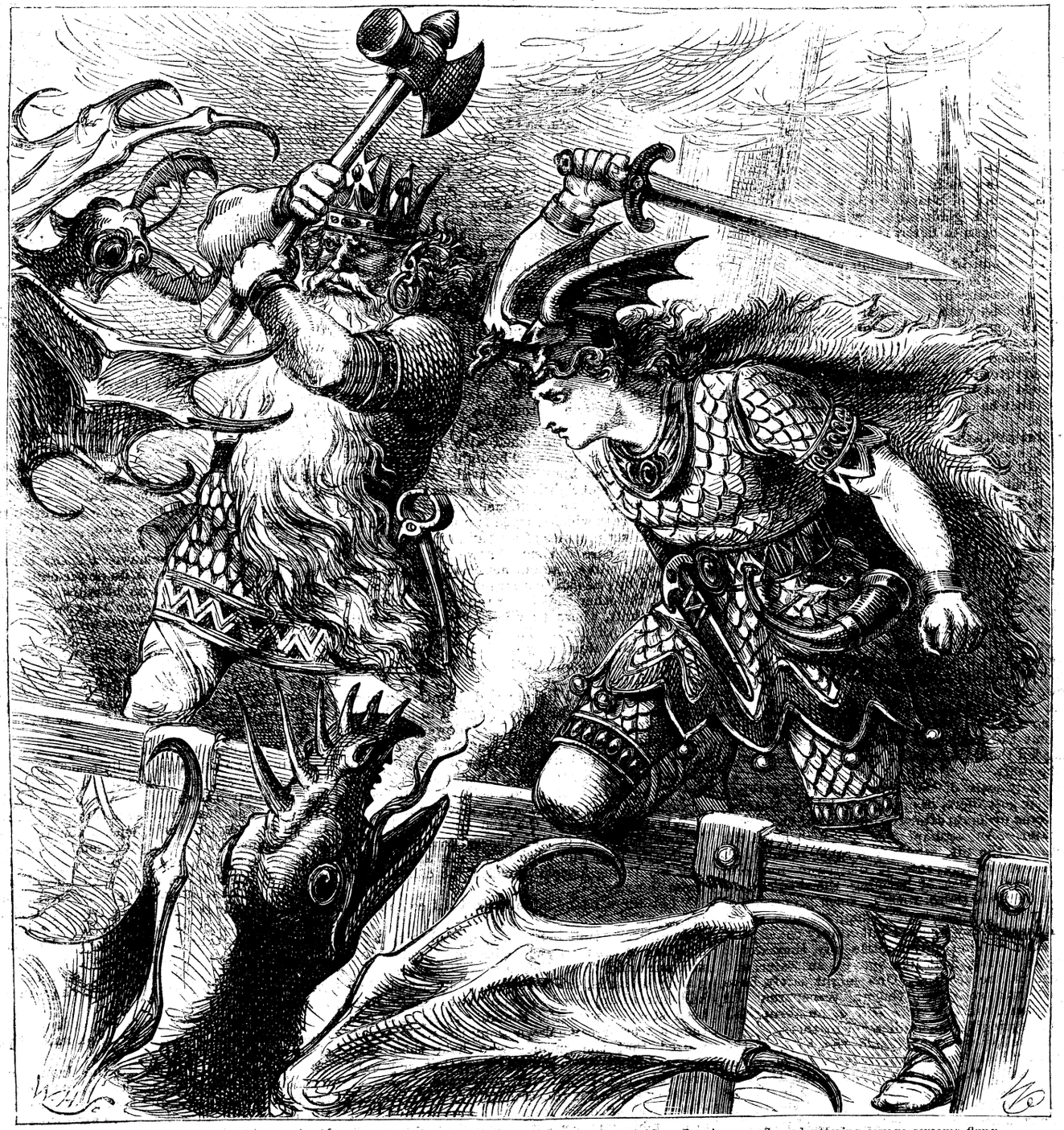
YOUNG FOLK'S WEEKLY BUDGET

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS OF ALL AGES. TO INFORM. TO INSTRUCT. TO AMUSE.

VOL. IX.—No. 294.] "The good I stand on is my truth and honesty."—*Shakespeare.* [ONE PENNY.



"The Chief of the Winged Spiders and its ugly mate, waving their dragon-shaped wings, with a flapping sound, and uttering savage screams, flung themselves upon the platform, and attacked their two valiant foes."

THE UNDER-WORLD

OR,

Prince Boldwin's Marvellous Adventures, Inside the Earth, in Search of the Princess Rosenblume.

BY LLEWELLYN LONGFELLOW.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MAGIC ARMS—FAREWELL TO THE IRON REALM—DOWN THE BOTTOMLESS SHAFT ON THE METAL SHIP—THE NET OF THE WINGED SPIDERS.

ON a nearer view, Boldwin repeated his outcry of admiration. There was a hauberk, or shirt of mail, of rare lightness, made of some metal new to our hero, whiter than silver and denser than gold. There were hose to match, of closely-fitting scales, glittering at the edge, and as supple at every turn as a woven garment. A sword, which seemed to be made of stone, and not of metal, as was its hilt, gleamed of a deep, warm, yellowish brown, with streakings of white.

"Your joy is but their due," remarked the Dwarf-Smith, with a gladdened eye, which gave the youth delight. "When I acquaint you with the names of these weapons, you will at once value their worth.

"Truly," said he, taking up our hero's helmet and moving it briskly, so that the wings flapped, the beak snapped, and the snakes opened their folds like living things—"you have here the casque of Aygishialmr, called also *Hildegrim*, worn by Siegfried after Fafnar, the first owner, had been transformed into a dragon, of which it retains the wings and beak. It renders the bearer unseen at his pleasure, and endows him with the might of ten men—think of that, Boldwin!—if he attacks in the cause of goodness, or defends the weak and oppressed, as I have belief you would alone do.

"These are its worthy fellows," continued he, rolling up the hauberk and hose into so small a parcel that one could hardly believe they were masses of metal able to cover a

man's breast, and repel lance and sword from his heart—"this is none other than the mail of Alexander the Great. It is impenetrable, laughing to scorn even such a point of temper as I would give a blade. This is the metal *minium*, which is not seen on the earth's surface; and such a piece as formed this mail would out-value its weight in diamonds. Like a feather, a child could play about under it on a summer's day, or in this sweltering mountain, and never once complain of it.

"This sword is made of the largest fragment of the famous silica, or sandstone, lance of the Giant Rugnar," he resumed, swinging the glaive round him adroitly, to cause it to reflect strange rays in the air. "When Thor, the huge Hammerman, fought this giant, he shivered his lance with his mallet, and the pieces became the flint-stones which are scattered over the earth. The finest bit you see here, which I shaped thus to be the falchion, of King Wermand. It is the Queen of Swords, untouched by fire, water, or acid, and cuts in halves, bear in mind, any object against which it is brought, whatever may be in the path; and now they are all for you."

The boy opened his eyes in amaze and slowness to believe. This was more than a Royal present. But the gleam of the sword, still held by the Troll, was fascinating, and he put out his hand, almost in spite of himself, to feel its weight. To his continued gladness, it warmed within his grip, and began to describe circles and thrusts as of its own will.

"You wield it like a willow wand," cried the smith, with glee. "Here, don the mail, and gird on this belt of iron of my own make, to which I am proud to have such a sword attached."

The gnomes dressed the youth in the hauberk and hose, and he hung the sword by his side. On the polished wall, as in a mirror, he could see himself after placing the helmet to his head, and he could not but agree, with a pleased but shy smile, that he offered a gallant and dread-inspiring aspect.

"But you, King Ferrugino?" said he, earnestly. "In the regions where none have penetrated as yet, will *you* not need some arms of supernature like to these?"

The Troll laughed so that the weighty table shook.

"I! Ho, ho! I carry my hammer but for plaything, for in my hands are lodged all the arts and strength I require to face—ay, and to strangle any odds. You are equipped completely. You have fed and drained the cup of welcome, of which the wine will fortify you for weeks to come. Let us go inspect this gulf into which the Witch has dived with her prize."

Boldwin had to stoop lowly now that he passed out of the doorway with the towering helm on his brow.

At the sight of him thus adorned, the vast throng of the trolls, awaiting them patiently without the palace, shouted in admiration. The King led the way, and all proceeded to the mouth of the shaft.

Already some of the dwarfs had wisely taken up their post there, in order to watch it. Nothing had come up again after the descent of the streak of water. An attempt was made to learn the depth of the pit, which was some twenty feet across, by hurling into it masses of iron ore. There was no risk of harming the Princess, if she were still there within, since a current of thick yet light gas kept rising, through which even those heavy weights but slowly could pass, and, after sinking only a little way, they would come to a stop, float like sponges in water, and return to the mouth. One might safely have leaped into so dense though transparent an atmosphere, without more fear of an abrupt fall than in springing upon a heap of feathers.

"My fellow-workmen," said the King of the Smiths, "I am fairly rusting for want of something fresh to do; and the flight of the Ice-Cold Witch through our midst gives a stir to my muscles which will never be calm till I shall have held her to account for her treatment of us all."

At the mention of their persecutor, the trolls groaned with hatred and disgust.

"We have this brave youth to thank for having not only opened another breathing-place to our stifling forges, but for having destroyed by that act most of those marine monsters who helped the Queen of the Sea Maidens to drive us down in hither and seal us up behind that wall. The sole means with which I can see my way clear to thank him in deed is to stand by his side in his adventures in the essay to recover the Princess Rosiebloom from the power of that detested hag. I have pledged myself to go with him, and—lest those of you, whom I would have to leave, would be hurt at the putting aloof—I go alone. I count my hammer as scarcely a second, do you see?"

The love of the gnomes for their master was plainly shown by the intense silence in which they received this notice of his departure without their company in his journey. Some of the oldest, whose red beards were striped with grey, silvery hair, fell on their knees at his feet, and tried to press his hands imploringly. They did not ask, but their action was an eloquent appeal for their presence to be his still as of old. But Ferrugino shook his head sadly, and coughed lustily to hide his grief.

"My word is given," repeated he, begging Boldwin to be silent—for the youth would have wished him not to persevere in his resolve, which thus wrung the hearts of his honest, hard-handed people. "And so the sooner you start me on my way, the sooner you are likely to see me on the return to my palace, and to my post between the flaming forge and the roaring bellows!"

This plea struck them, simple-minded as they were, as a bright idea and a cheering one, and they smiled again. Boldwin was the more glad at this because he might naturally presage their vexation at the absence of their ruler turning on him. For, it is sure, had he not entered the Iron Land, its king would not have been filled with the impulse to thrust himself into untold danger.

Ferrugino and his elder men laid their grizzled heads together. Ordinary means were not of use, and they had to determine on a mode of descending after the Witch that would be the best. Boldwin, puzzled at an opposing force of which he had had no previous taste, stood at the orifice, trying in vain to peer down. It was dark, and the eye could not discern any object at even a short distance downwards.

The gnomes were at once set to work. They extracted the heaviest metals they could find, smelted the ores, formed pigs and then plates, which they began to hammer and fasten together with the utmost speed and skill. Under Boldwin's impatient eyes he saw the material attain the shape of a flooring, from the centre of which rose a sort of mast, while the corners of the square stage were furnished with covered dishes which served as lamps. The light was given out by spongy iron knots, saturated with rock oil, which flared as brightly as any wicks in seal-fat.

This air-raft was launched level on the invisible current which buoyed it up, and gradually weighted with masses of lead and other metals, of which our hero did not know the names. A number of wires, fine but not easily broken, were attached by one end to a large ring in the planks of iron, the other ends being retained at the edge of the shaft, where they were tied to other balls and lumps of lead. The lamps were lit and trimmed, and shut in by steel-gauze blinds, so as not to be blown out, or beaten dull by attacks of enemies.

Boldwin stepped lightly and dauntlessly upon the floating floor, which did not yield to his barely perceptible weight. The king followed him with a firm step, under which it sank a little. Then his gnomes added more and more ballast, until the nicely-poised craft, to the mast of which the two clung until it steadied itself, began to seek a lower place, with an increasing movement.

When the head of the Iron Master had fallen below the brink of the chasm, around which, perilously near the edge of pyrites and ragged ore, his loving people crowded, he called up to them cheerily:

"Let there be no more work till I come back, my sons!"

It was some time before they ceased to hear the shouting of the trolls, which became a melancholy murmur, and then died away altogether. On gazing upwards, the broad breach by which they had entered appeared so small that it might have been stopped with the thumb. Every now and then a tremor came down along the wires, which proved that the gnomes who held them had agitated hands or wished to reveal that they were ever thinking of the venturesome pair.

"How smooth is this sailing!" said Ferrugino, who stood at ease, leaning his brawny, folded arms on his hammer, with his feet planted flatly, and balancing himself with a slight rock as the raft but gently swayed.

"The only flaw is that we have no means of telling how we get on," observed Boldwin, with a sigh at the tiresomeness. "To either hand, one sees nothing by which our progress can be marked."

"Oh, never mind that," took up the King, laying aside his sledge, and hauling down by their wires several masses of metal to increase the sinking power. "There, on we go again. We certainly *do* descend, and I am very well satisfied. Trim yonder lamp, my boy, and mind how you tread near the edges."

There seemed to be no end to the fall. They had no measure of time, but the lamps had burnt low, and to overcome the sluggish opposition of the gas, they had pulled down nearly all the wires and their attached weights.

"We are almost at a standstill," murmured Boldwin, stamping his foot so roughly in his annoyance as to shake the platform, as the least thing affected its balance.

"We are quite at a standstill," added the Iron Master, gravely, looking around him by the now mere glimmer of the lamps.

They drew down the last of their weights, and fancied they heard far aloft a sad wail, which might have been the gnomes' spoken sorrow, and that all thread of union between them was thus snapped in twain. But the increased weight for simply the moment depressed the raft. As if it had struck some spring, it bounded upwards a little, and then sank again only a few yards, and there reposed tranquilly.

Ferrugino took up a jar, and filled one of the lamps which had just gone out. In the bright blaze which rekindled, the two descried what wrung an exclamation of horror and astonishment from their lips.

"A net, a net!" cried Boldwin, as his eye traced more and yet more of the lines crossing one another with animated wavings on all sides.

"A net!" exclaimed the Gnome-Smith, chuckling in spite of himself at the cunning of the Witch in throwing such a bar in their path of pursuit. "It is a web, can you not see, made of the Ribbon-Snakes; and here come the Winged Monster-Spiders to see what prey they have taken!"

"*The Winged Monster-Spiders!*" said Boldwin, clapping one hand to his sword, and reaching out the other to the icicle talisman which had already stood him in good stead. "Whatever they are, they will find we are not to be swallowed in a mouthful!"

CHAPTER V.

THE WINGED MONSTER-SPIDERS ATTACK THE ADVENTURERS ON THE SERPENT WEB—THE BROKEN NET—THE CURIOUS LADDERS—THE QUAGMIRE OF QUICKSILVER—THE NEW ENEMIES.

The car had been checked in the centre of a vast net which easily barred the way. It was woven of scores upon scores of beautiful Ribbon-Snakes, each with a gay tint of its own, which retied themselves in knots at their crossing-points whenever they became undone.

Boldwin, using the icicle as a spear, thrust at these lines, and found that its power chilled them into quiet, and made them brittle as a dry twig. But on their snapping in two they were replaced by others, so that his work was all to be done over again.

This seeing, he laid aside the frozen rod, and drawing the sword of dazzling sheen, he began to sever the meshes. The Iron King, on his part, scorned to employ his mighty hammer against such slender strings, and stood ready for grander foes.

They had not long to wait for these.

Flying towards them, hardly touching the web but at long spaces, rushed a flock of creatures which appeared more hideous the nearer they were viewed. Yet there was something amusing for its strangeness in their aspect, for their eyes, some having one, some eight or ten, were arranged on their breasts in the shape of the eyes, nose, and mouth of comic faces, so that one could almost laugh at their mockery. These eyes were blazing red, and their round bodies were poised upon twelve long legs as frail as their wide and gauzy wings. Sharp hooks glistened at the tip of their feet, and long, thick, reddish hair covered them all over and gave them an air of vaster size and strength than they in truth possessed.

On seeking whence they proceeded, Boldwin espied their cells against the far-off walls of pearl-stone and brown rock.

"Why, see!" cried he to the Iron Master; "yonder are their young ones swinging to and fro in silken cradles, and kicking their claws in the air—if one can call this gas air—with glee as they mumble the bones of unhappy fireflies and bats which the old frights have caught."

"Humph!" growled the Troll. "They certainly are no beauties, especially this one with a pair or two more of blazing eyes than the others!"

"And who is probably the chief, by the crest of owls' feathers which adorn his head," added Boldwin, grasping his blade firmly. "If you please, I will let him taste this flint sword. Oh, come on, and do not be bashful!" he continued.

The spiders had no doubt been daunted by the bold front which the new-comers presented. They ceased to hover in the air, and alighted on the tremulous web, coming nearer each other step by step to form a ring around the iron platform.

The humming which the quick motion of their wings had caused now died away as they folded

them round their bodies, shining with natural armour as hard as a beetle's. Rising on their spindle legs as high as an ostrich, they stalked together towards the intruders.

The first who came near enough was dazed by the lamplight, and while thus confused was tapped in the side with the heavy sledge of the Iron Master. This gentle stroke was sufficient, none the less, to send it headlong through its mates some twenty yards away. There it rolled over once or twice, and, rising lamely, limped off to its hole in the wall of the shaft as if it thought its share in the combat had been fully carried out.

This foretaste of what the insects might expect drew a hoarse murmur from each open mouth, where a poisonous tongue was hissing as it shot in and out. In one mass they leaped up and descended upon the raft. They hid it, mast, lamps, and all, with their entwining limbs and unfolding wings, entangling themselves with the wires. Some who had blundered upon the lamps were singed, and fought more hotly to get away than they had done to approach. Others were kept back by the more eager.

In the meantime, the stone sword of Boldwin and the massive hammer had not been idle. The spiders fell to right and left in halves, where the former circled in the youthful and active hands; or, crushed into a heap, each that received the Iron Ruler's mace were flung out upon the net, some floundering about with their eyes partly extinguished. But, by their number and blind onset, they beat out the lantern flame, and the combat soon went on by no other light than that of the spiders' eyes, and another, more powerful but yet more softly glowing. This had suddenly gleamed forth from the Winged Star. The gnome and our hero were not given the repose to even wonder at the cause of this lustre, still overwhelmed as they were with odds.

The breath of the gigantic insects was envenomed; their stings were sharp in tongue and claw, and their beaked mouths fierce. But the skin of the Underground Smith was tanned hard, and his vigorous muscles kept his hammer plying pauselessly around him. The enemy could not penetrate such a defence.

Two or three times, though, forced to change their places, they had forgotten on what unsafe flooring they stood, and the platform, but loosely buoyed on the web, with a constant tendency to rise, nearly shook them over its low edge.

The Chief of the Winged Spiders and its ugly mate, up to this hour sparing themselves, showed at last that they had not shrunk because of fear. For, waving their dragon-shaped wings with a flapping sound, snapping their beaks and uttering hoarse, savage screams, they flung themselves upon the iron platform, and attacked their two valiant foes.

It seemed to the younger of these that his sword cleft the spiders of its own will, rather than by the impulse of his wearied arm. But if arm might weaken, his heart could not fail, and still his dragon-crested helm and his mail-clad breast confronted the tireless, spiteful enemies, while the Troll struck desperately with his heavy sledge-hammer.

As the metal floor rocked to and fro at its roughest, the Chief of the Spiders made its swoop. Boldwin had nerved his wrist to deal a more than common slash of the sword, but was not expecting to find so much power left in him. Not only did he cut the spider in two pieces, from beside the head to the back, so that each portion, with a wing still fluttering, fell to one side; but, overreaching himself, the edge cleft the web over the rail of the car. The serpent-cords, already sorely strained, snapped like tight fiddle-strings, and with a shrill twang, whilst the others, no longer bound together, broke away in one long line. The two halves of the net sank slowly downwards.

Boldwin, carried on by the force of his blow, and the floor tilting under his feet, could save himself from the gulf only by clutching at the net before him with his left hand. The Troll, who had taken a spider by the throat, and was choking it to compel it to open its beak from its nip of his shoulder, was also hurled out of the car. He too seized the crosspieces of snakes, but the other part, so that he and Boldwin were separated more and more, as their weight bore down the broad, deep ladders which alone supported them.

The iron stage, some of its ballast being shaken free from it, wavered there midway, and then, with leaps and bounds, disappeared in an upward course like a sodden log rising lazily in a pond. Save one of the wires, which was prudently attached to the belt of the Iron King (through which belt he had thrust his sledge-hammer, to leave his hands free for the close combat), not a trace of the means of their descent so far was left to them.

The spiders, who had not been slain or maimed, bewildered by the loss of their leader, circled round and round, unable to cope with such a great mishap to their web.

Some two hundred feet beneath them, and where the conflict had gone on, and more than that distance apart, the two explorers were hanging.

By degrees their weight told on so light and thin a fabric, which it brought against the wall in almost an up-and-down line.

They halloaed to one another to be of good cheer; and, indeed, the Iron King was laughing.

"Here I am," cried he, "upheld by I can hardly tell how flimsy a net."

"At least the net does not give," shouted back our hero, also cool in spirit. "Since I have no wish to see more spiders, let us descend till we join."

But they climbed down in lines too much parallel ever to meet. Seeing this, and fearing that the web, owning the gift of growing under their hands endlessly, might be a treacherous road, Boldwin called a halt.

"I see nothing on this wall, which to the touch is perfectly smooth and seamless," he said, "by which we can get out of this pit. Beneath, all is darkness."

"So is this stone, against which I dangle, without hollow or split," replied the Smith. "But I think I can descry, not so far under you, a large three-cornered hole in the wall. It has a dull glimmer of its own, quite unlike the pale but gladsome lustre which I spy, dwelling like the phantom of a star above your yellow hair. You surely see what I mean?"

Boldwin indeed had recognized the magic Winged Star, which furnished him with a view of the loathsome web on which he was forced to keep his hands. But wherever its rays fell upon the serpents they did not hiss or writhe their heads, but rested as harmlessly as ropes in his grasp.

"I see the Star, and thank it," he replied, joyously. "It came when the lamps were blown out. But this opening of which you speak is not apparent."

He tried to peer beneath him, but he could not reach out far enough from the wall.

"Because you are nearly over it. Descend a little farther, and you must reach it."

Boldwin climbed down yet more, but shortly stopped.

"I am at the end at last," he said. "The snakes here are those I froze stiff with my icicle wand, and they break in my hold like ice itself."

"Have no fear, for I can overcome *that* strait," shouted the Iron Master. "My good people and I arranged at least one wise-headed plan."

The wire tied to his apron-strings at one end still ran up into the Realm of Iron and Fire. It was endless at that portion, at all events, since it was continually drawn from a mass of melted metal, which the gnomes renewed.

He pulled and pulled until a long coil was in his hands. To the free end he fastened a pair of weighty pincers, which was stuck in his girdle, and flung it across the chasm. The wire ran through his hands. Twice he failed to send it across where Boldwin could catch it, but in one more trial he was successful.

