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February 1891, by Various and George Newnes**

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**THE  
STRAND MAGAZINE.**

FEBRUARY, 1891.

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"SILVIO! YOU KNEW SILVIO?"

### *The Pistol Shot.*

FROM THE RUSSIAN OF ALEXANDER PUSHKIN.



We were stationed at the little village of Z. The life of an officer in the army is well known. Drill and the riding school in the morning; dinner with the colonel or at the Jewish restaurant; and in the evening punch and cards.

At Z. nobody kept open house, and there was no girl that anyone could think of marrying. We used to meet at each other's rooms, where we never saw anything but one another's uniforms. There was only one man among us who did not belong to the regiment. He was about thirty-five, and, of course, we looked upon him as an old fellow. He had the advantage of experience, and his habitual gloom, stern features, and his sharp tongue gave him great influence over his juniors. He was surrounded by a certain mystery. His looks were Russian, but his name was foreign. He had served in the Hussars, and with credit. No one knew what had induced him to retire and settle in this out of the way little village, where he lived in mingled poverty and extravagance. He always went on foot, and wore a shabby black coat. But he was always ready to receive any of our officers; and, though his dinners, cooked by a retired soldier, never consisted of more than two or three dishes, champagne flowed at them like water. His income or how he got it no one knew; and no one ventured to ask. He had a few books on military subjects and a few novels, which he willingly lent and never asked to have returned. But, on the other hand, he never returned the books he himself borrowed.

His principal recreation was pistol-shooting. The walls of his room were riddled with bullets—a perfect honeycomb. A rich collection of pistols was the only thing luxurious in his modestly furnished villa. His skill as a shot was quite prodigious. If he had undertaken to shoot a pear off some one's cap, not a man in our regiment would have hesitated to act as target. Our conversation often turned on duelling. Silvio—so I will call him—never joined in it. When asked if he had ever fought, he answered curtly, "Yes." But he gave no particulars, and it was evident that he disliked such questions. We concluded that the memory of some unhappy victim of his terrible skill preyed heavily upon his conscience. None of us could ever have suspected him of cowardice. There are men whose look alone is enough to repel such a suspicion.

An unexpected incident fairly astonished us. One afternoon about ten officers were dining with Silvio. They drank as usual; that is to say, a great deal. After dinner we asked our host to make a pool. For a long time he refused on the ground that he seldom played. At last he ordered cards to be brought in. With half a hundred gold pieces on the table we sat round him, and the game began. It was Silvio's habit not to speak when playing. He never disputed or explained. If an adversary made a mistake Silvio without a word chalked it down against him. Knowing his way, we always let him have it.

But among us on this occasion was an officer who had but lately joined. While playing he absent-mindedly scored a point too much. Silvio took the chalk and corrected the score in his own fashion. The officer, supposing him to have

made a mistake, began to explain. Silvio went on dealing in silence. The officer, losing patience, took the brush and rubbed out what he thought was wrong. Silvio took the chalk and recorrected it. The officer, heated with wine and play, and irritated by the laughter of the company, thought himself aggrieved, and, in a fit of passion, seized a brass candlestick and threw it at Silvio, who only just managed to avoid the missile. Great was our confusion. Silvio got up, white with rage, and said, with sparkling eyes—

"Sir! have the goodness to withdraw, and you may thank God that this has happened in my own house."

We could have no doubt as to the consequences, and we already looked upon our new comrade as a dead man. He withdrew saying that he was ready to give satisfaction for his offence in any way desired.

The game went on for a few minutes. But feeling that our host was upset we gradually left off playing and dispersed, each to his own quarters. At the riding school next day, we were already asking one another whether the young lieutenant was still alive, when he appeared among us. We asked him the same question, and were told that he had not yet heard from Silvio. We were astonished. We went to Silvio's and found him in the court-yard popping bullet after bullet into an ace which he had gummed to the gate. He received us as usual, but made no allusion to what had happened on the previous evening.

Three days passed, and the lieutenant was still alive. "Can it be possible," we asked one another in astonishment, "that Silvio will not fight?"

Silvio did not fight. He accepted a flimsy apology, and became reconciled to the man who had insulted him. This lowered him greatly in the opinion of the young men, who, placing bravery above all the other human virtues and regarding it as an excuse for every imaginable vice, were ready to overlook anything sooner than a lack of courage. However, little by little all was forgotten, and Silvio regained his former influence. I alone could not renew my friendship with him. Being naturally romantic I had surpassed the rest in my attachment to the man whose life was an enigma, and who seemed to me a hero of some mysterious story. He liked me; and with me alone did he drop his sarcastic tone and converse simply and most agreeably on many subjects. But after this unlucky evening the thought that his honour was tarnished, and that it remained so by his own choice, never left me; and this prevented any renewal of our former intimacy. I was ashamed to look at him. Silvio was too sharp and experienced not to notice this and guess the reason. It seemed to vex him, for I observed that once or twice he hinted at an explanation. But I wanted none; and Silvio gave me up. Thenceforth I only met him in the presence of other friends, and our confidential talks were at an end.

The busy occupants of the capital have no idea of the emotions so frequently experienced by residents in the country and in country towns; as, for instance, in awaiting the arrival of the post. On Tuesdays and Fridays the bureau of the regimental staff was crammed with officers. Some were expecting money, others letters or newspapers. The letters were mostly opened on the spot, and the news freely interchanged, the office meanwhile presenting a most lively appearance.

Silvio's letters used to be addressed to our regiment, and he usually called for them himself. On one occasion, a letter having been handed to him, I saw him break the seal and, with a look of great impatience, read the contents. His eyes sparkled. The other officers, each engaged with his own letters, did not notice anything.

"Gentlemen," said Silvio, "circumstances demand my immediate departure. I leave to-night, and I hope you will not refuse to dine with me for the last time. I shall expect you, too," he added, turning towards me, "without fail." With these words he hurriedly left, and we agreed to meet at Silvio's.

I went to Silvio's at the appointed time, and found nearly the whole regiment with him. His things were already packed. Nothing remained but the bare shot-marked walls. We sat down to table. The host was in excellent spirits, and his liveliness communicated itself to the rest of the company. Corks popped every moment. Bottles fizzed, and tumblers foamed incessantly, and we, with much warmth, wished our departing friend a pleasant journey and every happiness. The evening was far advanced when we rose from table. During the search for hats, Silvio wished everybody good-bye. Then, taking me by the hand, as I was on the point of leaving, he said in a low voice,

"I want to speak to you."

I stopped behind.

The guests had gone and we were left alone.

Sitting down opposite one another, we lighted our pipes. Silvio was much agitated; no traces of



**"THE OFFICER SEIZED A BRASS CANDLESTICK."**

his former gaiety remained. Deadly pale, with sparkling eyes, and a thick smoke issuing from his mouth, he looked like a demon. Several minutes passed before he broke silence.

"Perhaps we shall never meet again," he said. "Before saying good-bye I want to have a few words with you. You may have remarked that I care little for the opinions of others. But I like you, and should be sorry to leave you under a wrong impression."

He paused, and began refilling his pipe. I looked down and was silent.

"You thought it odd," he continued, "that I did not require satisfaction from that drunken maniac. You will grant, however, that being entitled to the choice of weapons I had his life more or less in my hands. I might attribute my tolerance to generosity, but I will not deceive you. If I could have chastised him without the least risk to myself, without the slightest danger to my own life, then I would on no account have forgiven him."

I looked at Silvio with surprise. Such a confession completely upset me. Silvio continued:—

"Precisely so: I had no right to endanger my life. Six years ago I received a slap in the face, and my enemy still lives."

My curiosity was greatly excited.

"Did you not fight him?" I inquired. "Circumstances probably separated you?"

"I did fight him," replied Silvio, "and here is a memento of our duel."



**"HERE IS A MEMENTO OF OUR DUEL."**

He rose and took from a cardboard box a red cap with a gold tassel and gold braid.

"My disposition is well known to you. I have been accustomed to be first in everything. From my youth this has been my passion. In my time dissipation was the fashion, and I was the most dissipated man in the army. We used to boast of our drunkenness. I beat at drinking the celebrated Bourtoff, of whom Davidoff has sung in his poems. Duels in our regiment were of daily occurrence. I took part in all of them, either as second or as principal. My comrades adored me, while the commanders of the regiment, who were constantly being changed, looked upon me as an incurable evil.

"I was calmly, or rather boisterously, enjoying my reputation, when a certain young man joined our regiment. He was rich, and came of a distinguished family—I will not name him. Never in my life did I meet with so brilliant, so fortunate a fellow!—young, clever, handsome, with the wildest spirits, the most reckless bravery, bearing a celebrated name, possessing funds of which he did not know the amount, but which were inexhaustible. You may imagine the effect he was sure to produce among us. My leadership was shaken. Dazzled by my reputation, he began by seeking my friendship. But I received him coldly; at which, without the least sign of regret, he kept aloof from me.

"I took a dislike to him. His success in the regiment and in the society of women brought me to despair. I tried to pick a quarrel with him. To my epigrams he replied with epigrams which always seemed to me more pointed and more piercing than my own, and which were certainly much livelier; for while he joked, I was raving.

"Finally, at a ball at the house of a Polish landed proprietor, seeing him receive marked attention from all the ladies, and especially from the lady of the house, who had formerly been on very friendly terms with me, I whispered some low insult in his ear. He flew into a passion, and gave

me a slap on the cheek. We clutched our swords; the ladies fainted; we were separated; and the same night we drove out to fight.

"It was nearly daybreak. I was standing at the appointed spot with my three seconds. How impatiently I awaited my opponent! The spring sun had risen, and it was growing hot. At last I saw him in the distance. He was on foot, accompanied by only one second. We advanced to meet him. He approached, holding in his hand his regimental cap, filled full of black cherries.

"The seconds measured twelve paces. It was for me to fire first. But my excitement was so great that I could not depend upon the certainty of my hand; and, in order to give myself time to get calm, I ceded the first shot to my adversary. He would not accept it, and we decided to cast lots.

"The number fell to him; constant favourite of fortune that he was! He aimed, and put a bullet through my cap.

"It was now my turn. His life at last was in my hands; I looked at him eagerly, trying to detect if only some faint shadow of uneasiness. But he stood beneath my pistol, picking out ripe cherries from his cap and spitting out the stones, some of which fell near me. His indifference enraged me. 'What is the use,' thought I, 'of depriving him of life, when he sets no value upon it.' As this savage thought flitted through my brain I lowered the pistol.

"'You don't seem to be ready for death,' I said; 'you are eating your breakfast, and I don't want to interfere with you.'

"'You don't interfere with me in the least,' he replied. 'Be good enough to fire. Or don't fire if you prefer it; the shot remains with you, and I shall be at your service at any moment.'



### "WE CLUTCHED OUR SWORDS."

"I turned to the seconds, informing them that I had no intention of firing that day; and with this the duel ended. I resigned my commission and retired to this little place. Since then not a single day has passed that I have not thought of my revenge; and now the hour has arrived."

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Silvio took from his pocket the letter he had received that morning, and handed it to me to read. Someone (it seemed to be his business agent) wrote to him from Moscow, that a certain individual was soon to be married to a young and beautiful girl.

"You guess," said Silvio, "who the certain individual is. I am starting for Moscow. We shall see whether he will be as indifferent now as he was some time ago, when in presence of death he ate cherries!"



## "HIS LIFE AT LAST WAS IN MY HANDS."

With these words Silvio rose, threw his cap upon the floor, and began pacing up and down the room like a tiger in his cage. I remained silent. Strange contending feelings agitated me.

The servant entered and announced that the horses were ready. Silvio grasped my hand tightly. He got into the *telega*, in which lay two trunks—one containing his pistols, the other some personal effects. We wished good-bye a second time, and the horses galloped off.

## II.

Many years passed, and family circumstances obliged me to settle in the poor little village of N. Engaged in farming, I sighed in secret for my former merry, careless existence. Most difficult of all I found it to pass in solitude the spring and winter evenings. Until the dinner hour I somehow occupied the time, talking to the *starosta*, driving round to see how the work went on, or visiting the new buildings. But as soon as evening began to draw in, I was at a loss what to do with myself. My books in various bookcases, cupboards, and storerooms I knew by heart. The housekeeper, Kurilovna, related to me all the stories she could remember. The songs of the peasant women made me melancholy. I tried cherry brandy, but that gave me the headache. I must confess, however, that I had some fear of becoming a drunkard from *ennui*, the saddest kind of drunkenness imaginable, of which I had seen many examples in our district.

I had no near neighbours with the exception of two or three melancholy ones, whose conversation consisted mostly of hiccups and sighs. Solitude was preferable to that. Finally I decided to go to bed as early as possible, and to dine as late as possible, thus shortening the evening and lengthening the day; and I found this plan a good one.

Four versts from my place was a large estate belonging to Count B.; but the steward alone lived there. The Countess had visited her domain once only, just after her marriage; and she then only lived there about a month. However, in the second spring of my retirement, there was a report that the Countess, with her husband, would come to spend the summer on her estate; and they arrived at the beginning of June.

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The advent of a rich neighbour is an important event for residents in the country. The landowners and the people of their household talk of it for a couple of months beforehand, and for three years afterwards. As far as I was concerned, I must confess, the expected arrival of a young and beautiful neighbour affected me strongly. I burned with impatience to see her; and the first Sunday after her arrival I started for the village, in order to present myself to the Count and Countess as their near neighbour and humble servant.

The footman showed me into the Count's study, while he went to inform him of my arrival. The spacious room was furnished in a most luxurious manner. Against the walls stood enclosed bookshelves well furnished with books, and surmounted by bronze busts. Over the marble mantelpiece was a large mirror. The floor was covered with green cloth, over which were spread rugs and carpets.

Having got unaccustomed to luxury in my own poor little corner, and not having beheld the wealth of other people for a long while, I was awed; and I awaited the Count with a sort of fear, just as a petitioner from the provinces awaits in an ante-room the arrival of the minister. The doors opened, and a man, about thirty-two, and very handsome, entered the apartment. The Count approached me with a frank and friendly look. I tried to be self-possessed, and began to introduce myself, but he forestalled me.

We sat down. His easy and agreeable conversation soon dissipated my nervous timidity. I was already passing into my usual manner, when suddenly the Countess entered, and I became more confused than ever. She was, indeed, beautiful. The Count presented me. I was anxious to appear at ease, but the more I tried to assume an air of unrestraint, the more awkward I felt myself becoming. They, in order to give me time to recover myself and get accustomed to my new acquaintances, conversed with one another, treating me in good neighbourly fashion without ceremony. Meanwhile, I walked about the room, examining the books and pictures. In pictures I am no *connaisseur*; but one of the Count's attracted my particular notice. It represented a view in

Switzerland. I was not, however, struck by the painting, but by the fact that it was shot through by two bullets, one planted just on the top of the other.

"A good shot," I remarked, turning to the Count.

"Yes," he replied, "a very remarkable shot."

"Do you shoot well?" he added.

"Tolerably," I answered, rejoicing that the conversation had turned at last on a subject which interested me. "At a distance of thirty paces I do not miss a card; I mean, of course, with a pistol that I am accustomed to."

"Really?" said the Countess, with a look of great interest. "And you, my dear, could you hit a card at thirty paces?"

"Some day," replied the Count, "we will try. In my own time I did not shoot badly. But it is four years now since I held a pistol in my hand."

"Oh," I replied, "in that case, I bet, Count, that you will not hit a card even at twenty paces. The pistol demands daily practice. I know that from experience. In our regiment I was reckoned one of the best shots. Once I happened not to take a pistol in hand for a whole month: I had sent my own to the gunsmith's. Well, what do you think, Count? The first time I began again to shoot I four times running missed a bottle at twenty paces. The captain of our company, who was a wit, happened to be present, and he said to me: 'Your hand, my friend, refuses to raise itself against the bottle!' No, Count, you must not neglect to practise, or you will soon lose all skill. The best shot I ever knew used to shoot every day, and at least three times every day before dinner. This was as much his habit as the preliminary glass of vodka."

The Count and Countess seemed pleased that I had begun to talk.

"And what sort of a shot was he?" asked the Count.

"This sort, Count: if he saw a fly settle on the wall——You smile, Countess, but I assure you it is a fact. When he saw the fly, he would call out, 'Kouska, my pistol!' Kouska brought him the loaded pistol. A crack, and the fly was crushed into the wall!"

"That is astonishing!" said the Count. "And what was his name?"

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"Silvio was his name."

"Silvio!" exclaimed the Count, starting from his seat. "*You* knew Silvio?"

"How could I fail to know him?—we were comrades; he was received at our mess like a brother-officer. It is now about five years since I last had tidings of him. Then you, Count, also knew him?"

"I knew him very well. Did he never tell you of one very extraordinary incident in his life?"

"Do you mean the slap in the face, Count, that he received from a blackguard at a ball?"

"He did not tell you the name of this blackguard?"

"No, Count, he did not. Forgive me," I added, guessing the truth, "forgive me—I did not—could it really have been you?"

"It was myself," replied the Count, greatly agitated; "and the shots in the picture are a memento of our last meeting."



**"I FIRED AND HIT THAT PICTURE."**

"Oh, my dear," said the Countess, "for God's sake, do not relate it! It frightens me to think of it."

"No," replied the Count; "I must tell him all. He knows how I insulted his friend. He shall also know how Silvio revenged himself." The Count pushed a chair towards me, and with the liveliest interest I listened to the following story:—

"Five years ago," began the Count, "I got married. The honeymoon I spent here, in this village. To this house I am indebted for the happiest moments of my life, and for one of its saddest remembrances.

"One afternoon we went out riding together. My wife's horse became restive. She was frightened,

got off the horse, handed the reins over to me, and walked home. I rode on before her. In the yard I saw a travelling carriage, and I was told that in my study sat a man who would not give his name, but simply said that he wanted to see me on business. I entered the study, and saw in the darkness a man, dusty and unshaven. He stood there, by the fireplace. I approached him trying to recollect his face.

"You don't remember me, Count?" he said, in a tremulous voice.

"Silvio!" I cried, and I confess, I felt that my hair was standing on end.

"Exactly so," he added. "You owe me a shot; I have come to claim it. Are you ready?" A pistol protruded from his side pocket. [Pg 122]



**"MASHA THREW HERSELF AT HIS FEET."**

"I measured twelve paces, and stood there in that corner, begging him to fire quickly, before my wife came in.

"He hesitated, and asked for a light. Candles were brought in. I locked the doors, gave orders that no one should enter, and again called upon him to fire. He took out his pistol and aimed.

"I counted the seconds.... I thought of her.... A terrible moment passed! Then Silvio lowered his hand.

"I only regret," he said, "that the pistol is not loaded with cherry-stones. My bullet is heavy; and it always seems to me that an affair of this kind is not a duel, but a murder. I am not accustomed to aim at unarmed men. Let us begin again from the beginning. Let us cast lots as to who shall fire first."

"My head went round. I think I objected. Finally, however, we loaded another pistol and rolled up two pieces of paper. These he placed inside his cap; the one through which, at our first meeting, I had put the bullet. I again drew the lucky number.

"Count, you have the devil's luck," he said, with a smile which I shall never forget.

"I don't know what I was about, or how it happened that he succeeded in inducing me. But I fired and hit that picture."

The Count pointed with his finger to the picture with the shot-marks. His face had become red with agitation. The Countess was whiter than her own handkerchief: and I could not restrain an exclamation.

"I fired," continued the Count, "and, thank heaven, missed. Then Silvio—at this moment he was really terrible—then Silvio raised his pistol to take aim at me.

"Suddenly the door flew open, Masha rushed into the room. She threw herself upon my neck with a loud shriek. Her presence restored to me all my courage.

"My dear," I said to her, "don't you see that we are only joking? How frightened you look! Go and drink a glass of water and then come back; I will introduce you to an old friend and comrade."

"Masha was still in doubt.

"Tell me, is my husband speaking the truth?" she asked, turning to the terrible Silvio; "is it true that you are only joking?"

"He is always joking, Countess," Silvio replied. "He once in a joke gave me a slap in the face; in joke he put a bullet through this cap while I was wearing it; and in joke, too, he missed me when he fired just now. And now I have a fancy for a joke." With these words he raised his pistol as if to shoot me down before her eyes!

"Masha threw herself at his feet.

"Rise, Masha! For shame!" I cried in my passion; "and you, sir, cease to amuse yourself at the expense of an unhappy woman. Will you fire or not?"

"I will not," replied Silvio. "I am satisfied. I have witnessed your agitation; your terror. I forced you to fire at me. That is enough; you will remember me. I leave you to your conscience."

"He was now about to go. But he stopped at the door, looked round at the picture which my shot had passed through, fired at it almost without taking aim, and disappeared. [Pg 123]

"My wife had sunk down fainting. The servants had not ventured to stop Silvio, whom they looked upon with terror. He passed out to the steps, called his coachman, and before I could collect myself drove off."

The Count was silent. I had now heard the end of the story of which the beginning had long before surprised me. The hero of it I never saw again. I heard, however, that Silvio, during the



rising of Alexander Ipsilanti, commanded a detachment of insurgents and was killed in action.



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*A Night with the Thames Police.*

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**HEADQUARTERS AT WAPPING.**



HERE was a time when the owners of craft on the Thames practically left their back-doors open and invited the river-thieves to enter, help themselves, and leave unmolested and content. The barges lay in the river holding everything most coveted, from precious cargoes of silk to comfortable-looking bales of tobacco, protected only from wind, weather, and wicked fingers by a layer of tarpaulin—everything ready and inviting to those who devoted their peculiar talents and irrepressible instincts to the water. Goods to the value of a million sterling were being neatly appropriated every year. The City merchants were at their wits' end. Some of the more courageous and determined of them ventured out themselves at night; but the thieves—never at a loss in conceiving an ingenious and ready means of escape—slipped, so to speak, out of their would-be captors' hands by going semi-clothed about their work, greasing their flesh and garments until they were as difficult to catch as eels.

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So the merchants held solemn conclave, the result of which was the formation, in 1792, of "The Preventative Service," a title which clung to the members thereof until 1839, when they were embodied with the Metropolitan Police with the special privilege of posing as City constables. Now they are a body of two hundred and two strong, possessing twenty-eight police galleys and a trio of steam launches. From a million pounds' worth of property stolen yearly a hundred years ago, they have, by a persistent traversing of a watery beat, reduced it to one hundred pounds. Smuggling is in reality played out, though foggy nights are still fascinating to those so inclined; but now they have to be content with a coil or two of old rope, an ingot of lead, or a few fish. Still the river-policeman's eye and the light of his lantern are always searching for suspicious characters and guilty-looking craft.



#### **IN THE CELLS.**

In High-street, Wapping, famous for its river romances, and within five hundred yards of the Old Stairs, the principal station of the Thames Police is to be found. The traditional blue lamp projects over a somewhat gloomy passage leading down to the river-side landing stage. To us, on the night appointed for our expedition, it is a welcome beacon as to the whereabouts of law and order, for only a few minutes previously half a dozen worthy gentlemen standing at the top of some neighbouring steps, wearing slouched hats and anything but a comforting expression on their faces gruffly demanded, "Do you want a boat?" Fortunately we did not. These estimable individuals had only just left the dock of the police station, where they had been charged on suspicion, but eventually discharged.



### INSPECTOR FLETCHER.

It is a quarter to six o'clock. At six we are to start for our journey up the river as far as Waterloo and back again to Greenwich; but there is time to take a hasty survey of the interior of the station, where accommodation is provided for sixteen single men, with a library, reading-room, and billiard-room at their disposal.

"Fine night, sir; rather cold, though," says a hardy-looking fellow dressed in a reefer and a brightly glazed old-time man-o-war's hat. He is one of the two oldest men in the force, and could tell how he lost his wife and all his family, save one lad, when the *Princess Alice* went down in 1878. He searched for ten days and ten nights, but they were lost to him. Another of these river guardians has a never-to-be-forgotten reminiscence of that terrible disaster, when the men of the Thames police were on duty for four or five nights at a stretch. He was just too late to catch the ill-fated vessel! He was left behind on the pier at Sheerness, and with regret watched it leave, full of merry-makers. What must have been his thoughts when he heard the news?

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### A NIGHT CHARGE.

You may pick out any of these thick-set fellows standing about. They have one and all roamed the seas over. Many are old colonials, others middle-aged veterans from the navy and merchant service—every one of them as hard as a rock, capable of rowing for six or eight hours at a stretch without resting on the oar.

"Don't be long inside, sir," shouts a strapping fellow, buttoning up his coat to his neck.

"Aye, aye, skipper," we shout, becoming for the moment quite nautical.

Inside the station-house you turn sharply to the right, and there is the charge-room. Portraits of Sir Charles Warren and other police authorities are picturesquely arranged on the walls. In front of the desk, with its innumerable little wooden rails, where sits the inspector in charge, is the prisoners' dock, from the ground of which rises the military measurement in inches against which the culprit testifies as to his height. The hands of the clock above are slowly going their rounds. In a corner, near the stout steel rails of the dock, lie a couple of bargemen's peak caps. They are labelled with a half-sheet of notepaper. Their history? They have been picked up in the river, but the poor fellows who owned them are—missing! It will be part of our duties to assist in the search for them to-night.

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Just in a crevice by the window are the telegraph instruments. A clicking noise is heard, and the inspector hurriedly takes down on a slate a strange but suggestive message.

"Information received of a prize-fight for £2 a side, supposed to take place between Highgate and Hampstead."

What has Highgate or Hampstead to do with the neighbourhood of Wapping, or how does a prize-fight affect the members of the Thames police, who are anything but pugilistically inclined? In our innocence we learn that it is customary to telegraph such information to all the principal stations throughout London. The steady routine of the force is to be admired.



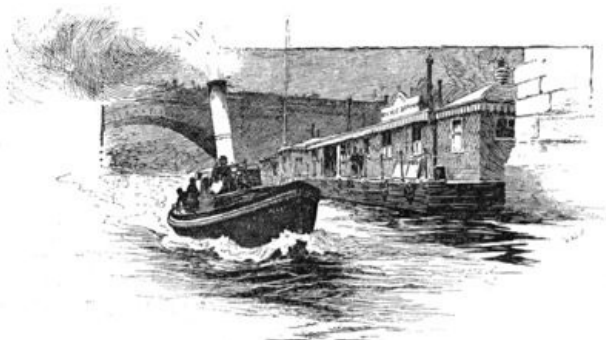
### GOING ON DUTY.

There are countless coats, capes, and caps hanging in a room through which we pass on our way to the cells—cosy, clean, and convenient apartments, and decidedly cheap to the temporary tenant. There are two of them, one being specially retained for women. They are painted yellow, provided with a wash-basin, towel, a supply of soap, and a drinking cup. Heat is supplied through hot-water pipes; a pillow and rug are provided for the women; and, like "desirable villa residences," the apartments are fitted with electric bells.

Here the occupier is lodged for the time being, allowed food at each meal to the value of fourpence, and eventually tried at the Thames Police-court. Look at the doors. They bear countless dents from the boot-tips of young men endeavouring to perform the clever acrobatic feat of kicking out the iron grating over the door through which the gas-jet gives them light. Those of a musical nature ring the electric bell for half an hour at a time, imagining that they are disturbing the peace of the officer in a distant room. But our smart constable, after satisfying himself that all is well, disconnects the current, and sits smiling at his ease. Some of the inmates, too, amuse themselves by manufacturing streamers out of the blankets. They never do it a second time.

Now we are on our way to the riverside. We descend the wooden steps, soaked through with the water which only a few hours previously has been washing the stairs. Our boat is in waiting, manned by three sturdy fellows, under the charge of an inspector. It is a glorious night; the moon seems to have come out just to throw a light upon our artist's note-book, and to provide a picture of the station standing out in strong relief. The carpenter—for they repair their own boats here—looks out from his shop door, and shouts a cheery "Good-night." Our galley receives a gentle push into the water, and we start on a long beat of seven and a half miles.

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## POLICE LAUNCH "ALERT."

Save for the warning of a passing tug, the river is as a place of the dead. How still and solemn! But a sudden "Yo-ho" from the inspector breaks the quietude.

It is the method of greeting as one police galley passes another.

"Yo-ho!" replies the man in charge of the other boat.

"All right. Good-night."

These river police know every man who has any business on the water at night. If the occupant of a boat was questioned, and his "Yo-ho" did not sound familiar, he would be "towed" to the station.

A simple "Yo-ho" once brought about a smart capture. The rower was mystified at the magic word, got mixed in his replies, and accordingly was accommodated with a private room at the station for the night. It transpired that this river purloiner had stolen the boat, and, being of a communicative disposition, was in the habit of getting on friendly terms with the watchmen of the steamers, and so contrived to gain an entrance to the cabins, from which money and watches disappeared. This piece of ingenuity was rewarded with ten years' penal servitude.

Our little craft has a lively time amongst the fire-floats—for fires are just as likely to occur on the river as on the land, and accordingly small launches are dotted about here and there, fulfilling the same duties as the more formidable-looking engines on *terra firma*. A red light signifies their whereabouts, and they usually lie alongside the piers, so as to be able to telephone quickly should a fire occur. If the police saw flames, they would act exactly as their comrades do on land, and hurry to the nearest float to give the alarm.

It blows cold as we spin past Traitor's Gate at the Tower, but our men become weather-beaten on the Thames, and their hands never lose the grip of the oar. They need a hardy frame, a robust constitution, for no matter what the weather, blinding snow or driving rain, these water guardians come out—the foggiest night detains them not; they have to get through the fog and their allotted six hours. At the time of the Fenian scare at the House of Correction, thirty-six hours at a stretch was considered nothing out of the way.

Now the lights of Billingsgate shine out, and we experience a good deal of dodging outside the Custom House. The wind is getting up, and the diminutive sprat-boats are taking advantage of the breeze to return home. Some are being towed along. And as the oars of our little craft touch the water, every man's eyes are fixed in order to catch sight of anything like the appearance of a missing person. A record of the missing, as well as the found, is kept at the station we have just left a mile or two down the river. Ten poor creatures remain yet to be discovered. What stories, thrilling and heartrending, we have to listen to! Yet even in such pitiful occurrences as these, much that is grimly humorous often surrounds them. Many are the sad recognitions on the part of those "found drowned." Experience has taught the police to stand quietly behind those who must needs go through such a terrible ordeal, and who often swoon at the first sight. Where is a more touching story than that of the little girl who tramped all the way from Camden Town to Wapping, for the purpose of identifying her father, who had been picked up near the Old Stairs? She was a brave little lass, and looked up into the policeman's face as he took her by the hand and walked with her towards the mortuary. As they reached the door and opened it, the bravery of the child went to the man's heart. He was used to this sort of thing, but, when he thought of the orphan, the tears came to his eyes; he turned away for a moment, lest his charge should see them and lose what strength her tiny frame possessed. He hesitated before he let her go in.

"You're not frightened, are you, policeman?" she asked innocently.

He could not move, and she went in alone. When the constable followed, he found the child with her arms round her dead father's neck, covering his face with tears and kisses.

We shoot beneath London Bridge, and the commotion brought about by a passing tug causes our men to rest their oars as we are lifted like a cork by the disturbed waves. And as the great dome of St. Paul's appears in sight, standing out solemnly against the black night, we pull our wraps around us, as a little preliminary to a story volunteered by the captain of our crew. The river police could tell of many a remarkable clue to identification—a piece of lace, or the button of a man's trousers. But the inspector has a curious story of a watch to relate—true every word of it.

"Easy!" he cries to his men—"look to it—now get along," and to the steady swing of the oars he commences.



### THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

"It all turned on the inscription engraved on a watch," he says. "When I came to search the clothing of the poor fellow picked up, the timekeeper was found in his pocket. It was a gold one, and on the case was engraved an inscription, setting forth that it had been given to a sergeant in the Marines. Here was the clue sought after—the drowned man had evidently been in the army. The following morning I was on my way to Spring Gardens, when in passing down the Strand I saw a marine, whom I was half inclined to question. I did not, however, do so, but hurried on my sorrowful mission.

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### RESCUED!

"On my arrival, I asked if they knew anything of Sergeant ——. Yes, they did. I must have passed him in the Strand, for he had gone to Coutts' Bank! I was perfectly bewildered. Here was the very man found drowned, still alive!

"I could only wait until his return. Then the mystery was soon explained. It seemed that the sergeant had sold his gold watch in order to get a more substantial silver one, on condition that the purchaser should take the inscription off. This he failed to do, and he in his turn parted with the timekeeper to another buyer, who had finally committed suicide with the watch still in his pocket."

Our police galley is now alongside the station, just below Waterloo Bridge. It is not far to seek why it has been found necessary to establish a depôt here. We look up at the great bridge which spans the river at this point, named alas! with only too much truth, "The Bridge of Sighs." The dark water looks inviting to those burdened with trial and trouble, a place to receive those longing for rest and yearning for one word of sympathy. More suicides occur at this spot than at any other along the whole length of the river, though Whitehall Stairs and Adelphi Stairs are both notorious places, where such poor creatures end their existence. Some twenty-one suicides have been attempted at this point

during the past year, and twenty-five bodies found.

As we step on the timber station the sensation is extremely curious to those used to the firm footing of the pavement. But Inspector Gibbons—a genial member of the river force—assures us

that one soon becomes accustomed to the incessant rocking. Waterloo Police Station—familiar to all river pedestrians during the summer months, owing to the picturesque appearance it presents with its pots of geraniums and climbing fuchsias—is a highly interesting corner.

Just peep into the Inspector's room, and make friends with "Dick," the cat, upon whose shoulders rests the weight of four years and a round dozen pounds. Dick is a capital swimmer, and has been in the water scores of times. Moreover, he is a veritable feline policeman, and woe betide any trespassers of his own race and breed. When a cat ventures within the sacred precincts of the station, Dick makes friends with the intruder for the moment, and, in order to enjoy the breeze, quietly edges him to the extreme end of the platform, and suddenly pushes him overboard. "Another cat last night," is a common expression amongst the men here.

The Waterloo Police Station on occasion becomes a temporary hospital and a home together.

Only half an hour previous to our arrival there had been an attempted suicide, and in a little room, at the far end of the pier, there was every sign that efforts had only recently been successfully made to restore animation to a young fellow who had thrown himself off Blackfriars Bridge. He had been picked up by a passing skiff, and his head held above water until a steamboat passed by and took him on board.

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Here is a bed in the corner, with comfortable-looking pillow and thick, warm blankets, where the unfortunate one is put to bed for a period, previous to being sent to the Infirmary, and afterwards charged. Close at hand is a little medicine chest, containing numerous medicine phials, a flask of stimulants, and a smelling-bottle. A dozen or so of tins, of all shapes and sizes, are handy. These are filled with hot water and placed in contact with the body of the person rescued from the river.

