Irish part of the town, put their confidence in me, telling me secrets which it would not be wise for me to disclose. This business included a great variety of subjects and things. But disputes as to insurance and club money were the most numerous. Many were the insurance agents and collectors I was brought in contact with, among them being the late Mr O'Connell.

## **I TURN INVENTOR**

I next turned inventor, and met with some success. I had always had an idea for invention and novelty, wanting to wear a different kind of clothes, and dress my warps different from anybody else. It was in company with Mr William Greenwood that I invented a warp-slaying machine. This we sold to Mr R. L. Hattersley. I also invented a patent wax for use in warp-dressing and weaving. This, I intended, should supersede Stephenson's paraffin wax, and that it would have done, I feel sure, had it been properly placed in the market; but of all people in the world there is none like a druggist for squeezing profit out of his wares. He will either have 1 1/2d profit in every shilling's worth of goods or "perish in the attempt." I disposed of my rights in this patent to a gentleman who is now in Australia. I also turned my attention to producing many other little inventions.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### OLD TIME FRIENDS

#### BILL SPINK, THE COBBLER

During the past few weeks I have received from friends acquired in the days of my boyhood and early manhood letters which have awakened within me a train of memories—both joyful and sorrowful—respecting my friends and acquaintances in the auld lang syne. That must be my apology for devoting this week's chapter of my "Recollections" to a brief notice of several of these local worthies. Of Bill Spink, the statesman-cobbler, I have previously made mention. Spink was born in the house in West-lane (now occupied as a club) wherein Mr James Lund, of Malsis Hall, first saw the light. He was a queer chap in his way was Spink. He belonged to what I may call the Peculiar political party which also claimed as members "Little" Barnes, James Leach, Theophilus Hayes, Joseph Fieldhouse, and your humble servant; and it was in his little cobbler's shop that the deliberations of our party were carried on. Spink took the Tory side in national politics, and frequently attended political meetings up and down the district. On one occasion, I well remember, Spink was sent by the Tory party to a Liberal meeting at Silsden. Sir Mathew Wilson was one of the speakers, and he was "tackled" on certain points during his speech by Spink, until the Radical garrison made a raid upon this undesirable invader of their citadel, and ejected him into the street. Spink was severely handled in the process, and it occupied him all his strength—*i.e.* all that remained—to walk back to Keighley. Spink was a man who must speak his mind, and could not bear to hear the views and principles which he upheld ruthlessly set at nought. He was, at bottom, a good-natured man; indeed, I think I scarcely ever came across a man with a more sympathetic disposition. In any deserving public object, or case of private distress in the town, he was the first to the rescue. Unfortunately, he suffered much from a diseased leg, which was the cause of his death. There was an unpleasant hitch at the funeral. When the party arrived at the Keighley Cemetery, it was found that the grave was too small, and it was some time before the necessary extension could be made. The circumstance of the mourners having to wait was aggravated by a heavy down fall of rain. At last, however, the remains of my old friend were duly consigned to Mother Earth. In his life time I promised Spink that I would write his epitaph, which I now produce:—

Here lie the remains of the friend of the poor,  
Inside of his palace without any door.  
By man's inhumanity he was oft made to flit,  
But now he's at home, where he'll bide for a bit.  
He had a large heart that beat in his breast;  
Without some sensation he never could rest;  
If he saw a mean action he'd cry like a calf;  
If he saw a kind deed he'd cry more bi't half.

#### A THEATRICAL CHUM

I must now revert to my old theatrical friend, John Spencer, who had returned from America. He was greatly changed in appearance, so that I scarcely knew him by sight; he put me in mind of a Spanish brigand. Spencer, while in the States, had gone through the Civil War, having served, he told me, on the sides of both North and South. He was first pressed into service while travelling with a circus. The request was put to the whole company, who 'listed as one man, and joined the Confederate Army. Spencer was put in as express rider, his duty being to act as mounted postman from one camp to another. It was while on one of these journeys that he was made a prisoner. He had a large amount of money in notes upon him, but this he managed to hand unnoticed to a civilian friend. As a prisoner he was taken to Washington. Being a first-class misdemeanant, he was allowed to patrol the streets, which, however, were closely watched, and it seemed an impossibility for him to pass the sentinels. But John had knocked about the world a good deal, and had had his wits sharpened, and by a "theatrical stratagem" he managed to evade the outposts and to make his escape. He stopped at a dye-house some distance out of Washington, and was fortunate enough there to meet with a friend from his native district—Sam Brook, a theatrical amateur, from Crossflatts, near Bingley. Sam furnished his erstwhile companion of the stage with a dyer's wearing apparel, and, thus disguised, Spencer managed to

