The FLYING CARPET

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DAY DREAMS

Painted for "The Flying Carpet"
by Harold Earnshaw

THE FLYING CARPET

Charles Scribner's Sons, New York

Printed in the United States of America

List of Those Who Have Woven This Flying Carpet

LIST OF THOSE WHO HAVE WOVEN THIS FLYING CARPET

LIST OF THOSE WHO HAVE HELPED TO ADORN THE FLYING CARPET

MABEL LUCIE ATTWELL
J. R. C. BODLEY
L. R. BRIGHTWELL
H. M. BROCK
HAROLD EARNSHAW
DAPHNE JERROLD
E. BARNARD LINTOTT
HUGH LOFTING
GEORGE MORROW
SUSAN PEARSE
T. HEATH ROBINSON
ERNEST H. SHEPARD
DUDLEY TENNANT
A. H. WATSON

A POPULAR PERSONAGE AT HOME

BY THOMAS HARDY

"I live here: 'Wessex' is my name,
I am a dog known rather well:
I guard the house; but how that came
To be my lot I cannot tell.

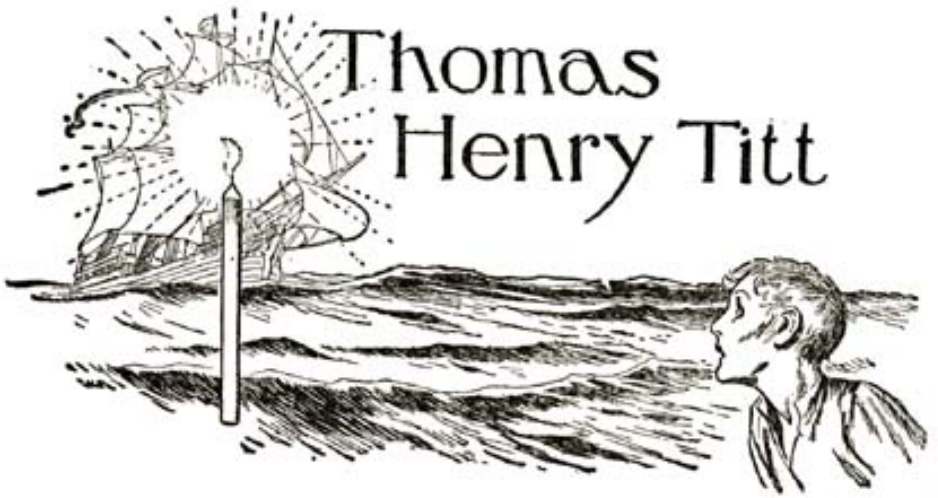
"With a leap and a heart elate I go,
At the end of an hour's expectancy,
To take a walk of a mile or so,
With the folk who share the house with me.

"Along the path amid the grass
I sniff, and find out rarest smells
For rolling over as I pass
The open fields towards the dells.

"No doubt I shall always cross this sill,
And turn the corner, and stand steady,
Gazing back for my mistress till
She reaches where I have run already.

"And that this meadow with its brook,
And bulrush, just as it appears
As I plunge past with hasty look,
Will stay the same a thousand years."

Thus "Wessex." Yet a dubious ray
At times informs his steadfast eye,
Just for a trice, as though to say:
"Will these things, after all, go by?"



ADELAIDE PHILLPOTTS

In the South West of London stands a cathedral, which, from outside, looks like a child's castle of bricks. But when you go inside you see nothing at first but a large emptiness—a ceiling somewhere up in the clouds supported by huge marble columns. There is always a smell of incense in the air, and there is a little painted figure before which, night and day, burn three rows of candles. Sometimes, on Saints' Days, other rows of candles are lighted before other painted figures—St. Andrew, St. Patrick, St. George—making centres of bright light in the dimness of the great interior.

Near this cathedral are blocks of tenement buildings where families dwell, one on top of the other, like books in a bookcase. These buildings are full of children: boys and girls and babies.

On the top floor of one of these blocks lived Thomas Henry Titt, aged twelve. Thomas Henry's father kept a shop round the corner where you saw sausages and onions frying in the window. His mother was dead. He had an elder sister who mended his clothes and helped their father in the shop. Thomas was known

as Tom-Tit; and he looked rather like a bird, for he had thin arms and legs, sharp little eyes, a crest of bright hair, and a pointed nose.

Like every imaginative child, Tom-Tit had a secret: a passion for the sea, which he had never seen. His ocean was in his mind's eye, and he hoped as no one ever hoped before that one day he might behold the reality of his dream. In the darkness of night Tom-Tit, alone in his attic, lying awake on his mattress, gazed out upon a heaving cornflower-blue coloured ocean—as blue as the flowers which the woman sold at the end of his street. And this ocean was full of shining fishes. There was no land in sight —ever.

Thomas Henry Titt loved the candles that burned before the painted figure in the cathedral. In the winter, when he was small, he had often held his little frozen hands to the warmth of them, when nobody was looking. But as he grew older the candles began to have for him a deeper significance. During evening service he would creep into a corner by one of the pillars, listening to the organ and watching the kneeling people in the distance near the shining altar. Then, when the music stopped and the people were gone, he would steal out and patter along to the rows of candles. There his heart would light up, even as they, and he would thrill with a strange, unaccountable happiness.

Gradually Tom-Tit began to connect these candles with his desire for the sea. The two facts became one in his mind. It was as if, by the light of the former, he could see the blue waves of the other.

Underneath the rows of burning candles was a rack full of new ones. Tom often saw people drop a coin into a box, take one, fix it upon a spike among the rest, and light it. And a longing overcame him to possess for his own one of these new candles. Perhaps, at the bottom of his mind, was the idea that if he took

it home and lighted it, it would bring him nearer to his ultimate ambition—to see the sea. He determined to realise his desire.

Then came a winter day when Tom-Tit's head ached, shivers ran up and down his spine, and he felt very ill. Therefore his sister bade him stay in bed, and he did so until she had left the house with her father. But then, despite his fever, the craving to possess that candle overcame obedience. So, gripping a penny, he rose, staggered downstairs, and out into the road. The cold air cooled his body and numbed his pains. He slipped unnoticed into the cathedral and leaned for a moment against the wall, for his head was swimming and he could not see. Then he recovered, and his eyes sparkled as he beheld the candles flickering like golden flowers before the wooden figure at the end of the aisle. The surrounding air was a golden haze. The smell of incense was sweet.

He tottered to the box of new candles, dropped in his penny, and took one. Then he dragged himself home, feeling worse and worse at every step, but gloriously glad within, because of the candle in his pocket.