"Do not spare it," cried Ferrugino, mirthfully. "So tiny a thread might be a million miles in length, and still not take away much iron from my realms. And besides, my good mates in the Burning Mountain will be deeply pleased at this proof that I am very much alive, and particularly stirring. Haul away."

When the youth had drawn a quantity of the wire, thin but strong, over to his side, he attached the end to the web where the latter was least liable to break, and lowered himself slowly on the frail line.

The eye had deceived King Ferrugino, for the cavity he mentioned was much less near than he had fancied. However, it was reached by the boy, who at once sent up a whoop of relief and comfort to his comrade. He stood in a triangular opening, too smoothly and accurately cut in the hard rock to have been done by nature. It was the tunnel mouth of which he could see the other and larger gateway, for a clear yellow light reigned there, and pervaded the channel. Without delay he made fast the wire to his sword, driven as a stake into the solid rock.

"You can slide down safely," he shouted to the Iron Master. "This loop is firmly secured."

Ferrugino had hardly waited for the call. He was so eager to join his younger friend that he slid down the wire aslant with so much speed that any hands but his horny ones must have been cut by the slender cord. Once he paused in his flight, but it was neither to rest himself nor to cool his glowing palms.

"What is wrong?" asked Boldwin, seeing him dimly swinging in suspense midway.

"No harm! I have just caught that icicle of yours floating about here; it struck me over the nose, and plaguey freezing it is! I feel as if I should have a cold in my head ever after its stroke!"

He sneezed once or twice with a force which set the wire trembling violently. But resuming his course it was not many minutes before he arrived in the niche, where Boldwin cordially caught him in his arms.

With his hammer, he gave the wire several smart blows as soon as he had taken a long breath.

"That means, in blacksmith's language," he explained, "that so far we are well and safe. They will read the tremor so above. What is the next step, my gallant boy?"

He was quite ready for a fresh exploit; and, clearly enough, looked upon the fruitless attempt of the spiders, set at it by the Ice-Cold Witch, as a mere whet to his appetite.

"Onwards, *I* say!"

"Then I say, On—on!"

The wire of communication again affixed to his belt behind, the hammer nestling in the hollow of his left arm, and his sturdy legs marching briskly, he followed the youth step for step.

It was all very well whilst the tunnel kept on with the base of its triangle—that is, the broad side on the level, at which one walks; but when the plan changed so that the road was in the angle itself, they got along but badly.

"If this keeps on thus," groaned Ferrugino, whose broad feet were less able than our hero's to walk in the acute trough in such parts, "I shall lie down and let you drag me along."

Boldwin turned round, and smiled at his rueful face.

"A little patience," he rejoined, "for again the path lies on the flat, and the end opens on a plain, I think."

He shaded his eyes with his hand, and gazed before him. After this glimpse of what struck him with aroused wonder, and hushed his tongue, he quickened his gait. In half an hour or so, the two had come out into the open.

A broad and lovely tract, which offered novel features on every side, was spread out before their gaze.

It was some time before either could calmly feast his vision on the grand view.

The air was as clear as in the purest mountain-top of the upper world, and a powerful illumination came from countless suns and stars, of many shapes, which studded the earthy vault as far as the eye could span.

"I see houses, I see people and animals, and vegetation; but all are unlike those of the world where I have dwelt," remarked the younger of the two.

"They are as new to me," replied the Smith, rolling his eyes in amazement.

But all at once he frowned and stared intently at some object near at hand.

"You have painted the portrait of the Princess but badly to me," he said, "if I do not recognize her over there upon that highest hill across this blue and silvery lake!"

Boldwin looked, and then hid his glad yet pained eyes with his trembling hands.

"It is no other," he murmured in a broken voice. "But she is so still—she is not lifeless, think you, lying there?"

"No, no!" returned Ferrugino, eager to relieve his comrade of his sudden grief. "The Ice Witch would not dare to treat her so. She is under some spell, that is all. But let us hasten to her, and see the worst!"

Boldwin sprang forward with him. But between them and the rising and rolling land, on the highest mound of which was certainly placed a delicate female form draped in white, spread out an unrippled pool of liquid metal. Yet it had so strongly an air of solidity that both rushed upon it without pause or misgiving.

"It *is* quicksilver," said the Iron Master, using his hammer handle as a walking-staff.

"And it moves—it moves!" called out the boy. "It carries us with it the way it pleases, not that we choose."

"*It* carries us?" echoed the King; "you mean that it obeys the efforts of those unwieldy beings of this same quicksilver, whom you must perceive as well as I."

Indeed, Boldwin also beheld that around the edges of the mercurial lake stood several lubberly figures, the largest and quite gigantic ones at the corners of the somewhat square mass. They tugged at it much as one might at a blanket, and so kept the two explorers ever in its midst, and were gradually drawing them away from their goal. They so shook the shifting surface that it was no light task to keep one's balance.

"To fall will be certain death," thought Boldwin, who smote the liquid with the icicle. The atoms froze, but still they slid over one another,

and the footing was no less unstable before. Besides, the wand broke off in the dense fluid each time, so that it was hardly eight inches long at last, and he could now thrust it like a dagger under his belt.

"If ever I wished to be light-headed," said the Iron King all at once, with a poor effort at a smile, and steadying himself on his hammer, which was repelled by the mercury, "it is now. For I was only ankle-deep in this stuff at the beginning, and now I am up to my knees."

In fact, he had to gather up his beard and tuck it under his apron, lest it should draggle in the element, in which their sinking was so fast as to make them fancy it rose. In spite of all, they could not better their position; and the fluid, having already coldly wrapped itself about their legs, now enchained them at the very waist. Though he severed it with his resistless sword, Boldwin saw with horror that the severed waves closed as intimately as before, the instant the blade was withdrawn.

Unable to walk, now that he could not pull up his feet, the Iron King, his strength spent in that unsteadfast metal, flung himself on his back. He spread himself, too, in order to offer the widest mass of resistance. But thus he floated for only a brief space.

As for the boy, his light form was even less fortunate. Like a moist needle in a cup of water, he pierced the quicksilver, and the time soon came when he almost despaired of freeing himself, still less of helping his friend.

"Forgive me, Ferrugino," said he, beholding the other's stalwart form half submerged in the shining lake, "for having brought you so far for so miserable an end. Would you were not here to embitter my fate! Not that I grieve for that, only, while I am thus overcome by the Freezing Hag's malicious instruments, poor Rosenblume's single defender perishes under her eyes, though in her eyes there seems no sight or evidence of life. She will be lost for ever in this Innerworld."

At that moment he was fain to believe that the sword gave a leap in his hand, as if not bent on submitting tamely to the waves passing over its hilt; and the magic helmet quivered as though the serpentine rim curled in life, and the dragon-wings opened out for a flight. He felt buoyed up, and above his head, reclining back in hopelessness, for which his fatigue was some excuse, he descried the Winged Star.

"No!" shouted he, refreshed by its effulgence—"no, never again will I repine or be dismayed, though the chance of safety be even less than this I have now! Be of good cheer, friend Ferrugino. I have hold of the wire which girds you, and with a stout pull and a vigorous stroke or two for the edge of this dreadful liquid, we shall be rid of it all, and grapple those monsters!"

Without delay to mark if his example was followed or not, he spread his bearskin on the quaking surface, and rolled himself upon it; then plying his sword as a paddle, he churned the cold blue lake with a frenzied hand, and made for the shore.

He could see this gleaming, with a white glare, at a little distance. This time he outstripped the quicksilver, and when near enough to hazard the leap, sprang upon his feet, and bounded as lightly as a mountain deer across the few feet of mercury, so as to land on the bank.

Without pausing even to take a breath in peace, he turned and tugged with all his might at the iron wire, of which he had not let go during all this desperate course. The Iron King, though then nearly under the flood, pulled at the same time. He was drawn out on the firm ground like a huge fish.

"We can laugh now," said the youth, with tears of joy and relief in his blue eyes.

"But be quick about your laughing," replied Ferrugino, "for here come those Quicksilver Men, burning with rage that we have baffled their spite so neatly!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

(This tale commenced in No. 292. Back numbers can always be had.)

The most popular General—General Holiday.

Things that must be pushed—Barrows.

Why is a cow's tail like a swan's bosom? Because it rows down.

What is it that has a mouth and never speaks, and a bed and never sleeps? A river.

Flowers placed in a receiver over a basin containing ammoniacal solution undergo a change of colour. Blue, violet, and purple flowers become green; carmine red, black; if white, they turn yellow. The effect is still more curious if several tints are combined in one flower. In a fuchsia with white and red flowers, the ammoniacal vapour changes them to yellow, blue, and green. The flowers, if placed in pure water, will retain their new tints for several hours, and then gradually resume their original colours. Aster flowers, which are inodorous, acquire an aromatic perfume under the influence of ammonia.

ODYSSEUS:

HIS WANDERINGS AND ADVENTURES.

BY C. A. READ.

CHAPTER XIII.

SCARCELY had the last of the female band disappeared when a crowd of warriors advanced towards Odysseus. As they drew near with bowed heads, he recognized in the foremost the kingly figure of Agamemnon.

The sight of his leader in the Trojan war startled Odysseus a moment. Then he stretched out his arms to the noble ghost and strove to clasp it in a friend's embrace. But, like the figure of Anticlea, the mighty Agamemnon was but a thing of air, and Odysseus's arms came back empty to his breast.

"Alas, what ruthless doom, O mighty shade, has sent thee hither!" he cried, with a broken voice, while his eyes grew damp with tears. "Has the sea dragged thee down to its depths, or have the fates seized thee in the clash of battle?"

"Alas, Agamemnon died neither by the sea nor in battle," replied the phantom. "A murderess' hand sent me here and these with me. Yes, even in the very moment when the bowl was at our lips, when we were rejoicing at our return to home, the dagger of my wife and of Ægysthus buried itself in my heart. Then fell every one who was my friend, the innocent Cassandra, my Trojan prize, among the rest."

"What weighty woes have fallen on thee and thine through woman," cried Odysseus. "A woman sent thee to the Trojan war, a woman and thy wife has sent thee hither."

"Let it warn thee, who yet art human," replied the shade. "But tell me, where does my son reside? Lives he in Sparta, Pylæ, or Orchemenos?"

"You ask me in vain," replied Odysseus. "I cannot tell even if Orestes be yet alive; for since we parted on the Trojan coast, I've been a wanderer. But who comes yonder?"

"Achilles' self," replied the ghost, as it flitted away—"Achilles and his friend Patroclus. And yonder strays Antilochus and Ajax, side by side. Farewell!"

"Welcome, Odysseus!" cried the airy form of the great hero, as it took the place of Agamemnon, and smiled sadly at the King of Ithaca—"welcome, true friend. But do you come alive to view the Stygian realms where the pale spectres walk eternally? Do you not fear to tread the horrid waste thick with wan ghosts?"

"I came here to see the Theban, and to learn my fate," replied Odysseus, with a sigh. "Day after day I drift from coast to coast, lost to country and to friends, distressed almost beyond my power to endure. But thou, surely, thou art blessed above all men, O Achilles, for ever famed on earth, and here a king!"

"Talk not of kings within this awful gloom," replied Achilles, sadly. "Vain words cannot ease my fate. Ah, I had rather live a slave with loads of woes and breathe on earth again than reign in Pluto's place. But tell me if my Pyrrhus follows in my steps, if the clash of arms rouses his heart as it did mine? Say, does old Peleus live still great in Phthia, or does he need my help to keep him on his throne. Oh, would that I might walk the earth again, then should my shoulders lift him high above all others!"

"Of Peleus I know nothing," replied Odysseus. "But of your son until we parted on the Trojan coast none knew so much. Day after day beneath my eye he drove to battle a second and no less Achilles. Heaps fell before him as before your hand, and when I hid within the hollow horse with all the bravest of the Greeks his eyes met mine amid the gloom. When Troy sank smoking to the ground his arm was deadliest in the crash, and when he sailed for home the Greeks piled high his ship with spoil. Like you for many a year he came through all without a scar."

As Odysseus spoke the face of the phantom seemed to glow with pride, and the figure to grow taller. Then sighing out, "Farewell, farewell, O long tried friend," it turned and strode into the darkness with a kingly step.

When Achilles had disappeared, shade after shade rose and crowded round the mortal visitor, all wailing out in bitter lonely woe. Presently Ajax passed sullen and sad, and taking no notice of his old brother in arms except by a disdainful silence.

Odysseus was about to spring after him to force him to speak, when suddenly where he had passed a wonderful vision appeared.

High in the midst rose a mighty throne, darkly splendid, and wreathed about with snakes. Around the throne clustered ghost after ghost, thick as locusts on their march, and on the throne sat an awful figure, with face more stern than that of Death. In the hand of the figure was a mace of gold, that gleamed red almost as flame.

"It is Minos, the Judge of Hell!" cried Odysseus, as he shrunk back a step in affright. "Alas, how the wan ghosts tremble before him!"

Next moment the throne, the crowd of trembling shades, and the stern judge seemed to glide past as in a panorama, and a huge figure took the place. In its hands the figure whirled aloft a mighty club, over its shoulders hung a lion's skin; by its side, thrust naked through a girdle, was a gleaming sword. Before the giant fled troops of wild beasts, wolves, lions, and bears.

"The hunter Orion," murmured Odysseus, in a low voice, as the figure shot past in chase after the beasts. "And this who takes his place? Ah, it is Tityus!"

On the black earth, stretching away for perches, lay a figure to which that of Orion was but as a child to a giant. On every limb were massive fetters, that clanked horribly as the figure struggled vainly to free itself. In his side was a ghastly wound, and through this two horrid vultures continually tore at the liver and flesh within. At every rend of the quivering flesh the birds screamed out as if in fiendish delight, while the breast of the giant rose and fell with pain.

Turning aside from the awful sight, Odysseus beheld a figure in the pool close by. From the mouth of the being burst groan after groan as it strove again and again to drink the waters that fled at its touch. Over the surface of the pool suddenly appeared trees of all kinds laden with delicious fruit—purple grapes, green olives, ripe pomegranates, rich dangling pears, and apples yellow as gold.

The figure stretched out its hand with a wild, hungry look, but as it almost felt the ripe fruit in its grasp, a swirl of wind lifted them just beyond his reach.

"Oh, may the fates grant me another doom than that of Tantalus!" cried Odysseus, moving away his eyes only to behold another woful sight.

There on the right rose a high hill, and up the hill toiled a weary, weary-looking shade, pressing before it a rock. Presently, as it reached the top, the rock slipped from the hold of the panting ghost, and thundered joyously down to the foot of the hill. Then the figure hastened to place its shoulder against the stone and press it laboriously up the hill as before, only to see it break from him, and thunder down to the bottom again. Sweat seemed to burst from every pore of the sad figure, and its lips uttered groans that seemed to come from a breaking heart.

A moment or two of this, then a shade full of strength and nobility of mien glided to the front, and hid all the rest. The form of the new-comer was tall and shadowy, his face was gloomy as night, and in his hands he held a bow from which he was about to let fly an arrow tipped with flame. Across the breast of the figure stretched a belt, on which were wrought in gold figures of wild beasts and monsters, with war, and havoc, and revenge standing out bold and grim.

Casting on Odysseus an awful yet not an angry look, the mighty ghost advanced towards him.

"O wise Odysseus, experienced in grief, and taught to bear bravely the wrongdoings of the base, as you are such was I once," said the figure, in a low voice, yet with a volume of sound that filled the whole air. "While on earth I breathed I was still tossed from care to care. I, even I, who sprang from the Thunderer himself, bore toils and dangers and griefs like you. Was I not a slave to a king baser than a slave? Down to these realms, like you, I came, and dragged the triple dog to open air. And now aloft I go, where Hebe crowns my joy—a god among the gods. Therefore fear not, Odysseus, for what man has done thou as man may do."

"A moment—stay a moment, O mighty Hercules!" cried Odysseus, with outstretched arms, as the mighty form turned and strode away. But the phantom, taking no notice of his appeal, disappeared in the gloom.

For a little while after this Odysseus stood in doubt what next to do. Should he wait, and see yet other mighty shades—Castor and Pollux, and the heroes of the Golden Fleece, Theseus and Pirithous, Bellerophon, and his one-time foe, the mighty Hector?

Muttering a prayer to Zeus, he decided to await for these, when suddenly a great swarm of spectres rose from the dark pit and swept towards him with a hideous yell. The faces of the creatures were pale and bloodless, their eyes like flickering flames, their whole aspect horrible!

As they drew nearer, their screams and shrieks and groans so filled the ears of Odysseus, and so stunned his heart, that it seemed to cease to beat. The very blood within his veins grew chill.

"I must away," he muttered. "Gorgon herself may rise with snaky hair, and fix me here, a stony warning to all time! Pallas assist me to escape!"

He turned and sprang towards his companions. These he found stretched senseless upon the earth, and it was only with difficulty he roused them. Then he and they hurried to the beach, and climbed on board the ship, where the two men dropped senseless again into the arms of their fellows.

Next moment the oars were out, and they were clear of the land. Then from the north a breeze came down and filled the sails, and sent them bounding towards the south. Soon the gloomy shore, the clouds and mists, disappeared, and they were sailing,

as it were, between two firmaments—the glassy sea below, the quiet sky above.

And now at last it seemed as if fate had begun to pity Odysseus, and would vex him no more. Day after day they had fair winds and pleasant skies. For two or three days they coasted along the shores of Spain, smiling upon them like a garden. Then the Herculean pillars were entered, the rock of Calpe passed, and the blue Mediterranean lay before them.

On this, as on the mightier Atlantic, they had still fair weather, until at last the shores of Italy came in sight, and they found themselves in the little bay near Circe's home.

Here, weary and worn, they sprang upon the shore, and after a feast, which was half a fast, laid themselves down to sleep.

Next morning, while one band hurried to the woods and busied itself in felling timber for a funeral pyre, another raised, close by the moaning wave, a humble tomb, from which an oar rose high, to say a seaman slept below.

Then the pyre was built, and Elpenor lifted from his sandy bed and placed upon it. Then fire was applied, and soon all that remained of the silent dead was but a handful of ashes, that the wind might scatter with its lightest breath.

Gathering it together carefully the Greeks placed it in an urn. This they set within the tomb, and sealed it close, then sighing turned towards the ship.

A few minutes more and they would have launched out again upon the deep, when suddenly on the brow of the cliff above appeared their late hostess, Circe.

As she descended swiftly towards them a train of nymphs came gliding after, bearing on their heads vases full of rich viands and choicest wine.

Odysseus, who had almost ascended the ship, stepped back to meet her, and the men stood still in quiet expectation.

"O sons of woe," said she, as she clasped Odysseus by the hand, and glanced round upon the rest, "all are soon or late doomed to enter Pluto's dreary realm; but you, more wretched, must behold it twice. Once have ye passed its horrid gloom alive, once shall ye visit it in airy form. But now forget your cares for a while. Make merry with me this one night, and lift your hearts while I tell you what dangers you have yet to meet. To-morrow raise your masts and spread your sails, and leave the Æacan coasts for ever."

The men answered her with a cry of joy, while Odysseus thanked her with a grateful look. Then the nymphs laid down their burthens, and like frightened fawns disappeared as they had come.

CHAPTER XIV.

The remainder of the day begun with funeral rites was occupied in feasting, and it was only after night had covered everything in its dark garment that the Greeks lay down to rest. Then, sitting by the watch fire on the beach, Circe pressed Odysseus to tell her of what he had seen within the dismal region of the dead.

When he had finished his tale—a tale that would have made any other hearts shrink with fear and see within the fire and among the shadows of the night a thousand horrid visions—when he had told her everything she bowed her head in thought a moment. Then she broke silence for the first time after he began to speak.

"These ills are past, Odysseus, never to return; they, therefore, need not vex you more," she said. "But now hear your future woes, and may some kindly power fix the words fast within your soul."

"The gods will give me power to think of all when most I need it," replied Odysseus. "Where next shall our landing be? In Ithaca?"

"Not yet in Ithaca," replied the maid. "The seas that surround the Sirens you first must plough. Alas, their pleasant song is death, and he who stays to listen to it is unblest indeed. No more shall that wretch taste of earthly joys, no more shall he behold wife or child or friend again!"

"Is their song, then, so hard to resist?"

"Alas, yes; and while the seaman sees in front but flowery meads in which the Sirens sport, the ground behind is white with human bones, the streams run thick with human gore. Oh, fly this coast as if on wings, and while you pass, let every ear be stopped. Let yourself be bound to the mast, and trust not your virtue to resist."

"And this danger past, what next?"

"This past, two mighty rocks will bar your way. Avoid them as you would Medusa's glance, for if between them once you glide no power can save you. Like as a monster's jaws, the rocks close in and swallow all that comes between, and while they do so, a horrid smoke seems to rise up, and the waves burn with fire."

"How shall we know these rocks, O Circe? The seas are full of such," said Odysseus.

"Their heads are high up among tempests," replied Circe. "Clouds and storms and everlasting mists hang round their dark brows and hide the skies. When all the ocean sparkles with the day, their sky for ever lowers filled with clouds. No human step has ever ascended their steep sides, smooth as the polished marble."

"And this escaped, what then?"

"The awful Scylla threatens you next. A fearful voice is hers; twelve monstrous feet, deformed and foul, support the beast; six horrid necks, decked with six terrific heads, spring from her shoulders; three rows of teeth gleam from each gaping mouth; the sea hides her lower parts, but her bosom swells in all its horror across the waves. When hunger stings her, she springs upon the sea-dog and the dolphin, and drags leviathan himself within her lair."

"A fearful creature!" cried Odysseus, with a shudder. "But we will steer far from her."