get back to the place where he had been captured, and to recover the notes which he had deposited with the person mentioned. With this money Spencer seems to have got back to England. Arrived at Keighley, he sent for me, and nothing would satisfy him but that I should break off work at once and help him, so to speak, to "mak t' brass fly." Together we travelled nearly all over Great Britain, and also paid a visit to Paris. It was in the French capital that Spencer found the money getting "beautifully less," and he concluded that it would be better for all concerned if we returned to Keighley. This we did. Soon after, Spencer took up a position as traveller for the Bradford Old Brewery Company. But the English climate did not seem to suit him—far from it; there were certain peculiarities about his constitution which said as much. It was with much pain that one morning I heard of his death, which had taken place very suddenly at the house of his father, who was landlord of the Bay Horse Inn. The Rev Mr Goodman, then the Baptist minister, officiated at the funeral of the deceased, and, I recollect, spoke of the awful suddenness of death. His remarks, I felt, were directed to myself, and I was very uncomfortable the while. Among the many persons present at the funeral was "Doctor" John Walton, who was at one time in partnership with Mr Anthony Spencer and Mr Henry Newton as herbalists, &c.

### WITH THE LATE MR EDWIN WAUGH

On one particular evening which has left its imprint indelibly on my mind, I spent a few pleasant hours with a handful of local celebrities in the Commercial Inn. The chief of the party was the celebrated Lancashire poet, the late Mr Edwin Waugh, who had come to Keighley to give readings in the old Mechanic's Hall, and was invited to join us. Another member of our party was Mr John Hopkinson, brother to Mr Barber Hopkinson. A right merry fellow he was, full of yarns and comic ditties. With him was his nephew, Mr Benjamin Hopkinson, who about the time was causing some stir in the district with several letters which he published in the Press. This trio are now gone over to the great majority. Mr Emmott, veterinary surgeon, and Mr Lacy, another local worthy, were also in the company. Very pleasant and entertaining was the time we spent together that night. Next morning I accompanied Mr Waugh to Kildwick, whither we walked on the canal bank. On the way, the Lancashire poet proved himself an intensely interesting and instructive companion. He had a large stock of funny stories, and possessed quite a knack of imparting his sensible advice to one in an inoffensive and almost unnoticeable manner. During the journey I said little, but thought much. At Kildwick we inspected the "Lang Kirk," and other places of note in the locality, and then parted. It was soon after this visit that I wrote the following verses:—

Old Kildwick Grange and Kildwick Hall,  
I see them now once more;  
They 'mind me of my boyish days,  
Those happy days of yore.

The old White Lion in the corner stands,  
Most fitting for the poets,  
Where Turner from a foreign land  
Would give his great exploits.

'Twas in the Indian jungle  
The tiger first he saw,  
With fiery eye, and open mouth,  
Sharp talons on his paw.

They met, and with a desperate spring  
The tiger on his prey;  
While Turner's two companions—  
Both cowards ran away.

But Turner fought a desperate fight,  
His courage ne'er forsook,  
He javelled at the tiger  
Until his bayonet broke.  
One part was in the savage breast,  
And Turner understood  
If he could grovel out the steel  
'Twould draw the savage blood.

'Twas done—the blood gushed out amain,  
The lion-hearted brave  
Beheld his foe go to a stream,  
To drink and meet his grave.

. . . . .

I see the house where Turner lived;  
But Turner is not here.  
In the Lang Kirkyard he now may rest  
Without a tiger's fear.

Since I began these Reminiscences I have received a letter from an old friend of mine, whom I said I thought was dead. I allude to "Sammy" Moore, and I am glad to hear that he is alive and doing well. I had not heard of him for a score of years. Many are the happy hours we have spent together on the stage. His letter says he is in California, where he is occupying a good situation as registrar of a town of about 10,000 inhabitants. He says he has left off acting and wishes to know if I have done the same; and he also inquires after many of his old Keighley friends. This sentence leads me to refer to a few more of my own friends in the days of yore. There is the Rev William Thawbrey, a Wesleyan Methodist minister at Keighley, who subsequently took up work in the mission field in South Africa. Then there are the late Mr Thomas Carrodus, the manager of the Yorkshire Penny Bank at Keighley, the Brothers Kay, Mr Joshua Robinson, and Mr James Lister,—all of whom were fellow stage amateurs of mine. The hand of death has passed heavily over my old friends—particularly those with whom I moved on the amateur theatrical stage—and I can number on my fingers those who have been left.