All day he lay on his bed, too ill to sit up, nursing his treasure. "I shall be well to-night," he thought, "and when it's dark I'll light it."

In the evening his father and sister returned, found him in a state of high fever, and sent for the doctor. He, when he saw Tom-Tit, said that he would come back in the morning and remove him to the hospital if he were not better.

He gave Tom a sleeping draught before he left.

When his father and sister had gone to bed, Thomas Henry, feeling drowsy and less hurt with pain, pulled out his candle half melted already by the heat of his hands, lit it, and set it on a chair by his side. Then he lay gazing at it, until the whole world was but a golden flame with a blue root.

Then a wonderful thing happened. He did not see the candle any more. His first idea was that the wind must have blown it out, for a great wind was blowing. Where could he be? He opened his eyes, which must have been closed, and lo! he was in a little wooden boat on a cornflower-blue sea! The boat was rocking from side to side like the baby's cradle on the floor below —a mechanical rock, rock, rock, rock, from side to side. He scooped up a handful of the sea, and, just as he had expected, it was bright blue. He could see blue shining fishes swimming round the boat, so he caught them in his fingers where they wriggled about and made blue reflections until he threw them back again into the blue water.

And all the time, though he could not see it, the candle was burning at his side—burning lower, and lower, and lower.

From horizon to horizon the cobalt ocean stretched around him—not a speck of land anywhere. He was perfectly happy there staring down through the blue fathoms and feeling the wind blow. He had never been so happy in his life before.

Then the candle went out.

In the morning they found a little pool of grease on the chair—and Tom-Tit was dead.

But this is not really a sad story, because Thomas Henry did what many thousands of people never do, even though they live to be a hundred and three—he realised his ambition. He saw the sea. And he was not disillusioned; for the sea that he saw was just as beautiful as the sea which he imagined: the reality matched the dream.

Stories

HERBERT ASQUITH

When lights are out and Pat's in bed,
He tells a story from his head
Of men who fight by sea and land
With cutlasses in either hand.
Who make their mouths into a sheath
And sharpen dirks upon their teeth;
And schooners heeling to the breeze
That blows across the coral seas,
With kegs of rum and bars of gold
And corpses rolling in the hold.
Then far below the dining-room
Pours out its voices: through the gloom
Borne on tobacco-laden air
The roar of talk comes up the stair,
But where are now the coral seas
And where is Pat? Lost on the breeze
With streaming flag the schooner fades
And takes her captain to the shades.

Invitation to the Voyage

(*A New Version*)

ALFRED NOYES

A rambling cherry-petalled stream;
  A bridge of pale bamboo;
A path that seemed a twisted dream
  Where everything came true;
A crimson-lanterned garden-hous
With jutting eaves below the boughs;
  The slant-eyed elves in blue
With soft slip-slapping heels and toes
Dancing before the Daimyōs:

"*And is it Old Japan*," you cry
  "That half-remembered place"—
I see beneath an English sky
  A child with brooding face.
The curious realm he chose to build
And paint with any hues he willed
  Is all I strive to trace,
Where odds and ends of memory smile
Like bits of heaven, through clouds awhile.

And some for charts and maps would call,
  But here, beside the fire,
The kakemono on the wall
  Is all that we require.

A chanty piped by bosun Lear
May float around us while we steer
  Our hearts to their desire—
The Nonsense Land beyond the sun
Where West and East, at last, are one.

Then let the rigging hum the tales
  That Tusitala* told
When first we spread our purple sails
  In quest of pirate gold;
For, though he waved us all good-bye
Beneath the deep Samoan sky,
  His heart was blithe and bold,
And hailed across a darker main
The shadowy hills of home again.

So we, who now adventure far
  Beyond the singing foam,
May see, in every dipping star,
  The harbour lights of home;
And, finding still, as all have found,
That every ship is homeward bound,
  (For none could ever roam
A sea too wide for heaven to span)
Sail on—sail on—to Old Japan.

* Robert Louis Stevenson.

I Wish I Were a Dog

DESMOND MACCARTHY

There were five in the family and Dicky, nearly nine, was the youngest but one. Dicky's father was a country doctor, and, like many country doctors, he led rather a hard life. The sick people he visited lived miles apart, and many were too poor to pay him properly.

Dr. Brook was a tall, pale man with grizzled hair turning to grey. He was clever, and he had a quick, short way of talking. He seemed to make up his mind about everything in a moment, and if you asked him a question, he answered as though it ought not to have been necessary to explain.

Dicky would have been surprised to hear that his father was a kind man, but kind he was. He hated attending upon well-to-do people who had nothing much the matter with them, though he knew he must visit them to make enough money to bring up his own children properly.

He would remember this while he was driving miles out of his way to see some poor cottager, and so, when he arrived at the cottage, he was usually in a bad temper. On the other hand, when he was calling on old Mrs. Varden at The Grange, who was sound as a bell and would probably live to be ninety, he was always thinking of those who really wanted looking after. Then, instead of smiling sympathetically, while she told him how queer she had felt in the middle of the night three weeks ago, or how well her nephews were doing, he would stand in front of the

fire in her cosy sitting-room, look up at the ceiling with a stern expression, and rattle the keys in his pocket in a manner which said plainly, "How much longer shall I have to listen to this stuff?" So, although everybody thought Dr. Brook "a very clever doctor," few people were fond of him.

All day he went bumping and rushing along the country lanes and roads in his shabby, muddy car, which he never had time to clean properly; and when he got home his day's work was not over. In the evening he turned schoolmaster and taught his children.

Dicky's mother had died when his brother Peregrin was born. Ella, the eldest of the children, a grown-up girl, kept house and taught Dicky and Peregrin in the morning. She was very like her father in many ways, only her cleverness had turned to music. She played the violin beautifully, and she was dying to get away from home and become a famous musician. Dr. Brook knew this and was very sorry for her; but he could not let her go till Dicky and Peregrin went to school. She had to be a governess till then. The other two boys had done very well. They had both got scholarships, and little Peregrin was as sharp as a needle.

Altogether the doctor had to admit he was very blessed in his children. But there was Dicky! Dicky was a dunce, there was no doubt about it—at least, so Ella reported. And when Dicky showed his smudgy exercise-books to his father in the evenings, his father thought it only too true.

Dicky dreaded the evening every day. He did not much mind his sister Ella's crossness. He was used to it. But there was something awful about the weary quiet way his father used to ask, "Do you understand *now?*" Dicky had then to say "Yes," and presently his father would find out he hadn't understood at all. There would be a still longer pause, and at last his father would sigh, "Unhappy boy, what will become of you!"