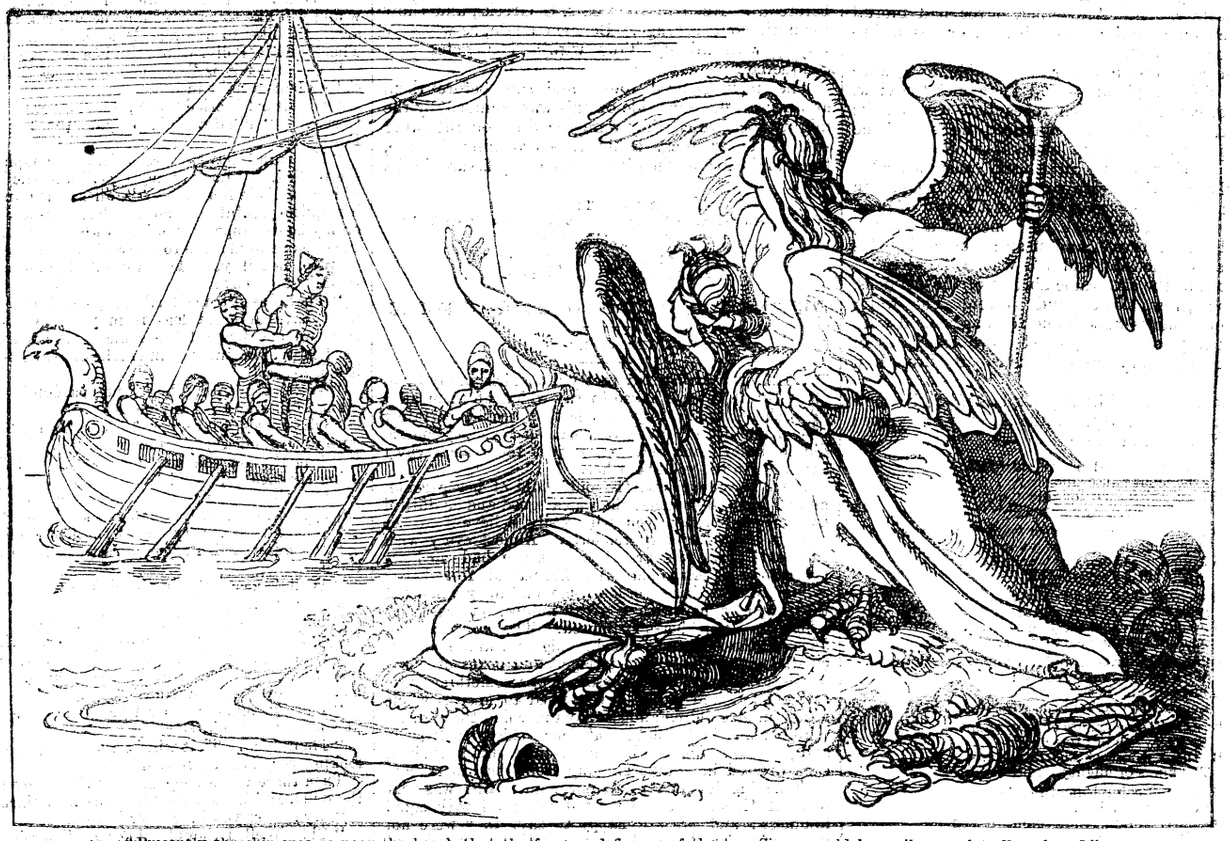
"But not too far. Close by rises a rock less than that in which she makes her home. On its top a fig-tree lifts its branches to the skies. At its base Charybdis dwells mid roaring whirlpools that suck in the mightiest wave. Three times within the gulf the seas are lost, then thrice with horrid thunder are thrown out again. If but too near ye go, or if your ship attempts the strait while waves are gulfed, ye perish every one, even though Poseidon himself lent you his aid. For pity's sake avoid the gulf, O king, and rather fly by Scylla. Better that six should die than all be lost!"

"But tell me, O goddess maid," cried Odysseus, "is the foul creature charmed against human rage?—and if I wield my arms and pierce her will she not bleed?"

"O toil-worn Odysseus, must war be ever your delight, and martial rage for ever fire your mind?" cried Circe, sadly. "Alas, the pest is deathless, impenetrable in her strength, and fearful to behold. She mocks as weakness man's mightiest efforts, and withers him with a look. Your only victory is in flight."

"And all these dangers past, are any more to come?"

"Yes; one. Close by where Scylla dwells lies the island of Trinacria. Here graze the herds of the god of day—a wondrous race that never increases and that never dies. Two goddesses possess the plain and guard the flock—fair Lampetie and young Phaëthusa—who here in flowery meadows and shady groves pass the joyous time. Touch not these flocks, and so fair winds shall be yours. Lay but a hand upon a single beast, and the gods will avenge it with your death. But yonder comes the morning, and I must away. Farewell, O noble Greek—farewell for ever!"



"Presently the ship was so near the beach that the faces and figures of the two Sirens could be easily seen by all on board."

At this Circe pointed to a streak of light just rising in the eastern sky. Then she rose quickly to her feet, and held out her hand to Odysseus.

For a while he held it in silence. Then she drew it from him, and turning, fled fast away across the sand, and up the cliff, till lost to sight. Odysseus looked after her a moment or two, then, with a sigh of regret for the loss of a friend, began to rouse his men.

Presently, when the sun himself rose over the eastern hills, the ship was launched, and speeding across the sea. As the sun clomb higher the breeze freshened. Then the men ceased from the oars, and while the vessel shot along smoothly and swiftly Odysseus rose sadly and slowly, and began to speak:

"Listen to me, friends and partners of my woes, while I tell you to what heaven has doomed us," he murmured. "Our fate hangs over us this minute, and on you it rests whether we are to live or die!"

He paused, and the men answered him with a low murmur. Then he continued:

"Near here, in flowery meadows, dwell the Sirens, sportive and fair to us, and with a power of song that steals the very heart away. When we come close to them bind me firmly to the mast, and while we pass, should I cry for freedom, make every band the tighter!"

The men bowed their heads in consent, and even as they did so the Siren shores sprang up as a cloud before them. Then suddenly the wind sank down to a dead calm, and the waves grew smooth, and seemed to sleep. The sails hung straight against the mast, useless.

At a sign from Odysseus the sails were quickly furled, and the oars put out. Then with quick fingers he filled the ears of every man with wax, until in each case his voice was lost to the listener.

This done, he placed himself by the mast, and his men bound him firmly. Then the men bent to the oars again, and the ship shot fast towards the fatal, flowery shores.

As it drew near, the Sirens beheld it, and burst forth into song—a song that seemed to thrill the air even beyond where it reached. In every note there was a heavenly tone, that filled the heart of a listener with intense delight and longing to draw nearer.

Presently the ship was so near the beach that the faces and figures of the two Sirens could be easily seen by all on board. A lovely pair they seemed—angelic in countenance and form. Wings like those of a seraph sprang from their shoulders; their long hair, radiant as gold, floated down behind. In one hand one of them carried a trumpet, whose notes pierced through the heart with a pleasure almost painful in its excess. Altogether, never had mortal eyes looked on anything more lovely, or listened to anything more sweet.

Had mortal eyes, however, been able to glance behind, a different picture would have met the view. Here, from beneath the rich robes that covered the lower parts of their bodies appeared the feet of the figures—great cruel claws, like those of a vulture. Here, in shadow of a little rock, that sparkled towards the sea with veins of gold, were heaped in horrid confusion the gaping skulls of a crowd of men. Close by stretched the skeleton bones of a warrior, gnawed by wild beasts, and near at hand lay his helmet, half on the sand and half within the wave.

And now, as the ship came abreast of the maidens, its motion grew slower and slower. The water seemed to become as smooth and solid as melted wax, and great drops of sweat poured down the faces of the Greeks, and they dragged their oars through it wearily.

For a moment the Sirens paused as if to give new force to their song; then, while the very air seemed to listen, burst forth again:

"O pride of Greece! brave and wise!
A moment pause and stay;
Upon us turn your longing eyes,
And leave the watery way.

"Our meads are bright with many a flower—
Our sands are sands of gold;
With us there comes no weary hour,
Our lovers ne'er grow old.

"More blest than aught of mortal kind
Is he who hears our voice;
Our song instructs the yearning mind,
And makes the heart rejoice.

"Approach, approach, and feel your soul
With mighty raptures rise!
Approach, and in the hero's goal
Learn wisdom from the wise.

"To us is known whate'er is wrought
By every son of fame;
By them who with the Trojans fought—
The kings of mighty name.

"To us each thing beneath the sun
For ever open lies!
Oh, stay, and find that you have won
New wisdom from the wise!"

Utterly overcome with the song, Odysseus raised his voice, and cried wildly to his men to loose his bonds; but every ear was closed and deaf, and no one answered him.

Then he began to struggle, and his efforts were so great that it seemed as if he must work himself free. At this two of his men sprang towards him, and added their strength to the strength of the bonds. Then the ship surged slowly past, and presently the song commenced to faint and die, not only because of the distance, but because that the singers for the first time began to despair of its success.

Presently it ceased altogether, as the singers, with a cry of pain, spread out their wings and sprang into the air, displaying the horrid vulture claws that formed their feet.

The Greeks drew their swords and snatched up their shields fearing an attack, but next moment, with another wild, despairing cry, the Sirens plunged headforemost into the sea, never to be seen by mortal eyes again!

At sight of this the Greeks uttered a cry of joy. Then they unbound their king, and cleared away the wax from every ear.

In a few minutes the wind rose again as suddenly as it had ceased, but scarcely had it blown them out of sight of the Sirens' coast when new troubles sprang up before them.

All at once the sea began to roll and roar, the sky became overcast, and high before them, its head wrapped in clouds, rose the double rock. A dim, phosphoric light gleamed across the waves.

Alarmed at the sight the men lay back in their seats, and let the ship drift on nearer and nearer to the fatal pass. Those who had worked the oars dropped them in despair, and broke into low moans and cries.

Odysseus, now himself again, sprang to his feet, his face full of calmness.

"Why, why, my friends—why are you alarmed?" he cried. "Have we not passed through ills more dreadful, storms more fierce than this? Did we not lie within the Cyclops' cave, and yet escaped? Take courage, and trust in me who led you thence. It is the same Odysseus that now leads you."

"What shall we do, O king?—what shall we do?" they cried with one voice.

"Down with your mast, bend to the oars, and with every muscle strain to clear these rocks! Work as if life and death depended upon every stroke, as truly before the gods they do!"

Quick at his words the mast was lowered, and the men bent to the oars.

For a time the current and the breeze swept them along towards the pass. Presently, however, their efforts began to tell, and in a few minutes more they gained a little way towards the right. A little later, and they were entirely clear of the race-like stream, and passing by the outer edge of the giant rock.

Once clear, the men dropped their oars and paused to rest. Then Odysseus rose to his feet again.

"This is no time to rest," he said, firmly. "A danger quite as great as that we've passed lies just before us. Keep to your oars, O Greeks, and show forth all your courage. Be men again, as when ye fought with mighty Troy within her gates and conquered!"

The men glanced round and saw before them another strait. One side of this was bounded by the mighty rock which they were coasting, on the other rose a lesser rock, a fig tree crowning its top, trees and shrubs shooting from every fissure in its sides.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

(This tale commenced in No. 289. Back numbers can always be had.)

DORA'S DOLLS.

FOR THE YOUNGEST OF OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

BY HARRY HACHE.

I HAVE known many pretty little girls in my time, but if I were asked to say which of them all I thought the very prettiest, I would certainly name little Dora Davenport. But you, of course, did not know Dora, and that is just the reason why I am going to tell you about her.

Dora Davenport was the only child of her parents, and when I tell you that she was as good and as dutiful as she was pretty, you will easily believe that her parents loved her very tenderly. Almost every wish she could form was gratified. As she had no little brothers or sisters to play with, her parents feared that she might sometimes feel lonesome, and to prevent that they supplied her with a great number of toys with which to keep herself amused. The collection of Jacks-in-the-Box, and dancing niggers, and monkeys on sticks, and pretty toy carriages, and boxes of baby-house furniture that she possessed was something quite astonishing, and might have served to keep a whole schoolful of children amused from morning till night.

But it was in her dolls that Dora chiefly took pride and pleasure. She had half a dozen of different sizes, each dressed in a different way from the others, and each having its own particular name. She was very fond of them, and she treated them all with equal kindness; and, we are happy to say, they were not ungrateful for the good treatment they received, but kept themselves nice and clean, and never went tumbling about breaking their noses, or scraping their cheeks, or knocking off their legs and arms. They were very well-behaved dolls, indeed, and did not give their little mistress any trouble, as other naughty dolls sometimes do.

It happened one evening that Dora's aunt came to visit her parents, and she carried in her arms a nice new little mite of a baby, with a wee pink face and bright blue eyes, that could open and shut themselves, and soft, puffy little hands and feet, with the tiniest and funniest little fingers and toes you could imagine. This little creature was something quite new and wonderful to Dora, and it excited her curiosity and delight. She never left it while it lay upon auntie's knee—she touched its hands, its feet, its face, and when it opened its big bright eyes and seemed to look at her, she clapped her hands and laughed aloud in her glee.

"Is it yours, auntie?" she asked, at last.

"Yes, dear," replied Aunt Susy.

"Did you buy it?" was the next question, and Aunt Susy replied that she did.

"Is there another in the shop?" she then said, eagerly.

"No, not another in all the world like this little darling," said Aunt Susy, and she lifted up the baby and kissed it.

The baby didn't seem to like being kissed however, for it began to cry out loud immediately, and soon after Aunt Susy left the house.

For many minutes after she was gone Dora sat with a very thoughtful face, looking at her dolls that lay so nicely sleeping side by side. Then she turned her pretty face up to her mother, who was sewing at the table, and said:

"Will you buy *me* a live baby, mamma?"

"Oh, darling, little girls mustn't have live babies; they couldn't nurse them," replied Mrs. Davenport, with a smile.

"But I could nurse a very little one like Aunt Susy's, mamma, I'm sure," Dora said.

"No, darling, you couldn't. Only big people like auntie can mind *live* babies; little girls can mind dolls that don't cry and make a noise," said Dora's mother.

The little girl looked at her dolls again, but I am afraid they did not now appear so interesting as they were before she had seen Aunt Susy's baby. She took the biggest of them, called Lily, upon her knee, however, and began to nurse it as she had seen Aunt Susy do, but all the time she looked thoughtful and grave.

"Oh dear," she sighed, "I do so wish it would move its eyes!"

Almost as soon as she spoke, the doll Lily *did* move its eyes, and not only that, but it moved its body and sat straight up in her lap.

"Oh, I'm so glad!" cried Dora. "Are you really alive?"

"Of course I am," replied the doll, quite pertly; "but, indeed, it's a wonder, considering the way you have treated me."

"I have always been very kind to you, Lily," said Dora.

"Kind, indeed!" replied Lily, with a toss of her head. "I'm sure you haven't. Just look at my arm. You've stitched my frock through it in four places, and I'm sure that's not kind."

"I'm very sorry; but I didn't think it would hurt you," said Dora.

"Well, I'm sure!—I didn't think it would hurt! How would you like to have a sharp needle run through your arm, I'd like to know? But that's not the worst. There's little Polly, whose life is a torture, I'm sure."

"Yes, that it is," chimed in one of the little dolls, sitting bolt upright in bed.

"Oh dear!" cried Dora, looking very much distressed. "Whatever have *you* to complain about, Polly?"

"I'm sure I have a great deal to complain about," she replied. "Look at my legs!" and she held up one of her fat little limbs. "It's all swelled and sore, and it's quite painful, and no wonder. Instead of putting on my boots properly, you've sewed them on, and I'm sure no one would like to be treated in that manner."

"No, not if your legs were flesh, and had blood in them," said Dora.

"That doesn't matter," responded Polly. "Dolls must have different legs from yours, of course; but then we can feel all the same. And when you stick needles and pins into us, and make our sawdust come out, it's dreadful."

"Well, I'm sure I beg your pardon," said Dora; "and I'll never do it any more."

"Oh, that's all very well, Miss Dora, but it won't cure my wounded legs," remarked Polly.

"But I'll get you new boots that will fit without being stitched on," said Dora.

"Oh, thank you; that will be very nice. And perhaps you will get Tilly a new frock?" said Polly.

"Tilly's dress is very nice, I think," replied Dora.

"No, missy, it isn't," piped a weak little voice from the bed.

"Well I never!" exclaimed Dora. "Whatever is the matter with you?"

"The matter!" exclaimed Tilly. "Good gracious! Why, I'm stuck full of pins all over. There is one right through my shoulder, and three great big ones run into my left side, and all to make this nasty dress fit me. It's quite disgraceful."

"Then we must try to get you a new dress that will fit you better," said Dora.

"Thank you. That will be very nice," replied Tilly, looking very much relieved.

Then there was a deep groan uttered by another of the dolls, and Dora looked towards it in alarm.

"My! Are you ill, Rosy?" she said.

"Ill! Well, I should think so. There's a dreadful pain running all through me. Oh dear—oh dear! It's shocking to be a doll!" whimpered Rosy.

"Now, Rosy, you mustn't say that. I think a doll leads a nice comfortable life," said Dora.

"A comfortable life! No; I'm sure they don't. How can one be comfortable, I'd like to know, with a great hairpin run right up one's back to make it stiff? If you call that comfortable, I'm sure I don't," said the doll, very decidedly.

"Well, no," said Dora, shaking her head, with a very wise air. "I daresay it is unpleasant; but then your back is so weak, Rosy."

"Well, if it is, I'm sure you oughtn't to mend it by sticking a piece of iron wire right through me. A pair of stays, now, would do very well, and be far more comfortable."

"You shall have a pair, then," said Dora; and the doll appeared to be quite satisfied with that assurance.

The other two dolls did not appear to have anything to complain about, for they continued to lie quite still; and Rosy and Tilly and Polly and Lily, appearing to be satisfied that their complaints would be attended to, again composed themselves to sleep.

Dora's mamma just then rung a little bell to summon a servant, and the noise attracted the little girl's attention.

"Oh, mamma," she cried, "my dolls have been talking to me, and they want such a lot of things."

"Do they, darling?" said Mrs. Davenport, with a smile.

"Yes. Rosy wants new stays, and Tilly wants a new dress, and Polly wants new boots, and Lily wants to be undressed, and have the stitches taken out of her arms."

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Davenport. "Did they ask for all those things themselves?"

"Yes, mamma. They opened their eyes and moved their lips, and sat up like little girls. They're quite alive, only they've all gone to sleep now," said Dora,

with great delight; and she related to her mamma all that had taken place.

Mrs. Davenport laughed, and when papa came in, the wonderful story was told to him, and he laughed too. But both Dora's parents agreed that the dolls had good cause to complain, and they promised to help Dora all they could to make them more comfortable.

The very next day little Dora began to make the necessary improvements, and from that hour there was not in all the world any little family so well attended and so happy as DORA'S DOLLS.

BLUEBELL VANE'S STORY.

BY LADYE BYRDE.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE QUEEN BEE TALKS.

TOM'S punishment seemed to me excessive for so small an offence; but he had broken a rule laid down by his father, and any violation of home laws was, I soon found, severely visited by their framer. For the next three days I heard of him through the others as being under a cloud of punishment; but not being able myself to appear at meals, I saw nothing of him, he not being permitted to join the family during the evenings.

In spite of Jack's warning, I had ventured to intercede with my uncle on Tom's behalf one morning when, after breakfast, he came in to see me, as I sat, as usual, on the sofa in the sitting-room; but the answer I received was:

"He has broken a rule of the house, and must suffer his punishment."

"But, uncle," I dared to say, "perhaps he wouldn't have done it, only for me."

"The greater shame to him," was the calm reply. "If he has been so weak and silly as to disregard rules merely to minister to the whim and caprice of a child more foolish than himself, he must abide by the consequence. If you deserve punishment, and I daresay you have been faulty in the matter (though Tom takes the entire blame upon himself), you are certainly receiving your full share, and I trust it may make you wiser for the future. It would be more becoming if you chose Zoe for your companion, than your cousin Tom."

"I like Zoe very much," said I, feeling as if I ought to be ashamed of myself for the preference I showed to boys' society, "but she only cares to play with dolls."

"It shows a proper feminine taste on Zoe's part to like her dolls; and if you, unfortunately, do not care to participate in her amusements, you should endeavour to cultivate such a taste."

Unyielding as was my uncle, often stern, and exacting an unquestioning obedience, I could not but like and respect him. He was much beloved by the elder members of his family, though, perhaps, in the affection of the juveniles there was a stronger element of admiration than love. To his wife alone was he demonstrative in his regard; in his coldest, most unapproachable moods I have seen his eye light up at her coming, and his whole manner change, but only to her. She was a wise woman, and, knowing her power, took care not to abuse it.

I saw more of my aunt in these days when I was a prisoner. She would bring her work or some little household job and sit beside me, talking kindly and pleasantly, and I poured out the little secrets I had been hoarding up for lack of opportunity to tell them to her since the visit to my uncle's office. She told me that Cranefells was now deserted, no one living there but persons to take care of the house, and soon there would be a sale of everything.

"Where are Elfrida and Catherine," asked I, wondering whether they had been sent to a workhouse.

"That I cannot tell you," she replied; adding in a sad voice, "Their father has been taken away. I'm afraid his punishment has been a sore one already."

"I'm sure he deserves it," was my uncharitable remark.

"Ah, Bluebell!" said she, reproachfully, "think of ourselves, if we were but punished as we deserve!"

"There are very few people as wicked as he's been!" said I, in my self-righteousness. "I'd be ashamed to do the wicked things he's done!"

"I daresay he felt much as you do when he was your age, my dear child!"

"Oh, aunt, I can't fancy he ever was a little boy. I'm sure he was a very horrid one, with dirty pinafores, and a great storyteller, too!"

"He may have lost his parents at an early age, and been brought up by strangers. We don't know what bad influences may have been brought to bear upon his youth. You know, dear, that no one becomes wicked all at once; it is only by slow degrees that the harm is done."

"If I'd stayed at Cranefells much longer, I should have got to be as wicked as wicked can be. It seemed as if I couldn't help being naughty there."

"Do you find yourself so much improved, then, since coming here?" asked my aunt, with a smile that made me hang my head with conscious shame.

"I don't feel half so wicked in my heart as I did there," I said, when I had a little recovered myself. "I've often gone to bed at nights wishing I could find out some way of poisoning myself, so that I wouldn't have to live with such people."

Aunt Esther kissed me as I leant my head on her shoulder, and said:

"It was indeed a happy thing that you were removed before any greater harm was effected. How wonderful are the ways of Providence!" she added, musingly. "If Mr. Stewart had not gone over to Cranefells to solicit a contribution from Mr. Hopkinson for the new schoolhouse that day, you might still be there, and we should, perhaps, never have known that our little Bluebell was alive and within fifty miles of us!"

"Yes; and if Mr. Stewart hadn't happened to come on that very day, when they were all out, I should never have seen him, I daresay, because they didn't allow me to go into the library at all."

"The more I think of it, the more wonderful it appears," said my aunt, lost in thought. She remained silent for a few moments, shading her face with her hand; and then, rousing herself, said: "I trust it is all for the best. We can never be grateful enough to the loving Hand that has guided us to each other."

I knew what she meant, and my heart was full of gratitude at the thought of the misery I had escaped, and of the home I had gained.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A HOPE IS CRUSHED TO DEATH.

Next morning my aunt came to spend a half hour with me after breakfast, bringing with her the *Pinebridge Gazette*, in which she showed me an advertisement headed "Important Sale," by which I read that "the whole of the costly appointments of the Manor Cranefells is to be sold, including some splendidly-carved furniture, elegant buhl tables and cabinets, fine old oak buffets, Dresden, Sevres, and other china, marble and rare French clocks, malachite and onyx ornaments, a valuable library, pianoforte, billiard table and appointments, console tables and glasses, decorative objects, chandeliers, articles of vertu; a collection of paintings, some by distinguished masters, including examples by Watteau, &c.; cellar of choice wine, plate, linen, &c., &c."

"I wonder who'll get all the money for these things?" said I to Aunt Esther.

"I hope it will go to a rightful owner," she replied. "Mr. Hopkinson has a brother to whom he has been very unjust."

"Ah, yes; I remember the man that came in through the study window that night said something about him, and he promised to give him a share of the money that he took out of the cashbox. Aunt, is it all written in the newspapers that Mr. Hopkinson has been such a bad man?"

