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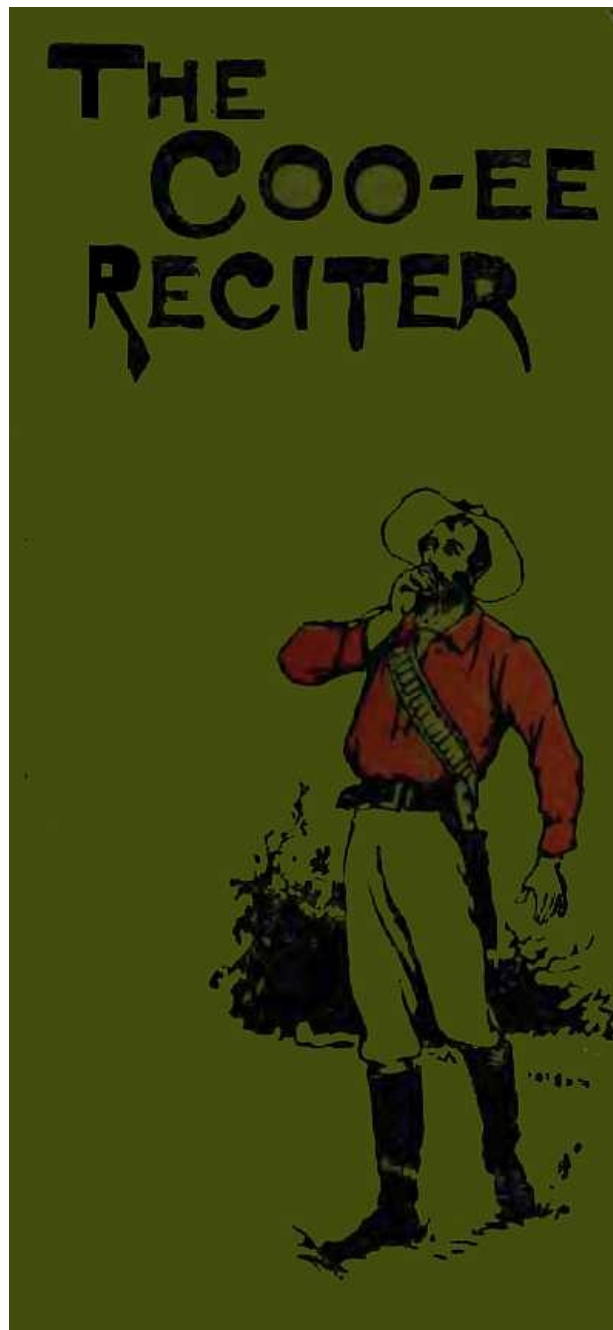
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE COO-EE RECITER: HUMOROUS, PATHETIC, DRAMATIC, DIALECT, RECITATIONS & READINGS ***



THE COO-EE RECITER.

BY

AUSTRALIAN, BRITISH, AND
AMERICAN AUTHORS.

HUMOROUS, PATHETIC, DRAMATIC, DIALECT, RECITATIONS & READINGS.

WARD, LOCK & CO., LIMITED, LONDON, MELBOURNE & TORONTO.

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THE COO-EE RECITER

[7]

I KILLED A MAN AT GRASPAN.

(The Tale of a Returned Australian Contingenter done into verse.)

I killed a man at Graspan,
 I killed him fair in fight;
 And the Empire's poets and the Empire's priests
 Swear blind I acted right.
 The Empire's poets and Empire's priests
 Make out my deed was fine,
 But they can't stop the eyes of the man I killed
 From starin' into mine.

I killed a man at Graspan,
 Maybe I killed a score;
 But this one wasn't a chance-shot home,
 From a thousand yards or more.
 I fired at him when he'd got no show;
 We were only a pace apart,
 With the cordite scorchin' his old worn coat
 As the bullet drilled his heart.

I killed a man at Graspan,
 I killed him fightin' fair;
 We came on each other face to face,
 An' we went at it then and there.
 Mine was the trigger that shifted first,
 His was the life that sped.
 An' a man I'd never a quarrel with
 Was spread on the boulders dead.

I killed a man at Graspan;
 I watched him squirmin' till
 He raised his eyes, an' they met with mine;
 An' there they're starin' still.
 Cut of my brother Tom, he looked,
 Hardly more'n a kid;
 An', Christ! he was stiffenin' at my feet

[8]

Because of the thing I did.

I killed a man at Graspan;
I told the camp that night;
An' of all the lies that ever I told
That was the poorest skite.
I swore I was proud of my hand-to-hand,
An' the Boer I'd chanced to pot,
An' all the time I'd ha' gave my eyes
To never ha' fired that shot.

I killed a man at Graspan;
An hour ago about,
For there he lies with his starin' eyes,
An' his blood still tricklin' out.
I know it was either him or me,
I know that I killed him fair,
But, all the same, wherever I look,
The man that I killed is there.

I killed a man at Graspan;
My first and, God! my last;
Harder to dodge than my bullet is
The look that his dead eyes cast.
If the Empire asks for me later on
It'll ask for me in vain,
Before I reach to my bandolier
To fire on a man again.

M. GROVER.

KITTY O'TOOLE.

[9]

Och! a charmin' young cratur' was Kitty O'Toole,
The lily ov shwate Tipperary;
Wid a voice like a thrish, and wid cheeks like a rose,
An' a figger as nate as a fairy!
Oi saw her wan noight—och! she look'd loike a quane
In the glory ov shwate wan an' twinty—
As she sat wid McGinty's big arm round her waisht,
Och! how I invied McGinty!

Six months afther that, in the shwate summer days,
The boys an' the girls wor' invoited
By Micky O'Toole, ov the cabin beyant,
To see Kate an' McGinty unoitied;
An' whin in the church they wor' made into wan,
An' the priesht gave thim blissin's in plinty,
An' Kitty look'd shwater than iver before—
Och! how I invied McGinty!

But the years have gone by, an' McGinty is dead!
Och! me heart was all broke up wid pity
To see her so lonely, an' mournful, an' sad,
An' I wint an' got married to Kitty!
But now, whin I look where McGinty is laid,
Wid a shtone o'er his head cowld an' flinty—
As he lies there so peaceful, an' quiet, an' shtill—
Och! how I invy McGinty.

W. L. LUMLEY.

THE BALLAD OF THE DROVER.

[10]

BY HENRY LAWSON.

(By kind permission of Messrs. Angus and Robertson, Publishers, Sydney and Melbourne.)

Across the stony ridges,
 Across the rolling plain,
Young Harry Dale, the drover,
 Comes riding home again.
And well his stock-horse bears him,
 And light of heart is he,
And stoutly his old pack-horse
 Is trotting by his knee.

Up Queensland way with cattle
 He travelled regions vast;
And many months have vanished
 Since home-folk saw him last.
He hums a song of someone
 He hopes to marry soon;
And hobble-chains and camp-ware
 Keep jingling to the tune.

Beyond the hazy dado
 Against the lower skies,
And yon blue line of ranges,
 The homestead station lies.
And thitherward the drover
 Jogs through the lazy noon,
While hobble-chains and camp-ware
 Are jingling to a tune.

An hour has filled the heavens
 With storm-cloud inky black;
At times the lightning trickles
 Around the drover's track,
But Harry pushes onward;
 His horses' strength he tries
In hope to reach the river
 Before the flood shall rise.

[11]

The thunder from above him
 Goes rolling o'er the plain;
And down on thirsty pastures
 In torrents fall the rain.
And every creek and gully
 Sends forth its little flood,
Till the river runs a banker,
 All stained with yellow mud.

Now Harry speaks to Rover,
 The best dog on the plains;
And to his hardy horses,
 And strokes their shaggy manes;
"We've breasted bigger rivers
 When floods were at their height,
Nor shall this gutter stop us
 From getting home to-night!"

The thunder growls a warning,
 The ghastly lightnings gleam,
As the drover turns his horses,
 To swim the fatal stream.
But, oh! the flood runs stronger
 Than e'er it ran before;
The saddle horse is failing,
 And only half-way o'er!

When flashes next the lightning,
 The flood's grey breast is blank,
And a cattle-dog and pack-horse
 Are struggling up the bank.
But on the bank to northward,

Or on the southern shore,
The stock-horse and his rider
Will struggle out no more.

[12]

The faithful dog a moment
Sits panting on the bank,
And then swims through the current
To where his master sank.
And round and round in circles,
He fights with failing strength,
Till borne down by the waters,
The old dog sinks at length.

Across the flooded lowlands
And slopes of sodden loam,
The pack-horse struggles onward,
To take dumb tidings home.
And mud-stained, wet, and weary,
Through ranges dark goes he;
The hobble-chains and tinware
Are sounding eerily.

* * * *

The floods are in the ocean,
The stream is clear again,
And now a verdant carpet
Is stretched across the plain.
But someone's eyes are saddened,
And someone's heart still bleeds,
In sorrow for the drover
Who sleeps among the reeds.

THE RESCUE.

[13]

BY EDWARD DYSON.

(From "Rhymes from the Mines," by kind permission of Messrs. Angus and Robertson, Publishers, Sydney and Melbourne.)

There's a sudden, fierce clang of the knocker, then the sound of a voice in the shaft,
Shrieking words that drum hard on the centres, and the braceman goes suddenly daft;
"Set the whistle a-blowing like blazes! Billy, run, give old Mackie a call—
Run, you fool! Number Two's gone to pieces, and Fred Baker is caught in the fall!
Say, hello! there below—any hope, boys, any chances of saving his life?"
"Heave away!" says the knocker. "They've started. God be praised, he's no youngsters or wife!"

Screams the whistle in fearful entreaty, and the wild echo raves on the spur,
And the night, that was still as a sleeper in soft, charmed sleep, is astir
With the fluttering of wings in the wattles, and the vague, frightened murmur of birds;
With far cooys that carry the warning, running feet, inarticulate words.
From the black belt of bush come the miners, and they gather by Mack on the brace,
Out of breath, barely clad, and half-wakened, with a question in every face.

[14]

"Who's below?" "Where's the fall?" "Didn't I tell you?—Didn't I say them sets wasn't sound?"
"Is it Fred? He was reckless was Baker; now he's seen his last shift underground."
"And his mate? Where is Sandy M'Fadyn?" "Sandy's snoring at home on his bunk."
"Not at work! Name of God! a foreboding?" "A foreboding be hanged! He is

drunk!"
"Take it steady there, lads!" the boss orders. He is white to the roots of his hair.
"We may get him alive before daybreak if he's close to the face and has air."
In the dim drive with ardour heroic two facemen are pegging away.
Long and Coats in the rise heard her thunder, and they fled without word or delay
Down the drive, and they rushed for the ladders, and they went up the shaft with a run,
For they knew the weak spot in the workings, and they guessed there was graft to be done.
Number Two was pitch dark, and they scrambled to the plat and they made for the face,
But the roof had come down fifty yards in, and the reef was all over the place.

Fresher men from the surface replace them, and they're hauled up on top for a blow;
When a life and death job is in doing there's room only for workers below. [15]
Bare-armed, and bare-chested, and brawny, with a grim, meaning set of the jaw,
The relay hurries in to the rescue, caring not for the danger a straw;
'Tis not toil, but a battle, they're called to, and like Trojans the miners respond,
For a dead man lies crushed 'neath the timbers, or a live man is choking beyond.

By the faint, yellow glow of the candles, where the dank drive is hot with their breath,
On the verge of the Land of the Shadow, waging war breast to bosom with Death,
How they struggle, these giants! and slowly, as the trucks rattle into the gloom,
Inch by inch they advance to the conquest of a prison—or is it a tomb?
And the workings re-echo a volley as the timbers are driven in place;
Then a whisper is borne to the toilers: "Boys, his mother is there on the brace!"

Like veterans late into action, fierce with longing to hew and to hack,
Riordan's shift rushes in to relieve them, and the toil-stricken men stagger back.
"Stow the stuff, mates, wherever there's stowage! Run the man on the brace till he drops!
There's no time to think on this billet! Bark the heels of the trucker who stops! [16]
Keep the props well in front, and be careful. He's in there, and alive, never fret."
But the grey dawn is softening the ridges, and the word has not come to us yet.

Still the knocker rings out, and the engine shrieks and strains like a creature in pain
As the cage rushes up to the surface and drops back into darkness again.
By the capstan a woman is crouching. In her eyes neither hope nor despair;
But a yearning that glowers like frenzy bids those who'd speak pity forbear.
Like a figure in stone she is seated till the labour of rescue be done.
For the father was killed in the Phoenix, and the son—Lord of pity! the son?

"Hello! there on top!" they are calling. "They are through! He is seen in the drive!"
"They have got him—thank Heaven! they've got him, and oh, blessed be God, he's alive!"
"Man on! heave away!" "Step aside, lads; let his mother be first when he lands."
She was silent and strong in her anguish; now she babbles and weeps where she stands,
And the stern men, grown gentle, support her at the mouth of the shaft, till at last
With a rush the cage springs to the landing, and her son's arms encircle her fast.

*She has cursed the old mine for its murders, for the victims its drives have ensnared,
Now she cries a great blessing upon it for the one precious life it has spared.*

SALTBUSH BILL.

[17]

BY A. B. PATERSON.

(By permission of Messrs. Angus and Robertson, Publishers, Sydney and Melbourne.)

Now this is the law of the Overland, that all in the West obey,
A man must cover with travelling sheep a six-mile stage a day;
But this is the law which the drovers make, right easily understood.
They travel their stage where the grass is bad, but they camp where the grass
is good;
They camp, and they ravage the squatter's grass till never a blade remains,
Then they drift away as the white clouds drift on the edge of the saltbush
plains.
From camp to camp and from run to run they battle it hand to hand,
For a blade of grass and the right to pass on the track of the Overland.

For this is the law of the Great Stock Routes, 'tis written in white and black—
The man that goes with a travelling mob must keep to a half-mile track;
And the drovers keep to a half-mile track on the runs where the grass is dead,
But they spread their sheep on a well-grassed run till they go with a two-mile
spread.

So the squatters hurry the drovers on from dawn till the fall of night,
And the squatters' dogs and the drovers' dogs get mixed in a deadly fight;
Yet the squatters' men, though they hunt the mob, are willing the peace to
keep,
For the drovers learn how to use their hands when they go with the travelling
sheep;
But this is a tale of a Jackeroo that came from a foreign strand,
And the fight that he fought with Saltbush Bill, the King of the Overland.

[18]

Now Saltbush Bill was a drover tough, as ever the country knew,
He had fought his way on the Great Stock Routes from the sea to the Big
Barcoo;
He could tell when he came to a friendly run that gave him a chance to
spread,
And he knew where the hungry owners were that hurried his sheep ahead;
He was drifting down in the Eighty drought with a mob that could scarcely
creep
(When the kangaroos by the thousands starve, it is rough on the travelling
sheep),
And he camped one night at the crossing-place on the edge of the Wilga run;
"We must manage a feed for them here," he said, "or the half of the mob are
done!"
So he spread them out when they left the camp wherever they liked to go,
Till he grew aware of a Jackeroo with a station-hand in tow,

And they set to work on the stragglings sheep, and with many a stockwhip
crack
They forced them in where the grass was dead in the space of the half-mile
track;
So William prayed that the hand of fate might suddenly strike him blue
But he'd get some grass for his starving sheep in the teeth of that Jackeroo.
So he turned and he cursed the Jackeroo, he cursed him alive or dead,
From the soles of his great unwieldy feet to the crown of his ugly head,
With an extra curse on the moke he rode and the cur at his heels that ran,
Till the Jackeroo from his horse got down and he went for the drover-man;
With the station-hand for his picker-up, though the sheep ran loose the while,
They battled it out on the saltbush plain in the regular prize-ring style.