## CHAPTER XXV

### MR JONAS BOTTOMLEY

I had not a little to do with the late Mr Jonas Bottomley, of mint rock fame. I first became acquainted with him in the warp department at Messrs Lund's in West-lane. He came to ask me if I would write his "manifesto," or election address, as he intended "standing" for the Local Board and the Board of Guardians. I wrote out the address, but Mr Bottomley did not succeed in getting on either of the Boards. It was soon afterwards that the Prince of Wales was announced to visit Milner Field, Saltaire. Mr Bottomley had hit upon some idea or other, and he came to ask me who was the likeliest person to write a letter to the Prince of Wales. I referred him to the late Rev J. Room, vicar of Eastwood. Mr Bottomley accordingly waited upon Mr Room, who, however, said he had come to the wrong person; he (Mr Room), was not in the habit of addressing kings and princes, and lords and dukes, but he could refer him to a man who was. Mr Room said he knew nobody better for the work than Bill o' th' Hoylus End. So Mr Bottomley appealed to me, and, with some demur, I penned a rough epistle, which was couched somewhat as follows:—"To His Royal Highness Albert Edward Prince of Wales.—May it please your Royal Highness to accept a package of mint rock from your humble servant. And, in addition, while your Royal Highness is staying in the locality, I should very greatly appreciate an interview. If you could see your way to consent to my earnest longing you would greatly oblige your most humble and obedient servant, Jonas Bottomley." Mr Bottomley told me when I was writing the letter that if he got the Royal patronage to his mint rock he would give me £100 "slap dahn," which, you may guess, made me as anxious as Mr Bottomley to bring about the desired "interview." I had also to write some verses concerning the Royal visit to Saltaire—

Welcome to Bradford Royal Albert Edward,  
Son of Victoria, Old England's Queen.

These are only a few of the preparations that were made by Mr Bottomley. But he did not achieve the success he so eagerly sought; it was on the day the visit took place that he received a letter in which the Prince of Wales expressed his pleasure to receive the gift of mint rock so kindly sent by Mr Jonas Bottomley, but explaining that there were so many gifts of this nature that it would be out of the question to give a privilege to one and not to another. I should offer a word of apology for making such an abrupt introduction of the next event. It was not many weeks after the above that Mr Bottomley came to an unfortunate end, his dead body being found on the canal bank at Leeds, where it was supposed he had been subjected to foul play.

### "SHOOTING MONKEYS"

Readers who have followed me through my "Recollections" will remember that in one chapter I said I should have something further to say of my esteemed friend the late Mr Barber Hopkinson. As is well known, Mr Hopkinson was of a merrily genial disposition—a veritable type of the real John Bull, and where his company was, there was no dearth of quaint, good-humoured talk. As a sportsman, he was known far and near—

He was indeed a merry chap  
As ever made a trigger snap,  
And ne'er a bird its wing could flap—  
And get away;  
Whenever Barber smashed a cap,  
It had to stay.

It was his abilities as a "crack" shot that led him to be generally appealed to for instruction and "tips" by "pupils in the art of shooting." It was one of these "unattached pupils" who was continually dogging at Mr Hopkinson to teach him how to shoot straight. His name was Bob Brigg. It was with great joy that Bob heard Barber say he would give him a lesson if he turned up on the following Saturday afternoon. Of course, Bob, gun in hand, was up to time at Mr Hopkinson's house in Devonshire-street. Barber took him out into the street and said: "Tha sees

theas haases?" "Ay," replied Bob wonderingly. "Nah, if tha'll goa an' shooit all t' 'monkeys' off iv'ry one o' t' haases, fra t' top ta t' bottom o' t' street, tha'll be a varry fair shot when tha's finished." Bob, I believe in the goodness of his heart, set out to find the monkeys, but without success, and he returned to tell his "instructor" that he "hed been i' iv'ry harse i' t' street, but noan on 'em hed a monkey in it." Barber, notwithstanding, maintained that there was a monkey on t' top o' nearly every house; and Bob felt that he had been nicely "taken in" when the sort of monkeys alluded to was explained to him. It was common knowledge at that time that every—or nearly every—house in Devonshire-street had a "monkey" (*i.e.* a mortgage) on it. The incident was the subject of much fun for a long time afterwards—Bob Brigg and his monkey-shooting. But Barber did really teach "the young idea to shoot," taking Bob with him on several shooting expeditions.