"Much has been said in them—too much, I am afraid; but we know a great deal through another source. You are too young, and it would not be right to tell you of many things that have come to our knowledge. Besides, it could do no possible good. Mr. Hopkinson must have been a remarkably cunning man, as well as a clever rogue."

"I knew he was!" cried I, exultingly, as if the knowledge could in any way benefit myself. "I believe he stole the money to buy mamma's house. Oh, if I could only get it back again!" I went on, clasping my hands. "Aunt, wouldn't it be nice? Then you and uncle and all of us could go and live there, and it would be just as if it was your very own; and we'd alter the house and make it just as it used to be when mamma lived there before she married. How lovely it would be!"

"I'm afraid such a pretty castle in the air has no solid foundation," laughed she. "We must build our future upon something more substantial, my little nicce."

I sighed.

"Never mind, auntie, it's a pretty castle to think of, even if it can never come true." Then, after a pause, I said, hesitatingly, "Do you think there's any chance of—of—Mr. Hopkinson having told a story about—about papa being dead, and that—that he"——

Aunt Esther dropped her work to look at me.

"What do you mean, child?"

"I've often thought of it since I came here," said I, gaining courage as I went on—"and I've wanted so to ask you, but I never liked to. Do you think Papa can be alive somewhere now?"

She resumed her work.

"No, dear; I don't think we've the slightest reason for such an impossible hope. It was too true; there's no doubt about it."

Then, finding I made no remark, she said:

"I read the account of the wreck of the vessel myself; and, although some few were saved, your Father was not among them; and besides, dear, no letters have come ever since, and, if he were living, surely he would have written."

"Yes," replied I, sorrowfully enough, the little hope I had been nursing fast disappearing; "but I only thought that if Mr. Hopkinson would tell such a story about me, he wouldn't mind telling one about poor Papa."

"So far as telling an untruth goes, I am afraid," said my aunt, "that would be but a small matter to such a man; but in this case he certainly told the truth, and," she added, lowering her voice, "he was too glad to have it to tell."

"How do you mean, aunt?"

"He was very anxious, I know, for your Father to leave England; and, indeed, I really think, under the circumstances, it was the best thing that could be done."

"Was my Father a good man?" asked I, greatly dreading the answer I might receive, for I knew my aunt's truthful nature.

"Yes, dear, I believe he was; but he was not what is called a man of strong mind—that is, he could be easily governed and controlled by others; and somehow Mr. Hopkinson gained great influence over him, especially after your mother's death, and this was a bitter, bitter thing for him, as well as for others. There was a time, dear, when your Father was a man highly thought of, and honoured among his friends. It was this unfortunate disposition to be guided by others that was his bane. He was, unhappily, one of those men who seem not to have the power of saying 'No.' To possess such a disposition is a positive misfortune—it is indeed."

"Mamma was not like that, was she?"

"Oh dear, no—very much the contrary; and so long as your Father was at her side, things went smoothly enough, for he loved her very dearly, and until the heaviest troubles came theirs was a happy home. But my poor brother, unfortunately for himself, was at one time a great sportsman. He had a passion for hunting, and all connected with it, and once kept a pack of hounds; but that was before he married. Mr. Hopkinson has been a sportsman, too, in a small way, and living in the same county they often met at hunt dinners, and before long became intimate. After this it was down-hill work. One loss followed another, no one seemed to know how, and family property slipped through your father's fingers till nothing was left; and as I told you before, your Mother, who had always strongly disapproved of her husband's friendship with Mr. Hopkinson, at last sacrificed her own estate rather than see your Father in difficulties. But the loss affected her health, and, indeed, she did not live long after it. There is a great deal that I myself do not know the rights of, but I feel sure your parents have been much wronged by this man, and from what you have told me he has confessed as much to yourself."

I was silent a few moments, and then said sagely:

"Uncle Carringer is a lawyer. Why couldn't he find out what wrong things Mr. Hopkinson has done to us, and make him pay it all back?"

"My dear Bluebell, these things are much more easily talked of than done. Even supposing such a course were possible, think of Mr. Hopkinson's state of health—his mind enfeebled by illness, his"——

"I know what I'd do," said I, impetuously, strong in the wisdom of eleven years of folly. "I'd just go up to him, and I'd say, 'Now, it's not a bit of good for you to deny that you've done a lot of unjust things to Mr. and Mrs. Vane. You know you have. So just tell me all about it; and if you don't, I'll make you.' I'd shake him" (clenching my teeth) "if he said he wouldn't tell." Then, as an afterthought, "Of course I mean if I was a man."

Aunt Esther laughed.

"I'm afraid such decisive measures would scarcely produce the desired effect," she said. "Besides, you must remember that it is not the lawyers who will decide Mr. Hopkinson's case. If he is sufficiently well to appear on trial at the next assizes, he will stand or fall according to the verdict of judge and jury. The lawyers, whom you think have so much power, will be of little use then."

"Has Uncle Carringer been to Cranefells since I came here?"

"Jack was there a few days ago on business—the same day that you took a note for me to your uncle's office; but of course he did not see either Mr. Hopkinson or his daughters, for it is their home no longer."

There were many more questions I should have liked to ask my aunt, but she seemed to think I had been told quite enough; and Lucie coming in with her stocking basket, Zoe and Baby Gertrude at her heels, carrying slates and books, we proceeded to the business of lessons.

CHAPTER XXX.

A GOLD LOCKET IS OPENED AND SHUT.

That same afternoon, when Zoe and Baby were in the garden with Lucie for an hour before tea, I sat alone on my sofa putting together a historical dissecting puzzle on a small table before me, when Graham, passing the open door, put his head in.

"All alone, little Bluebell?" he asked.

"Yes," replied I, searching industriously for the heads of Henry VIII. and his first queen. "Aunt Esther has just gone to the drawing-room; there's a visitor come."

"Then I suppose I may keep you company till she returns—eh?"

I liked this big Graham, but entertained some wholesome fear towards him as well, especially since Tom had told me he was so wonderfully clever. I could sooner have taken a liberty with Ion than with Graham, though I held the Mogul in dread.

"And how do you like being a prisoner?" asked he, throwing himself into the low chair my aunt had occupied.

"I'm getting so tired of it," said I. "Oh! here's the stupid old head. I knew it must be somewhere here."

"Whose stupid old head are you talking of—mine?"

"No, as if I was!" said I, laughing at the idea. "It's that wicked old Catherine of Arragon's. Tom says you are a—— I forget the word, it's such a long one; something beginning with an 'e.'"

"Empty-headed?"

"Oh, no; not that."

"Epileptic?"

"What stuff! I mean something tremendously clever—a sort of dictionary, you know. Encyclopedia—that's the word."

Graham laughed.

"Tom is fond of his joke. I suppose he finds I can translate Cæsar a little better than he can. Haven't you seen him?"

"No; but I want to."

"Well, he'll be out of purgatory this evening; and I hope he'll keep out of mischief for some time to come, and you, too, little one."

"Uncle Carringer is horrid," said I, pouting. "He's awfully strict," I went on, viciously poking Henry VIII. into his proper place. "Fancy punishing Tom so much just because he hadn't learnt all his lessons before going out! Where is that ugly old woman's foot?" I muttered, upsetting a dozen pieces in my quest for Anne Boleyn's left leg.

"Here, let me help you," said my companion, putting his great hand in the litter, and, as if by magic, pouncing on the right piece at once. "Here, let us work together, and we can have our talk as we go on. What comes next? We must find the royal crown for this dainty head. And so you think your uncle strict—eh?"

"Yes, that I do."

"For my own part," he said, paying all his attention to the puzzle before him, "I don't think much of anybody who isn't what you call strict."

I looked disapprovingly at him, and said, with energy:

"I hate strict people; I can't bear them."

"Not at all; they're just the people you like most," he said.

I looked up to stare at him. He took no notice of me, and went on:

"Give me the crown; I'll put it in its place. Now find Jane Seymour's little son. A person who is really and properly strict from pure, conscientious motives commands your respect and esteem, and if they are kind and reasonable at the same time, you cannot help liking them. You will become quite fond of Mr. Carringer in time."

I tried to screw up my nose; he put back some of my hair that hung between his face and mine and said:

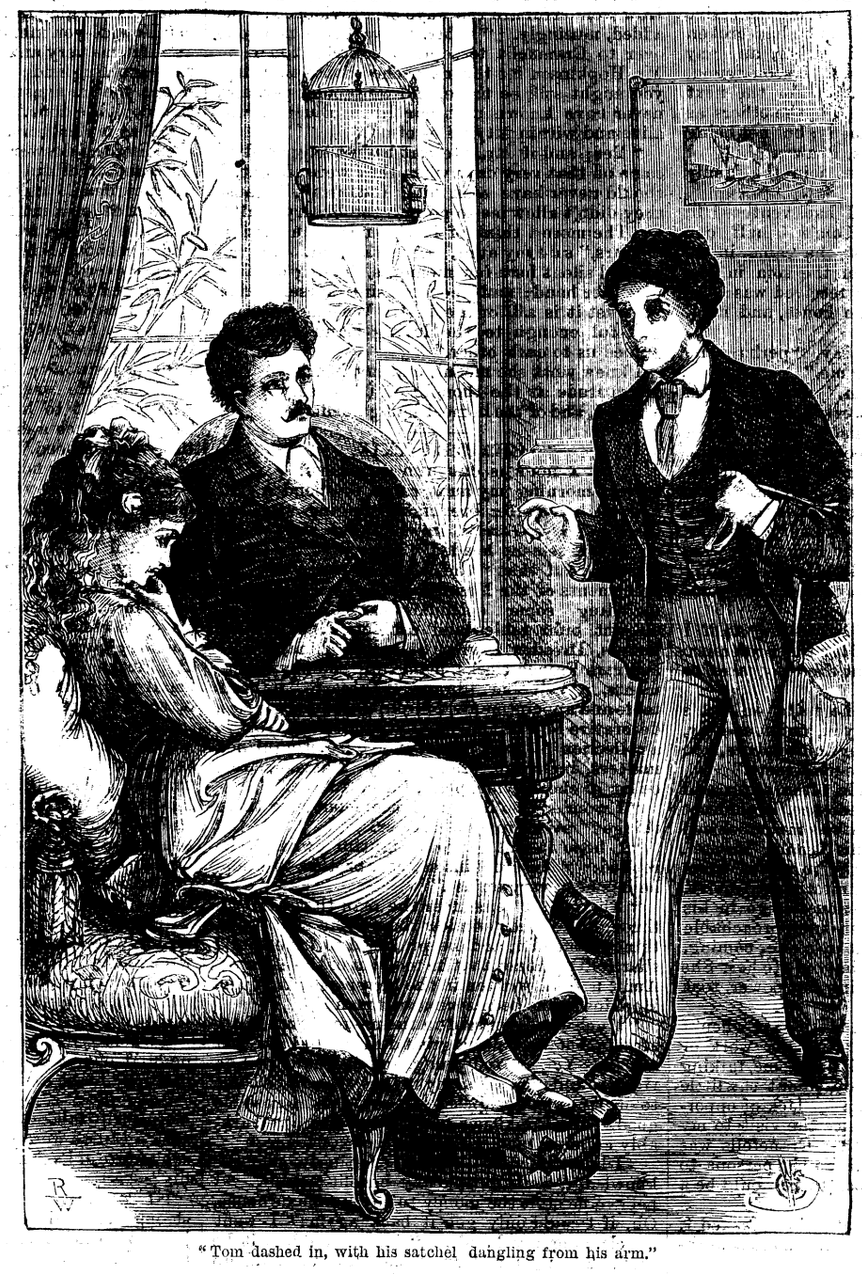
"I like to watch people's faces when they are talking to me, it is so much easier then to tell how much they mean of what they say."

"I always mean what I say," observed I, a little piqued.

"I don't think you do," said he, quietly.

I fired up. "I do—indeed I do."

"Do you think your uncle a horrid man?"



"Tom dashed in, with his satchel dangling from his arm."

"Not horrid, but dreadfully strict."

"I may have been mistaken," said he, "but I understood you to call him 'horrid.' You don't call Catherine of Arragon a wicked old woman, do you?"

"Who? Catherine of Arragon? No, I don't; I think she was rather nice. Why?"

"You called her a wicked old woman. And my impression of Anne Boleyn is that she was a bright, lively young person, yet you called her old and stupid."

"Did I? Of course I didn't mean to, only"——

"Yes; but you always say what you mean, you know."

"Oh, dear—as if I could be so particular as all that! I meant that I—I"——

"That you generally say things that you don't mean—is that it?"

"No, it isn't; but I didn't mean in that sort of way. Little things slip out now and then, when you're not thinking."

"But don't you think it would be much better if we always thought before we spoke?" he asked, bending to give my cheek a gentle pinch. "We shouldn't say half the foolish things we do if we only thought beforehand, should we?"

He was so long about his pinch that I felt myself blushing without any cause, and putting his hand aside, found my hand a prisoner, but only for an instant. It seemed to me that I ought to say something; so I began:

"Anyhow, if Uncle Carringer isn't horrid, you can't say he hasn't punished Tom a great deal more than he deserved for one little fault."

"Disobedience of any kind is a grave fault," he replied; but changing his tone, and smiling, he added, "You owe Master Tom a little grudge yourself, don't you?"

"I! No, I don't! It wasn't his fault—it was mine for laughing so. I nearly fell down once before, but he caught me up in time."

"You were both up in one tree, then?"

"Yes."

"What made you laugh so much?"

My cheeks grew crimson and my head drooped, the curls falling in a mass over my burning cheeks. But I couldn't have told why I felt thus, for I myself did not know.

"You don't want to tell me," said he, trying to draw my head up.

"Please don't ask. I think it's a secret"——

"Nothing is a secret that is known to three persons," laughed he. "I know a few of such secrets myself. Besides, you forget I was in the garden at the time. Lucie and Horace Mayne have been badly bitten."

"Bitten!" I echoed, looking up.

"Perhaps I should rather have said smitten," replied he, meeting my gaze as unconcernedly as if he were talking of physical geography. "You are not old enough yet to know anything about their fever, but your day will come soon enough, Bluebell. What a quantity of curls you have! I think you must spare me this little one; it is hidden by the rest, and won't be missed."

Before I could prevent him, he had dived into Aunt Esther's work-basket, taken out her scissors, and snipped off the lock.

I had scarcely felt the steel behind my ear, when he drew back from me, coolly twisting the hair round his forefinger, entirely regardless of my astonishment, and of the way in which I put up my hand hastily, as if to ward off a further attack of scissors.

"Amid such abundance," he said, addressing the hair he was twining, "you won't be missed, you little golden threads!" (How I wished Elfrida and Catherine could have heard him!) "And my poor locket here is empty. You will lie snugly there, won't you? And if anybody is curious, and wants to know where you came from, say you are bluebell fibres. Are you willing?" he asked, turning himself to look straight at me.

I meant to say "No," and shrugging up my shoulders began a vehement denial; but when my eyes met his, the words died on my lips, and somehow I was speechless.

"Hallo, Blub!" cried a voice at the door. "My gum, what's up? Just look at her cheeks! How red they are!"

And Tom dashed in, with his satchel dangling from his arm.

I heard the snap of Graham's locket. He looked up calmly, and said:

"Good evening, Mr. Tom Carringer. Welcome to the bosom of your family once more!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

FRANK HOWARD.

A SEA STORY OF ADVENTURE AND DARING.

BY J. A. MAITLAND.

CHAPTER XVII.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

DOUGLASS was one of those Englishmen—by no means rare, whether young or old—who can never be taught to speak a foreign language. He had a droll way of his own of mixing up bad French and broken Spanish and negro jargon with broken English, and now and then a Latin word that he had learnt at school, in one mess, or *olla podrida* as the Spanish would say.

"Now where *is* that woman gone, I wonder?" he muttered. "She was so active and sprightly that she must be a young girl. I made sure I had *her*, and now *she's* avoided me. Oh, dear, I wish I could speak French like poor Howard did. Though perhaps if he hadn't spoken French so well, they wouldn't have taken him for a spy, and he'd have escaped the gallows, poor fellow! By George, I'll never be satisfied till I've seen a score of Frenchmen hanged to revenge him. Indeed I'd act the part of Jack Ketch with all the pleasure in the world, though I came so near being hanged myself. I wonder whether they hanged the fellow from whom I took these confounded clothes, in *my* place, as the sergeant swore he would? Anyhow I wish I could get rid of this uniform. The Spaniards are afraid to let me come near them, and if I don't make some sort of change, I shall be starved to death. I made sure that I'd trapped that girl, or woman, or whatever she is; and, by Jove, if I *had* caught her I'd have made her change garments—outer garments at any rate, though I don't like the idea of plundering a female. But then a fellow can't starve! Now where *can* she have got to? I saw her take this turn, and I wasn't a minute before I was where she stood, and presto! she had disappeared! She *must* be hiding somewhere hereabouts. I'll search every inch of the ground but I'll find her."

He came nearer to the spot where I lay, and would have trodden upon me if I had not started to my feet, and ran away.

"Ay — stop — *arretty! Entendy!*" he called out, as he scrambled through the brushwood after me. "Me wantee catch. Not wantee do no harm. *Ingleza*—English sailor—no hurt woman—eh? Confound it (to himself). English sailor, indeed! Much like a sailor I look in these soldier fallals!"

He continued his pursuit for some time, until at length I pretended to be stopped by a clump of furze, and allowed him to come up with me.

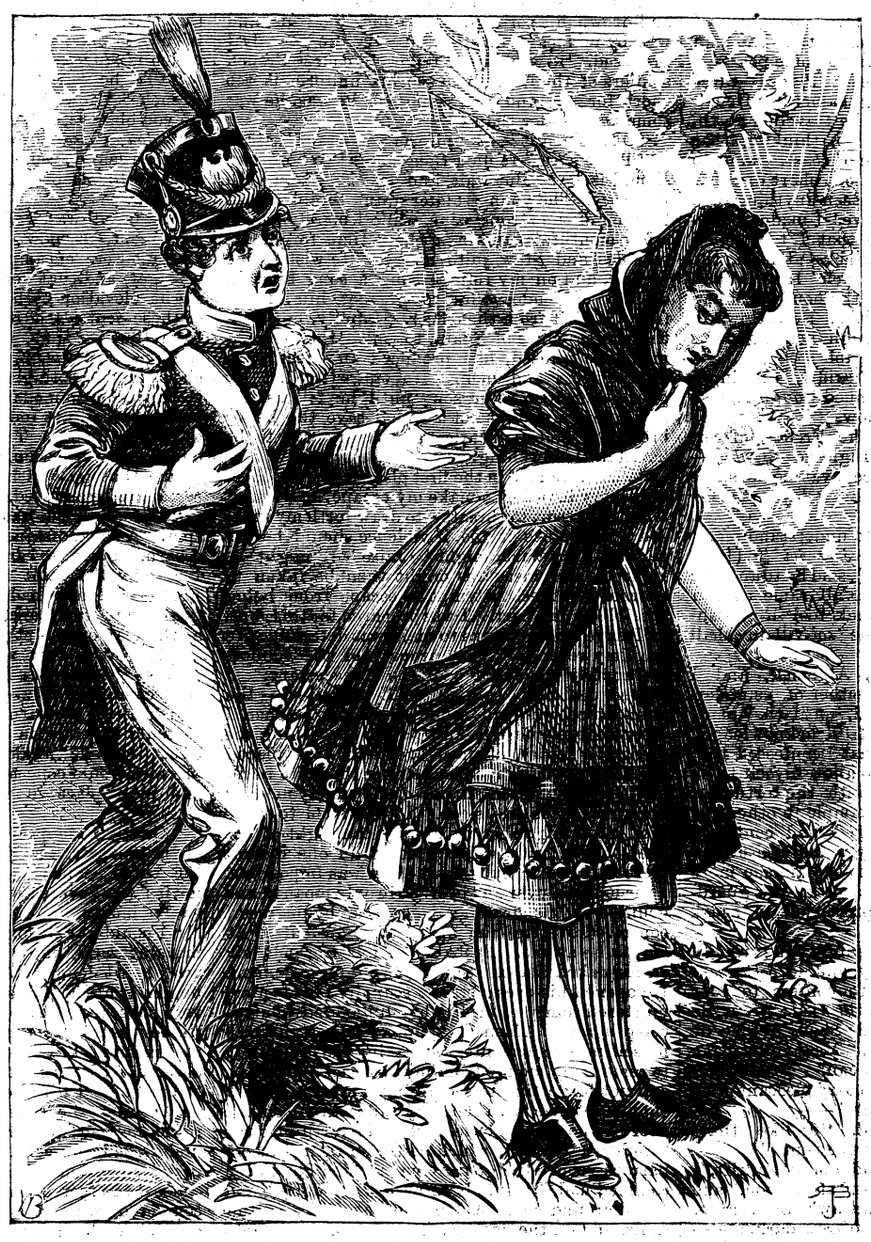
I could hardly keep from laughing when, with a low bow, he raised his shako, or military cap, and began, with the utmost politeness:

"Scusy, miss, madame, *mam'selle, senory*, Me what you call *gentilhomme*. Me officer Britannique, though I wear Fransay uniform—*compreny*? That is, do you *sabby*—know—what you call? Must changy clothes—gown, *habits, roba*. Very sorry. Mosh grieved; no can help it. See; peoples—*gens* frightened. No can come near them. One, two, three days—*une, duo, tres*—not have eat—no mangy nothing! Scusy, mam'selle; see, money — *dinarii—argent —plata*—what you call—have got;" and he pulled out a handful of silver, with a few Spanish gold pieces intermixed, from his pocket, and, laying the money on the ground, made signs that I should retire behind the bushes on one hand, and he on the other, while we took off our clothes; though by what means we were to make the exchange afterwards, without coming out from behind the bushes, I could not understand. Hitherto, I had nearly concealed my face, by pulling up over it the cape that hung behind my dress, and the handkerchief I wore coming down low on my forehead—my features were almost completely hidden.

Now I made signs as if I were bashful and frightened, and perceiving this to be the case, as *he* thought, he again went on:

"Scusy, *senory*. *Robas*—clothes must have; but will pay—will turn away my face—*visage*—what you call. No harm will do to *senory*."

"No, no!" I cried, in English. "I can't make the exchange; and I *won't*, that's flat. Please go away. I need my dress for myself."



"Douglass continued his pursuit for some time, until, at length, I pretended to be stopped by a clump of furze."

"Hillo! *By* Jove!" cried he, in amazement. "You speak English—eh? And yours is no *girl's* voice, *I'll* swear! By George! if it were not impossible, I should say that it's the voice"——

"Of Frank Howard!" I exclaimed, at the same time throwing back the cape that had partially concealed my features; "and you are no French officer, but"——

"Alfred Douglass," said he. "What *does* this mean? I don't understand it! But, 'pon my soul, I'm glad to see you, old fellow, if—if you are really Frank Howard. I'm not dreaming—am I? You really are yourself, and no ghost? By George, they told me, the false scoundrels, that you'd been hanged for a spy! But how the mischief came you here, and in *that* guise?"