This was far worse than being slapped by Ella, though her ring sometimes really did hurt. His father would then repeat what he had said before, twice, very slowly, as though he were dropping the words drop by drop into a medicine glass, looking at Dicky all the time, till Dicky's lips began to quiver and his eyes to fill, when his father would say hastily, pulling out his watch, "There, there. It's time for bed. Run along. Kiss me." Then Dicky's one desire was to get out of the room before bursting into tears. He did not mind if it happened outside the door or upstairs. Indeed, it was rather a comfort to cry, especially if he could only get hold of Jasper, the black spaniel, to hug and talk to while he was crying. But he was terrified at breaking down before his father. He somehow felt if he did, he might never stop sobbing, or that something else dreadful would happen. One evening it did happen.

The day had been altogether a bad day. Dicky had got up that morning feeling as if his head was rather smaller and lighter than usual. It felt about the size of an apple. Ella had had a fat letter that morning from her bosom friend, at the Royal College of Music in London. Lessons were always worse on the days she heard from her, and that morning it was true also, for once in a way, that Dicky had really *not* been "trying." He had begun by making thirty-four mistakes in his French dictation—and he was rather glad. During arithmetic he had amused himself by imagining that the numbers had different characters, and that some of them were very pleased to find themselves side by side in the sums. The result was that all his sums were wrong, and he had exasperated Ella by telling her that it was the fault of number 8, who was a quarrelsome widow and wore spectacles.

When left alone to do his Latin Prose, while Ella went to her bedroom to practise furiously on the fiddle, he had spent the time in teasing a beetle by hemming it in between canals of ink on the schoolroom table. He liked the beetle, but he enjoyed imagining

its disgust and perplexity, and he enjoyed feeling that he could, but wouldn't, drown it. When Ella came back and found that he had only written one Latin word, "Jam" (already), on the paper, she tore the exercise book from him and said that he could do what he liked: she would tell his father and never teach him again—never, never, never.

But the evening was a long way off, and Dicky walked into the garden, in a gloomy sort of way rather proud of himself. He found, however, he could not amuse himself, so he devoted himself to amusing Jasper, chasing him in circles about the lawn and throwing sticks for him to fetch. When the dog had had

"SHE WOULD NEVER TEACH HIM AGAIN—NEVER, NEVER"

enough, and lay down on the grass with his paws out in front of him like a lion, Dicky did not know what to do next. He went down himself on all fours and kissed Jasper, who responded, between quick pants, with a hasty slobber of his pink quivering tongue, as though he were snapping at a fly. Ah, if only he were as happy as Jasper! Dicky suddenly remembered that an old gentleman had once given him a sort of blessing, saying, "May you be as happy as a good dog." What an easy time Jasper had! Of course he got into trouble if he rolled in things, but if Dicky were in his shoes—or perhaps he ought to say on his paws—*he* wouldn't want to. (Jasper certainly had a very odd taste in scent.) Examinations, scholarships—those awful things meant nothing to him. Dicky thought he could have easily managed to be a good dog. And since he wanted to stop thinking about himself, he began to play a favourite game of imagining what Jasper said to other dogs about his home and the family. How he would boast to them of the excellent rabbit-hunting in the copse near by, of the good bones he had and the warm fires; and how he would tell them about jumping on Dick's bed in the morning and how perfectly Dick and he understood each other. But the worst of it was that unless one were tired and a little sleepy, one could not go on with that game very long. It soon began to seem silly. It was not a good morning game.

Ella was very grim at lunch and only spoke to Peregrin. After luncheon Dicky felt very inclined to work—anything to stop thinking. He said something about learning grammar, but Ella took all the books away and locked them up. She said he could do *whatever he liked*. This had never happened before and it frightened him.

He went for a walk by himself. The sky was grey and the hedges were dripping and his feet felt heavy. He actually tried to remember what cases the different prepositions governed in Latin,

as he walked along, in the hope of surprising his father in the evening; but the fear that he might be repeating them to himself all wrong made him hopeless. It was never safe to learn without the book. Only once, when a red stoat ambled with arched back across the lane, did he forget himself. A stoat, too, must have a jolly life, he thought, even if it ended by being nailed up on a door by a keeper. He stayed out till it was dark and past tea time.

His father's hat and coat were not in the hall when he returned, so Dicky knew he had not yet come back. Upstairs he could hear the wailing of Ella's violin. He went up and knocked at her door. She did not say "Come in," or stop bowing away or frowning at the music on the stand in front of her. "If you're hungry get milk in the kitchen," she said, her chin still on the fiddle, "and—shut the door."

Dicky did so, and stood for a minute outside it. Then he went slowly to the schoolroom and sat down at the table. Peregrin was already in bed, and there was nothing to do but to wait.

Time passed very slowly, and if Dicky had not known that he was dreading something, he would have thought he must be ill. He did, indeed, feel very queer. At last he heard the front door slam and the tramp of his father's stride in the hall. The same instant the sound of the violin stopped and Ella walked rapidly along the passage; and before Dicky knew what he was doing he had started to run after her. At the head of the stairs he stopped himself, and peeping over the bannisters he saw that his father had hesitated in the middle of pulling off his coat, and was staring at Ella, who was talking vehemently in front of him. Dicky heard her raised voice saying, "It is hopeless. Father, I won't; I really can't. He . . ." His father finished getting out of his coat without a word; then they both went into the study. The door closed behind them, and Dicky crept back to the schoolroom.

Presently, he heard Ella calling him to come down. A few minutes before, his legs had carried him to the top of the stairs without his wanting it, now they refused to move. "Father wants you in the study at once," she shouted, and she continued to call, "Dick, Dick, Dick, Dick." There was a long pause and Ella herself stood in the doorway.

"Father is coming to whip you," she said, and walked off to her room.

But he did not come. Dicky waited with beating heart, but he did not come. He waited till he almost forgot he was waiting, and yet his father did not come. And when at last he heard soft shuffling steps coming along the passage, his heart almost stopped. To his astonishment he saw in the darkness beyond the door two small round orange lamps shining about a foot from the ground. It was only Jasper, who padded quietly into the room and lay down on the hearth-rug with a quiet sigh of satisfaction. Having settled himself in the shape of a large foot-stool, Jasper did not lift his nose again, but he turned up his eyes at Dicky—they were brown eyes now, exquisitely humble and kind—and wagged his stumpy tail. Dicky had flung himself on the floor beside the dog and embraced him. Were these the terrible sobs which would never leave off? No, presently they did stop; and gradually Dicky even forgot that he was waiting for something awful. The occasional dab of the dog's cold nose on his hot cheeks was comforting, and so it was to curl all round him. Dicky felt almost as though he were a dog himself when he was curled up like that.