### **"WHEN GREEN LEAVES COME AGAIN"**

Perhaps the following unpublished poem, which I wrote some years ago, will not be inappropriate at this season; it will "go" to the tune of the old English ballad, "The dawning of the day":—

As I walk out one winter's morn,  
 Along the Steeton Ing,  
 And as I gaze me all around  
 Romantic ideas spring.  
 I think upon my past career,  
 With antics all in vain;—  
 But I will be a better lad  
 When green leaves come again.

The little birds I cannot see,  
 Excepting now and then;  
 For they are far beyond the sea  
 And left the haunts of men.  
 The trees are bare, and every bush  
 Speaks out to me so plain—  
 That I should be a better lad  
 When green leaves come again.

The fields are like a silvery lake,  
 The mountain tops are white,  
 And rear their heads majestically—  
 To me a great delight;  
 And as I gaze on Rivock End,  
 Across the silvery plain,  
 Methinks I hear a voice speak out—  
 "Green leaves will come again."

Green leaves came, and green leaves went,  
 And they are gone once more,  
 And I have never kept my vow,  
 Which makes my heart full sore.  
 But I will never "dee i' t' shell,"  
 But make that vow again—  
 That I will be a better lad  
 When green leaves come again.

And should I tarry here a while  
 To see the smiling scene,  
 When nature takes her snow-white cloth  
 And changes it for green,  
 I shall be faithful to my vow  
 With all my might and main;  
 For I will be a better lad  
 "When green leaves come again."

## **CHAPTER XXVI**

### **OLD MUSICIANS**

I now purpose briefly to refer to a few old singers whose friendship or acquaintance I enjoyed. Mr Edwin Ogden was well known in the neighbourhood as being about one of the best local singers of his day. Many townsfolk will remember Edwin, together with William Haggas, another old musician, teaching a singing-class. Ogden was a shoemaker by trade but he dabbled more in music than in wax and leather. For many years he held the position of leading chorister at St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church. He also "gave of his talents" on frequent occasions at local

concerts, and was in great favour with the public. He made as many young singers, I suppose, as Joe Turner made musicians in the instrumental sense of the word. Turner was for many years the conductor of Marriner's Brass Band. Not a few of our present-day musicians will be able to date the commencement of their musical career from the time they took up instruction with either Ogden or Turner. The former has been removed by death, but the latter is still with us. James Greenwood was also one of the school to which Ogden and Turner belonged; and the three took great interest in the musical training of the late Mademoiselle Matilda Florella Illingworth previous to her visiting the conservatoires of music on the Continent. Mr James Wright, my father, also interested himself in Miss Illingworth, in whom at an early period of her life he detected material for the making of an accomplished vocalist. She was a frequent visitor at our house, and often have I heard her sing "Robin Adair"—my father's favourite song. After she had been on the Continent, I heard Miss Illingworth tell how often while there she was swindled by the proprietors and managers of theatres and music-halls. In some instances she was subjected to the most cruel impositions. More than once she was robbed of all her stage properties, and in Florence she was duped out of every half-penny of the proceeds of a concert which she promoted. Other musicians of the time, I may mention, were John Dunderdale, Daniel Ackroyd, and Joe Constantine. It was in memory of these old musicians that I wrote the following verses:—

**"COME, GIE US A WAG O' THI PAW."**

Come, gie us a wag o' thi paw, Jim Wreet,  
 Come, gie us a wag o' thi paw;  
 Ah knew thee when thi heead wor black,  
 But nah it's as white as snow;  
 Yet a merry Christmas to thee, Jim,  
 An' all thi kith an' kin:  
 An' hopin' tha'll hev monny more  
 For t' sake o' owd long sin,  
 Jim Wreet,  
 For t' sake o' owd long sin.