It is often an hour before anything approaching animation makes itself visible, and even four hours have elapsed before any sign has been apparent. The rescued one is laid upon a wooden board, below which is a bath, and rubbed by ready hands according to Dr. Sylvester's method, whose instructions are prominently displayed upon the wall, and are understood by all the police.

It will be noticed in the picture that two men are apparently about to undress the hapless creature who has attempted her own life. The first thought that will occur to the reader on looking at the illustration is, that a member of her own sex ought to do this work. It must be remembered, however, that weeks may elapse without any such event, and there is no place at Waterloo Bridge where a woman could be kept constantly in waiting. Still, it is clearly not right that the men should do this duty, and we think they might be enabled to go to some house in the neighbourhood, in which arrangements had been made for the services of a woman in cases of emergency. We do not forget that great promptness is required at such times in order to resuscitate the body. But, when we remember that every branch in the police system on the Thames is so perfect, it seems a pity that some means cannot be devised.



**AN UNRULY PRISONER.**

Many remarkable things might be told about people who have been in this room. One poor fellow was once an inmate who was humorous to the last. When he was brought in, a pair of dumb-bells were found in his pocket, and a piece of paper on which was scrawled in charcoal the following:—

"Dear Bob,—I am going to drown myself. You will find me somewhere near Somerset House. I can't part with my old friends, Bob, so I'm going to take them with me. Good-bye."

The man was evidently an athlete, and the "old friends" referred to were the weighty dumb-bells.

Many have been picked up with their pockets full of granite stones or a piece of lead. One was found with the hands tied together with a silk handkerchief—a love-token which the forsaken one had used so pitifully. A woman, too, was discovered with a summons in her pocket, which was put down as the cause of her untimely end.

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Remarkable are the escapes of would-be suicides. In one instance a woman threw herself off one of the bridges, and instead of falling into the water, jumped into a passing barge. She had a child in her arms. The little one died at Guy's Hospital, but the mother recovered. Some time ago a woman jumped off Westminster Bridge, and floated safely down to the Temple Stairs, where she was picked up. She had gone off the bridge feet first, the wind had caught her clothes, and by this means her head was kept up, and she was saved.

Perhaps, however, the strangest case and one of the most romantic, was that of Alice Blanche

Oswald. Previous to committing suicide she wrote letters to herself, purporting to come from wealthy people in America, and setting forth a most heartrending history. Her death aroused a vast amount of public sympathy. A monument to her memory was suggested, and subscriptions were already coming in, when inquiries proved that her supposed friends in America did not exist, and that the story contained in the missives was a far from truthful one. She was nothing more than an adventuress.

As we glance in at the solitary cell, built on exactly the same principle as those at Wapping, in which eleven enterprising individuals have been accommodated at one time, we learn of the thousand and one odds and ends that are washed up—revolvers and rifles, housebreaking instruments which thoughtful burglars have got rid of; the plant of a process for manufacturing counterfeit bank-notes, with some of the flimsy pieces of paper still intact. A plated cup was once picked up at Waterloo, which turned out to be the proceeds of a burglary at Eton College; it is probable the cup floated all the way from the Thames at Windsor to Waterloo.

Forty-eight men are always on duty at this station, including four single men, whose quarters are both novel and decidedly cosy. This quartet of bachelors sleep in bunks, two above the others. The watch of one of the occupants is ticking away in one berth, whilst a clock is vying with it next door. These men have each a separate locker for their clothes, boot-brushes, tea-pot, coffee-pot, food, &c. The men do all their own cleaning and cooking; if you will, you may look into a kitchen in the corner, in which every pot and pan is as bright as a new pin.

But our time is up; the chiming of "Big Ben" causes the genial inspector gently to remind us that we must be off, and once more we are seated in the boat, and, cutting right across the river, move slowly on our way to Greenwich, where the old *Royalist* is transformed into a station, a familiar institution some sixteen or seventeen years ago at Waterloo.

The whole scene is wonderfully impressive—not a sound is to be heard but the distant rumbling of the vehicles over London Bridge. Our men pause for a moment and rest their oars. The great wharves are deserted, the steamers and barges appear immovable as they lie alongside—there is no life anywhere or any sign of it. Again we get along, halting for a moment to look up at the old man-o'-war, the famous *Discovery*, which ventured out to the Arctic regions under Captain Nares. The old three-mast schooner—for the vessel is nothing more now, being used as a river carrier of the stores from the Victualling Yard at Deptford to the various dockyards—had on board when she went to colder regions a future member of the Thames Police: hence he was called "Arctic Jack" by his companions, a near relation to "Father Neptune," a cognomen bestowed upon another representative of the force, owing to the wealth of white beard which he possessed.

Past Deptford Cattle Market, the red lamps on the jetties light up the water; a good pull and we are at Greenwich Steps, near to which is "The Ship," ever associated with the name of "whitebait." Our beat is ended, and a hearty "Good-night" is re-echoed by the men as we stand watching them on the river steps whilst they pull the first few strokes on their way home to Wapping.



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## ***The Maid of Treppi.***

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FROM THE GERMAN OF PAUL HEYSE.

(Continued from [page 69.](#))



He had not gone very far from her before he found himself between rocks and bushes and without a path; for however much he might deny it to himself, the words of this extraordinary girl had made him anxious at heart, and all his thoughts were centred on himself. However, he still saw the shepherd's fire on the opposite meadow, and worked his way through manfully, trying to get down to the plain below. He reckoned by looking at the sun that it must be about ten o'clock. But when he had climbed down the steep mountain side, he came upon a shady road, and then to a wooden bridge across a fresh stream. This seemed to lead up the other side, and out on to the meadow. He followed it, and at first the path was a very steep one, but then went winding along the mountain side. He soon saw that it would not bring him very quickly to his destination; but large overhanging rocks above prevented his taking a straighter direction, and he was obliged to trust himself to his path, unless he turned back altogether. He walked on rapidly, and at first as though loosed from bonds, glancing now and then up at the hut, which did not seem to draw near. By and by, when his blood began to cool, he recalled all the details of the scene he had just gone through. He saw the lovely girl's face bodily before him, and not as before through the mist of his anger. He could not help feeling full of pity for her. "There she sits," he said to himself, "poor crazy thing, and trusts to her magic arts. That was why she left the hut by moonlight, to pluck who knows what harmless plant. Why, yes; my brave contrabandists showed me the strange white flowers growing between the rocks, and told me they were sure always to evoke mutual



love. Innocent flowers, what things are imputed to you! And that, too, was why the wine was so bitter on my tongue. How everything child-like, the older it is, becomes the stronger and more honoured! She stood before me like a sibyl, stronger and surer in her faith than any of those Roman ones who cast their books into the flames. Poor heart of woman, how lovely, yet how wretched in delusion!"

The further he went on his way, the more he felt the touching grandeur of her love, and the power of her beauty enhanced by the separation. "I ought not to have made her suffer for wishing in all good faith to save me by freeing me from inevitable duties. I ought to have taken her hand and to have said: 'I love you Fenice, and, if I live, I will come back to you and take you home.' How blind of me not to think of that suggestion! a disgrace for any lawyer! I ought to have taken leave of her with a lover's kisses, and then she would never have suspected I was deceiving her. Instead of which I tried to be straightforward where she was defiant, and I only made things worse."

Then he buried himself in thoughts of such a leave-taking, and seemed to feel her breath and the pressure of her red lips on his own. It was as though he heard his name called. "Fenice!" he answered eagerly, and stood still with beating heart. The stream flowed on below him, the branches of the fir trees hung motionless; far and near was a vast, shady wilderness.

Once again her name rose to his lips, but shame in time sealed his mouth—shame and a sort of terror as well. He struck his forehead with his hand. "Am I already so far gone that waking I dream of her?" he exclaimed. "Is she right, and can no man under the sun resist her charm? Then I were no better than she would make me out to be, worthy only to be called a woman's man all my life long. No, away with you, you lovely, treacherous fiend!"

He had regained his composure for the time being, but he now perceived that he had utterly and entirely strayed from the path. He could not go back without running into the arms of danger. So he decided at all hazards to climb to some high point from which he could look about him for the shepherd's hut. Where he was walking, the one bank of the rushing stream below was too steep and precipitous. So he fastened his coat round his neck, chose a safe spot, and at one bound had leapt across to the other side of the chasm, the walls of which at that place nearly met. With fresh courage he climbed the precipice on the other side and soon stood out in the sun.

It scorched his head, and his tongue was dry, as he worked his way upward with great exertion. Then, suddenly, he was seized with the fear that, after all his trouble, he would not be able to reach his destination. The blood went to his head more and more; he abused the infernal wine that he had swallowed in the morning, and was forced to think of the white blossoms that had been pointed out to him the day before. They grew here too. He shuddered. What if it were true, he thought, that there were powers which enthrall our heart and senses, and bend a man's will to a girl's whim? better any extremity than such a disgrace! rather death than slavery! "But no, no! a lie can only conquer one who believes in it. Be a man, Filippo; forward, the summit is before you; but a short while, and this cursed haunted mountain will be left behind for ever!"

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And yet he could not calm the fever in his veins. Each stone, each slippery place, every bare pine-branch hanging before him, were obstacles which he surmounted only by an almost superhuman effort of will. When he at last arrived at the top, and still holding to the last bush, swung himself on to the summit, he could not look about him for the rapid coursing of the blood to his head, and the blinding, dazzling light of the sun on the yellow rocks around. Furiously he rubbed his forehead, and passed his fingers through his tangled hair as he lifted his hat. But then he heard his name again in real earnest, and gazed horror-struck in the direction from which came the sound. And there, a few paces from him, Fenice sat on a rock just as he had left her, gazing at him with intensely happy eyes.

"At last you have come, Filippo!" she said, earnestly. "I expected you sooner."

"Spirit of evil," he shrieked, beside himself, and inwardly torn in two by horror and attraction, "do you still mock me who have been wandering distressed in these forsaken places, and with the sun beating down into my very brain? Is it any triumph for you that I am forced to see you, only to curse you once again? By heaven, though I have found you, I have not sought you, and you will lose me yet."

She shook her head with a strange smile. "Something attracts you without your knowledge," she said. "You would find me though all the mountains in the world were between us, for I mixed with your wine seven drops of the dog's heart-blood. Poor Fuoco! He loved me and hated you. Thus will you hate the Filippo who so lately cast me off, and will find peace only if you love me. Do you see now, Filippo, that I have conquered you at last? Come, now I will again show you the way to Genoa, my darling, my beloved, my husband!"

And she stood up and would have embraced him; but the sight of his face suddenly startled her. He turned all at once pale as death, only the white of the eyes was red; his lips moved, but no sound came; his hat had fallen from his head, and with his hands he violently waved off her approach.

"A dog! a dog!" were the first words he with difficulty ejaculated. "No, no, no! you shall not conquer—demon that you are. Better a dead man than a living dog!" Thereupon he burst into a peal of terrible laughter, and slowly, as though he fought hard for each step, his eyes fixed and staring at the girl, he staggered and fell back into the ravine behind him.

For an instant her head swam, and all seemed dark around her. She pressed her hands to her heart, and when she saw the tall form disappear over the edge of the rock, she gave a scream

which resounded through the ravine like the cry of a falcon. She tottered forward a few steps, and then stood straight and upright, her hands still pressed to her heart. "Madonna!" she exclaimed mechanically.

Still looking before her she rapidly drew near the edge, and began to climb down the stony wall between the fir trees. Words without sense or meaning broke from her trembling lips. One hand she pressed against her heart, while with the other she helped herself down by branches and stones. Thus she reached the foot of the trees.

There he lay, his eyes closed, his hair and forehead covered with blood, his back against the foot of an old tree. His coat was torn, and his right leg seemed hurt. She could not tell whether he was still alive. She took him in her arms, and then felt that he still moved. "Praised be the Lord!" she said, and breathed more freely. She seemed to be endowed with a giant's strength as she began to climb the steep ascent, carrying the helpless man in her arms. But it was a weary way. Four times she laid him down on the mossy rocks. He was still unconscious.

When at last she gained the summit with her



"THERE HE LAY."

Tommaso; you, Bippo, take the legs. When you go uphill, you must go first, Tommaso. Now, raise him gently, gently! and, stay—dip this in water and lay it on his forehead, and wet it again at every spring. Do you understand?"

She tore off a great piece of the linen kerchief on her head, dipped it in water and laid it on Filippo's bleeding brow. Then they lifted him, and the men started to carry him to Treppi. Fenice, after watching them some time with anxious, straining eyes, gathered up her skirts and went rapidly down the rough and stony mountain path.



"HE FELL BACK INTO THE RAVINE."

hapless burden, she too sank down, and lay for a moment fainting and oblivious. Then she got up and went in the direction of the shepherd's hut. As soon as she was near enough, she gave a shrill cry across the valley. She was answered first by echo only, then by a man's voice. She repeated her cry and then turned back without waiting for the answer. When she stood again beside the senseless man, she groaned aloud, and lifting him, carried him into the shade of the rock, where she herself had been sitting waiting for him.

When he awoke to consciousness, and slowly opened his eyes again, he found himself still there. He saw two shepherds beside him, an old man and a lad of about seventeen. They were throwing water in his face and rubbing his temples. His head was pillowed softly. He little knew that it was in the girl's lap. He seemed altogether to have forgotten her. He drew a long breath, which made his whole frame quiver, and again closed his eyes. At last he said in trembling tones, "Will one of you good people go down—quickly, to Pistoja. I am expected there. May God, in His mercy, reward whoever will tell the landlord of the Fortuna—what has happened to me. My name is—" but here his voice failed him. He had fainted again.

"I will go," said the girl. "Meanwhile, you two must carry the gentleman to Treppi and lay him in the bed which Nina will show you. She must send for the *chiaruccia*, the old woman, and let her attend to the gentleman and dress his wounds. Lift him up; you take the shoulders,

It was nearly three in the afternoon when she reached Pistoja. The Fortuna Inn was some hundred paces outside the town, and at this hour of siesta there was not much life about the place. Carriages, with the horses taken out, stood in the shade under the overhanging roof, the drivers fast asleep on the cushions; opposite, too, at the great smithy, work had stopped; and not a breath of air penetrated through the dusty trees along the high road. Fenice went up to the fountain before the house, the busy jet of water flowing ceaselessly down into the great stone trough, and there refreshed her hands and face. Then she took a long slow drink to satisfy both thirst and hunger, and went into the inn.

The landlord got up sleepily from the bench at the bar, but sat down again when he saw that it was only a girl from the hills who thus disturbed his rest.

"What do you want?" he said to her sharply. "If you want anything to eat, or wine to drink, go to the kitchen."

"Are you the landlord?" she asked quietly.

"I should think so; I should think everyone knew *me*—Baldassare Tizzi, of the Fortuna. What do you bring me, my good girl?"

"A message from the lawyer, Signor Filippo Mannini."

"Eh, what? Indeed? That's another matter," and he got up hurriedly. "Is he not coming himself, child? There are some gentlemen here waiting for him."

"Then take me to them."

"What, secrets? May I not know what message he sends to these gentlemen?"

"No."

"Well, well, my child, well, well. Each one has his own secrets—your pretty little obstinate head as well as old Baldassare's hard pate. So he is not coming? The gentlemen will not be pleased at that; they evidently have important business with him."

He stopped and looked at the girl with a sidelong glance. But as she did not show any signs of taking him further into her confidence, and went to open the door, he put on his straw hat and went with her, shaking his head all the time.

There was a small vineyard at the back of the inn, which they walked through, the old man keeping up a continued flow of questions and exclamations, to which the girl did not deign to reply. At the further end of the middle walk stood a poor-looking summerhouse; the shutters were closed, and inside a thick curtain hung behind the glass door. The landlord made Fenice stop a little way from this pavilion, and went up to the door, which was opened when he knocked. Fenice noticed how the curtain was then drawn on one side, and a pair of eyes looked out at her. Then the old man came back to her and said that the gentlemen would speak to her.

As Fenice entered the pavilion, a man, who had been sitting at the table with his back to the door, rose from his seat and gave a sharp and penetrating look at her. Two other men remained seated. On the table she saw bottles of wine and glasses.

"Is Signor Filippo, the lawyer, not coming according to promise?" asked the man before whom she stood. "Who are you, and what verification have you of your message?"

"I am Fenice Cattaneo, sir; a maiden from Treppi. Verification? I have none, except that I am speaking the truth."

"Why is he not coming? We thought he was a man of honour."

"And he is so still; but he has fallen from a rock and hurt his head and legs, and is unconscious."

Her interlocutor exchanged looks with the other man, and then said:

"You betray the truth at all events, Fenice Cattaneo, because you do not understand how to lie. If he had lost consciousness, how could he send you here to tell us of it?"



**AT THE FORTUNA INN.**



### "IS SIGNOR FILIPPO NOT COMING?"

"Speech came back to him at intervals. And he then said that he was expected here at the inn; I was to let you know what had happened to him."

One of the other men gave a short, dry laugh. "You see," said the speaker, "these gentlemen do not believe much of your tale either. Certainly it is easier to play the poet than the man of honour."

"If, Signor, you mean by that that Signor Filippo has not come here out of cowardice, then it is an abominable falsehood, and may heaven reckon it to you!" She said this fiercely, and looked at them all three in succession.

"You wax warm, little one," scoffed the man. "You are doubtless Signor Filippo's sweetheart, eh?"

"No, the Madonna knows I am not!" replied she in her deepest voice. The men whispered together, and she heard one of them say: "That nest up there is Tuscan still."—"You don't seriously believe in this dodge?" asked the third. "He is no more at Treppi than——"

Their whispering was interrupted by Fenice: "Come and see for yourselves! But you must not carry arms if I am to be your guide."

"Foolish child," said the first speaker, "do you think that we would take the life of so pretty a creature as you?"

"No, but his life; I feel sure you would."

"Have you any other conditions to make, Fenice Cattaneo?"

"Yes, that you take a surgeon with you. Perhaps you already have one with you, signors?"

No one answered her. But the three men put their heads together in eager talk. "When we arrived I saw him by chance in the front part of the house," said one of them; "I hope he has not yet gone back to the town," and then he left the pavilion. He came back shortly with a fourth individual, who did not seem to know the rest of the party.

"Will you do us the favour to go up to Treppi with us?" asked the first speaker. "You have probably been told what it is all about."

The other bowed in silence, and they all left the pavilion. As they passed the kitchen, Fenice asked for some bread, and ate a few mouthfuls. Then she went on in front of the party, and took the road to the mountains. She paid no heed to her companions, who were talking eagerly together, but hurried on as fast as she could; sometimes they had to call to her, or she would have been lost to sight. Then she stood still, and gazed into space in a hopeless, dreamy way, her hand firmly pressed to her heart. The evening had closed in before they reached the heights.



**"SHE WENT ON IN FRONT OF THE PARTY."**

The little village of Treppi looked no livelier than usual. A few children's faces peered curiously out at the open windows, and one or two women came out to their doors, as Fenice went past with her companions. She spoke to no one as she drew near her home, returning the neighbours' greeting with a hasty wave of the hand. A group of men stood talking before the door, others were busy with some heavily-laden horses, and contrabandists hurried to and fro. A sudden silence came over the people, as they saw the strangers approaching. They stepped on one side, and allowed them to pass. Fenice exchanged a few words with Nina in the big room, and then opened her own chamber door.

The wounded man lay stretched on the bed in the dimly-lighted room. An old, old woman, from the village, sat on the floor beside him.

"How goes it, *chiaruccia*?" asked Fenice.

"Not so badly, praised be the Madonna!" answered the old woman, measuring with rapid glances the gentlemen who followed the girl into the room.

Filippo started suddenly out of his sleep, his pale face glowing. "Is it you?" he asked.

"Yes; I have brought with me the gentleman with whom you were to fight, that he may see for himself that you could not go. And there is a surgeon here, too."

The dull eye of the wounded man slowly surveyed the four strange faces. "He is not one of them," he said. "I know none of these gentlemen."

When he had said this, and was about to close his eyes again, the chief spokesman stepped forward: "It is sufficient that we know *you*," he said, "Signor Filippo Mannini. We had orders to await you and arrest you. Letters of yours have been found, from which it appears that it is not only to fight a duel that you have come back to Tuscany, but to renew certain connections through which your party will receive advances. You see before you the commissary of police, and here are my orders." He took a paper out of his pocket, and held it out to Filippo. But he only stared at it as if he had not understood a word, and fell back again into a half-stunned state.

"Examine his wounds, doctor," said the commissary, turning to the surgeon. "If his state in any way permits, we must have this gentleman transported down without delay. I saw horses outside. We shall be enforcing the law in two ways if we take possession of them, for they are laden with smuggled goods. It is a good thing to know what kind of people visit Treppi, if one really wishes for the information."

As he said this, and the surgeon approached the bed, Fenice disappeared out of the room. The old *chiaruccia* sat on quietly where she was, muttering to herself. Voices were heard outside, and a great bustle of people coming and going, faces looked in at the hole in the wall, but disappeared again quickly.

"It is just possible," said the surgeon, "that we can get him conveyed down, if his wounds are well and firmly bandaged. Of course, he would get well much quicker if he were left here quietly in

the care of this old witch, whose herbs and balsams would put to shame the most learned physician. His life might be endangered by wound-fever on the way, and I will on no account take any responsibility."

"It is not necessary—not at all," returned the commissary. "The way we get rid of him need not be taken into consideration. Put your bandages on him as tightly as you can, that nothing be wanting, and then forward! It is moonlight, and we will take a guide. Go you outside, Molza, and make sure of the horses."



**"THE CONSTABLE STOOD PETRIFIED."**

The constable to whom this order was addressed opened the door quickly, and would have gone out, but stood petrified at the unexpected sight that met his view. The adjoining room was filled by a band of villagers, with two contrabandists at their head. Fenice was still talking to them as the door opened. She now advanced to her own chamber door, and said with ringing tones:—

"Gentlemen, you must leave this room immediately, and without the wounded man, or you will never see Pistoja again. No blood has ever been shed in this house as long as Fenice Cattaneo has been mistress of it, and may the Madonna ever preserve us from such horrors. Nor must you attempt to come back again with a stronger force. Remember the place where the rocky steps wind up between the cliffs. A child could defend that pass, if the stones that lie on the top were rolled over the edge. We will keep a watch posted there until this gentleman is in safety. Now you can go, and boast of your heroic deed, that you deceived a girl, and would have murdered a wounded man."

The faces of the constables grew paler and paler, and a pause ensued after her last words. Then all three of them drew pistols out of their pockets, and the commissary said calmly: "We come in the name of the law. If you do not respect it yourselves, would you prevent others from enforcing it? It may cost the lives of six of you, if you oblige us to carry out the law by force."

A murmur ran through the group.

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"Silence, friends!" exclaimed the determined girl. "They dare not do it. They know that for each one they shoot down, his murderer would die a six-fold death. You speak like a fool," she went on, turning to the commissary. "The fear depicted on your faces is a more sensible spokesman. Do as it suggests to you. The way is open to you, gentlemen!"



**"THEY MARCHED THROUGH THE EXCITED BAND OF VILLAGERS."**

She stepped back, pointing with her left hand to the door of the house. The men in the bedroom whispered together a little; then, with tolerable composure, they marched through the excited band of villagers, whose parting curses waxed louder and louder as the strangers left the house. The surgeon seemed uncertain whether to go too, but, on an authoritative sign from the girl, he hastily joined his companions.

The wounded man in bed had followed the entire scene with wide-open eyes. The old woman now went to him and settled his pillows. "Lie still, my son!" she said. "There is no danger. The old *chiaruccia* keeps watch, and our Fenice, blessed child, will see that you are safe. Sleep, sleep!"

She hushed him to slumber like a child, singing monotonously until he slept. But the face of Fenice was with him in his dreams.

For ten days Filippo had been up in the mountains, nursed by the old woman. He slept soundly at night, and in the daytime he sat at the open door enjoying the fresh air and the solitude. As soon as he was able to write once more, he sent a messenger to Bologna with a letter, to which he received an answer the next day; but his pale countenance did not show whether it was satisfactory or not. He spoke to no one except his old nurse and the children from the village. Fenice he saw only in the evening, when she was busy at her fireside, for she left the house with the rising sun and remained away the whole day in the mountains. He gathered from chance remarks that this was not her usual custom. But even when she was in the house there was no opportunity of talking to her. Altogether, she seemed not to notice his presence in the very least, and her life went on as before. But her face had become like stone, and the light had faded from her eyes.

One day, enticed on by the lovely weather, Filippo had gone further than usual from the house, and for the first time, conscious of returning strength, was climbing up a gentle slope, when, turning a corner of a rock, he was startled to see Fenice sitting on the moss beside a spring. She had a distaff and a spindle in her hands, and as she spun was lost in thought. She looked up when she heard Filippo's footsteps, but did not utter a word, nor did the expression of her face alter. She rose up quickly and began to collect her things. She went away, too, without heeding that he called her, and was soon lost to sight.

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The morning after this meeting he had just risen, and his thoughts had flown to her again, when the door of his room was opened and Fenice walked in quietly. She remained standing at the door, and waved him back haughtily when he would have hurried up to her.

"You are now quite cured," she said, coldly. "I have spoken to the old woman. She thinks that you are strong enough to travel, in short stages and on horseback. You will, therefore, leave Treppi to-morrow morning early, and never again return. I demand this promise from you."

"I will give you the promise, Fenice, but on one condition only."

She was silent.

"That you will go with me, Fenice!" he exclaimed in unrestrained emotion.

Her brows knit in anger. But she controlled herself, and, holding the door-handle, said: "How have I merited your mockery? You must make the promise without a condition; I exact it from your sense of honour, Signor."



**"A DISTAFF AND SPINDLE IN HER HANDS."**

"Would you thus cast me off after causing your love-potion to enter my very marrow, and make me yours for ever, Fenice?"

She quietly shook her head. "From henceforth there is no more magic between us," she said, gloomily. "You had lost blood before the potion had had time to take effect; the spell is broken. And it is well, for I see that I did wrong. Let us speak no more about it, and say only that you will go. A horse will be ready and a guide for wherever you wish to go."

"And if it be no longer the same magic which binds me to you, it must be some other which you know not of, Fenice. As sure as God is over us."

"Silence!" she interrupted, and curled her lip scornfully. "I am deaf to any speeches you can make. If you think you owe me anything and would take pity on me—then leave me, and that will settle our account. You shall not think that this poor head of mine can learn nothing."

I know now that one can buy a man no more by humble services than by seven long years of waiting, which are also, in the sight of God, a matter of no moment. You must not think that you have made me miserable—you have cured me! Go! and my thanks go with you!"

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"Answer me, in God's name!" he exclaimed, beside himself as he drew nearer, "have I cured you, also, of your love?"

"No," she said, firmly. "Why do you ask about it? It belongs to me; you have neither power nor right over it. Go!"

Thereupon she stepped back across the threshold. The next moment he had flung himself on the stones at her feet, and clasped her knees.

"If what you say be true," he cried, overcome with grief, "then save me, take me to yourself, or this head of mine, saved by a miracle, will go to pieces like my heart, which you reject and spurn. My world is a void, my life a prey to hatred

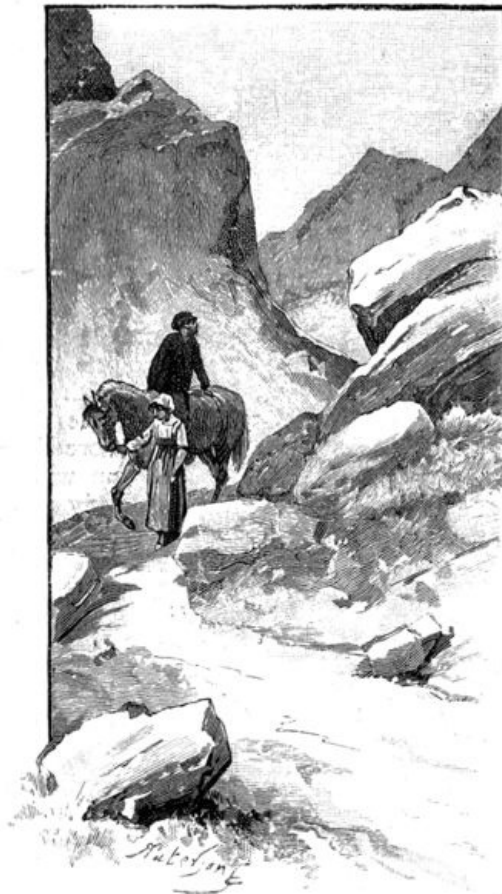
and revenge, my old and my new homes banish me—what is there left for me to live for if I must lose you, too?"

Then he raised his eyes to her and saw the tears streaming down her cheeks. Her face was still immovable; she drew a long breath and opened her eyes; her lips moved, but no sound came; the life in her seemed to awaken with one burst. She bent down and raised him with her powerful arms. "You are mine," she said, with trembling voice. "Then I, too, will be yours!"



**"HE FLUNG HIMSELF ON THE STONES AT HER FEET."**

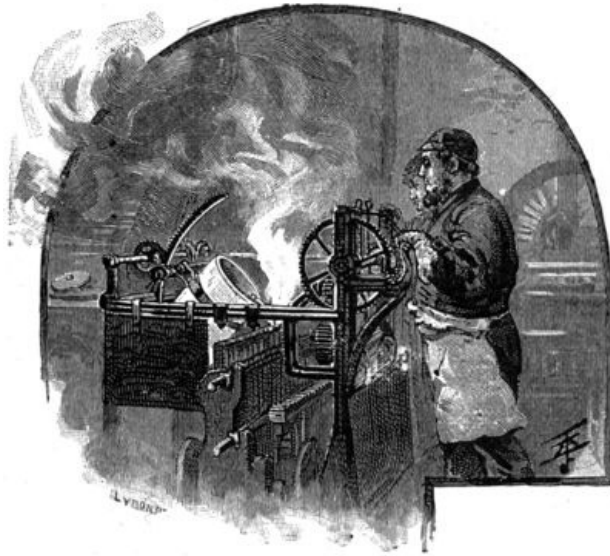
When the sun rose the following day, the pair were on their way to Genoa, whither Filippo had decided to retire from the persecutions of his enemies. The pale, tall man rode on a steady horse, which his betrothed led by the bridle. On either side the hills and valleys of the beautiful Apennines lay bright in the clear autumnal air, the eagles were circling overhead, and far in the distance shone the deep-blue sea. And bright and tranquil like the far-off ocean the travellers' future lay before their eyes.







NUMISMATICS is a science in which the vast majority of people probably take but the faintest interest. Yet the history of coinage, its developments, its ramifications, is bound up indissolubly with the history of the human race. It is the history of money; and money, as Carlyle said of his own time, is the one certain nexus as between man and man. Money is the determining factor in four-fifths of our relationships. It has made the world what it is; on the one hand it has brutalised mankind, and on the other it has given man unrivalled opportunities of winning popular esteem. Money has ruined and created individuals, families, States. Equally often it has brought worldly happiness and worldly misery; it has broken hearts, unhinged reasons, undone great enterprises; it has shed light in dark places, secured comfort for the weary and the suffering, and involved all that heart can desire. Noble knees have bent before "Lucre's sordid charms"; the humble and the struggling have exalted themselves to place and power by its means. Pope gives us an idea not only of the use but of the abuse to which riches may be put, from the hiring of the dark assassin to the corruption of a friend, and the bribing of a Senate.



### RUNNING SILVER INTO MOULDS.

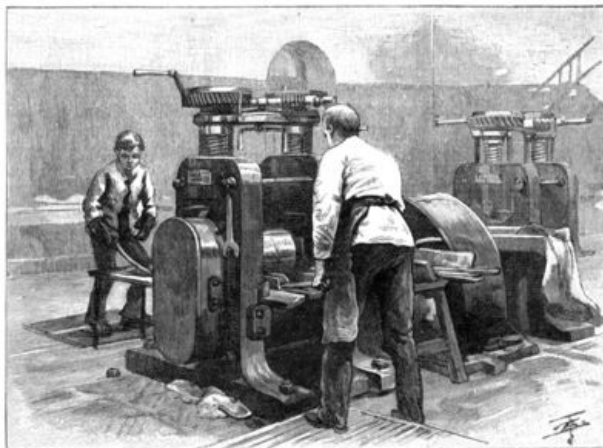
Money in the form of cash has been infinitely more to civilisation than mere barter and exchange ever were to barbarous races content to accept one article in payment for another. It is, in fact, only necessary to let the mind dwell for a period on all that the possession or want of coin means to a people, individually and collectively, to render any inquiry into the working of our money manufactory one of considerable fascination. The attractions of the Mint for the ordinary sightseer have, it would seem, yearly become greater, and in 1889, according to the Report of the Deputy Master, the number of visitors was larger than in any previous year, no less than 7,912 persons—that is, an average of twenty-five a day—having been shown over the establishment on Tower Hill. Vivid an idea of the place as the illustrations which accompany this article will convey to those who have never been to the Mint, it may at once be said, that to thoroughly grasp the actual work done there, a visit is essential. It is an institution round which centres so much human energy and scientific achievement that a picture should certainly make most people anxious to know something more about it.

The Mint, as one approaches it on Tower Hill, suggests that it may be a barrack, and the sentry pacing up and down outside lends colour to this view, until one finds one's passage through the entrance gate blocked by a sturdy policeman. Unless you happen to be fully armed with credentials, or orders, you will not easily run the gauntlet of the keeper of the peace and the gate, affable gentleman though he is. To be shown over the Mint you must get an order from the Deputy Master, and then everything is clear.

Once within the precincts of the establishment, your education—if it is a first visit, as this of ours is—begins. You have probably, when pocketing your salary at the end of the week, never given a moment's thought as to the process by which money comes into the world. The pounds (if you have any), the shillings, and the pence which you carry in your pockets are the result of a combination of experience and skill which you, perhaps, little suspect.

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When the bullion—the metal in its pure state—arrives at the Mint, it is assayed—that is, tested. It is then passed on to the Melting-room, and, together with the baser metal which forms the alloy necessary to reduce it to the proper standard, placed in the crucible, or melting-pot. Let us take the coining of silver as an example. The crucible used is made of mixed clay and graphite, each vessel holding about three thousand ounces. On two sides of the Melting-room are coke furnaces, and into one of these the crucible is dropped.