"Do you know, Jasper, if I were a dog, I should be a very clever dog? Much, much cleverer than you," he whispered with his face buried in the black fur. His head felt swollen and confused. "A re-markable dog," he repeated, "I should be a very re-markable dog."

Downstairs Dr. Brook was sitting close up to the fire and

staring gloomily into it. He had forgotten that he held a short switch in his hand, and that it still hung down between his knees. He was thinking in pictures and the pictures were not of Dicky. He had forgotten Dicky; he had even forgotten himself. They say the whole of life passes before a drowning man's eyes. The doctor ever since he sat down had felt like a man drowning in a sea of troubles. If not the whole of his own life, still, much of it, had passed before his eyes. Only when at last he was eating his cold solitary dinner in the dining-room, did he remember again that Dicky had been naughty that morning, and that Dicky was probably incurably stupid. But even if he were it did not seem now to matter much, or to matter in a different way. Ella, too, he thought, must go to her College of Music; things could somehow be managed. The doctor sat a very long time over his dinner.

But upstairs still stranger things were happening to Dick. First he felt hot and large, then cold and small. He kept on shivering. Was this silky hair his own or Jasper's? And where was he? He was apparently in a wet, grey place. What he touched with his hands and feet felt rough and gritty. Suddenly he saw a brown stoat with an arched back ambling rapidly in front of him—it was as big as a fox. Yes, he was on a road—the very road he had walked along that very afternoon, only now the wet hedges were ever so much higher. And before Dicky knew what he was doing he was dashing after the stoat, right into the quickset hedge after it. What was he doing? He smelt a queer strong smell which excited him; and he pushed and struggled through the roots and thorns, following the smell. He seemed, too, to be wearing a very odd cap with long flaps, which kept catching in the brambles and dragging him back. This did not hurt, but it was a nuisance, and he had constantly to shake his head. He traced the smell of stoat to a rabbit hole and thrust his head down it. Hullo! Dicky had no idea rabbits smelt so deliciously, as nice as pine-

apples or peaches! Dicky had wanted to kill the stoat, but he would have liked to eat the rabbit. He tried to make the hole larger, by tearing away the earth with his hands, but, although he got on much faster than he expected, he soon saw that was no use; and dragging himself violently backwards out of the hedge, he found himself in the road again with nothing to do.

Yes, there was nothing, absolutely nothing to do. The sensation was a strange one, for he couldn't even think of anything. He just stood there snuffing the wet wind. Then suddenly he found himself trotting towards home. He had not gone very far when he was aware of another smell which he somehow recognised instantly as "The Sacred Smell." He knew what it was, though he had never smelt it properly before. It reminded him of a feeling he had sometimes had in church—how long ago that seemed!—and partly of a feeling he had had when once an old general in scarlet and covered with medals had patted him on the head. Only this time The Sacred Smell was mixed with other smells; with smells of horse, leather, onions and smoke. This, Dicky knew, was not as it should be, and he was distinctly alarmed. However, he thought he had better stand still. It was always better, something whispered to him, not to run away from The Sacred Smell—unless the danger was terrific.

Of course, having smelt The Sacred Smell, he was not at all surprised to see next a huge pair of muddy boots coming towards him, and a pair of huge knees in dirty trousers moving up and down. When they were a short distance off, they stopped; and Dicky, looking up, saw what he had expected; an unshaven, dark-skinned Man in a cap, with a spotted handkerchief knotted round his neck. The Man made a squeaking noise with his pursed-up lips, such as rats make, and slapped his thigh once or twice. Dicky knew what this meant, but even when the Man called in a croaking voice, "E-e-e- 'ere good boy," Dicky still thought it was

best not to move. He stood and turned his face instead to the hedge, looking, no doubt, as absent-minded and miserable as he felt. (It was odd, but *now* when Dicky felt wretched and miserable that feeling was strongest, not just under the middle of his ribs, but at the end of his spine where his legs began; there now was the seat of anguish.) The Man took a step or two nearer, then another step. Still Dicky did not stir. Suddenly the Man dashed forward and made a grab at him. Dicky ducked, started aside and bumped right into the road-bank. He saw the Man's hand outstretched above him, and he knew there was now only one thing to do: to roll right over on to his back, in order to show he wouldn't resist and hoped for mercy. The Man stroked Dicky's head and made soothing noises; and then, suddenly, put an arm under him, lifting him up and holding him tight to his side.

"THE MAN DASHED FORWARD AND MADE A GRAB AT HIM"

Dicky felt perfectly miserable, but what could he do? He knew it would be folly to try to escape, and that it would be wiser to wait for an opportunity. The Man tucked him with a jerk still more firmly under his arm, and started to walk slowly on. He walked on for more than an hour, till they came to a gorse common, where a caravan was standing with empty shafts and a pair of steps behind. Gripping Dicky tighter than ever the Man gave a whistle, and a Woman came out of the caravan.

"Where did you find him, Joe?" said the Woman, looking at Dicky.

" 'Long road," said the Man, jerking his head backwards.

"You ain't been and thrown away his collar, 'ave you, Joe?"

" 'Adn't any," said the Man. Dicky was very dazed, but he did think they were talking about him in an odd way.

"Better take 'im where he belongs," said the Woman. "The cops won't believe as such as 'e is ours. He looks well cared for. Might get five bob."

Dicky did not try to tell them where he lived; he felt somehow it would be no use to try.

Instead of answering the Man just threw him into the caravan and shut the door. Although it was nearly dark, Dicky found he could see surprisingly well. Presently a tin bowl full of scraps of meat and bones was thrust in. Dicky would have been revolted by such a mess a short time ago, but now, though he was too scared to feel hungry, he could not resist putting his face close to it and giving a sniff. It really smelt uncommonly good. He put out the tip of his tongue and touched a brown-looking, ragged bit of gristle. Yes, it was good. Then all of a sudden he understood what must have happened. He had changed into a dog! Into a black spaniel!