[19]

Now, the new chum fought for his honour's sake and the pride of the English
race,
But the drover fought for his daily bread, with a smile on his bearded face;
So he shifted ground and he sparred for wind and he made it a lengthy mill,
And from time to time as his scouts came in they whispered to Saltbush Bill—
"We have spread the sheep with a two-mile spread, and the grass it is
something grand,
You must stick to him, Bill, for another round for the pride of the Overland."
The new chum made it a rushing fight, though never a blow got home,
Till the sun rode high in the cloudless sky and glared on the brick-red loam,

Till the sheep drew in to the shelter-trees and settled them down to rest,
Then the drover said he would fight no more, and he gave his opponent best.

So the new chum rode to the homestead straight and he told them a story
grand
Of the desperate fight that he fought that day with the King of the Overland.
And the tale went home to the public schools of the pluck of the English swell,
How the drover fought for his very life, but blood in the end must tell.
But the travelling sheep and the Wilga sheep were boxed on the Old Man
Plain.

[20]

'Twas a full week's work ere they drafted out and hunted them off again.
With a week's good grass in their wretched hides, with a curse and a
stockwhip crack
They hunted them off on the road once more to starve on the half-mile track.
And Saltbush Bill, on the Overland, will many a time recite
How the best day's work that ever he did was the day that he lost the fight.

DROUGHT AND DOCTRINE.

BY J. BRUNTON STEPHENS.

***(By kind permission of the publishers, Messrs. Angus and Robertson,
Sydney and Melbourne.)***

Come, take the tenner, doctor ... yes, I know the bill says "five,"
But it ain't as if you'd merely kep' our little 'un alive;
Man, you saved the mother's reason when you saved that baby's life,
An' it's thanks to *you* I ha'n't a ravin' idiot for a wife.

Let me tell you all the story, an' if then you think it strange,
That I'd like to fee ye extry—why, I'll take the bloomin' change.
If yer bill had said a hundred ... I'm a poor man, doc., and yet
I'd 'a' slaved till I had squared it; ay, an' still been in yer debt.

[21]

Well, you see, the wife's got notions on a heap o' things that ain't
To be handled by a man as don't pretend to be a saint;
So I minds "the cultivation," smokes my pipe an' makes no stir,
An' religion an' such p'int's I lays entirely on to her.

No, she's got it fixed within her that, if children die afore
They've been sprinkled by the parson, they've no show for evermore;
An' though they're spared the pitchfork, the brimstun, an' the smoke,
They ain't allowed to mix *up there* with other little folk.

So when our last began to pine, an' lost his pretty smile,
An' not a parson to be had within a hunder mile—
(For though there is a chapel down at Bluegrass Creek, you know,
The clargy's there on dooty only thrice a year or so)—

Well, when our yet unchristen'd mite grew limp, an' thin, an' pale,
It would 'a' cut you to the heart to hear the mother wail
About her "unregenerate babe," an' how, if it should go,
'Twould have no chance with them as had their registers to show.

Then awful quiet she grew, an' hadn't spoken for a week,
When in came brother Bill one day with news from Bluegrass Creek.
"I seen," says he, "a notice on the chapel railin' tied;
They'll have service there this evenin'—can the youngster stand the ride?"

[22]

For we can't have parson here, if it be true, as I've heard say,
There's a dyin' man as wants him more'n twenty mile away;
So"—He hadn't time to finish ere the child was out of bed,
With a shawl about its body an' a hood upon its head.

"Saddle up," the missus said. I did her biddin' like a bird.
Perhaps I thought it foolish, but I never said a word;
For though I have a vote in what the kids eat, drink, or wear,
Their sperritual requirements are entirely *her* affair.

We started on our two hours' ride beneath a burnin' sun,
With Aunt Sal and Bill for sureties to renounce the Evil One;
An' a bottle in Sal's basket that was labelled "Fine Old Tom"
Held the water that regeneration was to follow from.

For Bluegrass Creek was dry, as Bill that very day had found,
An' not a sup o' water to be had for miles around;
So, to make salvation sartin for the babby's little soul,
We had filled a dead marine, sir, at the fam'ly waterhole. [23]
Which every forty rods or so Sal raised it to her head,
An' took a snifter, "just enough to wet her lips," she said;
Whereby it came to pass that when we reached the chapel door,
There was only what would serve the job, an' deuce a dribble more.

The service had begun—we didn't like to carry in
A vessel with so evident a carritur for gin;
So we left it in the porch, an', havin' done our level best,
Went an' owned to bein' "mis'rable offenders" with the rest.

An' nigh upon the finish, when the parson had been told
That a lamb was waitin' there to be admitted to the fold,
Rememberin' the needful, I gets up an' quietly slips
To the porch to see—a swagsman—with our bottle at his lips!

Such a faintness came all over me, you might have then an' there
Knocked me down, sir, with a feather or tied me with a hair.
Doc., I couldn't speak nor move; an' though I caught the beggar's eye,
With a wink he turned the bottle bottom up an' drank it dry.

An' then he flung it from him, bein' suddintly aware
That the label on't was merely a deloosion an' a snare;
An' the crash cut short the people in the middle of "A-men,"
An' all the congregation heard him holler "Sold again!" [24]

So that christ'nin' was a failure; every water-flask was drained;
Ev'n the monkey in the vestry not a blessed drop contained;
An' the parson in a hurry cantered off upon his mare,
Leavin' baby unregenerate, an' missus in despair.

That night the child grew worse, but all my care was for the wife;
I feared more for her reason than for that wee spark o' life....
But you know the rest—how Providence contrived that very night
That a doctor should come cadgin' at our shanty for a light....

Baby? Oh, he's chirpy, thank ye—been baptised—his name is Bill.
It's weeks and weeks since parson came an' put him through the mill;
An' his mother's mighty vain upon the subjick of his weight,
An' reg'lar cock-a-hoop about his sperritual state.

So now you'll take the tenner. Oh, confound the bloomin' change!
Lord, had Billy died!—but, doctor, don't you think it summut strange
That them as keeps the gate would have refused to let him in
Because a fool mistook a drop of Adam's ale for gin?

THE MARTYR.

BY VICTOR J. DALEY.

***(From "At Dawn and Dusk" poems, by kind permission of Angus and
Robertson, Publishers, Sydney and Melbourne.)***

Not only on cross and gibbet,
By sword, and fire, and flood,
Have perished the world's sad martyrs
Whose names are writ in blood.

A woman lay in a hovel
Mean, dismal, gasping for breath;

[23]

[24]

[25]

One friend alone was beside her:
The name of him was—Death.

For the sake of her orphan children,
For money to buy them food,
She had slaved in the dismal hovel
And wasted her womanhood.

Winter and spring and summer
Came each with a load of cares;
And autumn to her brought only
A harvest of grey hairs.

Far out in the blessed country,
Beyond the smoky town,
The winds of God were blowing
Evermore up and down;

The trees were waving signals
Of joy from the bush beyond;
The gum its blue-green banner,
The fern its dark-green frond;

Flower called to flower in whispers
By sweet caressing names,
And young gum shoots sprang upward
Like woodland altar-flames;

And, deep in the distant ranges
The magpie's fluting song
Roused musical, mocking echoes
In the woods of Dandenong;

And riders were galloping gaily,
With loose-held flowing reins,
Through dim and shadowy gullies,
Across broad, treeless plains;

And winds through the Heads came wafting
A breath of life from the sea,
And over the blue horizon
The ships sailed silently;

And out of the sea at morning
The sun rose, golden bright,
And in crimson, and gold, and purple
Sank in the sea at night;

But in dreams alone she saw them,
Her hours of toil between;
For life to her was only
A heartless dead machine.

Her heart was in the graveyard
Where lay her children three;
Nor work nor prayer could save them,
Nor tears of agony.

On the lips of her last and dearest
Pressing a farewell kiss,
She cried aloud in her anguish—
"Can God make amends for *this*?"

Dull, desperate, ceaseless slaving
Bereft her of power to pray,
And Man was careless and cruel,
And God was far away.

But who shall measure His mercies?
His ways are in the deep;
And, after a life of sorrow,
He gave her His gift of sleep.

Rest comes at last to the weary,
And freedom to the slave;
Her tired and worn-out body
Sleeps well in its pauper grave.

[26]

[27]

But His angel bore her soul up
To that Bright Land and Fair,
Where Sorrow enters never,
Nor any cloud of care.

They came to a lovely valley,
Agleam with asphodel,
And the soul of the woman speaking,
Said, "Here I fain would dwell!"

The angel answered gently:
"O Soul, most pure and dear,
O Soul, most tried and truest,
Thy dwelling is not here!

"Behold thy place appointed—
Long kept, long waiting—come!
Where bloom on the hills of Heaven
The roses of Martyrdom!"

[28]

THE CARRYING OF THE BABY.

BY ETHEL TURNER.

Larrie had been carrying it for a long way, and said it was quite time Dot took her turn.

Dot was arguing the point.

She reminded him of all athletic sports he had taken part in, and of all the prizes he had won; she asked him what was the use of being six-foot-two and an impossible number of inches round the chest if he could not carry a baby.

Larrie gave her an unexpected glance and moved the baby to his other arm; he was heated and unhappy, there seemed absolutely no end to the red, red road they were traversing, and Dot, as well as refusing to help to carry the burden, laughed aggravatingly at him when he said it was heavy.

"He is exactly twenty-one pounds," she said, "I weighed him on the kitchen scales yesterday. I should think a man of your size ought to be able to carry twenty-one pounds without grumbling so."

"But he's on springs, Dot," he said; "just look at him, he's never still for a minute; you carry him to the beginning of Lee's orchard, and then I'll take him again."

Dot shook her head.

"I'm very sorry, Larrie," she said, "but I really can't. You know I didn't want to bring the child, and when you insisted, I said to myself, you should carry him every inch of the way, just for your obstinacy."

"But you're his mother," objected Larrie.

He was getting seriously angry, his arms ached unutterably, his clothes were sticking to his back, and twice the baby had poked a little fat thumb in his eye and made it water.

"But you're its father," Dot said sweetly.

"It's easier for a woman to carry a child than a man"—poor Larrie was mopping his hot brow with his disengaged hand—"everyone says so; don't be a little sneak, Dot; my arm's getting awfully cramped; here, for pity's sake take him."

Dot shook her head again.

"Would you have me break my vow, St. Lawrence?" she said.

She looked provokingly cool and unruffled as she walked along by his side; her gown was white, with transparent puffy sleeves, her hat was white and very large, she had little white canvas shoes, long white Suède gloves, and she carried a white parasol.

"I'm hanged," said Larrie, and he stopped short in the middle of the road; "look here, my good woman, are you going to take your baby, or are you not?"

Dot revolved her sunshade round her little sweet face.

[29]

"No, my good man," she said; "I don't propose to carry your baby one step."

"Then I shall drop it," said Larrie. He held it up in a threatening position by the back of its crumpled coat, but Dot had gone sailing on.

"Find a soft place," she called, looking back over her shoulder once and seeing him still standing in the road.

"Little minx," he said under his breath.

Then his mouth squared itself; ordinarily it was a pleasant mouth, much given to laughter and merry words; but when it took that obstinate look, one could see capabilities for all manner of things. [30]

He looked carefully around. By the roadside there was a patch of soft, green grass, and a wattle bush, yellow-crowned, beautiful. He laid the child down in the shade of it, he looked to see there were no ants or other insects near; he put on the bootee that was hanging by a string from the little rosy foot, and he stuck the india-rubber comforter in its mouth. Then he walked quietly away and caught up to Dot.

"Well?" she said, but she looked a little startled at his empty arms; she drooped the sunshade over the shoulder nearest to him, and gave a hasty, surreptitious glance backward. Larrie strode along.

"You look fearfully ugly when you screw up your mouth like that," she said, looking up at his set side face.

"You're an unnatural mother, Dot, that's what you are," he returned hotly. "By Jove, if I was a woman, I'd be ashamed to act as you do. You get worse every day you live. I've kept excusing you to myself, and saying you would get wiser as you grew older, and instead, you seem more childish every day."

She looked childish. She was very, very small in stature, very slightly and delicately built. Her hair was in soft gold-brown curls, as short as a boy's; her eyes were soft, and wide, and tender, and beautiful as a child's. When she was happy they were the colour of that blue, deep violet we call the Czar, and when she grew thoughtful, or sorrowful, they were like the heart of a great, dark purple pansy. She was not particularly beautiful, only very fresh, and sweet, and lovable. Larrie once said she always looked like a baby that has been freshly bathed and dressed, and puffed with sweet violet powder, and sent out into the world to refresh tired eyes. [31]

That was one of his courtship sayings, more than a year ago, when she was barely seventeen. She was eighteen now, and he was telling her she was an unnatural mother.

"Why, the child wouldn't have had its bib on, only I saw to it," he said, in a voice that increased in excitement as he dwelt on the enormity.

"Dear me," said Dot, "that was very careless of Peggie; I must really speak to her about it."

"I shall shake you some day, Dot," Larrie said, "shake you till your teeth rattle. Sometimes I can hardly keep my hands off you."

His brow was gloomy, his boyish face troubled, vexed.

And Dot laughed. Leaned against the fence skirting the road that seemed to run to eternity, and laughed outrageously.

Larrie stopped too. His face was very white and square-looking, his dark eyes held fire. He put his hands on the white, exaggerated shoulders of her muslin dress and turned her round.

"Go back to the bottom of the hill this instant, and pick up the child and carry it up here," he said.

"Go and insert your foolish old head in a receptacle for *pommes-de-terre*," was Dot's flippant retort.

Larrie's hands pressed harder, his chin grew squarer.

"I'm in earnest, Dot, deadly earnest. I order you to fetch the child, and I intend you to obey me," he gave her a little shake to enforce the command. "I am your master, and I intend you to know it from this day." [32]

Dot experienced a vague feeling of surprise at the fire in the eyes that were nearly always clear, and smiling, and loving, then she twisted herself away.

"Pooh," she said, "you're only a stupid over-grown, passionate boy, Larrie. You my master! You're nothing in the world but my husband."

"Are you going?" he said in a tone he had never used before to her. "Say Yes or No, Dot, instantly."

"No," said Dot, stormily.

Then they both gave a sob of terror, their faces blanched, and they began to run madly down the hill.

Oh the long, long way they had come, the endless stretch of red, red road that wound back to the gold-tipped wattles, the velvet grass, and their baby!

Larrie was a fleet, wonderful runner. In the little cottage where they lived, manifold silver cups and mugs bore witness to it, and he was running for life now, but Dot nearly outstripped him.

She flew over the ground, hardly touching it, her arms were outstretched, her lips moving. They fell down together on their knees by their baby, just as three furious, hard-driven bullocks thundered by, filling the air with dust and bellowing.

The baby was blinking happily up at a great fat golden beetle that was making a lazy way up the wattle. It had lost its "comforter" and was sucking its thumb thoughtfully. It had kicked off its white knitted boots, and was curling its pink toes up in the sunshine with great enjoyment.

[33]

"Baby!" Larrie said. The big fellow was trembling in every limb.

"*Baby!*" said Dot. She gathered it up in her little shaking arms, she put her poor white face down upon it, and broke into such pitiful tears and sobs that it wept too. Larrie took them both into his arms, and sat down on a fallen tree. He soothed them, he called them a thousand tender, beautiful names; he took off Dot's hat and stroked her little curls, he kissed his baby again and again; he kissed his wife. When they were all quite calm and the bullocks ten miles away, they started again.