**IN THE ROLLING-ROOM.**

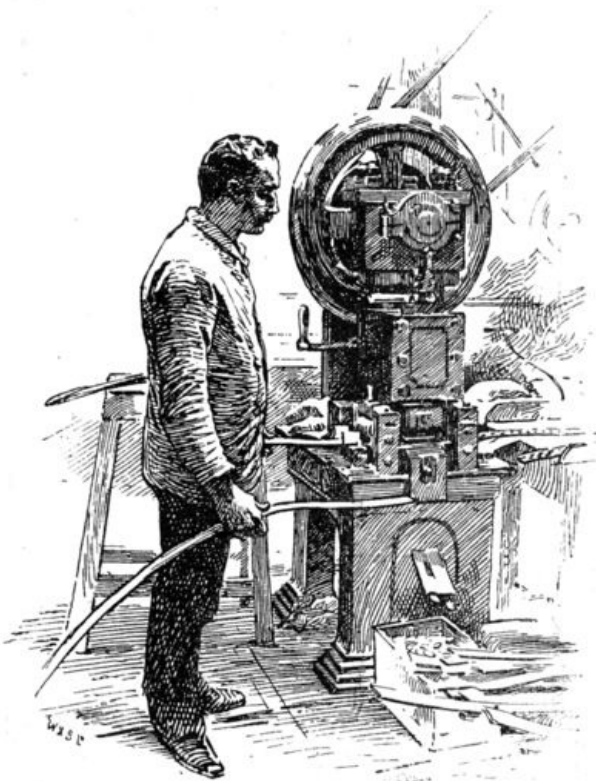
Here it remains until the metal is at a molten heat, when it is lifted by means of a crane on to an apparatus shown in our illustration. This forms a pretty sight. The crucible is red-hot, and the boiling metal, as it is stirred vigorously by one of the men with an iron rod, emits a lovely bluish flame. The apparatus tilts the pot, and the metal runs into a series of moulds which move on a carriage underneath. These moulds being well oiled, the metal has no chance of becoming part of them. The bars formed in this way are twelve inches long and three-eighths of an inch thick. When removed from the moulds their edges are ragged, but a revolving file soon makes them smooth, and the bars are ready to be again assayed. A piece is chipped from one of them, and if the necessary standard of fineness has been secured, the bars pass to the next department.

This is the Rolling-room. The metal, it must be understood, is far from hard, and the reduction of the thickness and consequent increase in the length, due to the rolling of the bars, are not so difficult a matter as to the uninitiated they may seem. The bars are placed between adjustable cylinders and rolled into strips, or "fillets" as they are called.

They pass several times through the machine, being reduced the one-nineteenth part of an inch in each rolling at first, but, finally, only the one-hundredth part of an inch. Naturally the process makes the metal very hard, and it has to be annealed—that is, heated and softened—constantly until it is the right thickness. We need only state that the strips from which half-sovereigns are made must not vary more than 1-20,000th part of an inch—in other words, they must be within 1-10,000th part of an inch of the nominal thickness—to give an idea of the minute care with which every stage of the development of the coin has to be watched. Two-tenths of a grain is the divergence allowed in the weight of the sovereign, but even this margin may mean a difference of more than £3,000 on a million sovereigns.

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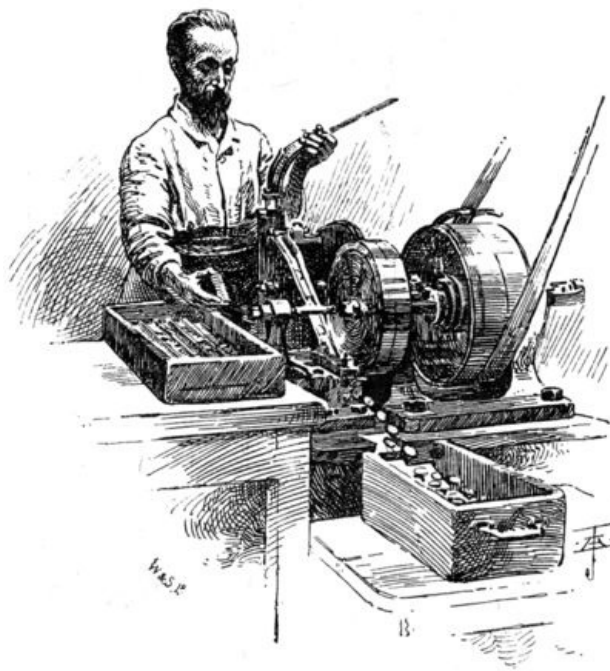
The strips, as they leave the Rolling-room, are about four feet long and double the width of the shilling. They are taken to the Cutting-room, and here for the first time we get something approaching a piece of money. The "fillets" are placed in the cutting-machines, by a man who feeds two at a time. No doubt many persons have formed the idea that the coin is cut, cucumber-fashion, from a metal rod; we have, indeed, heard people suggest as much. Well, the foregoing is sufficient to dispel any such notion. The fillet passes beneath two punches, and over holes the size of the coin. As the former descend with swift, sharp, irresistible force, they punch the "blanks" of the coin out of the strip. The blanks fall through a tube into a tray or pan, and what remains of the strips is sent back to the Melting-room, to be turned again into bars. In the case of shillings, two blanks are forced out at once. In the case of copper, five disappear at a blow, but in the case of large silver coins, only one blank is cut at a time. The blanks of the shilling are produced at the rate of some 300 an hour.



**MARKING MACHINE.**

Having secured the blank, it might well be imagined that there was nothing more to be done but to impress it with the proper device on its obverse and reverse. But we are not yet more than half-way on the road to the coin which can be sent to the Bank, there to be handed over the counter to the public.

Close by the cutting-machine is what is called a marking-machine. The special function of this is to raise the edge which all coins possess for



**CUTTING MACHINE.**

the protection of their face. The blank is run into a groove in a rapidly revolving disc, and edges are produced at the rate of between six and seven hundred an hour; in fact, almost as quickly as the man can feed the machine.

We cannot help but listen pensively for a moment to the thud, thud, of the cutting machine as the punches strike the fillet, and watch with keen interest the express rate at which the marking is accomplished. To see the blank being turned out at this pace is to make one's mouth literally water, and one's heart and pocket wish that it were so easy and so mechanical a business to "make money" in one's daily doings. And then it strikes us: What do these men, with their usually grimy aprons and often blackened faces, get for their work in turning out so much coin of the realm? They seem to have a very good time of it on the whole, and the conditions of light, warmth, and safety under which they labour are certainly in striking contrast to the trials, the dangers, and the dreariness of the lives of those who unearth the metal.

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On an average, each workman in the operative department of the Mint makes his £2 10s. a week. He enters the service of the department as a boy, and remains there through his working life, if he cares to do so and proves trustworthy. No one is accepted for employment after sixteen years of age, and every precaution is taken by the authorities against the weakness of human nature. Each room is under a separate official, without whose assistance in the unlocking of doors no employé can leave.

There is no hardship in this daily imprisonment, every department being fitted up with all conveniences for cooking, eating, &c.; and, judging from what we have seen, we should say the lives of the operatives at the Mint are not unenviable. Of one thing we can speak very positively, and that is as to their natures: their geniality is a characteristic they share in common with their chief superintendent. If one had seriously contemplated becoming an operative, they could not have taken more pains to initiate one into the mysteries of the coinage.

We now make our way to the Annealing-room. Here the scene changes entirely. The buzz, the whirr, and bang of the all powerful machinery give place to several furnaces. The blanks are brought in in bags, are emptied into an iron tray, and shoved along an elongated sort of oven, of which our illustration gives an excellent impression. It shows the man standing with the iron rod and hook in hand ready to push the tray to the farther end of the oven.

We venture modestly to suggest that the structure would do admirably for the purposes of cremation.

"Quite right, sir, it would! I suppose you wouldn't like to try it?"

We frankly and honestly confess we should not.

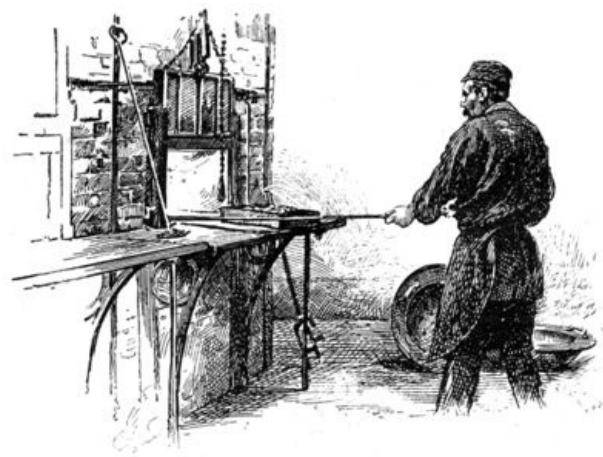
After a few minutes the blanks are sufficiently baked. If one's own valuable carcass had been in that red-hot oven for ever so short a time, it would have come out charred and hardened. Not so the metal, which is considerably softened.

The blanks are now tipped into a perforated sort of basin, which is picked up by a man from another room and carried away.

We have during all this time been standing in a heat which would do credit to a Turkish bath.

But now, again, the conditions change entirely, and we are in a room filled with steam, and cold enough to refrigerate one. Here the blanks are plunged into a tank of cold water, which hisses and spits like a dozen angry snakes as the hot metal touches it. From the cooling bath the blanks go to the acid bath. Into this latter they disappear black with the oxide of copper clinging to them. Pears' Soap or Sapolio, or whatever means to cleanliness we may employ, would hardly accomplish the wonders in an hour's application to the human skin, which a few seconds of the sulphuric solution accomplishes with the blank of the coin. They emerge from their bath in every sense white as snow.

The blanks are, of course, wet, and before they can assume the full honours of the complete coin



**ANNEALING FURNACE.**

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they have to be dried. How is this done? By blowing on them with a bellows? By wiping each blank separately with a cloth? By placing them in front of a fire or even in the oven again? No. They are simply emptied into a revolving box containing beech-wood sawdust. A turn about in this, and they and the sawdust are emptied into a sieve, from which the sawdust escapes with a little shaking. The sawdust is dried on a hot slab or bench, and is used again; the blanks are ready for the Press or Die room.

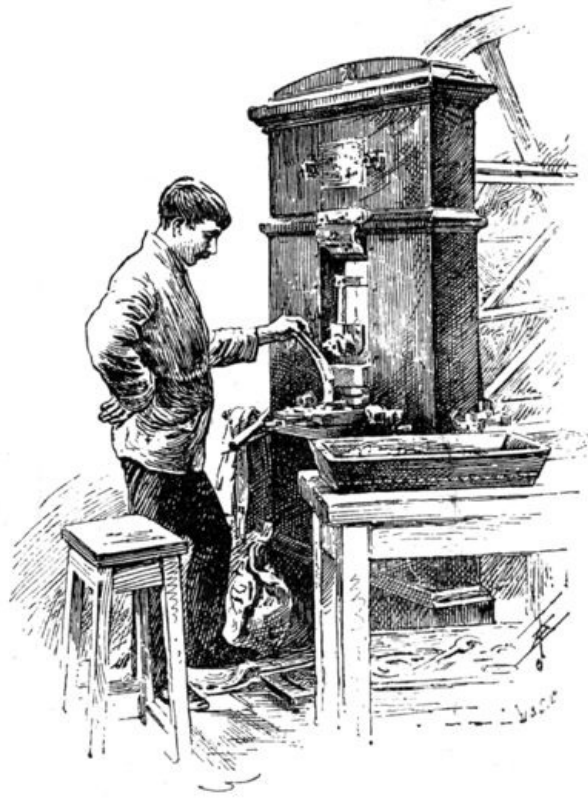
In the illustration of this room the man is standing with a handful of blanks feeding a small tube or shoot, from which they drop on to a sliding plate and are conveyed into a collar, as it is called. We see the piece a blank for the last time. Once in the collar, if the machinery is in motion, nothing can save that smooth-faced blank from becoming, in appearance at least, a coin of the realm. The blank rests on a die and beneath a die. The latter descends with precision and force, and the blank finds itself for an instant in a grip more powerful than miser ever gave his hoard. It would, if it could, spread itself out to the thinnest possible substance. But as it seeks to escape under the pressure its edge comes in contact with the sides of the collar. These are milled or lettered, and whatever they contain appears on the coin. It is not generally known that the object of this milling or lettering is to prevent the clipping or debasement of the money. In Queen Elizabeth's time, and on to the reign of William III.—during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—the operations of the clippers were very serious. Men made fortunes by paring a small piece from every coin in their possession, and even the death penalty failed to check the evil. A year or two before the beginning of the eighteenth century a mill, worked by horses, was started in the Tower of London to replace the old system of making money by the hand-wielded hammer. The edge of the coin was made to bear an inscription, and the operations of the clipper were rendered practically impossible. Even to-day offences in connection with the currency are numerous. In 1889 110 persons were convicted out of 194 charged with issuing counterfeit coins, having them in their possession, or actually making them. The more ingenious the device on the coin produced by the Imperial mint, the less likely is a counterfeit to pass muster for long.

The coin leaves the Press-room complete, and has to pass only one other ordeal, that, namely, of the Weighing-room. Here it is placed on a wonderful automatic balance. If it is too light it falls into a drawer on one side, if correct into a drawer in the centre, if too heavy into a drawer on the other side. The average of coins which are either too heavy or too light, and consequently have to be returned to the melting pot, is, owing to the smallness of the "remedy" or margin of weight allowed, as much as 13 per cent.

There are thirty of these little machines employed, and their workmanship may be judged by the fact that each one costs £300. Bronze coins are not subjected to this severe test, but are weighed in bulk in a huge scale. Every year there is what is called "The Trial of the Pyx"—the pyx being the chest containing sample coins. A coin is taken, without preference, from every "journey weight" of gold, a "journey weight" being 15 lb. troy, or 701 sovereigns, or 1,402 half sovereigns. The work of testing is performed by a jury, composed of freemen of the Goldsmiths' Company in the presence of the Queen's Remembrancer, and the report of the jury is laid before the Treasury. The yearly verdict shows how wonderfully and uniformly accurate the standard of fineness has remained, averaging, as it did in 1889, according to the Deputy Master's Report, 916.657, the precise standard being 916.6. As regards silver, the English standard of 925 is, with the exception of certain coins, averaging 945 in the Netherlands, the highest in the world, the average in France being 835, and in Germany and the United States, 900.



**DRYING BLANKS.**



**COINING PRESS.**

The Deputy Master's Report for 1889 was rendered especially interesting from the fact that it was the twentieth issued under the present system of Mint administration. It was only in 1870 that the Mastership of the Mint ceased to be a separate office, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer became *ex officio* Master, with the Deputy Master as principal executive officer. The Mint was removed to its present site from the Tower of London in 1810. With the increase of its labours, the buildings afforded quite insufficient accommodation, and from 1871 to 1881 several Bills were introduced into the House of Commons with a view to acquiring a new site on the Thames Embankment. The governor of the Bank of England, however, having in 1881 declared that no inconvenience would arise if all gold coinage were suspended for a year, it was determined to improve the existing structure. The changes were commenced on February 1, 1882, and ended early in the following December. The result has been to place the department in a position to meet almost any demands which may be made upon it. The machinery was nearly all renewed, and the arrangements now admit of the simultaneous coinage of two metals. During July, 1889, the producing capabilities of the Mint were put to the test, and one million perfect sovereigns were struck and issued in a week. The coinage in that year of £9,746,538, to which previous reference has been made, was nearly four times the average of the previous ten years. Even this enormous sum does not represent the whole of the coinage operations of the country in 1889. A considerable portion of the Colonial coins required were turned out by a firm formerly known as Ralph Heaton & Sons, but now called "The Mint, Birmingham, Limited."<sup>[A]</sup> Messrs. Heaton were for many years a sort of Imperial Mint Auxiliary. The idea once got abroad that all bronze coins stamped with the letter "H" were counterfeit, whereas the initial simply denoted that their manufacture had been entrusted to Messrs. Heaton. The Mint, Birmingham, does most of the coinage for small foreign States which look to England to convert their ingots to money.

The Imperial Mint, in the words of so many company prospectuses, is a going concern. It levies a seigniorage which brings in a handsome revenue. This seigniorage was abolished by Charles II., but restored by an Act of George III., which required every pound of silver to be coined into 66 shillings instead of 62—the extra four shillings to go to defray the expenses of the establishment. During five out of the 18 years, 1872 to 1889, the Mint was worked at a loss; but, taking the whole 18 years, the average net profit was as much as £83,724. The profit made in 1889 amounted to no less than £780,691 12s. 5d. What the record for 1890 will be it is too early yet to know, but 1889 will, in every respect, take a lot of beating.

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The Mint does not confine itself to the production of coins, but strikes thousands of medals every year for the War Office, the Board of Trade, the University of London, the Royal and other Societies. It may be remembered that Pope addressed some admirable lines to Addison *à propos* of one of his dialogues, on the historic virtues of the medal. He pictures all the glories and triumphs of the Imperial ambition of Rome shrunk into a coin. "A narrow orb each conquest keeps," he says, and he demands when Britain shall "in living medals see her wars enrolled," and "vanquished realms supply recording gold." The historian must always bear grateful testimony to the assistance derivable from the metallic tokens of a country, no matter whether they show "a small Euphrates," or merely an inscription, and the head of the sovereign. They are imperishable witnesses in the cause of accuracy and truth.



### WEIGHING ROOM.

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#### FOOTNOTES:

- [A] The Imperial Mint supplies the whole Empire with coinage, except Australasia, which is supplied largely by mints in Sydney and Melbourne, and India, which has mints in Calcutta and Bombay.

## *Slap-Bang.*

FROM THE FRENCH OF JULES CLARETIE.

[JULES CLARETIE was born at Limoges, in 1840, and is still a well-known figure in the literary world of Paris. No man is more prolific; histories, novels, articles, short stories, plays, pour without cessation from his pen. Jules Claretie is a man of the most varied gifts. His best known achievement is his "History of the Revolution," in five volumes—a monumental work. But there are those (and we confess ourselves among them) who would rather be the author of the lovely little story of child-life which we lay before our readers under the title of "Slap-Bang."]

### I.



HE little boy lay pale and listless in his small white cot, gazing, with eyes enlarged by fever, straight before him, with the strange fixity of illness which seems to see already more than is visible to living eyes. His mother, sitting at the bottom of the bed, biting her fingers to keep back a cry, noted how the symptoms deepened on the ghostly little face; while his father, a strong workman, brushed away his burning tears.

The day was breaking; a calm, clear, lovely day of June. The light began to steal into the poor apartment where little Francis, the son of Jacques and Madeline Legrand, lay very near death's door. He was seven years old; three weeks ago, a fair-haired, rosy, little boy, as happy as a bird. But one night, when he came home from school, his head was giddy and his hands were burning. Ever since he had lain there in his cot. To-night he did not wander in his mind; but for two days his strange listlessness had alarmed the doctor. He lay there sad and quiet, as if at seven years old he was already tired of life; rolling his head upon the bolster, his thin lips never smiling, his eyes staring at one knew not what. He would take nothing—neither medicine, syrup, nor beef-tea.

"Is there anything that you would like?" they asked him.

"No," he answered, "nothing."

"This must be remedied," the doctor said. "This torpor is alarming. You are his parents, and you know him best. Try to discover what will interest and amuse him." And the doctor went away.



**"THIS MUST BE REMEDIED,' THE DOCTOR SAID."**

To amuse him! True, they knew him well, their little Francis. They knew how it delighted him, when he was well, to go into the fields, and to come home, loaded with white hawthorn blossoms, riding on his father's shoulders. Jacques had already bought him gilded soldiers, figures, "Chinese shadows," to be shown upon a screen. He placed them on the sick child's bed, made them dance before his eyes, and, scarcely able to keep back his tears, strove to make him laugh.

"Look, there is the Broken Bridge. Tra-la-la! And there is a general. You saw one once at Boulogne Wood, don't you remember? If you drink your medicine like a good boy, I will buy you a real one, with a cloth tunic and gold epaulettes. Would you like to have a general?"

[Pg 151]

"No," said the sick child, his voice dry with fever.

"Would you like a pistol and bullets, or a crossbow?"

"No," replied the little voice, decisively.

And so it was with everything—even with balloons and jumping-jacks. Still, while the parents looked at each other in despair, the little voice responded, "No! No! No!"

"But what is there you would like, then, darling?" said his mother. "Come, whisper to me—to mamma." And she laid her cheek beside him on the pillow.

The sick boy raised himself in bed, and, throwing out his eager hands towards some unseen object, cried out, as in command and in entreaty, "I want *Slap-bang!*"

**II.**

"Slap-bang!"

The poor mother looked at her husband with a frightened glance. What was the little fellow saying? Was the terrible delirium coming back again? "Slap-bang!" She knew not what that signified. She was frightened at the strangeness of the words, which now the sick boy, with the perversity of illness—as if, having screwed his courage up to put his dream in words, he was resolved to speak of nothing else—repeated without ceasing:—

"Slap-bang! I want Slap-bang!"

"What does he mean?" she said, distractedly, grasping her husband's hand. "Oh, he is lost!"

But Jacques' rough face wore a smile of wonder and relief, like that of one condemned to death who sees a chance of liberty.

Slap-bang! He remembered well the morning of Whit-Monday, when he had taken Francis to the circus. He could hear still the child's delighted laughter, when the clown—the beautiful clown, all be-starred with golden spangles, and with a huge many-coloured butterfly glittering on the back of his black costume—skipped across the track, tripped up the riding-master by the heels, took a walk upon his hands, or threw up to the gas-light the soft felt caps, which he dexterously caught upon his skull, where, one by one, they formed a pyramid; while at every trick and every jest, his large droll face expanding with a smile, he uttered the same catch-word, sometimes to a roll of music from the band, "Slap-bang!" And every time he uttered it the audience roared and the little fellow shouted with delight.

Slap-bang! It was this Slap-bang, the circus clown, he who kept half the city laughing, whom little

Francis wished to see, and whom, alas! he could not see as he lay pale and feeble in his little bed.

That night Jacques brought the child a jointed clown, ablaze with spangles, which he had bought at a high price. Four days' wages would not pay for it; but he would willingly have given the price of a year's labour, could he have brought a smile to the thin lips of the sick boy.

The child looked for a moment at the toy which sparkled on the bed-quilt. Then he said, sadly, "That is not Slap-bang. I want to see Slap-bang!"

If only Jacques could have wrapped him in the bed-clothes, borne him to the circus, shown him the clown dancing under the blazing gas-lights, and said, "Look there!"

But Jacques did better still. He went to the circus, obtained the clown's address, and then, with legs tottering with nervousness and agitation, climbed slowly up the stairs which led to the great man's apartment. It was a bold task to undertake! Yet actors, after all, go sometimes to recite or sing at rich men's houses. Who knew but that the clown, at any price he liked, would consent to go to say good-day to little Francis? If so, what matter his reception?

But was *this* Slap-bang, this charming person, called Monsieur Moreno, who received him in his study like a doctor, in the midst of books and pictures, and all the luxury of art! Jacques looked at him, and could not recognise the clown. He turned and twisted his felt hat between his fingers. The other waited. At last the poor fellow began to stammer out excuses: "It was unpardonable—a thing unheard of—that he had come to ask; but the fact was, it was about his little boy—such a pretty little boy, sir! and so clever! Always first in his class—except in arithmetic, which he did not understand. A dreamy little chap—too dreamy—as you may see"—Jacques stopped and stammered; then screwing up his courage he continued with a rush—"as you may see by the fact that he wants to see you, that he thinks of nothing else, that you are before him always, like a star which he has set his mind on—"

Jacques stopped. Great beads stood on his forehead and his face was very pale. He dared not look at the clown, whose eyes were fixed upon him. What had he dared to ask the great Slap-bang? What if the latter took him for a madman, and showed him to the door? [Pg 152]

"Where do you live?" demanded Slap-bang.

"Oh! close by. The Rue des Abbesses!"

"Come!" said the other; "the little fellow wants to see Slap-bang—well, he *shall* see him."

### CHAPTER III.

When the door opened before the clown, Jacques cried out joyfully, "Cheer up, Francis! Here is Slap-bang."

The child's face beamed with expectation. He raised himself upon his mother's arm, and turned his head towards the two men as they entered. Who was the gentleman in an overcoat beside his father, who smiled good-naturedly, but whom he did not know? "Slap-bang," they told him. It was all in vain. His head fell slowly back upon the pillow, and his great sad blue eyes seemed to look out again beyond the narrow chamber walls, in search, unceasing search, of the spangles and the butterfly of the Slap-bang of his dreams.

"No," he said, in a voice which sounded inconsolable; "no; *this* is not Slap-bang!"

The clown, standing by the little bed, looked gravely down upon the child with a regard of infinite kind-heartedness. He shook his head, and looking at the anxious father and the mother in her agony, said smiling, "He is right. This is not Slap-bang." And he left the room.

"I shall not see him; I shall never him again," said the child, softly.

But all at once—half an hour had not elapsed since the clown had disappeared—the door was sharply opened, and behold, in his black spangled tunic, the yellow tuft upon his head, the golden butterfly upon his breast and back, a large smile opening his mouth like a money-box, his face white with flour, Slap-bang, the true Slap-bang, the Slap-bang of the circus, burst into view. And in his little white cot, with the joy of life in his eyes, laughing, crying, happy, saved, the little fellow clapped his feeble hands, and, with the recovered gaiety of seven years old, cried out:



"BRAVO, SLAP-BANG!"



"Bravo! Bravo, Slap-bang! It is he this time! This is Slap-bang! Long live Slap-bang! Bravo!"

#### CHAPTER IV.

When the doctor called that day, he found, sitting beside the little patient's pillow, a white-faced clown, who kept him in a constant ripple of laughter, and who was observing, as he stirred a lump of sugar at the bottom of a glass of cooling drink:

"You know, Francis, if you do not drink your medicine, you will never see Slap-bang again."

And the child drank up the draught.

"Is it not good?"

"Very good. Thank you, Slap-bang."

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**"THANK YOU, SLAP-BANG."**

"Doctor," said the clown to the physician, "do not be jealous, but it seems to me that my tomfooleries have done more good than your prescriptions."

The poor parents were both crying; but this time it was with joy.

From that time till little Francis was on foot again, a carriage pulled up every day before the lodging of the workman in the Rue des Abbesses; a man descended, wrapped in a greatcoat with the collar turned up to his ears, and underneath arrayed as for the circus, with his gay visage white with flour.

"What do I owe you, sir?" said Jacques to the good clown, on the day when Francis left the house for the first time. "For I really owe you everything!"

The clown extended to the parents his two hands, huge as those of Hercules:

"A shake of the hand," he said. Then, kissing the little boy on both his rosy cheeks, he added, laughing, "And permission to inscribe on my visiting-cards, 'Slap-bang, doctor-acrobat, physician in ordinary to little Francis!'"





**AGE 4. *From a Miniature.***



**AGE 36. *From a Painting by G. Richmond,  
R.A.***

### **CARDINAL MANNING.**

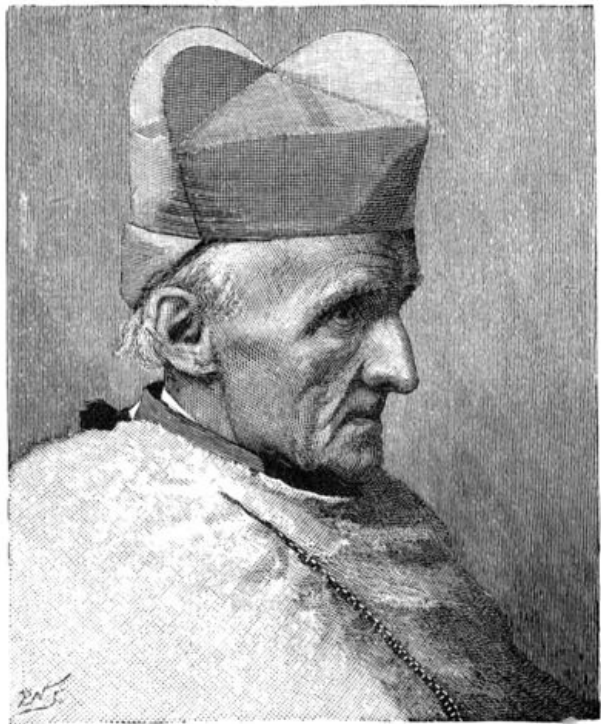
BORN 1808.

HENRY EDWARD MANNING, at the age of four, had his portrait taken by a miniature-painter, who depicted him upon a cliff above the sea, absorbed in listening to the murmur of a shell. This most interesting picture of the future Cardinal, together with companion portraits of his little brothers and sisters, long hung upon the wall of the library of his father's house at Totteridge. But one night the house was broken into by a gang of burglars, and, among other valuables, the miniatures were carried off. The vexation of the family was extreme; but by a curious freak of fortune the portraits were at length discovered in an old curiosity shop in London, and, after years of absence, resumed their old position on the library wall. The second of our portraits shows the future Cardinal as Archdeacon of Chichester, at a time when he was universally regarded as one of the strongest pillars of the English Church. Alas for human foresight! Seven years later, on Passion Sunday, 1851, he felt himself compelled to make the great renunciation, and laid before the footstool of the Pope the costly offering of such a character as in its blend of saintly life, of strength of intellect, of



eloquence alike of tongue and pen, and of unrivalled knowledge of the world, has rarely been bestowed on any of the sons of men.

For these portraits we are indebted to the courtesy of Cardinal Manning, of Mr. Wilfred Meynell, and of Messrs. Henry Graves & Co., Pall Mall.

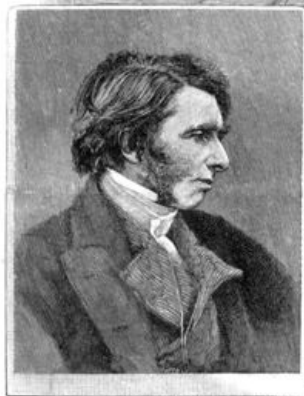


**AGE 81. From a Photo by Messrs. Elliott & Fry.**

## JOHN RUSKIN.

[Pg 155]

BORN 1819.



**Top: AGE 38. From a Drawing by G. Richmond, R.A.**

**Middle: AGE 48. From a Photo. by Messrs. Elliott & Fry.**

**Bottom: AGE 63. From a Photo. by Messrs. Elliott & Fry.**

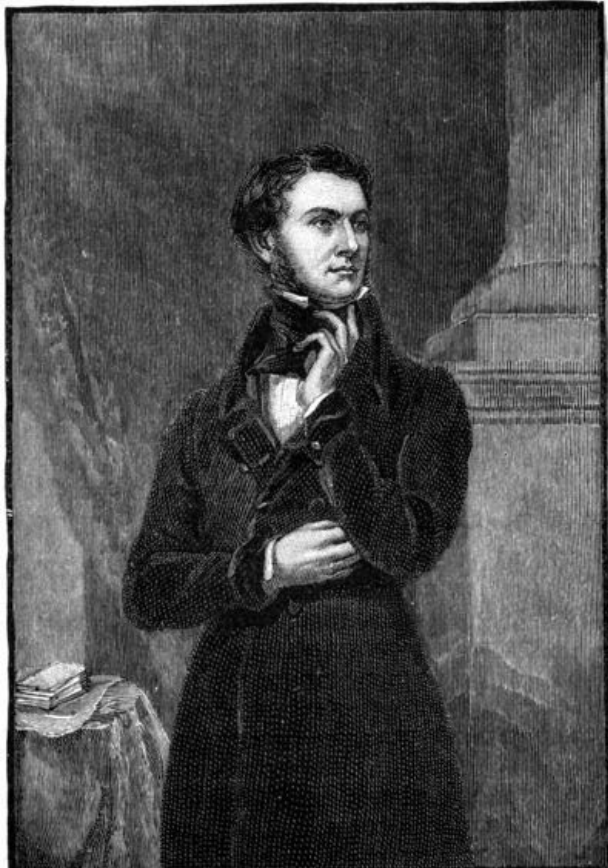


At the age of twenty, Mr. Ruskin, then at Christ Church, Oxford, had just won the Newdigate prize poem. Two years later the first volume of "Modern Painters" showed that a new poet had indeed arisen, though a poet who was destined not to cast his thoughts in verse, but in "the other harmony of prose." At eight-and-thirty "Stones of Venice" had appeared. At eight-and-forty (as in our second portrait) he had recently been elected Rede Lecturer at Cambridge, and was in the height of his great combat

with the world he lives in—a world which, in his eyes, is given up almost beyond redemption to cansters, money-grubbers, inventors of improved machinery, and every kind of charlatan. In volume after volume, he was putting forth—in the midst of much which reason found fantastic—bursts of satire fierce as Juvenal's, and word-pictures more gorgeous than the tints of Turner, conveyed in that inimitable style which is as strong and sweet as Shelley's verse. In these latter days (as our last portrait shows him) Mr. Ruskin, like a prophet in a hermitage, has become more and more of a recluse, though now and then his voice is still audible in a wrathful letter to the papers, like a voice heard crying in the wilderness that all is lost.

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*From an Engraving by W. Walker. AGE 28.*



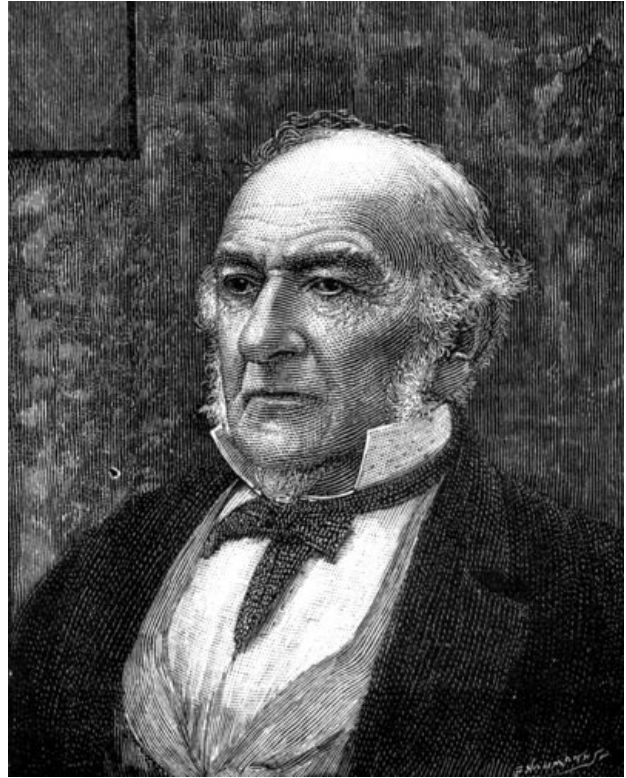
*AGE 45. From Photo. by Cameron of a Painting by G. F. Watts, R.A.*

## THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P.

BORN 1809.



THESE portraits represent Mr. Gladstone at three important epochs in his career. At twenty-eight he was the henchman of Sir Robert Peel, and it was at this time that Macaulay described him as "the rising hope of the stern, unbending Tories." He had just produced his work on "Church and State," which attracted a great deal of attention. Our second portrait shows what he was like at the time when, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, he put forth the first of the long series of his famous Budgets. The third picture is the one which is now so familiar, representing the illustrious statesman as he is at the present time. It will be observed that the high collars which are inseparable from every picture of Mr. Gladstone, whether serious or comic, have been favourites with him all his life. Like Peel, Palmerston, and Beaconsfield, he is a striking instance of the fact that the toils and cares of responsible statesmanship seem with some constitutions to tend to vigorous old age.



