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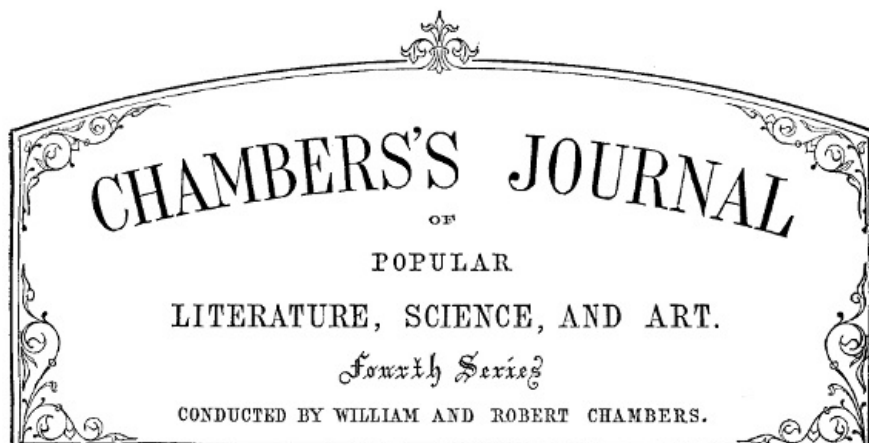
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**CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL
OF
POPULAR
LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.**

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TOYS.

OF British industries, not the least interesting to a large world of readers, great and small, will be found the manufacture of toys. Mr Bartley, in treating this subject in Mr Stanford's useful series of Handbooks to British Manufactures, rightly assumes that objects which are so inseparably connected with the happiness of our early life cannot be held unimportant; while we need but mention the name of Charles Dickens, in order to lend a charm to the avocations of a doll's dressmaker and a journeyman toy-maker. Although the English productions are almost entirely confined to a few special types of goods, which not only hold their own among foreign rivals, but are largely exported to the continent, we find that in London alone there are, besides various importers of toys, eleven rocking-horse manufacturers, ten wholesale dealers, and one hundred and fifty-one retail dealers, not including the large tribe of small retailers, who combine other occupations with the sale of toys. Though Germany, Switzerland, and France are the great storehouses of all toys of which the material is soft wood, the toy manufacture of London forms a large and interesting industry.

Penny wooden toys are turned out of a manufacturing establishment which consists of a toy-maker, his wife, and family. When the father has finished his work on the lathe, the mother and children have each their particular share in gluing, pasting, and painting. The material for these articles are scraps of timber bought out of builders' yards, the principal tools being the chisel and the lathe. Pewter toys are made in London in very large quantities. At one establishment a ton of metal is consumed each month in the production of Lilliputian tea, coffee, and dinner sets. English taste may be gathered from the fact, that the number of *tea*-sets made is nearly thirty times larger than either of the other two. Twenty-three separate articles make up a set, and of these articles two millions and a half are made yearly by one house alone. The metal is provided from miscellaneous goods, such as old candlesticks, tea-pots, pots and pans, bought from 'marine' store-dealers by the hundredweight; and when melted, is formed into the required shapes by different processes of casting in moulds. One girl can make two thousand five hundred small tea-cups in a day. Putting together the four separate pieces of a mould made of hard gun-metal, she fills it with the molten metal, dips its mouth into cold water, takes it to pieces, and turns out a cup that only wants trimming.

Under the head of paper toys, miniature packs of cards demand a large amount of material and labour. It is astonishing to read that one firm alone in London turns out each year *one million* packs of toy cards, using five or six tons of paper for the purpose, on each sheet of which are printed three packs in black and red. When these sheets have been pasted on cards—called 'middlings'—one girl can cut up and complete eight hundred and sixty-four packs each day, earning about one pound a week. These cards are sold at twopence, one penny, and a halfpenny a pack. The penny cards have, as might be expected, far the largest sale with the public; the manufacturer getting five shillings for a gross of twelve dozen, or somewhat less than half the retail price. Many thousand gross of these little packs go to all parts of the world. The twopenny packs are precisely the same as the penny packs, with the addition of an ornamental paper back to each card. The demand for these superior packs is small, for when the price of an article gets above a penny, we read that it at once shuts it out from a certain class of the buying public. The purchaser that will spend more than a penny will spend sixpence. The spending public, it seems, go in sets. There is the farthing set, mostly children, who patronise small shops of toys and sweets; there is the halfpenny set; and the penny set. We then jump to the sixpenny set. There is a very large manufacture of toy picture-books which are sold at one penny, a halfpenny, and a farthing. Even the farthing books have a picture on the cover printed in four colours; and valentines printed from wood-blocks and hand-painted can be sold for a halfpenny.

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Another large industry grown up or developed of late years is the manufacture of india-rubber toys. The india-rubber, cut up into small pieces, and formed, by the admixture of white-lead and other substances, into sheets of a putty-like inelastic material, is fitted into two pieces of an iron mould, variously shaped according to the requirements of the toy, and then plunged into the vulcanising bath—a vessel filled with sulphur and other ingredients. When taken out, the india-rubber has become elastic, the two pieces of mould are unscrewed, and the toy, after trimming and painting, is ready for use.

Toy-boats, which in their construction go through fifteen different hands, are very cheap, though the whole of the work is done by hand. In one London manufactory as many as ten thousand sailing-boats are made every year; upwards of five hundred twelve-feet lengths of three-inch deals being used in their manufacture, and eight tons of lead being required for their keels.

We have left to the last place notice of the toy which is the speciality of English toy-makers, the wax-doll. The wax, after being melted in large vessels by means of boiling water, is poured into hollow plaster-moulds made in three pieces, and laid in rows with the crown of the head downwards. When the workman has filled from a can ten or twelve of these moulds, returning to the first one in the row, he pours back into his can as much of the wax as remains fluid; and so on with the other moulds. Most of the wax is thus poured back again into the can; but that which adheres to the mould has now become a hollow wax head, thick or thin according to the time which elapses between pouring the wax into the mould and pouring it out again. Then comes the process of fixing the glass eyes, which, save the very best, are now made abroad, the Germans having driven the Birmingham manufacturers out of the field. The wax ridges left by the joints of the mould are smoothed down, the surface is brushed over with turpentine to clean it, and with violet powder to beautify it; and when the cheeks have been tinted with rouge and the lips with vermilion, the head is ready for the hair-dressing operations. For the best dolls, the wig is made

by a lengthy process of fixing one or two hairs at a time, so as to give a natural appearance to the hair. In the common dolls, the hair is more quickly put on in locks. The black hair, most of which comes from abroad, is human; but the favourite flaxen curls are of mohair, the silky wool of the Angora goat. *Composition* dolls' heads are made of pasteboard from iron moulds. The pasteboard is placed over a mould representing half a head cut vertically behind the ear, and is then forced by means of a pestle into every crevice. Another mould for the other half of the head, is similarly filled; and when nearly dry, the two halves are removed from the moulds and pasted together. The head thus moulded, which becomes as hard as leather, is coated with a composition of size and whiting, washed with oil and turpentine; and then having received a pair of eyes, is dipped into a vessel of melted wax, and re-dipped until it looks like a solid wax-head. The wax is then cut from off the eyes, and scraped from the part of the head which the hair will cover; and the head is then ready for painting, powdering, and hair-dressing. A third class of dolls, known in the trade by the misnomer of 'rag dolls,' is the pretty muslin-faced creature with blue eyes and becoming cap. Her face is of wax, covered with an outer skin of muslin, and is made by pressing a wax mask, moulded in the ordinary way, into a mould exactly like the one in which the wax was cast, over which is stretched a piece of thin muslin. In this way the wax necessarily adheres so closely to the muslin, that it becomes a sort of skin to the mask. These faces are nothing but masks, and require the caps to conceal the junction with the skulls, made of calico and sawdust, like the bodies. The bodies are mostly the handiwork of women and the smaller members of the doll-maker's family. The doll manufacturer gives out so many yards of calico which are to produce so many bodies, the sawdust to be found by the maker. Then by a division of labour in cutting out, sewing up, filling with sawdust, and making the joints, many dozen bodies will be turned out by one family in a week. The arms are a branch of the trade upon which certain persons are almost exclusively employed. They are made of calico above the elbow, of leather for the part below, and are paid for at the incredibly small price of sixpence-halfpenny a dozen pairs; smaller arms for very cheap dolls costing three-halfpence a dozen pairs. We read that the hands, which thus cost each the sixteenth part of a penny, have always a certain number of fingers! The materials are found by the makers themselves; so when we consider that each doll sold to the public for sixpence should not cost more than threepence in the making, if the toy-merchant and the retailer are to earn a living, there remains but a pittance to be earned by the Caleb Plummers and Jenny Wrens. Though most dolls leave their first homes in an undressed condition, the larger establishments employ many young women in the dressmaking department of their trade. One article of dolls' attire forms a distinct branch of trade—the little many-coloured leather shoes, which are made from the waste material left by the makers of children's ornamental boots and shoes. A thousand such pairs are made weekly by one large manufactory in Clerkenwell.

And now we replace our puppets in their box, grateful for having been let into some of the mysteries of their creation, not only the more ready to admire the charming little picture of the toy-maker, by John Leech, in the *Cricket on the Hearth*, but more sensible of a sympathy with doll-nature, and more certain that toys are as much needed for old as for young. Happy is it if the toys of grown-up folks cause as little mischief and as much pleasure as the innocent toys of childhood!

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FROM DAWN TO SUNSET.

PART II.

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

WHEN Deborah awaked, old Marjory was sitting watching over her; the sun was still glorious on the woods outside, but the chamber was left in grateful gloom. She could not even distinguish her father's picture; but soon, clear and distinct through the gloom, laughed out the boyish face of Charlie. Charlie? What had Charlie done? Mute and still, Deborah looked up at her old nurse, while the darkness of reality dawned on her wakening mind.

'Thou'rt ill, child,' said old Marjory abruptly.

'What makes you think so, dame?' asked Deborah faintly.

'Why, thy face betrays thee; it is white as my apron, and thine was a sleep o' sorrow. *I* know it. Thou'lt eat summat now, an' no more o' these airs.'