"I'll carry him," said Larrie.

"Ah no, let me," Dot said.

"Darling, you're too tired—see, you can hold his hand across my shoulder."

"No, no, give him to me—my arms ache without him."

"But the hill—my big baby!"

"Oh, I *must* have him—Larrie, *let* me—see, he is so light—why, he is nothing to carry."

THE OLD GUM.

[34]

Stand here; he has once been a grand old gum,
But it makes one reflect that the time will come
 When we all shall have had our fling;
Yet, our life soon passes, we scarce know how—
You would hardly think, to see him now,
 That once he had been a king.

In his youth, in the silence of the wood,
A forest of saplings around him stood;
 But he overtopped them all.
And, over their heads, through the forest shade,
He could see how the sunlight danced and played,
 So straight he grew, and so tall.

Each day of his life brought something new,
The breeze stirred the bracken, the dry leaves flew,
 The wild bird passed on the wing:
He heard the low, sad song of the wood,
His childhood was passed in its solitude;
 And he grew—and became a king.

Oft has he stood on the stormy night,
When the long-forked flash has revealed to sight
 The plain where the floods were out;
When the wind came down like a hurricane,
And the branches, broken and snapped in twain,
 Were scattered and strewn about.

Oft, touched by the reddening bush-fire glow,
When clouds of smoke, rolling up from below,
 Obscured the sun like a pall;
When the forest seemed like a flaming sea,
And down came many a mighty tree,
 Has he stood firm through it all.

[35]

Those days of his youth have long gone by;
The magpie's note and the parrot's cry,
 As borne on the evening wind,
Recall to his thoughts his childhood flown,
Old memories, fresh, yet faintly blown,
 Of the youth he has left behind.

On the brow of the hill he stands to-day,
But the pride of his life has passed away;
 His leaves are withered and sere.
And oft at night comes a sound of woe,
As he sways his tired limbs to and fro
 And laments to the bleak night air.

He can still look down on the plain below,
And his head is decked by the sunset glow
 With a glorious crown of light;
And from every field, as the night draws on,
To his spreading arms the magpies come
 To shelter there for the night.

Some night, when the waters rage and swell,
He will hear the thunder roll his knell,
 And will bow his head to the ground;
And the birds from their nests will wheel in the air,
And the rabbits burrow deeper in fear,
 At the thundering, rending sound.

And the magpies must find another home;
No more, at the sunset, will they come
 To warble their evening song.
Ah, well! our sorrow is quickly flown,
For the good old friends we have loved and known:
And the old tree falls by the tall new grown,
 And the weak must yield to the strong.

FLORENCE BULLIVANT.

[36]

MURPHY SHALL NOT SING TO-NIGHT.

Specimens of Ireland's greatness gathered round O'Connor's bar,
Answering the invitation Patsy posted near and far.
All the chandeliers were lit, but did not shed sufficient light,
So tallow candles, stuck in bottles, graced the bar that famous night.

All the quality were there; before such talent ne'er was seen;
Healy brought the house down fairly with "The Wearin' o' the Green."
Liquor went around in lashins, everything was going off right,
When O'Connor sent the word round, "Murphy shall not sing to-night."

Faces paled at Patsy's order; none were listening to the song;
Through their hearts went vague sensations—awful dreads of coming wrong;
For they knew that Danny Murphy thought himself a singer quite,
And knew that if he made his mind up, that, bedad, he'd sing that night.

[37]

Everyone was close attention, knew that there would be a row,
When the chairman said that "Mr. Murphy will oblige us now."
"Not so fasht," said Pat O'Connor, rising to his fullest height,
"This here pub belongs to me, and Murphy shall not sing to-night."

Up jumps Murphy, scowling darkly as he looks at Pat O'Connor:
"Is this the way," he says to Pat, "that you uphold Ould Oireland's honour?"
"Oi know Oi'm not much at singin'; any toime Oi'd sooner foight;
But, to show me independence, s'help me bob, Oi'll sing to-night."

"Gintlemin," says Pat O'Connor, wildly gazing round about,
"It will be my painful duty to chuck Danny Murphy out;
It has been a rule with me that no man sings when he is tight;

When Oi say a thing Oi mane it—Murphy shall not sing to-night."

Then says Doolan to O'Connor, "Listen what Oi've got to tell;
If yez want to chuck out Murphy, yez must chuck out me as well."
This lot staggered Pat O'Connor, Doolan was a man of might;
But he bluffed him, loudly crying, "Murphy shall not sing to-night."

[38]

Then he rushed on Danny Murphy and he smote him hip and thigh;
Patsy looked a winner straight, when Doolan jabbed him in the eye.
All the crowd at once took sides, and soon began a rousing fight;
The battle cry of Patsy's push was "Murphy shall not sing to-night."

The noise soon brought a copper in: 'twas Patsy's cousin, Jim Kinsella.
"Hould yer row," he says to Doolan, when Mick lands him on the smeller.
They got the best of Doolan's push, though; lumbered them for getting tight.
Patsy then had spoken truly, "Murphy did not sing that night."

EPILOGUE.

Specimens of Ireland's greatness gathered round the City court.
There before the awful sentence was a touching lesson taught—
Then away they led the prisoners to a cell, so cool and white;
And for fourteen days to come Murphy shall not sing at night.

MONTAGUE GROVER.

[39]

CHRISTMAS BELLS.

BY JOHN B. O'HARA, M.A.

(By kind permission of the Author.)

Bells, joyous bells of the Christmas-time,
Dear is the song of your welcome chime;
Dear is the burden that softly wells
From your joyous throats, O tolling bells!
Dear is the message sweet you bind
Dove-like to wings of the wafting wind.

You tell how the Yule-king cometh forth
From his home in the heart of the icy North;
On his Eastern steeds how rusheth on
The wind-god of storms, Euroclydon;
How his trumpet strikes to the pallid stars
That shrink from the mad moon's silver bars,
Where the cold wind tortures the sobbing sea,
And the chill sleet pierces the pinioned lea,
As the snow king hurls from his frozen zone
The fragments fast of a tumbled throne.

But what is the song, O silver bells,
You sing of the ferny Austral dells,
Of the bracken height, and the sylvan stream,
And the breezy woodland's summer dream,
Lulled by the lute of the slow sweet rills
In the trembling heart of the great grave hills?
Ah, what is the song that you sing to me
Of the soft blue isles of our shimmering sea,
Where the slow tides sleep, and a purple haze
Fringes the skirts of the windless bays,

[40]

That, ringed with a circlet of beauty fair,
Start in the face of the dreamer there;
O, what is the burden of your sweet chimes,
Bells of the golden Christmas times?

You sing of the summer gliding down
From the stars that gem bright heaven's crown;

Of the flowers that fade in the autumn sere,
And the sunlit death of the old, old year.
Of the sweet South wind that sobs above
The grass-green grave of our buried love:
No bitter dirge from the stormy flow
Of a moaning sea,—ah! no, no, no!
But a sweet farewell, and a low soft hymn
Under the beautiful moons that swim
Over the silver seas that toss
Their foam to thy shrine, O Southern Cross!

O, bright is the burden of your sweet chimes,
Bells of the joyous Christmas times!
You bring to the old hearts throbbing slow
The beautiful dreams of the long ago;
Remembrance sweet of the olden Yule,
When hearts beat high in life's young school.
Ah, haply now, as they list to your chimes,
Will the voices rise of the olden times,
Till the wings of peace brood over the hours
Slipping like streams through sleepy bowers,
While you whisper the story loved of One
Who suffered for us—the sad sweet Son—
Who taught that afflictions, sent in love,
Chasten the soul for the realms above.

[41]

WOOL IS UP.

Earth o'erflows with nectared gladness,
All creation teems with joy;
Banished be each thought of sadness,
Life for me has no alloy.
Fill a bumper!—drain a measure,
Pewter! goblet! tankard! cup!
Testifying thus our pleasure
At the news that "Wool is up."

'Thwart the empires, 'neath the oceans,
Subtly speeds the living fire;
Who shall tell what wild emotions
Spring from out that thridden wire?
"Jute is lower—copper weaker,"
This will break poor neighbour Jupp;
But for me, I shout "Eureka!"
Wealth is mine—for wool is up!

What care I for jute or cotton,
Sugar, copper, hemp, or flax!
Reeds like these are often rotten,
Turn to rods for owners' backs.
Fortune! ha! I have thee holden
In what Scotia calls a "grup,"
All my fleeces now are golden,
Full troy weight—for wool is up!

I will dance the gay fandango
(Though to me its steps be strange),
Doubts and fears, you all can hang go!
I will cut a dash on 'Change.
Atra Cura, you will please me
By dismounting from my crup—
Per—you no more shall tease me,
Pray get down—for wool is up!

Jane shall have that stylish bonnet
Which my scanty purse denied;
Long she set her heart upon it,

[42]

She shall wear it now with pride.
I will buy old Dumper's station,
Reign as king at Gerringhup,
For my crest a bust of Jason,
With this motto, "Wool is up."

I will keep a stud extensive;
Bolter, here! I'll have those greys,
Those Sir George deemed too expensive,
You can send them—with the bays.
Coursing! I should rather think so;
Yes, I'll take that "Lightning" pup;
Jones, my boy, you needn't wink so,
I can stand it—wool is up!

Wifey, love, you're looking charming,
Years with you are but as days;
We must have a grand house-warming
When these painters go their ways.
Let the ball-room be got ready,
Bid our friends to dance and sup:
Bother! *how* can I "go steady"?
I'm worth thousands—wool is up!

GARNET WALCH.

WOOL IS DOWN.

Blacker than 'eer the inky waters roll
Upon the gloomy shores of sluggish Styx,
A surge of sorrow laps my leaden soul,
For that which was at "two" is now "one—six."
"Come, disappointment, come!" as has been said
By someone else who quailed 'neath Fortune's frown,
Stab to the core the heart that once has bled,
(For "heart" read "pocket")—wool, ah! wool is down.

[43]

"And in the lowest deep a lower deep,"
Thou sightless seer, indeed it may be so,
The road to—well, we know—is somewhat steep,
And who shall stay us when that road we go?
Thrice cursèd wire, whose lightning strikes to blast,
Whose babbling tongue proclaims throughout the town
The news, which, being ill, has travelled fast,
The dire intelligence that—wool is down.

A rise in copper and a rise in jute,
A fall alone in wool—but what a fall!
Jupp must have made a pile this trip, the brute,
He don't deserve such splendid luck at all.
The smiles for him—for me the scalding tears;
He's worth ten thousand if he's worth a crown,
While I—untimely shorn by Fate's harsh shears—
Feel that my game is up when wool is down.
Bolter, take back these prancing greys of thine,
Remove as well the vanquished warrior's bays,
My fortunes are not stable, they decline;
Aye, even horses taunt me with their neighs.
And thou, sweet puppy of the "Lightning" breed,
Through whose fleet limbs I pictured me renown,
Hie howling to thy former home with speed,
Thy course with me is up—for wool is down.

[44]

Why, Jane, what's this—this pile of letters here?
Such waste of stamps is really very sad.
Your birthday ball! Oh, come! not *twice* a year,
Good gracious me! the woman must be mad.

You'd better save expense at once, that's clear,
And send a bellman to invite the town!
There—there—don't cry; forgive my temper, dear,
But put these letters up—for wool is down.

My station "Gerringhup"—yes, that must go,
Its sheep, its oxen, and its kangaroos,
First 'twas the home of blacks, then whites, we know,
Now is it but a dwelling for "the blues."
With it I leave the brotherhood of Cash
Who form Australian Fashion's tinsel crown;
I tread along the devious path of Smash,
I go where wool has gone—down, ever down.

Thus ends my dream of greatness; not for me
The silken couch, the banquet, and the rout,
They're flown—the base *residuum* will be
A mutton chop and half a pint of stout—
Yet will I hold a corner in my soul
Where Hope may nestle safe from Fortune's frown.
Thou hoodwinked jade! my heart remaineth whole—
I'll keep my spirits up—though wool be down.

GARNET WALCH.

[45]

THE HIGHLAND BRIGADE BURIES ITS DEAD.

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL W. T. REAY.

(By kind permission of the Author.)

How am I to describe the sadly impressive scene at Modder River on the evening of the 13th of December? The sun has just set, and the period of twilight has commenced. The great heat of the day has passed, and although there is not a breath of wind, the air is cool and refreshing. The whole British camp at Modder River is astir. Not, however, with the always gay bustle of warlike preparations; not with the laughter and jest which—such strange creatures are we—almost invariably come from the lips of men who dress for the parade which precedes a plunge into battle. There is this evening a solemn hush over the camp, and the men move from their lines in irregular and noiseless parties, for the time their pipes put out of sight, and their minds charged with serious thought. To what is given this homage of silence as the soldiers gather, and mechanically, without word of command or even request of any kind, leave a roadway from the head-quarters' flag to a point a quarter of a mile away, where a dark mound of upraised earth breaks the monotonous flatness of the whitey-green veldt? For these are mere spectators, deeply interested, it is true, yet still only spectators. What, then, is afoot? Civilians, hats off, and attention everyone. The Highland Brigade is about to bury its dead.

[46]

Stand here at the head of the lines of spectator soldiers—here where that significant mound is; here at the spot selected as a last resting-place—and observe. The whole Brigade, some of the regiments sadly attenuated, is on parade, and has formed funeral procession, under Colonel Pole-Carew. First come the pipers, and it is seen that they have for the nonce discarded their service kit, and are in the full dress of their several clans. "Savage and shrill" is the Byronic description of the pibroch, which, in the "noon of night," startled the joyous revellers before Waterloo. Now it is a low, deep wail, yet voluminous and weirdly euphonious, that comes from the music-makers of the Highlands, and every heart stands still to listen. Oh, so sad it is! "The Flowers of the Forest"—("He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down")—they are—playing, shall I say? No; rather does the music flow out from the very souls of the pipers in a succession of strangely harmonious moans, and soul calls to soul. Yet beneath it all, beneath the dominant note of heart-bursting sorrow, lurks that other element—"the savage and shrill." Yes, indeed; soul calls to soul through these pipes—calls for sobs and tears for the brave who have fallen—calls for vengeance on the yet unbeaten foe. The Highland Brigade is burying its dead.

[47]

Following the pipers marches a small armed party. It would have been the firing party, but volleys are not fired over soldiers' graves in time of war. Then the chaplain, in his robes, preceding the corpse of General Wauchope (who had fallen at the head of his men), borne on a stretcher. One of the bearers is of the dead man's kin—a promising young Highland officer. Then come the several regiments of the Brigade, the Black Watch leading. The men march with arms reversed, stately, erect, stern, grim. They lift their feet high for the regulation step of the slow, funeral march. But observe that even in their grim sternness these men are quivering with an

emotion which they cannot control—an emotion which passes out in magnetic waves from their ranks to those of their comrade spectators of England and Ireland, and brings tears to the eyes and choking sobs to the throats of the strong and the brave. "Talk not of grief till thou hast seen the tears of warlike men!" The Highland Brigade is burying its dead.