AGE 80. *From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.*

## MRS. LANGTRY.

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AGE 18. *From a Photo. by Oules, Jersey.*



**AGE 23. *From a Photo. by Oules, Jersey.***



**AGE 23 (WITH MR. LANGTRY). *From a Photo. by Oules, Jersey.***



**PRESENT DAY.** *From a Photo. by Lafayette,  
Dublin.*



HIS page enables one to trace the blooming of the Jersey Lily from the bud to the full flower; from the lovely Miss Le Breton, the daughter of the Dean, to the newly-married bride, and from the belle of London drawing-rooms to the charming actress who has won on both sides of the world applause which is not gained by loveliness alone, even when, like Mrs. Langtry's, it is of that rare kind, statuesque yet blooming, which is adapted equally to represent the chiselled grace of Galatea, or the burning beauty of the Queen of Egypt.



**AGE 28.** *From a Photo. by Messrs. Elliott &  
Fry.*



AGE 40. *From a Photo. by Barraud.*



AGE 44. *From a Photo. by Messrs. Elliott & Fry.*

## JOHN HARE.

BORN 1844.



R. HARE, as most people have the pleasure of knowing from experience, is the finest actor of old men at present on the stage—if not, indeed, the finest ever seen. It seems strange, as we regard the strong young face of our first portrait, that Mr. Hare was then, or very little later, acting *Sir Peter Teazle* to the very life. Mr. Hare as an old man is old all over. Yet no two of his old men are like each other; no characters bear less resemblance than *Lord Kilclare* in "A Quiet Rubber," and *Benjamin Goldfinch* in "A Pair of Spectacles," but which is the most life-like it is difficult to say. Mr. Hare, indeed, prefers his present part to any of his rôles, as may be learnt, with other facts of interest, by a reference to [page 182](#) of this number; and certainly a more delightful piece of character-acting it is impossible to conceive than that which represents the dear old gentleman whose faith in waiters, bootmakers, butlers, brothers, friends, and wives, is so rudely shaken and so happily restored. At his present age, of which our last portrait is a speaking likeness, Mr. Hare is a familiar figure, not only on the stage, but on horseback in the Row, or, more delightful still to



his acquaintances, talking from an easy-chair as no one but himself *can* talk, or rising after dinner to make one of his inimitable speeches.

For permission to reproduce these portraits we have to thank the courtesy of Mr. Hare.

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**Top Left: AGE 23. *From a Photograph by W. Keith, Liverpool.***

**Top Right: AGE 37. *From a Photograph by Window & Grove.***

**Center: *From a Photograph by Barraud.***

**Bottom Left: AGE 18. *From a Photograph by Window & Grove.***

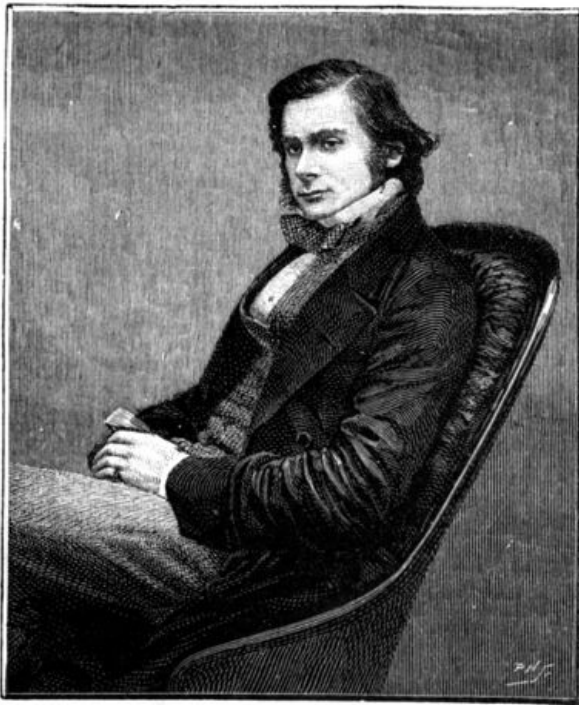
**Bottom Right: AGE 27. *From a Photograph by Walker & Sons.***

### **MR. AND MRS. BANCROFT.**



BY the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft we are able to present our readers with their portraits at an age when they had not yet met each other—when Marie Wilton was the life and soul of the burlesques at the "Strand" Theatre, and when Mr. Bancroft was still studying in the provinces the art with which he was to charm the audiences of the "Prince of Wales's." In our second portraits Marie Wilton was still Marie Wilton, but was on the eve of becoming Mrs. Bancroft; and finally, in the centre, we have them both as at the present day.

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**AGE 31. *From a Photograph.***



**AGE 45. *From a Photograph by Messrs. Elliott & Fry.***

### **PROFESSOR HUXLEY.**

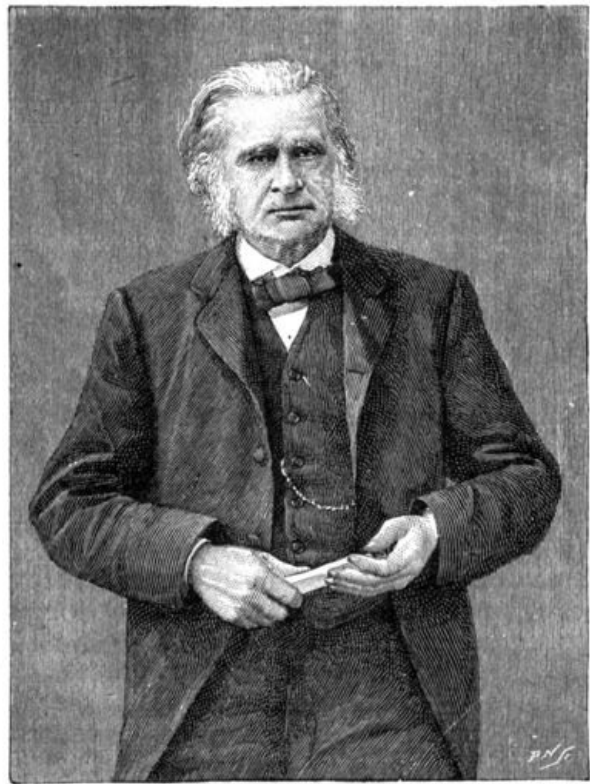
BORN 1825.

It is, unfortunately, impossible to obtain a portrait of Professor Huxley in the days when he was not yet a professor—when he was catching sticklebacks and chasing butterflies at his father's school at Ealing—for at thirty-one, the age at which his earliest photograph was taken, he was already a professor of two sciences—of Natural History at the Royal School of Mines, and of Physiology at the Royal Institute. As assistant-surgeon to H.M.S. *Rattlesnake* he had spent three years in studying natural history off the Australian coasts, and had written out the record of his observations in the earliest of his books. The Admiralty refused to pay a penny of the publishing expenses; the young assistant-surgeon's salary was seven-and-sixpence a day; and the volume only saw the light some five years later, when it was issued by the Ray Society. But, from the days of his first fight with fortune, Professor Huxley's fame rose steadily, and by the time at which our second portrait shows him he had been President of the British Association, and had developed that limpidity of style and strength of logic which makes him both the most redoubtable antagonist in the literary arena, and the most popular exponent of the discoveries of science. Professor Huxley's health, never of the very best, has latterly compelled him to withdraw entirely from the active duties of the many posts which he has held; but the magazine articles which he occasionally puts forth show all his early faculties as strong as ever.

For the above interesting early photograph we



are indebted to the kindness of Professor and Mrs. Huxley.



AGE 64. *From a Photograph by Messrs. Elliott & Fry.*

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AGE 8. *From a Photograph, New York.*

### ADELINA PATTI.



F ever an artist was "cradled in song," that artist was Adelina Patti. Before she could utter a word she could hum every air she had heard her mother rehearsing for the opera. Her musical precocity was so extraordinary that she could detect the least falsity of intonation in any vocal performance, and on one occasion when she had been admitted behind the scenes to the dress rehearsal of a new opera in New York, she managed to startle the leading lady—a singer of some reputation—very considerably, by running up to her and exclaiming, in her little shrill Yankee accent, "I guess you

don't know the proper way to trill, you rest too long on the first note. Listen to me, and try to do it as I do!" And from her baby lips issued a trill so long-sustained and so pure of intonation, that the whole company of artists applauded with surprise and rapture. The appearance of Adelina was much what would be imagined—always tiny for her age, but lithe and straight, with her thick, black locks braided on either side of her face, her eyes keen as a hawk's, whilst her clear brow, mobile mouth, and determined chin each in turn emphasised the expression with which she was animated at the moment. The street arabs of New York nicknamed her "the little Chinese girl," because of her big, black eyes and somewhat yellow skin, when she used to run up and down Broadway bowling her hoop. Of her phenomenal success, when she appeared as a prima-donna of seven summers at Niblo's Garden in New York, it would be idle to repeat an oft-told tale. But we are fortunately able to reproduce a photograph of the little prima-donna; for which, as well as for the notes above, we are indebted to the kindness of a friend of the great singer. The signature across the photograph is Adelina Patti's own.



**PRESENT DAY.** *From a Photograph by Messrs. Elliot & Fry.*

## ***Letters from Artists on Ladies' Dress.***

[Pg 162]



QUESTIONS of Fashion are, perhaps, more open to debate and difference of opinion than any others. But those who ridicule the commands of Fashion, as well as those who worship them, must find an equal interest in the views of the best judges of what is beautiful and what is ugly—that is to say, of artists. In this belief, we have asked a number of our leading painters to state their views upon the subject, in the form of a reply to the succeeding questions:—

"What is your opinion of the present style of ladies' dress? What are its chief defects, and what its merits, from an artist's point of view? What is your ideal of a beautiful woman, beautifully dressed?"

Our invitation has been most cordially responded to, and we are now in a position to publish the replies received.

SIR FREDERIC LEIGHTON.

Ladies, who are, of course, the keenest votaries of fashion, will be delighted, and we think surprised, to find Sir Frederick Leighton on their side.

Hôtel Royal, Rome.

DEAR SIR,—Whatever may be the criticisms to which the dress of a lady in our day is open, there is a vast amount of nonsense talked about it. Titian and Velasquez would probably have been very happy to paint it.—Believe me, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

FREDERIC LEIGHTON.

MR. G. F. WATTS, R.A.

Little Holland House,  
Kensington, W.

DEAR SIR,—I don't know that the present style of "ladies' dress," when not pushed to extremes and exaggerations, can be very much objected to. Mr. du Maurier, in *Punch*, is able, without violating truth, to make it look very graceful and charming. Such portions as are easily put on and taken

off need not be soberly, much less severely, criticised. It is natural, and even right, that considerable elasticity should be claimed by fashion—fancy and trade are encouraged. All, however, that is calculated to effect permanent injury to health must be very severely condemned. Tight lacing, pointed shoes, and high heels—these, unless the fashion changes (which, being very ugly, it probably will not), leave permanent disastrous results. No lady can be really well and beautifully dressed if what she wears outrages Nature's intentions in the structure of the human frame. Such outrages are: a waist like a stove pipe, shoes that compress the toes into a crumpled mass of deformity, and, it might even be added, gloves that confine the hand till it looks little better than a fin—but as this inflicts no permanent injury, it does not matter—but the foot is irredeemably ruined, to the destruction of spring and grace in movement, and to no inconsiderable injury to health. It is a very common thing to hear a lady say, "The foot is an ugly thing!" Her shapeless shoe has told her this; but it will be seen how untrue it is if one looks at a cast from the foot of an Indian woman, or the drawing of a foot by Sir Frederic Leighton. No doubt the crumpled clump of deformity common from wearing modern abominations, is a thing an ancient Greek would have shuddered at; and this is to be the more lamented as the modern young lady is often of splendid growth and form, such as probably the ancient Greek never saw.

Perhaps, the real test of the highest taste in dress would be, whether it could be put into sculpture; but that would be too rigid a rule. One may say, however, that no lady can be well dressed who, for the sake of tasteless vanity, decks herself in the spoils of the most beautiful of created creatures, cruelly indifferent to such destruction; or sticks reptiles and repulsive insects about her.

To your question, "What is your ideal of a beautiful woman?" I would answer, That form which, tall or short, or of light or dark colour, most emphasises human characteristics furthest removed from suggestions of the inferior creatures—a principle so well understood and acted upon by the great Greek artists. How beautiful when, in the words of Ruskin, "Fairest, because purest and thoughtfulest, trained in all high knowledge, as in all courteous art—in dance, in song, in sweet wit, in lofty learning, in loftier courage, in loftiest love—able alike to cheer, to enchant, or save the souls of men."

This would, I think, do for an ideal.—Very truly yours,

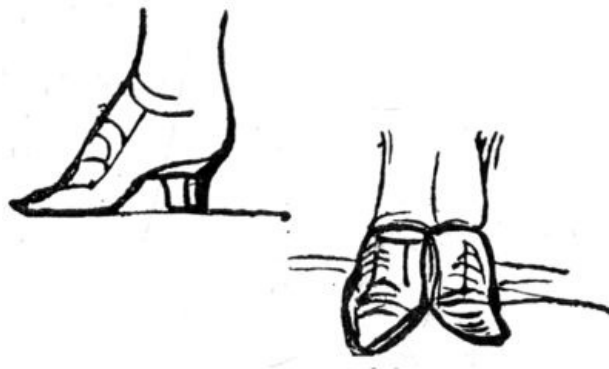
G. F. WATTS.

In a second letter Mr. Watts adds:—

[Pg 163]

"It is impossible that we should be unaffected by the impressions the mind receives through the medium of dress; we ought not to be so. The indifference in modern times to grace and harmony in dress is a strong reason for concluding that pleasure in what is beautiful—or, which may sometimes be accepted as an equivalent, interesting—a sense so strong in former ages, is extinct.

"I think I said that it was more easy to say what should not be, than what should be. Good taste must be outraged when deformity is suggested, but even that may be passed over when such things are perfectly extraneous. When they tend to produce permanent deformity, it is a pity they cannot be suppressed by law, as unquestionably the race suffers. No healthy, well-made young girl ought to be allowed to wear stays compressing the ribs; after thirty, there may be reasons; and by that time nature would have asserted herself, and no great harm would be done. But as long as men have the degraded taste to prefer a pipe to the beautiful flexible line, which might always, with the greatest delicacy, be evident, there can be no hope. Again, this thing is hardly short of wicked. Put together, you have this—uncommonly like a cloven hoof. I wish the ladies joy of it!"



MR. G. D. LESLIE, R.A.

Riverside, Wallingford.

DEAR SIR,—I alluded to the subject of ladies' dress in an address I delivered at Southampton on Art. It is a short allusion, but if you care to publish it I have no objection, and could send you a copy.—I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

G. D. LESLIE.

The passage runs as follows:—

"The results of female art education are not quite satisfactory in the matter of dress, as here woman is so apt, by nature, to become the slave of fashion; but still I think much can be done by right-minded girls, by careful selection and wholesome reform in such things as tight-lacing and high heels. I care not for the so-called high art school of millinery. Dresses that look like bed-

gowns of green serge, and little girls smothered in Kate Greenaway flopperty hats, seem to me, however picturesque intrinsically, in bad taste from their eccentricity. A young lady of real taste can always find amidst the prevailing fashions some that suit her individuality; and those that have this taste invariably seem to do so."

HON. JOHN COLLIER.

4, Marlborough Place, N.W.

SIR,—I should hardly venture to express an opinion on the delicate subject of modern female dress, were it not that in my double capacity of husband and portrait-painter I have been obliged to devote a great deal of attention to it.



**FIG. 1.**

I think the outlook is, on the whole, encouraging. To begin with, there is much greater variety of style and freedom of choice than has obtained for a very long time. Indeed, it is probable that in no country or period since dress was invented has there been such a wide scope for individual taste as in England at the present day.

This is an enormous advantage, for women vary so much that a hard and fast style, however good in itself, is certain to be unsuitable to at least half the sex. It is true that this freedom of choice is not always wisely exercised, but it is a subject to which women devote so much time and thought that they are mostly good judges in the matter.

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**FIG. 2.**

Then, again, there is at present a happy absence of those monstrosities that have first offended, and then corrupted, our ideal of feminine form; the crinoline has long disappeared, and at length the bustle—perhaps the most odious of all these misshapements—has followed suit. Of course they may both re-appear, and probably will do so; but freedom of choice is now so firmly established, that no one will be considered eccentric or unwomanly for refusing to adopt them.

We may take it once for all that the extreme tyranny of fashion is broken down—a glorious triumph that we mainly owe to the much-abused æsthetic movement.

But although much has been achieved, much still remains to be done. There are two deadly sins in modern female dress which seem to defy all considerations of beauty and convenience. Tight waists and high heels are still so common that the courageous protests of the emancipated pass almost unnoticed.

My own opinion is that female dress will never be thoroughly satisfactory until women have realised that they have no waists. Nature has not endowed them with waists, which are artificial forms produced by compressing the body.

This seeming paradox is easily proved by considering that the waist of woman has been placed by fashion in every conceivable position, from under the armpits to half-way down the hips. Obviously it cannot correspond to any natural formation, or it could not wander about in this extraordinary manner.

Of course, the Greek lady never supposed she had a waist. She often, for the sake of convenience, tied a string round her body, but only just tightly enough to keep her clothes in place, and then nearly always let some folds of the drapery fall over and hide the unsightly line (Fig. 1). If there must be a waist, I distinctly prefer the one placed under the armpits, in the fashion of the beginning of this century, for it is physically impossible to tie it so tightly as to much alter the form, and having the division high up tends to minimise the most common defect of the English female figure, a want of length in the leg (Fig. 2).



**FIG. 3.**

Of course, it is this very want of length that has led to the high heels, but the remedy is worse than the disease. It does not really give the impression of long-leggedness, and it does alter and spoil the whole carriage of the body. [Pg 165]

The high heels also help to deform the feet by pressing the toes forward into the pointed ends of those terrible boots that are another disgrace to our civilisation. Painters and sculptors have good cause to know that the modern female foot is a hideous object—our vitiated taste has become accustomed to it when clothed, but when seen in its naked deformity it is a thing to shudder at.

It occurs to me that there are two fundamental rules of dress.

First, wherever the dress is tight it should show the true natural form of the body beneath, and should not suggest, and still less produce, some entirely unnatural and artificial form. (This rule, of course, only applies to tolerably good figures.)

Secondly, where the dress is loose it should be allowed to fall in its own natural folds, and should not be gathered up into the horrible convolutions miscalled drapery by the milliners.





**FIG. 4.**

The old Greek dress fulfilled these conditions in the highest degree, and, I have no doubt, was the noblest form of clothing ever invented. All other forms of dress have abounded in monstrosities of one kind or another, but in looking over the history of costume one now and then comes across some simple and artistic form which seems to have sprung up by chance, as it were, or as a transition between two opposite exaggerations. Here is a fine example from the early middle ages (Fig. 3). And here, again, is a good design from a much later period (Fig. 4).



**FIG. 5.**

Just before the introduction of the enormous hoops in the early part of the eighteenth century, which, perhaps, are the high-water mark of monstrosity in dress, there was a brief period of

comparative simplicity, to which has been given a perhaps factitious charm by the genius of Watteau (Fig. 5).

And then, again, we come to the costume of 1800 and the neighbouring years, to which I have already alluded, and which was, perhaps, the simplest and most graceful dress that European women have worn since the classical period (Fig. 6), but which soon, alas! gave way to the succession of nightmares from which, at last, we seem to have awakened.

But from many styles besides these there are hints to be gathered for the benefit of modern dress, and, fortunately, the tolerance of the age enables us to pick and choose from any source we like. I have great hopes of the future of female costume (male costume seems, from the artistic side, to be past praying for), but a great deal depends upon the artists. The average man is as bad as the average woman; he likes pretty little waists and neat little feet quite as much as the recipient of his misplaced admiration. Indeed, as I think it is incontestable that women dress more to please men than to please themselves, we men are probably more to blame than the women for the vagaries of female costume. But the artists have, or ought to have, a better taste in these matters than the outside public. They all affect to admire the masterpieces of classical art, and they are, few of them, entirely ignorant of what the human form ought to be. It is to them that we must look for protests against its disfigurement.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

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JOHN COLLIER.



FIG. 6.

MR. G. H. BOUGHTON, A.R.A.

West House,  
Campden Hill-road, W.

DEAR SIR,—The questions you send me regarding my opinion of the present style of ladies' dress cover too large and varied a field to be disposed of in a moment—that is, if one *could* dispose of them even after many and many a month, let alone moments. The one virtue of the women's dress of to-day is its variety and individuality. Those who are really *dressed* and not merely clothed, have their dresses "created" for them, and they belong to each other. The fair and the dark, the lean and the reverse, do not now bedeck themselves with the same all pervading tint or cut, whether it suits them well or ill, just because it is "all the go." Even the almost universal cut of to-day is most usually graceful and of quiet tone. And somehow girls seem to be of taller growth, and of better health and colour, and to walk better than ever before. The adoption of *bits* of bygone fashions is now and then deplorable. One sees queer jumbles of Marie Stuart ruffs and "Empire" bonnets, or of any other period except of the Marie Stuart head-gear. Suppose a poor simple masher of the male kind should try some historical head-gear—say a cocked hat or a Charles II. with a wreath of feathers and lace—and mount a jewelled sword, as a new incident to his usual Piccadilly attire? It would be in no worse taste than the various mixture of "periods" that some of the dear creatures of to-day startle the student of costume with now and then. My ideal of "a beautiful woman, beautifully dressed," is not yet defined. I am not very narrow-minded with regard to either point. From the Princess in gold and white samite, to the nut-brown maid with her gown of hodden gray and her bare feet, there are thousands that are good enough for

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*me*. The only bad ones are the pretentious and vulgar (dirt and fine feathers). I saw a little "æsthetic" creature the other day, with a sad, woe-begone costume in flabby colours, a mop of tousled hair, a painted mask of a face, all in keeping, except the boots—"side-spring," if you please (if anything so squashy could have a spring). She was only a passing vision—but enough. I could but repeat with Madame Roland under the guillotine (*was it Roland?*) "O Liberty (and Co.), what crimes are committed in thy name!"

The subject is a fascinating one; but there are limits.—Yours faithfully,

GEO. H. BOUGHTON, A.R.A.

MR. G. A. STOREY, A.R.A.

39, Broadhurst Gardens, N.W.

SIR,—It is difficult to pass an opinion upon "ladies' dress," because its chief characteristic seems to be that it is ever changing. We no sooner see a really pretty fashion than we hear ominous rumours—from Paris (?)—that some abomination such as the crinoline is coming in again, or the Gainsborough hat is to give place to the Pork-pie, or a small copy of the Toriodero's head-gear. We are told that costume indicates the phase or current of thought of the period and of the country in which it is worn; that it becomes sumptuous in rich communities and in prosperous times, but is sad and impoverished in times of war and depression; that it marks the degree of civilisation, of culture, of taste, and of wealth; and, like the other fine arts, has its glorious periods as well as its decadence and restoration. Perhaps it reached its lowest stage of ugliness, in this country, some thirty or forty years ago, when corkscrew ringlets, high foreheads, flat bandeaus plastered down the cheeks, evening dresses cut straight across the collar bones, flounces and crinolines, and all the other horrors that John Leech has so cleverly depicted in the early volumes of *Punch* were the fashions that set off our types of beauty. May we then conclude that taste has improved since those days, and not only taste, but common sense? At the present moment we see nothing outrageous to find fault with, and much that is pretty to admire. It would take up too much space to go into detail: to discourse on hats alone would require a separate letter of some pages. I should have to show how some set off the face and others do not, and how it often happens that the success of a hat depends very much upon the face that looks out from under it. And so with the way the hair is dressed, &c.; and I need scarcely say that a pretty, graceful woman will make almost any costume look well if she puts it on with taste, whereas there are certain other figures that require special treatment.

There are some, whom I would not offend, but who nevertheless are deficient in those graceful curves that Nature bestows upon her best art, who require farthingales, hoops, improvers, and even flounces to disguise the angularity of their structure, whilst others go the other extreme of rotundity, such as a lady I knew, who was taller when she sat down than when she stood up, and must baffle the most ingenious contrivers of European costume, and whom nothing but a Chinese or loose Japanese gown could make at all presentable.

I think female dress may be either very gorgeous, or very simple—gorgeous as a Venetian lady when Titian and Paul Veronese delighted to depict her in rich brocades and a wealth of pearls and jewellery, or simple as in England a hundred years ago, when our great-grandmothers wore muslin gowns with short waists and silk sashes, the beauty and refinement of their faces making their chief attraction, and the simplicity of the dress leaving full scope for the gracefulness of the figure to display itself, as we see in the pictures of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough, George Morland, Romney, and others.

But the great artists seldom adhere to the passing fashions; they arrange the dress or reconstruct it so that it shall be most becoming to their sitters and at the same time make a good composition of colour and form for their pictures. This is also done by ladies of taste, who will often turn some freak of fashion into a thing of beauty, and, regardless of their milliner and dressmaker, will adopt some modification of the passing style if it seems to them more suitable and becoming.

The sense of fitness in dress as in everything else, should, I think, guide the fair sex of whatever degree—and I must say that there are fewer costumes more suitable and, at the same time, much prettier than those of some of our domestic servants, who, with their white caps, bibs and aprons and black dresses make quite dainty little pictures, often reminding us of that well-known print of "La Belle Chocolatière."

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Whether this idea of fitness could be carried out in the cases of lady Town Councillors, female clerks, &c., &c., I do not know. I must leave that and many other matters connected with this subject to more competent judges,—and remain, Yours obediently,

G. A. STOREY.

MR. WYKE BAYLISS, P.R.B.A.

SIR,—You ask me to give you, in the form of a letter, my ideas on the subject of ladies' dress.

It is not without considerable hesitation that I venture to approach so sacred a mystery. I should indeed be disposed to decline your courteous invitation to be "drawn" upon the question, on the ground that I am not a figure painter, but for the consideration that although unhappily an artist is obliged in his work to limit the range of his vision, yet the beauty that exists in the world is the common heritage of us all, and every artist is, or should be, equally appreciative of the loveliness of our companions in life, and jealous of the safety and honour of the shrine at which we all worship.

Replying to your letter, therefore, not as a specialist, but simply as an artist, I would say:

The first essential in a woman's dress should be that *the beauty of it must be a beauty that shall always be beautiful*. I do not deprecate fashion—on the contrary, change is in itself pleasant to the eyes. But it must be a change from one loveliness to another. To see a rose is always an exquisite delight; so it is to see a lily. But we are not called upon to decide once for all which we prefer, and if we choose the rose to kill all the lilies. Thus it should be with dress: change is desirable, but it must be on the understanding that no ugly thing shall be tolerated for the sake of fashion.

That is, I think, the first great principle; and attention to it would rid us for ever of the danger of the recurrence of those monstrosities that have brought the very name of "fashion" into contempt. There have been vagaries in dress to which our countrywomen have submitted, not because they had an imperfect perception of what is really beautiful and took the false for true, but because, in obedience to the inexorable laws of fashion, they accepted regretfully what they knew to be ugly. I hope the time will never come again when we may be tempted to lay a finger on her ladyship's hoops, and ask, as the little maid did, "Pray, madam, is that all yourself?" The leaders of fashion in Europe see clearly enough that to mutilate a woman's foot, as the Chinese do, is a barbarous custom; but they do not perceive that to make European ladies walk painfully on stilts and tiptoe is barbarism of the same kind. But the truth is that every attempt to modify the human form is an act of savagery, and any form of dress that simulates a modification, whether worn in Pekin or in Paris, or in London, is a savage dress, and carries with it the additional shame of being a sham. Let us be content with women as God made them. Let them be dressed, not altered. In a word, *no dress can be really beautiful that suggests a personal deformity*.

Secondarily to this reverence for the human form should be fair treatment of the fabric of which the dress is made. Velvet, silk, linen,—each has its own natural way of falling into folds; and the shape that a dress should take should be the natural result of the folding of the material, and not the result of an artificial construction. This principle may also be expressed in the simple form of a negative. *No dress can be really beautiful that suggests the carrying about of a machine*.

Then as to colour. I think the present taste for soft, tertiary colours is altogether favourable. Strong colours, in a mass, are destructive to the delicacy of colour and expression in a woman's face. The vermilion of her lips should not have to fight the red that is suitable enough for pillar-posts. The blue of her eyes should not have to compete with that of Reckitt. The missing colour, yellow, should not be flaunted against her carnations and azure and pearly white. A woman is worth more than to be subordinated to an aniline dye. *The primary or secondary colours should be used (like brass instruments in a fine orchestra) very sparingly*.

These are, of course, very general principles. But I am not an expert in millinery, and can only speak generally.

I think, however, that there is a tolerably safe test that might be applied in carrying them out, viz., What will the dress look like in a picture? Artists are every day finding their inspirations more and more in the living men and women of their own time. Women are every day making more history for men to paint. Let them dress so as to be paintable. Dress how they will, they are always admired, and revered, and loved. But I cannot say the same of their dress. The time has been when, in order to paint a woman, the first necessity for the artist was to get possession of her great-grandmother's gown. Under such circumstances the painting of contemporary life must be limited to portraiture; and everything that limits the range of art, limits its splendour and the hold it should have on our affections.

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There are only a few words that I care to add.

I think we lose something as a nation in not having a distinctive dress for our peasantry and the *bourgeoises* of our provincial towns—nothing, I mean, to correspond with the square of linen folded on the head, of which the Roman woman is so justly proud, or the white caps of Normandy and Holland, varying in shape according to the township. The picturesque way in which the shawl is used by our Lancashire lasses is, indeed, some approach to it. But I recognise the impossibility of the Continental system being established amongst us.

Would it, however, be too much to hope that the ladies of England may see fit to adopt the beautiful custom of wearing a special garment for church services? It would be in itself so seemly; it would add so much to the grace and dignity of our worship; it would be so agreeable a contrast to the parterre of bonnets in the lecture-room, and the pretty grouping of black and brown and golden hair—yes, and of silver, too—in the opera-house, that I believe the suggestion has only to be fairly considered to be accepted.

I ask, "Will the ladies see fit to do this?" because, after all, it is a woman's question. Men have a right to be considered, but *a woman's dress, to be beautiful, must be the expression of a woman's mind, and the work of a woman's hand*.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

WYKE BAYLISS.

MR. JOHN ABSOLON, R.I.

52, Chetwynd-road, N.W.

DEAR SIR,—*All padding, unless to hide a positive deformity, is a mistake*. Fashion must be constantly changing, or how would dressmakers live? I remember taking my wife to a friend's in the country. Next morning the young ladies were invisible, but appeared in the afternoon *without* crinolines. I never submitted to that abomination, and my wife, to please me, never put one on. The young ladies thought Mrs. Absolon brought the last London change!—Truly yours,

Lastly, let us hear the opinion of a lady artist. Madame Starr Canziani—for years one of the best known lady exhibitors at the Royal Academy, to whom we owe the following designs—writes as follows:—

MADAME STARR CANZIANI.



**DESIGN FOR A  
TENNIS DRESS.**

3, Palace-green, W.

SIR,—I have been asked to give my opinion of modern dress, its merits and demerits, from an artist's point of view. It seems to me that while much at the present time is picturesque and quaint in the extreme, the highest laws of beauty demand fitness as well, and while we have no fixed principles to guide our fashions, however beautiful and sensible they may happen to be at any given moment, there must always be the danger that at the next moment they may relapse into the inconvenient and ridiculous.

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Considering how much has been done of late years to encourage all other forms of art, I cannot help wondering why in the Art Schools now existing all over the country, no classes have been instituted in which the principles of hygiene and fitness, harmony of colour, proportion, and beauty are taught. Architecture and decorative design are taught in the schools, but dress, which has existed since the world began, has no guiding laws, and sways from the severely ugly and matter-of-fact to the wildest extravagance of form and colour in a manner truly grotesque, were it not so sad to those who love ideal beauty, and whose eyes are daily outraged by flagrant sins against the laws of beauty and common sense.

There never was a time in which there was a greater abundance and variety of materials, rich and simple, exquisite embroideries, and lovely combinations of colour; but of what avail are all these beautiful materials if they are erroneously employed? At the present moment—alas! that we only dare speak for the absolute moment—some of the forms of dress are, on the whole, simple and practical, and express the natural figure fairly well; but who can say what wild vagaries the next caprice of the fashion-giver may bring forth?

If the laws of health and beauty were more generally understood, would it be possible that such enormities could exist as tight lacing, and high heels, and pointed toes? I am far from holding in abhorrence all corsets whatever. There are few figures which can do entirely without some stay; but tidiness and a neat, well-fitting gown are very different things from the walking hour-glass that seems as if it would snap in two at a touch.



#### DESIGN FOR A BALL DRESS.

But though the stay, when properly used, may be upheld, there is nothing that can be said in excuse of the wicked fashion—wicked, because the cause of much deformity and disease—of the high heel and pointed toe. We all know the mischief done by the very high heel, and from an artistic point of view it is to be condemned, making, as it does, the prettiest foot look like a hoof and destroying all freedom and dignity of gait. The pointed toe distorts the foot from its natural shape and gives the idea of the front claw of a vulture protruding from the gown, and while it miserably fails in making the foot look small, succeeds only too well in making it hideous. If one sees the whole foot, its width appears very much greater than it really is, by contrast with the point, and the joint of the big toe is brought into most aggressive prominence. If one sees only the end of the shoe peeping from under the dress, in many cases the point with its rapidly diverging lines suggests that the foot hidden by the gown *may* continue to any width, however enormous.

With the square-toed shoe, on the contrary, one has a fair idea of the whole width of the foot at once. It cannot go much beyond that, and the ideas of discomfort and pain are not constantly forced into one's mind.

Characteristic dresses of the period are the riding habit and tailor-made gown. I humbly confess that I dislike them both, for while they are simple, practical, plain, neat, warm, and on a slender unexaggerated figure, modest—they fail in the quality of womanliness, and therefore cannot be beautiful.

They are not womanly in sentiment. First because (a reason which has little to do with the scope of this letter) a woman's clothes should be made by a woman only, and all who are loyal to their own sex would employ each other in an occupation so feminine.

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Then they are unwomanly because they imitate men's dress, and I don't know that I should make a sin of this, were it not that at the present time men's dress is too truly hideous to be imitated even by a savage of darkest Africa!

It is for this reason that I find the riding habit so ugly and inartistic. Practical it is, but it apes the coat and the hat (!) of the man, and now that his cardboard shirt and collar are often added, I have no words strong enough that I may use to express the depths of my dislike.