'Have ye no letter or message for me, Marjory? What are you hiding there?' and Deborah raised herself in feverish excitement.

'Why, it's a letter that'll keep, I warrant me, my Lady Deb. It's from the old man at Lincoln.'

'Give it me, Marjory, and leave me, dear old dame. I wish to be alone.'

So Marjory left her; but soon the old woman was knocking at the door again with food and wine for Deborah. She found her sitting on the floor white as a ghost. 'O child, thou'rt faintin' for good victuals! There! eat and drink like a Christian. Why, bless thee, Lady Deb, dear, I know the master's in his old quandaries. But don't take on, my Rose.'

'Dame, come and comfort me. Pray, take that food away! Let me lay my head on thy kind old breast. Thou'rt a mother to me, Marjory—always wert. Dame, I've no dear mother!'

The dame took her darling in her arms, and rocked her gently to and fro, with the toil-hardened old hand stroking the girl's silken hair, and her grave old face laid against it.

'No; thou hast no mother, poor lamb; worse for thee.'

'It's hard to know right from wrong, Marjory; but I am quick to decide, and once decided, never falter. I try to do all for the best.'

'I know it, I know it. But child, my Lady Deb, have no dealin's with that old man Master Sinclair. He's a demon.'

'Hush! or give the demon his due, Marjory. He has been kind to my brother Charlie.'

'For what? We all know it; all Enderby knows what he's after.'

'That is no concern of Enderby's. I hate this gossip. Look you, dame, if I choose to wed fifty such, it is no concern of Enderby's. If I did wed Master Sinclair, it would be of mine own free will: let all the world know that!'

'But thou'lt never wed him, dearie!' cried the old nurse, in tremulous breathless haste.

'I do not answer you Yes or No; but I am my own mistress.'

'Too much so—ever too much so,' muttered Marjory below her breath.

'What say'st thou, Marjory?'

'That thou wantest a strong kind hand over thee, bein' too headstrong by half. I wish Master King was here; *he'd* advise thee!'

'Best not,' said Deborah, with a quick breath of pain. 'Let "Master King" attend to his own affairs. Each one has his troubles. Nurse, love me! I have need of it. O that I were a little tiny child again, when, in affright or in distress, I wrapped these arms o' thine about me; and they would seem to shelter me from all the world! O that thou wert magician, fairy, to give me my childhood back! I was happy *then*.'

'An' not now? What ails my bright bird? Is it Master Charlie?'

'O Marjory, don't speak of that. Look you at his picture; look there! Could those fearless eyes ever turn aside in shame or dread? Would Charlie, with all his faults, ever bring *dishonour* on us? Tell me that?'

'No, *never*.' The old face turned white, but did not flinch; Marjory believed in the honour of her wild boy, as in her own soul.

'Ah, Marjory, nurse, my darling! How I do love thee! No; never believe that any but a black liar would ever accuse Charlie Fleming of a mean low act. Wild, reckless he may be, but dishonourable, never! Ah, my love, my comfort, our true and faithful friend, *we* believe in Charlie Fleming!'

'Where is my boy?' asked the old woman, with troubled tears in her eyes. 'Why don't he come to Enderby? They *will* say strange things o' him if he don't come home. Oh, he'll break his father's heart by bein' so wild; but it's his father's blood that's in him.'

'And his mother's too, for they say our sweet mother was a mad, mad lass. Dame, who was she? What was my mother's name?'

The girl gazed straight at the old woman till Marjory's eyes fell, and the girl's fair face was flushed with crimson. 'I have never asked you,' she said, 'not since I was a child; but who was my mother, dame? Prithee, tell me. Ah, say not that there was shame! Poor and honest, I care not; but naught of *shame*.'

'No, my Lady Deb, no; naught o' shame. She was the child o' wedded parents, I promise thee; she was lawful wedded wife, thy mother; but if I was to tell thee who she was, Sir Vincent would strike me dead. I cannot tell thee; there's my faithful promise given, not.'

'I will not ask ye then. One day I will—must know. Does Charlie know?'

'Ne'er from me or his father. But no one knows what Master Charlie knows.'

'There's my father calling me; I must go. Good-bye, dame. Pray for me.'

Deborah went down into the hall. Sir Vincent got up and met her. He shut the door carefully, and led her to a chair; he sat down opposite her, and screening his face from the light with one great sinewy hand, gazed out from under its shadow, as if he would read his daughter's soul. For her part, she gazed at him with all her great and tender soul in her eyes, her own despair forgotten in her father's. There was a long silence between them, each gazing on the other, sorrow-stricken and speechless.

'Father,' said Deborah softly then, 'sweet father, have I not done thee some good? See! here's the letter from Lincoln; and in three weeks I shall be Master Sinclair's wife. It is my duty, father, my free choice. My heart is very strong. Sweet father, thou'rt sad still, ay, even heart-broken; I know thy face so well! I have saved Charlie. Listen! This Master Sinclair puts everything in my power, makes me absolute mistress of all he has. My first act will be to save us from ruin; Charlie from ruin too. But tell me what more there is? What serpent has wronged Charlie falsely? ay, *falsely*, for before heaven, father, I would *swear* that Charlie has done no dishonour! Sooner would I doubt my own soul than his. He is incapable of double-dealing, incapable of all meanness and dishonesty. To doubt him, to believe for one moment that he could act dishonourably, is to believe that Charlie Fleming is no son of thine and mother's; that this Charlie Fleming is not the

boy who has grown up under thine eyes and mine; graceless, truly, but the very soul of honour. Even the masters at his school, his tutors, his comrades who knew him best, have done him justice in calling him honourable and true. Then doubt him not for one moment!

Under the fire and sweetness of her faith in her brother, Sir Vincent waxed wan, and his fierce eyes grew dim with sadness.

Laying one hand upon her hands, and shading his own face still, he whispered brokenly: 'Believe on—hope on. Sweet child, sweet Deb, my brave best one, I *must* confide in thee, or my old heart will break. This boy—this son, in whom I trusted—Ah me!' and with his clenched hand on his brow and his eyes raised to heaven, the father gave a deep and bitter sob—'has *betrayed* me—*his father!*' With a strange hoarse eager whisper, and eyes that gleamed like a madman's, Sir Vincent leaned forward and uttered those words to Deborah. She, white, still, waited without a word for more. 'I have seen the papers—Adam Sinclair holds them—by which that boy of mine has anticipated my death, and raised money upon Enderby; his writing—his name—Charles Stuart Fleming. Adam Sinclair has got those papers out of Parry's hands; and by marrying thee, my fairest and my best, he buys those papers of Parry and destroys their shameful purport. But Deb—does that wipe out the stain? Does that blot out the fact that that boy of mine, deceiving and betraying me—ay, cursing my lengthened life, and hungering for the old man's death—has got a hound to raise this money? Ay, that hound has in turn betrayed him into Sinclair's hands; and Charles Fleming's black-heartedness is laid bare to him and me.'

'Have ye seen those papers, father, with your very eyes? And Charlie's writing?'

'Ay, ay.'

Deborah panted, terribly white and wild she looked, with her hands pressed on her side. Sir Vincent kneeled down beside her and laid his head upon her shoulder. Bitter, bitter was that hour.

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

Some days after that—it might have been centuries to Deborah Fleming—she heard a peal at the great hall bell; and Kingston Fleming, pale, disordered in dress, and haggard-eyed, entered the library. Deborah was looking idly over the books, not reading; she was stunned, and could neither read nor write; she scarcely had the power of thought. One look at King, and she knew that he knew her fate. 'Deborah!' he said, roughly and hoarsely, 'you have played me *false!* By words strong and binding as an oath, you told your brother you would not wed Adam Sinclair—that no ruin, no misery, should lead you to so ignoble a sacrifice. Is it then under the mask of doing good, ye do this grievous evil? Soiling your soul, sacrificing your life, not to save your father and your brother, for Charles Fleming would rather see you dead than accept your bounty *then*, but to win rank and money—to shuffle off this miserable coil of poverty, that wearies you; and to sell yourself for gold and tinsel to this hoary reprobate! No good intention, no amount of self-sacrifice, could justify so detestable a deed.'

Palely beautiful, but full of calm scorn, Deborah Fleming faced her fiery and impetuous kinsman; before she spoke, her haughty eyes flashed fire and disdain.

'Kingston Fleming, are *you* my brother? Are *you* my guardian, my master, or the master of this house, that you dare to insult me thus? What earthly right have you to question or to jeer at me? Were I a man, I would strike you on the face for this. Coward! Because I am alone and a woman, you dare to insult me by these words! What if I choose to be wed to Adam Sinclair, and to love his "gold and tinsel;" what is that to you? What if I choose to "sell" my precious self for his name and fortune; what is that to you? I have my father's consent; I am under my father's protection; you have no earthly claim on me. Fair and friendly have you ever been to me. Courteous has been your kindly interest in me from childhood upwards; but scarcely enough so, to justify your interference now. I thank you, Master Kingston Fleming, for your anxiety on my account; but I'll thank you also to leave me and mine alone.'

Even in that wild moment, Kingston saw that she was trembling with fierce passion—ay, she could have struck him; in that moment, she *hated* him. But Kingston too, goaded by his wild unavailing remorse and love, mad with the knowledge of how cruelly his taunt had wronged her, desperate at her beauty and her sacrifice, cared for nothing. Dashing down his hat and whip, he caught her hands in his: 'Beautiful, cruel, heartless, reckless Deborah! Child, I have loved thee—too late, too late. I am *free!* I am free to woo thee; I am a free man now! But when I come in mad haste to ask thy love and pity, I find thee betrothed, and cast away, and *sold!* Listen! I would have *made* thee love me. No woman on earth have I loved but Deborah Fleming! I would have *made* thee love me!'