"I really *am* Frank Howard," I replied, laughing; "but as to how I came to be here in this guise I may just as well ask how *you* came to be here, disguised in the uniform of a French soldier, when I believed you to be at Malta on board Captain Barlow's new frigate by this time?"

I shared the contents of my bag with Douglass, who was truly near famishing. He ate heartily of the rye-bread and onions which the bag contained, and then finished off with a bunch of grapes and a bottle of light wine that I had purchased the day before, that we emptied between us.

"I feel all the better after that," said he, when our simple meal was ended. "Black bread and onions is poor fare, yet I never enjoyed a feast at Douglass Castle half so much. But I say, old fellow, it's too bad to be obliged to stick to these confounded soldier's duds. I made sure that I was in luck's way at last. I thought I'd got hold of a female of some sort—young or old, I didn't much care which; and I intended to change garments with her whether she would or no."

"Very gallant!" said I, laughing. "The idea of Lord Alfred Douglass, who prides himself so much upon his courtesy to females of all ages and every class, plundering a poor girl of her clothing!"

"What would you have me do?" answered Douglass. "It would have gone against me; but it was a case of life or death. I daren't go anywhere to purchase food in this dress, and whenever I went near a cottage the people closed their doors against me, and pointed a musket at me from the upper window. One fellow actually fired at me! After all, it would have been a fair exchange, and that's no robbery. These soldier-duds are worth more than a peasant woman's dress. And then just fancy some young girl or old woman going home to her friends in the guise of a French soldier! Ha, ha, ha! But I say, Frank, now that we've met, you must help me in some way or other to get rid of this disguise—eh?"

"How did you procure it?" I asked, "and how came you to be here, in the heart of Spain, at all? I can't conceive *how* you got here!"

"Well, I'll tell you," continued Douglass. "You see, I missed you before you could have been a hundred yards from the ship, and missing the jolly-boat, and seeing that the tackles had been freshly cut, I knew how the accident must have happened. But the night was as dark as pitch. There was no boat at hand to lower and send after you if we'd known where to search for you. I spoke to the captain of the troop-ship, and asked him to heave to and get a boat into the water and search for you till daylight; but he told me that he'd be hanged if he'd risk any mishap to his ship, or delay his passage to Malta for any midshipman in his Majesty's service. He said you had no business to get into the boat, and that he was more sorry for the loss of the boat than you. A midshipman, he said, has as many lives as a cat, and he had no doubt you'd turn up somewhere some day or other. At any rate, you must take your chance.

"The captain, as you know, was terribly afraid of coming across some one of the enemy's cruisers while his own ship was in a disabled condition, and he was anxious to get to Majorca, where he might be able to refit, if he could not put his ship into repair out at sea. However, it fell calm, the morning after your disappearance, and so remained for three days, during which period we managed to get up jury-masts and put things pretty well to rights again. Then, just as the breeze sprang up, we sighted a French merchant ship, deeply laden, and eager as the captain had been

to get away from the Spanish coast, he was just as eager to make a prize of this vessel. She bore away nor'-west; we followed after her, quite forgetful, for the time being, of the enemy's cruisers; and, to make matters short, we pressed her so close that we drove her on shore near Pensecola, and after plundering her of everything that was worth carrying off, we left her to her fate. I, however, was still anxious to learn something about you, and, to tell the truth, I took it into my head that I should like a run on shore, and that it would be all the better fun through its being on an enemy's soil. So I put all my money into my pockets, and watching my opportunity, got away in one of the boats that we had taken from the French ship, and sculled myself on shore during the night, leaving the troop-ship to make her way to Malta without the honour of my company on board.

"Well, you see, I didn't know whereabouts I was when daylight came any more than the man in the moon, until I learnt from some peasants that I was near Castellon de la Planca—these Spaniards are *so* fond of long names! 'Hem!' thinks I—'Frank Howard, if he travelled north, 'll be somewhere near here.' So, thinking that you'd naturally follow the line of coast, I went to what I thought was a farmhouse, a short distance off, to inquire whether they'd seen anything of a young English officer. By Jove! I made a precious mess of it! The place that I took for a farmhouse proved to be a barrack—at least, the French soldiers had turned their friends and allies, the Spaniards, out of the house, and had made a barrack of it for themselves. Now, Howard, you know that my French, though not so good as yours, is very plain and intelligible?"

"No, I'll be hanged if I do," said I, laughing.

"Well, it *is*, anyway," continued Douglass, "so you needn't make fun of a fellow.

"'Monsheer,' said I, to the French officer, 'avvy woo seen one officer Ingleeze—*Anglais*—what you call—from one sheep, vat come shore alone—*seulement*—one, *deux*, three days—*jours*—may be one week *passée?*'

"The officer pretended not to understand me.

"'*Hé, Alphonse, mon ami, venez ici*'" (Here Alphonse, my friend, come here), said he to another officer. 'You speck Engleesh all same as von natif. Speek you to dis dronck fool Engleeshmans. Find for me vat de *sot*-villain shall say.'

"Well, the French officer, Alphonse, and I pegged away for some time, neither of us understanding a word the other said, until they made it out—confound them!—that I'd acknowledged myself to be a spy, and also that I confessed that since I'd been such a fool as to allow myself to be caught, I deserved to meet with the fortune of war, and to be hanged as an example to others!

"Of course I'd acknowledged and confessed nothing of the kind; but they would insist that I had, and the more I offered to explain the more they laughed at me. I was sent to the guardhouse, and Alphonse, who pretended to speak English, said:

"'*Bon soir, mon ami* (good evening, mine vriend). And since you have de courtesy and de *politesse*—de politeness, vat you call—to confess to your sins, you shall have von leetle visite from de provost-marshal—vat you call de Shack Ketch—de first ting to-morrow morning. Meanvhile make you'self so comfort'ble vat you can.'

"This, you will allow, was no very pleasant prospect, and all through *your* fault"——

"*My* fault!" I interrupted. "I like that! How the mischief do you make that out?"

"Plain enough. If you had not got adrift, I shouldn't have come to look after you, and shouldn't have got into such an awkward scrape. But no matter. It soon began to grow dark, and—as I could hear—the French officers and soldiers went to their dinners, and appeared to drink freely of the strong Spanish wines they found in the house, for they soon grew very noisy.

"Presently I received a visit from Alphonse, who came to set a guard over me for the night, and brought with him a half-gallon flask of port wine.

"'See you, mine vriend,' said he. 'Your contremans like mosh for get dronck. So, dat you shall—*vous enjouir*—vat you call, enjoy you, I have bring you some *vin*, dat you shall go more comfort'ble to do gallows in de morning—eh?'

"And thus speaking, Alphonse, who had evidently been already making *himself* comfortable, after the fashion he recommended to me, set down the flask and a tumbler, and staggered away to rejoin his comrades, leaving the sentinel along with me.

"I soon discovered that the soldier left in charge of me was a young recruit who had very lately been enlisted against his will, and had been at the ploughtail all his life. He was as ignorant and stupid as he well could be, and, before long, he began to weep and sorrow aloud for his mother and the friends he had left behind him in *la belle France* (fair France), and then he broke out into curses against Bonaparte and the war, and all wars that have been or shall be while the world shall last.

"An idea came into my head. The noise and jollity of the officers and soldiers grew fast and furious, and then gradually subsided, as if they had all fallen asleep overpowered by the quantity of wine they had drank. You've seen my dagger-knife? Here it is (drawing forth the knife from a sheath concealed beneath his waistcoat). You know how keen and sharp the blade is? Well, I had, as you see, brought this knife on shore with me, and I determined that if I must die, somebody else should die with me to bear me company. The first thing, however, was to try to escape. I therefore made signs to the young soldier to drink and drown his sorrows. He understood me, and was by no means unwilling to try the remedy I proposed. He was a little fellow, like most French soldiers of the line. You see his uniform is too short for *me;* and yet, young as he was, he was some years older than I."

"Oh! Then it is *his* uniform you wear?" said I.

"To be sure," replied Douglass. "Whose else should it be? But wait, and let *me* go on with my story. The young soldier drank tumbler after tumbler of the strong wine, while I merely sipped a few mouthfuls, and in a short time forgot his troubles and grew quite merry. He wished me to sing, and on my refusal sang a song himself, despite my endeavours to prevent him, for I feared a visit from the officer. Happily, however, the strong wines of Spain, to which the Frenchmen were unused, had produced an effect upon both officers and men. No one stirred. My guard sang song after song until he fell asleep, and before midnight not a sound save the heavy breathing of the intoxicated soldiers was to be heard in the dwelling.

"I had intended in the first place to try the effect of bribery in order to make my escape, and if that failed, to resort to threats—to draw forth my knife—ay, and to use it too, if violence should be necessary. An alarm might be raised—I might be secured, and measures might then be taken to prevent any fresh attempt to escape from being possible on my part. I was prepared for this; but, as I have said, if I was to die, I was determined to have my revenge. The carousal of the soldiers fortunately rendered violence unnecessary. I waited awhile. Silence still prevailed — the Frenchmen were all soundly sleeping. Then I drew forth my dagger-knife, and approaching the prostrate sentry, stooped over him, and placed my hand upon his mouth, holding the knife ready to strike if he raised an alarm. He merely moaned and grunted in his sleep. I then tried to wake him, intending to terrify him by the sight of the keen blade, with which I could in one instant pierce his heart; but to wake him was impossible. I turned him over and over. He only moaned and grunted in his drunken sleep, and by degrees I contrived to strip him of all his garments. At length he awoke. Probably he felt the cold air on his naked limbs. But it was but for a moment. He opened his eyes; stared stupidly about him; muttered some unintelligible lingo, and went to sleep again. Then I stripped myself, attired myself in his garments, and taking the precaution to remove my money from my own cast-off clothes, and not forgetting to secure my knife, in case I should yet need it, I left my sailor dress on the floor of the guardhouse, and stole forth into the farmhouse kitchen, which had been turned into a barrack-room—the guardroom in which I had been confined had, I think, been used as a dairy—and gazed around me. A lamp burnt dimly on the table, and on the floor lay the officer of the detachment, and the sergeant—my good friend Alphonse; while in the room beyond, some twenty or thirty soldiers lay stretched on the floor in every attitude of drunken slumber. I passed stealthily between them without awakening them; but when I reached the door I found a sentry seated before it, asleep, and apparently intoxicated, like his comrades, but with his musket across his knees.

"As I approached him, he heard me, and woke up——

"'Ha! *Qui va là?*' (Who goes there?) said he, winking and blinking as he spoke.

"'*Votre bon camarade, mon ami*' (Your good comrade, my friend) said I, mustering up my best French for the occasion. Fortunately, but a few phrases were necessary.

"'*L-l-l-le m-ot, le mot d'ordre, camarade*' (Th-th-the watchword, comrade), stammered the drunken fellow, still half asleep, placing his musket across the door.

"Here was a pretty considerable fix, as the Yankees say. I didn't know the watchword, and the fellow might raise an alarm and rouse his comrades!

"'*Hist, hist, mon ami.* Don't betray a comrade bound on a little pleasure. 'Tis an assignation—a meeting I have arranged with a fair friend; you understand—eh? That's all,' I explained, in such wretched French that if he had not been as drunk as a pig he must have detected me.

"'*Ha, ha!*' he muttered; '*c'est bien, mon camarade. Je comprend. M-m-mais il-il-il faut prononcer le mot d'ordre*' (Ah, yes, that is well, comrade; but still the watchword is necessary).

"'*Certainement*—undoubtedly,' said I. '*C'est vilain mot d'ordre! Qu'est qu'a-t-il? Pour le moment j'ai l'oublié.*' (That confounded watchword! What is it? For the moment I have forgotten it.)

"'*Bah!*' muttered the sentry, nodding in his chair. '*Sot que vous êtes! Il faut que vous êtes ivre, mon ami, que vous avez oublié l l-le mot d'ordre. C'est Massena, savez-vous!*' (Bah! Stupid fellow that you are! You must surely be tipsy, my friend, to have forgetten th-th-the watchword, which is *Massena*, you know.)

"'To be sure,' said I, still in my broken French. 'How stupid of me to be so forgetful! As you observe, it *is Massena.*'

"'*Bon! Passez, Massena*' (Good! Pass, Massena), said the sentry, removing his musket, and settling himself to sleep again as I passed out into the open air.

"So far all was well. But, to my great disappointment, I now perceived that parties of soldiers were encamped in all the surrounding cottages, and that sentries were posted on every slight elevation; while, from the prompt replies of these sentries, as they challenged one another from time to time, it was very clear to me that these parties of soldiers had not found such good cheer in the cottages they had appropriated to their own accommodation, or, at all events, if they had, they had not indulged so freely as had those at the farmhouse. The sentries were on the look-out in every direction, and it was clearly apparent to me that go which way I would, I should be certain to be arrested.

"My only hope was to conceal myself near the spot. A short distance from the farmhouse stood a barn. I went towards it. On entering the door, I saw by the faint moonlight that three of the French soldiers had taken up their sleeping quarters in this barn, and from their appearance as they lay on the straw—as well as from several empty bottles that were strewn around—it was evident that they had been indulging as freely as their comrades. There were several heaps of hay and straw in the barn, and the idea struck me that I would be safer in hiding here than anywhere else. No one would suspect that an escaped prisoner would conceal himself so near his captors, and in a place in which three of them were sleeping.

"Gently I stepped across the prostrate forms of the sleepers, and lying down in a far corner of the barn, heaped a quantity of straw over me until I was covered with it to the depth of ten or twelve inches.

"I could not sleep. I waited anxiously for the morning, and, oh, how slowly the hours passed away! At length day dawn appeared, and the bugles sounded all over the encampment; and, very soon, from the confusion that prevailed, and the few sentences that were uttered that I could understand, I knew that my escape was discovered. I lay still, trembling, yet hardly daring to breathe. I heard one soldier ask another where he thought the *vilain Anglais* had gone—what route he had taken? But, from what I could understand, the sergeant—my friend Alphonse—in order to excuse himself from blame, wished to conceal the fact of my escape from the officer in command, who, it appeared, had gone to the colonel, at the far end of the encampment, to get an order for my execution as a spy before the soldiers should march, and that it was expected that he would bring the provost-marshal back with him. The men were to march in an hour, but in the first place they were to breakfast; and in a few minutes cookery was going on—as I discovered by the fumes—in every direction around me.

"'*Voilà M. le Capitaine, et M. le Provost-marechal avec lui*' (Here comes the captain, and the provost marshal with him) cried several voices; and then I heard the voice of the sergeant, Alphonse, in conversation with the provost-marshal—in other words, the hangman.

"A quarter of an hour passed away. Then I heard the orders of the captain, as he called to the men to form into line:

"'*Formez! Attention! Soyez pret à marcher!*' (Form! Attention! Be ready to march) he shouted; and then, as well as I could make out, he ordered the provost-marshal to remain behind, with a corporal's guard, and hang the accursed English spy so soon as the detachment was on the march, and then to hasten after the party.

"The order to march was given; but, in the first

place, several of the soldiers, by the captain's orders, entered the barn, and loaded themselves with hay and straw, to serve for beds at the next encampment. The men dragged the straw from around me. One man actually trod on my arm; but though he hurt me very much, I neither dared to move nor to utter a word.

"'Bring that heap of straw from the corner there, one of you,' said a corporal, and I felt that the straw that covered me was being dragged away. Another moment, and I should have lain exposed—discovered!

"'*Marchez—marchez vitement!*' (March—quick march!) shouted the captain.

"'*Bah!*' muttered the corporal. '*Il n'y a pas de temps. C'est dommage! Mais n'importe! Allez!*' (There is not time. It is a pity! But no matter. Away with you!) The men rejoined their comrades—the straw was left behind, and I was saved!

"I heard the measured tramp, tramp of the soldiers as they marched away, and I was still listening to the gradually lessening sound of their footsteps, when my attention was attracted to the sound of voices near the barn-door. The corporal and the provost-marshal were conversing, and the latter was directing the preparations for hanging the unfortunate sentry with whom I had exchanged garments, while the poor wretch pleaded earnestly for his life.

"'*Bah!*' replied the provost-marshal, 'I cannot listen. I must obey orders. My orders are to hang a *body*. One body must therefore *necessarily* be hanged, and to me one body is as good as another; consequently, my friend, do you perceive, *you* must hang—*pour encourager les autres* (to encourage the others)—as an example to your comrades; do you perceive?'

"'But *I*, monsieur, am not a spy!' pleaded the poor fellow.

"'Still, my friend, you will answer the same purpose,' replied the provost-marshal.

"At length, however, so far as I could make out, the provost-marshal, at the intercession of the corporal, consented to carry the poor sentry to the captain, and let him explain. They passed on, and perhaps the poor wretch wasn't hanged after all—perhaps he was. *Quien sabe?* (Who knows?) as the Spaniards say. The fellow had no business to get drunk!

"I lay still beneath the straw till noonday. Then I crept cautiously out, and finding myself quite alone, I entered the farmhouse, and made a hearty meal of such scraps of food as the soldiers had left behind.

"Everything else they had carried away with them, and fearing that the farmer might return, now that the soldiers had departed, and wreak his vengeance upon *me*, I made off, and plunged deep into the woods."

CHAPTER XVIII.

DOUGLASS CONTINUES HIS STORY.

"I almost wished, before the day ended, that I had kept my own old sailor costume," continued Douglass; "for I found that the Spanish peasantry hate and fear their French allies as much as they do the English, and if they get hold of a French soldier by himself they are ready to tear him to pieces. Towards night I grew hungry; but when I went up to a farmhouse, the people banged the door in my face, and pointed a blunderbuss at me through the window. It was not until noon the next day that I obtained any food, and then I helped myself to some rye bread in a cottage in which there were only a woman and two children, who ran away, and hid themselves when I entered. I left some money on the table, and took all the bread I could find—here was not much—and next morning I was hungrier than ever. It was now that I first heard news of *you*. I hid myself in some bushes while a party of men passed by. They stopped awhile in conversation near my hiding-place, and I found that they were talking about an English spy, who had been captured by some French soldiers near Valencia; and from what I could understand of their confounded lingo, they gave a description of *you*, and said that you had been hanged. At length they passed on, and I came forth from my concealment, and, urged by hunger, went to a farmhouse that I saw some distance off. The men were all absent at a fair in the next town; but the house was full of women and children, who set upon me in a body, armed with broomsticks, axes, pokers, sickles, and anything they could get hold of. They would have torn me to pieces if they had caught me; but though I made off, they pursued me through the wood, howling and screaming like wild beasts, and furiously brandishing the weapons they carried. After awhile most of them gave up the chase; but four stout young women kept on, and seemed determined to capture me; and it was difficult for me to run in my awkward soldier's clothes.

"I only saved myself at last by climbing a tall tree; and then two of the women, armed with axes, tried to clamber up after me! I suppose they, or some of their friends, had been ill-treated by French soldiers; but I never saw such furious creatures. Finding themselves unable to climb the stout trunk of the tree, they descended, and I could understand enough Spanish to make out that one of the women told the other three to wait and keep watch round the tree until she returned to the farmhouse and brought back her brother's loaded blunderbuss—'That'll bring the *ladrone Francés* (the thief of a Frenchman) down head foremost,' she said.

"Matters began to look serious. I thought I might as well run the risk of being cut down in attempting to escape, as wait, with the certainty of being shot. So, I quietly broke off a stout branch from the top of the tree, and watching an opportunity when they were looking out for the return of their companion, I descended quickly, unseen, until I dropped from a lower branch to the ground. Then the three women rushed at me with their raised axes, yelling like hungry wolves. I defended myself, with the stout cudgel I had made out of the branch in one hand, and my dagger-knife in the other, backing away all the while, until I came to a clear space, when I bounded off as quick as my legs could carry me, still followed by the infuriated women. I had descended from the tree only just in time to save myself; for while the three women were still in pursuit, I heard a savage yell, and saw the fourth female, armed with the blunderbuss, approaching, and trying to head me off by taking a cross cut through the wood; but finding that she could not do this, she fired off the double-barrelled blunderbuss. One after the other both balls whistled close above my head; but they fortunately missed me, and before the woman could load again I had concealed myself amongst the trees, and the whole party gave up the chase and returned to the farmhouse. I found that my best chance of safety would be to procure a woman's dress, and disguise myself as a female, and for three days I've been chasing every lonely female I came across, but to no purpose. They all got away from me—though, of course, I would have paid them well to make the exchange. At length I saw you, and I made sure I'd gained my end at last. You may imagine my disappointment when I discovered that you were not a woman."

"You were disappointed at falling in with me, then?" said I, smiling.

"Well, no," returned Douglass. "I was glad to see you, old fellow; for I made sure that you'd been hanged as a spy. Still, it *was* a disappointment in one sense; and then, you see, I had hardly eaten anything for three days, and was well-nigh famished."

I then related *my* adventures to Douglass, who laughed heartily at the recital.

"It's confoundedly awkward, and unpleasant at times, this wandering about in disguise, in a strange country," said he, when I had ended my story. "But it's real jolly fun, after all!"

"And now what's to be done?" said I.

"You must provide me with a peasant-woman's dress," he replied. "You can do so easily."

"You still stick to that notion, then?"

"To be sure. A female disguise is the safest to wear, and then it promises the most fun. You can go to the nearest town and buy a set of feminine duds complete."

"What if they suspect *me*?"

"They won't. You're sunburnt till you're as dark as an Indian. No one, unless he had reason for suspicion, would suspect you to be dressed in disguise."

"Perhaps not, if I could speak Spanish fluently. There lies the difficulty."

"Bah! You must speak as few words as possible, and if any one appears to suspect you, you can pretend that you come from the Southern provinces, where the common people speak Spanish after a fashion that the people of the middle and northern provinces find it difficult to understand."

This plan was finally decided upon. The next day we travelled to a small town lying back from the coast. (I never heard its name, nor did I ask what it was.) Leaving Douglass in the woods outside the town (a great many of the smaller towns of Spain lie embosomed in woods) I entered the gates, and going to the first shop I saw in which secondhand female apparel was offered for sale, I purchased, for about the value of thirty-five shillings in English money, what Douglass had spoken of as a "complete set of feminine duds." I believe that the shopkeeper had some suspicion that I was not what I pretended to be; but he said nothing, and I thought the wiser plan was to keep silent.

I brought away the garments tied up in a bundle, and carried them to the spot where I had left my companion, who at once proceeded to change his sex, at least to outward appearance; thought it was no easy matter, for Douglass would insist upon putting on the garments the wrong way, and I had forgotten to buy any pins, therefore we were obliged to make the prickles of the thorn bushes answer the purpose of pins for the time being.

At length the disguise was effected. The soldier-clothes, rolled up in a bundle with a stone in the centre, were sunk in a deep pond, and then we emerged from the wood in high glee, flattering ourselves that we really appeared to be a couple of merry, light-hearted, and not ill-looking Spanish peasant girls.

"How much money have we got?" asked Douglass, as, after walking a short distance from the wood, we seated ourselves on the flowery bank of a narrow river. We emptied our pockets, and found that our joint stock of English, French, and Spanish coins amounted together to about the value of seven pounds fifteen shillings in English money.

"A small stock of money for two young, unprotected females to possess, in a foreign country!" said I, laughing.

"We must be economical," was Douglass's reply.