I do not agree with the general opinion that a good-looking woman never looks so well as on her horse. If she do look well, I believe it to be in spite of her habit and not because of it, and that all the charm which a well-cut, appropriate, and simple garment can give to a graceful figure could perfectly well be retained, and yet that slightly more liberty might be allowed as to texture of material and colour (though the colour should always be quiet and mellow) and appropriate ornamentation by braiding the body and sleeves of the habit. By these means its hard severity would be somewhat softened, and without destroying the simple lines it would be rendered more feminine, and the fitness of the garment for its purpose would by no means be interfered with.

My objection to tailor-made gowns is that they give no scope for graceful, natural movement. In these the figure is made to fit the dress, and not the dress the figure, and if the wearer lift her

arm above her head she must burst—or one feels that, having originally begun as a human being, well, she *ought* to burst if she doesn't. I am not fond of inventing sins, and think we already have enough for all our needs, and I cannot see—to save my life I cannot see—the harm of moving if one wants to do so. The whole costume is a failure so far as beauty and picturesqueness are concerned, but it claims to be practical, and if there were only a little more room in it for all the purposes of life I should say it succeeded well.

It also succeeds in something else. It paints truly the character of the women of the age. Matter-of-fact, sharp, full of common sense, with an eye to the main chance they are, and their tailor-made gowns express this most clearly. Not much room seemingly is there for romantic or motherly love, for devotion and self-sacrifice, in those tightly-fitting cases.

How different are the women of Sir Joshua Reynolds' time! Delicate, ethereal creatures, with swaying, soft movements, not fit for this hard every-day world. These exquisite beings went out in thinnest of evening shoes into the wet grass. They never wore anything more practical than soft white satin, even in a thunderstorm, and they *never* saw the thunderstorm coming. They knew not of homespun nor of heavy boots, and when their true loves went to the wars, they did not wait until they came back, but went into consumption and died. At least many of them did, though some lived to be our great-grandmothers.

At any rate it was the proper thing to do in those days, and it is not the proper thing now. No—our maidens no longer faint, and pine, and die, nor do they wait either—they marry someone else!

I confess to a feeling of wonder when I look at Sir Joshua Reynolds and Romney's beautiful women. I wonder how they are going to get away from the pedestal or tree against which they are leaning without distressing very much their soft draperies when they move. But—how tender, how graceful, how refined, how fascinating, how pure and faithful and womanly these gentle beings are! Their dresses were the outcome of the character and customs of the period, but although very feminine and beautiful were not practical, and would not be adapted to our present needs.

And this brings me to what I want to ask. What constitutes fitness and womanliness in dress? Do the dresses of the period possess these qualities? I certainly think not always, and without fitness and womanliness no dress can be artistically beautiful.

To be beautiful, it should be the expression of a beautiful mind, a beautiful body, and of perfect health and ease, and of natural delight in movement.

Also, it should have no association with pain.

No dress can be beautiful that is disfigured by an innocent animal wantonly sacrificed to the vanity and egotism of the wearer.

What womanly woman would wear real astracan on her jacket (if she knows *what* real astracan is), or the corpses of gulls, doves, humming-birds, swallows, &c., in her hair? No one with a heart could do it, or, having a heart, the brain must be wanting which would enable her to think of the unjustifiable cruelty to which she gives her sanction.

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If I were a man, nothing would induce me to marry a girl who would wear a bird in her hat. I should think: "Either she is selfish and cold, and through life would sacrifice everything to her own vanity or interests, or else she has so little mind and judgment that she would be ill able to conduct the affairs of life with discretion."

I should say that never was a pretty face rendered one whit the prettier by the body of a dead animal above it, but that on the contrary the attention is distracted from the living beauty beneath, and the mind is saddened and disgusted by the association of cruelty, and death, and decay, with the tender and beautiful womanhood which should rightly only call forth deepest feelings of admiration and respect.

From these examples it would appear that unless restrained by more general knowledge of guiding principles, dress, as hitherto, will always err by the want of some one necessary quality or another, be it that of beauty or of utility, or by indulgence in the vulgar, masculine, or grotesque.

How lately have we been subjected to the most illogical treatment of fine materials. Magnificent velvets and brocades cut up into "panels" of all sizes and all shapes, expressing nothing unless deformity. Tapering "gores" put wide end up on the skirt, or crossways, or any way except one in which they might help to express the shape—if the human form could be expressed by patches! Add to these the folds gathered into the aforesaid panels across, sideways, upside down, and the hump behind in the wrong place, and the hats like a huge dish stuck on in front with nothing behind, so that the wearer looks as if she must topple forward for want of balance, and we wonder what the good of civilisation and education can be if they only bring us to this. Truly, that savage in Africa can have little to learn from us in the way of adornment.



**DESIGN FOR A TEA GOWN.**

Still, we must thankfully acknowledge that at the present moment, amongst the better classes, there is much that is ideal in dress. How simple and how lovely are some of the afternoon gowns, how picturesque the hats and cloaks, and what romances of colour and form may one not find among tea and evening gowns? The tea gown especially lends itself to grace of line and beauty of colour and material.

I should like, before concluding, to say a few words about the most beautiful dress of all times and countries—the Greek. I cannot see why it should not be adopted in England for evening dress, or at any time when the wearer is not exposed to wind and weather. Then, I am fain to confess, the clinging, voluminous draperies and the long skirts would be sadly in the way, and be no longer practical nor beautiful. But I do think that the *principles* governing classical Greek dress should be our guide in all costume. Our garments should be garments with a meaning and a purpose. We should never contradict Nature's simple lines by false protuberances or exaggerations. To be beautiful, clothes should, by their shape, express the figure underneath; any cutting about of material a manner as to contradict the natural lines of the shape must be wrong. If the figure be ungainly, the lines of the dress should be so discreetly managed as to apparently lessen its defects and suggest better proportions to the eye.

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The gown should also be in harmony with the character of the mind and form of the wearer, and while quaintness of cut and even frippery (in a sense) may be appropriate to a merely pretty woman, and, discreetly used, may give interest to a plain one, only the very simplest and most flowing forms are worthy of the noblest type of beauty. No one could imagine the Venus of Milo in ribbons or frills, but wrap her in a sheet and her beauty will still dominate the world.

Dress need not be Greek in form to be Greek in spirit. I think we only need look, and we shall find the following noble qualities in Greek dress:—Fitness and honesty, simplicity, modesty, and dignity.—I am, Sir, your truly,

LOUISA STARR CANZIANI.

It will be seen that, on the whole, the verdict of the artists on the present style of ladies' dress is considerably more favourable than might have been anticipated from the adverse criticism to which it is so commonly exposed. Indeed, the consensus of opinion is one which cannot fail to gratify our lady readers, since, in reality, it affirms not only that they are themselves, as ever, the delight of painters, but that—tomfooleries of tight-lacing and high heels apart—their everyday attire may be so also.

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## ***How the Redoubt was Taken.***

FROM THE FRENCH OF PROSPER MÉRIMÉE.

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[PROSPER MÉRIMÉE was born in 1803 and died in 1870. His father was a painter—but Prosper started life upon a lawyer's stool. Before thirty he was made Inspector-General of Historic Monuments, and in the pleasant occupation of this office he travelled over most of Europe, and afterwards described his travels in a book. Then he began to write short stories—among them "Carmen," which the opera founded on its plot has made a household word. These little masterpieces—he never tried his hand at a long tale—exquisite in style, and full of life and action, gained his election to the French Academy. And he deserved his fame. He has the magic art which makes the things of fancy real as life itself, we know not how. "How the Redoubt was Taken" is in length a very little story—but to read it is to be present with the storming-party, in their mad rush to victory and death.]



FRIEND of mine, a soldier, who died in Greece of fever some years since, described to me one day his first engagement. His story so impressed me that I wrote it down from memory. It was as follows:—

I joined my regiment on September 4. It was evening. I found the colonel in the camp. He received me rather brusquely, but having read the general's introductory letter he changed his manner, and addressed me courteously.

By him I was presented to my captain, who had just come in from reconnoitring. This captain, whose acquaintance I had scarcely time to make, was a tall, dark man, of harsh, repelling aspect. He had been a private soldier, and had won his cross and epaulettes upon the field of battle. His voice, which was hoarse and feeble, contrasted strangely with his gigantic stature. This voice of his he owed, as I was told, to a bullet which had passed completely through his body at the battle of Jena.

On learning that I had just come from college at Fontainebleau, he remarked, with a wry face, "My lieutenant died last night."

I understood what he implied—"It is for you to take his place, and you are good for nothing."

A sharp retort was on my tongue, but I restrained it.

The moon was rising behind the redoubt of Cheverino, which stood two cannon-shots from our encampment. The moon was large and red, as is common at her rising; but that night she seemed to me of extraordinary size. For an instant the redoubt stood out coal-black against the glittering disk. It resembled the cone of a volcano at the moment of eruption.

An old soldier, at whose side I found myself, observed the colour of the moon.

"She is very red," he said. "It is a sign that it will cost us dear to win this wonderful redoubt."

I was always superstitious, and this piece of augury, coming at that moment, troubled me. I sought my couch, but could not sleep. I rose, and walked about awhile, watching the long line of fires upon the heights beyond the village of Cheverino.

When the sharp night air had thoroughly refreshed my blood I went back to the fire. I rolled my mantle round me, and I shut my eyes, trusting not to open them till daybreak. But sleep refused to visit me. Insensibly my thoughts grew doleful. I told myself that I had not a friend among the hundred thousand men who filled that plain. If I were wounded, I should be placed in hospital, in the hands of ignorant and careless surgeons. I called to mind what I had heard of operations. My heart beat violently, and I mechanically arranged, as a kind of rude cuirass, my handkerchief and pocket-book upon my breast. Then, overpowered with weariness, my eyes closed drowsily, only to open the next instant with a start at some new thought of horror.

Fatigue, however, at last gained the day. When the drums beat at daybreak I was fast asleep. We were drawn up in rank. The roll was called, then we stacked our arms, and everything announced that we should pass another uneventful day.

But about three o'clock an aide-de-camp arrived with orders. We were commanded to take arms.

Our sharp-shooters marched into the plain. We followed slowly, and in twenty minutes we saw the outposts of the Russians falling back and entering the redoubt. We had a battery of artillery on our right, another on our left, but both some distance in advance of us. They opened a sharp fire upon the enemy, who returned it briskly, and the redoubt of Cheverino was soon concealed by volumes of thick smoke. Our regiment was almost covered from the Russians' fire by a piece of



"I FOUND THE COLONEL IN THE CAMP."

rising ground. Their bullets (which besides were rarely aimed at us, for they preferred to fire upon our cannoneers) whistled over us, or at worst knocked up a shower of earth and stones.

Just as the order to advance was given, the captain looked at me intently. I stroked my sprouting moustache with an air of unconcern; in truth, I was not frightened, and only dreaded lest I might be thought so. These passing bullets aided my heroic coolness, while my self-respect assured me that the danger was a real one, since I was veritably under fire. I was delighted at my self-possession, and already looked forward to the pleasure of describing in Parisian drawing-rooms the capture of the redoubt of Cheverino.



### "A SHELL KNOCKED OFF MY SHAKO."

The colonel passed before our company. "Well," he said to me, "you are going to see warm work in your first action." [Pg 176]

I gave a martial smile, and brushed my cuff, on which a bullet, which had struck the earth at thirty paces distant, had cast a little dust.

It appeared that the Russians had discovered that their bullets did no harm, for they replaced them by a fire of shells, which began to reach us in the hollows where we lay. One of these, in its explosion, knocked off my shako and killed a man beside me.

"I congratulate you," said the captain, as I picked up my shako. "You are safe now for the day."

I knew the military superstition which believes that the axiom *non bis in idem* is as applicable to the battlefield as to the courts of justice. I replaced my shako with a swagger.

"That's a rude way to make one raise one's hat," I said, as lightly as I could. And this wretched piece of wit was, in the circumstances, received as excellent.

"I compliment you," said the captain. "You will command a company to-night; for I shall not survive the day. Every time I have been wounded the officer below me has been touched by some spent ball; and," he added, in a lower tone, "all their names began with P."

I laughed sceptically; most people would have done the same; but most would also have been struck, as I was, by these prophetic words. But, conscript though I was, I felt that I could trust my thoughts to no one, and that it was my duty to seem always calm and bold.

At the end of half an hour the Russian fire had sensibly diminished. We left our cover to advance on the redoubt.

Our regiment was composed of three battalions. The second had to take the enemy in flank; the two others formed the storming party. I was in the third.

On issuing from behind the cover, we were received by several volleys, which did but little harm. The whistling of the balls amazed me. "But after all," I thought, "a battle is less terrible than I expected."



**"OUR SOLDIERS RUSHED ACROSS THE  
RUINS."**

We advanced at a smart run, our musketeers in front. All at once the Russians uttered three hurras—three distinct hurras—and then stood silent, without firing.

"I don't like that silence," said the captain. "It bodes no good."

I began to think our people were too eager. I could not help comparing, mentally, their shouts and clamour with the striking silence of the enemy.

We quickly reached the foot of the redoubt. The palisades were broken and the earthworks shattered by our balls. With a roar of "Vive l'Empereur!" our soldiers rushed across the ruins.

I raised my eyes. Never shall I forget the sight which met my view. The smoke had mostly lifted, and remained suspended, like a canopy, at twenty feet above the redoubt. Through a bluish mist could be perceived, behind their shattered parapet, the Russian Grenadiers, with rifles lifted, as motionless as statues. I can see them still—the left eye of every soldier glaring at us, the right hidden by his lifted gun. In an embrasure at a few feet distant, a man with a fusee stood by a cannon.

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I shuddered. I believed that my last hour had come.

"Now for the dance to open!" cried the captain. These were the last words I heard him speak.

There came from the redoubt a roll of drums. I saw the muzzles lowered. I shut my eyes; I heard a most appalling crash of sound, to which succeeded groans and cries. Then I looked up, amazed to find myself still living. The redoubt was once more wrapped in smoke. I was surrounded by the dead and wounded. The captain was extended at my feet; a ball had carried off his head, and I was covered with his blood. Of all the company, only six men, except myself, remained erect.

This carnage was succeeded by a kind of stupor. The next instant the colonel, with his hat on his sword's point, had scaled the parapet with a cry of "Vive l'Empereur!" The survivors followed him. All that succeeded is to me a kind of dream. We rushed into the redoubt, I know not how; we fought hand to hand in the midst of smoke so thick that no man could perceive his enemy. I found my sabre dripping blood; I heard a shout of "Victory"; and, in the clearing smoke, I saw the earthworks piled with dead and dying. The cannons were covered with a heap of corpses. About two hundred men in the French uniform were standing, without order, loading their muskets or wiping their bayonets. Eleven Russian prisoners were with them.

The colonel was lying, bathed in blood, upon a broken cannon. A group of soldiers crowded round him. I approached them.

"Who is the oldest captain?" he was asking of a sergeant.

The sergeant shrugged his shoulders most expressively.

"Who is the oldest lieutenant?"

"This gentleman, who came last night," replied the sergeant, calmly.

The colonel smiled bitterly.

"Come, sir," he said to me, "you are now in chief command. Fortify the gorge of the redoubt at once with waggons, for the enemy is out in force. But General C— is coming to support you."



**"PISH, MY DEAR FELLOW! THE REDOUBT  
IS TAKEN!"**

"Colonel," I asked him, "are you badly wounded?"

"Pish, my dear fellow! The redoubt is taken!"

### *Actors' Dressing Rooms.*

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HE robing apartments of actors are pleasant retreats. Quaint old prints, autographed portraits and pictures, highly-prized programmes, letters from celebrities are as numerous as they are interesting, whilst every actor bids "good luck" cross his threshold by exhibiting his own particular horse-shoe in a conspicuous corner.

Where is a more picturesque room than that which Henry Irving enters nightly? Scarcely a dozen square inches of wall paper is to be seen—pictures are everywhere. The eminent tragedian has a private entrance in Burleigh-street, and you may know when the actor is not far away, for "Fussie," a pet fox-terrier, always heralds his approach. "Fussie" has his own mat to sit on, and here he waits during the whole of the performance until after the second act, when he regularly looks up for his customary biscuit. It was "Fussie" who was lost at Southampton when Mr. Irving was on his way to America. He turned up, however, at the Lyceum stage door four days afterwards, and it remains a mystery to this day as to whether "Fussie" came by road or rail.



**MR. IRVING'S DRESSING-ROOM.**

Henry Irving's room is a comfortable apartment. The floor is covered with oilcloth, and a huge rug imparts a cosy appearance. Irving always uses the same chair to sit in when making up. It has broken down a score of times, but has been patched up again and again. In fact, the actor has almost a reverence for anything which is a connecting link with old associations.

Look at the costumes, for instance, hanging behind a door which leads to a very unpretentious-looking wash-basin. There hangs the clothing of *The Master of Ravenswood*. The two Spanish hats with long feathers, the velvet coat and waistcoat with innumerable buttons, a quaint old crimson waistcoat, with elaborate silver work. Mr. Irving clings to an old coat so long as it will cling to him. He makes his clothes old—wears them during the day. That old beaver hat was worn in "Charles I." and "The Dead Heart"—now it is the characteristic head-gear of *The Master of Ravenswood*. The hat worn in the last act did duty ten years ago in "The Corsican Brothers."

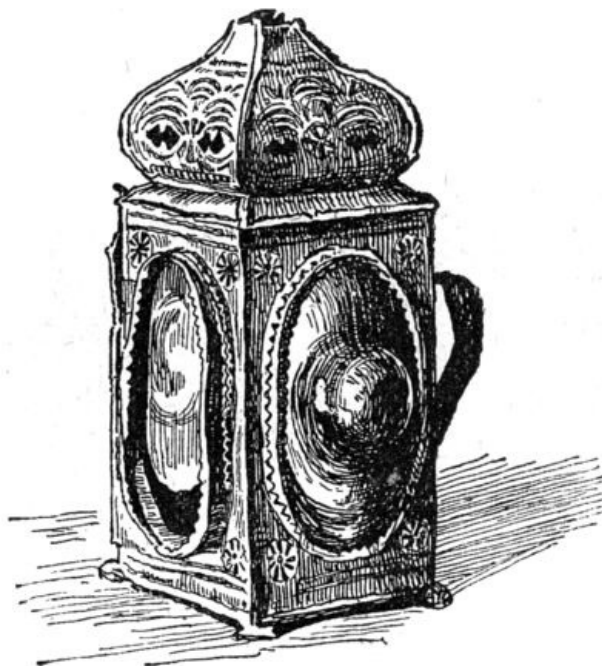
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There, just by the long pier glass, is the old fashioned oak dressing-table, of a pattern associated with the days of King Arthur—in fact, the table has done duty in "Macbeth" in one of the banqueting scenes. Handle some of the veritable curiosities on it. The very looking-glass is tied up with string—it has reflected its owner's face for fourteen years, and went across the Atlantic with him. The old pincushion went as well. On a chair are the actor's eye-glasses, which he always uses when making up. Scissors, nail parers, &c., are about, whilst the paints lie in a little side cabinet by the looking-glass, and four diminutive gallipots are conspicuous, filled with the colours mostly used. A great tin box of crepe hair is also at hand, for Mr. Irving makes all his own

moustaches. He gums a little hair on where needed and then works in colour to get the effect.

The wicker hand-basket is interesting. The dresser carries this to "the wings" when the actor needs a rapid change of "make-up." It has three compartments, holding a glass of water, powder puff, saucer containing fuller's earth, cold cream, hare's foot, lip salve, rouge, and a remarkably old comb and brush. Here is a striking collection of rings; a great emerald—only a "stage" gem, alas!—is worn in "Louis XI." and "Richelieu," whilst here is one worn as *Doricourt* in the "Belle's Stratagem," the space where the stone ought to be being ingeniously filled up with blue sealing wax. These long pear-shaped pearl earrings are worn as *Charles I.*, such as all gay cavaliers were wont to wear.

You can handle the quaint old bull's-eye lantern which tradition says Eugene Aram carried on the night of the murder—for it is on the table. A piece of wick still remains and grease is visible—not as the morbid Aram left it, but as last used. The lantern itself is of stamped metal. The glass on either side is there, though that through which the light was seen in the centre has long since left. It is a highly interesting relic.



**EUGENE ARAM'S LANTERN.**

Be careful not to step into a big flower-pot saucer just close by, where "Fussie" drinks; mind not to overturn what looks like a magnified pepper-box near the fireplace, but which, after all, only contains the dust which is "peppered" on to the actor's long boots, to make them look travel-stained and worn. Then walk round the room and admire the treasures.

There is a little gift sent from Denmark. In a neat oak frame is a picture of Elsinore, sprays of leaves from "Ophelia's brook," and a number of tiny stones and pebbles from "Hamlet's Grave." Here again is Kean, by Sir Thomas Lawrence, a small "Maclise," a sketch by Charles Matthews, Fechter—who used to dress in this very room himself—as *The Master of Ravenswood*, Ellen Terry as *Ophelia*, Sara Bernhardt, and John L. Toole. Variety is found in a pair of horseshoes, one of which Mr. Irving carried with him to America.

Over the crimson plush mantel-board is "Garrick in the Green-room," and on either side a pair of ancient coloured prints of the one and only Joey Grimaldi, one of which represents him "as he appeared when he took his farewell benefit at Drury Lane Theatre on June 27, 1828," with pan and soap in his lap, arrayed in highly coloured garments, wonderfully made, and wearing a remarkably broad smile on his face. But to mention every one of Mr. Irving's treasures would be impossible.

The play over, he is in walking costume, cigar alight, and away in less than a quarter of an hour—"Fussie" with him, following faithfully in his steps.

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Mr. Toole's room is exactly what everybody imagines it to be—cosy and homely, like its genial occupant. The casual passer-by over the iron grating in King William-street little thinks that he is throwing a momentary shadow over the very corner where Toole's washstand, soap and towel find a convenient lodging.

How simple everything is! The little table in the centre where Toole sits down and religiously "drops a line," during the time he is not wanted in the piece, to all those unknown "young friends" who would tempt good fortune on the stage; the sofa covered with flowered cretonne; and in close proximity to the fireplace a ricketty arm-chair in brown leather. The springs are broken, but what matter? That chair is Toole's, sir, and Royalty has occupied it many a time. Yes, nothing could be more simple than our own comedian's dressing-room. It is just a cosy parlour, and with Toole in the chair by the fire-side one would be loth to leave it.



### MR. TOOLE'S DRESSING-ROOM.

The mantel-board has a clock in the centre, an ornament or two, and a bust of the occupant in his younger days. In a corner is the veritable umbrella used in *Paul Pry*. What a priceless collection of theatrical reminiscences meet the eye everywhere! There is a portrait group of a company of young actors who appeared in the original production of "Dearer than Life," at the New Queen's Theatre, Long-acre—Henry Irving, Charles Wyndham, John Clayton, Lionel Brough, John L. Toole, and Miss Henrietta Hodson, who afterwards became Mrs. Labouchere. A tolerably good cast! And here are portraits of a few actors taken years ago at Ryde, Isle of Wight, showing W. Creswick in a great Inverness cape, Benjamin Webster, S. Phelps, Paul Bedford, and a rising young actor who had only recently made his appearance—J. L. Toole by name.

Near a capital character sketch of Henry J. Byron, by Alfred Bryan, is an old playbill in a black ebony frame. This was the programme for one night:—

### THEATRE ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

The Drama in 3 Acts:  
MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS.

KEELEY WORRIED BY BUCKSTONE.

<i>Mr. Keeley</i>	By himself.
<i>Mr. Buckstone</i>	By himself.

To conclude with the laughable farce,  
THE SPITALFIELDS WEAVER.

<i>Simmons</i>	Mr. John L. Toole.
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(*His first appearance on any stage*).

Many a white satin programme is about, and the tenant of the little dressing-room of King William-street is represented in many parts. Just by the door is Mr. Liston as *Paul Pry*, arrayed in bottle-green coat, big beaver hat, and armed with the inevitable umbrella—"just called to ask you how your tooth was."

An excellent portrait represents John Billington as *John Peerybingle* in "Dot," underneath which are penned some noteworthy lines: "I don't want anybody to tell me my fortune. I've got one of the best little wives alive, a happy home over my head, a blessed baby, and a cricket on my hearth."

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Certainly what Mr. W. S. Gilbert would term "a highly respectable" entrance is that which leads to Mr. Beerbohm Tree's dressing-room. The stage door is in Suffolk-street, and until Mr. Tree's tenancy of the Haymarket Theatre, there was an old clause in the lease setting forth that whenever Royalty visited the theatre they should have the right to enter by that way. Buckstone lived here—his dressing-room still remains. It is a quaint corner near the stage, now used by the actors as a smoking-room. The walls are covered with red paper, relieved by one or two decidedly ancient paintings. Buckstone's iron safe—wherein the renowned comedian was wont to store his money—is still visible; but the money-bags are there no longer; their place being occupied by sundry jars of tobacco and a churchwarden or two. Only on one occasion has Mr. Tree found it necessary to use this room. The corpulency of the bibulous *Falstaff* prevented the actor from conveniently coming down the stairs which lead from his own room to the stage—hence *Falstaff* was attired in this apartment.

The sound of the overture is just beginning as we hurriedly follow Mr. Tree in the direction of his room. Though he has been singled out as a very master of the art of transferring the face into the presentment of character, it is a fact that Mr. Tree never sits down to dress until the overture has started, and attaches less importance to his make-up than to any other portion of the actor's art.

He throws himself into a chair of a decided "office" pattern, in front of a triple glass which reflects all positions of his face. The sticks of paint are arranged on a small Japanese tray, and the various powders in tin boxes. Everything about the room is quiet and unassuming—a washstand near the window, a few odd wooden-back chairs. The room is regarded rather as a workshop than a lounging-room, and it certainly possesses that appearance, though not without a certain pleasant cosiness.

The actor's fingers have evidently been recently at work on the lengthy pier-glass. Young Mr. Irving has just been in. He wanted some idea of a make-up for *King John*. Mr. Tree gave him one by taking a stick of grease paint and sketching it in outline on the glass. A number of still unanswered letters are lying about—some of them delightfully humorous missives from "stage-struck" young people. One is positively from a footman. It runs:—

"DEAR SIR,—I want to be an actor, so thought I would write to you. I am tall and dark, and have been a footman for five years in a nobleman's family. I have just had a hundred pounds left me, and if you will give me a part in one of your pieces I will give you fifty pounds of it. Write by return, as I have already given notice.—Your obedient servant,

"P.S.—Mark the letter private."



**MR. BEERBOHM TREE'S DRESSING-ROOM.**



**MR. HARE'S DRESSING-ROOM.**

In a corner lies the peak cap worn as *Demetrius* in "The Red Lamp"; here the cloth cap, gaily decorated with poppies, corn and feathers, used in "The Ballad Monger." Over the door is a gigantic horseshoe, measuring at least a couple of feet from top to bottom. This was placed here by Mrs. Bancroft.

Just at this moment a magnificent bull-dog—whose appearance we had not previously noticed—turns lazily on a mat under the dressing-table. This is "Ned," rechristened "Bully Boy." The dog plays a prominent part in the piece now running at the Haymarket.

A tap at the door. A voice cries, "Mr. Tree"—and hurriedly applying a line here and there about the eyes, as we accompany the actor to the stage, he has something interesting to say regarding "making-up." He rather laughs at the idea, and is perplexed to understand the reason why his facial paintings are so commented upon. He is always the last to reach the theatre. "The less make-up, the better," he observes. "The art of acting is not a matter of painting the face, for a very plain person can in a few seconds become extremely good-looking and *vice versâ*; it is what comes from within—what the player feels. It is his imagination which really illuminates the face, and not what he has put on it with hare's foot and pencil."

A peculiar interest is attached to the visit which we made to Mr. John Hare's room at the Garrick Theatre. Mr. Hare has been on the stage for twenty-six years, and previous to our finding him seated in his great arm-chair by the fireplace, had never been interviewed. Hence the few words he said, as he played with a cigarette, become particularly notable.

"I have been acting now for twenty-six years. I was for ten years with Mrs. Bancroft at the Prince of Wales's, and have been some twelve or thirteen years in management."

"What is your favourite part, Mr. Hare?"

"The present one in 'A Pair of Spectacles,'" is the reply. "I take about a month to study up a character. I always wear the clothes I am going to play in for some time previously, so as to get them to my figure. The longest time I ever bestowed on a make-up was in 'The Profligate.' I took half an hour over it."

Mr. Hare has really two rooms. The big one is used for an office as much as possible, where the actor does all his correspondence. Note the old-fashioned high wire fender, the heavy plush curtains, and elaborate rosewood furniture. It is a most artistic apartment. Those speaking-tubes communicate with the stage door, prompter, box office, and acting manager.

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The pictures which adorn the walls are as varied as they are valuable. Here may be found Leslie Ward's caricature of Corney Grain and of George Grossmith, together with an old engraving of Garrick, after R. E. Pine, published in 1818. Just by the glass is one of the few photos of Compton, in frock coat and plaid tie. Many a reminiscence of the Hare and Kendal management is about, and on the mantel-board of ebony and gold—over which rests the customary horse-shoe with the initials J. H. in the centre—portraits in silver frames of members of Mr. Hare's family are to be seen.



**MR. HARE'S INNER ROOM.**

But by far the most attractive corner is a little room, scarcely large enough for two people to stand in, which branches off from the more spacious apartment. There, hanging up, is the light suit worn as *Benjamin Goldfinch*, with the long black coat which flaps about so marvellously—the actor finds plenty of "character" even in a coat—and the shepherd's-plaid trousers.

The looking-glass is of walnut, with electric lights on either side shaded with metal leaves. In front of this he sits, amidst a hundred little oddments. Here are tiny bottles of medicine and quinine—for the actor being is a firm believer in the properties of this traditional strength-reviver. The little room is as comfortable as it well can be, and has a thoroughly domesticated air about it.

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There are many things to notice as we pass through the passages on our way toward Mr. Charles Wyndham's room at the Criterion; programmes and play-bills in German and Russian of "David Garrick"—in fact the passages are literally decorated with mementoes of the clever comedian's admirable impersonation of this character. A bronze of the actor as *Davy* raising the glass on high, and a massive silver loving cup, engraved "Garrick," is mounted on a pedestal bearing the inscription "Charles Wyndham, Von Direktor Lautenberg, Residenz Theatre, Berlin, December, 1887." Prints and pictures typical of Russian life are freely displayed. And here is an exceptional curiosity, and one which is doubtless highly treasured. In a modest oak frame is a piece of paper which once served to settle a little dispute, which is historical among things theatrical:—

"Mr. Bedford waxes two gallons of claret with Mr. Williams, that Mr. Garrick did not play upon ye



stage in ye year 1732 or before."

Then follows the suggestive word "Paid," and below it are the words:—

"I acted upon Goodman's Fields Theatre for ye first time in ye year 1741.

"D. GARRICK.

"Witness,  
"SOMERSET DRAPER."

Mr. Wyndham's room has one thing about it which distinguishes it from all similar apartments in London. It is next to the stage, and by pulling up a little red blind he can see through an aperture just what is going on, and know exactly when his services are required.

The room is square, divided by a curtain. Strange to say, not a single portrait of a brother actor is apparent; but, whilst the actor paints his face, he can see many an invitation to dinner negligently thrust in the edges of the gilt frame. The dressing-table which occupies nearly the whole length of one end of the room is fully supplied with countless colours, whilst a little tray is positively brimming over with all patterns of collar studs. An egg is handy; it is intended for the hair, as Mr. Wyndham and wigs have never agreed. There is a writing-table and a chair or two, and an elaborate inlaid rosewood escritoire is in a corner, against which Mr. Wyndham stands for his portrait in the character of *Dazzle*, with his flowered waistcoat, frilled front, and hanging fob.

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Nor must the apartment in which Mr. Wyndham entertains his friends be passed unnoticed. This is a room overlooking Piccadilly, and capable of seating some twenty or twenty-five persons. It was dark when we entered, but the next instant the electric light was switched on, and an apartment was presented which may be singled out as the only one of its kind ever built.

We were standing in the middle of a first-class cabin of a ship. Not a solitary item was wanting to complete the illusion. The ceiling was built low, and every article of furniture was made on sea-going principles, even down to the table. The walls are of walnut, the panels between being lined with exquisite sateen. Though one or two windows look out on to Piccadilly Circus, there are many port-holes about, all draped with old gold plush curtains. The upholstery consists principally of a series of settees of light blue plush, which go round the sides of the room.

The looking-glass over the mantelpiece is typical of a cabin. It is surrounded, in the form of a framework, by a cable, the ends of which are fastened off by diminutive anchors. Exactly in the centre, in an elaborate frame, is the programme used on the occasion of the performance of "David Garrick," which Mr. Wyndham and his brother actors gave before the Prince and Princess of Wales at Sandringham some years ago.

The very lamps suspended from the ceiling are made to sway to and fro in case of rough and windy weather. The whole thing is an ingenious idea, delightfully carried out, and to-night Mr. Wyndham's cabin is seen at its best. There is to be a supper-party at the conclusion of the performance downstairs, and the tables for the time being are burdened down with every luxury. Fairy lamps are peeping out amongst the pines and hot-house grapes, and the lamps hanging from the roof are surrounded with flowers and ferns, whilst the electric light shines out brilliantly from amongst the blossoms.



**MR. WYNDHAM'S DRESSING-ROOM.**

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## ***The Minister's Crime.***

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BY MACLAREN COBBAN.

### **I.**

HERE is really little use in my continuing to call," said the doctor; "it will only be running you into useless expense. I may go on prescribing and prescribing till I get through the whole pharmacopœia, but I can do him no good; what he needs is not drugs but air—a bracing air. Get him away out of this, and let him run wild in the country, or—if your engagements won't let you



get to the country—remove to some open suburb north or south."

The doctor sat in a little parlour, in a shabby-genteel street of close-packed middle London. Opposite him was the patient, a child of three or four, on his mother's knee and clasped about with his mother's arms, while his father, the Rev. James Murray, stood anxiously listening. The boy—the first-born, and the only child of his parents—had a month or two before been stricken down with an infant's ailment, and though that had passed, he continued so weak that the doctor had tested the soundness of heart and lungs, and the outcome of his examination was that the only hope for the child was change of air.



### THE DOCTOR'S VISIT.

"I only wish," said the father, "that I could take him away. I must try, though I don't see at present how I am to do it."

He turned away to the window to hide the emotion that would rise to choke him when he met the large, weary blue eyes of his boy bent on him, as if in appeal that he might not be allowed to fade and wither and die, like a flower before it has fairly bloomed.

"Can't you at least send the boy away with his mother?" asked the doctor.

"I must try," said the father without turning round. "I must see what can be done."

"In the meantime," said the doctor, rising, "go on with the cod-liver oil and malt extract."