Then, with a sharp bitter cry, Deborah wrenched away her hands. Conscious of her brother's dishonour, sublime in the greatness of her sacrifice, and her terrible secret and her suffering, she looked back on Kingston only with passion and scorn, to hide the love that would still master her, and hurled him back taunt for taunt. 'Ah! you are a good one to preach honour and good faith to me! throwing over one woman to woo another who is betrothed! I feel dishonoured even to have heard your words of love, when I have plighted troth to Adam Sinclair. But don't think to win or move me by thy treachery. Deborah Fleming doesn't change her troth-plight every hour. Her vows once made, are binding, binding till *death!*'

'Then good-bye, Deborah.' He took up his hat and whip and strode to the door. His looks were turned back on her, a smile was in his haggard eyes—intense passion, love, and suffering; his

face was pale as death. His last sight of her was the proud erectness of her figure, and the bright watchfulness of her beautiful haughty eyes, following him, and burning on him. But when he was gone from her sight, the bells of Enderby, as all through their interview, came clanging wildly out, clashing on heart and brain.

'I know not if I love or hate him most!' cried the girl, half mad with her despair. 'I love him, and I hate him too!'

Then rang out the bells of Enderby, loud and clear, the refrain, 'I love him, and I hate him too!' Low in the lull, loud and clear on the gale, 'I love him, and I hate him too!'

Mistress Dinnage in those days was well-nigh desperate. After hearing that Deborah Fleming was betrothed to Adam Sinclair and was to be wedded to him in three weeks' time, she knew no rest. It was all for Charlie, it was on his account; Charlie therefore must know of this, and there would be an end of it. For two evenings Mistress Dinnage watched for her lover in vain. She had talked herself hoarse to Deborah; she had exhausted threats and entreaties: she might as well have talked to the idle wind—and so she knew—as to Deborah once resolved. On the third evening-watch, however, Margaret saw the well-known form. She was out in a moment under the gloom of the trees and the twilight.

'I have somewhat to tell you, Charlie. Let me speak quickly and clearly, love. Your sister Deborah is betrothed to Master Sinclair; they are to be wedded in two weeks and four days. There have been sad doings at Enderby. Your father! Ah! I dare not tell ye what I fear. But oh! grievous trouble has he been in through tidings from Master Sinclair about *you*! So Mistress Deborah promised then and there to be Master Sinclair's wife. Oh, I tell you she is desperate since! She loves another; I know it; but she gives up all for you and Enderby.'

'Can this be true! Meg, I will kill him first. Has he betrayed me then? What tidings has he sent?'

'I know not; but of terrible losses, be sure. Ah, dear, are ye not in terrible trouble, and waiting about for love of me? Stay no longer, Charlie! Think not o' me; I will follow; I've got good courage. Release sweet Mistress Deborah.'

'How, quotha? Death only will release that mad reckless girl. Ah! I might have known her.'

'Neither prayers nor commands, Charlie, would she listen to; no, not if you were rolling in riches now, she says she would not break her oath. Charlie! O love, what do I urge you to! You must fight that old man, and we must fly. Not to kill him, Charlie, hark ye!—not to kill him; but to disable him for what life he has left! Think me merciless, unwomanly; I care not, so that it saves her. Or stay, stay, Charlie! Will ye use all your influence first to turn him? O ye can talk to tenderness a heart o' stone! Talk to Adam Sinclair then till he melts to pity; but set sweet Deborah free!'

'*Talk to him!*' said Charlie Fleming, with a short laugh; 'ay, I will *talk*. But we have old accounts to settle first, old debts to square. We have a little affair to settle between ourselves, Adam Sinclair and I. Hark ye, Meg! He has accused me of foul play—not to my face, not he! but behind my back. He has accused me of cheating at cards—a dirty trick to brand on a man; and as ye know, love, whatever Charlie Fleming's faults, he would scorn so foul an act. I don't mind telling ye now, Meg, that I must wipe off this slander with blood. All my comrades are up in arms at it; and even *now* I am on my way to Lincoln, to meet Adam Sinclair face to face; and in case I fall, Meg—to bid thee now farewell.' He took her in his arms; he folded back the long dark hair from the passionate face. In bitter wrath and passion had she trembled at hearing of the foul slander put on his fair fame; and her fiery spirit, following the spirit of his words, had made her grasp his hands, and pant and frown in eagerness for revenge. But when she pictured him dead—lying perchance beneath the old man's deadly shot, stiffening in his blood, in the perished glory of his youth and strength—then her woman's heart began to shudder and to faint: she leaned on his broad breast and moaned.

'What! sick?' he whispered. 'Faint? A little *poltroon*! The wife of a Fleming must be brave. *Thou* wouldst hate and despise Charles Fleming if he could for one moment brook such an insult as this. Come; I meant to bid thee good-bye, and hide this from thee; but now I have told thee all, thou must face death with me, and take it as it comes.'

'I know it! I know it! Not for one moment would I say aught but "Go!" Yet, pity my woman's fears; think how long I have loved but thee! Ay, I have kissed the stones where thy shadow passed! and to lose thee now, *now*—my husband of but a week, my darling *husband*! Nay; I will not grieve before 'tis time!' she cried with sudden fire, gazing up at him. 'See! I am so brave that I would fain be thy second, and see thy true shot speed to that old coward heart! Oh, thou'lt kill him, Charlie, thou'lt kill him, or hurt him sorely. A dead-shot he may be; but men say thine is deadlier. Nay; do not laugh; I have listened, till I know better than thou canst know thyself, all Charles Fleming's brave gifts. They say thou'rt a deadly shot.'

He stooped and kissed her. 'A deadly shot! Yes; I will shoot him for love of *thee*. Better not mangle the old traitor; I will kill him clean, or not at all. Thank heaven, if he kills me it will be clean! Love, if I fall, don't weep; *I leave a hope with thee*.' These words were whispered; she did not answer, she did not speak.

A few more happy stolen hours, and he was gone. She went with him to the gate in the woods, where he was wont to come and go, through the mossed entrance and the tangled clambering ivy. There they stood, her hand upon the gate; her dark head, that reached no higher than his heart, laid there. The mute clinging hand did not escape him; every motion, every gesture of his young love, was marked by his keen hawk eyes, as if it were her last. He pulled open the

stubborn gate; still the two clung as if they would never part.

'Sweet love, good-bye.' He listened for her answer, but only heard a sob; kisses were Margaret's good-bye—kisses, and the deathless love within them. Then her arms fell asunder, and leaning against the gate, she let him go. With the iron grasped within her little hands, she stood gazing through the bars and saw him wave adieu; still stood, while the quick hoofs bore him far away; still stood, gazing for him through the night, though Mistress Margaret Fleming (for Mistress Fleming indeed she was) saw him no more!

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COD-FISHING IN ICELAND.

THOUGH the French are not naturally a maritime nation, there is a hardy race of fishermen to be found on the coasts of Normandy and Brittany, from whose ranks are obtained a large proportion of the hands that are employed in the cod-fishing of Newfoundland and Iceland. Though it is a painful and dangerous occupation, there are few that offer a higher remuneration to the masters and crews; the shoals of fish are inexhaustible, and the demand is always greater than the supply.

It is, however, not always easy to get up the necessary complement of hands; and captains sometimes have recourse to the unlawful acts of the press-gang of former days. A ship ready to start will enter a little creek on the coast of Brittany near an almost unknown village; and after mass on Sunday, the captain announces at the church door that he is in want of men for Iceland. The advantages are loudly proclaimed: good food, good wine, brandy, meat three times a week, and above all, an immediate bounty of from four to eight pounds, with future pay in proportion to the results. The extreme poverty of the peasants makes such a sum of money seem fabulous; they have only to say Yes. And yet, how hard it is to them to leave their beloved home and speak the fatal word! The captain knows how to overcome their irresolution. Installed in a neighbouring *cabaret*, he patiently waits until some young and vigorous men enter, when he pours forth all his eloquence, enumerates the advantages, slurs over the danger and fatigue, shakes the gold in his purse, orders an abundance of cider and brandy, and in the end, draws his victims into the net.

The engagement is signed; and the labourer, who has spent the winter in collecting sea-weed for the fields and sowing his crops, leaves the women to manage the rest. All being favourable, he will return in September with twenty pounds in his pocket. A few voyages make him a good sailor, when he can be drafted into the fleet at Cherbourg, thence to be transformed into a servant of his country.

From the difficulty of obtaining men, French shipbuilders reduce the labour by mechanical appliances; so that five or six men will navigate ships of two hundred tons. But in cod-fishing craft it is necessary to have as many men as possible, and twenty are usually taken. The arrangements are wofully insufficient. There are only sleeping-places for a third; one sailor resting whilst two are fishing. Thus, after six hours spent on deck without shelter from rain, wind, and snow, the waves washing over and the heavy line in their hands, the men go down stiff with cold and worn out with fatigue. Yet they must lie dressed as they are, on a hard damp mattress; and frequently the clothes are never changed from the beginning to the end of the voyage.

After five voyages a man is authorised to take the command, and though styled captain, he is nothing more than the head of the fishermen. It is his work to keep the account of the number of cod caught; the sailors taking care as they hook a fish to cut out its tongue and place it in a bag hung to their belt. When the hour of repose comes the tongues are taken to the captain, and about ten centimes is allowed for each. The second in office is only chosen as being the most skilful with his line; then comes the man who cuts off the cods' heads, opens and prepares the fish for the salter; and lastly the one who lays them in the barrels and closes them for sale.

With this short description of the crew we will pass over the voyage, as described by a French writer, M. Aragon, and take the reader to the Icelandic coast, Patrix-Fiord, where a number of vessels are already collected. Deserted during the past season, it now presents a scene of the greatest animation. A man-of-war is there to provide for any repairs that may be needed; carpenters and blacksmiths are busy doing their work, the bay echoes with the noise of hammers and saws. Other vessels, called *chasseurs*, come from France to take away the fish. On the shore rises the little wooden hut of the *cocman*, a Danish merchant who lives there during the summer months to trade with the people and sell spirits. No night comes on to interrupt the incessant labour; during the middle of May the sun is never below the horizon, and but a few stars may be seen on the zenith about the end of June.

Those ships that have chosen their position for fishing take down their sails and lie as quietly at anchor as the wind will permit, the men standing in a close line at the side of the vessel. They are clothed from head to foot in knitted or flannel garments, with waterproof capes and hats. A petticoat of strong linen is tied round the waist, descending below the knees, and to preserve the feet from wet they wear woollen stockings and waterproof boots. Thick woollen gloves lined with leather save their hands from the injury of constant friction from the heavy line. The whole forms a curious picture of ragged, patched, greasy, well-tarred habiliments, which a comic pencil might rejoice to portray. The men, indifferent to their appearance, seek only to be saved from moisture. The lines they use are necessarily very heavy to bring on board a fish weighing say forty pounds. There are two hooks baited with the entrails of fish; but the voracity of the cod is such that it is

scarcely necessary to be too particular as to the lure. Thus the men stand for six hours consecutively, gently moving the line, and when a shake indicates a catch, lifting the heavy weight on board.