"And now," said I, "what is to be done next?"

"To make the most of whatsoever fortune may provide," answered Douglass, as we rose from the flowery bank and passed slowly onward, we knew not whither.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

(This tale commenced in No. 283. Back numbers can always be had.)

JEWEL-LAND;

OR, THE

Marvellous Life, Adventures, and Discoveries of the Young Lord Luton and his Sister, Lady Lilia.

BY UNCLE GEORGE.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE END OF A CRUISE.

It was perfectly astounding to the young people to see how little things were altered on board the vessel, which had only been removed inland for them, while the dingy had been pitched into a wood two miles away, where it was found some days afterwards, and carried down to the shore by Tom-Tom.

The great thing Arthur had to do now was to take care that no animals should climb on board at night, and in this he was helped by the fact that the ship stood higher up now than it did before; and, considering all things, upon a wonderfully even keel.

As the days glided by, it was astonishing to see how rapidly nature covered over all the wreck that had been caused by the earthquake. Herbage and various flowers sprang up quickly, and the young people were obliged to own that, though they had farther to go down to the sea for fishing purposes, they were in a much better and safer position.

The sea-elephant was always ready to help them, and by degrees Madame Tom-Tom, who had been frightened away by the earthquake, returned and learned to help her lord in the little duties he performed for his master and mistress.

The leopard hunted for them; Tom-Tom brought down cocoa-nuts, dug, carried, and fenced the garden, but could never be trusted to weed; the giraffe and kangaroo had grown into the most perfect steeds, and the eagle was always hanging about the ship.

Altogether life passed very pleasantly for the young people, who each day grew stronger, while Lilia had turned into the very picture of robust health. But though the flag on the staff up the mountain, and that on the palm tree at the point, had blown out broad and square, and been beaten to rags by the wind, and replaced with new ones by Arthur and the ape, no ship came in sight.

The young people were now, in spite of longings for their home and friends, quite resigned to their fate, and worked and read and studied day after day.

For, as Arthur said, it would not do for them to degenerate into savages even if they did lead a savage life.

And there was always so much to do that they were never dull. Fishing, hunting, gardening, and seeing to the provisions on board the ship, kept Arthur even too busy, though not so busy that he could not enjoy his active life.

Thoughts of home and those they loved troubled them, though, pretty often, and it was at such times that Arthur and Lilia made excursions to the gem rock, to the sandy holes amongst the rocks, or to the great tunnel of the drawing-room cave.

From the first of these places they brought the beautiful gems that they chipped out of the rocks.

From the second they obtained the soft lustrous pearls.

And from the third gold in such profusion that after a time they gave up the task as useless, saying that they had already as much as they could wish for.

The way in which they obtained the gold was this:

Arthur would take a shovel and a couple of stout bags. These he filled with sand, and set Tom-Tom and his lady to carry them to a rock-pool, where the contents of the bags were washed, and the sandy earth separated from the glittering yellow metal, which was afterwards stored in little canvas bags made for the purpose by Lilia, and then tightly tied up at the neck.

For these bags Arthur made boxes out of new plank, which he found in the hold. This he cut up and sawed to a suitable length, nailing the boxes strongly, and then, when each one was full, nailing it firmly down, and securing it with some of the iron bands of which he found plenty in the carpenter's store-room.

He pursued a similar course with the pearls and precious stones, which were also placed in little bags, and nailed up tightly in a box.

"But," said Lilia, "had we not better get some more?"

"Don't you know, Lil," said Arthur, laughing, "that enough's as good as a feast? Why, we might freight the ship with gold, and then its very abundance might lessen its value. No; let's be content with what we have got, and then if we ever get away from the island we shall have enough to make papa and mamma rich as long as they live."

Saying this, Arthur set to packing his chests of gold in the inner cabin, Tom-Tom being the porter, and Madame, who now condescended to come on the ship, looking on as if endued with an idea that all that was going on was somehow part of a plot, whose object was to shut up Tom-Tom so that he would never be heard of more.

"Let's have a trip right round the island," said Arthur one day; and no sooner was it proposed than he proceeded to put it in execution, for Lilia was delighted with the idea.

For Arthur's plan was to take oars and sail, in the little dingy of course, and plenty of provisions; but the novel idea was to secure the elephant-seal to the bows by a rope with a noose, and make the swift water animal draw them round the island.

There would be no difficulty over this, Arthur knew; for he had more than once tried the experiment, the seal now being more docile than a dog.

There was one thing, however, that puzzled Arthur, and to effect which he could not see his way. He wanted Tom-Tom to be their companion; for he was so brave and trustworthy that it seemed a thousand pities to leave him behind.

But how to manage it?

Lilia said he might swim, which was about as reasonable as setting him to swim round the world.

Then she said he might float on an oar.

But the notion found no more favour with Arthur, who sat and bit his nails and puzzled his brains for long enough before he hit upon a plan.

The seal was so strong in the water that it would have drawn a jolly-boat full of men with the greatest ease, therefore the weight of the dingy and the addition Arthur proposed to make would not affect it much, and he set earnestly to work.

Tom-Tom's aid was of course enlisted, and he was set to carry four moderate-sized casks out of the hold.

These had held oil, and therefore they were in excellent condition, so that when Arthur hammered bungs in tightly, and then nailed a piece of thin sheet lead over the bungholes, they were quite air-tight, and buoyancy itself.

Placing these four casks on the deck, two and two, each pair being five feet apart, and the distance between the pairs ten, he cut planks to these lengths, and joined the casks together by nailing the planking outside and framing them strongly in till they were firmly kept in their places.

To make them more secure he nailed other planks diagonally—that is, from corner cask to corner cask, the planks making an X—and then over all he nailed smooth boarding in short lengths, so as to form a deck.

When, really tired out, Arthur had finished his task, there lay upon the deck a strong, light, serviceable raft, that would have borne three Tom-Tom's were it necessary.

The next thing was to get it over the side, and with Tom-Tom's huge strength that became an easy task; after which he carried it to the sea, when it floated buoyantly in the water, and when Arthur swung himself upon it from the dingy by means of a pole, it was as firm as could be, and Lilia clapped her hands as she watched the result from the shore.

"Now, Tom-Tom," cried Arthur, "come along."

The ape followed his example, and swam off to climb on, and then to place his feet rather gingerly upon the raft, while he held on by the sides; but the moment he found how substantial it was, he danced about for a time, and finally squatted down and refused to move.

It was too late for their adventure that day, so Arthur made all his preparations for starting very early the next morning, stowing the dingy with all that was necessary, not forgetting gun and fishing-lines, and the next morning, before daybreak, they descended from the ship to the verdant grass, and locked up the house, as Arthur called it—that is to say, he had thrown his rope-ladder up on deck, only leaving a piece of string hanging where he knew how to pull it and draw down the ladder when they returned.

The flag was flying bravely on the mountain, which was tipped with light while they were in the shade; but as they reached the sea, the other flag could be seen fluttering gently from the palm tree on the point.

It was a lovely morning, so clear and deliciously cool, and launching the dingy and raft, the former with Lilia on board, Arthur whistled for the seal, which came wallowing and floundering through the shallow water like a dog, and submitted quietly to have the rope passed over its neck and one flipper, so that it might pull from the shoulder and breast.

Then the rope was fastened to the bow of the dingy, from whose stem another rope was made fast to the raft.

The next minute, after seeing that all was right, Arthur ran through the shallow water, and leaped upon the boat, the impetus thus given sending it farther out, when calling to Tom-Tom to get on to his raft, the lad saw Lilia comfortably seated in the stern, and then taking his station in the bows, he prepared to guide the seal on its long journey.

Tom-Tom hesitated for a moment, but seeing that the raft he was expected to occupy was slipping away, he made a floundering dash through the water, and caught at it, but only for the seal at the same moment to make a dash with its powerful flippers and snatch it away.

Tom-Tom scuffled on over the shallows, though, and nearly caught it again, but once more missed, for it was going now quickly.

This put him on his mettle, and making a tremendous rush he got hold of the raft, climbed on to it, and then squatted himself down, chattering hugely with delight.

Lilia clapped her hands, too, as the dingy and its tender glided swiftly along into the open water, drawn with the greatest of ease by their powerful sea-horse.

"But is there any dangor, Arty?" she whispered the next moment, for the dingy now began to dance on the little wavelets.

"Not the least," said Arthur; and his look of confidence reassured his sister. "If there had been danger I should not have brought you. We will go right round the island, and will not land unless it seems perfectly wise to do so."

The sun now rose like a great orange globe over the edge of the sea, and turned everything into gold, when suddenly the young travellers were startled by a loud snorting cry from Tom-Tom, who stood up on his raft in great excitement, evidently in a state of rage at something he saw.

Lilia uttered an exclamation of surprise almost at the same moment; and then the object of wonder caught Arthur's gaze, for there, at about a couple of miles' distance, lay, evidently at anchor, what seemed to be in the morning sunshine a golden ship, rigged with golden masts and ropes.

Arthur turned faint with surprise, fear, and joy; and after a few moments' indecision, turned the seal shoreward, returning to the spot from whence they had started, and landing and drawing up boat and raft, with feelings such as he could not describe.

"Oh, Arty, have they come to fetch us away?" cried Lilia, gazing at the ship.

"Yes," replied Arthur; "I hope so—that is, I'm afraid so."

And then came upon him in all its force, and upon his sister too, a knowledge that in spite of their desolate position, their life on the island had become very dear to them—Lilia showing her emotion at the idea of separation by catching hold of shaggy Tom-Tom's paw, and crying over it bitterly.

As the brother and sister stood on the sands together, their different followers looked at them wonderingly, for this was a new phase of life—they had never seen the young people in tears before.

Suddenly the seal gave a barking snort, wallowed in the shallow water for a few moments, and disappeared.

Almost at the same moment the eagle uttered a wild shriek, rose from the rock on which it had been perched, and flew inland.

The giraffe was the next to take fright and gallop off, closely followed by the kangaroo and leopard, while Madame Tom-Tom uttered a snarling cry, and ran at full speed up the defile.

Both Arthur and Lilia were too much blinded by tears to see the cause of alarm, till an angry snarl from Tom-Tom caught Arthur's ear, and, turning sharply round, it was to see the ape standing in the surf, prepared to bar the way of a boat's crew rowing ashore, one of the men standing up in the bows with an iron slide pole in his hand, poised to strike poor Tom-Tom.

Arthur was just in time to arrest the blow.

"Don't strike!" he cried, running up. "Here, Tom-Tom—here!"

"Well, I *am* blest!" cried the man in the bows, as he saw Tom-Tom obey his master's call. "Why, young un', he's big enough to eat you without salt. What are you a-doing of here?"

"I was wrecked on the island with my sister a year ago," said Arthur to the rough salt, who now leaped ashore with his companions.

"Is that there pretty little gal your sister?" said the man, pointing to Lilia.

"Yes," said Arthur.

"And you two have lived here all alone?" said the man.

"Yes," said Arthur, smiling at his wonder.

"Then I'm blest if I ain't ever so much more blest than I was afore," said the man. "Why, it licks everything into fits, mate. Then that there hairy great monkey's been your Man Friday—eh?"

"Yes, and the truest, faithfullest creature that ever lived. Come here, Tom-Tom."

The ape came to his side, and stood erect, quite a foot taller than the biggest man present.

"Send I may live, what a whopper!" said one of the sailors. "Will he bite?"

"Yes, if I tell him to," said Arthur, smiling.

"But I say," said the first sailor, "where's your house—where did you live?"

"Oh, in the ship," said Arthur.

"Well, where's the ship, mate?"

"Oh, it was here," said Arthur; "but a great wave carried it inland, quite a mile and a half."

"It's a big three-master of course," said the man, winking at his companions.

"Yes," said Arthur, ingenuously, "a big ship."

"My, what a crasher!" cried the sailor, laughing, and the others, to Arthur's annoyance, joined in.

"There's the skipper making signals," said one of the men. "He's on the starn there with a telescope."

"Then we must just go back at once," said the first sailor. "Here, young 'un, you and your sister had best come on board and talk to the skipper."

"Yes, willingly," said Arthur; "and he can arrange to take us away. Where are you bound to?"

"Calcutta," said the man, "after calling at Port de Galle. Step in, squire."

Tom-Tom uttered an angry snarl as he saw Lilia handed into the boat, and his master take his place beside her; but at a word from Arthur, the faithful beast lay down upon the sands to wait for his return.

The men bent to their oars, and the boat went swiftly over the rollers, the men talking wonderingly about their passengers, and whispering about what a handsome young couple they were.

The captain of the ship talked just as wonderingly, but he made the young people very welcome, and made them come down into his cabin and dine with him.

He told Arthur, after hearing his story, that he had seen both signals flying, and had changed his course to land, having been already blown out of the regular track by a storm.

Plans were made, by which the captain undertook to land Arthur and his sister at Calcutta, with their effects, including the boxes of treasure, though Arthur thought it wise not to say anything about the riches of the island; and the captain looked for recompense from the stores of the ship, many of which he proposed to transfer to his own.

"I shan't be able to take your wild beasts, though," said the captain, laughing. "You'll let me see what they can do, though?"

Arthur promised, and the captain rose and crossed the cabin to look at his barometer, when, to his dismay, he found that it had fallen terribly—a sure proof of a coming storm.

To stay where they were meant wreck on some of the rocks which surrounded the island; so sail was set directly, the captain promising to put in again as soon as the storm was over.

And then down came down so terrible a storm, that for six days the ship was in danger of sinking minute by minute, and when the rough weather abated, Arthur and his sister were over a thousand miles away from their island, which the captain said he could not find again.

He landed the young people, though, safely at Calcutta, from whence they found their way to their parents' arms, to whom they seemed like two who had risen from the dead; for they had long been mourned as lost.

As for Lilia, she had grown into a strong, hearty maiden in the year of absence, while Arthur was far more manly than before.

They grieved terribly, though, about the loss of their pets, and for nights and nights Arthur never lay down to sleep without dreaming of Tom-Tom lying on the sand watching for his return—a return he determined to compass before long, either to stay there for a time, or merely to fetch his treasures and certain of his dumb companions; for Arthur and Lilia, though absent, were not likely soon to forget "JEWEL-LAND."

THE END.

The hardest thing to deal with.—An old pack of cards.

What is that which every one wishes for, and yet tries to get rid of? A good appetite.

"I will be down directly, sir," as the pill said to the patient.

A BRAVE GIRL.

A STARTLING INCIDENT OF LIFE IN CANADA.

IN the winter of 1842, a gentleman and his daughter, a young lady, while travelling through Canada, arrived about nightfall at an old-fashioned tavern. The gentleman concluded to stop here instead of going on to the village of S——, which was ten miles distant, and which they had thought to reach.

The daughter—Carrie—expressed her willingness, as the tavern presented a comfortable appearance, and they alighted, when it was plainly to be seen that the gentleman was quite lame, so much so that he was obliged to use a cane.

The landlord came out, and calling a boy to take the horse and sleigh to the barn, he ushered Mr. Spencer and his daughter into a pleasant sitting-room, where a bright fire was burning on the hearth, which proved very acceptable to our travellers, who had been in the sleigh since morning.

"Your room will be ready by supper-time, sir," said the landlord, as he left the room and went into the bar-room.

Supper was shortly announced, and after refreshing themselves, Mr. Spencer and Carrie returned to the cosy sitting-room, where they talked and chatted until half-past eight.

They were then shown to their room, which was on the second storey, in a wing somewhat distant from the main portion. The room was very long, with a high ceiling. On one side was a window, and on the other a door. Just above the door was a bust of King George III.

The room was very plainly furnished, containing two beds, a washstand, and a few chairs.

Carrie took in the whole room at a glance, and it must be confessed had there not been a cheerful fire burning she would have felt nervous about sleeping there. As it was, the warm glow lit up the room into comparative cheerfulness.

While she and her father sat by the fire, her eyes wandered to the bust above the door, when she noticed that the eye-balls had evidently been knocked out, leaving two empty spaces.

"Well, Carrie," said Mr. Spencer, presently, "I think you had better lock the door. I am going to count my money."

After Carrie had done so, he drew out a money-belt, heavy with bills, and proceeded to count them. While doing so, Carrie's eyes involuntarily wandered again to the bust, when, to her horror and astonishment, in place of the empty spaces were two glittering eyes, greedily watching every movement of her father.

The young girl could scarcely repress a scream; but, controlling herself, she looked towards the fire, while her father went on counting a large roll of bills.

"I must have been mistaken," thought the fair girl. "What could make me have such a strange fancy, though?" she continued, glancing again at the bust.

The eyes were still there—two burning, savage eyes, that brightened as Mr. Spencer went on counting.

"Good heavens!" thought Carrie, "what shall we do! We are evidently in a den of thieves, and will get murdered for my poor father's money!"

How to communicate their danger to her father without those terrible eyes noticing it, Carrie could not think. Suddenly a bright idea came to her.

"Father," she said, aloud, "let me take a card and pencil. I wish to make a memorandum of some items I want to purchase in the village."

Her father handed them to her, after stowing away his belt. Carrie wrote, tremblingly, in a fine hand:

"Father, do not be frightened; we are in a trap. Go in the opposite corner of the room, where your face will be in the dark, and look at the bust above the door. In it you will see two glittering eyes, that have watched you counting your money."

"Read it," she said, aloud, handing the card to her father. "I want you to see if you think I am too extravagant."

Her father betrayed no emotion as he read, but said: "You are pretty extravagant, Carrie. I suppose you think your father is made of money;" and he arose and went to the washstand, which was in a dark corner.

Once there he glanced toward the bust, and that glance confirmed his daughter's extraordinary statement.

When he came back to his seat, Carrie saw that the eyes were gone. Then leaning toward her father, she said, in a low tone:

"You see it is as I said. I have thought of a plan, however, by which we can both escape. You would be perfectly helpless in an affray of any kind on account of your lame leg, so I must try to save us both."

Then followed a whispered consultation, during which Carrie kept her eyes fixed on the bust; but the glittering orbs had not come back.

As she concluded, Carrie went to the window, threw it up, and looked out. Beckoning to her father, who came, she said, or rather whispered:

"You see this shed, father? Well, they will probably come up on it and get in through the window. I do not think they will make the attack before twelve, so I will get out of this window, jump from the shed, go to the barn and take our horse, and go to S—— for help.

Flinging a wrap over her slight figure, she embraced her father tenderly, and bidding him not worry over her, she jumped lightly out on the shed and disappeared.

Mr. Spencer watched her for a while, then closing the window, took out a handsome watch, saw that it was nine o'clock, and proceeded to work.

He first covered up the fire, blew out the light, and rolled up a blanket, with which he made a dummy. This he placed in the bed which his daughter was to occupy. Then he sat down and waited—oh, how anxiously!

Ten, fifteen, twenty minutes went by, and no sound came from the vicinity of the barn.

Taking off his boots, he crept noiselessly to the window and peered out, but he could see nothing. Then creeping to the washstand he laid his money-belt in the drawer and closed it.

He then threw himself on the bed, and once more waited.

After an hour had apparently gone by, Mr. Spencer threw off his coat and vest, tumbled up the bed, hobbled to the door, unlocked it, and stepped out into the hall. This was all in accordance with Carrie's plan.

"Landlord! landlord!" he shouted.

He then went back into the room and noiselessly threw up the window, all the time shouting for the landlord. That worthy came flying up the stairs, and, late as it was, he was still dressed.

"Oh, landlord," gasped Mr. Spencer, rushing toward him, "I have been robbed! my money is gone!"

"Gone!" echoed the landlord, in dismay.

"Who could have stolen it!" groaned Mr. Spencer. "I had five thousand dollars in a belt, and it is gone—stolen!"

The landlord lit the candle and looked all around, chagrin depicted in every feature.

"Why don't you wake your daughter, sir?" he questioned.

Mr. Spencer hurried to her bed.

"Carrie! Carrie!" he called, but no answer came; and the landlord, drawing near with the light, saw the dummy, and cried:

"Why, man, the girl isn't there!"

"What!" gasped Mr. Spencer. "Oh, I see it all! The wicked girl has robbed me while I slept, and run off to meet her lover, from whom I was taking her."

He ran to the window, followed by the landlord.

"Yes, yes, here are footprints in the snow on the shed!" cried the landlord, while Mr. Spencer groaned aloud. "How long do you think she has been gone, sir?" asked the landlord.

"For an hour or more, the deceitful jade!" replied Mr. Spencer.

"Then there's no use looking for her, sir," rejoined the landlord.

"Oh, but I must!" cried Mr. Spencer, as he began to descend the stairway, followed by the landlord, who had believed every word Mr. Spencer said.

They proceeded to the barn followed by the landlord's confederates. They found the horse gone, and her mode of flight was easily explained.

"You may as well give her up, sir," said the landlord, consolingly.

"I suppose I may," groaned Mr. Spencer, and they returned to the house.

As they left the barn he heard the landlord whisper to one of his confederates:

"The job's up, Jem; we'd better let the old man alone."

Once more entering his room, Mr. Spencer threw himself on the bed, and awaited the return of his brave daughter.

"God bless her, and bring her back in safety," he murmured.

Meanwhile all grew still, and the hours rolled by. The fire had been raked up and crackled merrily. The eyes were not looking from the bust; they had evidently disappeared for the night.

At last, after what seemed an age to the anxious watcher, he heard a loud knock on the front entrance, and five minutes afterward heard the landlord stumble to the door. Then followed a confused jumble of curses and struggles, then a rush of many feet up the long hall and stairway.

The next minute the door was thrown open and his daughter rushed in, followed by the officers, who dragged in the landlord and his confederates.

"Oh, father!" she cried, "you are safe! safe!" and throwing her arms around his neck the brave girl burst into happy tears.

The sheriff and his posse of men held the landlord and his confederates in a vice-like grasp, while Carrie related the adventures of her perilous ride.

"After I left the barn I led Tommy to a fence, all unsaddled, sprang on him, wound my arms tightly round his neck, and whispered, 'Go, Tommy!' and away we went like the wind. Up and down, over the frozen road, on we went! My arms felt like ice. I thought I should certainly freeze, and after what seemed an age of cold and pain and misery, we dashed into the main street of S——. As we came up in front of the tavern the stage drove up, and the inmates sprang out and rushed to my assistance. I must have been almost insensible, for I had to be carried in by the landlord. I was given warm drinks until I fully recovered, and was able to relate my story. I told them my suspicions and my fears, and this gentleman"—here Carrie paused, and turning to a fine-looking man near her, said, "Mr. James, by his ready belief in what I told, and his energy and spirit in arousing the sheriff and his men, has been the main cause in bringing assistance."

Mr. Spencer grasped the young man's hand, and thanked him.

"Your plan succeeded admirably, Carrie," he said, and advancing to the washstand, he took out the money-belt, saying, "My money is all right, as you see."

The landlord quivered with rage as he saw how completely he had been defeated.

As the men began to search the room, the landlord protested his innocence, declaring that they had no right to hold him or his men prisoners, or to search his house.

Breaking open the door, above which was the bust, the men rushed in.