He dashed at the door, shouting at the top of his voice, "Let me out! Let me out!" Alas, the only word which sounded

at all like what he wanted to say was, "Out." "Out, out, out, out," he kept barking, hoping that the Man and Woman would understand. They took no notice; but he could not stop. "Out, out, out," he barked. He shook the door by jumping at it; he tore at the wood with his nails. There was a latch just within his reach when he sprang up, but his paws—yes, it was only too true, his hands were round, black and feathery—could not lift it. "Out, out, out." No answer. At last he gave it up, and lay down on the floor, feeling very tired. It occurred to him presently that he might think better while gnawing a bone. So he went to the bowl and pulled out the largest. It was a slight comfort to him. With his head on one side and his teeth sliding along the bone, he found he could think a little more calmly. How was he to let them know that he was not a real dog, but a boy called Dicky Brook? He tried again to talk. After a lot of practice he succeeded in making a sound rather like "Brrr-ook," but it was also too sadly like the noise Jasper made when he was too lazy to bark or had been told to stop barking. Dicky was afraid they would never understand. But surely a very clever dog could make people understand somehow?

At last the door opened and the Man appeared, black against the starry sky. He stumbled over Dicky, swore and lit a stinking lamp-flame the size of the blade of a pocket knife. He was followed by the Woman. Outside Dicky could see the red glow of the fire which had cooked their dinner. Now was his chance. What should he do to astonish them? That was the first thing to do, to astonish them till they began to understand. But all Dicky could think of was a doggy thing after all: he sat up and begged. The Woman grinned at him, but the Man, who was pulling off his great boots, flung one at him, which Dicky dodged. He at once sat up on his hind-legs again, this time joining his paws and holding them up high in front of him.

"Bli'my Joe, look at the dawg!" exclaimed the Woman. "It's saying its prayers!"

The Man, too, stared in astonishment.

"I don't like it," said the Woman.

Dicky felt greatly encouraged. At home he was fond of turning somersaults. Now, down went his head and over went his hind-legs. It was not a good somersault (he was too short in the legs for somersaults now) but it was one. The Man gave a shout of laughter, and his face lit up with joy and cunning.

"S'truth, it's a performing dawg! I ain't taking 'im back, no fear. He'll make our fortunes."

At these words Dicky saw he had made a terrible mistake. If he was a dog, he had better not be a remarkable dog.

"HE COULD NOT FALL ANY FURTHER"

The door was still open, and through it he dashed, taking the steps at a leap. Now he was falling, falling, falling. What a height! Oh, would he never reach the bottom? Stars were flying above him like bees. The awful thing was that he was beginning to fall slowly, while a huge arm with a hand at the end of it was stretching out, longer and longer, after him. He was not even falling slowly now; he was floating. He tried to force himself down through the air, but though there was nothing to keep him up he could not fall any further. Suddenly the arm gripped him. In an agony of terror he yelled: "I'm not a dog." He heard his own voice, and, to his amazement, he saw his father's face close to his; it was his father's arm lifting him from the hearthrug. He felt a hand cool on his forehead. "Dick, you're feverish. My little Dick." His father's voice had never sounded like that before, and he felt himself being carried—deliciously safe—to bed.

"After all," he said to himself, as he snuggled down, "I'm glad I'm not a dog."

When We Were Very, Very Young

A. A. MILNE

I think I am a Muffin Man. I haven't got a bell,
I haven't got the muffin things that muffin-people sell.
Perhaps I am a Postman. No, I think I am a Tram.
I'm feeling rather funny and I don't know *what* I am—

BUT
Round about
And *round* about
And *round* about I go—
All round the table,
The table in the nursery—
Round about
And *round* about
And *round* about I go:

I think I am a Traveller Escaping from a Bear;
I think I am an Elephant
Behind another Elephant
Behind *another* Elephant who isn't really there . . .

SO

Round about
And *round* about
And *round* about and *round* about
And *round* about
And *round* about
I go.

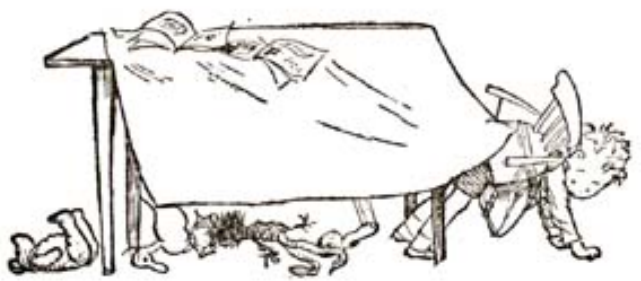
I think I am a Ticket Man, who's selling tickets-please,
I think I am a Doctor who is visiting a Sneeze;
Perhaps I'm just a Nanny who is walking with a pram.
I'm feeling rather funny and I don't know *what* I am—

BUT
Round about
And *round* about
And *round* about I go—
All round the table
The table in the nursery—

Round about
And *round* about
And *round* about I go:
I think I am a Puppy, so I'm hanging out my tongue:
I think I am a Camel Who
Is looking for a Camel Who
Is looking for a Camel who is Looking for its Young . . .

SO

Round about
And *round* about
And *round* about and *round* about
And *round* about
And *round* about
I go.



DAVID CECIL

Night falls upon a day of storm,
Of mist and gust and rain,
And still wind howls along the sands,
And sleet with myriad tiny hands,
Slaps at the window pane.

Awake in bed lay Jack and Jane,
They watched the shadows play;
Their eyes roved round from wall to floor
And then they stopped and roved no more.
A lady standing by the door
Looked at them as they lay.

Her skin was smooth as ivory,
    Her hair was like pale silk
All spells and secrets seemed to lie
Beneath each slanting emerald eye,
    And eyelid white as milk.

Her stiff skirts gleamed in the firelight
    And the ceaseless hurrying shadows.
Her voice was high and far away
Like distant voice at close of day,
    Calling across the meadows.

"Come!" she said, "Come!"; the children came,
    They had nor voice nor will.
Round her the hurrying shadows skim,
She struck one with her knuckles slim,
    It fluttered and stood still.

WILDER YET THE SHADOWS WHIRL

Wilder yet the shadows whirl.
    As nailed to wall and floor,
Stood firm this one; she whispered "Follow."
Then swiftly swooping like a swallow,
    Slipt through as through a door.

And she led them to far shadowland,
    Where the shadows stand upright;
And walk and talk, while on the ground,
The live men trail without a sound,
    Solid and pink and white.

Where the echo is heard before the song,
    And in the pools you see
Reflected houses steady stand,
While real ones built upon the land
    Tremble continually.

All night long stayed Jack and Jane,
    But when the dawn grew red,
They crept back through the shadow door,
Across the firelight-chequered floor,
    And scrambled back to bed.