The fatigue is very great, and much of it is pure loss, as the line too often brings up another fish, called the flétan, which though very good to eat, does not bear preserving. The sailors hold this interloper in extreme aversion, as it often breaks the line by its weight, and gives them much trouble to heave on board.

Let us now take a glance at the scenery which surrounds these hardy seamen. The coast is broken up into large gulfs, strewn with shoals and reefs of a most dangerous character, where misfortunes are so frequent that the place is called by the fishermen 'The Ships' Cemeteries.' Enormous precipices line the coast, with heaps of volcanic stones, worn by the action of the waves, lying at the foot. These rocks are cut at certain distances into spaces like the mouth of an immense river, called fiords, which communicate with the sea by a comparatively narrow inlet, and spread out into a sort of lake, surrounded by vertical and jagged rocks. The more sinuous the outlet, the more sure is the anchorage; and in each bay there is generally found one sandy spit, forming a sort of natural jetty, behind which the ships are secure, and where the cocman builds his hut. Far away in the distance rises the gigantic cone of the extinct volcano Sneffjells-Jökul, whose summit is covered with rosy-tinted snow. In the hollows of the rocks thousands of sea-birds build their nests, to be slaughtered by the inhabitants at a certain season for the sake of *fuel*, their flesh being utterly unpalatable to the least fastidious appetite. {663}

One of the most important fiords is the Dyre-Fiord, where a small hamlet of a dozen huts or *bœrs* is built in a large meadow. These constructions are not easy to describe; they are low and massive, formed of lava-stone and peat. To avoid cold and damp within, a very small door opens into a dark narrow passage, towards which the rooms converge. The walls and pointed roof are covered with turf, upon which grows a thick crop of grass, making it very difficult to distinguish the *bær* from the field in which it stands. Within, the accommodation is most simple—a kitchen and one sleeping-apartment, with closets to contain provisions, clothes, and fishing apparatus. Beyond the vegetable garden is a building for drying fish, the planks of which are separated to admit the free circulation of the air. Here the decapitated cod are hung, emitting a savour far from pleasant. The heads form the food of the Icelanders with butter and milk; the fish are sold for export. The sea-wolf is also largely eaten, though its flesh is tough and rancid, the frequency of leprosy and elephantiasis in the island being attributed to this unwholesome diet.

Men and women, masters and servants, all inhabit the same room, whilst cleanliness is not much attended to; but poor as they are, and accustomed to great privations, they set an example of cheerful contentment. The beauty of the young girls is remarkable; their fair hair falls in long plaits, partially covered by a black cloth coif, daintily worn on one side of the head, and finished at the top with a tassel of coloured silk run through a silver or steel buckle, which floats on the shoulder. It reminds the traveller of the Greek head-dress; but the blue eyes with their sweet benevolent expression soon recall to his mind their Danish origin. The dress is made of the cloth woven in the country, and on festival days the bodice is gaily adorned with silver braid and velvet, whilst the belt and sleeves are ornamented with silver devices, beautifully chased and often of great value. On wet and cold days the shawl becomes a useful mantilla, completely enveloping the head, and defending the wearer from the effects of the frequent storms.

The people offer the most generous and cordial hospitality to all travellers, and especially to shipwrecked mariners. An opportunity for proving this hospitality once occurred in the open and dangerous bay of the Westre-Horn, surrounded by breakers and reefs. Here forty vessels were fishing on a fine morning in March, when the breeze began to freshen. The cod was abundant, and the men were tempted to stay too near the coast. All the vessels but five doubled the point; these beaten back by the enormous waves, and not daring to raise a sail, were broken on the rocks. Thirty men reached the shore, sixty-six found a watery grave. The *Sea-bird* struggled long, until breaking up, all perished excepting the mate and cabin-boy; the former had received a severe wound in the leg by falling on some broken glass. Tied to the rigging, together they awaited their fate, frozen with cold, the waves washing over them. After three hours the boy expired of exhaustion; and the mate unloosing the ropes was soon thrown on to the shore. The corpses of his friends were lying around him, the survivors having gone inland for shelter; but with great difficulty he followed them, crossing streams and marshes, sinking into ice and snow at every step, his wounded leg torn by the sharp points. Six weary hours were thus passed, when his heartrending cries at length reached two Icelanders, who carried him into a *bær* not far off.

For five months these good people nursed and tended the sufferer. At the end of that time he was still confined to bed, but the healing had begun. A vessel was sent round to bring him away; yet his hosts evinced much sorrow at the prospect of his departure. At their request the captain left him one night longer, when the shipwrecked mariner was escorted to the beach by the whole family, all manifesting a deep emotion. After thanking the father, not only for his care of the survivor, but also for the burial he had given to the victims of the storm, the captain assured him that the French government would indemnify him for the expense he had incurred; but the good man only pressed his hand, declaring that he had done his duty, and deserved neither indemnity, thanks, nor recompense. The Minister of Marine sent a gold medal to him after hearing of his generous conduct.

Robbery, murder, and theft are almost unknown in this peaceful little country; not a soldier or policeman is needed even in the capital Reikiavik; a fact which fully proves the virtues of the Icelanders. Travellers have asserted that the hospitality was not quite so disinterested as it appears, and there may be an exception in certain localities, such as the road to the Geysers,

traversed every year by many tourists. Here the Lutheran ministers offer shelter in their churches, which are transformed into hotels, and provide fish, milk, and coffee for those who need it at a certain charge. Roads are almost unknown; the configuration of the ground wholly prevents their formation. The island has been the scene of such tremendous volcanic action that the mountains are heaped together in the most fantastic manner. From the glaciers which cover the summits of extinct volcanoes rush torrents of water, bringing down the disintegrated rocks to accumulate in the valleys below.

Yet in the midst of these convulsions, Nature does not forget her rights, and wherever a little earth can be found there grows a tuft of grass. Meadows undulating with the rocky ground cover it with a green mantle, and in summer the botanist will find most of the wild-flowers which bloom in our temperate climates. During the winter, the water infiltrating through the soil turns the whole into an impassable marsh, where the unwary traveller may sink into quicksands of the most dangerous character, since there is no exterior sign to denote their existence. In a country whose natural configuration scarcely admits of carriage-roads, ponies are invaluable, their robust constitution defying alike climate and fatigue. Small in size, quiet and patient, they resemble the Corsican or Pyrenean breed. Such is their docility, that the most inexperienced rider may mount without fear, and trust to their instinct in the difficult mountain passes. Three or four thousand are exported yearly into England, where they are used chiefly for coal-mines; and such is the estimation in which they are now held, that their cost has largely increased.

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The eider-duck is one of the most profitable sources of revenue, and strict laws prevent their wanton destruction. A gun is not allowed to be fired near the places they frequent, for fear of alarming them; thus they have become so tame that they allow themselves to be stroked without fear. They choose the islands for their homes—where their deadly enemy the fox cannot reach them—and the steep barren rocks in the fiords. Many of the owners clear a thousand a year by the sale of the down, without any expense. It is scarcely necessary to make laws for the preservation of game, since shooting is a pleasure the Icelanders wholly despise. The curlew, snipe, golden plover, and wild-duck abound, as well as the delicate white partridge; but the natives despise them as food, and prefer smoked or dried salmon, with which their streams abound.

In the middle of August the greater part of the French ships meet in the Faskrud-Fiord before starting home. By this time the snow is beginning to fall and ice to form around the bays. Detached icebergs make their appearance in forms as singular as varied, sometimes resembling fantastic animals or the prow of a ship. The anchors are raised, and the convoy leaves the wintry shore; and anticipations of home once more dawn on the weary fishermen.

THE ADMIRAL'S SECOND WIFE.

CHAPTER VII.—COMING-HOME.

PREPARATIONS for the much-talked-of marriage are pushed on rapidly; and before the spring flowers are making the slopes of Hayes Hill glad with their brightness, the wedding—a very quiet one—takes place. Laura Best is not present, though everybody says how charmingly she has acted towards Katie. She called on the bride-elect, and on the wedding morning a short perfumy note of congratulation and a handsome set of opals arrive as a marriage gift. Sir Herbert is pleased at his daughter's attentions to his bride, and is glad that after all such a friendly feeling has sprung up between them.

The fact is, Laura Best, finding that opposition cannot prevent the marriage, has decided to give it her apparent sanction. Not for worlds would she interfere with the happiness of the wedded pair or throw unpleasantness on their path. So she quietly does all that is needful in the way of proper attention, and then goes home to Hayes Hill to her children and duties there. Yet in secret she bears a heavy heart with her, and mourns over her father's infatuation.

If the Admiral's wedding has been a quiet one, the home-coming is destined to be quite the reverse. The whole town of Seabright wakes up, and great preparations are made to welcome the pair. The ships in the bay are illuminated, flags flutter in the breeze, and bells peal out their jubilant chimes.

Katie smiles proudly to herself as she walks through the lofty apartments of Government House, and feels she is mistress there now. It is pleasant to roam about everywhere, and know that she has the right to do so; pleasant also to stand in the shade of the deep window, and listen to the joyous pealing of the bells, which she knows are pealing for her. Wealth and rank are in her grasp; she has entered on the honours of her new position, and will rule with no timid hand. Self-confident and fearless, she laughs to herself in utter exultation at the warnings, the croakings, the forebodings that a while ago assailed her. Walter Reeves is very angry indeed, when he finds out how unceremoniously he has been set aside; and he is intensely bitter against Katie in the first flush of his disappointment; so doubtless it is fortunate for all concerned that his ship, the *Leo*, is ordered off on a cruise in the Mediterranean. He will be away for nearly twelve months, and surely in that time the most poignant heart-wound may be healed. Besides, change of scene is all-potent in such cases!