In a separate grave, at the head of a long, shallow trench, the body of General Wauchope is laid, in sight of and facing the foe. The chaplain advances, and the solemn service for the dead is recited in a clear and markedly Scotch voice, while all bow their heads and either listen or ponder. A grief-stricken kinsman's quivering hand drops earth upon the body at the words, "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust," and the grave of the General is quickly filled in. There, beside the trench, already lie the corpses of fifty officers and men. They had been carried to the burial place earlier in the day. There, at the end nearer to the General's grave, the officers are laid. Beside them their comrades of minor rank in life, all brought to a worldly level by the hand of death, are placed in the trench. It is an excavation only about three feet deep, but it is twelve feet wide, and the dead men are put feet to feet in two parallel rows, twenty-five on each side. They are fully attired, just as they were brought in from the battlefield, and each is wrapped in his blanket. The sporan is turned over on to the dead face, and the kilt thrown back, the rigid limbs showing bare and scarred in the unfilled trench. The Highland Brigade is burying its dead. [48]

Once more the chaplain steps forward, and a new funeral service is commenced. Again great, powerful men weep. Some grow faint, some pray, some curse. "Oh, God! oh, God!" is the cry which comes from bursting hearts as comrades are recognised, and soil is sprinkled over them by hard, rough hands, which tremble now as they never trembled in the face of a foe. Then the burial parties get to work, gently as a sweet woman tucks the bedclothes round her sleeping child. The soft soil falls kindly upon the shreds of humanity beneath. Men cease to weep, and catch something of the "rapture of repose" of which a poet has sung. Mother Earth has claimed her own, and the brave are sleeping their last sleep in her kindly embrace. Again the dirge of the pipes, and the sweet strains of "Lochaber no more" fill the evening air. The Highland Brigade is burying its dead. [49]

Meanwhile, the cable has carried its budget of sad messages to the old land. There, in a wee cottage by the bonnie burn side, the bereaved mother bows her aged head and says, "Thy will be done." There also the heart-broken once wife, newly-made widow, pours out the anguish of her soul as she clasps her fatherless bairn to her warm bosom. Her man comes no more. For the Highland Brigade has buried its dead.

AUSTRALIA'S CALL TO ARMS.

BY JOHN B. O'HARA, M.A.

(By kind permission of the Author.)

Sons of ocean-girdled islands,
Where the southern billows sigh,
Wake! arise! the dread Bellona
Speeds her chariot through the sky;
Yea, the troubled star of danger
On Britannia shineth down—
Wake! arise! maintain her glory
And renown, and renown!

In the hour of Britain's peril
Shall we falter, while the fires
Still are glowing on our altars
From the ashes of our sires?
Ho! brave hearts, for Britain's honour,
For the lustre of her crown,
Wake! arise! maintain her glory
And renown, and renown!

Ye are children of a nation,
Ye are scions of the sires
That of old were in the vanguard
Of the world's wide empires!
With the spirit of your fathers,
With the fulness of their fame,
Wake! arise! maintain the honour
Of her name, of her name!

Long to Britain may "the crimson
Thread of kinship" bind our wings!—
Crimson thread that slowly slackens
As the newer race upsprings:
Sons of heroes, men of courage
That reverse could never tame,
Wake! arise! maintain the glory
Of her name, of her name!

See! the star of ancient Britain,
That hath never known decline,
By your valour lit up newly,
With a glow of fiercer shine,
O'er the burning sands of Afric,
With your loyalty aflame;
Once again maintain the glory
Of her name, of her name!

GOOD NEWS.

[51]

Moostarchers and hair black as jet,
Tall and thin, with a sad kind of smile;
Soft-handed, soft-voiced, but well set—
A New Chum in manners and style.
That's him, sir—that's him; he's been here
A matter of nigh fourteen weeks,
Which I know by the rent in arrear,
Though a gent—you can tell when he speaks—
Came one night about eight, hired the room
Without board—it's four shillings, and cheap,
Though I say it, and me and the broom,
And good yaller soap for its keep;
And a widow with nine, which the twins—
Bless their 'arts—are that sturdy and bold
At their tricks soon as daylight begins,
Even now when it's perishing cold
O' mornings; and Betsy, my girl,
As answered the door, sir, for you,
She's so slow for her age, though a pearl
When there's any long job to get through;
And Bobby—but there, I forgot;
You'll pardon a mother, I know.
Well, for six weeks he paid up his shot,
And then I could see funds was low.
He dressed just as neat, but his coat
Got buttoned up nigher his chin,
And the scarf twisted round his poor throat
Missed a friend in the shape of a pin.
So the rent it run on, for, says I,
He's out of his luck, I can see,
And wants all his money to buy
His wittles (you brat, let that be).
Where he works I can't tell, but he's out
Every morning at nine from the house,
And he comes back at six or about,
And ups to his room like a mouse.
On Sundays the same, so I s'pose
He visits his friends on that day,
But where it may be that he goes
It's not in my knowledge to say.
He ain't well. I can tell by his walk;
He's as thin as a lath, and *that* pale;
But I never could get him to talk,
So I can't rightly guess what may ail.
He never sends out for no beer,
He don't smoke, and as far as I see,
Beyond the few clothes he brought here,

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And a desk, he's as hard up as me.
What! you bring him good news; I *am* glad!
A fortune! ten thousand! Oh, la!
That's the physic for *you*, my poor lad.
This way, sir; it's not very far.
Mind that stair, please—the banister's broke.
Here's his door; hush, I'll knock. Ah! asleep.
Can't help it—you'd better be woke;
The news is too pretty to keep.
Ain't he sound, eh? Poor fellow, he's rocked
To rest in the Kingdom of Nod.
We'd better go in. It's not locked.
Follow me, sir. All dark. Oh! my God!

GARNET WALCH.

FREE TRADE v. PROTECTION.

[53]

Yes, they were boys together in the grand old Fatherland,
They fubbed at law together, played truant hand-in-hand,
They sucked each other's toffy, they cribbed each other's tops,
They pledged eternal friendship in an ounce of acid drops.

With no tie of blood between them, a greater bond was theirs,
Cemented by the constant swop of apples, nuts, and pears;
And when to manhood they had grown, with manhood's hispid chins,
They held as close together still as Siam's famous twins.

And Dobbins swore by Jobbins, and Jobbins vowed that he
Would never break with Dobbins, whate'er their fate might be,
So Jobbins came with Dobbins across the restless main,
And they traded as D., J. & Co., and gained much worldly gain.

Each gave the other dinners, each drank the other's health,
Each looked upon the other as a "mine of mental wealth,"
And Dobbins swore by Jobbins, and Jobbins vowed that he
Would never break with Dobbins, whate'er their fate might be.

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But ah! for human nature—alas for human kind—
There came a cloud between them, with a lot more clouds behind.
The Tariff was the demon fell which sad disruption made,
For our Dobbins loved Protection, while our Jobbins loved Free Trade.

As partners now in business, they could no more agree,
So they forthwith dissolved and halved the £ s. d.
And the fiercest opposition in every sort of way,
Was carried on by Dobbins *versus* Jobbins day by day.

Then Dobbins entered Parliament, and so did Jobbins too,
And each upheld his principles amidst that motley crew—
And the side that Dobbins voted with were victors of the hour.
And Dobbins was made Treasurer while Jobbins' grapes were sour.

Then Dobbins went to work with glee, protecting everything,
And gave his pet proclivities the very fullest swing,
Set all the manger-loving dogs a-barking in his praise,
And raised the Tariff up kite-high, a real four-aces' raise.

He taxed the pots, he taxed the pans, he taxed the children's mugs,
He taxed the brooms, he taxed the mops, He taxed the jars and jugs;
In soft and hardware every line was smothered by his dues,
Except the national *tin tax*—the Ministerial *screws*.

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He taxed each article of food, each article of wear,
He even taxed fresh water, and he tried to tax fresh air;
He improvised new duties, new taxes by the score,
And when he stopped awhile to think he taxed his brain for more.

And not one blessed class of goods was entered at the port,
But what he advalorem till he made importers snort;
Till even old Protectionists, grown hoary in the cause,
Began to change to fidgets what had started as applause.

Poor Jobbins suffered hugely by his whilom partner's tricks,
But found it rather dangerous to kick against the pricks;
He had to grin and bear it, as many a worthy man
Has grinned and borne it in his turn since this mad world began.

Now Dobbins, flushed with Fortune's smiles, his high ambition fed,
Bethought him that the time had come when he might safely wed.
So by the wire electrical, as he had nicely planned,
He sent this loving message to the grand old Fatherland.

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"Matilda, I am ready, with five thousand pounds a-year;
Come out unto your Dobbins, love, and be his bride so dear;"
To which there sped the answer back that very self-same day,
"As soon as I have packed my things, I'm coming straight away."

Matilda was an heiress of the old blue Bobbins' blood,
Her ancestors owned land and beeves long years before the flood;
One relative, 'tis said, indeed—a chemist, I'll engage—
Sold bottled Protoplasm in the prehistoric age.

Our Dobbins and our Jobbins, too, had loved the maid of old,
But Bobbins *père* had snubbed them both for lack of needful gold;
Though when the telegram arrived, "Five thousand pounds a-year!"
Pa winked a playful little wink—and said, "Be off, my dear."

The packing of her luggage was a most stupendous job,
She'd the miscellaneous wardrobe of the highest sort of nob,
New trousseau, plate, and furniture, and presents from her friends,
And Cockle's pills and raspberry jam, and various odds and ends.

There were eighty zinc-lined cases and portmanteaus full a score,
Of band and bonnet boxes at least some fifty more,
Of carpet-bags three dozen most plethorically crammed,
With nigh-forgotten articles in one wild chaos jammed.

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Our Venus had a transit out particularly quick,
A glorious *transit mundi*, but without the usual *sic* (k);
Till one fine day she gazed upon the far-famed, Austral strand.
One eye upon her luggage, and one eye upon the land.

The vessel berthed beside the pier; Matilda's future lord,
The "Honourable Dobbins," stepped jauntily on board;
He clasped the maiden to his breast, nor heeded that close by
The melancholy Jobbins stood with sad reproachful eye.

"Come, come, my love!" says Dobbins, "let's get your things ashore;
I have a cab in waiting here to take them to my store."
"A cab!" cried she—"twice twenty cabs would not for me suffice;
Behold my things!" He started, as though stung by cockatrice.

"That lofty mountain yonder, which high its head erects,
That Alp of packing cases—are those, dear, your effects?"
"Of course they are, beloved, for keeping house with *you*,
Enough to furnish us complete, and everything *quite new*!"

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He staggered as if hearing news of pestilence or dearth,
Then gasped in low and anxious tones, "And what's the whole lot worth?"
She thought that his emotion spoke of joy that knew no bounds,
And whispered gaily in his ear, "Some forty thousand pounds!"

He bit his lips, he ground his teeth, he tore out hunks of hair,
He looked the full embodiment of desperate despair;
Then with a shriek of agony, the hideous truth found vent,
"There's *ad valorem* on the lot of ninety-five per cent.!"

"My new amended Tariff comes in force this very day,
I little dreamt that you and I should be the first to pay;
Besides, I haven't got the cash! oh dear, how bad I feel!"
The maiden smiled a scornful smile and turned upon her heel.

The miserable Dobbins gave a second piercing shriek,
Then leaped into the briny flood, and stayed there for a week;

Though Jobbins tried to find him hard, but failed, with these remarks,
"He always *was* too deep for me—besides, there might be sharks."

The very night of Dobbins' loss, the Ministry went out,
The Jobbins' party took their place 'midst many a ringing shout;
And of our Jobbins in a trice, their Treasurer they made.
Because, as everybody knew, he gloried in Free Trade.

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He took the dues off everything, from thimbles up to tanks,
And passed Miss Bobbins' goods himself, and won that virgin's thanks;
And what is more, he won her hand, her chattels and her heart,
And she is Mrs. Jobbins now, till death them twain doth part.

As Dobbins to import his love had spared nor cash nor pains—
They raised a handsome monument above his cold remains;
The carved inscription to this day is there his tale to tell,
"He *did* his duties—and himself—not wisely but too well."

GARNET WALCH.

THE LION'S CUBS.

PATRIOTIC SONG AND CHORUS.

Australia's sons are we,
And the freest of the free,
 But Love enchains us still with fetters strong
To the dear old land at Home,
Far across the rolling foam—
 The little isle to which our hearts belong.
It shall always be our boast,
Our bumper-honoured toast,
 That, should Britain bid us help her, we'll obey;
Then, if e'er the call is made,
And Old England needs our aid,
 These are the words Australia's sons will say—

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 There is not a strong right hand,
 Throughout this Southern land,
 But will draw a sword in dear old England's cause;
 Our numbers may be few,
 But we've loyal hearts and true,
 And the Lion's cubs have got the Lion's claws.

From our ocean-guarded strand,
O'er the sunny plains inland,
 To the cloud-kissed mountain summits faint and far,
Australians bred and born,
Behold yon banner torn,
 And greet it with a lusty-lunged hurrah!
'Tis the brave old Union Jack,
That nothing can beat back—
 Ever waving where the brunt of battle lies;
For each frayed and faded thread
Britain counts a hero dead,
 Who died to gain the liberties we prize.

 Then there's not, &c.

The ever-honoured name
On the bright bead-roll of Fame,
 That our fathers held through all the changing Past,
In it we claim our share,
And by Saint George we swear,
 We can keep that name untarnished to the last;
Then, when the hour arrives,
We will give our very lives
 For the dearest land of all the lands on earth,

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And, foremost in the fray,
Show Britain's foes the way
Australia's sons can prove their British birth.

Yes, there's not, &c.

Sons of the South, unite
In federated might,
The Champions of your Country and your Queen;
From New Zealand's glacier throne
To the burning Torrid Zone,
We'll prove that welded steel is tough and keen.
The wide world shall be shown
That we mean to hold our own
In the home of our adoption, free and fair;
And if the Lion needs,
He shall see, by doughty deeds,
How his Austral cubs can guard their father's lair.

For there's not, &c.

GARNET WALCH.

THE LITTLE DUCHESS.

[62]

BY ETHEL TURNER.

"The tale is as old as the Eden tree,
And new as the new-cut tooth."

He was the clerk of the cash tramway, and when the rolling balls gave him a moment's leisure, used to look down from his high perch at the big shop beneath his feet, and, in his slow, quiet style, study the ways of the numberless assistants whose life-books thus opened to him so many of their pages.

Lately there had come to the place a slight, grey-eyed girl, who wore her black dress with such grace, and held her small head with such dignity, that he whimsically had named her to himself "The Little Duchess." He liked to look down and catch a glint of her hair's sunshine when his brain was dulled with calculating change, and his fingers ached with shutting cash-balls and dispatching them on their journeys. And he used to wonder greatly how any customer could hesitate to buy silks and satins when their lustre and sheen were displayed by her slim little fingers and the quality descanted on with so persuasive a smile. There were handsomer girls in the shop, girls with finer figures and better features; but, to the boy in his mid-air cage, there was none with the nameless dainty charms that made the little Duchess so lovable.

For, of course, he did love her. In less than two months he had begun to watch for her cash-ball with a trembling eagerness, to smooth out and stroke gently the bill her fingers had written, and to wrap it and its change up again with a careful tenderness that no one else's change and bill received. He had spoken to her half-a-dozen times in all; twice at the door on leaving—weather remarks, to which she had responded graciously; once or twice about bills that she had come to rectify at the desk, and once he had had the great good fortune to find and return a handkerchief she had dropped. Such a pretty, ridiculous atom of muslin it was, with a fanciful "Nellie" taking up one quarter, and some delicate scent lending such subtle fascination that it was a real wrench for the lad to take the handkerchief from his breast-pocket and proffer it to her.

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So great a wrench, indeed, that he proffered his love, too, humbly, but fervently, and received a very wondering look from the grey eyes, a badly-concealed smile, a "Thank you" for the handkerchief, and a "No, thank you" for the love.

He had kissed her, though, and that was some consolation afterwards to his sore spirit, kissed her right upon the sweet, scarlet lips which had said "No" so decidedly, and then, bold no longer, had fled the shelter of the friendly packing-cases, and beaten a retreat to his desk aloft.