I

Once upon a time there lived a man called Anselm, who used several times an hour to stamp his foot and cry out: "I *must* be rich! I *must* be rich!" He was married to the most beautiful woman he had ever seen, and, since he had enough to eat and a weatherproof house, and had neither aches nor pains, he should have been happy for 365 days in each year. But his unceasing longing for great wealth spoilt everything, and even on fine days he went about looking as discontented as though he were hungry.

As for his wife, Jasmine, she had long red-gold hair and great green eyes set wide apart in her flower-like face, and she possessed a mirror in which she could see her shimmering loveliness. So she ought to have been very happy and very grateful. She was so beautiful that when she walked abroad, men would lean far out of their windows to watch her pass and then wonder why their own wives and daughters should look so much like suet puddings.

But, though you will scarcely believe it, Jasmine was quite

as discontented as her husband, and pouted and sighed through the days.

For she, too, was consumed by this perpetual craving for riches. Whether she had caught this uncomfortable sort of illness from her husband, or whether she had given it to him, I do not know, but there they were both wasting their youth, their beauty, and their love for one another, in foolish, petulant longing.

Whenever Jasmine saw other women clad in rich raiment and adorned with jewels, envy would blight her loveliness as frost blights a flower.

"Of what use is my beauty if I cannot adorn it?" she cried. "I *must* have pearls—ropes of pearls, crowns of glittering diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and sapphires!"

"Yes," said Anselm, "and I must have a hundred horses, a thousand slaves, and fountains that spout forth wines!"

One day, as Jasmine walked sadly through a deep, dark forest she suddenly saw a very strange looking house moving slowly towards her. The roof of the house was most beautifully thatched with brightly-coloured feathers, and across its face in rainbow letters ran the queer inscription:

THE BARGAIN HOUSE

MONEY FOR SALE. ENQUIRE WITHIN

"Money for sale?" read the wondering Jasmine. "What can this mean? Some foolish jest, no doubt."

Three times the house sped round her; then it quivered and stood still. She stared at the glass door that held a myriad reflections of herself. As though her gaze had power to push, it slowly opened. She now saw into a vast hall, and heard

a gentle but compelling voice say: "Come in." Trembling, Jasmine walked through the door. The light was dim and flickering as though from a fire, but no fire-place could be seen. Across the whole length of the hall ran a counter, such as you see in large shops, and behind this counter there rose up a wall made of rows of boxes piled high the one upon the other, and on these boxes were rainbow letters and figures. Between the boxes and the counter there stood a tall, sweetly-smiling woman, whose face, though unrecognisable, seemed somehow familiar to Jasmine.

"I was expecting you, beautiful Jasmine," spoke the stranger in a voice that was soft but decided, like the fall of snow. "You would buy money, would you not?"

"Can one buy money?" faltered Jasmine. "Save *with* money, and, alas! I have none."

"Though you were penniless, yet from me you could purchase boundless wealth," replied the stranger. "Behold, a purse," she continued, holding up a red-tasselled bag, "which, spend as you may, will always contain one thousand golden guineas. This purse is yours if in exchange you will give me one part of yourself."

"A part of myself?" gasped the astonished Jasmine. "What would you have? My hair?"

"No," smiled the woman. "Lovely as are your tresses, in time they would grow again, and no one may own unlimited wealth and pay no price therefor. Your beauty shall remain untouched. It is your Sense of Humour that I require."

"My Sense of Humour?" laughed Jasmine. "Is that all? Just that part of me which makes me laugh? Humour? What was it my mother used to call Humour? I remember—she said it was Man's consolation sent to him by God in sign of peace. God's rainbow in our minds. But with boundless wealth what need of consolation shall I have? Besides, I have often been told

I had but little Sense of Humour. The more gladly will I give it to you. The purse, I pray," and Jasmine held out both her trembling hands.

"Stay a while," said the solemn, smiling woman. "I must warn you of two conditions. First, I would have you know, the money this purse yields can be spent only upon yourself. Would you still have it?"

"Yes! Yes! Yes!" clamoured Jasmine.

"I must also tell you that should you ever repent of your bargain and wish to buy back the precious sense you sell, it will, alas, not be in my power to help you. I can never buy back from the person to whom I have sold. The only chance of recovering your Sense of Humour is, that another customer, unasked by you, should buy it back with a similar purse, and I warn you that it may be hard to find anyone willing to give up boundless wealth for the sake of your laughter."

"What matter?" exclaimed Jasmine. "Never, never shall I wish to return my purse."

"You are determined?" asked the strange saleswoman.

"Yes, yes, yes!"

"Hold out your arms, then."

Eagerly Jasmine stretched out her arms.

The smiling woman touched her on both her funny-bones, drew forth her Sense of Humour, laid it away in a box, on which she wrote Jasmine's name, and the date, and then placed it on a shelf between two other boxes.

"Now it is mine, until redeemed by the return of a purse, fellow to this that I give thee," said the woman, handing the tasselled red bag to Jasmine. "And while it is in my careful keeping, this despised sense of yours will grow and grow. Farewell, Jasmine. Leave me now and go forth into a bleak world."

Clasping the marvellous purse to her heart, Jasmine fled from the house and hastened through the deep, dark forest till she reached the city. At once she went to the great jewel-merchants, against whose windows she had often pressed her face in wistful longing.

"I want the biggest pearl necklace you have got," she cried, breathlessly bursting into the gorgeous showroom.

"I'm afraid goods of such value can only be supplied in exchange for ready money," said the merchant with an uncivil smile.

"How much?" asked Jasmine.

"Seven thousand guineas."

Jasmine opened the purse and holding it upside down, shook it. Glittering guineas poured out in a golden stream, but the purse remained just as full as before.

As the clinking coins bounded and rolled the merchant's eyes grew rounder and rounder, and he had to shout for six small black slaves to come to help him to count the money, now lying scattered all over his shop. With the lowest bow he had ever bowed he handed the long rope of glistening pearls to Jasmine. Feverishly she clasped them round her throat, where they scarcely showed against the whiteness of her skin. They reached down to her knees.

"Now some emerald ear-rings, a crown of diamonds, ten ruby bracelets for each arm, and all the opals you possess!" ordered Jasmine, scattering guineas as she spoke, and putting on all the jewels as fast as they were produced.

At last she went away, hung with jewels as a Christmas tree is hung with ornaments. Proud as a peacock she strutted through the streets, and everyone laughed at the absurd sight of so many gaudy ornaments crowded on to one ordinary-sized woman. She heard titters and wondered what might be the cause of the laughter.

She now went to the grandest Fashion House in the city, ordered one thousand costly garments, and came out wearing the richest raiment she had found in stock. Next she bought a most magnificent coach, made of mother o' pearl, and sixteen piebald horses to draw it; and then she engaged an enormous coachman with a face gilt to match his golden livery.