It's soa monny year ta-day, Jim Wreet,  
 Sin owd Joe Constantine  
 An' Daniel Ackroyd, thee and me,  
 An' other friends o' thine  
 Went up ta sing at t' Squire's house  
 Net hawf-a-mile fra' here;  
 An' t' Squire made us welcome  
 To his brown October beer,  
 Jim Wreet,  
 To his brown October beer.  
 An' owd Joe Booth tha knew, Jim Wreet,  
 'At kept the Old King's Arms.  
 Wheear all t' church singers used ta meet,  
 When they hed sung their Psalms;  
 An' thee an' me amang 'em, Jim,  
 Sometimes hev chang'd the string,  
 An' wi' a merry chorus join'd,  
 We've made yon' tavern ring,  
 Jim Wreet,  
 We've made yon' tavern ring.

But nearly three score year, Jim Wreet,  
 Hev passed away sin then;  
 When Keighley in Apollo's art  
 Could boast her music men.  
 But music, nah, means money, Jim,  
 An' that tha's sense ta knaw;  
 But just for owd acquaintance sake,  
 Come gie us a wag o' thi paw, Jim Wreet;  
 Jim Wreet,  
 Come gie us a wag o' thi paw.

**A DISAPPOINTED MAN**

I think an apology will be scarcely needed for introducing a few remarks regarding Mr James Wallbank, a well-known and eccentric character in the town. I have heard that James is dead. Whether this is so or not I cannot say; certainly I have not seen the old gentleman about for some time. James was for many years billiard-marker at the Devonshire Hotel. He cherished the idea that he was related to royalty. He often told me that he was a relative of one of the old kings of France, and insisted that his name instead of being Wallbank should be Wal de Brooke, or something like that. When Burridge, the celebrated American painter, was in Keighley, he stayed at the Devonshire Hotel and painted Mr Walbank's portrait, and the picture is now in the possession of Mr Martin Reynolds.

## “GOOISE AN’ GIBLET PIE.”

Another well-known character was Harry Smith, manufacturer. Harry was a man intensely fond of fun, and one Christmas Eve, I remember, when I was coming from the station after returning from Scotland, he tapped me on the shoulder, and, after ascertaining where I had been of late, quoted a motto of the Freemasons’—“In my Father’s house are many mansions, but such as I have I give unto thee. Follow me.” I went with Smith to his house, and spent Christmas Eve there. The subject of my poem, “Gooise and Giblet Pie,” arose out of that night’s proceedings:—

A Kersmas song I’ll sing mi lads,  
If you’ll but hearken me,  
An incident i’ Kersmas time  
I’ eighteen sixty three:  
Withaht a cypher i’ the world  
I’d scorn to tell a lie—  
I dined wi’ a gentleman  
O’ gooise an’ giblet pie.

I’ve been i’ lots o’ feeds, mi’ lads,  
An’ hed some rare tuck-ahts;  
Blood-pudding days wi’ killing pigs,  
Minch pies an’ thumping tarts.  
But I wired in, an’ reight an’ all,  
An’ supped when I wor dry;  
For I wor dining wi’ a gentleman  
O’ gooise an’ giblet pie.  
I hardly knew what ailed me, lads,  
I felt so fearful prahd;  
Mi ears prick’d up, mi collar rose,  
Towards a hawf-a-yard;  
Mi chest stood aht, mi charley in,  
Like horns stuck aht mi tie;  
For I dined wi’ a gentleman  
O’ gooise an’ giblet pie.

I offen think o’ t’ feed, mi lads,  
When t’ gentleman I meet;  
But nauther of us speyke a word  
Abaht that glorious neet;  
In fact, I hardly can mysel—  
I feel so fearful shy;  
For I ate a deal o’ t’ roasted gooise,  
An’ warmed his giblet pie.