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The doctor went, and still the Rev. James Murray stood by the window, striving to keep down the emotion that demanded to have its way. The wife rose with the child in her arms and went close to her husband.

"James, my dear," said she in a low voice (and she took his hand), "don't, my dear!"

James turned with the impulse of all his passionate love for his wife and child, and drew them together to his breast and bent his head over them. And one great sob of anguish broke from him, and one tear of bitter agony sprang in his eye, and fell hot upon his wife's hand.

"Oh, James, my darling!" she cried, clinging to him. "Don't! God *will* be good to us!"

They stood thus for some seconds, while no sound was heard but the loud ticking of the cheap lodging-house clock on the mantelpiece. The wife sobbed a little in sympathy with her husband; not that she considered at all how her own heart was wrung, but that she felt how his was. Seeing and hearing her, he recovered himself.

"Come, my dear," said he, "this does no good. Let us sit down, and see what can be arranged."

He led her back to her seat. He sat down beside her, transferred the boy to his own lap, and held her hand.

"Come now, Jim," said he to his boy, "how am I going to get you and your mammy to the country? Eh?"

"Daddy come, too," said the child, putting his arm about his father's neck.

"I would, Jim, I would," said he, with the faintest suspicion of a painful catch in his voice still; "but I have no money. And I don't know how mammy and you are to go, unless some kind friend offers to take you in."

"Oh, James dear!" exclaimed the wife, impulsively, catching her husband's hand to her cheek. "It's I who have taken you from kind friends! I am a burden to you, and nothing but a burden!"

"My dear wife," said he, bending to her, "you are the sweetest burden that man could bear, and I'd rather have you than all else the world could give."

"It's beautiful, my dear," said she, "to hear you say so. It's like sweet music to me; but it's not true. If you had married another—if you had married differently, and as you were expected to have married—you would not be here now; and if you had a sick boy, like our dear, poor Jim, there would have been no difficulty in getting to the country, or in getting anything that was needed for him! But you married me, and—my poor, dear love!—you bear the penalty!"

"Mary," said he, with a certain touch of solemnity in his voice, "I have not for one instant regretted that we loved each other, and married each other, and, whatever may come, I shall not regret it. The complete love of a woman like you is more precious than rubies. Your love, my darling,"—and he caressed the head crowned with a glory of bright hair—"is the joy of my life—God forgive me!"

She drew again his hand to her cheek, and pressed it there, and said no word more. And so they sat for a few seconds longer, while the vulgar, intrusive clock, with a kind of limp in its noisy tick, seemed to say, "*It's time! It's time!*"

Let us take the opportunity of this pause to explain how the Reverend James Murray got into the anxious position in which we find him. He was a minister of a well-known denomination of Nonconformists. When he left college he had been reckoned a young man of great promise and of considerable powers of persuasive eloquence, and he was expected to become a famous preacher. He was invited to be the minister of a large and wealthy congregation in a northern manufacturing town. He accepted the invitation, and for two or three years he was a great favourite with his people; never, they declared, had they heard so fine a preacher (though he was sometimes so "fine" that they did not understand him), and never had they known a better man. His praise was in everybody's mouth; the men admired him and the women adored him. But he was a bachelor, and there was not an unmarried lady in the congregation who did not aspire to be his wife, which put him in the awkward and invidious position of having to prefer one out of many. He astonished and offended all the well-to-do ladies, by falling in love with and marrying the pretty, shy governess of one of the wealthiest families—a girl who had not been regarded as having the smallest chance of occupying the proud position of minister's wife. His marriage alienated the women, and through them cooled the ardour of the men. The situation was strained; but it might have gradually returned to its former easy condition, had not the minister soon after his marriage become what is termed "broad" in his religious views and uncompromising in his expression of them. His people grew alarmed, and his deacons remonstrated—(with less friendliness of feeling, probably, than if he had not offended them by his marriage)—but the minister declared he could not do otherwise than preach what he believed to be the truth. Then some people left him, and others would not speak to him, and his position became so difficult and finally so unbearable that he could do nothing but send in his resignation. He shook the dust and the grime of that northern town off his feet, and with sore heart and slender purse journeyed to London. He was resolved to labour among "the masses"; if the arrogant and wealthy people of the north would not hear him, he was sure the poor of London, bending beneath the weary burden of life, would hear him gladly. He had not been in London long when he became minister of a venerable, half-deserted chapel in one of those curiously quiet corners made by the rushing currents and the swirling eddies of the life of our huge metropolis. It was close to the heart of London, and yet no one knew it was there but the handful of small shop-keepers and their families and the few devout and destitute old women who made up its congregation. These poor people were fluttered with pride when they got so clever and beautiful a preacher for their own; they looked to see ere long the old chapel crowded with an attentive congregation as it had been in other days; and the chapel-keeper (who was also a painter) had put all the magnificent hopes of himself and his friends in the fresh inscription he made on the faded notice-board in the fore-court: "MINISTER, THE REV. JAMES MURRAY, M.A.," in letters of gold.



### "THE PRETTY GOVERNESS."

A year had passed since then, and the minister's heart was sad. He had spent himself for the benefit of the poor that sweltered round that old chapel, and the poor did not seem to want him or his ministrations any more than the wealthy: they would gather round him if he spread a tea for them, but they would not come to hear him preach; so the chapel remained as empty as when he first ascended its pulpit. Most harassing and wearing anxiety of all, he was desperately poor. How he and his wife and child had lived during the year it would be difficult to tell; from the treasurer of the chapel funds he had received less than sixty pounds, and he was in debt for his lodgings, in debt to the doctor, his and his wife's clothes were become painfully shabby, and his child was sick unto death.

What now was to be done?

"If I had only two or three pounds in hand," said he, "or if I could raise them, I could send you and Jim away to some quiet seaside place; but everything is gone—everything!"

"Don't be cast down, my dear," said his wife, raising her head, and bravely smiling. "It is always darkest and coldest before the dawn. Something may come to us just when we least expect it."

"I am angry with myself," said he, "for being so cast down; but I can't help it. I care nothing for myself—nothing at all, you know, Mary: I have good health, and I can live on little. It's seeing you, my dear, and poor little Jim, going without things you ought to have, that goes to my heart; and to know now that the boy's life would be saved if I could do something which I have no hope of doing!—oh! it maddens me! I ask myself over and over again if I've done wrong to anyone that we should be at this desperate pass!"

"My dear, dear husband!" exclaimed his wife, again caressing his hand. "You done wrong to anyone? You could not hurt a fly! We must be patient and brave, my dear, and bear it. And Jim, poor boy, may really be improving: doctors sometimes make mistakes."

But it needed only to look at the child's thin, limp figure, his transparent skin, and his large, sad, lustreless eyes, to be convinced that there the doctor had made no mistake. The boy would die unless he could be taken into the fresh, stimulating air of the seaside or the country. The parents glanced at the boy, and then looked involuntarily each into the sad face of the other, and turned their heads away.

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At that moment there came a loud, double "rat-tat" at the street door, which made them both jump. Their sitting-room was on the ground-floor. The minister rose, pale and expectant. He heard no one coming to answer the summons.

"I wonder if it's for me?" he said.

"Go and see," said his wife.

He went into the passage and opened the door.

"Murray?" said the telegraph-boy, and, on being answered "Yes," handed a reply-paid telegram.

The minister's fingers trembled so, he could scarcely tear the envelope open. He took the

telegram in to his wife and read it aloud:—

"*Can you supply Upton Chapel on Sunday next? Letter to follow.*"

That was all, with the name and address of the sender appended. Both the minister and his wife knew the Upton Chapel, and perceived at once that that was the most hopeful thing that had happened to them for more than a year.

"Yes," wrote the minister on the reply-form, which he handed to the telegraph-boy.

"Thank God for that, Mary," said he, when he returned to her. "Now I can send you and Jim away for at least a week! Thank God, my dear!"

He kissed her, and then set himself in his agitation to walk up and down the little room.

"That will mean five pounds for us, I believe; I don't want to count the fee I shall get, but I can't help it now. It's a rich congregation, and I think I must get that. And, Mary," he went on, "what if they should ask me to be their minister? You know they are without one. Perhaps the 'letter to follow' will say something. Upton is a beautiful, bracing suburb, and Jim—our own little Jim!"—and he raised him in his arms—"would get strong there!"

"Ah, my dear," said his wife, "it is too tempting. I am afraid to hope. But I am sure when once they hear you they will like you. Now let us think: what sermons will you take?"

## II.

The "letter to follow" came by a late post, but it was only a fuller and politer version of the telegram. It hoped that Mr. Murray would be able to give the Upton congregation the pleasure of listening to him, it apologised for the short notice (it was then Friday), and it invited the minister to dine with the writer on Sunday. It thus gave no hint that the eye of the Upton congregation might be on Mr. Murray, but at the same time it did not completely dash the hope that it might be.

On Saturday the minister sat down and wrote one sermon expressly for the occasion, and with that and another in his pocket he set off on Sunday morning to fulfil his engagement with some trepidation.

The aspect of the Upton Chapel was itself cheerful and inspiring. It was nearly new, and it was large and handsome in a semi-Gothic, open-raftered style; moreover, it was well filled, without being crowded. It was a complete contrast to the place where Mr. Murray usually ministered, where most of the high-backed musty pews were quite empty, where a kind of fog hung perpetually, and where the minister, perched aloft in the pulpit, was as "a voice crying in the wilderness." Then in the Upton Chapel there was a fine organ, and good singing by a well-trained choir. When the minister, therefore, rose to preach his sermon, it was with a sense of exaltation and inspiration which he had not felt for years. He delivered himself with effect, and he was listened to with wakeful attention and apparent appreciation. When the service was over, and one leader of the congregation after another came to the vestry to shake him warmly by the hand and to thank him for his "beautiful discourse," he thanked God and took courage, and wished that his Mary were with him, instead of sitting lonely and anxious in their little lodging with their sick boy.

He went in good spirits to the home of his host, who was a merchant in the city, and he sat down with the family to the ample Sunday dinner. He sat next his hostess, a gentle, motherly lady, who asked him if he was married, and if he had any children; and he told her of Mary and the child. His host was a shrewd man, of middle age, who had clearly read much and thought a good deal, and all his family (three grown sons and two daughters) were intelligent and cultivated, and took a modest, but sufficient, share in the conversation of the table, and all listened to such opinions as the minister uttered with attention and understanding. Mr. Murray, therefore, felt he was in a sociable, frank, and refined atmosphere, and he thought within himself: "What a place of brightness and pleasant endeavour this would be after my rude and stormy experience of the north and this terrible year in London! And, oh, what a haven of rest and health for my darling wife and boy!"

So it was with unaffected joy, when he walked round the large garden with his host after dinner, that he heard him say:—

"I think, Mr. Murray, absolute frankness in these matters is best. Let me ask you, if you were invited to become our minister, would you be willing? Would you like to come to us?"

"As frankly as you put the question," said Mr. Murray, "I answer that, from all I know and have seen of the Upton congregation, I *should* like to be your minister. Of course, it would be pleasanter for me and for all if the invitation were as nearly unanimous as may be."

"Quite so," said his host. "I ought to say that, though I am the chairman, I have at present no authority to speak for any but myself and my family. But we have heard a good report of you, Mr. Murray, and I know that many of our people have been much impressed by you this morning." Then, unconsciously, he went on to dash somewhat the minister's lively hopes. "There is a young man—Mr. Lloyd: you may know him. No? Well—some of our people are very much taken with him. He is a brilliant, popular sort of young fellow; but he is young—he has only been some two years or so a minister—and he is unmarried, and—and well, I don't want to say anything against him—but he is just a *little* flighty, and we older folk doubt how we should get on with him. I am glad, however, to have your assurance that you would come if you were asked."



**"HE DELIVERED HIMSELF WITH EFFECT."**

He put his arm within the minister's, and thus they returned into the house. And—as if that had been a sign of consent agreed upon—all the company (and there were now a good many guests assembled) beamed upon them as they entered the drawing-room.

"I am *so* glad," said the eldest daughter of the house, bringing Mr. Murray a cup of tea and sitting down by him, "to know that you are willing to be our minister!"

"How do you know I am?" he asked, with a smile.

"Oh," she answered with a blush and a light laugh, "we arranged for a sign from my father, so that we should all know at once. You are willing, are you not?"

"I am," he answered, "quite."

"And I hope—I *do* hope—you will be asked."

Presently there came to him an unknown young man, and said: "I don't often go to chapel or church, but if you often preach sermons like this morning's, I should always go to hear you, I think."

That was a flattering tribute, and the minister showed his appreciation of it.

"Well, I confess," he said, "it is at least pleasant to hear you say so."

Thus the time passed till the hour came for evening service. The gas was lit, and floor and galleries were crowded with people. The minister had chosen a simple and pathetic theme for his evening discourse: "He took little children in His arms and blessed them;" and he spoke out of the fulness of experience and with the tender feeling of the father of a sick child, insomuch that all were moved, many even to sobs and tears. There was no doubt that he carried his audience with him; and, as in the morning, he had to shake many hands and receive many thanks.

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Last of all, his host of the day came and asked him to take also the services of the next Sunday; and then he hastened home by train to his wife with hopeful, grateful heart.



**"ISN'T HE A JOLLY FELLOW?"**

"There, Mary, my dear," said he, giving her the £5 note in an envelope as it had been slipped into his hand; "that's for you and Jim. I'll take you both down to Margate to-morrow—the air of Margate is the most bracing in England—and you can stay for two or three weeks at least, and the boy will begin to grow strong."

For answer Mary threw herself into her husband's arms, and sobbed upon his breast.

"Oh, how good God is, James! Let us be thankful, my dear! Oh, let us be thankful!"

Next day the minister took his wife and child to Margate, and placed them in lodgings on the breezy cliff-top. On Tuesday he returned to town; for he had much to do to prepare for his second Sunday at Upton and to fill the vacancy at the old, deserted chapel. In spite of his occupation he began, before the week was out, to feel lonely and depressed; for he and his wife had not separated before, save for a day or two, since the hour of their marriage. In the solitude of his close and dingy lodging he restlessly and morbidly meditated on his desire to go to Upton, and his chances of going. Had he any right to go, with such mercenary motives as moved him? But was the health of wife and child a mercenary motive? Was the desire to see them free from a narrow and blighting poverty a mercenary motive? And had he not other motives also—motives of truth and duty? If it was wrong to seek to go to Upton for these reasons, then God forgive him! for he could not help longing to go!

It was in something of that depressed and troubled mood that he went to fulfil his second Sunday. The congregation was larger than on the previous Sunday morning, and the minister felt that

many must have come expressly to hear him; and, therefore, he had less brightness and freedom of delivery than on the Sunday before. He felt, when the service was over, that he had not acquitted himself well, and he began anew to torture himself with the thoughts of what would become of Mary and Jim if he should miss his chance of Upton.

To add discomfort to discomfort, and constraint to constraint, he was introduced in the vestry to the Reverend Mr. Lloyd—his rival, as he felt bound to consider him; and to his host for the day—a stout, loud-spoken, rather vulgar-looking man, who dropped his h's.

When they reached the home of his host (who clearly was a wealthy man, for the house was large and furnished with substantial splendour), he discovered that his rival also was to be a guest. That did not serve to put him more at his ease, the less that he perceived host and rival seemed on very friendly, if not familiar, terms. They called one another "Lloyd" and "Brown," and slapped each other on the back. "Brown" said something, and "Lloyd" flatly and boisterously contradicted and corrected him, and then "Brown" laughed loudly, and seemed to like it. Thus dinner wore away, while Mr. Murray said little save to his hostess—a pale, thin, and somewhat depressed woman, grievously overburdened, it was clear, with a "jolly" husband, and a loud and healthy young family. After dinner "Lloyd" romped and rollicked in and out of the house with the troop of noisy children, while Mr. Murray kept his hostess and her very youngest company, and the attention of his host was divided between duty and inclination—the duty of sitting by his wife and guest, and the inclination of "larking with 'Lloyd.'"

"Look at him!" he exclaimed once. "Isn't he a jolly fellow? I do think he's a capital fellow! Oh, yes; and he has a nice mind." [Pg 191]

It was all very depressing and saddening to Mr. Murray, though he appeared only to be very quiet. For he thought: "A large congregation like this of Upton must necessarily have more people like these Browns than like my friends of last Sunday; and it must, therefore, needs be that this Mr. Lloyd—who has no harm in him, I daresay, but who is little more than a rough, noisy, presumptuous boy not long from school—it must be that he should be preferred by the majority to me. I may as well, then, give up all hope of coming here. But what then of Mary and the boy—the boy?"

He was scarcely more satisfied with himself after the evening service (though he held the attention again of a crowded congregation), and he went back to his lonely lodging with a sore and doubting heart. He wrote, however, cheerfully (he thought) to his wife; but next day she replied to his letter and showed that his assumed cheerfulness had not deceived the watchful sense of love.

"You are not in good spirits, my dear," she wrote; "don't pretend you are. If you are not better to-day I shall come home to you, though little Jim is beginning to show the benefit of the change."

"Poor little chap!" the father thought. "He is beginning to improve. They must not come back, and I must not go down to them. My glum face would frighten Mary, and I should have to tell her all my fears. Besides, I cannot afford it. Oh, that it might be settled I'm to go to Upton!"

That was the refrain of his thoughts all that day. "Oh, that I might go to Upton!" It was a kind of prayer, and surely as worthy a prayer, and springing from as pure and loving a desire as any prayer that is uttered. He could do nothing more, however, to attain the desired end; he could only wait. Monday passed, and Tuesday, and still no word from Upton. On Wednesday came a letter from his first host—the Chairman of Committee. It contained little, but that little was charged with meaning and anxiety for the minister. Nothing, it declared, was yet absolutely decided; but on Thursday evening there was to be held a certain debate in the Lecture-room, in which it had been resolved that both Mr. Murray and Mr. Lloyd should be asked to take part.

"I am not officially instructed," continued the writer, "to say this to you, but I think I ought to tell you that there is a disposition among a good many to form their final choice for you or for Mr. Lloyd, on the conclusion of the debate."

### III.

It was put gently and carefully, but the meaning of the communication to the minister plainly was that it had come to a contest between him and the young Mr. Lloyd, and that whichever should acquit himself in this debate most to the satisfaction and admiration of the audience would straightway be chosen as minister.

It was a terrible situation for the minister—how terrible none but himself knew, and none, not even the wife of his bosom, could ever sufficiently understand. He was a bad debater, and, worse than that, he was the most nervous, hesitating, and involved extempore speaker in the world. His sermons and discourses were always written, but he delivered them so well that very few would have guessed that he had manuscript before him. With his writing in his hand he was easy, vigorous, and self-possessed; but when he had to speak extempore a panic of fear shook him; he had neither ideas nor words, and he was completely lost.

It was simply a question of nerves with him, and whenever he knew beforehand that he was expected to speak extempore the strain upon him was crueller than man can tell. The strain imposed now upon a body weakened by the past year's privations and anxiety could not have been crueller if he had been under sentence of death; and, indeed, life or death seemed to his overwrought nerves to hang upon the issue. If he failed, and he feared he would fail, fail signally, for he did not doubt but that the young and boisterous Mr. Lloyd was without nerves, and was a glib and self-confident talker—then Upton was lost, and his wife was condemned for Heaven

alone knew how long to grievous poverty, and his child to a lingering death. If he succeeded—but he had no reason to hope he would—then Upton was won, and with it life and health and happiness for those he loved.

It was Wednesday morning when he got the letter, and all that day he considered, with a frequent feeling of panic at the heart, and a constant fluttering of the nerves, what he could possibly do to ensure success. He thought he would write down something on the subject of the debate, and commit it to memory. He had sat down and written a little, when he bethought him that he did not know when he would be called upon to speak, nor whether he might not have to expressly answer someone. He threw down the pen, and groaned in despair; there was nothing to be done; he must trust to the inspiration and self-possession of the moment.

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When he went to bed his sleep was a succession of ghastly nightmares. He dreamt his wife and child were struggling and choking in a dark and slimy sea, that Mr. Lloyd stood aloof unconcernedly looking on, and that he, the husband and father, lay unable to stir hand or foot or tongue! Then he awoke with a sharp cry, trembling with dread and bathed in perspiration, and found, lo! it was but a dream!

So the night passed and the day came with its constant wearing fear and anxiety. He could not eat, he could not drink, he could not rest; and thus the day passed and the hour came when he must set out for the fatal meeting. As he passed along the street people paused to glance at him: he appeared so pale and scared.

When he entered the Lecture-room at Upton he was met by his friend, the Chairman of Committee, who looked at him and said:—

"Don't you feel well, Mr. Murray? You look very faint and pale. Let me get you a glass of wine."

"No, thank you," said the minister. "I am really quite well."

"We shall have a good debate, I think," said his friend, then leading the way forward.

"I hope so," said the minister, "though I am afraid I can do little; I am the worst extempore speaker you can imagine."

"Is that so?" The friend turned quickly and considered him. "I should not have thought so. Ah, well, never mind."

But the minister felt that his friend's hope of his success was considerably shaken.

The chief persons of the assembly were gathered about a table at the upper end of the room. The chairman introduced the matter for debate; one man rose and spoke on the affirmative side, and another rose and spoke on the negative. The minister listened, but he scarce knew what was said; he drank great gulps of water to moisten his parched mouth (which, for all the water, remained obstinately dry) and he felt his hour was come. He glanced round him, but saw only shadows of men. One only he saw—the man opposite him, the very young and boisterous Mr. Lloyd, who clapped his hands and lustily said "Hear, hear!" when anything was said of which he approved or which he wished to deride. The minister's eyes burned upon him till he seemed to assume threatening, demoniac proportions as the boastful and blatant Apollyon whom Christian fought in the Valley.



#### THE DEBATE.

At length young Mr. Lloyd rose, large and hairy, and then the minister listened with all his ears. He missed nothing the young man uttered—none of the foolish and ignorant opinions, none of the coarse and awkward phrases—and as he listened amazement seized him, and then anger, and he said to himself: "This is the man, this is the conceited and ignorant smatterer, who would supplant *me*, and rob my wife and child of health and happiness!" He rose at once in his anger to answer him, to smash and pulverise him. What he said in his anger he did not know; but when he had finished he sat down and buried his face in his hands and was sure he had made an egregious ass of himself. He felt very faint and drank more water, and it was all over. In a dazed and hurried fashion he said his adieux and went away to the train, convinced he should never see Upton more.

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He had entered a carriage and sunk back with body exhausted, but with brain on fire; the train was starting, when the door was flung open, and Mr. Lloyd burst in and sat down opposite him.





### "THE DOOR SWUNG OPEN."

"Halloa!" he cried. "I did *not* think to find you here. What a splendid debate it was, wasn't it?" He did not wait for an answer, but hurried on in his loquacity, "I think I woke them up. They need waking up, and I'll do it when I'm their minister."

It clearly did not occur to him that his *vis-à-vis* might be minister instead; and Mr. Murray, in his exaggerated dread and humility, thought that the question who was to be minister must really have been settled before the young man left. Mr. Murray said nothing, but that did not embarrass Mr. Lloyd.

"I shall soon settle," he continued, "the hash of some of those frightened old fogies who want things to go on in the old, humdrum way. It's a fine place, and a magnificent chapel, and can be made a popular cause: and I'll make it, too, when I'm among them. Good, rousing, popular stuff—that's the thing to make a success; don't you think so, Murray?"

"No doubt," said Murray, scarce knowing or caring what he said in his bitterness and despair; "only make noise enough."

Young Mr. Lloyd merely laughed boisterously, and Mr. Murray only kept saying to himself: "This is the man who has robbed me of my chance, and my wife and child of health and happiness! But for this ignorant, conceited, and incompetent braggart I should be minister!"

And incontrollable dislike—and in his nervous, over-strained condition, hatred even—rose in him against the young man.

As Lloyd went on with his ding-dong, maddening talk, Mr. Murray, who could have cried aloud in his pain and despair of the loss he believed he had endured, observed absently that the inner handle of the door showed that the catch was open. The train slowed down, for some reason, in the middle of a tunnel, and Lloyd rose in his lusty, boisterous way, banged down the window, and looked out.

"These trains," quoth he, "are confoundedly slow."

Mr. Murray kept his eye on the brass handle of the door. It was a dangerous position for Mr. Lloyd; if he leaned too heavily, or if the train went on with a jerk, he was likely to be thrown out. Should he warn him? Should he say, "Take care: you may fall in your rashness." Yet why did not the foolish, unobservant young man see for himself the condition of the door?

Still, the handle of the door fascinated the minister's eye, and he kept silence. At that moment the train started off again with a jerk and a screech; the door swung open, and Lloyd fell, and as the minister put out his hands and head to catch him, with a horrified "Oh!" he saw the fiery eye of a train rushing down upon him from the opposite direction. It came on with thunderous roar and passed, and the minister sank back in the carriage *alone*, and fainted!

## IV.

He came to himself only outside the London terminus at which he had to arrive, when the train drew up, and a man came along for the collection of tickets. In a half-dazed condition (which the ticket-collector probably considered intoxication), he surrendered his ticket without a word, and then the train went on, and presently he was on the platform, stumbling out of the station on his way home, but no more in touch with the people and things he passed among than a man in a dream.

What had he done? What had he done? To what a depth of misery and infamy had he cast himself? It was impossible to sound the black bottom of it.

"*I have slain a man to my wounding; a young man to my hurt.*"

The old words rose in his mind unbidden—rose and sank, rose and sank again. He felt that the young man must be lying crushed across those rails. And it was his doing: he had not warned the young man of his danger; he had consented to his death, and, therefore, he had killed him! Oh,

the horror! Oh, the pity of it!

When he reached his lonely lodging it was late, and he was dull and tired. He was conscious of having walked a long way round, and to and fro, but where he did not know. The strain was now off his nerves, and dull, dead misery was upon him. He mechanically undressed, and went to bed and sank to sleep at once; but his sleep was unrefreshing: it was troubled all the night through with alarms and terrors, with screeching and roaring trains, and falling bodies; and when in the morning he was fully awake, his misery settled upon him like a dense fog of death.

The morning postman brought a letter from his wife. She was in good spirits, and the boy was improving rapidly. Then tears—bitter, bitter tears!—came to his relief, and he sobbed in agony. What had possessed him? What fiend of anger and hate had entered into him to make him commit that deed? He was aghast at the atrocious possibilities of his own nature. He felt as if he could not look in the face of his wife again, or again venture to take her in his arms. Would she not shrink from him with horror when she knew? And would not his boy—his little Jim!—when he grew up (if he ever grew up) be ashamed of the father who had so dishonoured his name?

"Oh, my God!" he cried in his misery and grief. "Let me bear the utmost punishment of my sin, but spare them! Punish not the innocent with the guilty! Let my dear wife and child live in peace and honour before Thee!"

He could not eat a morsel of breakfast—he had scarcely tasted food or drink for two whole days—and he could not rest in the lodgings. He wandered out with his load of misery upon him. He was a man who seldom read the newspapers, and he did not think of buying one now, nor did it even occur to him to scan the contents-bills set outside the newsvendors' shops. He merely wandered on and round, revolving the horrible business that had brought him so low, and then he wandered back in the afternoon faint with exhaustion.

When he entered the sitting-room he saw a letter set for him on the mantelpiece. It was from his friend at Upton, and it declared with delight that, after the stirring debate on Thursday evening, he (Murray) had been "unanimously elected" minister. That was the most unlooked-for stroke of retribution! To think that he had committed his sin—nay, his crime!—in headlong wantonness! To think that at the very moment when he had committed it he was being elected to the place which he had believed the young man had been chosen to fill! Bitter, bitter was his punishment beginning to be; for, of course, he could not, with the stain of crime on his soul if not on his hands, accept the place—not even to save his wife and child from want!

The writer further said that it was desired he (Murray) should occupy next Sunday the pulpit which was henceforward to be his. What was to be done? Clearly but one thing: at all costs to occupy the pulpit on Sunday morning, to lay bare his soul to the people who had "unanimously" invited him, and to tell them he could never more be minister either there or elsewhere.

He sat thus with the letter in his hand, when the door opened and his wife came in with the boy asleep in her arms: he had omitted to write to her since Wednesday. He rose to his feet, and stood back against the fire-place.

"Oh, my poor dear!" she cried, when she saw him. "How terribly ill you look! Why didn't you tell me? I felt there was something wrong with you when I had no word." She carefully laid the sleeping child on the couch and returned to embrace her husband.

"Don't, Mary!" said he, keeping her back.

"Oh, James dear!" she said, clasping her hands. "What has gone wrong? You look worn to death!"

"Everything's gone wrong, Mary!" he answered. "My whole life's gone wrong!"

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"What do you mean?" she asked in breathless terror. "What have you in your hand?"

He held out to her the letter, and sat down and covered his face.

"Oh, but this is good news, James!" she exclaimed. "You are elected minister at Upton!"

"I can't go, Mary! I can no longer be minister there or anywhere!"

"James, my darling!" She knelt beside him, and put her arms about him. "Something has happened to you! Tell me what it is!" But he held his peace. "Remember, my dear, that we are all the world to each other; remember that when we were married we said we should never have any secret from each other! Tell me your trouble, my dear!"

He could not resist her appeal: he told her the whole story.

"My poor, dear love!" she cried. "How terribly tried you have been! And I did not know it!"

"And you don't shrink from me, Mary?" said he.

"Shrink from you, my dear husband?" she demanded. "How can you ask me? Oh, my darling!"

She kissed his hands and his face, and covered him with her love and wept over him.

They sat in silence for a while, and then he told her what he proposed to do. She agreed with him that that was the proper thing.

"We must do the first thing that is right, whatever may happen to ourselves. Write and say that you do not feel you can take more than the morning service. I'll go with you, and you shall do as you say—and the rest is with God."

Thus it was arranged. And on Sunday morning they set off together for Upton, leaving the boy in the care of the landlady. They had no word to



"DON'T, MARY!"

say to each other in the train, but they held close each other's hand. They avoided greetings, and introductions, and felicitations save from one or two by keeping close in the vestry till the hour struck, and the attendant came to usher the minister to the pulpit. He went out and up the pulpit stairs with a firm step, but his face was very pale, his lips were parched, and his heart was thumping hard, till he felt as if it would burst. The first part of the service was gone through, and the minister rose to deliver his sermon. He gave out his text, "*And Cain said unto the Lord, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear!'*" and glanced round upon the congregation, who sat up wondering what was to come of that. He repeated it, and happening to look down, saw seated immediately below the pulpit, looking as well and self-satisfied as usual, the young man whom he had imagined crushed in the tunnel! The revulsion of feeling was too great; the minister put up his hand to his head, with a cry something between sob and sigh,

tottered, and fell back!

There was a flutter and a rustle of dismay throughout the congregation. The minister's wife was up the pulpit stairs in an instant, and she was followed by the chairman and the young Mr. Lloyd. Between them they carried the minister down into the vestry, where a few others presently assembled.

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"Will you run for a doctor, Mr. Lloyd?" said the chairman.

Hearing the name "Lloyd," and seeing a man in minister's attire, Mrs. Murray guessed the truth at once.

"I think," said she, "there is no need for a doctor, my husband has only fainted. He has been terribly worried all the year, and the last week or two especially has told on him."

"I thought the other night," said the chairman, "that he looked ill."

"He has not been well since," said she; and she continued, turning to Mr. Lloyd, "I believe he was the more upset that he thought an accident had happened to you in the train, Mr. Lloyd."

"Oh," said the young man, "it was nothing. It really served me right for leaning against a door that was unlatched. I picked myself up all right."

The chairman and the others stared; they clearly had heard nothing of that.

"He is coming round," said the wife. "If someone will kindly get me a cab, I'll take him home."

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That is the story of the unconfessed crime of the minister of Upton Chapel, who is to-day known as a gentle, sweet, and somewhat shy man, good to all, and especially tender and patient with all wrong-doers.



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### *At the Children's Hospital.*

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### CONVALESCENT HOME, HIGHGATE.



W E want to move Johnny to a place where there are none but children; a place set up on purpose for sick children; where the good doctors and nurses pass their lives with children, talk to none but children, touch none but children, comfort and cure none but children."

Who does not remember that chapter in "Our Mutual Friend" in which Charles Dickens described Johnny's removal—with his Noah's Ark and his noble wooden steed—from the care of poor old Betty to that of the Hospital for Sick Children in Great Ormond-street? Johnny is dead—he died after bequeathing all his dear possessions, the Noah's Ark, the gallant horse, and the yellow bird, to his little sick neighbour—and his large-hearted creator is dead too; but the Hospital in Great Ormond-street still exists—in a finer form than Dickens knew it—and still receives sick children to be comforted and cured by its gentle nurses and good doctors.

And this is how the very first Hospital for Children came to be founded. Some fifty years ago, Dr. Charles West, a physician extremely interested in children and their ailments, was walking with a companion along Great Ormond-street. He stopped opposite the stately old mansion known as No. 49, which was then "to let," and said, "There! That is the future Children's Hospital. It can be had cheap, I believe, and it is in the midst of a district teeming with poor." The house was known to the Doctor as one with a history. It had been the residence of a great and kindly man—the famous Dr. Richard Mead, Court Physician to Queen Anne and George the First, and it is described by a chronicler of the time as a "splendidly-fitted mansion, with spacious gardens looking out into the fields" of St. Pancras. Another notable tenant of the mansion was the Rev. Zachary Macaulay, father of Lord Macaulay, and a co-worker with Clarkson and Wilberforce for the abolition of slavery.

Dr. Charles West pushed his project for turning the house into a hospital for sick children with such effect that a Provisional Committee was formed, which held its first recorded meeting on January 30, 1850, under the presidency of the philanthropic banker Joseph Hoare. As a practical outcome of these and other meetings, the mansion and grounds were bought, and the necessary alterations were made to adapt them for their purpose. A "constitution" also was drawn up—which obtains to this day—and in that it was set down that the object of the Hospital was threefold:—"(1) The Medical and Surgical Treatment of Poor Children; (2) The Attainment and Diffusion of Knowledge regarding the Diseases of Children; and (3) The Training of Nurses for Children." So, in the February of 1852—exactly nine-and-thirty years ago—the Hospital for Sick Children was opened, and visitors had displayed to them the curious sight of ailing children lying contentedly in little cots in the splendid apartments still decorated with flowing figures and scrolls of beautiful blue on the ceiling, and bright shepherds and shepherdesses in the panels of the walls—rooms where the beaux and belles of Queen Anne and King George, in wigs and buckle-shoes, in frills and furbelows, had been wont to assemble; where the kindly Dr. Mead had learnedly discussed with his brethren, and where Zachary Macaulay had presided at many an anti-slavery meeting. It was, indeed, a haunted house that the poor sick children had been carried into—haunted, however, not by hideous spirits of darkness and crime, but by gentle memories of Christian charity and loving-kindness.