As months pass away, Lady Dillworth's tastes rapidly expand and assert themselves; ere long she

becomes the leader of society in Seabright, and the most fashionably dressed woman there. Sir Herbert is generous beyond measure; Katie must not have a wish ungratified, or a desire unfulfilled if he can help it. And so the young wife, loving admiration and homage with a wild passion, basks in them to her heart's content. The semi-official parties at Government House, stately and dignified as they were, rapidly give place to balls and quadrille assemblies, to late hours and overcrowded rooms. The junior officers of the ships rejoice at the change; while the older ones shake their heads ominously, and gradually withdraw themselves from excitements that have no longer any charms for them.

Lady Dillworth is the belle on all occasions. Whether she entertains the company with her rich voice as she sings for them, or delights them with her sparkling conversation, or whirls with some favoured ones through waltz or galop, she is ever the attraction of the evening.

If the Admiral sometimes thinks there is rather too much gaiety, and longs to have Katie now and then all to himself, he does not say so, for he cannot bear to deprive her of any enjoyment on which her heart is set. Often and often during the season, at Katie's old home, sounds of the rattle of carriages come up to the cosy drawing-room, and the lamps flash for a moment on the blinds.

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'There they go—another party at Government House, I suppose!' Mr Grey will say, as he quietly looks up from his books.

'Yes, my dear; Katie is giving a ball to-night, and such a magnificent dress she has got for it! Sir Herbert grudges her nothing.'

'So much the worse for Katie. Spending is an art easily learned; and where in the world *she* gained her education on that point, I am puzzled to know. Not from you, Sarah; you were always economical.'

'Katie's position is different from ours, dear; she must keep it up.'

'But she has no need to keep up such an endless whirl. I wonder the Admiral is not tired to death of it. *I* should be, I know.'

And so, all through the quiet night, husband and wife are roused every now and then from their slumbers by the rattle of passing wheels; and Mrs Grey sighs to herself about Katie's love for excitement, but will not blame her aloud, even to her husband's ears.

CHAPTER VIII.—RETURN OF THE 'LEO.'

December comes round again with its blustering winds and rude gales; there is every prospect of a spell of rough weather, and Captain Walter Reeves looks with intense satisfaction at his gallant ship the *Leo*, again riding securely at her anchor in Seabright Bay.

A season on shore just now, when festivities are about to commence, is in his idea far preferable to being tossed about on a squally sea or cruising about from port to port; so he congratulates himself on being ordered home. He hears of the gay doings at Government House, and how Katie is the reigning belle of Seabright; and he listens placidly, without one throb of emotion. Time has proved a panacea. He has no pang of regret that Sir Herbert is the husband of this very attractive woman of fashion, instead of himself. As a matter of duty, he is on his way to call at Government House, when outside a fashionable shop in one of the streets he sees a well-appointed carriage drawn up, and in it he catches a glimpse of a well-known form and face. An obsequious shopman is standing on the edge of the curb-stone displaying some articles of bijouterie; a coachman in dark livery, with a black cockade in his hat, is holding the reins. It *is* Lady Dillworth. There is no mistaking her imperial manner, as she speaks out in that slightly commanding voice; neither is there any mistaking her handsome face, her brilliant eyes, her dark coronal of hair, as she sits there in her proud beauty. Walter, as he crosses the street, takes note of her velvet, her sealskin, and the feathers and the damask rosebuds in her bonnet, and thinks all this suits the Admiral's wife very well. He hears her say to the shopman: 'The price is eight guineas, you say. Are the stones real?'

'Yes, my Lady; and they are very fine and well set. You are the first to whom I have had the honour of shewing them.'

'Send one of them to Government House. Or stay,' adds she musingly—'I want another for a present for a friend; so you may send me two bouquet-holders.'

'Sixteen guineas for such rubbish as that! I'm very glad the money comes out of the Admiral's purse, and not out of mine. A poor Commander's exchequer would not stand many such attacks as that,' thinks Walter, rather ungallantly, as he now greets the occupant of the carriage.

Katie is surprised to see him, and says so as she holds out her daintily gloved hand. 'I had no idea the *Leo* had returned. Have you been long here?'

'I arrived only last night, and am on my way to Government House.'

'How unfortunate there is no one at home! Sir Herbert went to Belton Park this morning, and I am on my way to the station to meet a friend who is coming to stay with me. By-the-by, you know the young lady—Liddy Delmere. Do you remember her?'

'Isn't she very pretty and a blonde?'

'Yes; she has both those attractions.'

'And doesn't she sing nicely?'

'O yes! Liddy can sing if she likes; and her voice is not a bad soprano,' replies Lady Dillworth with one of her brightest smiles.

'Then I'm sure I've often met her at your house in former days.'

'You had better come and refresh your memory this evening. We shall be quite alone, and very pleased to see you at Government House.'

Captain Reeves is of course delighted to meet Lady Dillworth on such friendly terms. He accepts the impromptu invitation at once.

The past, with its shadows and disappointments and jealousies, is gone for ever. Better now to banish every recollection of it from his heart, and meet Katie on an entirely new footing.

As if by tacit understanding, they both decide this is the wisest plan. They meet and separate as mere every-day acquaintances. Nothing can be more unembarrassed than her ladyship's smile as she acknowledges Walter's parting bow, and drives off, to the admiration of the staring urchins in the street.

'Quite alone' is a mere relative term with Lady Dillworth; for when the footman throws open the drawing-room door on that evening to announce Captain Reeves, the latter sees the room is already half full of guests. Katie stands near the piano; her dark velvet dress falls in sweeping folds, unbroken by flounce or trimming; the beautiful set of opals—her step-daughter's wedding present—shine out with a subdued light from neck, arms, and breast. Beside her is Liddy Delmere, who in her bright blue silk dress, and with her sunny hair tied with ribbons of the same azure tint, forms a contrast to her hostess, in which neither loses.

Ere long, Walter finds himself seated beside Miss Delmere, for they have renewed their acquaintanceship with mutual satisfaction, and plunge at once into discursive recollections of the past.

'We had some pleasant times together in the days long ago,' begins Walter.

'O yes; I remember meeting you several times at Mrs Grey's, also at a picnic on Bushby Plain, and at a gipsy party. Hadn't we capital fun sometimes?' {666}

'Yes, really. What a pity these happy days are over. We never can recall those bright fresh hours, when the heart gilds everything with a magic glamour.'

'Speak for yourself, Captain Reeves! For *my* part, I enjoy things as much as ever I did; and my heart "gilds" a good deal still. Do tell me some of your adventures. What have you been doing all the months you were away?'

'Nothing worth relating. I neither discovered a desert island nor a new race of savages. I really have no wonders to narrate.'

'How marvellous! The very lack of incidents makes the thing curious. Now, if *I* had been cruising about in the *Leo* for months, I should have gleaned materials enough for at least two volumes of travels.'

'Ah! you ladies draw largely on the imagination. My experience is just this: I went away from England last spring; I return again in time for the Christmas pudding.'

'You sailors are all alike. I never met one yet who could give me the merest sketch of his voyage—all seems a blank, but the going and returning,' Liddy asserts laughingly.

'We had some nice balls at Malta,' replies Walter, rousing himself with a sudden recollection.

'Had you? Who gave them?'

'Sometimes *we* did; and crowds of the prettiest girls I ever saw, came.'

'Very flattering to the givers.'

'Oh, I wish you could see the *Auberge de Provence* when it is made ready for a ball; it looks just like a fairy scene. The old knights of Provence would never recognise the place if they could return to take a peep at it. As one passes through the hall, it appears like an orange grove; the trees are full of golden fruit and fragrant blossoms; and clusters of coloured lamps shine out like rubies through the green leaves.'

Walter is fairly launched into his subject now; one recollection speedily calls up another, till Liddy and he grow eloquent, and enjoy themselves amazingly.

He begins describing some musical charades they 'got up' at Malta.

'How nice they must be! But I can't quite understand them.'

'We merely take a word, divide it, and make our singing descriptive of the parts, instead of acting them out. For instance, take Ravenswood.'

'A sweet word, particularly if one has to croak out a raven chorus! Oh, I should like that extremely!' laughs Liddy.

'Ah, no; you don't catch my meaning. We make quite a grand affair of it, have a drop-scene, on which birds and trees are painted, and our illustrations are from the opera of *Lucia di Lammermoor*.'

'Quite a musical drama on a small scale, I declare! I wish we could get up something of the sort here. I'll ask Lady Dillworth about it. And here she comes.'

Katie walks over, looking rather amused at the evident good understanding between Liddy and

Walter, as they thus interchange recollections with much *empressement*. She seats herself beside them, and the subject is discussed in all its points. Lady Dillworth enters into it with impulsive eagerness. Already she is longing for something new and fresh, something that will cause a sensation among the 'upper ten' at Seabright.

Several other guests join them, and ere long an animated group of people are professing willingness to aid such a charming scheme; anything novel is so attractive to those whose whole life is excitement. Walter takes the initiative at once.

'I have all the music we need. The bandmaster of the 25th arranged it for me with the songs, duets, and choruses. It's capital for drawing-room practice, if we can only get enough performers.'

Everybody is ready to join, so the *rôle* is settled on the spot. Walter is to be Edgar; Liddy, Lucy Ashton. But here the young lady enters a protest.

'I don't wish to be Lucy. If you want me, you must let me be Lucy's mother. I make a splendid old woman.'

'Then who will be the unfortunate bride?—Will you, Lady Dillworth?' asks Major Dillon, turning towards her.

'O yes, if Miss Delmere objects.'

So it is settled. Walter infects the whole party with his eagerness. Scenes, music, costumes, and arrangements are talked over; and Katie is all anxiety to carry out the plans with due effect. Walter is to bring on shore the music-scroll and sketches of the costume; and the intended performers are invited to meet him to-morrow morning at Government House, for the first rehearsal.

'Now *that* affair is settled, we'll have some music,' Katie says, as she rises and goes towards the piano. Walter follows her. 'Have you forgotten all your songs, Captain Reeves?'

'O no. How could I? *You* taught me most of them,' he replies.

'Will you try one now?'

'Don't ask me to sing a solo. I should break down at once; but if you will allow me to join you in a duet, I'll try to manage it.'