## THE CONCLUDING CHAPTER

It must be a long lane that has no turning. I am afraid the *Herald* readers who have followed my Recollections will have thought Bill o’ th’ Hoylus End’s memory an inexhaustible one. The truth is, when I commenced to “resurrect” my past career I had no idea that the stories and reminiscences would extend to anything like the length they have gone to; and even now I find that the source of supply is far from being exhausted. But, in the circumstances, I have decided to conclude with this week’s chapter—“the last scene that ends this strange and eventful history.” In the first place, I must crave an apology from my readers for not having been able to give events in my career in their chronological order. As I stated at the outset, I had no diary or data whatever to go by, and have simply reeled the stories and anecdotes off my memory. It will thus be readily seen that I cannot have given every little transaction or happening in my life. In my Recollections I have now and again introduced descriptions and narratives of various characters with whom I was brought closely in contact. I may say that in doing this I have made it my aim to omit, or, failing that, to treat with proper respect, all incidents concerning individuals who were living themselves or had relatives living; and I think that nothing I have said in regard to friends or foes gone over to the Great Majority will have given the slightest offence to their living representatives. I commenced by recapitulating some of the tricks of my boyhood—when I was said, by the old house-wives, to be the “village harum-skarum”—and have traced my career down to within a few years of the present time. Some of my stories have been favourable, others unfavourable to my character. My critics will have said that Bill o’ th’ Hoylus End has many faults; but I must ask them to forgive my many shortcomings, and look upon my few virtues. Above all things, I think I can say that with all reasonableness I have held to the truth. Most of the people of Keighley and the surrounding towns and villages are familiar with the name, at least, of Bill o’ th’ Hoylus End. Without appearing vain or egotistical, I think I may say that I have been recognised by high and low, rich and poor, and by people not altogether unknown to fame. Of all my friends, I entertain the greatest respect for the late Sir Titus Salt, whose assurance I had that if, while he was alive, I wanted a helping hand I need not go far or wait long for it. The

baronet honoured me with an interview, at which he told me how highly he thought of the poem which I had written just previously on the occasion of the unveiling of the monument of Sir Titus in Bradford. Perhaps a couple of verses of my "Ode to Sir Titus Salt" will not be misplaced here:

—  
Heedless of others, some there are  
Who all their days employ  
To raise themselves, no matter how,  
And better men destroy.  
How different is the mind of him  
Whose deeds themselves are told,  
Who values worth more nobler far  
Than all the heaps of gold.

No empty titles ever could  
His principles subdue;  
His queen and country, too, he loved,  
Was loyal and was true:  
He craved no boon from royalty,  
Nor wished their pomp to share;  
For nobler is the soul of him,  
The Founder of Saltaire.

I may venture to say that I have had a valued friend in Mr Butterfield, of Bonnie Cliffe Castle and fair Marianna, Nice; also in Sir Isaac Holden, Bart, M.P., Dr Dobie, Keighley, and other gentlemen. I have had a letter, commending my rhyme, from Sir Albert K. Rollit; and other communications with respect to the outpouring of my muse from Mr Archie Laidlaw, of Edinburgh; Councillor Burgess, of Congleton, Cheshire, &c. I was privileged to claim the late Rev J. Room, M.A., as an especial friend, and may say that of all the times I shook hands with him I scarcely ever withdrew my hand without finding "something" in it. Mr Room's last request to me was that I would write seven verses—and only seven, he said—on the death of his dear, beloved wife. I promised to do so, but (partly through my dilatoriness, I must admit) the rev gentleman did not live to receive the verses. During the past few days, however, I have written the following verses on

#### **THE LATE REV. J. ROOM, M.A.**

John Room! he is dead and is buried;  
There is mourning the whole village through,  
And all the people who knew him  
Are loth to bid him adieu.

'Tis true he was filled with compassion;  
God's nature in him over-flowed;  
He knew all the people with burdens,  
And strove hard to lighten their load.

His dress it were plain and quite common,  
No pride in him could you trace;  
Yet you knew that he was a good parson  
Whenever you looked in his face.

The worst things his foes knew about him—  
He was fond of satire or joke,  
Writing some verses of rhythm,  
Which always amused the folk.  
Whene'er he walked into the pulpit,  
He bowed for a moment in prayer,  
Every soul in the temple grew thirsty;—  
The true Christian spirit was there.

His likes there are few in the nation,  
(I wish in my heart there were more;  
For it wants something else besides learning,  
To grapple the hearts of the poor.)

'Tis true he was high up in learning  
The secrets of nations long dead;  
But he cared more for those who were yearning  
Sad tears round the sufferer's bed.

Then farewell! my worthy old preacher,  
For thou shall have no end of praise—  
Good father and true-hearted shepherd,  
Who knew both the poor and their ways.