The room was empty, save for a long ladder, which reached a shelf above the door. A hole above the shelf disclosed the bust to be broken in half, so that a man could easily climb up the ladder, get on the shelf, thrust his head in the bust, which was large enough for an ordinary-sized man's head, and see all that was going on in the adjoining room.

This certainly looked very suspicious, but absolute proof was yet wanting.

On returning to the room occupied by Mr. Spencer, they again searched every nook and corner.

Suddenly Carrie and Mr. James, who had been standing by the fireplace, gave a loud cry, for on close examination they had found spots of blood on the bricks which formed the hearth. They began to pull up the bricks, which proved loose, when Carrie, feeling faint, gave way to the sheriff and his men, who soon had them all pulled up, when a cavity was disclosed, containing the murdered body of a gentleman whom Mr. James and the sheriff remembered to have stopped at S—— three days before.

The evidence was conclusive.

The landlord and his confederates were well guarded through the night, and the next day they were lodged in gaol, where in due time they were sentenced, and suffered the extreme penalty of the law.

OUR WEEKLY PARTY.

WE have news for you to-day, young friends—great news, glorious news—news that will be hailed with beaming eyes and dancing hearts amongst the thousands on thousands of YOUNG FOLKS whom our words can reach. What do you think it is? Can't guess? Well, then, it is that an old and famous friend, whom we have missed too long, is returning to us. Can you guess his name? Ha! we see by the glow of pleasure which rises to your cheeks that you have a keen suspicion, but you remain silent, as if you thought the announcement you expect was too good to be true. But it is perfectly true, dear boys and girls, and your own hearts have whispered to you the right name. ROLAND QUIZ! ROLAND QUIZ! is coming. Yes, your favourite, the favourite of all YOUNG FOLKS, is coming back to us, and we will have the happiness of introducing him to you all in our next number but one—the number after next.

"But what is he bringing?" we think we hear some eager voices exclaim.

Bringing? Why, a story, of course—a wonderful story of thrilling adventure, of magic and mystery, of wizards and giants, of combat and triumph—the triumph of Justice and Right over Wrong and Might—a glorious story, which will engage your attention by its intense and absorbing interest, and will stir your hearts by its vivid description of deeds of mighty heroism.

We see a question in your eyes, young friends, and we will answer it without giving you the trouble of putting it into words.

No, it is not TIM. We do not wish to say one word which might detract from the glory of that renowned little hero in the slightest degree, yet we must confess we think the new hero whom ROLAND QUIZ will so soon introduce will prove to be a formidable rival. His adventures are not less astonishing, and his deeds are not less doughty. Indeed, the very name by which he is distinguished should prove this, for the hero of the great new story is

JACK THE VALIANT.

And you will find in the history of his exploits *the complete story, never before written, of*

THE REAL JACK THE GIANT-KILLER.

This is what ROLAND QUIZ himself says to you about his coming story.

Everybody—well, we may safely say everybody who speaks the English language—has either read or heard, of "Jack the Giant-Killer;" but no one has ever read the *complete* story of sturdy Jack's wonderful adventures, simply because the complete story has never before been written.

And so it happens, after a lapse of nearly thirteen hundred years—for you must know that Jack the Giant-Killer lived in the days of "Good King Arthur," which was sometime during the sixth century—that it becomes our pleasing task to relate to the young people of the pre ent generation, for the *first time*—mark that, the first time!—the new and complete story of Jack Valiant the Giant-Killer.

And this great story will be commenced in our *next number but one*. Mark *that*, also. And do not only mark it yourselves, but draw the attention of others to the fact. Spread the news amongst your friends and acquaintances by word of mouth and by letter, and let us give to

JACK THE VALIANT

A glorious reception, worthy of his merits and of his fame.

And now let us tell you something about ourselves. One evening of late we were lying idly upon the grass, and thinking of the great treat in store for you. But something happened close by just then that set our thoughts wandering away in another channel. There was a church not far away, and suddenly the bells in its steeple began to peal out joyously, and filled all the air with music. We listened for several minutes with delight, for we are exceedingly fond of the music of bells; and then we began to think

that others had been no less partial to it, and to wonder whether you, our young friends, did not like it as much as we.

Bells! bells! There is music in the very name. Do you not think so? The great Napoleon was passionately fond of bells, and we believe they afforded the only music which sounded as sweetly in his ears as the booming of cannon or the thrilling notes of the soul-stirring drum.

There are many beautiful and interesting stories in prose and poetry in which bells play an important part. Some of you may have read Longfellow's poem entitled "The Aiarm Bell of Atri;" but as very many may not have heard or read it, we think it will be well, as we are on this subject, to give you the story which it relates in our own plain words. Well, then, in that part of the Apennines where the rent and jagged mountains arrange themselves in the wildest forms, where the high peaks are crowned with snow, and the valleys are fertile, green, and flowery, there was a quiet little hamlet called Atri. In the market-place of this hamlet there hung a great bell, which had been placed there by the order of the chief magistrate for a very peculiar purpose. There was a law which ordained that whenever wrong was done to any person, he or she might ring this great bell, the sound of which was regarded as a demand for justice, and then the chief magistrate and his council assumed their robes of office, the ringer's complaint was heard, and justice was done.

The days went peacefully by at Atri. The people were simple and just, and there were few wrongs to be righted, and consequently the bell was very seldom rung. It had been so long unused that a wild vine had sent out its wandering tendrils until they were twined all round the bell-rope and the bell, and bore, yearly, their natural crop of green leaves.

At last there came a creature who rang the bell, and so informed the little town that injustice had been done. This was not a man, nor a woman, not a boy, nor a girl, but a horse—a poor, half-starved animal, that had long served a hard master, and was now, in the days of his old age and weakness, turned out of doors, to live or die, just as he might. He had been picking up a scanty meal upon the roadside near the town, when he saw the vine-clad rope, and attracted by the rich-looking verdure, he began to tug at leaf and sprig until he rang forth the alarm peal of the accusing bell. It was many a day since the bell had been heard before, but the law was binding, and the proclamation of the magistrate was made. The state of things was readily understood, and a good townsman spoke up for the poor animal. The authorities were impressed by the circumstance—the poor horse's appeal was allowed, and he was well cared for from that day forth.

One of the most beautiful—if not *the* most beautiful—story of the bells which we have heard is that connected with the set which hung in the tower of St. Mary's Church, Limerick. These bells were made by a young Italian after many years of patient toil. He was proud of his work, and when they were purchased by the prior of a neighbouring convent, near the Lake of Como, the young artist, with the money received for them, bought a pretty villa on the margin of the lake where he could hear their music wafted across the waters at morning, noon, and night. Here he intended to pass his life in peace, but this happiness was denied him. In one of the broils which then agitated Italy he lost all that he possessed, and when peace was restored he found himself without home, family, friends, or fortune. The convent had been destroyed, too, and the dear bells whose tuneful chimes had charmed his ear for so many happy days of his past life had been carried away, but none could tell him whither. He now became a wanderer, and during many years he roamed over the earth, suffering much from hunger and privation. His hair became white and his body bent before he again found a resting-place; but in all these years of bitter desolation the music of his bells never left him. He heard it in the forest and in the crowded city, on the sea and by the banks of the quiet rivers. He heard it by day, and when night came and brought dreams, it whispered to his heart soothingly of peace and happiness.

One day he chanced to meet a sailor who had been in many lands, and this man told him of a wonderful chime of bells which he had heard in Ireland. Something—we know not what to call it—told the now aged Italian that they were his bells—the beloved bells which he had sought so earnestly, and for whose music he longed so passionately. He took ship as a sailor and voyaged to Ireland, sick and weary. His vessel sailed up the river Shannon, and was anchored in the port near Limerick, and then he took passage in a small boat, for the purpose of reaching the city. Before him the tall steeple of St. Mary's lifted its turreted head above the mist and smoke of the old town. He leaned back wearily, yet there was a happy light beaming in his eyes, for the angels were whispering to him that his bells were there. The poor, worn wanderer clasped his hands, and murmured: "Just one note, O bells! One note of greeting, one note of musical welcome, O bells, and my pilgrimage is done!" It was a beautiful evening. The bosom of the river was like a broad mirror, reflecting the cloudlets on the blue sky, the towers, and the churches of the old town in its clear depths. Suddenly the stillness was broken. From St. Mary's tower there came a shower of silver sound, filling the air with music. The boatmen rested on their oars to listen, and the old Italian crossed his arms upon his breast and fixed his streaming eyes upon the tower. They were indeed the beloved work of his own hands, and he wept in the excess of his joy. Their music bore to his long-wounded heart all the sweet memories of the past—his home in sunny Italy, his kindred, friends, all. At last he was happy—but, ah, too happy to breathe! When the rowers sought to arouse him, his face was upturned to the tower, but his eyes were closed. The poor stranger had breathed his last, and his own darling productions had rung his "passing bell."

We might still continue to tell you stories about the bells, but we are afraid that if we rang upon them longer, you might not enjoy the music we could extract from them, and so we think the better plan will be to ring up a change.

We often think, young friends, that you must set us down in your own minds as quite an incurable gossiper. Do you? Well, if you do we cannot help it, and we will find comfort in thinking that you might easily give us a character which would be very much worse. No one can say that our gossip is malicious, or that it is vicious. Whatever else it may be, we are sure it is good-natured, and that, we think, should, like charity, cover a multitude of faults. All gossip is not bad. It is only ill-natured gossip, or the gossip of ill-natured people that deserves to be condemned. Yet we would not recommend you to cultivate the habit of gossiping, because we must confess that we find many of those whom the world calls gossips are either malicious or ignorant. The gossip of such people is always evil. It is low, frivolous, and too often dirty. But the familiar intercourse, the free exchange of thought and feeling amongst people who have something to talk about besides the faults of their neighbours, is a very different thing; and this is what we call gossip at these parties. Perhaps it would be better to call it what it really is—intelligent conversation. We know a family of young ladies of whom it is said that they never gossip—that is, as most people understand the word. We have seen them at home, we have met them in public places, we have caught glimpses of them going from a book-shop or a library with a fresh volume in their hands, and though they are the most talkative and entertaining of young ladies, they are yet said never to gossip. This is because they have something to talk about which does not come under the name of common vulgar gossip. When we meet them they are full of what they have seen and read. They are brimming with questions. One subject of conversation is dropped only to give place to another in which they are interested, and we have left them, after a delightful hour, feeling our mind roused and refreshed; and during all that hour of ceaseless talking not a neighbour's character was injured, even by the slightest reflection. The reason was, they had something to talk about. They knew something, and they wanted to know more. They could listen as well as they could talk. They had no temptation to indulge in mischievous gossip, because the doings and the belongings of their acquaintances made a subject much less interesting than those which their own knowledge and cultivation supplied. And this tells the whole story, and hence you, young friends, may learn that you should not only avoid idle and malicious gossip, but by reading and observing things so fill your minds with interesting subjects of conversation that you may not have any temptation to indulge in it.

Amongst the many big things of which the Americans so loudly boast they have now

A BIG BOY.

The fame of Daniel Lambert is likely to be eclipsed, whilst Joe, the fat boy in "Pickwick," will no longer serve as an illustration for fat boys in general. As might be expected, the abnormal specimen of adipose humanity hails from America, where all things are great in proportion to the opinion of the natives of their own powers. The latest example of excessive stoutness comes from the State of Illinois. His name is David Navarre, and he is now on view, with other wonderful products, at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition. He is fourteen years old, is six feet seven inches in height, measures three feet and four-teen inches across his shoulders, and six feet and seven inches round his hips. He weighs four hundred and seventy-five pounds. Some idea of the enormous bulk of this youthful mountain of flesh may be gathered from the fact that when he stood upright he occupied the whole width of the aisle of an American railway car. We are not enlightened as to how many candles he would make, or whether it is the intention of the parents who exhibit him during life to melt him down after death.

What a cruel remark that last one is! We need hardly tell you that we have no sympathy with such a writer.

In addition to the big boy the big exhibition of big America has brought out another prodigy in the shape of

A BIG PICTURE.

A novel feature in the art collection of the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition will be the largest picture ever painted. The subject is the "Siege of Paris," and the painter, the celebrated M. Philippotcaux; the size, fifty feet wide by three hundred and eighty feet long. A peculiar and attractive feature will be the introduction of superb life-sized figures in *papier-maché* of men and horses, occupying a foreground of earth, in front of the canvas, by means of which the eye will insensibly be carred away from reality to the painting—a perfect illusion.

Nearly all boys at an early age display a taste or liking for some particular pursuit, and we think it would be well if those persons who have the charge of children would closely observe these signs of a natural bias in favour of one thing more than another. This is very often the indication of the child's true genius, the particular token by which nature itself points out the path of life in which the future man would work with most ease, most honour, and most pleasure. It is undoubtedly true that what we do most willingly we do best, and when a boy's feelings are unmistakably strong in favour of one particular branch of study, a certain art, or profession, we really believe that he would pursue that study, that art, or profession with more honour to himself and more benefit to his fellows than any other, however superior it might appear in the eyes of his more experienced friends. This natural tendency is sometimes so strong as to conquer all opposition and to triumph over every difficulty, and when it is not repressed and kept down by unwise restrictions, it produces those wonderful instances of youthful precocity which are truly astonishing. As one instance out of hundreds we might quote to show how soon the talents of a boy may produce worthy fruit under favourable circumstances, we ask your attention to this little story of

A YOUNG ARTIST.

The Fine Arts' Exhibition of the present year contained two curious pictures, "A Vase of Violets," and "Daisies and Chrysanthemums," signed Louis de Schryver. But the owner of that name is a boy of only twelve and a half years old. A few days before taking his pictures to the Salon he went to ask the advice of M. Philippe Rossau.

"Sir," said he, showing his two canvasses, "do you think the jury will consent to receive these?"

"First of all, on whose behalf do you come?"

"On my own."

"You, however, did not paint these."

"I beg your pardon sir, I did." And taking up the brush and palette of the master, he in a few minutes sketched off a flower. The two pieces were duly approved of by the judges, and the painter has adopted the young artist, who, without ever having had a lesson, painted well enough to gain admission to the Salon at an age when boys generally prefer a game of marbles to studying the art of painting.

But stop; it is time to introduce one of our young poets. We are proud to say that they *are* becoming not only more numerous each week, but, what is of far more importance, they are becoming more accomplished. We claim some little credit for ourselves and you for this pleasing result, because we think that our advice and your applause has had some effect in urging our singers on the way of improvement. A word of judicious applause often marks the turning point in a youth's career. Our clever friend, T. PINDER, will entertain us with some pretty and pleasant verses, entitled

THE SWING.

In the bosom of a valley,
That the summer sheen was wrapping,
Where a bird so musically
In a hollow tree was tapping;
Where the butterfly winged ever,
And the robin followed after,
There beside the dreamy river
Was the sound of silver laughter.

It was in a pleasant garden,
Where the trees were green and stately,
Where the blossom had been warden
Of the boughs so very lately,
That a boy and girl together
From the branches now were singing,
Having tied them with a tether,
While the sun its gold was flinging.

Never was a time so pleasant,
Never were the leaves so shaken,
As they made a ceaseless crescent,
While their aërial ride was taken.
They could see the gliding shallop
On the stream in sun and shadow;
They could see the young colt gallop
Round and round the merry meadow.

They beheld the cattle laving
Down beside the flags and rushes;
They beheld the corn-ears waving,
And they heard the warbling thrushes.
And until the daylight faded,
Still they laughed in merry measure;
Could all children do as they did,
They would have enough of pleasure!

T. PINDER.

Many thanks, sir. These are just the sort of verses we require for our young friends. They are simple, yet melodious, and they present a pleasing picture to the mind. By the way, your verses seem to be suggested by a much-admired picture, of which they give an excellent rendering.

What little girl is there in all the world who does not wish to be a lady? There is not one, we are sure. Yet we are afraid a great many little girls have very mistaken notions as to what is necessary to make a lady. We have known some who thought that nothing more than fine clothes—silks and velvets and glittering jewels—were necessary, but that is a very wrong idea. A good girl may become a lady, no matter whether she has fine clothes or not. The qualities of a real lady are to be found in the heart and the mind, not in her wardrobe. We have heard a pleasing anecdote of one little girl which goes to prove that she possesses one, at least, of the qualities that are necessary to the character of

A TRUE LADY.

I was once walking a short distance behind a very handsomely dressed young girl, and as I looked at her beautiful clothes wondered if she took half so much pains with her heart as she did with her body. A poor old man was coming up the walk with a loaded wheelbarrow, and just before he reached us he made two attempts to go into the yard of a house, but the gate was heavy, and would swing back before he could get in.

"Wait," said the young girl, hurrying forward, "I will hold the gate open."

And she held the gate till he passed in, and received his thanks with a pleasant smile.

"She deserves to have beautiful clothes," I thought, "for a beautiful spirit dwells within her breast."

We daresay you have all learned by this time that we set great value upon the virtue of obedience. It is not only a duty in the young to be strictly obedient to parents and other superiors, it is also one of the most graceful traits of character which can distinguish them. There is also another sort of obedience with which we are more concerned just now. This is the obedience which servants owe to their employers, and which should also be cheerfully and promptly rendered. But this latter obedience need not be so absolute as that which children should yield to parents, because the tie which connects the servant with a master or mistress is not so binding as that between parent and child. A servant should in many circumstances be guided by native intelligence, and it very often happens when they use some proper judgment in carrying out their orders that the employers are better served. Some employers, we know, will not allow their servants to exercise any judgment in these matters, and if they suffer from a too strict adherence to the letter of their commands they should not blame any

erson but themselves. Here is a little story that tells how one of these peremptory masters was served because he insisted upon his servant too strictly

OBEYING ORDERS.

A certain general, supposing his favourite horse dead, ordered a soldier to go and skin him.

"What! is Silvertail dead?" asked Pat.

"What's that to you?" replied the officer. "Do as I bid you, and ask no questions."

Pat went about his business, and in a hour or two he returned.

"Well, Pat, where have you been all this time?" asked the general.

"Skinning your horse, your honour."

"Does it take nearly two hours to perform such an operation?"

"No, your honour; but then you see it took about half an hour to catch him!"

"Catch him! Was he alive?"

"Yis, yer honour, and I could not skin him alive, you know!"

"Skin him alive! Did you kill him?"

"To be sure I did, yer honour! And sure you know I must obey orders without asking any questions!"

We do not feel the least pity for the officer, but we *do* feel rather sorry for poor Silvertail!

Let us now turn our attention to the contents of

OUR YOUNG FOLK'S LETTER BOX.

Amongst the first to hand is one from a young friend whom we had lost sight of for some time.

South Shields.

Mon cher Editeur,—You will think I have quite forgotten you and *Our Young Folk's Weekly Budget*, it is such a long time since I wrote you.

Even now you will be "in a mist" as to whom I am; but just glance at the foot of the letter, and you will see that I am one on whom you were pleased to confer the honour of knighthood (*i. e.* "Loyal Budgetier").

Since I wrote you last I have been living on the Continent, and have visited Wildbad, Carlsbad, Berlin, Mentone, Paris, Dijon, Lyons, Nice, Milan, Florence, Rome, and Como, and have enjoyed myself very much; but you may guess how much better I would have enjoyed myself if I had had your *Budget* every week (which through some mistake at home I did not get), and how much more if I could have read it in the depths of the "Black Forest" at Wildbad, and on the beautiful Lake of Como.

The moment we got to Dover I sent out a servant to get me the *Budget*, and I have got them regularly since.

I find that it is better than ever, and all the stories splendid. "Jewel-Land" is a good story; and, in fact, so are all in the *Budget*. The chat-page is as good, and even better than ever, and I find that your correspondence has not at all decreased, but rather a great deal increased. I have made arrangements to send the *Y. F. W. B.* to five friends on the Continent, who were delighted with the old numbers I gave them.

And now, having trespassed too much already on your valuable time, I remain, very truly yours, my dear Editor,

ERNEST DE LINTERN.

The Editor, *Young Folk's Weekly Budget*,
London.

Thanks. You see, young friends, that the fame of your journal is being spread through foreign lands by some of its faithful admirers. We welcome this good friend's reappearance at our "Party" with great satisfaction, and we are grateful for the many services he has rendered us at home and abroad.

J. A. BARKER (New Springs).—Your letter of thanks is a very becoming one. We find the liveliest pleasure in doing any service in our power for the young people whose confidence we invite, and whose interests we sincerely try to promote.

FRANK TEBBS (Kingston).—We accept the advice in a friendly spirit, as we think it was prompted by a similar feeling; and, indeed, our experience of the system is so unsatisfactory that we are well disposed to accept your suggestions. Thanks for the batch of contributions. We have not yet been able to make room for your prose con.

HORATIO F. HILLSON (Adelaide).—This letter comes to us all the way from the antipodes. There! we fear we have used a word that some of our younger readers may not understand. We must explain. The antipodes mean that part of the globe which is directly opposite to this which we inhabit, so that our feet are against the feet of those who live and move upon that opposite side. This letter, then, has travelled exactly half round the world, and our pride is great at finding that our journal is known and admired so far away, and that it serves to unite the YOUNG FOLKS of half the earth in one great family and happy brotherhood.

PATRICK J. NOLAN (Dublin).—We thank you sincerely, and we hope the "*Y. F. B.* Club" you have founded will prosper. We are much pleased to learn that you like our "Party" so much. We could not write upon that subject in a comprehensible manner without the use of diagrams, and for these we cannot find room in our columns.

F. J. CROGER.—This correspondent sends us one of his characteristic letters, from which we select an extract. He accuses us with some neglect, and continues thus:

It's too bad, naughty Editor!

Now, I expect a severe rebuke for my impertinence, so will you please temper your harshness by doing me a favour?

Pray tell EILEEN MAVOURNEEN that my friends and relations are in great distress. They say I am getting thinner. Good gracious, thinner! I thought that was impossible. Soon you will only be able to see where I am by my red nose!

Tell EILEEN I'm *ail-in'* (no, no, I won't do it any more, sir!) because she hasn't sent me a kind word lately.

I'm in love with my—or some one else's—Mavourneen. It used to be *May worn in* my button-hole; but now it's that sombre flower which signifies "forlorn hope," and is also a good contrast to my red nose!

We think our dear friend EILEEN will learn from this that it is very dangerous to give too much praise to poetical contributors: it is apt to turn their heads. Pray excuse us, dear JULIAN, *we* like you very much.

We have now to proceed with our usual service of

SHORT ANSWERS TO SHORT LETTERS.