Katie turns over a book of manuscript music, and they fix on *Then and Now*.

'The words are dreadfully stupid, but the air is pretty,' asserts Lady Dillworth, as she runs over the prelude:

We heard the tower bells pealing
On that soft summer night,
Your hand was linked with mine, love;
Your heart, like mine, was light.
We whispered low together
Of that hope and of this;
While far above, the joyous bells
Seemed echoes of our bliss.

Again those bells are pealing;
We hear them now, and sigh;
No longer can their chimes, love,
Blend with our thoughts of joy.
Our lives for aye are parted;
And on the wintry air,
Those crashing sounds but haunt us now,
Like echoes of despair.

The two voices ring harmoniously and plaintively through the rooms. One could almost imagine the singers are actually using the 'past to give pathos' to the words. But nothing is further from their thoughts. Katie is only deciding that, after all, Walter's voice will 'do' with hers in the duets of the charade; and Walter is wishing—just a little—that Miss Delmere had retained the part of Lucy, as at first proposed.

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ELECTRICITY AS A LIGHT-PRODUCER.

IT has long been the opinion of scientific people that in electricity we have a power the development of which is only at present in its infancy. The marvellous details of our telegraphic system constantly remind us that there is a mysterious fluid round about us which can to a certain extent be made subservient and obedient to the will of man. This familiarity with that which would a few centuries ago have been stigmatised as the outcome of sorcery, has led the ignorant to place a blind belief in its powers. The subtle fluid has in fact taken the place of the necromancer's wand, and is believed by many to be capable of anything or everything. The electrician is thus credited with much that does not of right belong to his domain, and the wildest

speculations are occasionally indulged in as to what next he will do for us. That electricity will prove of far more extended use than the present state of knowledge allows, we all have vague anticipations, and among these is the reasonable hope that it will some day supersede coal-gas as a means of artificial illumination. We propose, by a brief review of the present position of electrical research, to point out how far such a hope is justified by facts.

Sir Humphry Davy was the first to discover that when the terminal wires of a powerful electric battery were furnished with carbon-points and brought into such a position that they almost touched, the space between them became bridged over with a dazzling arc of light. The excessive cost of producing this light (owing to the rapid consumption of the metal-plates and acids which together form the battery-power) rendered it for a long time almost inapplicable to any other purpose than that of lecture-room demonstration. But it was evident to all that a means of illumination so nearly approaching in its intensity the light of the sun, would, if practicable, be of immense value to society at large. Apart from its cost, there were many other hindrances to its ready adoption. The incandescent carbon-points—which we may here remark are cut from a hard form of gas-coke—were found to waste away unequally. Some plan had therefore to be hit upon of not only replacing them at certain intervals, but also, in view of this inequality of consumption, of preserving their relative distance the one from the other; otherwise the light they gave became intermittent and irregular. These difficulties were met by employing clock-work as a regulator, and more recently by a train of wheelwork and magnets set in motion by the current itself. These arrangements naturally led to complications, which required the constant supervision of skilled operators, and the coveted light was necessarily confined to uses of a special nature where the question of cost and trouble was unimportant.

The use of the battery for the electric light has for some years been almost entirely superseded by the magneto-electric machine. The construction of this machine is based upon Faraday's discovery, that when a piece of soft iron inclosed in a coil of metal wire is caused to pass by the poles of a magnet, an electric current is produced in the wire. The common form of this machine consists of a number of such iron cores so arranged upon a revolving cylinder that in continual succession they fly past a number of stationary horse-shoe magnets placed in a frame round its circumference. By a piece of mechanism called a commutator, the various small streams of electricity thus induced are collected together into one powerful current. This invention forms one of the most advanced steps in the history of the electric light. But although it produces electricity without the consumption of metal involved in the battery system, another element of cost comes into view in the expense of the steam-power necessary to work it; besides which the original outlay is considerable.

In the year 1853 a Company was formed at Paris for producing (by the aid of some large magneto-electric machines) gas for combustion, by the decomposition of water. The Company failed to produce gas, and what was perhaps more to the annoyance of the subscribers, they failed also to shew any dividends, and the expensive machines were voted impostors. However, an Englishman, Mr Holms, succeeded in turning them to better account, and eventually produced by their aid a light of great power. Mr Wilde of Manchester was another worker in the same field; and improved machines were soon introduced to public notice by both gentlemen. A few years after, the South Foreland and Dungeness lighthouses were provided with experimental lights. (The first-named headland had previously been furnished with an oxyhydrogen or lime light, a source of illumination which is also open to the same objections of requiring constant attention and renewal.)

It is a matter of surprise to most visitors to the South Foreland lighthouse to find that a small factory and staff of men are necessary to keep the electric apparatus in working order. The extent of the establishment is partly explained by the fact that, in case of a breakdown of any part of the apparatus, everything is kept in duplicate. Hence there are two ten horse-power steam-engines, and a double set of magneto-electric machines, although only half that number are in actual use at one time. The old oil-lamps are also kept ready, in view of the improbable event of both sets of electrical apparatus going wrong.

Although lighthouses were the first places to which electrical illumination was applied, there are many other purposes for which that species of light is invaluable. One of the chief of these is its use in submarine operations. Unlike other lights, being quite independent of atmospheric air or any kind of gas for its support, and merely requiring an attachment of a couple of gutta-percha-covered wires for its connection with the source of electricity (which may be at a considerable distance from the place of combustion), it is specially applicable to the use of divers. The importance of a means of brilliantly lighting the work of those engaged in clearing wreck or laying the foundations of subaqueous structures cannot be over-estimated. There is another service too in which we may hope some day to see it commonly employed: we mean as a source of light to our miners. For this purpose, the burner could be placed in a thick glass globe hermetically closed; in fact the globe might even be exhausted of air, for experiments prove that the light is in several respects improved when burnt in a vacuum! The danger of fire-damp explosion would by this means be almost altogether obviated; for unless the glass were broken (and abundant means suggest themselves for protecting it), no communication could be made between the light and the gas-laden air of the mine. As a means of night-signalling, the electric light can also be profitably applied. This can be done by an alphabet of flashes of varying duration; the readiness with which the light can be extinguished and rekindled by the mere touch of a wire, rendering it peculiarly adapted for such a purpose; while the distance at which it can be seen is perhaps only limited by the convexity of the earth. Several of Her Majesty's ships are now being fitted with the electric light, which is to serve both for signalling purposes, and as a

precautionary measure against the attack of torpedo-boats. For military field operations a brilliant light is often useful; and an electrical apparatus is in actual use by one of the belligerents in the present war. In this case, the light is doubtless worked by an electric battery, as a steam-engine is hardly a convenient addition to the impedimenta of a moving column.

Having called our readers' attention to the several special public uses for which the electric light is available, we may now consider how far it can serve us for the more common wants of everyday life. In its crude state as we have described it, governed by such a touchy thing as clock-work, it could not possibly compete with gas for ordinary purposes. But one or two improvements have within the last few months been made, which have led many to hope that the day is not far distant when the light will become common in our streets, if not in our houses.

These improvements are two in number. The one is a plan whereby the electric current can be subdivided so as to serve a number of different lights, and the other is an improvement in the arrangement of the burner. The first-mentioned invention seems most certainly to bring the system more on a par with gas-lighting, only that wires take the place of pipes. But the second offers features of a more novel character. The carbons, instead of being placed point to point, one above the other, as in the old system, are put side by side and made into a kind of candle. The carbons therefore represent a double wick; while the portion of the candle usually made of tallow is made of kaolin, a form of white clay used in the manufacture of porcelain. The points are thus kept at a fixed distance apart; and as they burn, they vitrify the kaolin between them, which both checks their waste and adds, by its incandescence, to the light produced. The old difficulty of keeping the carbons apart by the aid of clock-work, therefore disappears. The invention of this 'electric candle' is due to a Russian engineer, M. Jablochhoff. Another plan which is also credited to the same inventor is that of doing away with the carbon-points altogether, and substituting for them a thin plate of kaolin. The light produced is said to be softer, steadier, and more constant than that obtained by any previous method. Successful experiments with M. Jablochhoff's invention both in France and England have shewn it to be readily applicable to many purposes. It was lately tried at the West India Docks, London, where its power of illuminating large areas for the purpose (among others) of unloading ships by night, was fully demonstrated. Moreover, its portability is such that it can be carried into the depths of a ship's hold. We may mention as a result of these experiments, that the various gas companies' shares have been depreciated to a considerable extent.

Meanwhile, improvements in the magneto-electric machine have not been wanting; Siemens in England and Gramme in France have succeeded in obtaining intense currents from machines far less bulky than those of the old pattern. But still steam-power is required to set them in motion, and until this is obviated, we cannot expect that the electric light can become really available for more general use. The inventors claim that their method of illumination is, for the amount of light obtained, far cheaper than any other known, pleading that one burner is equal to one hundred gas-lights. But we must remember that for ordinary purposes this amount of light is far beyond our needs. In factories where steam-power is already available, and where the light would supersede a large number of gas-burners, it can of course be employed with profit. Indeed we learn that at several large workshops in different parts of France the light is in actual use with the best results. Some of the railway stations both there and in Belgium are also making arrangements for its immediate adoption.

The problem, however, which has now to be solved is, whether the light can be made available for domestic purposes. We fear that the necessary motive-power presents an insuperable objection; for although, as we have explained, one engine will feed a certain number of lights, it will bear no comparison in this respect with the capabilities of a small gas-holder. Besides which, a man would have far more difficulty and expense in starting a steam-engine in his back-garden than he would have (as is commonly done in country districts) in founding a small gas-factory for the supply of his premises. Without losing sight of the benefits which coal-gas has given us, we may hope that it is not the last and best kind of artificial illumination open to us. It blackens our ceilings and walls; it spoils our books and pictures, besides robbing our dwellings of oxygen, and giving us instead a close and unhealthy atmosphere. The combustion of electricity is on the other hand, as we have already shewn, *independent of any supply of air*; and instead of vitiating the atmosphere, it adds to it a supply of that sea-side luxury ozone, which may truly be said to be 'recommended by the faculty.' Besides these advantages, it can be used without any sensible rise of temperature. Another great advantage which its use secures is its actinic qualities, which would enable artists and all whose work depends upon a correct appreciation of colours, to be independent of daylight.