That was nearly a fortnight ago; not once since had she spoken to him, and to-day he was feeling desperate.

It had been a very busy morning, and he had found hardly a second to raise his eyes from his work. The one time he had looked down she had been busy with a customer—a girl prettily dressed and golden-headed like herself. That had been at about ten o'clock. Before twelve her

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cash-box, with the notch upon it that his penknife had made, rolled down its line, and he opened it as he had opened it twenty times that morning; but this time it bore his fate. With the bill was a little twisted note, on which "John Walters, private," was written, and the boy's very heart leaped at the sight. Down below, customers wearily waited for change, and anxiously watched for their own particular ball while the *deus ex machina* read again and again, with eager eyes: "Please will you meet me at lunch-time in the Strand? Do, if you can. I am in trouble. You said you loved me." Then, as he began mechanically to manipulate the waiting balls, he looked down to the accustomed place of the little Duchess. She was pale, he saw, and her lips trembled oddly now and again. There was a frightened look in her grey eyes, and once or twice he thought he noticed a sparkle as of tears.

At lunch-time he actually tore through the shop and away down to the appointed place. She was there—still pale, still nervous and fluttering.

"Let us go to the Gardens. It's quieter," he said, putting a great restraint upon himself; then, when at last they were within the gates, "God bless you for this, Nellie."

"What?" said the girl, with uncertainty, but not looking at the plain, rugged face that was all aglow with love for her.

"For telling me about the worry—asking me to come. Oh, God bless you, Nellie! Now tell me."

She sat down on a seat and began to cry, quietly and miserably, till the boy was almost beside himself. At last, between the sobs, he learned her trouble, which was grave indeed. She and her sister had very much wanted to go to a certain ball, and, more than that, to have new dresses for it, of soft white Liberty silk, such as she cut off daily for fortunate customers. But her purse was empty, so, in their emergency, the sisters had hit upon a plan, questionable, indeed, but not dishonestly meant. The sister came to the silk counter and purchased thirty yards of silk, paying 15s. for it instead of £3 15s.

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"That was on account; I was only taking a little credit, like other customers," said the little Duchess, with a haughty movement of the head. "On Saturday I was going to make out a bill for an imaginary customer, and send the £3 up to the desk to you. Don't imagine I would really wrong the firm by a halfpenny."

"Oh, no," cried the boy eagerly; "it's all right."

"That's not all." The girl began to cry again, hopelessly, miserably. "I had no money to get the dresses made, and the next customer paid £2 10s., and—and—I only sent 10s. up to you—I wanted to make it just £5 I had borrowed. I thought I might borrow enough, as I was borrowing—don't forget, I would rather have died than have stolen the £5, Mr. Walters."

"Of course, of course, I understand," said the cash clerk, seeing it was a worse fix than he had imagined, but longing to take her in his arms and kiss away the tears.

"And then that horrid Mr. Greaves, who signed first in a hurry, asked for my book and took it for something, and then sent it up to the desk, and the figures are all confused, and the check-leaf isn't the same as I sent to you. I hadn't time to make it right, and when the books are compared to-night it will be noticed, and I shall get into trouble—and, oh, I am so miserable!" The little Duchess was sobbing pitifully.

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He kissed her, this time in earnest; on the lips, the cheeks, the hair, the tear-wet eyes. He only recollected himself when a gardener's form, and especially his smile, obtruded themselves upon their notice, and they sat apart looking foolish until the two o'clock bells made them hurry back to the shop.

"I'll put everything right—don't you worry," he said; and she smiled relievedly and went to her counter.

That afternoon he did what all the other years of his life he had deemed it impossible for him to do. He made a neat alteration in his books so that the £5 in question would not be missed. Tomorrow, he resolved, he would take £5 of his own and pay it into the account of the firm. The little Duchess should be his debtor, and run no more risks. But, alas, for the morrow!

Before he had fairly taken his seat in the morning—before Nellie had finished fastening at her neck the violets he had brought her—some words were said at his elbow, and he slowly became aware that he—surely it was a dream!—was being arrested for defalcations in his accounts. He learned that for some time past the firm had been aware of considerable discrepancies in the books, and had placed a detective-accountant in the office. Last night, for the first time, the man had discovered, as he thought, a clue, and had convinced the firm that in Walters he had found the offender.

The lad was ashen pale, horror stricken, as he realised how these things must go against him. He could not drag in the name of the little Duchess—even if he did, it would not avail him much; he certainly had altered his books, and to mention the girl's share would only be to have two of them brought to trial, and perhaps to gaol. The little Duchess in gaol! That hair catching the prison-yard sunshine! That slender form clad in the garments of shame! The boy drew a deep breath, gave one very wistful glance at the silk counter, and then walked straight to the manager's room, followed by the policeman.

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"I took the £5 yesterday, and brought it back to-day. On my oath before God, sir, I have never misapplied one farthing of my moneys."

His voice trembled in its eagerness, the deep-set eyes gleamed, and the white lips worked.

"Your purpose, Walters?"

The manager looked hard, disbelieving.

"Direst need. Oh, believe me, sir, I have served you three years honestly as man can serve—yesterday I borrowed this money and brought it back this morning—don't ruin my whole life for that one act."

"Your pressing need yesterday?"

John drew a deep breath again.

"I—can't well tell you."

Then the heads of the firm came in, indignant at their misused trust, and they scorned his story. The defalcations amounted to almost £50 in all, and he had confessed to £5, which had been found upon him. Of course, he and no other was the offender, and they must teach their employés a lesson. So John walked down that long shop by the side of the official, his head very erect, his face pale, and his knees shaking; all his life he would remember the glances of pity, curiosity, and disdain that met him on every side. As he passed the silk counter, the little Duchess was measuring a great piece of rose-red, sheeny satin, that gleamed warm and beautiful beneath her hands. She was very white, and in her eyes was a look of abject horror and entreaty; his eyes reassured her, and he passed on and out of the door. All his life he would remember that rose-red satin and its brilliant, glancing lights. [68]

After the trial everyone thought him fortunate to get only two years, and the little Duchess, who had grown thin and old-looking in the interval, breathed freely as she read the account in the papers, and saw that her name was not even mentioned in connection with the matter. He wrote to her a loving, boyish letter, and told her she must be true to him till he came out, and that then they would be married and go away where this could never be heard of.

It was no small thing he had done for her, he knew; and, as he was not more than human, he expected his reward. And the little Duchess had cried quietly over the letter, and for several days cut off silk and satin with a pensive, unhappy look that quite touched her customers—those few among them who realised that it was human flesh and blood at the other side of the yard measure.

Twenty months later the little Duchess was at the same counter measuring silk and satin for the stock-taking, when a note was brought to her in a writing she remembered too well.

"I got out to-day, Nellie. Come down to the Gardens in the lunch-time."

She hesitated when the time came, but he might come to the shop, and that would never do. So she put her hat on thoughtfully and set out for the Gardens. [69]

He was awaiting her on the seat where, nearly two years ago, the gardener had smiled at them. He stood up as she came slowly towards him, and for a minute they gazed at each other without speaking.

She was in black, of course, but fresh and dainty-looking, with a bunch of white chiffon at her throat, little tan shoes on her feet, and her hair showing golden against the black of her lace hat.

For him, his face had altered and hardened; the once thick, curling hair was horribly short, his hands were rough and unsightly, his clothes hung awkwardly upon him, and his linen was doubtful.

"The little Duchess!" he said, dully; then he put out his hand, took her small gloved one, and looked at it curiously.

"I—I am glad you're out," she said, carefully looking away from him.

"Yes—we must be married now, Nellie; that's all I've had to think about all this awful time."

His face flushed a little and his eyes lightened.

"It's good not to see the walls," he added, looking round at the spring's brave show, then away to the blue sparkle in the bay and the glancing sails.

"We mustn't talk of that time, though, ever—eh, Nellie?"

"No," she said, regarding her brown shoes intently.

His eye noted the smooth roundness of her cheek, the delicate pink that came and went, the turn of the white neck.

"Aren't you going to kiss me, Nellie?" he said, slowly; and he drew her a little strangely and [70]

awkwardly to him.

Then she spoke.

"I knew it wouldn't be any use, and you'd never have any money or get a place after this. We couldn't be married on nothing, and it would only drag you down to have me, too. I'm not worthy of you."

"Well, little Duchess," he said, softly, as she stopped and faltered; a slow smile crept over his face, and his deep-set eyes lighted up with tenderness.

Not worthy, his little Duchess!

Then the crimson rushed into her face, and she flung up her head defiantly.

"I married the new shop-walker, four months ago!"

AUSTRALIA'S SPRINGTIME.

'Tis a bright September morning, and Australia's golden Spring
Is awak'ning every flow'ret, and retouching every wing;
Everywhere the yellow blossoms of the wattle are in view—
Even has the solemn gum tree taken on a lighter hue;
And the earth is cover'd over with a vest of fresher green,
And the clear cool air adds brightness to the beauty of the scene.
Now the cockatoo's hoarse screaming, and the magpie's cheery call
Sound in chorus to the music of the plashy waterfall.
Overhead the deep, clear azure is just fleck'd with snowy clouds,
And the green and crimson parrots fly around in chatt'ring crowds;
Far away is all the bustle of the smoky, restless town,
And the timid kangaroo upon the grass lies fearless down;
Nature calmly lieth waiting, in her peaceful solitude,
For the dawning of the morning bright with hopes of future good:
Lies as she has lain for ages, by the white man's foot untrod,
Like a glorious new creation, freshly from the hand of God.

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'Tis Australia's golden Springtime, and the vision, fresh and green,
Of the lonely, peaceful country, is a swiftly changing scene;
First a few white tents embosom'd 'mid the thickly growing trees,
And the sound of human labour floating on the passing breeze.
First a village—then a city—with an everswelling tide
Passing thro' its busy markets—stretching outwards far and wide;
And while the growing nation overspreads the smiling land,
Nature opens up her treasures with a free and lavish hand:
O'er the verdant fields are roaming flocks and herds of sheep and kine—
Deep beneath the sunlit surface works the toiler in the mine—
Education and religion build their temples o'er the plain,
And the iron horse moves swiftly past broad fields of golden grain,
Where a plenteous harvest ripens to reward the toiler's care,
And each honest, willing worker may obtain a rightful share.
Blessed peace and glorious freedom banish far the warrior's sword—
Fancy seems to gaze enraptur'd on a Paradise restored!

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'Tis the Springtime of Australia, and the dazzled eye may see
Wondrous dreams of future greatness—of the glories yet to be:
Visions—not of martial conquest—not of courage, blood and fire—
But of lands by noble actions growing greater, grander, higher!
Of the wond'ring nations turning—gazing with expectant eyes,
While oppress'd and toiling millions feel new hopes and thoughts arise
In the march of human progress as Australia leads the van
To the world's great Federation, and the "parliament of Man!"
Such the triumphs—aye, and grander, that the coming days shall see
If Australia but be faithful to her glorious destiny;
With the smile of Heav'n upon her in the future, as the past,
Sweeping back the threat'ning war-clouds that her sky may overcast—
Like a stately white-wing'd vessel she shall keep her steadfast way—
Peace, o'er all her wide dominions, ruling with unbroken sway;
And her progress be continued till the wings of Time are furled—
Her glorious page the brightest in the history of the world!

THE MAN THAT SAVED THE MATCH.

[73]

BY DAVID M'KEE WRIGHT.

(By kind permission of the Author.)

Our church ain't reckoned very big, but then the township's small—
I've seen the time when there was seats and elbow-room for all.
The women-fold would come, of course, but working chaps was rare;
They'd rather loaf about and smoke, and take the Sunday air.
But now there's hardly standing room, and you can fairly say
There ain't a man we like as well as quiet Parson Grey.

We blokes was great for cricket once, we'd held our own so long,
In all the townships round about our team was reckoned strong;
And them that didn't use to play could barrack pretty fair,
They liked the leather-hunting that they didn't have to share.
A team from town was coming up to teach us how to play—
We meant to show what we could do upon that Christmas Day.

The stumps were pitched at two o'clock, but Lawson's face was grim
(Lawson was Captain of the team, our crack we reckoned him),
For Albert Wilson hadn't come, the safest bat of all,
With no one there to take his place he counted on a fall.
"Who could we get? There's no one here it's worth our while to play
In place of Albert." At his side was standing Parson Grey.

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"I used to wield the willow once," the Parson softly said;
"If you have no one for the tail, you might take me instead."
The Captain bit his fair moustache—he seemed inclined to swear;
But answered sulkily enough, "All right, sir; I don't care.
There's no one here is worth his salt with breaking balls to play."
"I'll try and do my best for you," said quiet Parson Grey.

"His best," Bill Lawson said to me, "what's that, I'd like to know?
To spoon an easy ball to point, and walk back sad and slow,
Miss every catch that comes to him and fumble every ball,
And lose his way about the field at every 'over' call.
The blooming team can go below after this Christmas Day;
I'm hanged if I'm to captain it when parsons start to play."

Bill won the toss, we went in first. I might as well say here
That I'm a weary kind of bat—to stick in for a year.
I can't hit out—it ain't no use; it saddens me to think
A bloke that bowled against us once has taken since to drink.
He couldn't get my wicket, and his balls came in that way
I batted through the innings without a run all day.

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The fun began. By George! to think the way our stumps went down!
Our boys was made the laughing-stock for them swell-blokes from town.
I kept my end up—that was all, Lawson was bowled first ball,
And six of them went strolling back without a run at all.
Nine wickets down for fourteen runs was all our score that day
When the last man came in to bat, and that was Parson Grey.

The bowler with the break from leg sent down a hardish ball,
I thought to see the parson squirm and hear the wicket fall;
It didn't happen, for he played a pretty forward stroke;
I knew that moment he could bat, that quiet preaching bloke.
And when a careless ball came down the boys began to roar,
He drove it hard along the ground—we took and run a four.

Then it was "over," and of course mine was a maiden one,
I broke the bowler's hearts that day for just a single run.
The Parson played a dashing game, his cuts were clean and fine;
I only wish that strokes like them could now and then be mine.

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He had a fifty to his name in just an hour's play,
And then—well, then—I run him out, I own, that Christmas Day.

"By George," said Lawson, "who'd have thought that he could bat so well!
I could have gone and drowned myself when Bryant's wicket fell;
But, man, he must have been a bat when he was at his best,
I'm glad that Wilson wasn't here, or any of the rest;
Now, if our chaps are on the spot, and bowl as well to-day,
We'll give them news to carry home how country clubs can play."

Our bowling always has been fair; we couldn't well complain;
We got a wicket now and then—they didn't fall like rain;
But runs were coming rather slow, and fifty was the score
When the ninth man was given out—an honest "leg before."
It was a single innings game, and plainly on the play
It seemed the glory would be ours upon that Christmas Day.

Last man! The bowling crack came in—of course he couldn't bat,
He could lash out and chance the stroke to show us what was what;
Our hopes were down to freezing-point, twelve runs were to his score,
To win the match he only had to hit another four.
He swiped; we groaned to think that we were beaten after all;
The stroke was high—a splendid catch—*the Parson held the ball.*

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Then how we yelled, and yelled again; he'd fairly won the match—
The splendid batting that he showed, the more than splendid catch;
Why, chaps, you'd hardly credit it, that almost every bloke
Goes into church on Sunday now, and does without his smoke;
And no one's likely to forget that sunny Christmas Day,
When we were all surprised a bit at quiet Parson Grey.

ODE FOR COMMONWEALTH DAY

1st JANUARY, 1901.