On her way home she stopped at seven merchants to buy all manner of rare and costly foods, and before long the great coach was crammed with dainties. In it were piled every fruit and vegetable that happened to be then out of season, bottles of wonderful wine, jars of caviare, pots of roseleaf jam, tiny birds in aspic,

and sugar plums of every colour. Last of all—because it looked so grand and expensive—she bought an immense wedding-cake, sixteen stories high. The confectioners laughed. They seemed to think it funny that she should buy the wedding-cake. She wondered why they were amused.

When Anselm saw his wife stagger into the room, swaying beneath the weight of so many gaudy jewels, thinking them to be all sham and worn in jest, he burst into a great roar of laughter.

Annoyed at his merriment, Jasmine told him breathlessly of the marvellous purse. Her husband laughed and laughed, partly at her story, partly at her absurd appearance. He laughed until he got hiccoughs.

"Oh, how funny! How funny! What has come over you?" he cried, rolling on the floor.

"This is no jest, Anselm, I swear; it is the solemn truth. Just look inside and you will see all the golden coins."

Incredulously Anselm peered into the bulging purse. He rubbed his eyes. Slowly his unbelief gave way to amazed joy.

"Praise be to God!" he cried at last. "We're rich, rich, rich beyond the dreams of man. Give it to me that I may go and buy gorgeous apparel, fine horses, and rarest wines." Feverishly he snatched the purse from his wife's hand.

"What's this?" he cried. "I knew it was some trickery. Your precious purse is as empty as an egg that has been eaten." And in truth, the tasselled bag now dangled from his hand flat and light as a leaf.

'Oh!" screamed Jasmine, in dismay, "give it back to me!" No sooner had she touched the purse than once more it became rounded and heavy with the weight of a thousand guineas.

"Praise be to God!" she sighed. "I remember now. The woman from whom I bought it warned me that the guineas were only for my own use."

"Tut, tut, that's very troublesome," said Anselm ruefully. "But what matter? You will be able to buy gifts for me. It will come to the same thing. But, wife, what mean you when you say you *bought* the purse? With what can one buy money?"

Jasmine told him of the weird house, the mysterious saleswoman and the strange bargain she had driven.

"Your Sense of Humour?" cried Anselm. "*Your* Sense of Humour! Well, she didn't get much for her money, did she? Ha! ha! ha!"

With grave eyes Jasmine stared at her husband, offended at his display of merriment.

Then she said: "You little guess what a banquet I have prepared for you. Come now and I will show you how I have ransacked the city for its choicest dainties. Let us now feast." Together they entered the dining-hall and at sight of the gorgeous banquet spread before them Anselm smacked his lips and promised himself great delight.

But bitter disappointment awaited him. For, no sooner did he touch the iced grape-fruit with which he intended to begin his feast, than, behold, it shrivelled in his hand, and became an empty rind. With an oath he stretched out his hand to grasp a goblet of purple wine. It broke in his hand, and of the rich vintage nothing remained but a stain on the damask tablecloth.

"Alas!" cried Jasmine. "It seems that with the magic gold I may buy nothing for your use!"

In truth, everything that poor Anselm touched, before it reached his eager lips, disappeared like a bubble that has burst. In nothing that had been purchased with the magic gold could he share. For him, all the rich viands were spread in vain, and finally, he was obliged to fall back on their accustomed fare of bread and cheese and last Friday's mutton.

" 'Tis funny to watch one's wife quaffing the wines one

dreams of and to be on prison-fare oneself," laughed Anselm, trying to make the best of things.

"Funny?" asked his wife. "Why is it funny? I think it is very sad. These humming birds and this sparkling juice of the grape are most delicious."

To keep up his spirits Anselm, who was famed for his wit, cracked many jokes, but no smile ever lifted the corners of Jasmine's perfect mouth; no twinkle appeared in the depth of her great green eyes. Discouraged at last, Anselm fell into silent sulks, whilst his wife continued to eat and drink, until a stitch came in both her sides.

Days passed. Every evening, Jasmine, clad in new raiment and gorgeous jewels, regaled herself with rich dainties.

"Alas, husband!" she cried one night, "I have no pleasure in feasting that you cannot share."

"In truth, this is no life!" angrily exclaimed Anselm. "To sit at a banquet one may not taste with a wife who cannot see one's jokes. I can bear it no longer. Why should not I seek this strange woman and make the same bargain? If husband and wife may not share their jokes, they must at least share their dinner. Tell me quickly where I may find this 'Bargain House.'"

Jasmine told her husband the way through the deep, dark forest, and early the next morning he set forth in search of the mysterious building. An hour's walking brought him within sight of just such a house as his wife had described. It moved nearer, sped three times around him and then stood still. As he stared at it, the door slowly opened, the gentle, commanding voice bade him enter, and there stood the tall, smiling woman of his wife's description.

"Good morning, Anselm," she said, in the voice that was soft like the fall of snow. "Would you have a purse that shall always bear a thousand guineas?"

"Indeed I would!" cried Anselm. "Have you one for me?"

"Yes, if you consent to my terms."

"What is it that you want? My Sense of Humour? Of what use is it to me now? I will gladly part with it."

"No," said the woman. "'Tis not your Sense of Humour I require of you, it is your Sense of Beauty."

"Take what you will from me," cried Anselm. "I care not so I have one of those wondrous purses."

"Listen first, Anselm," said the woman, and solemnly, as she had warned Jasmine, so she warned him that the magic money could be spent on none save himself, and that the sense he sold could be bought back only by the owner of such another purse.

"Remember, you can never reclaim it yourself," she repeated.

"I care not! I care not!" exclaimed Anselm. "Quick, the purse!"

"Come hither," said the woman, "and close your eyes." Gently she touched him on both eyelids, and drew forth his Sense of Beauty. Then she handed him a red-tasselled bag exactly the same as Jasmine's and as heavy with golden guineas.

"Now farewell, Anselm. Go forth into a bleak world."

Wild with joy and excitement, Anselm dashed from the Bargain House and hastened through the deep, dark forest to that part of the city where dwelt the grandest merchants. Here he bought gorgeous apparel, costly wines, and magnificent horses. Astride the finest of the horses, a gleaming chestnut, said to be the swiftest steed alive, he then rode home through the forest. As he went, he met an old man clad in wretched rags, who looked very hungry and tired. Feeling pleased with life Anselm plunged his hand into the magic purse, and, drawing forth a golden guinea, flung it at the poor man, who joyfully stooped to pick it up. But

no sooner had his hand touched the coin than it vanished. Anselm remembered the woman's warning.