In conclusion, we may say that, beyond the special uses for the electric light which we have enumerated, and for which it has by experience been found practicable, we see no likelihood of its more general adoption until two requisites are discovered. The one is a substance that will, without wasting away and requiring constant renewal, act as an incandescent burner; and the other is a cheap and ready method of obtaining the electric fluid. For the former we know not where to look, for even the hardest diamond disappears under contact with the electric poles. But with regard to the latter, we cannot help thinking how, many years ago, Franklin succeeded by the aid of a kite-string in drawing electricity from the clouds. Is it too much to hope that other philosophers may discover some means not only of obtaining the luminous fluid from the same source, but of storing it up for the benefit of all?

JAPANESE WRESTLERS.

It is a fine clear day in February; and the bright sun shining without a cloud to impede his rays, lights up the hull of H.M.S. *Lyre*, swinging lazily round her anchors in Yokohama Bay. Scarcely a ripple can be seen on the surface of the water, and numberless boats are darting to and fro, conveying passengers from the various ships to the shore. On board the corvette the blue-jackets and marines are reclining about the fore-castle smoking and sewing, for it is Thursday afternoon, the day set apart in English men-of-war for the men to make and mend their clothes; a concession which Jack values the more for the privilege of smoking all the afternoon which accompanies it. Clearly it is not a day for any one to remain cooped up in a ship, who is not detained there by duty. So think we officers; for most of us have shifted into plain clothes, and are ready to go ashore. The officer of the afternoon watch, who is endeavouring to beguile the weary four hours he has to spend on deck by levelling his spyglass at every object far and near, looks gloomily at a party of us getting into a sampan, and remarks, with a view to cheering us up, that the glass is falling rapidly, and he expects dirty weather before the night; *he* wouldn't go ashore if he could, &c. But we have been at sea too long to be persuaded out of anything by a little chaff; so with a parting joke at sour grapes, we get into the crazy little sampan, and manage to seat ourselves without capsizing her, a work of some little difficulty. The four half-naked, muscular little fellows who form our crew work their long sculls with great vigour, keeping time to the beat of the unwieldy oars with a shrill monotonous chant, whose burden is 'Go ashore! go ashore!'

It is a glorious view that lies before us on that bright winter day. The long esplanade, or *bund*, that fringes the shore is lined with the tall white houses of the foreign settlement, to the southward of which is the beautiful wooded hill called the Bluff, the white cliffs of which are dazzlingly bright in the sunlight. The bungalows of the foreign residents are for the most part on the Bluff, each house inclosed in its own beautiful grounds; and here too, about two miles from the settlement, is the race-course, an invariable accompaniment to any large gathering of Englishmen in the East. Yokohama itself lies in a valley between the Bluff on the one hand and the Kanagawa hills on the other; but inland rises range after range of lofty mountains, and towering far above everything is the snow-capped crest of Fusi-yama, the 'peerless' mountain of Japan, which is forty-five miles distant from the bay where our ship is lying. Fusi-yama is a volcano in the shape of a truncated cone, but no eruption has taken place for more than a century; a fortunate thing for the country, as fifty thousand people are said to have perished at its last great outbreak, which almost destroyed the capital, Yeddo. Shocks of earthquake are very frequent, though slight, in Yokohama and the neighbouring town, Kanagawa; in fact, most of Japan is subject to these volcanic disturbances, which occasionally cause great damage. It is on this account that the houses are built generally of such slight materials, as they can endure shocks which would infallibly overthrow any building constructed after the European fashion. In the summer, when the snow has melted from the top of Fusi-yama, bands of pilgrims dressed in white, who have come from all parts of the empire to worship the peerless mountain, throng in great numbers along the roads at its base. At this season the ascent is often accomplished by foreigners for the sake of the magnificent view which is obtained from the summit on a clear day; though whether it is worth while going through so much to obtain so little is of course a matter of opinion. Many people will tell you they go up for the sake of saying they have been there, forgetting that any one who has not been there can as easily say the same thing. For my own part I never could see the object of climbing a mountain only to come down again on the other side, and therefore in my numerous excursions into the interior of Japan, I gave Fusi-yama a wide berth. Ponies are usually employed by those who believe in the merits of four legs as compared to two; and the deep ashes which cover the upper part of the mountain render this mode of ascent preferable to the severe labour of climbing on foot. The weather is so clear on the day in question that the deep gullies down the sides can be easily traced by the naked eye as we are pulling ashore.

While we have been admiring the beauties of the scene, our sampan has passed round the projecting arm of the English Hatoba, a stone jetty which protects the landing-place from the heavy swell which often sets into the bay; so we land and make our way to the bund with some difficulty, owing to the crowd of coolies who are passing to and from the merchants' godowns with heavy packages slung on bamboo poles between two men. Now comes the question, how are we to pass our time? for amusements are somewhat limited in a small settlement like Yokohama. To be sure, we can go to the club and play billiards or bowls or read the papers; but the afternoon is so fine that it seems a pity to waste it indoors. We might spend a few hours very pleasantly in the Benten Doré, a street filled with shops for the sale of lacquer-work and curiosities of different sorts; but unfortunately it is nearly the end of the month, and I need scarcely tell any one acquainted with the manners and customs of naval officers that our dollars have grown small by degrees and beautifully less, and we are anxiously waiting for pay-day.

The most popular idea seems to be to walk round the race-course to Mississippi Bay, on the south side of the Bluff, the favourite drive of the Yokohama ladies; but just as we have resolved on this, a man passes making some proclamation in a high sing-song tone, which seems to meet with general approval from the natives. On inquiring, we find that he is announcing the arrival of the champion troupe of wrestlers, who intend giving a performance that afternoon on a piece of waste land just outside the boundaries of the foreign settlement. Nothing could have happened more apropos; so jumping into some of the odd-looking little hand-carriages which ply for hire in great numbers about the streets of most Japanese towns, we are rattled along the streets at a rapid rate by the active little drivers, who seem to possess the enviable faculty of never tiring, for they trot along as gaily at the end of a thirty miles' run over indifferent roads, as when they

started. On arriving at our destination, we find numbers of natives on the same errand, 'gaily dressed in their Sunday best,' entering an inclosure which has been hastily made out of long bamboos covered with matting, to keep out the too curious eyes that would gaze at the performance gratis. A payment of a quarter *bu* each (about threepence in English money) admits us to the interior, which presents a very striking scene. Round the sides of the large inclosure are numerous bamboo stages, crowded with the wealthier class of natives and a few foreigners; while in the amphitheatre some thousands of people are assembled, many of them women, whose gay robes set off their attractions to perfection.

Every one has his holiday face on, and the ceremonious politeness which usually characterises the meeting of any Japanese, has for the time given place to mirth and gaiety. Itinerant vendors of cakes and sweets ply their trade among the crowd with much apparent success; and here and there is a stall for the sale of *saki*, a strong spirit brewed from rice, and much resembling inferior sherry in the taste and smell. There is a total absence of intoxication, and I may say very few drunken men are ever to be seen about the streets. By the time we have mounted a stage, and settled down on the chairs a neatly dressed *musūme* (young girl) has procured for us, the performances are about to commence, and a man is giving out the names of the first pair of wrestlers.

In the centre of the amphitheatre a mound has been raised, on which a ring has been formed by banking up the earth to the height of a few inches. Two grave-looking elderly men, apparently the judges, now seat themselves upon mats on the mound, and unfurling their paper umbrellas, light their pipes, and commence smoking in dignified composure; while the two wrestlers doff their *kimonos* (robes) and enter the ring perfectly naked but for a cloth round the loins. They are very far removed from our idea of what an athlete ought to be, for though muscular, they have an ungainly heaviness of figure. Weight is indeed thought of such importance in these contests that men are fattened for them like prize cattle, under the mistaken belief that such size is an advantage to the fortunate possessor!

A tedious preliminary performance has to be gone through before the actual business of wrestling commences. Each man comes to the centre of the ring, and squatting down in front of his antagonist, raises each leg in turn, and then brings it down heavily on the ground, at the same time striking his thigh smartly with his open hand. I suppose this is meant as a sort of challenge; but it has an extremely ludicrous effect, at least to foreigners, to see two very fat men so employing themselves. Both men now quit the ring and take a draught of water and a pinch of salt, while they rub their arms and hands with mud, in order that they may get a better hold of each other's naked body. At length they re-enter the ring, and the real struggle now begins. They squat in front of each other like two huge frogs and strike their hands together, at the same time uttering a curious hissing noise, which gets louder and louder till they suddenly fly at each other like angry cats. Heavy blows and slaps are exchanged freely in the effort to close, but umpires are behind each shouting out cautions at any attempted infringement of the rules on either side. When they have fairly got hold of each other many a cunning feint and twist is shewn, and the struggling bodies and limbs entwine so rapidly that the pair look like one gigantic octopus. At length the bout is concluded by one man being hurled bodily out of the ring into the crowd outside, and the cheering from the excited spectators is absolutely deafening. The victor stalks about the ring for some time in great dignity, receiving the congratulations of his friends, and then repeats his former challenge, striking his thighs heavily and crowing like a bantam cock. Another wrestler, nothing daunted, at once comes forward to try his fortune; while the vanquished combatant, who has picked himself up amidst a running fire of chaff from the unsympathising crowd, resumes his *kimono* with an assumed air of indifference and vanishes behind the spectators.

Three men in succession did the first victor overthrow before he found a foeman worthy of his grip; but he too in turn soon succumbed to a fresh challenger. The judges during all the confusion maintained their seats in great dignity, and smoked away with quiet unconcern while the wrestlers strove and kicked beside them. Their office seemed to be to settle any disputes; but it was almost a sinecure, as I saw hardly any during the afternoon, everything being conducted with perfect fairness and good-humour. All the hard work seemed to be done by the umpires, who were dancing about each combatant in a perfect state of frenzy, and their repeated screams of 'Anatta! anatta!' (Sir! sir!) when any unfair movement was attempted on either side, soon reduced their voices to mere croaks. To win a round, a man had either to lay his opponent flat on the ground or thrust him out of the ring. Several of the first bouts we witnessed were decided in the latter manner, a heavy man driving his antagonist clean out of the circle by the weight and impetus of his first assault. Any method whatever seemed to be allowed in catching hold; I saw one man win a heat by dexterously catching his opponent by the scruff of the neck and jamming his head on the ground, the whole body perforce following suit. This seemed to be regarded as a sort of 'fool's mate,' for I noticed that the loser was much laughed at; and although the same manœuvre was attempted several times afterwards, it was never successful.