For some time poor people were shy of the new hospital. In the first month only eight cots were occupied out of the ten provided, and only twenty-four out-patients were treated. The treatment of these, however, soon told upon the people, and by and by more little patients were brought to the door of the Hospital than could be received. The place steadily grew in usefulness and popularity, so that in five years 1,483 little people occupied its cots, and 39,300 passed through its out-patient department. But by 1858 the hearts of the founders and managers misgave them; for funds had fallen so low that it was feared the doors of the Hospital must be closed. No doubt the anxious and terrible events of the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny had done much to divert public attention from the claims of the little folk in 49, Great Ormond-street, but the general tendency of even kindly people to run after new things and then to neglect them had done more. It was then that Charles Dickens stood the true and practical friend of the Hospital.

He was appealed to for the magic help of his pen and his voice. He wrote about the sick children, and he spoke for them at the annual dinner of 1858 in a speech so potent to move the heart and to untie the purse-strings that the Hospital managers smiled again; the number of cots was increased to 44, two additional physicians were appointed, and No. 48 was added to No. 49, Great Ormond-street.

From that date the institution prospered and grew, till, in 1869, Cromwell House, at the top of Highgate-hill (of which more anon) was opened as a Convalescent Branch of the Hospital, and in 1872 the first stone of the present building was laid by the Princess of Wales, in the spacious garden of Number Forty-Nine. The funds, however, were insufficient for the completion of the whole place, and until 1889 the Hospital stood with but one wing. Extraordinary efforts were made to collect money, with the result that last year the new wing was begun on the site of the two "stately mansions" which had been for years the home of the Hospital. With all this increase, and the temptation sometimes to borrow rather than slacken in a good work, the managers have never borrowed nor run into debt. They have steadily believed in the excellent advice which Mr. Micawber made a present of to his young friend Copperfield, "Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen nineteen six: result, happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six: result, misery"; and, as a consequence, they are annually dependent on the voluntary contributions of kind-hearted people who are willing to aid them to rescue ailing little children from "the two grim nurses, Poverty and Sickness."

But, in order to be interested in the work of the Hospital and its little charges, there is nothing like a personal visit. One bitterly cold afternoon a little while before Christmas, we kept an appointment with the courteous Secretary, and were by him led past the uniformed porter at the great door, and up the great staircase to the little snuggerly of Miss Hicks, the Lady Superintendent. On our way we had glimpses through glass doors into clean, bright wards, which gave a first impression at once cheerful and soothing, heightened by contrast with the heavy black cold that oppressed all life out of doors. By the Secretary we were transferred to the guidance of Miss Hicks, who has done more than can here be told for the prosperity of the Hospital and the completion of the building. She led us again downstairs, to begin our tour of inspection at the very beginning—at the door of the out-patients' department. That is opened at half-past eight every week-day morning, and in troop crowds of poor mothers with children of all ages up to twelve—babies in arms and toddlekins led by the hand. They pass through a kind of turnstile and take their seats in the order of their arrival on rows of benches in a large waiting-room, provided with a stove, a lavatory, and a drinking-fountain, with an attendant nurse and a woman to sell cheap, wholesome buns baked in the Hospital; for they may have to wait all the morning before their turn arrives to go in to the doctor, who sits from nine to twelve seeing and prescribing for child after child; and, if the matter is very serious, sending the poor thing on into the Hospital to occupy one of the cosy cots. All the morning this stream of sad and ailing mothers and children trickles on out of the waiting-room into the presence of the keen-eyed, kindly doctor, out to the window of the great dispensary (which stretches the whole length of the building) to take up the medicine ordered, on past a little box on the wall, which requests the mothers to "please spare a penny," and so out into the street again. There are two such out-patient departments—one at either end of the great building—and there pass through them in a year between eighteen and nineteen thousand cases, which leave grateful casual pennies in the little wall-box to the respectable amount of £100 a year. It does not need much arithmetic to reckon that that means no less than 24,000 pence.

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DAISY.

Leaving that lower region (which is, of course, deserted when we view it in the afternoon) we re-ascend to look at the little in-patients. From the first ward we seek to enter we are admonished by our own senses to turn back. We have barely looked in when the faint, sweet odour of chloroform hanging in the air, the hiss of the antiseptic-spray machine, and the screens placed round a cot inform us that one of the surgeons is conducting an operation. The ward is all hushed in silence, for the children are quick to learn that, when the big, kind-eyed doctor is putting a little comrade to sleep in order to do some clever thing to him to make him well, all must be as quiet as mice. There is no more touching evidence of the trust and faith of childhood than the readiness with which these children yield themselves to the influence of chloroform, and surrender themselves without a pang of fear into the careful hands of the doctor. Sometimes, when an examination or an operation is over, there is a little flash of resentment, as in the case of the poor boy who, after having submitted patiently to have

his lungs examined, exclaimed to the doctor, "I'll tell my mother you've been a-squeezing of me!"

We cross to the other side and enter the ward called after Queen Victoria. The ward is quiet, for it is one of those set apart for medical cases. Here the poor mites of patients are almost all lying

weak and ill. On the left, not far from the door, we come upon a pretty and piteous sight. In a cot roofed and curtained with white, save on one side, lies a little flaxen-haired girl—a mere baby of between two and three—named "Daisy." Her eyes are open, but she does not move when we look at her; she only continues to cuddle to her bosom her brush and comb, from which, the nurse tells us, she resolutely refuses to be parted. She is ill of some kind of growths in the throat, and on the other side of her cot stands a bronchial kettle over a spirit-lamp, thrusting its long nozzle through the white curtain of the cot to moisten and mollify the atmosphere breathed by the little patient. While our artist prepares to make a sketch, we note that the baby's eyes are fixed on the vapours from the kettle, which are curling and writhing, and hovering and melting over her. What does she think of them? Do they suggest to her at all, child though she is, the dimness and evanescence of that human life which she is thus painfully beginning? Does she wonder what it all means—her illness, the curling vapour, and the people near her bed? Poor Daisy! There are scores of children like her here, and tens of thousands out of doors, who suffer thus for the sins of society and the sins of their parents. It is possible to pity her and them without reserve, for they have done nothing to bring these sufferings on themselves. Surely, then, their parents and society owe it to them that all things possible should be done to set them in the way of health.

And much is certainly done in this Hospital for Sick Children. We look round the ward—and what we say of this ward may be understood to apply to all—and note how architectural art and sanitary and medical skill have done their utmost to make this as perfect a place as can be contrived for the recovery of health. The ward is large and lofty, and contains twenty-one cots, half of which are for boys and half for girls. The walls have been built double, with an air space in the midst, for the sake of warming and ventilation. The inner face of the walls is made of glazed bricks of various colours, a pleasant shade of green being the chief. That not only has an agreeable effect, but also ensures that no infection or taint can be retained—and, to make that surety doubly sure, the walls are once a month washed down with disinfectants. Every ward has attached to it, but completely outside and isolated, a small kitchen, a clothes-room, a bath-room, &c. These are against the several corners of the ward, and combine to form the towers which run up in the front and back of the building. Every ward also has a stove with double open fireplace, which serves, not only to warm the room in the ordinary way, but also to burn, so to say, and carry away the vitiated air, and, moreover, to send off warm through the open iron-work surrounding it fresh air which comes through openings in the floor from ventilating shafts communicating with the outer atmosphere. That is what architectural and sanitary art has done for children. And what does not medical and nursing skill do for them? And tender human kindness, which is as nourishing to the ailing little ones as mother's milk? It is small reproach against poor parents to say that seldom do their children know real childish happiness, and cleanliness, and comfort, till they are brought into one of these wards. It is in itself an invigoration to be gently waited upon and fed by sweet, comely young nurses, none of whom is allowed to enter fully upon her duties till she has proved herself fond of children and deft to manage them. And what a delight it must be to have constantly on your bed wonderful picture-books, and on the tray that slides along the top rails of your cot the whole animal creation trooping out of Noah's Ark, armies of tin soldiers, and wonderful woolly dogs with amazing barks concealed in their bowels, or—if you happen to be a girl—dolls, dressed and undressed, of all sorts and sizes! And, lastly, what a contrast is all this space, and light, and pure air—which is never hot and never cold—to the low ceilings and narrow walls, the stuffiness, and the impurity of the poor little homes from which the children come. There, if they are unwell only, they cannot but toss and cry and suffer on their bed, exasperate their hard-worked mother, and drive their home-coming father forth to drown his sorrows in the flowing bowl: here they are wrapped softly in a heavenly calm, ministered to by skilful, tender hands, and spoken to by soft and kindly voices: so that they wonder, and insensibly are soothed and cease to suffer. Until he has been in a children's hospital, no one would guess how thoughtful, and good-tempered, and contented a sick child can be amid his strange surroundings.

But we linger too long in this ward. With a glance at the chubby, convalescent boy, "Martin," asleep in his arm-chair before the fire—whom we leave our artist companion to sketch—we pass upstairs to another medical ward, which promises to be the liveliest of all; for, as soon as we are ushered through the door, a cheery voice rings out from somewhere near the stove:—

"Halloa, man! Ha, ha, ha!"

We are instantly led with a laugh to the owner of the voice, who occupies a cot over against the fire. He is called "Freddy," and he is a merry little chap, with dark hair, and bright twinkling eyes—so young and yet so active that he is tethered by the waist to one of the bars at the head of his bed lest he should fling himself out upon the floor—so young, and yet afflicted with so old a couple of ailments. He is being treated for "chronic asthma and bronchitis." He is a child of the slums; he is by nature strong and merry, and—poor little chap!—he has been brought to this pass merely by a cold steadily and ignorantly neglected. Let us hope that "Freddy" will be cured, and that he will become a sturdy and useful citizen, and keep ever bright the memory of his childish experience of hospital care and tenderness.

Next to "Freddy" is another kind of boy altogether. He has evidently been the pet of his mother at home, as he is the pet of the nurses here. He is sitting up in his cot, playing in a serious, melancholy way with a set of tea-things. He is very pretty. He has large eyes and a mass of fair curls, and he looks up in a pensive way that makes the nurses call him "Bubbles," after Sir John Millais' well-known picture-poster. He has a knack of saying droll things with an unconscious seriousness which makes them doubly amusing. He is shy, however, and it is difficult to engage him in conversation. We try to wake his friendliness by presenting him with a specimen of a



**MARTIN.**

finish it all?"

We reluctantly utter the opinion that very likely he will have to "finish it all" in order to get well enough to go home. And then after another remark or two we turn away to look at other little patients; but from afar we can see that the child is still deeply pondering the question. Presently we hear the slow, pensive voice call:—

"I say!"

We go to him, and he inquires: "Is Kismas in the shops? Eh? Is there toys and fings?"

We answer that the shops are simply overflowing with Christmas delights, and again we retire; but by and by the slow, pensive voice again calls:—

"I say!"

Again we return, and he says: "Will the doctor come to me on Kismas morning and say, 'Cheer up, Tommy; you're goin' 'ome to-day?' Will he? Eh?"

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Poor little boy! Though the nurses love him, and though he loves his nurses, he longs for his mother and the "Kismas" joys of home. And though he looks so healthy, and has only turned three years, he has incipient consumption, and his "Kismas" must be spent either here or in the Convalescent Home on the top of Highgate-hill.



**CHARLIE, ROBIN, AND CARRIE.**

It is impossible, and needless, to go round all the little beds; it is a constant tale of children innocently and cheerfully bearing the punishment of the neglect, the mistakes, or the sins of their parents, or of society. Here is a mere baby suffering from tuberculosis because it has been underfed; there, and there, and there are children, boys and girls—girls more frequently—afflicted with chorea, or St. Vitus' dance, because their weak nerves have been overwrought, either with fright at home or in the streets, or with overwork or punishment at school; and so on, and so on, runs the sad and weary tale. But, before we leave the ward, let us note one bright and fanciful little picture, crowning evidence of the kindness of the nurses to the children, and even of their womanly delight in them. Near the cheerful glow of one of the faces of the double-faced stove, in a fairy-like bassinette—a special gift to the ward—sit "Robin" and "Carrie," two babies decked out as an extraordinary treat in gala array of white frocks and ribbons. These gala dresses, it must be chronicled, are bought by the nurses' own money and made in the nurses' own time for the particular and Sunday decoration of their little charges. On the other side of the stove sits Charlie, a pretty little fellow, on his bed-sofa.

And so we pass on to the surgical wards; but it is much the same tale as before. Only here the children are on the whole older, livelier, and hungrier. We do not wish to harrow the feelings of our readers, so we shall not take them round the cots to point out the strange and wonderful

common coin of the realm, but for some time without effect. For several seconds he will bend his powerful mind to nothing but the important matter of finding a receptacle for the coin that will be safe, and that will at the same time constantly exhibit it to his delighted eye. These conditions being at length fulfilled, he condescends to listen to our questions.

Does he like being in the Hospital?

"Yes. But I'm goin' 'ome on Kismas Day. My mother's comin' for me."

We express our pleasure at the news. He looks at us with his large, pensive eyes, and continues in the same low, slow, pensive tone:—

"Will the doctor let me? Eh? Will he let me? I've nearly finished my medicine. Will I have to

operations the surgeons have performed. We shall but note that the great proportion of these cases are scrofulous of some order or other—caries, or strumous disease of the bones, or something similar; and, finally, we shall point out one little fellow, helpless as a dry twig, but bold as a lion, at least if his words are to be trusted. He has caries, or decay, of the backbone. He has been operated upon, and he is compelled to lie flat on his back always without stirring. He could not have tackled a black-beetle, and yet one visitors' day the father of his neighbour having somehow offended him he threatened to throw him "out o' winder," and on another occasion he made his comrades quake by declaring he would "fetch a big gun, and shoot every man-jack of 'em!" But, for all his Bombastes vein, he is a patient and stoical little chap.

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#### EVA.

There are here altogether 110 cases in five wards (there will be 200 cots when the new wing is finished), and a few infectious fever and diphtheria cases in an isolated building in the grounds; and the cases treated and nursed in the course of the year average 1,000. But the most obstinate cases, we are told, are now sent to Highgate, to keep company with the convalescents, because of the constant urgency of receiving new patients into Great Ormond-street. To the top of Highgate-hill, therefore, to Cromwell House, we make our way the following afternoon.

Frost and fog hang black and cold over densely-peopled London; but, as we ascend towards Highgate, it brightens, till we reach the top of the hill, where the air is clear, and crisp, and bracing. No finer spot than this could have been chosen within the metropolitan boundary for a convalescent branch of the Children's Hospital.

We are received by Miss Wilson, the Lady Superintendent of Cromwell House, in her cosy little sitting-room; and, before we set out on our round of the wards, we sit and hear her relate some of the legends connected with the noble old house. It is no legend, however, but historical fact, which connects it with the name of Oliver Cromwell. The house was built by Cromwell for his daughter, whom he gave in marriage to General Ireton, and it still bears evidence of the Ireton occupation. About a house so old and associated with so formidable a name, it must needs be there are strange stories. Miss Wilson tells us, for instance, that immediately behind her where she sits is a panel in the wainscot which was once movable, and which admitted to a secret staircase leading down to an underground passage communicating with another old mansion across the way—namely, Lauderdale House, built by an Earl of Lauderdale, and once tenanted by the famous Nell Gwynne. Moreover, Cromwell House contains a veritable skeleton closet, from which a genuine skeleton was taken when the Hospital entered upon occupation. We are promised that we shall see the outside of the closet, but no more; because the door has been nailed up.

So we set out on our round of the Wards. It is Thursday, and therefore there is considerable bustle; for on that day regularly come the convalescents from Great Ormond-street. They come to stay for from three to eight weeks, and to run wild in the large garden, and to grow fresh roses on their cheeks, blown by the fresh air of Highgate-hill. The average stay is six weeks, though one or two tedious cases of recovery have been allowed to remain seven months. Difficult cases of scrofula, however, frequently gain admittance to the Sea-Bathing Infirmary at Margate.



The first little ward we enter (all the wards are little here: they contain from ten to a dozen cots) is one of difficult and obstinate cases. But here, by the fireplace, stands convalescent one of these with her nurse—a child named "Eva," stout and ruddy, but with her head tied up. She has had a wonderfully delicate operation performed upon her. She had what the doctors term a "mastoid abscess" pressing upon her brain in the neighbourhood of her ear. It was within her skull, that is to say, but the surgeon cleverly got at it by piercing behind the ear, and so draining it off through the ear. Some other obstinate "cases" that are well on the way to recovery are sitting about the room in their little arm-chairs, playing with toys or reading story picture-books. But several obstinate ones are so obstinate that they must stay in bed. Here is one boy who has endured excision of the hip-joint, but who is lively enough to be still interested in the fortunes of the outside world. He has a weight hung from his foot to keep him rigidly extended; but, as we pass, he begs Miss Wilson to raise him for an instant that he may see the great fire that a comrade by the window has told him is raging across the way. She yields to his appeal, and carefully lifts him in her arms. It is only a big fire of brushwood in Waterlow Park, but he exclaims:—

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"Oh! it's as big as a house, ain't it? They'd better get the firemen!"

And down he lies again to think how he should like to see the fire-engine come dashing up, and to run helter-skelter after it. Poor boy! There'll be no more running for him in this world!

Close by him is a very interesting personage, a kind of infant Achilles. That we say, not because of his robust or warlike aspect, but because disease has found him vulnerable only in the heel. He suffers from what the doctors call "oscalsus."

Thus we might go round pointing out that this girl has paraplegia, and that boy empyema; but these "blessed" words would neither instruct, nor amuse, nor touch the heart. Let us note, however, before we pass on, that here are two champions in their way: the champion stoic, who absolutely enjoys being operated upon, and the champion sufferer—the boy "Cyril"—who has endured almost as many ailments as he has lived months, but who yet fights them all, with the help of doctor and nurse, patiently and cheerfully.

And so we pass on into the other little wards, and then downstairs into a sitting-room where the greater number of convalescents are assembled. This room was probably the dining-room of the mansion in Cromwell's days, and here, about the table and the fire where the children sit, must have gathered grave and austere Puritans, and soldiers in clanking jack-boots from among Cromwell's invincible Ironsides. Over the fireplace is still to be seen in complete preservation General Ireton's coat-of-arms, and between the windows are mirrors of the same date. But we have little more than crossed the threshold when all thought of Puritans and Ironsides is banished by a cry not unlike the laugh of a hyena.

Our guide points out to us the utterer of the cry—a little boy sitting up at the head of a couch against the fireplace. He is one of the very few children who are afraid of a doctor, and he sees men there so seldom that every man appears to him a doctor: hence his cry. We consider him from afar off, so as not to distress him unduly; and we learn that he is commonly known as "Dotty," partly because he is small and partly because his wits are temporarily somewhat obscured. His chief affliction, however, is that he has curiously crooked feet which the surgeon is trying to set straight. Over against him, on the couch, sits a Boy of Mystery. He is called "Harry" (there is nothing mysterious about that), but some months ago he swallowed an old copper coin, which he still keeps concealed somewhere in his interior. The doctors are puzzled, but the Boy of Mystery sits unconcerned. With one final glance round and a word to a girl who is reading "The Nursery Alice" to a younger girl, we turn away, and the door closes upon the children.

But we cannot leave them without a final word to our readers. Of all possible forms of charitable work there is surely none better or more hopeful than that which is concerned with children, and especially that which is anxious about the health of children. More than one-third of the annual deaths in London are the unnatural deaths of innocent young folk. "The two grim nurses, Poverty and Sickness," said Dickens in his famous speech, "who bring these children before you, preside over their births, rock their wretched cradles, nail down their little coffins, pile up the earth above their graves." Have we no duty towards them as fellow-citizens? If we pity their hard condition, and admire the patience and fortitude with which they endure suffering, then let us show our pity and our admiration in such practical ways as are open to us.

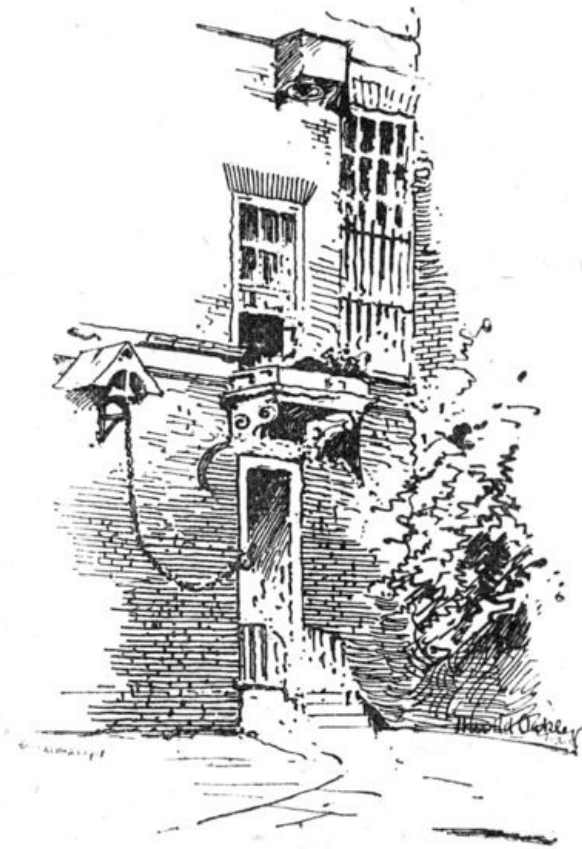


CYRIL.

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**DOTTY AND HARRY.**



**THE GARDEN ENTRANCE: CROMWELL HOUSE.**

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***Fac-simile of the Notes of a Speech by John Bright.***

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This month we present our readers with a curiosity—the fac-simile notes of John Bright's famous speech on Women's Suffrage, in the House of Commons, April 26, 1876. Mr. J. A. Bright, M.P., to whose kindness we owe them, believes that no others by his father are extant, so that the interest of the present is unique. To allow the reader to compare the speech, as spoken, with the notes, we add an abstract of the *Times* report next morning.

Mr. Bright said it was with extreme reluctance that he took part in this debate.... The Bill seemed to him based on a proposition which was untenable, and which, he thought, was contradicted by universal experience. (Cheers.) In fact, it was a Bill based on the assumed hostility between the sexes. (Hear.) ... Men were represented as ruling even to the length of tyranny, and women were represented as suffering injustice even to the length of very degrading slavery. (Hear.) ... This was not said of women in savage nations, but it was said of women in general in this civilised and Christian country in which they lived. If he looked at the population of this country, that which struck him more than almost anything else was this—that at this moment there were millions of men at work, sacrificing and giving up their leisure

to a life of sustained hardship, confronting peril in every shape, for the sake of the sustenance, and the comfort and the happiness of women and children. (Cheers.) ... The avowed object of this Bill was to enable the women of this country to defend themselves against a Parliament of men. (Hear.) ... There might be injustice with regard to the laws which affected the property of married women; but was there no injustice in the laws which affected the property of men? Had younger sons no right to complain? (A laugh.) ... But there was another side to this question. He would take the question of punishment. There could be no doubt whatever that, as regards the question of punishment, there was much greater moderation or mercy dealt out to women than to men. (Hear.) ... In all cases of punishment judges and juries were always more lenient in disposition to women than they were to men. He would point out to some of those ladies who were so excited on this matter, that in cases of breach of promise of marriage the advantage on their side seemed to be enormous. (Laughter and cheers.) ... They almost always got a verdict, and very often, he was satisfied, when they ought not to have got it. (Laughter.) ... Women servants were not taxed, and men servants were taxed.... There was an argument which told with many, and that was the argument of equal rights.... He supposed the country had a right to determine how it would be governed—whether by one, by few, or by many. Honourable members told us that unless this Bill passed we should have a class discontented.... But the great mistake was arguing that women were a class. (Hear.) Nothing could be more monstrous or absurd than to describe women as a class. They were not like the class of agricultural labourers or factory workers. Who were so near the hearts of the legislators of this country as the members of their own families? (Cheers.) It was a scandalous and odious libel to say women were a class, and were therefore excluded from our sympathy, and Parliament could do no justice in regard to them. (Cheers.) ... Unfortunately for those who argued about political wrongs, the measure excluded by far the greatest proportion of women—viz., those who, if there were any special qualification required for an elector, might be said to be specially qualified. It excluded married women, though they were generally older, more informed, and had greater interests at stake. Then it was said that the Bill was an instalment, that it was one step in the emancipation of women.

If that were so, it was very odd that those most concerned in the Bill did not appear to be aware of it, because last year there was a great dispute on that matter.... Last year he saw a letter, signed "A Married Claimant of the Franchise," in a newspaper, who said that a married woman could not claim to vote as a householder, but why should she not pay her husband a sum for her lodgings, so as to entitle her to claim the lodger franchise? (Laughter.) ... If that Bill passed, how would they contend against further claims? (Hear, hear.) ... And what were they to say to those women who were to have votes until they married? The moment the woman householder came out of church or chapel as a wife her vote would vanish, and her husband would become the elector. (A laugh.) It seemed to him that if they passed that Bill and went no further, what Mr. Mill called "the subjection of women" was decreed by the very measure intended to enfranchise them, and by the very women, and the very party in that House, who were in favour of that Bill. (Hear, hear.) Then again, if all men being householders had a right to be elected, on what principle were women not also to have a right to be elected? (Hear, hear.) Those who opposed that Bill had a right to ask these questions, and to have an answer to them. If they were to travel that path, let them know how far they were going, and to what it led.... If they granted that every woman, married or unmarried, was to have a vote, the hon. member for Lincolnshire had referred to what would happen in every house where there was a double vote. If the husband and wife agreed, it would make no difference in the result of the election; but if they disagreed, it would possibly introduce discord into every family; and if there were discord between man and wife, there would certainly be discord between the children.... In that House they had one peculiar kind of knowledge—namely, of the penalties they paid for their constitutional freedom.... Was it desirable to introduce their mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters to the excitement, the turmoil, and, it might be, the very humiliation which seemed in every country to attend a system of Parliamentary representation? (Hear, hear.) Women were more likely to be tainted in that way than men were. There had been some instances of it, ever since the Municipal Act gave them votes. He knew a place in his neighbourhood where scenes of the most shocking kind had occurred.... In another borough in Lancashire, at an election, women—by the hundred, he was told—but in great numbers—were seen drunk and disgraced under the temptation offered them in the fierceness and unscrupulousness of a political contest.... The hon. member for Warwickshire had referred to priestly influence. On that he would only say that the influence of the priest, the parson, and the minister would be

reluctance. 1867. Mill's Book Doubt. Confirmed.  
 Bill based on proposition - untenable & condemned  
 of all experience  
 on assumed hostility between sexes - speeches  
 & conversation  
 men - seeking to rule to length of tyranny.  
 women - suffering injustice to degree of slavery.  
 this sort of savage nations - or savages in civilized  
 nations - where passion & hate bore supreme  
 but of this nation - where millions of men work -  
 sacrifice - give up leisure - health - pursue  
 hardship - & comfort every kind for wife & children  
 Bill - to enable women to defend themselves  
 against injustice & tyranny of Parl. of men?  
 Facts. Property laws, not women only, but men.  
 younger sons & daughters suffer.  
 if married women ranged - from times when law  
 was made - & possession & defence vested in men.  
 on this point. Debates - measures - temper shown  
 not another side. Punishments highest to lowest -  
 Judges - Juries - breach of promise - men - juries  
 verdicts & damages. Taxation of servants.

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greatly raised if that Bill were passed. (Hear, hear.) ... Well, they were asked to make that great change and to incur all those risks—for what? To arm the women of this country against the men of this country—to defend them against their husbands, their brothers, and their sons. To him the idea had in it something strange and monstrous; and he thought that a more baseless case had never been submitted to the House of Commons. (Hear, hear.) If all men and women voted, the general result must be the same; for, by an unalterable natural law, strength was stronger than weakness, and in the end, by an absolute necessity, men must prevail. He regretted that there should be any measure in favour of extended suffrage to which he could not give his support; but women would lose much of what was best in what they now possessed, and they would gain no good of any sort, by mingling in the contests of the polling-booths. He should vote for that measure if he were voting solely in the interests of men; but he would vote against it with perfect honesty, believing that in so doing he should most serve the interests of women themselves. An honourable member who voted for the Bill last year, in a conversation with him the next day, told him that he had very great doubts in the matter, for he found wherever he went that all the best women seemed to be against the measure. (Laughter and cheers.) If the House believed that they could not legislate justly for their mothers, their wives, their sisters, and their daughters, the House might abdicate, and might pass that Bill. But he believed that Parliament could not, unless it were in ignorance, be otherwise than just to the women of this country, with whom they were so intimately allied; and with that conviction, and having these doubts—which were stronger even than he had been able to express—doubts also which had only become strengthened the more he had considered the subject—he was obliged—differing from many of those whom he cared for and loved—to give his opposition to that Bill.

no case for accusation.<sup>2</sup> But claim equal rights  
 not discuss question of rights. Nation determines.  
 one - few or many.  
intelligence - experience - opinion decides where  
knows she's not - & suffrage is conferred.  
 But excluded class injured & discontented.  
 True. Landowners - Farmers - Laborers - } might  
Merchants - Manufacturers - } a Laborer suffers  
 But Women not a class - our mothers - wives  
sisters - & daughters.  
 & near to hearts of men as electing Legislators  
as in our homes & families.  
Scandalous & odious libel to say the contrary.  
 If any fact seem to contradict - Spring, from ignorance  
an ancient custom - which discussion & advancing  
civilization & Christian feeling will correct.  
 So much for political wrongs of women & reasons  
 for Bill based on those wrongs.  
 But look further. Bill excludes married.  
olden - more injured - greater interest at stake.  
in statement - one step in ladder <sup>the</sup> redemption  
path of women.

<sup>3</sup>  
 Dispute last year - secession. real opinion of both  
Examines letter. Mills' view. he the Justice.  
 If passed, how contented against further claims?  
Shall marriage be protracted?  
shall objection of women be decreased if those who  
are clamoring for her freedom?  
if her right to elect - is not equally as to be elected?  
must ask these questions - who will answer them?  
if to travel this path - how far & where am I to go?  
isn't all what there? many will }  
institutions doubled. offences doubled. doubled }  
 If man & wife agree - double votes. & no result.  
 If disagree - discord in every house - & children  
divided.  
 Impose heavy penalties for Constitutional Freedom  
 shall mothers - sisters - daughters be introduced to the  
excitement & turmoil of elections } Canvassing &  
Canvasses? }  
 And. If woman yields to what is degrading & corrupt,  
she yields more & more inevitably than men.  
 Some Borst. Municipal. shocking scenes.  
partly feeling. make majorities. - }

not to vote in their influence. Priest - Parson. Mainly  
 Ireland - woman's vote. Priest's vote. dependent-  
 everywhere  
 and this change for what? To arm against men!  
 against Fathers. Husbands. Brothers & Sons!  
 to me. idea sharp & ambitious. case baselers.  
 of the vote. general result - same. Unalterable Law  
 strength stronger than weakness. & men prevail.  
 women lose much of what is best among them.  
 & gain nothing good in return at Polling Booth.  
 my sympathies for wide franchise. but not this Bill.  
 but sympathy give many votes for this Bill.  
 many vote. but dislike. last year. Stamford's speech  
 Club & Lobby. confession of doubt & dislike.  
 mistake. & not courage is what.  
 I vote. not solely in interest of men. but even  
 more in interest of women.  
 Best women everywhere against it. <sup>in themselves</sup>  
 believe men can legislate for wives. sisters & daughters &  
 they who think men need. vote for this Bill.  
 they also believe they can be just. reject this Bill.

## A Passion in the Desert.

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FROM THE FRENCH OF BALZAC.

[The greatest of French novelists hardly needs an introduction. Innumerable books of recent years have rendered him and his peculiarities familiar to the world—his ponderous figure and his face like Nero's, his early struggles as a Grub-street hack, his garret in the Rue Lesdiguières, his meals of bread and milk at twopence-halfpenny a day, his midnight draughts of coffee, his everlasting dressing-gown, his eighteen hours of work to five of sleep, his innumerable proof-sheets blackened with corrections, his debts, his duns, his quarrels with his publishers, his gradual rise to affluence and glory, his romantic passion for the Russian Countess, his marriage with her after sixteen years of waiting, and his death of heart disease just as the land of promise lay before him. Balzac, who took all human nature for his theme, and who portrayed above two thousand men and women, made but one study of an animal—a circumstance which gives "A Passion in the Desert" an interest all its own.]



"It is a terrible sight!" she exclaimed as we left the menagerie of Monsieur Martin.

She had just been witnessing this daring showman "performing" in the cage of his hyena.

"By what means," she went on, "can he have so tamed these animals as to be secure of their affection?"

"What seems to you a problem," I responded, interrupting her, "is in reality a fact of nature."

"Oh!" she exclaimed, with an incredulous smile.

"You think, then, that animals are devoid of passions?" I asked her. "You must know that we can teach them all the qualities of civilised existence."

She looked at me with an astonished air.

"But," I went on, "when I first saw Monsieur Martin, I confess that, like yourself, I uttered an exclamation of surprise. I happened to be standing by the side of an old soldier, whose right leg had been amputated, and who had come in with me. I was struck by his appearance. His was one of those intrepid heads, stamped with the seal of war, upon whose brows are written the battles of Napoleon. About this old soldier was a certain air of frankness and of gaiety which always gains my favour. He was doubtless one of those old troopers whom nothing can surprise; who find food for laughter in the dying spasms of a comrade, who gaily bury and despoil him, who challenge bullets with indifference—though their arguments are short enough—and who would hob-nob with the devil. After keenly looking at the showman as he was coming from the cage, my

neighbour pursed his lips with that significant expression of contempt which superior men assume to show their difference from the dupes. At my exclamation of surprise at Monsieur Martin's courage he smiled, and nodding with a knowing air, remarked, 'I understand all that.'

"How?" I answered. 'If you can explain this mystery to me you will oblige me greatly.'

"In a few moments we had struck up an acquaintance, and went to dine at the first restaurant at hand. At dessert a bottle of champagne completely cleared the memory of this strange old soldier. He told his story, and I saw he was right when he exclaimed, 'I understand all that.'



**"HE TOLD HIS STORY."**

When we got home, she teased me so, and yet so prettily, that I consented to write out for her the soldier's reminiscences.