Awake! Arise! The wings of dawn
Are beating at the gates of day,
The morning star hath been withdrawn,
The silver vapours melt away.
Rise royally, O sun, and crown
The shoreward billow, streaming white,
The forelands, and the mountains brown,
With crested light;
Flood with soft beams the valleys wide,
The mighty plains, the desert sand,
Till the New Day hath won for bride
This Austral land!
Free-born of nations, virgin white,
Not won by blood, nor ringed with steel.
Thy throne is on a loftier height,
Deep-rooted in the commonweal.
O thou, for whom the strong have wrought,
And poets sung with souls aflame,
Born of long hope and patient thought,
A mighty name—
We pledge thee faith that shall not swerve,
Our land, our lady, breathing high
The thought that makes it love to serve,
And life to die!

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Now are thy maidens linked in love,
Who erst have striven for pride of place;
Lifted all meaner thoughts above
They greet thee, one in heart and race;
She, in whose sunlit coves of peace
The navies of the world may rest,
And bear her wealth of snowy fleece

Northward and west.
And she, whose corn and rock-hewn gold
Built that Queen City of the South,
Where the lone billow swept of old
Her harbour-mouth.

Come, too, thou Sun-maid, in whose veins
For ever burns the tropic fire
Whose cattle roam a thousand plains,
Come, with thy gold and pearls for tire;
And that sweet Harvester who twines
The tender vine and binds the sheaf;
And she, the Western Queen, who mines
The desert reef;
And thou, against whose flowery throne
And orchards green the wave is hurled;
Australia claims you; ye are one
Before the world.
Crown her—most worthy to be praised—
With eyes uplifted to the morn;
For, on this day, a flag is raised,
A triumph won, a nation born;
And ye, vast armies of the dead,
From mine and city, plain and sea,
Who fought and dared, who toiled and bled
That this might be,
Draw round us in this hour of fate—
This golden harvest of thy hand—
With unseen lips, O consecrate
And bless the land!

Eternal power, benign, supreme,
Who weigh'st the nations upon earth;
Without whose aid the empire-dream
And pride of states is nothing worth,
From shameless speech, and vengeful deed,
From licence veiled in Freedom's name,
From greed of gold, and scorn of creed,
Guard Thou our fame!
In stress of days that yet may be,
When hope shall rest upon the sword,
In welfare and adversity,
Be with us, Lord!

GEORGE ESSEX EVANS.

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A DESPERATE ASSAULT.

I have more than once had reason to admire the British soldier in battle, but never was there such good ground for admiration as in watching him prepare. All the blare and tumult, the death and disaster of actual conflict have no such tense, dramatic, nerve-trying moments as when a regiment is making ready for some great enterprise. The fight is a medley of mixed impressions, jostling each other for a moment's existence ere passing away, but the getting ready is unforgettable. Everything is clear-cut and within the sum of human emotions—eternal. So it was with that last grand charge of the Devons, which swept the Boers from their fringe of the little plateau and finished the long seventeen hours' ordeal. The enemy were on one side of the Table, we on the other. A tropical hailstorm howled across it, and beat heavily in our faces, as Colonel Park led his men up the sheltered face of the hill, and halted a moment within five yards of the crest, to make ready. The men knew exactly what they had to do, and the solemnity of a great and tragic undertaking was upon and about them. All the world for them—the too brief past with its consequences, the fast-flying present, and the mysterious beyond—might concentrate in a short desperate dash across a storm-swept African hilltop. It was the sublimity of life—the anticipation of death. The Devons were making ready for it, and how unready a man might feel at such a moment! The line of brown riflemen stretched away to the left of us, and it seemed that every trivial action of every man there had become an epic. One noticed most of all the constant moistening of the dry lips, and the frequent raising of the water-bottles for a last hurried mouthful. One man tightened a belt, another brought his cartridges handier to his right hand,

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though he was not to use them. It was something to ease the strain of watching. Every little thing fixed itself on the mind as a photograph. There was no need of mental effort to remember. One could not see and forget, and would not, for his patriotism and his pride of kinship, forget if he could. Then the low clinking, quivering sound of the steel which died away from us in a trickle down the ranks as the bayonets were fixed—and a dry, harsh, artificial laugh, in strong contrast to the quiet of the scene—everything heard easily somehow above the rush and clatter of the storm, and lost only for an instant in the sudden bursts of thunder. A bit of quiet tragedy wedged into the turmoil of the great play, and all unspeakably solemn and awe-inspiring. One must see to understand it. One may have seen yet can never describe it. The situation was not for ordinary language; it was Homeric, over-mastering.

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"Now, then, Devons, get ready." There was a dry catch in the colonel's voice as he gave the word—and the short sentence was punctuated by the zip-zip of the Mauser bullets, that for a few precious seconds would still be flying overhead. There was a quick panting of the breath, a stiffening of the lines of the faces, that with so many of them was but the prelude to the rigidity of death. It was waiting for them only a few yards up, and their manhood was being sorely tried. But the Devons squared their shoulders, gripped their rifles—bringing them up with the quick whip of the drill, that was too well ground into them to be forgotten even then. A prompt dressing by the left, and, as though eager to get it over, the Devons sprang forward to the word into the double storm of hail and nickel-plated bullets. The killing suspense was over—they were in action at last, one's whole heart went with them, and just for one moment, as they stood fully exposed upon the plateau, it seemed to the watchers that there might be disaster. They had slightly miscalculated the enemy's strongest point, and had to wheel by the left. As they did so the line faltered for a moment. A shiver, a pendulum-like swaying seemed to run down it; that was the history-making moment, when the regiment might either do something that ever afterwards they would try to forget, or that all their countrymen would be proud to remember—the moment in men's lives which, measured by emotion only, stretch out into centuries. It was the moment of a life, too, for the commander of men. His chance had come.

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"Steady, Devons, steady," came the clear ringing call, and then, with one great surging rush, that gathered momentum even as it lost in fallen units, the regiment went on.

Boldly though they had taken and held that hill, prudence came to the Boer riflemen as these eager bayonets bore down upon them. For a moment they shot the Devons through and through, and then they ran. At that moment not a man amongst our common-place, drinking, swearing Tommies but was exalted, deified—but so many of them were something less of interest on earth than even a common soldier. Where the regiment had gone seventy of its dead and wounded littered the hilltop, but still it was the moment of victory, not of lamentations. It may sound strange to say that the prelude to a battle, like the preface to a book, can be greater than the actual battle or the book. But so it seemed to me. Others might view it differently, but challenge our impressions as we may in the light of riper history, we shall never alter them. They are indelible. Overhaul the plates again and again as we please, it will always be the same picture.

DONALD MACDONALD ("How we Kept the Flag Flying").

THE GAME OF LIFE.

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There's a game much in fashion—I think it's called *Euchre*
(Though I never have played for pleasure or lucre),
In which, when the cards are in certain conditions,
The players appear to have changed their positions,
And one of them cries in a confident tone,
"I think I may venture to 'go it alone!'"

While watching the game, 'tis a whim of the bard's
A moral to draw from that skirmish of cards,
And to fancy he finds in the trivial strife
Some excellent hints for the battle of Life;
Where—whether the prize be a ribbon or throne—
The winner is he who can "go it alone!"

When great Galileo proclaimed that the world
In a regular orbit was ceaselessly whirled,
And got—not a convert—for all of his pains,
But only derision and prison and chains,
"It moves, *for all that!*" was his answering tone,
For he knew, like the earth, he could "go it alone!"
When Kepler, with intellect piercing afar,

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Discovered the laws of each planet and star,
And doctors, who ought to have lauded his name,
Derided his learning and blackened his fame,
"I can wait," he replied, "till the truth you shall own;"
For he felt in his heart he could "go it alone!"

Alas! for the player who idly depends,
In the struggle of life, upon kindred or friends;
Whatever the value of blessings like these,
They can never atone for inglorious ease,
Nor comfort the coward who finds, with a groan,
That his clutches have left him to "go it alone!"

There's something, no doubt, in the hand you may hold:
Wealth, family, culture, wit, beauty and gold,
The fortunate owner may fairly regard
As, each in its way, a most excellent card;
Yet the game may be lost, with all these for your own,
Unless you've the courage to "go it alone!"

In battle or business, whatever the game,
In law or love, it is ever the same;
In the struggle for power, or the scramble for pelf,
Let this be your motto, "RELY ON YOURSELF!"
For, whether the prize be a ribbon or throne,
The victor is he who can "go it alone!"

JOHN G. SAXE.

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PREJUDICE.

I was climbing up a mountain path,
 With many things to do,
Important business of my own,
 And other people's too,
When I ran against a Prejudice
 That quite cut off the view.

My work was such as could not wait,
 My path quite clearly showed;
My strength and time were limited;
 I carried quite a load,
And there that bulking Prejudice
 Sat all along the road.

So I spoke to him politely,
 For he was huge and high,
And begged that he would move a bit,
 And let me travel by—
He smiled, but as for moving—
 He didn't even try.

And then I reasoned quietly
 With that colossal mule;
The time was short, no other path,
 The mountain winds were cool—
I argued like a Solomon,
 He sat there like a fool.

Then I flew into a passion,
 I danced and howled and swore;
I pelted and belaboured him
 Till I was stiff and sore;
He got as mad as I did—
 But he sat there as before.

And then I begged him on my knees—
 I might be kneeling still,

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If so I hoped to move that mass
Of obdurate ill-will—
As well invite the monument
To vacate Bunker's Hill!

So I sat before him helpless,
In an ecstasy of woe—
The mountain mists were rising fast,
The sun was sinking slow—
When a sudden inspiration came,
As sudden winds do blow.

I took my hat, I took my stick,
My load I settled fair,
I approached that awful incubus,
With an absent-minded air—
And I walked directly through him,
As if he wasn't there!

CHARLOTTE PERKINS STETSON.

THE POOR AND THE RICH.

The rich man's son inherits lands,
And piles of brick and stone and gold,
And tender flesh that fears the cold,
Nor dares to wear a garment old;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One would not care to hold in fee.
The rich man's son inherits cares.
The bank may break, the factory burn,
Some breath may burst his bubble shares,
And soft white hands would scarcely earn
A living that would suit his turn;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One would not care to hold in fee.

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What does the poor man's son inherit?
Stout muscles and a sinewy heart,
A hardy frame, a hardier spirit,
King of two hands he does his part
In every useful toil and art;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

What does the poor man's son inherit?
Wishes o'erjoyed with humble things,
A rank adjudged by toil-worn merit,
Content that from enjoyment springs,
A heart that in his labour sings;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

What does the poor man's son inherit?
A patience learned by being poor,
Courage, if sorrow come, to bear it;
A fellow feeling that is sure
To make the outcast bless his door;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

Oh! rich man's son, there is a toil
That with all others level stands;
Large charity doth never soil,
But only whitens, soft white hands;
This is the best crop from thy lands;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Worth being rich to hold in fee.

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Oh! poor man's son, scorn not thy state,
There is worse weariness than thine—
In being merely rich and great;
Work only makes the soul to shine,
And makes rest fragrant and benign
A heritage, it seems to me,
Worth being poor to hold in fee.

Both, heirs to some six feet of sod,
Are equal in the earth at last—
Both, children of the same dear God.
Prove title to your heirship vast,
By record of a well-filled past!
A heritage, it seems to me,
Well worth a life to hold in fee.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

THE ENGINEER'S STORY.

(From the "Denver Post.")

Well, yes, 'tis a hair-curlin' story—
I would it could not be recalled.
The terrible fright of that hell-tinctured night
Is the cause of my head bein' bald.
I was runnin' the Git-There Express, sir,
On the Yankee Creek Jerkwater line.
An' the track along there was as crooked, I swear,
As the growth of a field pumpkin vine.
My run was a night one, an' nights on the Yank
War as black as the coal piled back there on the tank.

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We pulled out of Tenderfoot Station,
A day and almost a-half late,
An' every durn wheel was a-poundin' the steel
At a wildly extravagant rate.
My fireman kept pilin' the coal in
The jaws of the ol' 94,
Till the sweat from his nose seemed to play through a hose
An' splashed 'round his feet on the floor,
As we thundered along like a demon in flight,
A-rippin' a streak through the breast of the night.

As we rounded the curve on the mountain,
Full sixty an hour I will swear,
Jest ahead was a sight that with blood-freezin' fright
Would have raised a stuffed buffalo's hair.
The bridge over Ute Creek was burnin',
The flames shootin' up in their glee;
My God! how they gleamed in the air, till they seemed
Like the fiery-tongued imps on a spree—
Jest snickered an' sparkled an' laughed like they knowed
I'd make my next trip on a different road.

In frenzy I reached for the throttle,
But 'twas stuck an' refused to obey.
I yelled in affright, for our maddenin' flight
I felt that I never could stay.
Then wildly I grasped the big lever,
Threw her over, then held my hot breath,
An' waited for what I assuredly thought
Was a sure an' terrible death.
Then came the wild crash, an' with horror-fringed yell
Down into that great fiery chasm I fell.

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When I came to myself I was lyin'

On the floor of the bedroom; my wife
Sat astride of my form, and was making it warm
Fur her darlin', you bet your sweet life!
My hair she had clutched in her fingers,
An' was jammin' my head on the floor,
Yet I yelled with delight when I found that my fright
Was a horrible dream, nothin' more.
I had wildly grabb'd one of her ankles, she said,
An' reversed her clear over the head of the bed.

SEEING'S NOT BELIEVING.

I saw her, as I fancied, fair,
Yes, fairest of earth's creatures;
I saw the purest red and white
O'erspread her lovely features;
She fainted, and I sprinkled her,
Her malady relieving;
I washed both rose and lily off!
Oh! seeing's not believing!

I looked again, again I longed
To breathe love's fond confession
I saw her eyebrows formed to give
Her face its arch expression;
But gum is very apt to crack,
And whilst my breast was heaving,
It so fell out that one fell off!
Oh! seeing's not believing!

I saw the tresses on her brow
So beautifully braided;
I never saw in all my life
Locks look so well as they did,
She walked with me one windy day—
Ye zephyrs, why so thieving?
The lady lost her flaxen wig!
Oh! seeing's not believing!

I saw her form, by Nature's hand
So prodigally finished,
She were less perfect if enlarged,
Less perfect if diminished;
Her toilet I surprised—the worst
Of wonders then achieving;
None knew the bustle I perceived!
Oh! seeing's not believing!

I saw, when costly gems I gave,
The smile with which she took them;
And if she said no tender things,
I've often seen her look them;
I saw her my affianced bride,
And then, my mansion leaving,
She ran away with Colonel Jones!
Oh! seeing's not believing!

I saw another maiden soon,
And struggled to detain her;
I saw her plain enough—in fact,
Few women could be plainer;
'Twas said, that at her father's death
A plum she'd be receiving;
I saw that father's house and grounds!
Oh! seeing's not believing!

I saw her mother—she was deck'd

With furbelows and feathers;
 I saw distinctly that she wore
 Silk stockings in all weathers;
 I saw, beneath a load of gems,
 The matron's bosom heaving;
 I saw a thousand signs of wealth!
 Oh! seeing's not believing!

I saw her father, and I spoke
 Of marriage in his study;
 But would he let her marry me
 Alas! alas! how could he?
 I saw him smile a glad consent,
 My anxious heart relieving,
 And then I saw the settlements
 Oh! seeing's not believing!

I saw the daughter, and I named
 My moderate finances;
 She spurned me not, she gave me one
 Of her most tender glances.
 I saw her father's bank—thought I,
 There cash is safe from thieving;
 I saw my money safely lodged:
 Oh! seeing's not believing!