The light weights had their contest first; and then came the middle weights, if such a term can be applied to men of fifteen stone at least. But the real event of the day was the concluding struggle between the champions, about a dozen in number, who would have passed muster in any assembly where height and strength were the test. Not one of them was under six feet in height, and most of them were considerably over; one gigantic fellow must have been nearly seven feet. All of them were disfigured by the same inordinate amount of flesh; but the muscles of the arms and legs were very powerfully developed, and the activity displayed in spite of their enormous size was something marvellous. In one severe contest the gigantic champion threw a lesser

athlete clear out of the ring on to the heads of the spectators below, overwhelming one of the unfortunate judges in the transit. The latter, however, soon arose, gave himself a shake, and resumed his pipe and seat, apparently none the worse for his rude shock.

The final contest of the day, which took place just before dusk, was between our friend the giant and the next biggest of the band; and after a severe struggle, ended in the former being thrown as scientifically as ever I wished to see. The earth shook with the violence of the fall; but the vanquished hero picked himself up at once, and with a good-humoured laugh at his opponent, resumed his *kimono*; and the sports were concluded.

Not the least amusing part of the afternoon's amusement was afforded by a blue-jacket on leave from the *Lyre*, who threw his cap into the ring, and wanted to try conclusions with the biggest man of the party for a few dollars. A long and amusing conversation took place between the sailor and the natives; but the challenge was not accepted, so Jack put on his hat and walked jauntily away. He was a tall powerful man, and I daresay could have held his own against the giant himself, in spite of his inferiority of weight; for it is a well-known fact that the enormous amount of flesh cultivated by the Japanese wrestlers stands seriously in their way when opposed to a foreigner in good condition. It is not very many years ago that a shining light of the English Church in the East came to Japan and astonished the natives by throwing some of their best men. No doubt, before many years, the Japanese, who are very quick at seizing any new idea, will perceive the folly of feeding their athletes to such a size, and follow the English system of training. A very noticeable feature about these contests was the perfect good-humour with which they were conducted, not a single man losing his temper, in spite of the heavy blows and cuffs which were exchanged with great vigour before closing with each other. While discussing the afternoon's amusement, we walked to the bund in the twilight, and a twelve-oared cutter soon took us on board in time for dinner. Next morning at daylight we were under weigh for Hong-kong.

SHAMROCK LEAVES.

A WAKE.

TIM SCANLAN, while he lived, was only a labouring man; but he was well liked in the country; and it was expected that his funeral would be an unusually large gathering. Crowds flocked to the wake, and a great provision of tea, whisky, pipes, and tobacco had been made. The widow occupied her post of honour at the head of the coffin, and displayed a fair show of grief, joining in with vociferous weeping whenever the 'keening' was led by the older women. She was young enough to have been the dead man's daughter, having come to his house a 'slip' of a servant-girl, whom he had married and ruled over very masterfully.

As the night wore on, the whisky began to tell on those outside the room where the corpse lay. The noise increased, and soon apparently became loud enough to 'wake the dead,' as the saying is; for to the consternation and amazement of every one present, the defunct, after a deep sigh and sundry groans, opened his eyes and struggled up into a sitting posture. When the startled company had recovered from the shock, poor Tim was lifted out of the coffin; whisky was liberally poured down his throat; and well wrapped up in blankets and seated in the big chair by the fire, he gradually revived from the trance or stupor that had been mistaken for death. The last of the guests had departed from the cabin, and Tim, still propped up before the fire, was left to the care of his wife. Instead of coming near him however, she slunk off, cringing timidly away into a dark corner behind his chair, whence she directed frightened glances at her resuscitated spouse.

'Mary!' said the man in a stern voice.

No answer.

'Are you there?' peering round, his face quivering with anger and weakness.

'Yis, Tim, I'm here,' faltered Mary, without stirring.

'Bring me my stick.'

'Ah, no, Tim; no! Sure you never rose yer hand to me yet! And 'tisn't now, when you're all as one as come back from the dead, that'—

'Bring me my stick.'

The stick was brought, and down on her knees beside the big chair flopped the cowering wife.

'Well you know what you desarve. Well you know, you young thief o' the world! that if I was to take and beat you this blessed minute as black as a mourning-coach, 'twould be only sarving you right, after the mean, dirty, shameful turn you've done me!'

'It would, it would!' sobbed the girl.

'Look here!' gasped Tim, opening his breast and shewing an old tattered shirt. 'Look at them rags! Look at what you dressed up my poor corpse in; shaming me before all the decent neighbours at the wake! An' you knowing as well as I did about the elegant brand-new shirt I'd bought o' purpose for my berrin; a shirt I wouldn't have put on my living back—no, not if I had gone naked in my skin! You knew I had it there in the chest laid up; and you grudged it to my unfortunate carcase when I couldn't spake up for myself!'

'O Tim, darlin', forgive me!' cried Mary. 'Forgive me this once, and on my two knees I promise never, never to do the likes again! I don't know what came over me at all. Sure, I think, the devil—Lord save us!—must have been at my elbow when I went to get out the shirt; tempting me, and whispering that it was a pity and a sin to put good linen like that into the clay. Oh, how could I do it at all?'

'Now, hearken to me, Mary;' and Tim raised the stick and laid it on her shoulder. She knew he wouldn't beat her even if he could with his trembling hands; but she pretended to wince and cower away. 'Mind what I say. As sure as you do me the like turn again, and go for to dress me in those undacent rags, I tell you what I'll do—I'll *walk*.'

'O don't, Tim, don't!' shrieked Mary, as pale as ashes. 'Murder me now, if it's plazing to you, or do anything to me you like; but for the love of the blessed Vargin and all the Saints, keep in yer grave! I'll put the new shirt on you; my two hands 'll starch it and make it up as white as snow, after lying by so long in the old chest. Yer corpse will look lovely, niver fear! And I'll give you the grandest wake that iver man had, even if I had to sell the pig, and part with every stick in the cabin to buy the tay and the whisky. I swear to you I will, darlin'. There's my hand on it, this blessed night!'

'Well, mind you do, or 'twill be worse for you. And now give me a drop of wather to drink, and put a taste of sperrits through it; for I'm like to faint with thirst and with weakness.'

Mary kept her promise; for such a wake was never remembered as Tim Scanlan's, when, soon after, the poor man really did depart this life. And the 'get up' of the 'elegant brand-new shirt' in which the corpse was arrayed, was the admiration of all beholders.

CARRIER-PIGEONS.

THE value of these birds as carriers of messages was interestingly demonstrated at the siege of Paris, as it used to be in the French war seventy years ago, before the invention of the electric telegraph. It now appears that carrier-pigeons may be employed with advantage in taking messages from boats engaged in the Scottish herring-fisheries, when no species of telegraph is available. The following notice of the fact occurs in the *Fishing Gazette*:

'The experiment which was tried last year of employing carrier-pigeons for the purpose of bringing early intelligence each morning from the fishing-ground of the results of the night's labour, is again being resorted to this season, and with the most satisfactory results. One of the birds is taken out in each boat in the afternoon; and after the nets have been hauled on the following morning and the extent of the catch ascertained, the pigeon is despatched with a small piece of parchment tied round its neck, containing information as to the number of crans on board, the position of the boat, the direction of the wind, and the prospects of the return journey, &c. If there is not wind to take the boat back, or if it is blowing in an unfavourable direction, a request is made for a tug; and from the particulars given as to the bearings of the craft, she can be picked up easily by the steamer. The other advantages of the system are that, when the curers are apprised of the quantity of herrings they may expect, they can make preparations for expediting the delivering and curing of the fish. Most of the pigeons belong to Messrs Moir and Son, Aberdeen. When let off from the boats, the birds invariably circle three times round overhead, and then sweep away towards the land with great rapidity, generally flying at the rate of about a mile per minute. Two superior birds in Messrs Moir's possession have occasionally come a distance of twenty or twenty-five miles in as many minutes; and on Tuesday one of these pigeons came home sixteen miles in the same number of minutes. Another of Messrs Moir's pigeons flew on board the *Heatherbell* on Tuesday afternoon off the Girdleness, bearing a slip of paper containing the intelligence that the boat from which it had been despatched at 11.54 had a cargo of twenty-five barrels of herrings. The pigeons require very little training, and soon know where to land with their message. A cot has been fitted up on the roof of Messrs Moir's premises at the quay for the accommodation of the birds, and they invariably alight there on their return from sea.'

According to the London newspapers, there was lately an amusing experiment to test the flight of carrier-pigeons against the speed of a railway train. The following is the account given of this curious race, which took place on the 13th July: 'The race was from Dover to London between the continental mail express train and a carrier-pigeon conveying a document of an urgent nature from the French police. The pigeon, which was bred by Messrs Hartley and Sons of Woolwich, and "homed" when a few weeks old to a building in Cannon Street, City, was of the best breed of homing pigeons, known as "Belgian voyageurs." The bird was tossed through the railway carriage window by a French official as the train moved from the Admiralty Pier, the wind being west and the atmosphere hazy, but with the sun shining. For upwards of a minute the carrier-pigeon circled round to an altitude of about half a mile, and then sailed away towards London. By this time the train, which carried the European mails, and was timed not to stop between Dover and Cannon Street, had got up to full speed, and was proceeding at the rate of sixty miles an hour towards London. The odds at starting seemed against the bird; and the railway officials predicted that the little messenger would be beaten in the race. The pigeon, however, as soon as it ascertained its bearings, took the nearest homeward route in a direction midway between Maidstone and Sittingbourne, the distance "as the crow flies" between Dover and London being seventy miles, and by rail seventy-six and a half miles. When the continental mail express came

into Cannon Street station, the bird had been home twenty minutes; having beaten Her Majesty's royal mail by a time allowance representing eighteen miles.'

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