#### **SOME LAUGHABLE STORIES**



In this, the last chapter, I should like to give a few anecdotes concerning an eccentric character who was pretty well known in the Keighley district, although he was a native of Flintergill, a village near Kendal. This individual was known as "Kendal," "Flintergill Billy," "Three bease an' a Cow" &c. He was a warpdresser by trade, and for a time worked along with me at Messrs Butterfield Bros.' Prospect Mill. He often used to tell us that his father had "two bease an' a cow" on his farm at "Flintergill." Yes; "Billy" was as queer a chap as one could well imagine—such a specimen as one often reads about in comic almanacs, but seldom sees. At one period of his stay in Keighley, "Billy" lived at Paradise—a row of cottages just below the Prospect Mill. His wife was a weaver in the mill, and one baking day, I remember, she gave her husband strict orders "ta hev t' fire under t' oven when she com' fra her wark." "Kendal" was working alongside me at warpdressing, and just before stopping time the thought chanced to strike him that he had to have the fire going. Away home he darted, and on his return he stated, in reply to my question, that he thought all was right. Soon afterwards I happened to ask if he had put the fire under the pan or the oven, and he had to acknowledge that he did not know where he had put it. He set off home again to see how things stood, and lo and behold! he had put the fire under the pan. Now, "Billy" was not blessed with a superabundance of sense, and (perhaps flurried by the thought that if the oven was not ready in time he would "get his ear-hoil weel combed" by his wife) he scaled the fire out of the range, and re-kindled it under the oven with the clothes-pegs. The idea of pushing the fire across under the oven did not seem to occur to poor "Billy's" brain. The fact remains that he had just got the clothes-pegs nicely alight when in popped his wife . . . For various reasons I draw the curtain over the closing scenes in the little farce.—"Billy" never would allow it to be said that his wife ever bossed him. Indeed it used to be a standing boast with "Kendal" in public-house company that he "could mak' their Martha dew just as he wanted her; he hed nobbut ta stamp his foot, an' shoo did it in a minit." He was boasting, as usual, one day, when in came "Martha," and, without any words of explanation, seized her "lord and master" by the hair of the head, and dragged him out of the door. The company fully appreciated the situation, and with one voice shouted, "Stamp, Flintergill, stamp!" But there was no stamping. "Martha" pre-eminently proved her authority as "boss," whether poor, hen-pecked "Flintergill" came in as "foreman" or "deputy," or merely "apprentice" or what.—Another remarkable feature about "Flintergill" was that he never came back to his work in the afternoon except that he had had ham, veal, beef, or some other "scrumptious viand" to his dinner. But on one occasion one of his shop-mates detected some flour porridge on his waistcoat. During the afternoon this shop-mate asked "Flintergill" what he had had for dinner. "Duck and green peas," promptly replied "Kendal." "Aye," said the workman, "an' ther's a feather o' thi waistcoit."—Another side-light on "Kendal's" character will perhaps be afforded by the following. He went to a certain shoemaker's in Haworth, and got measured for a pair of boots, which it was arranged should be ready by a stated time. Then he went to another shoemaker's shop in the village, and was measured for a pair there. The anecdote runs that on the day fixed for the boots to be ready "Flintergill" sent his father-in-law's daughter to each of the shoemakers, telling her to get "t'reight un fra one, an' t'left un fra t'other." In this way, it was "Flintergill's" frequent boast, he got a pair of boots for nothing.—Another story relates his visit to Bradford. "Flintergill" intended to spend the evening in Pullan's Music Hall, but he got into the Bowling Green, where there happened to be a waxwork show. "This must be Pullan's," said "Flintergill" to his companion; and up they both went on the platform. "Billy" offered his money to the door-keeper, who, however, neither spoke nor held out his hand. "Flintergill" said he "wor a funny door-keeper" and threatened that "if he didn't tak' t' brass they wor bahn in abaht." And inside "Flintergill" and his friend bounced, to find that the door-keeper was "Tim Bobbin,"—a wax figure.—Still another anecdote says that "Flintergill" was one day seen up a tree sawing off one of the branches. A passer-by asked, "What is ta dewin up theear, Flintergill?" "Oh," was the reply, "we call this weyvin i' ahr country." No sooner were the words spoken than "Flintergill" tumbled to the ground. "Ah see," said his questioner, very aptly, "an' tha's come dahn fer some more bobbins." It appeared that "Flintergill" had been sawing off the bough on which he was standing.—I will close this series of anecdotes with a reference to the frequency of "Flintergill's" flittings. He used to say that he had no sooner got into a house than it was wanted for a beer-house or by a railway company. "Flintergill" kept a few hens, and it was said that these hens became so accustomed to the "flittings" that at the first sign of preparations for removing they would roll over on their backs with their legs together ready to be tied.