I saw the bank, the shutters up,
 I could not think what they meant,
 The old infirmity of firms,
 The bank had just stopped payment!
 I saw my future father then
 Was ruined past retrieving,
 Like me, without a single *sou*:
 Oh! seeing's not believing!

I saw the banker's wife had got
 The fortune settled on her;
 What cared he, when the creditors
 Talked loudly of dishonour!
 I saw his name in the *Gazette*,
 But soon I stared, perceiving,
 He bought another house and grounds:
 Oh! seeing's not believing!

I saw—yes, as plain as could be,
 I saw the banker's daughter;
 She saw me, too, and called for sal
 Volatile and water.
 She said that she had just espoused
 A rich old man, conceiving
 That I was dead or gone to gaol:
 Oh! seeing's not believing!

I saw a friend, and freely spoke
 My mind on the transaction;
 Her brother heard it, and he called,
 Demanding satisfaction.
 We met—I fell—that brother's ball
 In my left leg receiving;
 I have two legs, true—*one is cork*:
 Oh! seeing's not believing!

THOMAS HAYNES BAYLEY.

CAUDLE HAS BEEN MADE A MASON.

Now, Mr. Caudle—Mr. Caudle, I say: oh! you can't be asleep already, I know. Now, what I mean to say is this: there's no use, none at all, in our having any disturbance about the matter; but at

last my mind's made up, Mr. Caudle; I shall leave you. Either I know all you've been doing to-night, or to-morrow morning I shall quit the house. No, no! There's an end of the marriage state, I think—and an end of all confidence between man and wife—if a husband's to have secrets and keep 'em all to himself. Pretty secrets they must be, when his own wife can't know 'em. Not fit for any decent person to know, I'm sure, if that's the case. Now, Caudle, don't let us quarrel, there's a good soul: tell me, what's it all about? A pack of nonsense, I daresay; still—not that I care much about it—still, I should like to know. There's a dear. Eh? Oh, don't tell me there's nothing in it; I know better. I'm not a fool, Mr. Caudle; I know there's a good deal in it. Now, Caudle, just tell me a little bit of it. I'm sure I'd tell you anything. You know I would. Well?

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And you're not going to let me know the secret, eh? You mean to say—you're not? Now, Caudle, you know it's a hard matter to put me in a passion—not that I care about the secret itself; no, I wouldn't give a button to know it, for it's all nonsense, I'm sure. It isn't the secret I care about; it's the slight, Mr. Caudle; it's the studied insult that a man pays to his wife, when he thinks of going through the world keeping something to himself which he won't let her know. Man and wife one, indeed! I should like to know how that can be when a man's a Mason—when he keeps a secret that sets him and his wife apart? Ha! you men make the laws, and so you take good care to have all the best of them to yourselves; otherwise a woman ought to be allowed a divorce when a man becomes a Mason—when he's got a sort of corner-cupboard in his heart, a secret place in his mind, that his poor wife isn't allowed to rummage.

Was there ever such a man? A man, indeed! A brute!—yes, Mr. Caudle, an unfeeling, brutal creature, when you might oblige me, and you won't. I'm sure I don't object to your being a Mason; not at all, Caudle; I daresay it's a very good thing; I daresay it is: it's only your making a secret of it that vexes me. But you'll tell me—you'll tell your own Margaret? You won't? You're a wretch, Mr. Caudle.

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DOUGLAS JERROLD.

MRS. CAUDLE'S LECTURE.

There, Mr. Caudle, I hope you're in a little better temper than you were this morning. There, you needn't begin to whistle: people don't come to bed to whistle. But it's like you; I can't speak, that you don't try to insult me. Once, I used to say you were the best creature living: now, you get quite a fiend. Do let you rest? No, I won't let you rest. It's the only time I have to talk to you, and you shall hear me. I'm put upon all day long: it's very hard if I can't speak a word at night; and it isn't often I open my mouth, goodness knows!

Because once in your lifetime your shirt wanted a button, you must almost swear the roof off the house. You didn't swear? Ha, Mr. Caudle! you don't know what you do when you're in a passion. You were not in a passion, wer'n't you? Well, then I don't know what a passion is; and I think I ought by this time. I've lived long enough with you, Mr. Caudle, to know that.

It's a pity you hav'n't something worse to complain of than a button off your shirt. If you'd some wives, you would, I know. I'm sure I'm never without a needle-and-thread in my hand; what with you and the children, I'm made a perfect slave of. And what's my thanks? Why, if once in your life a button's off your shirt—what do you say "ah" at? I say once, Mr. Caudle; or twice or three times, at most. I'm sure, Caudle, no man's buttons in the world are better looked after than yours. I only wish I'd kept the shirts you had when you were first married! I should like to know where were your buttons then?

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Yes, it is worth talking of! But that's how you always try to put me down. You fly into a rage, and then, if I only try to speak, you won't hear me. That's how you men always will have all the talk to yourselves: a poor woman isn't allowed to get a word in. A nice notion you have of a wife, to suppose she's nothing to think of but her husband's buttons. A pretty notion, indeed, you have of marriage. Ha! if poor women only knew what they had to go through! What with buttons—and one thing and another! They'd never tie themselves up to the best man in the world, I'm sure. What would they do, Mr. Caudle?—Why, do much better without you, I'm certain.

And it's my belief, after all, that the button wasn't off the shirt; it's my belief that you pulled it off, that you might have something to talk about. Oh, you're aggravating enough, when you like, for anything. All I know is, it's very odd that the button should be off the shirt; for I'm sure no woman's a greater slave to her husband's buttons than I am. I only say it's very odd.

However, there's one comfort; it can't last long. I'm worn to death with your temper, and sha'n't trouble you a great while. Ha, you may laugh! And I daresay you would laugh! I've no doubt of it! That's your love; that's your feeling! I know that I'm sinking every day, though I say nothing about it. And when I'm gone, we shall see how your second wife will look after your buttons! You'll find out the difference, then. Yes, Caudle, you'll think of me, then; for then, I hope, you'll

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never have a blessed button to your back.

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

JIM BLUDSO.

Wall, no! I can't tell where he lives,
Because he don't live, you see:
Leastways, he's got out of the habit
Of livin' like you and me.
Whar have you been for the last three years,
That you haven't heard folks tell
How Jimmy Bludso passed in his checks,
The night of the "Prairie Belle"?

He warn't no saint—they engineers
Is all pretty much alike—
One wife in Natchez-under-the-Hill,
And another one here, in Pike.
A careless man in his talk was Jim,
And an awkward man in a row—
But he never pinked, and he never lied,
I reckon he never knowed how.

And this was all the religion he had—
To treat his engine well;
Never be passed on the river;
To mind the pilot's bell;
And if ever the *Prairie Belle* took fire,
A thousand times he swore
He'd hold her nozzle agin the bank
Till the last soul got ashore.

All boats has their day on the Mississip'.
And her day came at last—
The *Movastar* was a better boat,
But the *Belle*, she wouldn't be passed,
And so came tearin' along that night,
The oldest craft on the line,
With a nigger squat on her safety-valve,
And her furnaces crammed, rosin and pine.

The fire bust out as she clared the bar,
And burnt a hole in the night,
And quick as a flash she turned, and made
For that willer-bank on the right.
There was runnin' and cursin', but Jim yelled out
Over all the infernal roar,
"I'll hold her nozzle agin the bank
Till the last galoot's ashore."

Thro' the hot, black breath of the burnin' boat
Jim Bludso's voice was heard,
And they all had trust in his cussedness,
And know'd he would keep his word.
And sure's you're born, they all got off
Afore the smoke-stacks fell,
And Bludso's ghost went up alone
In the smoke of the *Prairie Belle*.

He warn't no saint—but at judgment
I'd run my chance with Jim
'Longside of some pious gentlemen
That wouldn't shook hands with him.
He'd seen his duty a dead sure thing,
And went for it thar and then;
And Christ ain't a-goin' to be too hard
On a man that died for men.

[98]

[99]

HOW UNCLE MOSE COUNTED THE EGGS.

Old Mose, who sells eggs and chickens on the streets of Austin for a living, is as honest an old negro as ever lived; but he has got the habit of chatting familiarly with his customers, hence he frequently makes mistakes in counting out the eggs they buy. He carries his wares around in a small cart drawn by a diminutive donkey. He stopped in front of the residence of Mrs. Samuel Burton. The old lady came out to the gate to make the purchases.

"Have you got any eggs this morning, Uncle Mose?" she asked.

"Yes, indeed I has. Jes got in ten dozen from de kentry."

"Are they fresh?"

"I gua'ntee 'em. I knows dey am fresh jess de same as ef I had laid 'em myse'f."

"I'll take nine dozen. You can count them in this basket."

"All right, mum." He counts: "One, two, free, foah, five, six, seben, eight, nine, ten. You kin rely on dem bein' fresh. How's your son comin' on at de school? He mus' be mos' grown."

"Yes, Uncle Mose, he is a clerk in a bank at Galveston."

[100]

"Why, how ole am de boy?"

"He is eighteen."

"You don't tole me so. Eighteen and gettin' a salary already! eighteen (counting), nineteen, twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-free, twenty-foah, twenty-five, and how's yore gal comin' on? She was mos' grewed up de las' time I seed her."

"She is married and living in Dallas."

"Wal, I declar. How de time scoots away! An' yo' say she has childruns? Why, how ole am de gal? She mus' be about——"

"Thirty-three."

"Am dat so? (counting) firty-free, firty-foah, firty-five, firty-six, firty-seben, firty-eight, firty-nine, forty, forty-one, forty-two, forty-free. Hit am so singular dat you has sich old childruns. I can't believe you has grand-childruns. You don't look more den forty yeahs old yourself."

"Nonsense, old man, I see you want to flatter me. When a person gets to be fifty-three years old ——"

"Fifty-free? I jess dun gwinter b'lieve hit, fifty-free, fifty-foah, fifty-five, fifty-six—I want you to pay tenshun when I counts de eggs, so dar'll be no mistake—fifty-nine, sixty, sixty-one, sixty-two, sixty-free, sixty-foah—whew! Dat am a warm day. Dis am de time of yeah when I feels I'se gettin' ole myse'f. I ain't long for dis worl. You comes from an ole family. When your fodder died he was sebenty years ole."

"Seventy-two, Uncle Mose."

"Dat's ole, suah. Sebenty-two, sebenty-free, sebenty-foah, sebenty-five, sebenty-six, sebenty-seven, sebenty-eight, sebenty-nine—and your mudder? she was one ob de noblest lookin' ladies I ebber see. You reminds me ob her so much. She libbed to mos' a hundred. I bleeves she was done past a centurion when she died."

[101]

"No, Uncle Mose, she was only ninety-six when she died."

"Den she wasn't no chicken when she died. I know dat—ninety-six, ninety-seben, ninety-eight, ninety-nine, one hundred, one, two, free, foah, five, six, seben, eight—dar 108 nice fresh eggs—jess nine dozen, and heah am one moah egg in case I has discounted myse'f."

Old Mose went on his way rejoicing. A few days afterward Mrs. Burton said to her husband, "I am afraid we will have to discharge Matilda. I am satisfied she steals the milk and eggs. I am positive about the eggs, for I bought them day before yesterday, and now about half of them are gone. I stood right there and heard Old Mose count them myself, and there were nine dozen."

THE NEGRO BABY'S FUNERAL.

I was walking in Savannah, past a church decayed and dim,
When there slowly through the windows came a plaintive funeral hymn;
And the sympathy awakened, and a wonder quickly grew,
Till I found myself environed in a little negro pew. [102]
Out at front a coloured couple sat in sorrow, nearly wild;
On the altar was a coffin, in the coffin was a child.
I could picture him when living—curly hair, protruding lip—
And had seen perhaps a thousand in my hurried Southern trip.

But no baby ever rested in the soothing arms of death
That had fanned more flames of sorrow with his little fluttering breath;
And no funeral ever glistened with more sympathy profound
Than was in the chain of teardrops that enclasped those mourners round.

Rose a sad, old coloured preacher at the little wooden desk—
With a manner grandly awkward, with a countenance grotesque;
With simplicity and shrewdness on his Ethiopian face;
With the ignorance and wisdom of a crushed, undying race.

And he said: "Now, don' be weepin' for dis pretty bit o' clay—
For de little boy who lived dere, he's done gone an' run away!
He was doin' very finely, an' he 'preciate your love;
But his sure 'nuff Father want him in de large house up above.

"Now, he didn't give you that baby, by a hundred thousan' mile!
He just think you need some sunshine, an' He lent it for a while!
An' He let you keep an' love it till your hearts were bigger grown;
An' dese silver tears your sheddin's jest de interes' on the loan. [103]

"Here's yer oder pretty childrun!—doan' be makin' it appear
Dat your love got sort o' 'nopolised by dis little fellow here;
Don' pile up too much your sorrow on dere little mental shelves,
So's to kind 'o set 'em wonderin' if dey're no account demselves.

"Just you think, you poor deah mounahs, creepin' long o'er Sorrow's way,
What a blessed little pic-nic dis yere baby's got to-day!
Your good faders and good moders crowd de little fellow round
In de angel-tended garden ob de big Plantation Ground.

"An' dey ask him, 'Was your feet sore?' an' take off his little shoes,
An' dey wash him, an' dey kiss him, an' dey say—'Now what's de news?'
An' de Lawd done cut his tongue loose, den de little fellow say—
'All our folks down in the valley tries to keep de hebbenly way.'

"An' his eyes dey brightly sparkle at de pretty things he view;
Den a tear come an' he whispers—'But I want my parents too!
But de Angel Chief Musician teach dat boy a little song—
Says 'If only dey be fait'ful dey will soon be comin' 'long.'
An' he'll get an' education dat will proberbly be worth [104]
Seberal times as much as any you could buy for him on earth;
He'll be in de Lawd's big schoolhouse, widout no contempt or fear;
While dere's no end to the bad tings might have happened to him here.

"So, my pooah dejected mounahs, let your hearts wid Jesus rest,
An' don't go to critercisin' dat ar One w'at knows the best!
He have sent us many comforts—He have right to take away—
To the Lawd be praise an' glory now and ever! Let us pray!"

WILL CARLETON.

I reads in Yawcob's shtory book,
A couple veeks ago,
Von firsd-rade boem, vot I dinks
Der beoples all should know.
I'd ask dis goot conundhrum, too,
Vich ve should brofit by:
"Vill you indo mine parlor valk?"
Says der Shpider off der fly."

Dot set me dinking, righdt away,
Und vhen, von afternoon,
A shbeculator he comes in
Und dells me, pooty soon,
He haf silfer mine to sell,
Und ask me eef I puy,
I dink off der oxberience
Off dot plue-pottle fly.

[105]

Der oder day, vhen on der cars
I vent by Nie Yorck oudt,
I meets a fraulein on der train,
Who dold me, mit a pout,
She likes der Deutscher shentlemans
Und dells me sit peside her—
I says: "Mine friendt, I vas no fly,
Eef you vas peen a shpider."

I vent indo der shmoking car,
Vhere dhey vas blaying boker,
Und also haf somedings dhey calls
Der funny "leedle joker."
Some money id vas shanging hands,
Dhey wanted me to try—
I says: "You vas too brevious,
I don'd vas been a fly!"

On Central Park a shmartd young man
Says: "Strauss, how vas you peen?"
Und dake me kindly py der hand,
Und ask off mine Katrine.
He vants to shange a feefty bill,
Und says hees name vas Schneider—
Maype, berhaps, he vas all righdt;
More like he vas a shpider.