The next day she received this episode, from an epic that might be called "The French in Egypt." [Pg 211]

During the expedition undertaken in Upper Egypt by General Desaix, a Provençal soldier, who had fallen into the hands of the Maugrabins, was taken by these Arabs into the desert beyond the cataracts of the Nile. In order to put between them and the French army a distance to assure their safety, the Maugrabins made a forced march, and did not halt till night. They then camped by the side of a well, surrounded by a clump of palm trees, where they had before buried some provisions. Never dreaming that their prisoner would think of flight, they merely bound his hands, and all of them, after eating a few dates, and giving barley to their horses, went to sleep. When the bold Provençal saw his enemies incapable of watching him, he picked up a scimitar with his teeth, and then with the blade fixed between his knees, cut the cords that lashed his wrists, and found himself at liberty. He at once seized a carbine and a dagger; provided himself with some dry dates and a small bag of barley, powder and balls; girded on the scimitar, sprang on a horse, and pressed forward in the direction where he fancied the French army must be found. Impatient to regain the bivouac, he so urged the weary horse, that the poor beast fell dead, its sides torn with the spurs, leaving the Frenchman alone in the midst of the desert.

After wandering for some time amidst the sand with the desperate courage of an escaping convict, the soldier was forced to stop. Night was closing in. Despite the beauty of the Eastern night he had not strength sufficient to go on. Fortunately he had reached a height on the top of which were palm trees, whose leaves, for some time visible far off, had awakened in his heart a hope of safety. He was so weary that he lay down on a granite stone, oddly shaped like a camp bed, and went to sleep, without taking the precaution to protect himself in his slumber. He had sacrificed his life, and his last thought was a regret for having left the Maugrabins, whose wandering life began to please him, now that he was far from them and from all hope of succour.

He was awakened by the sun, whose pitiless rays falling vertically upon the granite made it intolerably hot. For the Provençal had been so careless as to cast himself upon the ground in the direction opposite to that on which the



**"HE CUT THE CORDS."**

green majestic palm-tops threw their shadow. He looked at these solitary trees and shuddered! They reminded him of the graceful shafts surmounted by long foils that distinguish the Saracenic columns of the Cathedral of Arles. He counted the few palms; and then looked about him. A terrible despair seized upon his soul. He saw a boundless ocean. The melancholy sands spread round him, glittering like a blade of steel in a bright light, as far as eye could see. He knew not whether he was gazing on an ocean, or a chain of lakes as lustrous as a mirror. A fiery mist shimmered, in little ripples, above the tremulous landscape. The sky possessed an Oriental blaze, the brilliancy which brings despair, seeing that it leaves the imagination nothing to desire. Heaven and earth alike were all aflame. The silence was terrible in its wild and awful majesty. Infinity, immensity, oppressed the soul on all sides; not a cloud was in the sky, not a breath was in the air, not a movement on the bosom of the sand, which undulated into tiny waves. Far away, the horizon was marked off, as on a summer day at sea, by a line of light as bright and narrow as a sabre's edge.

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The Provençal clasped his arms about a palm tree as if it had been the body of a friend; then, sheltered by the straight and meagre shadow, he sat down weeping on the granite, and looking with deep dread upon the lonely scene spread out before his eyes. He cried aloud as if to tempt the solitude. His voice, lost in the hollows of the height, gave forth far-off a feeble sound that woke no echo; the echo was within his heart!

The Provençal was twenty-two years old. He loaded his carbine.

"Time enough for that!" he muttered to himself, placing the weapon of deliverance on the ground.



**"THE POOR BEAST FELL DEAD."**

Looking by turns at the melancholy waste of sand and at the blue expanse of sky, the soldier dreamed of France. With delight he fancied that he smelt the Paris gutters, and recalled the towns through which he had passed, the faces of his comrades, and the slightest incidents of his life. Then, his Southern imagination made him fancy in the play of heat quivering above the plain, the pebbles of his own dear Provence. But fearing all the dangers of this cruel mirage, he went down in the direction opposite to that which he had taken when he had climbed the hill the night before. Great was his joy on discovering a kind of grotto, naturally cut out of the enormous fragments of granite that formed the bottom of the hill. The remnants of a mat showed that this retreat had once been inhabited. Then, a few steps further, he saw palm trees with a load of dates. Again the instinct which attaches man to life awoke within his heart. He now hoped to live until the passing of some Maugrabin; or perhaps he

would soon hear the boom of cannon, for at that time Buonaparte was overrunning Egypt. Revived by this reflection, the Frenchman cut down a few bunches of ripe fruit, beneath whose weight the date trees seemed to bend, and felt sure, on tasting this unhopéd-for manna, that the inhabitant of this grotto had cultivated the palm trees. The fresh and luscious substance of the date bore witness to his predecessor's care.

The Provençal passed suddenly from dark despair to well-nigh insane delight. He climbed the hill again; and spent the remainder of the day in cutting down a barren palm tree, which the night before had served him for shelter.

A vague remembrance made him think of the wild desert beasts; and, foreseeing that they might come to seek the spring which bubbled through the sand among the rocks, he resolved to secure himself against their visits by placing a barrier at the door of his hermitage. In spite of his exertions, in spite of the strength with which the fear of being eaten during sleep endured him, it was impossible for him to cut the palm to pieces in one day; but he contrived to bring it down. When, towards evening, the monarch of the desert fell, the thunder of its crash resounded far, as if the mighty Solitude had given forth a moan. The soldier shuddered as if he had heard a voice that prophesied misfortune. But like an heir who does not long bewail the death of a relation, he stripped the tree of the broad, long, green leaves, and used them to repair the mat on which he was about to lie. At length, wearied by the heat and by his labours, he fell asleep beneath the red roof of his murky grotto.

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In the middle of the night he was disturbed by a strange noise. He sat up; in the profound silence he could hear a creature breathing—a savage respiration which resembled nothing human. Terror, intensified by darkness, silence, and the fancies of one suddenly awakened, froze his blood. He felt the sharp contraction of his scalp, when, as the pupils of his eyes dilated, he saw in the shadow two faint and yellow lights. At first he thought these lights were some reflection of his eyeballs, but soon, the clear brightness of the night helping him to distinguish objects in the grotto, he saw lying at two paces from him an enormous beast!

Was it a lion?—a tiger?—a crocodile? The Provençal was not sufficiently educated to know the species of his enemy, but his terror was all the greater; since his ignorance assisted his

imagination. He bore the cruel torture of listening, of marking the caprices of this awful breathing, without losing a sound of it, or venturing to make the slightest movement. A smell as pungent as a fox's, but more penetrating, filled the grotto; and when it entered his nostrils his terror passed all bounds; he could no longer doubt the presence of the terrible companion whose royal den was serving him for bivouac. Presently the moon, now sinking, lighted up the den, and in the moon-rays gradually shone out a panther's spotted skin.

The lion of Egypt was sleeping, curled up like a great dog who is the peaceable possessor of a sumptuous kennel at a mansion door; its eyes, which had been opened for one moment, were now closed again. Its face was turned towards the Frenchman.

A thousand troubled thoughts passed through the mind of the panther's prisoner. At first he thought of shooting it; but there was not enough room between them to adjust his gun; the barrel would have reached beyond the animal. And what if he awoke it! This supposition made him motionless. Listening in the silence to the beating of his heart, he cursed the loud pulsations, fearing to disturb the sleep that gave him time to seek some means of safety. Twice he placed his hand upon his scimitar, with the intention of cutting off the head of his enemy; but the difficulty of cutting through the short, strong fur compelled him to abandon the idea. To fail was certain death. He preferred the odds of conflict, and determined to await the daybreak. And daylight was not long in coming. The Frenchman was able to examine the panther. Its muzzle was stained with blood.

"It has eaten plenty," he reflected, without conjecturing that the feast might have been composed of human flesh; "it will not be hungry when it wakes."

It was a female. The fur upon her breast and thighs shone with whiteness. A number of little spots like velvet looked like charming bracelets around her paws. The muscular tail was also white, but tipped with black rings. The upper part of her coat, yellow as old gold, but very soft and smooth, bore those characteristic marks, shaded into the form of roses, which serve to distinguish the panther from the other species of the genus *Felis*. This fearful visitor was snoring tranquilly in an attitude as graceful as that of a kitten lying on the cushions of an ottoman. Her sinewy, blood-stained paws, with powerful claws, were spread beyond her head, which rested on them, and from which stood out the thin, straight whiskers with a gleam like silver wires.



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**"HE CLASPED HIS ARMS ABOUT A PALM TREE."**



**"THE BEAST BEGAN TO MOVE TOWARDS HIM."**

If she had been imprisoned in a cage, the Provençal would assuredly have admired the creature's grace, and the vivid contrasts of colour that gave her garment an imperial lustre; but at this moment he felt his sight grow dim at her sinister aspect. The presence of the panther, even sleeping, made him experience the effect which the magnetic eyes of the serpent are said to exercise upon the nightingale.

In the presence of this danger the courage of the soldier faltered, although without doubt it would have risen at the cannon's mouth. A desperate thought, however, filled his mind, and dried up at its source the chilly moisture which was rolling down his forehead. Acting as men do who, driven to extremities, at last defy their fate, and nerve themselves to meet their doom, he saw a tragedy in this adventure, and resolved to play his part in it with honour to the last.

"Two days ago," he argued with himself, "the Arabs might have killed me."



Considering himself as good as dead, he waited bravely, yet with restless curiosity, for the awaking of his enemy.

When the sun shone out, the panther opened her eyes suddenly; then she spread out her paws forcibly, as if to stretch them and get rid of cramp. Then she yawned, showing an alarming set of teeth and an indented, rasp-like tongue. "She is like a dainty lady!" thought the Frenchman, as he saw her rolling over with a gentle and coquettish movement. She licked off the blood that stained her paws and mouth, and rubbed her head with movements full of charm. "That's it! Just beautify yourself a little!" the Frenchman said, his gaiety returning with his courage. "Then we must say good-morning." And he took up the short dagger of which he had relieved the Maugrabins.

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At this moment the panther turned her head towards the Frenchman, and looked at him fixedly, without advancing. The rigidity of those metallic eyes, and their insupportable brightness, made the Provençal shudder. The beast began to move towards him. He looked at her caressingly, and fixing her eyes as if to magnetise her, he let her come close up to him; then, with a soft and gentle gesture, he passed his hand along her body, from head to tail, scratching with his nails the flexible vertebræ that divide a panther's yellow back. The beast put up her tail with pleasure; her eyes grew softer; and when for the third time the Frenchman accomplished this self-interested piece of flattery, she broke into a purring like a cat. But this purr proceeded from a throat so deep and powerful that it re-echoed through the grotto like the peals of a cathedral organ. The Provençal, realising the success of his caresses, redoubled them, until the imperious beauty was completely soothed and lulled.

When he felt sure that he had perfectly subdued the ferocity of his capricious companion, whose hunger had been satisfied so cruelly the night before, he got up to leave the grotto. The panther let him go; but when he had climbed the hill, she came bounding after him with the lightness of a sparrow hopping from branch to branch, and rubbed herself against the soldier's leg, arching her back after the fashion of a cat. Then looking at her guest with eyes whose brightness had grown less inflexible, she uttered that savage cry which naturalists have compared to the sound of a saw.

"What an exacting beauty!" cried the Frenchman, smiling. He set himself to play with her ears, to caress her body, and to scratch her head hard with his nails. Then, growing bolder with success, he tickled her skull with the point of his dagger, watching for the spot to strike her. But the hardness of the bones made him afraid of failing.

The sultana of the desert approved the action of her slave by raising her head, stretching her neck, and showing her delight by the quietness of her attitude. The Frenchman suddenly reflected that in order to assassinate this fierce princess with one blow he need only stab her in the neck. He had just raised his knife for the attempt, when the panther, with a graceful action, threw herself upon the ground before his feet, casting him from time to time a look in which, in spite of its ferocity of nature, there was a gleam of tenderness.

The poor Provençal, with his back against a palm tree, ate his dates, while he cast inquiring glances, now towards the desert for deliverers, now upon his terrible companion, to keep an eye upon her dubious clemency. Every time he threw away a date-stone, the panther fixed her eyes upon the spot with inconceivable mistrust. She scrutinised the Frenchman with a business-like attention; but the examination seemed favourable, for when he finished his poor meal, she licked his boots, and with her rough, strong tongue removed the dust incrustated in their creases.

"But when she becomes hungry?" thought the Provençal.

Despite the shudder this idea caused him, the soldier began examining with curiosity the proportions of the panther, certainly one of the most beautiful specimens of her kind. She was three feet high and four feet long, without the tail. This powerful weapon, as round as a club, was nearly three feet long. The head—large as that of a lioness—was distinguished by an expression of rare delicacy; true, the cold cruelty of the tiger dominated, but there was also a resemblance to the features of a wily woman. In a word, the countenance of the solitary queen wore at this moment an expression of fierce gaiety, like that of Nero flushed with wine; she had quenched her thirst in blood, and now desired to play.

The soldier tried to come and go, and the panther let him, content to follow him with her eyes, but less after the manner of a faithful dog than of a great Angora cat, suspicious even of the movements of its master. When he turned round he saw beside the fountain the carcass of his horse; the panther had dragged the body all that distance. About two-thirds had been devoured. This sight reassured the Frenchman. He was thus easily able to explain the absence of the panther, and the respect which she had shown for him while he was sleeping.

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This first piece of luck emboldened him about the future. He conceived the mad idea of setting up a pleasant household life, together with the panther, neglecting no means of pacifying her and of conciliating her good graces. He returned to her, and saw, to his delight, that she moved her tail with an almost imperceptible motion. Then he sat down beside her without fear, and began to play with her; he grasped her paws, her muzzle, pulled her ears, threw her over on her back, and vigorously scratched her warm and silky sides. She let him have his way, and when the soldier tried to smooth the fur upon her paws she carefully drew in her claws, which had the curve of a Damascus blade. The Frenchman, who kept one hand upon his dagger, was still thinking of plunging it into the body of the too-confiding panther; but he feared lest she should strangle him in her last convulsions. And besides, within his heart there was a movement of remorse that warned him to respect an inoffensive creature. It seemed to him that he had found a friend in this vast desert. Involuntarily he called to mind a woman whom he once had loved, whom he

sarcastically had nicknamed "Mignonne," from her jealousy, which was so fierce that during the whole time of their acquaintance he went in fear that she would stab him. This memory of his youth suggested the idea of calling the young panther by this name, whose lithe agility and grace he now admired with less terror.

Towards evening he had become so far accustomed to his perilous position, that he almost liked the hazard of it. At last his companion had got into the habit of looking at him when he called in a falsetto voice "Mignonne."

At sun-down Mignonne uttered several times a deep and melancholy cry.

"She has been properly brought up," thought the light-hearted soldier; "she says her prayers!" But it was, no doubt, her peaceful attitude which brought the jest into his mind.

"All right, my little pet; I will let you get to sleep first," he said, relying on his legs to get away as soon as she was sleeping, and to seek some other shelter for the night.

The soldier waited with patience for the hour of flight, and when it came, set out full speed in the direction of the Nile. But he had only gone a quarter of a league across the sand when he heard the panther bounding after him, uttering at intervals that saw-like cry, more terrible even than the thudding of her leaps.

"Well!" he said to himself, "she must have taken a fancy to me. Perhaps she has never yet met anyone. It is flattering to be her first love!" At this moment the Frenchman fell into a shifting quicksand, so dangerous to the traveller in the desert, escape from which is hopeless. He felt that he was sinking; he gave a cry of terror. The panther seized him by the collar with her teeth, and springing backwards with stupendous vigour drew him from the gulf as if by magic.

"Ah! Mignonne!" cried the soldier, enthusiastically caressing her, "we are friends now for life and death. But no tricks, eh?" and he retraced his steps.

Henceforth the desert was as though it had been peopled. It contained a being with whom he could converse, and whose ferocity had been softened for him, without his being able to explain so strange a friendship.



**"HE BEGAN TO PLAY WITH HER."**



**"HE GAVE A CRY OF TERROR."**

However great was his desire to keep awake and on his guard, he fell asleep. On awakening, Mignonne was no longer to be seen. He climbed the hill, and then perceived her afar off, coming along by leaps and bounds, according to the nature of these creatures, the extreme flexibility of whose vertebræ prevents their running.

Mignonne came up, her jaws besmeared with blood. She received the caresses of her companion with deep purrs of satisfaction. Her eyes, now full of softness, were turned, with even greater tenderness than the night before, to the Provençal, who spoke to her as to a pet.

"Ah! Beauty! you are a respectable young woman, are you not? You like petting, don't you? Are you not ashamed of yourself? You have been eating a Maugrabin! Well! they're animals, as you are. But don't you go and gobble up a Frenchman. If you do, I shall not love you!"

She played as a young pup plays with its master, letting him roll her over, beat and pet her; and sometimes she would coax him to caress her with a movement of entreaty.

A few days passed thus. This companionship revealed to the Provençal the sublime beauties of the desert. From the moment when he found within it hours of fear and yet of calm, a sufficiency of food, and a living creature who absorbed his thoughts, his soul was stirred by new emotions. It was a life of contrasts. Solitude revealed to him her secrets, and involved him in her charm. He

discovered in the rising and the setting of the sun a splendour hidden from the world of men. His frame quivered when he heard above his head the soft whirr of a bird's wings—rare wayfarer; or when he saw the clouds—those changeful, many-coloured voyagers—mingle in the depth of heaven. In the dead of night he studied the effects of the moon upon the sea of sand, which the simoon drove in ever-changing undulations. He lived with the Oriental day; he marvelled at its pomp and glory; and often, after having watched the grandeur of a tempest in the plain, in which the sands were whirled in dry red mists of deadly vapour, he beheld with ecstasy the coming on of night, for then there fell upon him the benignant coolness of the stars. He heard imaginary music in the sky. Solitude taught him all the bliss of reverie. He spent whole hours in calling trifles to remembrance, in comparing his past life with his strange present. To his panther he grew passionately attached, for he required an object of affection. Whether by a strong effort of his will he had really changed the character of his companion, or whether, thanks to the constant warfare of the deserts, she found sufficient food, she showed no disposition to attack him, and at last, in her perfect tameness, he no longer felt the slightest fear.

He spent a great part of his time in sleeping, but ever, like a spider in its web, with mind alert, that he might not let deliverance escape him, should any chance to pass within the sphere described by the horizon. He had sacrificed his shirt to make a flag, which he had hoisted to the summit of a palm-tree stripped of leaves. Taught by necessity, he had found the means to keep it spread by stretching it with sticks, lest the wind should fail to wave it at the moment when the hoped-for traveller might be travelling the waste of sand.

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It was during the long hours when hope abandoned him that he amused himself with his companion. He had learnt to understand the different inflexions of her voice, and the expression of her glances; he had studied the varying changes of the spots that starred her robe of gold. Mignonne no longer growled, even when he seized her by the tuft with which her terrible tail ended, to count the black and white rings which adorned it, and which glittered in the sun like precious gems. It delighted him to watch the delicate soft lines of her snowy breast and graceful head. But above all when she was gambolling in her play he watched her with delight, for the agility, the youthfulness of all her movements filled him with an ever-fresh surprise. He admired her suppleness in leaping, climbing, gliding, pressing close against him, swaying, rolling over, crouching for a bound. But however swift her spring, however slippery the block of granite, she would stop short, without motion, at the sound of the word "Mignonne!"

One day, in the most dazzling sunshine, an enormous bird was hovering in the air. The Provençal left his panther to examine this new visitor; but after waiting for a moment the deserted sultana uttered a hoarse growl.

"Blessed if I don't believe that she is jealous!" he exclaimed, perceiving that her eyes were once more hard and rigid. "A woman's soul has passed into her body, that is certain!"

The eagle disappeared in air, while he admired afresh the rounded back and graceful outlines of the panther. She was as pretty as a woman. The blonde fur blended in its delicate gradations into the dull white colour of the thighs. The brilliant sunshine made this vivid gold, with spots of brown, take on a lustre indescribable. The Provençal and the panther looked at one another understandingly; the beauty of the desert quivered when she felt the nails of her admirer on her skull. Her eyes gave forth a flash like lightning, and then she closed them hard.

"She *has* a soul," he cried, as he beheld the desert queen in her repose, golden as the sands, white as their blinding lustre, and, like them, fiery and alone.

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"Well?" she said to me, "I have read your pleading on behalf of animals. But what was the end of these two persons so well made to understand each other?"



**"I PLUNGED MY DAGGER INTO HER  
NECK."**

"Ah! They ended as all great passions end—through a misunderstanding. Each thinks the other guilty of a falsity, each is too proud for explanation, and obstinacy brings about a rupture."

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"And sometimes in the happiest moments," she said, "a look, an exclamation, is enough! Well, what was the end of the story?"

"That is difficult to tell, but you will understand what the old fellow had confided to me, when, finishing his bottle of champagne, he exclaimed, 'I don't know how I hurt her, but she turned on me like mad, and with her sharp teeth seized my thigh. The action was not savage; but fancying that she meant to kill me I plunged my dagger into her neck. She rolled over with a cry that froze my blood; she looked at me in her last struggles without anger. I would have given everything on earth, even my cross—which then I had not won—to bring her back to life. It was as if I had slain a human being. And the soldiers who had seen my flag, and who were hastening to my succour, found me bathed in tears.

"Well, sir,' he went on, after a moment's silence, 'since then I have been through the wars in Germany, Spain, Russia, France; I have dragged my carcass round the world; but there is nothing like the desert in my eyes! Ah! it is beautiful—superb.'

"What did you feel there?' I inquired of him.

"Oh! that I cannot tell you. Besides, I do not always regret my panther, and my clump of palm-trees. I must be sad at heart for that. But mark my words. In the desert, there is everything and there is nothing.'

"Explain yourself.'

"Well!' he continued, with a gesture of impatience, 'it is God without man.'"

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## BARAK HAGEB AND HIS WIVES

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A STORY FOR CHILDREN, FROM THE HUNGARIAN OF  
MORITZ JOKAI.

[Moritz Jokai, the most popular of Hungarian writers living, was born at Kormorn, in 1825. His father, who was a lawyer, intended Moritz for the same profession, and at twelve years old the boy began to drive a quill. But his ambition was to be a painter and an author. Often, after office hours, he would write or paint in his own room till day was breaking. His pictures turned out failures—though he still makes dashing sketches, full of life and colour—but his writings met with a peculiar stroke of luck. One day his master lighted on a bundle of his papers, looked into them, and was amazed to find his clerk a man of genius. He took the papers to a printer, and had them printed at his own expense. The book caught the public fancy, and Moritz, who was now an orphan, took the counsel of his friendly master, and turned from his engrossing to write tales and plays. At the age of twenty-three he married Rosa Laborfabri, the greatest of Hungarian actresses—a step for which his family discarded him, but to which, a year afterwards, he owed his life. The Revolution broke upon the country; Moritz drew his sword to strike a blow for liberty, was present at the surrender of Villagos, was taken prisoner, and was sentenced to be shot. On the eve of the execution his wife arrived from Pesth; she had sold her jewels to raise money, with which she bribed the guards, and the pair escaped into the woods of Buk, where for some time, in danger of their lives, they lurked in caves and slept on heaps of leaves. Thence they stole to Pesth, where they have ever since resided—in summer, in a pretty house, half buried in its vines and looking from a rising ground across the roofs and steeples of the grand old city; in winter, in a house within the town, where Jokai writes among his books and pictures in a room ablaze with flowers. His works amount to some two hundred volumes; indeed, the modern literature of Hungary is almost wholly his creation; and in everything he writes his original and striking gifts are visible, whether it be a novel in five volumes, or the slightest of amusing trifles, like "Barak Hageb and his Wives."]



BARAK HAGEB had no less than three hundred and sixty-five wives; one for every day in the year. How he managed in leap year with one wife short, remains for ever a mystery.

But you are not, therefore, to suppose that Barak was a Sultan; he was only High Chamberlain—as the title Hageb shows—at the court of Sultan Mahmoud.

Barak had come into the land in the first instance as ambassador from the great empire of Mongolia, and the Regent, the widow of the late Sultan, who was still a young woman, had

entrusted everything to him. Mahmoud was as yet no more than a child.

Barak governed as he thought fit. It was a very thrifty rule. He introduced that reform in the army by which the soldier's pay was reduced from four half-pennies to three; for he declared that three was a sacred number, if only because there had been three Prophets.

One day the Grand Vizier Darfoor Ali came to visit the worthy Barak Hageb, and while they sipped their coffee the guest spoke: "Verily," said he, "it is a piece of folly quite unworthy of you to keep so many wives. If, indeed, it were the custom with us, as among the Franks, to give wives for nothing, or even on occasion to pay a dowry to the husband, I should have nothing to say to it, for you would be richer than King Crœsus. But among us the world is topsy-turvy; we buy our wives, and generally pay money down. You have squandered vast sums in this way. If it had been your own money it would have mattered nothing. But it is the nation's money that you have spent to buy more and more wives—that is where the mischief lies. A hundred warriors could be placed in the field for the price of one of your wives."

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"Very true; but would a hundred warriors afford me greater pleasure than one beautiful woman?" replied Barak, with profound wisdom. And Ali was obliged in his soul to admit that he was right.

However, he objected to the multiplicity of wives, saying: "Everyone may gather as many flowers in the garden of the world as he possibly can. This the Prophet allows, and you might have collected every variety: fair and dark, pale and black, blue-eyed and green-eyed women, yellow Chinese and tawny Malays, and, for aught I care, women who dye their hair red and their teeth black; still, I think that one specimen of each would have been enough. By Allah! Why, you could not even repeat the names of all your wives, or the use they are to you."

"You are quite mistaken," replied Barak Hageb. "I will enumerate them all in order. First, there is Ildibah, who can prophesy, and is indispensable to the fate of the country; then there is Hafitem, a ghost-seer, who calls up the spirits of the dead; Nourmahal, who understands the language of birds better than I understand yours; Alpaida, who tells tales which would send even a Sultan to sleep; and Mahaderi and Assinta, who dance a *pas de deux* to perfection. As to Mangora, she makes cakes fit for a King, and Sandabad prepares such a miraculous sherbet that when you have drunk it, it makes you sad to wipe your moustache. Via Hia, my Chinese wife, has a way of arranging cock-fights which are more amusing than a battle; and Haka, the Hindoo, can subjugate wild beasts, and tame even lions to harness to her chariot. Roxana is an astrologer, and can tell you the day of your death; Aysha understands the culture of flowers; Kaika to be sure is hideous, but to this peculiarity she adds the power of rubbing the gout out of my limbs. Jarko, my Tartar wife, is an accomplished horsewoman, and teaches the others to ride. Abuzayda, who is highly educated, writes the letters I dictate to her; Josa reads to me out of the Koran; Rachel sings psalms, in which she is assisted by Kadigaval and Samuza, for a man of any position at all must have a trio. Of Tukinna I need only say that she is a rope-dancer, while Zibella can cast a knife with such precision as to divide a human hair at twelve paces. Barossa is skilled in medicine, Aliben embroiders in gold, Alaciél binds my turban admirably, and Khatum of Bagdad interprets my most interesting dreams. Mavola plays the harp, Zebra the tom-tom, and Hia the tambourine, a quite celestial harmony. Ah, and then Sichem—"



"I WILL ENUMERATE THEM ALL."

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The Grand Vizier had begun by counting the list of ladies on his fingers, and then on his toes; but when the number already exceeded thirty, he cried "Hold, enough!" for he began to fear that he should remain all night, and still that his friend would not have done.

"Well, well," he broke in, "I have heard enough. No doubt you require all the three hundred and sixty-five. Each of them has her admirable side, but beware lest some day the bad side should be turned outwards."

And the Grand Vizier was right, as we shall see in the sequel.

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Sultan Sidi Ahmed, of Herman, the ruler of an adjacent State, had received information that the people in Mahmoud's territory were ill-content, and he determined to set the oppressed free. To cure the diseases of his neighbour was in all ages a favourite undertaking with every Oriental Sovereign.

Sidi Ahmed was master of a vast army. Some Persian writers affirm that he had ten thousand soldiers, while other historians estimate them as at least a hundred thousand. Something

between the two is probably nearer the truth. He had three hundred horsemen; that much is certain.

Before declaring war, the Sultan raised his soldiers' pay from four halfpennies to five. This announcement fired the whole army with enthusiasm. At the head of the troops was the Sultan himself. He and his horse were a blaze of jewels, a sight which filled his bare-foot troops with honest pride. The most costly delicacies were carried in his train, and the thought that he alone would feast on these dainties brought great consolation to the hungry warriors.

Mahmoud, too, fitted out a great army; of how many men history does not tell, but at any rate they were twice as many as the enemy could put into the field. The Grand Vizier Darfoor Ali led them in person.



**ILDIBAH PROPHECIES.**

On the eve of the first battle one of Barak's wives, the above-named Ildibah, foretold that the neighbouring realm would be brought to nought; and the lady Roxana, who was also a soothsayer, solemnly declared that on the morrow Sidi Ahmed must die. Barak Hageb had these prophecies proclaimed in the capital, and the enthusiasm was soon general. Barak himself was firmly convinced that both would be fulfilled; he and all his wifely following took up a position next day on a hill overlooking the field of battle, whence they could enjoy the delightful prospect of the enemy's defeat.

The struggle began at daybreak, but it did not last long. The historians before quoted, or rather alluded to, differ widely in their accounts. Persian chroniclers assert that Mahmoud's army lost forty-five thousand men, and that the enemy only left three for dead; another writer, on the contrary, says that Mahmoud's troops lost not even a slipper, much less the man belonging thereto, while

the dead on the other side may be reckoned in round numbers at thirty-three thousand. In this case, again, perhaps the truth lies between the two. But by fairly trustworthy accounts the worthy Mahmoud's army—the men whose pay had been so liberally reduced—at the first onslaught took to their heels, seizing the opportunity of showing that no one could catch them up. What wonder? Who would care to sell his life for three halfpence? Sidi Ahmed's troops thereupon announced that they were masters of the field, and their first business was to plunder the villages in the neighbourhood, at that time a favourite way of setting a people free.

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**"A TALL WARRIOR RODE FORTH."**

"By the beard of the Prophet!" cried Barak Hageb, as he saw his countrymen take to flight, "I almost fancy that Ildibah's prophecy will not be fulfilled; on the contrary, our side seems to be losing."

"Patience," said Ildibah, to comfort him, "the sun has not yet sunk in the sea."

This observation was true, no doubt, yet did Barak Hageb tarry no longer to philosophise, but set spurs into his horse and rode away. His wives followed his example.

Sidi Ahmed, the conqueror, had heard many fine things about the fabulous wealth of Barak Hageb, and more especially about his choice collection of wives; and when he was told that Barak and his women had taken to flight he thought he could not do better than start at once in pursuit. Till late at night two clouds of dust might be discerned scudding along one behind the other: the foremost raised by Barak and his wives, the second by Sidi Ahmed's horsemen.

"By the apron of the Prophet's wife!" Barak growled, "Roxana's prognostications have not proved true. It is I who shall be a dead man this day, and not Sidi Ahmed."

"The stars are not yet risen," replied the sage Roxana, and she added: "But there, by that tank, we will rest awhile. There you can perform your evening ablutions. Leave the rest to us."

But never had Barak so little enjoyed his bath.

The women meanwhile were plotting a stratagem. They cut off the horses' tails and made themselves false beards, so that they looked quite terrible. They cut bamboo canes in the neighbouring thicket, and fastened their dainty little daggers to the end of them; thus they contrived excellent lances. When Barak Hageb returned from his evening devotions, instead of his troop of docile wives, he found an army of bearded warriors! He started, for they really looked very dreadful.

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Jarko the Tartar and Zibella the Indian commanded the light cavalry; and on this occasion the wonder was wrought, that one woman would obey another's orders. To be sure, the times were evil.



**"HE HAD NOT TIME TO DROP FROM HIS HORSE."**

The little army formed in three divisions, and awaited the enemy's onslaught. Sidi Ahmed came rushing on in hot haste. But when he saw this force, with beards flowing down to their stirrup-irons, his heart sank into the depths of his baggy pantaloons. Before he had quite recovered from the shock, a tall warrior rode forth and called to him: "Sidi Ahmed! if you are not a coward, come out and try your strength with me in single combat."

This hero was Zibella, so greatly skilled in casting the knife. Nor did her cunning betray her. She flung her javelin, and Sidi Ahmed was that instant a dead man; he had not time to drop from his horse.

The rest of the Amazons, under the command of Jarko, now pressed on the enemy. But Sidi Ahmed's followers did not like the look of things. Five halfpence are indeed a handsome sum, but even for such a guerdon as this a man will not give his skin to be punctured *ad libitum*. So each man flung his shield over his

back, which he turned on the adversary, and the horsemen fled as fast as feet could carry them, shouting as they went: "The Tartars are on us, the barbarians are at our heels! Ten thousand—twenty thousand—a hundred thousand fighting men have risen up to protect Barak Hageb! Ride for your lives—ride! The Tartars shoot with lightnings!"

"Now you see that my prophecy is fulfilled!" said Roxana to Barak Hageb. "Sidi Ahmed lies dead before you."

"And mine, too, will yet come true," said Ildibah. "Our enemy's realm will perish. Let us hasten to Kerman!"

So they cut off the dead Sultan's head, and set it on a lance. With this badge of victory they rode in triumph to Kerman, their followers increasing from hour to hour. The soldiers who had ran away came out of their hiding-places, and joined the array, so that it was a large force by the time they crossed the frontier. The gates of the towns were flung open joyfully, for every one was now ready to say that Sidi Ahmed had, in truth, been a tyrant, and Barak Hageb was hailed as a deliverer, and was finally proclaimed as Sultan.

This conclusion, which is so strange that no one will believe this history, though it is the literal truth, happened in the year after the flight of the Prophet 612.

## Transcriber's Notes:

Images may be clicked to see larger versions.

Added table of contents.

Some inconsistent punctuation (semi-colons sometimes inside, sometimes outside quotes) retained from the original.

Some inconsistent spelling (practice vs. practise, etc.) retained from the original.

Retained inconsistent hyphenation (river-side vs. riverside, etc.).

Reformatted some image captions for HTML representation.

Rejoined split image captions (e.g. "*From a* AGE 4. [*Miniature.*" becomes "AGE 4. *From a Miniature.*")

Page 126, changed "culpit" to "culprit."

Page 130, added missing quotes around paragraph beginning "I could only wait until his return."

Page 133, added missing quote after "I only made things worse."

Page 136, changed "con-dence" to "confidence."

Page 138, added missing close quote to image caption.

Page 140, added missing quote before "There is no danger."

Page 155, removed unnecessary quote after "At eight-and-thirty 'Stones of Venice' had appeared."

Page 164, added missing period to "Fig. 2."

Page 174, changed apostrophe to comma after "brusquely;" added missing close quote to image caption.

Page 177, changed "as a few feet distant" to "at a few feet distant."

Page 178, added missing quotes around Fussie in "whether Fussie came by road or rail."

Page 179, changed "every body" to "everybody."

Page 183, changed "Residencz" to "Residenz."

Page 188, changed "walk up down" to "walk up and down."

Page 203, added missing period at end of page.

Page 212, changed "the the solitude" to "the solitude."

Page 223, added missing quote after "our side seems to be losing."

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