## MY LAST RAMBLE

To a few verses I recently wrote I have given the title "My last ramble." The lines run as follow:—

As I stroll round by Exley Head  
 Down by the Wheathead Farm,  
 My thoughts fall back to days bygone—  
 Thoughts which my soul doth charm;  
 Each hill and clough, each hedge and stile,  
 To me they are most dear;  
 And as I pass them one by one  
 They bring to me a tear.

In old Fell Lane when I was young,  
 A ruined mansion stood,  
 With roofless cots filled up with sticks  
 Brought from the Holme House Wood.  
 And now I cross the Intake Brig

Where I used to sport and play,  
And bathe, and plunge, and water splash  
Full many a happy day.

I gaze upon the old farm-gate,  
And long to have a swing  
Along with all my boyish mates,  
As happy as a king;  
For the carriage of the noble man,  
Or the chariot of the State,  
Never carried nobler hearts  
Than did the old farm-gate.

I now pass by the Intake Farm,  
And I am much amazed;  
It has the charm for me to day  
As first I on it gazed.  
And farther as I wind my way  
And climb the old Blackhill,  
A scene appears before my sight  
To me more charming still.

The silvery Tarn—once my delight,  
For there I took my skates,  
On many a happy winter day,  
With my dear little mates.  
The old Tarn House I see again,  
The seat of Aaron King;  
And as I gaze from east to west  
Such sights of wonder spring.

As far as e'er my eye can see,  
Hills on each other rise,  
Towering their heads in majesty  
Far in the western skies;  
And as I view the landscape round,  
No artist here could dream  
The beauties of the Vale of Aire,  
With its crooked, wimpling stream.

This was my walk one summer morn,  
When all was on the wing:  
I heard the cuckoo tell his name,  
I heard the lark to sing.  
I left the Tower upon the hill  
Dedicated to the Queen,  
And for old Keighley back again,  
Charmed with all I'd seen.

I must now wind up my rough-and-ready stories. Let me say that if, by the recital of some of the incidents which happened during my nomadic career, I have caused any pleasure or amusement to my readers, I feel amply repaid. If anything which I have said has given offence or caused displeasure in any quarter, kindly permit me to say that it was done quite unwittingly.

The Christmas season will soon be here, and in preparation for that glad time let us put away envy and malice, and offer peace and good-will unto all. I think the following poem will seasonably conclude my present series of writings:—

## CHRISTMAS DAY

Sweet lady, 't is no troubadour  
That sings so sweetly at your door,  
To tell you of the joys in store—  
So grand and gay;  
But one that sings "Remember t' poor,  
'Tis Christmas Day."

Within some gloomy walls to-day  
Just cheer the looks of hoary gray,  
And try to smooth their rugged way  
With cheerful glow;  
And cheer the widow's heart, I pray,  
Crushed down with woe.

O! make the weary spent-up glad,  
And cheer the orphan lass and lad;  
Make frailty's heart, so long, long sad,  
Your kindness feel;

And make old crazy-bones stark mad  
To dance a reel.

Then, peace and plenty be your lot,  
And may your deed ne'er be forgot  
That helps the widow in her cot  
Out of your store;  
Nor creed, nor seed, should matter not—  
The poor are poor.

[ *The End* ]

## Footnotes

[1] Each chapter corresponds to a separate article in the Keighley Herald and are numbered as such in the newspaper. To help in locating the originals the following may be useful:

Chapter	Issue of the Keighley Herald
I	2 June 1893
II	9 June 1893
III	16 June 1893
IV	23 June 1893
V	30 June 1893
VI	7 July 1893
VII	14 July 1893
VIII	21 July 1893
IX	28 July 1893
X	4 August 1893
XI	11 August 1893
XII	18 August 1893
XIII	1 September 1893
XIV	8 September 1893
XV	15 September 1893
XVI	22 September 1893
XVII	29 September 1893
XVIII	6 October 1893
XIX	13 October 1893
XX	20 November 1893
XXI	27 October 1893
XXII	3 November 1893
XXIII	10 November 1893
XXIV	17 November 1893
XXV	24 November 1893
XXVI	1 December 1893
Concluding	8 December 1893

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