W. T. DUTTON—*We thank you much for your very kind letter, young friend, and we hope the novelties we have lately introduced in our journal will meet with your approval;* NORTHUMBERLAND—*We regret that your disappointment should have made you forget your good manners. We acknowledge your letter, however, and we hope that when next you write a letter, no matter to whom, you will remember that courtesy is no less due to yourself than to the person whom you address;* GYMNAST *(Manchester)—We think the perspiration should not be violently stopped; yet, if you think the inconvenience so great as to warrant you in running some risk of injury, you might wash in a strong solution of alum. We thank you for your friendly letter, and the very flattering remarks you make upon our journal;* EDWIN F. LESLIE—*Many thanks, dear Edwin, for your little con., but we do not think it would have enough interest for our young friends;* P. LASCELLES *We are happy in knowing that we contribute so much to your amusement. The slight deafness may be due to the lodgement of hardened wax in the ears. A chemist would supply you with a remedy for a few pence. We must decline the lines, as, indeed, they are not at all poetical;* W. J. FERGUSON *(Glasgow)—We thank you for all your good wishes. We have been highly amused by the evident relish with which you enjoy your journal;* A COLLIER LAD *(Little Hulton)—Thanks for your friendly letter. Use the stale bread-paste formerly described for still waters, and the fresh bread-paste for streams;* VIOLET—*Your pleasant letter has afforded us much satisfaction, dear Violet, and though we have, as you say, "heaps more to read," we consider the few minutes spent upon yours as well employed. Leonard means lion-like;* JAMES MUNRO *(Edinburgh)—Many thanks. We are not sufficiently skilled in the varieties and several excellencies of canine nature to answer your question with confidence. We can only say that our own favourite is the Newfoundland. Two of your puzzles are accepted; the conundrum is declined:* J. T. HORSHAM *(Scarborough)—You flatter us very pleasantly indeed, sir. Accept our thanks for your kind letter, and be assured that the cons. will receive our best attention;* JAMES MURRAY *(Liverpool)—We have to thank you for many favours, and you have increased the sum of our obligations by the service you have done in adding a new friend to our muster-roll. We regret to learn that you have lost a friend, and one in whom we also lose a faithful supporter;* B. BINDER *(Nottingham)—We are at all times ready to hear from you, and to give our attention to your communications. The verses you enclose are very fairly written, but we must decline them as being scarcely suited to our pages;* TAM O'SHANTER—*Your question is so exceedingly vague, and so infinitely wide in its scope, that we are unable to answer it. You ask "Who was the greatest man ever in the world?" Do you mean the greatest soldier, the greatest conqueror, the greatest poet, philosopher, orator, painter, historian, or divine? You must be more explicit, young friend. Achilles is considered the greatest of the Greek heroes;* T. TAYLOR *(Birmingham)—Many thanks. The tricks you describe are already well known;* HECTOR PRIEST *(Goose Green)—You are kind, we are sure, and we are also convinced that you wish us well. The verses you send us, however, are not at all poetical;* THOMAS ROBSON *(Newcastle-on-Tyne) We are obliged by your favour, and thank you for directing our attention to the geographical error;* BIRMINGHAM *We are sorry that we have found it necessary to verify your fears. The con. was not quite good enough; but we have no doubt that you can do better if you try earnestly;* MAUD *(Great Claidons)—Thanks. The answers are correct;* KATE ROBINSON *(West Stanley)—We have read your kind letter with pleasure, and we regret that we cannot give you the information you require;* FRANK HOWARD *No, dear boy, we must really be excused. We cannot consent to assist you in a pursuit which is cruel and improper. Do not be angry with us, and when you are older we have no doubt that you will confess that what we now do is right;* J. G. ANDERSON *(Swansea)—Many thanks for your letter. We will try to meet your wishes in every respect, and you may tell your little sister that we are pleased to learn how much she admires our stories;* J. H. *(Cardiff)—Thanks. The cons. will be attended to in due course. We have a vast number on hand, and several weeks must elapse before any we now accept can appear;* T. DAVIES *(Pyle)—The present cons. are not up to our standard. You make your letter quite ridiculous by a few improper French phrases, which, evidently, you do not understand;* JANE WALES *(Pyle)—We are much pleased to learn that our journal affords so much entertainment to yourself and your brother David. We regret that we must decline the puzzles, as they are not up to our standard;* W. NELSON *(Culnafay)—Thanks; the metagram will do;* COSMO CASTILLO *(Devon)—We were much interested by the brief glimpse of boy-life on ship-board which your letter afforded, and we might have published it only that it contained several sentences which appeared to reflect unfavourably upon the gentlemen in command. It is very gratifying to us to learn that our journal is so much liked on board, and that it serves to make the leisure time of yourself and your companions pass more pleasantly than it might do without our assistance. We will be pleased to hear from you whenever you think it advisable to write;* S. SAMUEL *(Bayswater)—We fully appreciate your kindness, and thank you for the proof of goodwill which your letter and enclosure affords. We beg to decline the translation with thanks. John means the gift of the Lord; Lionel, a little lion, or lion-like. The other we do not know;* CECILIA *(Paddington)—Your praises of our journal are very warm, dear Cecilia, and we cannot doubt that they are sincere. We could not but smile over that part of your letter where you describe how baby "stretches out her chubby hand as if she, too, wanted the paper." We are inclined to believe that when dear baby has learned to read, she will immediately join our happy band, and become a faithful Budgetier. Don't you think she will?* JAMES M'KENZIE *(Glasgow)—Thanks. Our principle desire is to contribute to the improvement and the amusement of our young friends, and therefore we are always anxious to comply with their desires, and to adopt their suggestions when we think that so doing would give general satisfaction. Sometimes, however, we are asked to do things which are exceedingly difficult, if not wholly impossible, and then we are reluctantly compelled to confess an inability that we sincerely regret. Your request, like that of your friend's, is one of those very disagreeable ones with which we cannot comply;* ARTHUR CORLEY—*Thanks. You intended to have done us a service, no doubt, but you have sent us things we have already used, and, besides, you have written on both sides of the paper;* FRED HISCOE *(Leeds)—Thanks. We have filed for insertion an arithmorem and charade;* F. G. BEATON *(Lee)—We have not had time to read your cons. carefully; but a short examination leads us to think that a selection from them will appear in due course;* SISTER OF THE KNIGHT OF MALTA—*We can but say, young lady, that your brothers are as mistaken as they are ungenerous in their judgment if they think you cannot write anything. The lines you have sent us are a very fair performance indeed, and but for a few trifling errors in quantity and rhythm, we would have felt ourselves bound to present them at our "Party." Even though we must decline them we thank you for the offer, and we say they do you no little honour;* LAD—*Thanks for your generous praises. We have much pleasure in replying to your question, although the answer must take up more space than we feel justified in devoting to a single correspondent. However, we like to encourage the study of history, and accordingly we tell you "what the Spanish Armada consisted of." From an announcement published by Philip, King of Spain, himself, and dated May 20, 1588, we learn that the Armada consisted of one hundred and thirty ships, of the total burthen of fifty-thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight tons; on board of which were nineteen thousand two hundred and ninety-five soldiers, eight thousand four hundred and fifty sailors, two thousand and eighty-eight slaves, and two thousand eight hundred and thirty pieces of cannon. There was also a large fleet of tenders, with a vast quantity of arms aboard, making up the most prodigious armament that had sailed the seas for many ages. We suppose you have read of the defeat of this mighty fleet, which the Spanish King thought invincible;* DULSE *(Paisley)—Thanks. The answers are correct. The rebus is declined;* T. SULLIVAN *(Manchester)—Your friendly letter has given us much pleasure, and the cons. enclosed are passed for insertion;* FREDERICK BROWN *(Canning Town) Your rhyming letter has amused us. We trust you are already recovered from that "cold in the head" which kept you abed when your brother John to his school had gone;* JOHN YORKSTON *(Edinburgh)—You have written on both sides of your paper, and your cons. are therefore unavailable;* E. T. BULL—*Yes, certainly, we admit you both with much pleasure; but we may not presume to give you names. Surely you will be able to find titles for yourselves!* W. M. BROWN *(Glasgow)—We have not anything to excuse. We are always well pleased to hear from our friends;* GERTRUDE—*We regret that we cannot give the information, as we do not know of any dance thus described;* A HIGHLANDER—*The cons. are not up to our standard;* F. W. BETCHELL *(Leicester)—No, we certainly cannot think bad of you. On the contrary, we are grateful for the service you have rendered us, and for the pleasure your kind letter has afforded us. The first syllable is pronounced as in Mary. We have found it necessary to decline the cons.;* JOHN T. BARON *(Blackburn)—We thank you, and are happy to say that your cons. are passed for insertion, though, owing to the crowded state of our files, some time must pass before they can appear;* ALFRED WADLEY—*We thank you, but you have not yet reached the point of success;* FRED LANCASTER *(Birmingham)—You must pay far more attention to grammar, dear Fred, before we can admit you to our "Party" as a contributor;* WILL TAYLOR—*Thanks. Such kindly letters as yours, young friend, do much more than repay for any trouble we may be at to contribute to your amusement, and to secure your favour;* ARTHUR DALE *(Leicester)—Your perseverance deserves success, and will certainly secure it in the end. We may be able to use one of the last cons. you have sent us; but we are so fully supplied just now, that some weeks must elapse before it can appear;* RICHARD BROWN *(Dublin)—We mean that we have fixed upon a certain degree of excellence as a standard, and that contributions which fall below that degree of excellence cannot be accepted, because they are not up to the standard of merit;* FAT BOY *(Athlone) For neuralgia dissolve ten grains of citrate of iron and quinine in five ounces of water, and take a tablespoonful twice a day. For a bad breath try brushing the teeth with camphorated chalk every morning;* IVY *(Killarney)—Thanks, dear Ivy. You only do us justice when you say you are sure we would have accepted your cons. if we could. There is not anything that gives us greater pleasure than to afford whatever gratification we can to our young friends;* H. L. MUSIC *(Cheshire)—We would gladly oblige you if we could; but we have never heard of anything used for that purpose; practice is, we believe, the only remedy;* JAMES C. NASH *(Dundee)—We enrol you amongst the guests at our "Party" with much pleasure. In reply to your question, we think it is not good for a boy of your age. The cons. are not up to publishing standard;* EDWARD CHETWYND *(Eccleshall)—We consider your verses rather creditable; but they are yet not good enough for our pages;* FRED J. *(Hanley)—You are quite an old friend, and we are sorry we cannot admit you to our company of riddlers. The con. you kindly sent us is not quite up to the mark, however;* ARTHUR DALE *(Leicester)—The cons. are to hand, for which, together with your kind letter, we return you our thanks;* CHARLES BELL—*We acknowledge receipt of your con., but we do not find it up to our publishing standard;* J. F. FARRER *(Leeds)—Thanks for your contributions, which will appear in due time;* WATER-SPRITE *(Great Grimsby)—Our aquatic nymph has learned to flatter, we think. At least, we are sure her letter has given us much satisfaction;* ALFRED DAVIS *(Manchester)—Thanks. We do not remember the cons.; but if they reached us, and were good enough, they will appear in due course;* A. J. LOVELL *(Cardiff)—You are very kind. We are sorry for poor Uncum Buncum, however, and we think the boy who gave him a "bob in the eye" misbehaved himself very much;* W. H. WRIGHT—*Thanks. You have not offended us in the least. We like our friends to express their opinions candidly, and without hesitation, even when we find it necessary to dissent from their views. The conundrums are declined;* J. H. WALLIS *(Chester)—We are grateful for the service you have done us. The enigma is declined; but the other cons. are passed for insertion;* ALICE MAUD S.—*Thanks. We must decline the puzzle stanza, as it is too easily read. Our young riddle readers would arrive at the solution in a minute;* JAMES MURRAY *(Liverpool)—Yes, many persons are afflicted with colour blindness—that is, an inability to distinguish between certain colours. The anagram is declined because it is not original. The other cons. will do;* JOHN YOUNG *(Manchester)—Your generous praise gives us great pleasure, and we think we can afford you some satisfaction in return by informing you that your con. is filed for insertion;* SNOWDROP—*We are much pleased to hear from you, dear Snowdrop. It seems to us quite a long time since we had the pleasure of looking upon your pretty signature. The cat's fur is charged with a certain degree of electricity, but if you have any regard for the appearance of your skin, we would not advise you to try such experiments too often. Cats do not like to be rubbed against the grain;* F. U. JEFFERY—*Many thanks. Some of your cons. will appear in due time. The word is a modern invention, and appears to be a corruption of ring;* JAMES RICHARDSON—*No, we fear such a proceeding would be quite unjustifiable on economic grounds. Thanks for the cons., which will appear in due time;* VIOLETTA VALERY—*Many thanks for your very kind letter. We are pleased indeed to know that we have been able to afford you the gratification to which you allude;* NOVICE NATURALIST *(Newcastle-on-Tyne)—Your kind and considerate letter has given us much satisfaction. We do not find it at all painful to discharge our duty to our kind young friends, even though it involves considerable labour. We think thirty-four inches a fair average measurement;* J. ALEXANDER *(Glasgow)—Thanks for the cons., some of which will appear in due time.*

Our good friend, T. PINDER, will lead the riddling band to-day with an excellent poetical

ACROSTIC.

No. 1.

Foundation Words.

Now is the pleasant time,
Worthy the poet's rhyme,
Fair as the sunny clime
Where citrons grow,
Beauty is reigning round,
Verdure has clad the ground,
Streams have a purling sound,
And roses blow.

Come from the city's smoke,
Throw off the weary yoke,
Rest 'neath the spreading oak,
King of the glade,
List to the woodlark's song,
While bees in numbers throng
Fairest of flow'rs among,
Making their raid.

Cross Words.

Or by the golden corn
Stray in the early morn,
Which fragrant this is borne
Through all the air;
There poppies lift the head
Rich with a brilliant red
Like to the colour spread
On cheeks so fair.

This from her grassy bed
Like to an arrow sped
High in the sky o'erhead,
Rises the lark,
Winging in rapid flight,
Hailing the bright sunlight—
He is a soulless wight,
Who will not hark.

Here is the "fairies' ring,"
They have been wandering,
Led by their merry king,
And this their queen,
When all the flow'rets slept,
Or dewy tears they wept,
And paly moonbeams crept
Over the green.

Winds murmur this, and low
The sun with golden glow
Beams on the world below,
Kissing it oft—
Beams on the crystal stream,
Flowing as flows a dream,
Singing some pleasant theme
Dulcet and soft.

Roam by the quiet lake,
Roam by its reedy brake,
Roam where kingfishers make
Nests by its shores;
See where the lily floats,
Whitest is hers of coats,
This one who views and notes
Her grace adores.

There o'er the silver tide
Perchance a boat will glide,
'Neath hanging boughs that hide
From sun and glare;
Scarcely an oar blade stirs,
This are the passengers,
Drifting beneath the firs,
Nigh unaware.

T. PINDER, Leeds.

CENTRAL DELETIONS.

No. 2.

Oftimes, with great immensity,
Men practise this propensity,
With utmost satisfaction;
Many people oft they ruin
Through this form of evil doing,
And drive them to distraction.

From this the centre now extract,
And when you have performed this act,
A well-known name will appear,
One that is welcomed with delight,
On each successive "Party" night,
By every "Budgetier."

J. W. LOWE, Ilford.

No. 3.

From an overlooker's name the centre delete,
And you'll have a place from which horses eat.

J. RICHARDSON, Liverpool.

CHARADE.

No. 4.

I stood at early dawn of day,
And watched my first spread o'er the sky,
To chase the gloom of night away,
And render dim the stars on high.

In every street in every town
My last is sure to be;
My whole is on the rock coast found,
And blessed by those at sea.

KNIGHT OF MALTA.

PUZZLES.

No. 5.

One-fifth of glade, one-fifth of spade,
And then one-fifth of stick;
One-fifth of stock, one-fifth of block,
And then one-fifth of brick;
These letters, when placed aright by you,
Will bring a well-known friend to view.

G. PORRET, Dublin.

No. 6.

One-fourth of milk, one-fourth of silk,
And then one-fifth of shake;
One-fourth of bake, one-fourth of cake,
A Christian name will make.

A. SUTCLIFFE, Todmorden.

TRANSPOSITIONS.

No. 7.

If a measure you transpose,
Part of your face it will disclose.

H. BEYNON, Bristol.

No. 8.

A fragrant ointment if you transpose,
A kind of animal it will disclose.

J. MURRAY.

No. 9.

What means to finish if you transpose,
An animal's residence it will disclose.

J. W. SMITH.

METAGRAM.

No. 10.

A simple article of wear,
Of shades I'm sometimes dark or fair;
Change head, and lo, as this takes place,
A kind of spice in me you trace.

Changes are lightsome, people say,
Therefore the proverb, by the way,
Will admirably suit our plan,
And so we'll try another one.

Cut off my head, this brings to view,
A subtle influence felt by you,
From infancy to manhood's age,
And onward through life's troubled page.

A different head now please bestow,
Which alters my appearance so,
Into a bird of gentle fame,
And all, I'm certain, know my name.

I think sufficient has been said,
Enough suggestions have been laid,
Through which to bring my name to view,
Therefore, I'll bid you all adieu.

W. NELSON, Culnafay.

VERBAL CHARADE.

No. 11.

My first is in cat, but not in dog;
My second in mist, but not in fog;
My third in sing but not in sorrow;
My next in lend, but not in borrow;
My fifth in feet, but not in toes;
The answer to this riddle shows
A *Budget* heroine.

T. RUSSELL.

REVERSION.

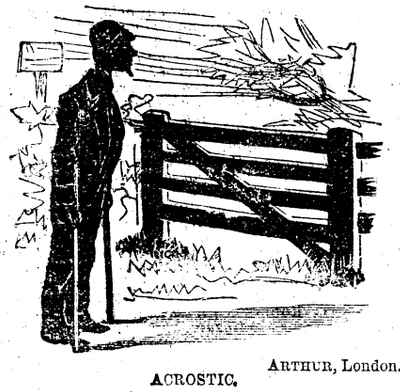
No. 12.

Turn round an Irish town,
And then you'll plainly see,
That what I was at first
I still must surely be.

SEMPER IDEM.

GEOGRAPHICAL REBUS.

No. 13.



ARTHUR, London.

ACROSTIC.

No. 14.

Foundation Words.

Good riddling friend,
Just please attend,
And soon the answer you'll find;
My primals name
A city of fame,
In England, bear in mind.

Cross Words.

A famous naval hero
Will in my first be shown;
He was the bravest of the brave,
As you, I'm sure, will own.

All o'er our land this story is
Perused with great delight;
It is indeed a famous one,
So put it down aright.

This celebrated author is
Possessed of wondrous fame;
His writings for *Our Young Folk's* have
Immortalized his name.

This will a fish assuredly be,
Which is the largest in the sea.

I know a beauteous maiden,
With lovely silken hair,
And eyes a dark, deep blue,
Who does this sweet name bear.

The sweet notes of this little bird
In early spring are always heard.

This daring *Budget* hero
Is doubtless known to you;
And now, as I my task have done,
I'll bid you all adieu.

F. J. WILSON, Forest Gate.

NUMERICAL CHARADE.

No. 15.

Pick me to pieces, and you'll find
That fourteen letters are combined;
My 1, 8, 2, 6, 5, 7, 3, 4
Is what S. CLARKE is to the Editor;
My 5 or 8, my 9 and 10
Is a metal used by all men;
My 12, 11, 14, 13
Is made of wood—that is certain;
My 3, 2 I don't like people to say;
My 4, 2, 3 is born every day;
My 4, 9, 8 is commonly done;
My 12, 14, 10's my favourite one;
My, 13, 14, 12, and 6
Is the way that boys often get kicks;
My 6, my 12, also my 5
Can always move, but's not alive;
My 12, 9, 10 is used by all;
And now I think I'll end my call.
If you look me well over, you will see
That a capital town I will be.

ESTHER ALCOCK.

LOGOGRIPHS.

No. 16.

A vast expanse of water meets your eye;
Behead, transpose, and then a stick is nigh;
Now from my body please to cut my tail—
A kind of vessel is seen without fail;
And now, if you'll cut off the other end,
An article you see which none can mend;
Curtail this article, and then behold
A vowel which you'll not see in retold.

J. LEA.

No. 17.

A female's Christian name turn round,
And then deprive of head,
When lo, immediately is found
A certain quadruped.

J. B. AND A. ANGOVE.

DECAPITATIONS.

No. 18.

I am a creature of small might—
Some say of little good;
My enemies are great indeed—
They'd kill me if they could.

Behead me, friend, and you will see
An English river flowing free;
Again behead, and here we find
What should with show be well combined.

ANNE STANTON, Holloway.

No. 19.

A woman's name if you behead,
A man's name you will have instead.

H. POUND.

No. 20.

A vehicle; cut off my head,
And a word for skill you'll see instead.

ROSA K.

SQUARE WORDS.

No. 21.

To dart, to issue forth a flame;
A truly English maiden's name;
A metal—very useful, too;
A river not unknown to you.

KATE DODD.

No. 22.

My first, you'll find, means to despatch;
My second means always; but just try and catch
My third, a river, as you will find;
And my last a weight of the smallest kind.

W. SHAW.

DIAMOND PUZZLE.

No. 23.

Now, riddlers all, to me attend,
Whilst I this riddle show;
Then when I've done, without a doubt,
The answer you will know.

With every gallant knight of old
My first was always seen,
And with them in each tournament
And battle I have been.

A noble stream for second take—
Through Europe it doth flow;
A foreign title, too, 'twill name;
A kind of game also.

The map of Prussia now please take,
And search it o'er with care;
This great commercial trading town
The same will soon declare.

What could we do without the girls?
We could not joke or game;
I love them all, especially one
Who bears this pretty name.

Within my centres you will find
A first-class tale is shown,
That doth with daring deeds abound,
As one and all will own.

To France we'll now direct our course
To bring my next to mind;
If in the north you penetrate
This seaport town you'll find.

Here's to our good and noble Queen;
Long may she with us live—
With peace and plenty o'er us this,
For it will pleasure give.

A mighty power is in me found—
What magic I possess!
Yet often used by you and me;
It's name, dear riddler, guess.

Our Young Folk's Budget now take,
And search it o'er with care;
My last you then will quickly find,
For it is always there.

Just trace my centres, then you will
A splendid tale espy;
Admired it is—I can't say more,
So, riddling friends, good-bye.

C. MARSH, Dudley.

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES, &c., OF LAST WEEK.

1.—Monday. Thus: My, Oat, Not, Dew, As, Yellow.
2.—Crescent.
3.—Cowslip.
4.—Ada, Cora, Eve, Nina, Mary, Nora, Lena, Myra.
5.—Ouse, Cam, Eden, Wear, Forth, Rhone, Po, Tiber, Ganges, Indus.
6.—Light.
7.—Hair, air.
8.—Alfred, Fred.
9.—Bomb, comb.
10.—Bolton, London. Thus: BalL, OliO, LanterN, TrinidaD, OhiO, NelsoN.
11.—Coalville.
12.—Wellington.
13.—Rail, lait.
14.—At open doors dogs come in.
15.—Lever, revel.
16.—Garb, brag.
17.—Meat, tea.
18.—Homer, Rome, more, ore, roe.
19.—Eliza.
20.—Bark.
21.—Dull, hull, pull.
22.—Mitre, mire.
23.—H. Cleere. Thus: Henry, Caroline, Louise, Edward, Ernest, Richard, Elizabeth.
24.—Stair, star.

25.—
O V I D
V I C E
I C E S
D E S K

26.—
H I G H
I S L E
G L E N
H E N S

27.—
S T A R
T O N E
A N O N
R E N D

28.—
O
A R T
P A P E R
O R P H A N S
T E A R S
O N E
S

29.—
F
S O T
B I R D S
F O R T U N E
P R U N E
I N N
E

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