Mosd efry day some shwindling chap
He dries hees leedle game;
I cuts me oudt dot shpider biece
Und poot id in a frame;
Righdt in mine shtore I hangs it oup,
Und near id, on der shly,
I geepts a glub, to send gvick oudt,
Dhose shpiders, "on der fly."

CHARLES FOLLEN ADAMS.

LARIAT BILL.

[106]

"Well, stranger, 'twas somewhere in 'sixty-nine
I wore runnin' the 'Frisco fast express;
An' from Murder Creek to Blasted Pine,
Were nigh onto eighteen mile, I guess.
The road were a down-grade all the way,
An' we pulled out of Murder a little late,
So I opened the throttle wide that day,
And a mile a minute was 'bout our gait.

"My fireman's name was Lariat Bill,

A quiet man with an easy way,
Who could rope a steer with a cow-boy's skill,
Which he'd learned in Texas, I've heard him say.
The coil were strong as tempered steel,
An' it went like a bolt from a cross-bow flung,
An' arter Bill changed from saddle to wheel,
Just over his head in the cab it hung.

"Well, as I were saying, we fairly flew,
As we struck the curve at Buffalo Spring,
An' I give her full steam an' put her through,
An' the engine rocked like a living thing;
When all of a sudden I got a scare—
For thar on the track were a little child!
An' right in the path of the engine there
She held out her little hands and smiled!

[107]

"I jerked the lever and whistled for brakes,
The wheels threw sparks like a shower of gold;
But I knew the trouble a down-grade makes,
An' I set my teeth an' my flesh grew cold.
Then Lariat Bill yanked his long lasso,
An' out on the front of the engine crept—
He balanced a moment before he threw,
Then out in the air his lariat swept!"

He paused. There were tears in his honest eyes;
The stranger listened with bated breath.
"I know the rest of the tale," he cries;
"He snatched the child from the jaws of death!
'Twas the deed of a hero, from heroes bred,
Whose praises the very angels sing!"
The engineer shook his grizzled head,
And growled: "He didn't do no sich thing.

"He aimed at the stump of a big pine tree,
An' the lariat caught with a double hitch,
An' in less than a second the train an' we
Were yanked off the track an' inter the ditch!
'Twere an awful smash, an' it laid me out,
I ain't forgot it, and never shall;
Were the passengers hurt? Lemme see—about—
Yes, it killed about forty—but saved the gal!"

G. W. H.

THE ELF CHILD; OR, LITTLE ORPHANT ANNIE.

[108]

Little orphant Annie's come to our house to stay,
And wash the cups and saucers up, an' brush the crumbs away,
An' shoo the chickens off the porch, an' dust the hearth, an' sweep,
An' make the fire, and bake the bread, an' earn her board an' keep;
An' all us other children, when the supper things is done,
We set around the kitchen fire, an' has the mostest fun
A-list'ning to the witch tales 'at Annie tells about,
An' the gobble-uns 'at gits you
 Ef you
 Don't
 Watch
 Out!

Onc't they was a little boy wouldn't say his pray'rs;
An' when he went to bed 'at night, away upstairs,
His mammy heard him holler, and his daddy heard him bawl,
An' whin they turn'd the kivers down, he wasn't there at all!
An' they seeked him in the rafter room, and cubby hole and press,
An' seeked him up the chimbly flue an' ever'wheres, I guess,

But all they ever found was thist his pants an' roundabout!
An' the gobble-uns 'll git you

Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

[109]

An' one time a little girl 'ud allus laugh and grin,
An' make fun of ever'one, an' all her blood an' kin;
An' onc't when they was company an' ole folks was there,
She mocked 'em an' shocked 'em, an' said she didn't care!
An' thist as she kicked her heels, an' turn't to run an' hide,
They was two great big Black Things a-standin' by her side,
An' they snatched her through the ceilin' 'fore she know'd what she's about,
An' the gobble-uns 'll git you

Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An' little orphant Annie says, when the blaze is blue,
An' the lampwick sputters, an' the wind goes woo-oo!
An' you hear the crickets quit, an' the moon is grey,
An' the lightnin' bugs in dew is all squelched away,
You better mind yer parents, an' yer teachers fond an' dear,
An' cherish them 't loves you, and dry the orphant's tear,
An' he'p the pore an' needy ones 'at cluster all about,
Er the gobble-uns 'll git you

Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

ALONZO THE BRAVE AND THE FAIR IMOGENE.

[110]

A warrior so bold and a virgin so bright,
Conversed as they sat on the green;
They gazed on each other with tender delight;
Alonzo the Brave was the name of the knight,—
The maiden's the Fair Imogene.

"And oh!" said the youth, "since to-morrow I go
To fight in a far distant land,
Your tears for my absence soon ceasing to flow,
Some other will court you, and you will bestow
On a wealthier suitor your hand!"

"Oh cease these suspicions," Fair Imogene said.
"Offensive to love and to me;
For if you be living, or if you be dead,
I swear by the Virgin that none in your stead,
Shall husband of Imogene be.

"If e'er by lust or by wealth led astray I forget my Alonzo the Brave,
God grant that to punish my falsehood and pride
Your ghost at the marriage may sit by my side,
May tax me with perjury, claim me as bride,
And bear me away to the grave."

[111]

To Palestine hastened the hero so bold,
His love she lamented him sore;
But scarce had a twelve-month elapsed, when behold!
A Baron, all covered with jewels and gold,
Arrived at Fair Imogene's door.

His treasures, his presents, his spacious domain

Soon made her untrue to her vows;
He dazzled her eyes, he bewildered her brain,
He caught her affection, so light and so vain,
And carried her home as his spouse.

And now had the marriage been blest by the priest,
And revelry now had begun;
The tables they groaned with the weight of the feast.
Nor yet had the laughter and merriment ceased,
When the bell at the castle tolled—one.

Then first with amazement Fair Imogene found
A stranger was placed by her side;
His air was terrific, he uttered no sound—
He spake not, he moved not—he looked not around,
But earnestly gazed on the bride.

His visor was closed, and gigantic his height,
His armour was sable to view;
All pleasure and laughter were hushed at the sight,
All the dogs as they eyed him drew back in afright,
All the lights in the chamber burned blue.

[112]

His presence all bosoms appeared to dismay,
The guests sat in silence and fear;
At length spake the bride, while she trembled, "I pray,
Sir Knight, that your helmet aside you would lay,
And deign to partake of our cheer."

The lady is silent—the stranger complies—
His visor he slowly unclosed;
Oh God! what a sight met Fair Imogene's eyes!
What word can express her dismay and surprise,
When a skeleton's head was exposed.

All present then uttered a terrified shout,
All turned in disgust from the scene;
The worms they crept in, and the worms they crept out,
And sported his eyes and his temples about,
While the spectre addressed Imogene.

"Behold me, thou false one—behold me!" he cried; "Remember Alonzo the
Brave!
God grant that to punish thy falsehood and pride,
My ghost at thy marriage should sit at thy side,
Should tax thee with perjury, claim thee as bride,
And bear thee away to the grave!"

Thus saying, his arms round the lady he wound,
While loudly she shrieked in dismay;
And sank with his prey through the wide yawning ground,
Nor ever again was Fair Imogene found,
Or the spectre that bore her away.

[113]

Not long lived the Baron, and none since that time
To inhabit the castle presume;
For chronicles say, that by order sublime,
There Imogene suffers the pain of her crime,
And mourns her deplorable doom.

At midnight four times in each year does her sprite,
When mortals in slumber are bound,
Arrayed in her bridal apparel of white,
Appear in the hall of the skeleton knight,
And shriek as he whirls her around.

While they drink out of skulls, newly torn from the grave,
Dancing around them the spectres are seen;
Their liquid is blood, and this horrible stave
They howl: "To the health of Alonzo the Brave,
And his consort, the Fair Imogene."

MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS (MONK LEWIS).

AN ALL-AROUND INTELLECTUAL MAN.

[114]

He was up in mathematics, had a taste for hydrostatics, and could talk about astronomy from Aristarchus down;
He could tell what kind of beans were devoured by the Chaldeans, and he knew the date of every joke made by a circus clown.

He was versed in evolution, and would instance the poor Russian as a type of despotism in the modern age of man.
He could write a page of matter on the different kinds of batter used in making flinty gim-cracks on the modern cooking plan.

He could revel in statistics, he was well up in the fistics, knew the pedigree of horses dating 'way back from the ark.
Far and wide his tips were quoted, and his base-ball stuff was noted. In political predictions he would always hit the mark.

He could write upon the tariff, and he didn't seem to care if he was called off to review a book or write a poem or two:
He could boil down stuff and edit, knew the value of a credit, and could hustle with the telegraph in a style excelled by few.
He could tell just how a fire should be handled; as a liar he was sure to exercise a wise, discriminative taste.
He was mild and yet undaunted, and no matter what was wanted he was always sure to get it first, yet never was in haste.

[115]

But despite his reputation as a brainy aggregation, he was known to be deficient in a manner to provoke.
For no matter when you met him he would borrow if you let him, and he seemed to have the faculty of always being broke.

TOM MASSON.

HER IDEAL.

She wanted to reach an ideal;
She talked of the lovely in art,
She quoted from Emerson's Essays,
And said she thought Howells had "heart."
She doted on Wagner's productions,
She thought comic opera low,
And she played trying tunes on a zither,
Keeping time with a sandal-shod toe.

She had dreams of a nobler existence—
A bifurcated, corsetless place,
Where women would stand free and equal
As queens of a glorious race.
But her biscuits were deadly creations
That caused people's spirits to sink,
And she'd views on matters religious
That drove her relations to drink.

[116]

She'd opinions on co-education,
But not an idea on cake;
She could analyse Spencer or Browning,
But the new kitchen range wouldn't bake.
She wanted to be esoteric,
And she wore the most classical clothes;
But she ended by being hysteric
And contracting a cold in her nose.

She studied of forces hypnotic,
She believed in theosophy quite,

She understood themes prehistoric
And said that the faith cure was right.
She wanted to reach the ideal,
And at clods unpoetic would rail,
And her husband wore fringe on his trousers
And fastened them on with a nail!

KATE MASTERSON.

THE HAPPY FARMER.

The farmer is a happy man,
His life is free from care,
With naught to make his spirit sad
Or make him want to swear;
All day among the cockle burrs
He gaily grubs and hoes,
And money never troubles him,
Unless 'tis what he owes.

How sweet at early dawn of day
To rise before the sun,
And hustle briskly round the barn
Till all the chores are done;
To feed the cows, and milk them, too,
In brightly shining pails,
The while they tread upon your corns
And thump you with their tails.

[117]

How sweet to hie into the field,
From breakfast smoking hot,
And chase a plough all day around
A forty acre lot,
And, when it strikes against a stone,
Drawn by the horses stout,
To have the handles prance around
And punch your daylights out.

How sweet at noon to lie at ease
Beneath some spreading tree,
And hold a secret session
With an ardent bumble bee,
And when your rheumatism makes
Your legs refuse to go,
How sweet to lie upon your back
And watch your mortgage grow.

And when the busy cares of day
Have faded with the light,
How sweet to lie in peaceful sleep
Throughout the dewy night,
And to hear the partner of your joys,
At the first faint tinge of dawn,
Shout, "Come, old granger, hump yourself
The cows are in the corn."

MORTIMER C. BROWN.

THE SON OF A SOLDIER

[118]

BY OWEN OLIVER.

(Reprinted from "To-Day" by kind permission of the Author.)

You'll be sure to know my daddy,
'Cause he wears a coat of red.
An' a rifle, an' a bay'net,
An' a helmet on his head.
An' he's very big an' handsome,
An' his name is Sergeant Smith,
An' he's gone to fight the Boers
That our Queen is angry with.
He's the good Queen's faithful soldier,
So he's angry, too, of course—
I expects they *will* be frightened
When they know my daddy's cross!

Daddy took me up and nursed me
'For he went on Friday week;
"Sonny-boy," he said, "Here's sixpence,
Bless you, lad!" and kissed my cheek,
"Mind you write to me and tell me
How you're doing at your books,
How the baby's learning walking,
How your little sister looks,
How you're good and helping mother—
That's the news I want to find."
Mine is only printing writing,
But my daddy doesn't mind.

I'm my daddy's little soldier,
An I've often heard him say,
Soldiers ought to do their duty
Though their officer's away.
Mamma says my duty's doing
Just what daddy said I should;
But it's hard to do my lessons;
And its harder to be good!
Teacher says, "Just keep on trying,
They'll come easy by-an'-by;"
Mamma says I do grow better,
And she'll write an' say I try.

Won't he smile! unless they've shot him!
Mamma said perhaps they would;
An' she cried and cried till I cried—
But I don't believe they could.
No one couldn't hurt my daddy;
If they did, when I grow tall,
I shall take a sword and rifle,
An' I'll go and kill them all.
If I woke up big to-morrow,
Off to battle I should go;
Then I'd see who'd touch my daddy—
Please, dear God, do make me grow!

[119]

THE MILE.

BY DAVID M'KEE WRIGHT.

(By kind permission of the Author.)

Sports day at the township; the station chaps mustered
From Stewart's and "Flaxland" and Scott's of "Argyle;"
Good sport and good weather, and take things together
The event that they talked most about was the mile.

Young Wilson from Flaxland could run like a greyhound,
His times were a wonder with no stopwatch by;
From Stewart's, Jack Barry could go like "Old Harry,"
And Scott's chaps had pinned all their faith on Mackay.

[120]

The township had three in, and each looked like winning.
The cunning boys smiled when you asked what they knew;
I'd have sooner been resting than stripping and breasting
The mark for the honour of old Waitahu.

But the chaps that were with me would take no denial—
I used to run once and could do it to-day;
It was no use complaining I wasn't in training,
I was hard from the hills and could show them the way.

So they said; but the other blokes smiled at my chances,
Well they might when I hadn't run for a year;
I heard someone mutter, "He's softer than butter—
He used to win once, but he won't finish here."

That made me feel foolish, I wished I'd been training,
I felt if I had I could make someone spin,
But still I was thinking, "I'll finish like winking;
Though there isn't a ghost of a chance I can win!"

[121]

We all toed the line, but I wasn't excited,
I fancied the race was all over for Dan;
The slowest could do me—the pistol went through me,
I jumped from the scratch, and the tussle began.

I'd a yard at the start, but I lost it next moment,
My word, they went off at a terrible bat;
I saw in a minute I wouldn't be in it
If Wilson and Barry kept moving like that.

They went for a quarter, then Pearce, of the township,
Ran up to the lead like a young cannon ball;
I kept well behind them, I reckoned to find them
About the three-quarters, or else not at all.

Second round the same order, Mackay creeping closer,
And Pearce, of the township, dropped out at the bend;
They kept the pace going, but Wilson was blowing,
I didn't expect to see him at the end.

Third round, and, by George, I was closing upon them,
My long steady swing was beginning to tell;
Mackay took the running—he'd played pretty cunning—
I caught my first man at the three-quarter bell.

[122]

Then I let myself out and I tackled another,
Passed him quickly and got up to Wilson at last;
There was nothing left in him that once looked like winning;
He gave up the struggle the moment I passed.

Jack Barry was next, and we got going level,
I brought him along till we tackled Mackay;
The whole ground was moving, our pace was improving,
By Jove! at the finish the grass seemed to fly.

"Come on, Dan! come on! you can leave them both standing!"
"Jack Barry's the winner!" "Mackay leads the way!"—
The yelling and raving, the rushing and waving—
I'll always remember the finish that day.

We were going "eyes out," all three shoulder to shoulder,
I gathered myself for the best I could do—
I heard my name crying, I took the tape flying
For the honour and glory of old Waitahu!

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