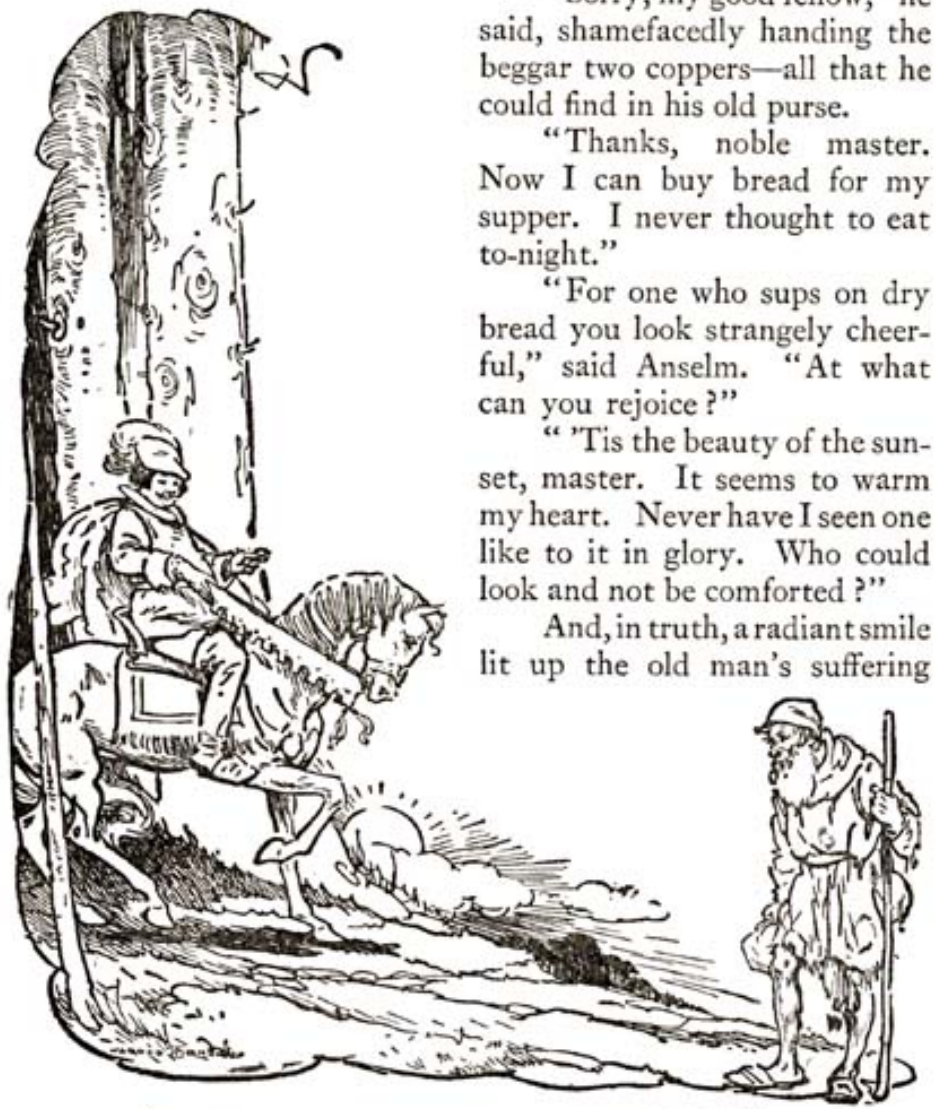
"Sorry, my good fellow," he said, shamefacedly handing the beggar two coppers—all that he could find in his old purse.

"Thanks, noble master. Now I can buy bread for my supper. I never thought to eat to-night."

"For one who sups on dry bread you look strangely cheerful," said Anselm. "At what can you rejoice?"

"'Tis the beauty of the sunset, master. It seems to warm my heart. Never have I seen one like to it in glory. Who could look and not be comforted?"

And, in truth, a radiant smile lit up the old man's suffering



"ANSELM DREW FORTH A GOLDEN GUINEA"

face as he gazed on the flaming splendours of the western sky. Anselm turned and looked where the beggar pointed, but he could see nothing that seemed worth the turning of the head, and with a shrug of the shoulders he rode home.

Now Jasmine, rejoicing that Anselm would share her feasting, arrayed herself that she might look her fairest for their banquet. She brushed her red-gold hair until it shone, and gazed at herself in the mirror until her beauty glowed. Then she attired herself in a dress of dragon-flies' wings, covered all over with hearts made of tiny little diamonds like dewdrops.

"Never, never have I looked so fair. When Anselm sees me he will love me more than ever. How joyfully we shall feast together, and how glad am I that he will no longer want me to laugh at the things he says! I shall love him far more without his Sense of Humour."

Her heart beat as she heard footsteps hastening up the stairs. Radiant with excitement in burst Anselm. "I'm rich!" he cried. "Rich! rich! Rejoice with me, Jasmine."

Grey disappointment crushed into Jasmine's heart, for not one word did her husband say of her especial beauty or her wonderful dress.

"There's nothing like wealth!" he cried. "How did we ever endure our poverty? And fancy, I met a beggar-man, who said he was cheerful because he looked at the sunset! Ha! ha! ha!"

"Why do you laugh, Anselm? Have you then not sold your Sense of Humour? How came you then by that purse?"

"No. I may still laugh. I have but parted with my Sense of Beauty."

"Your Sense of Beauty?" echoed Jasmine, icy fear entering her heart. "Is that why your eyes no longer seek my face?"

"Why ever do you look so doleful?" laughed Anselm. "Let us hasten down and feast. My lips thirst for the wines I have bought."

Trembling, Jasmine pleaded: "Look on my face, husband, the face you have so often called your glory. What think you of my face to-night?"

"Your face? Let me look. It seems all right: two eyes, one nose, one mouth. Yes, it seems just as other faces are."

It was with a sad heart poor Jasmine sat at the feast that night. Loving her husband, she rejoiced to see him revel, but that he should no longer gaze at her with the admiration which had been her delight was pain past bearing. Anselm enjoyed his feasting, but the wine made jokes rise in his mind, to flutter from his lips, and it vexed him that no smile ever widened his wife's mouth, set for ever in still solemnity.

Days, weeks, months passed. Anselm and Jasmine now lived in a gorgeous palace. They were clad in the finest raiment and they feasted like emperors, but in their hearts all was becoming as dust and ashes.

"Ah me!" sighed Jasmine. "I know now why it was that I longed for wealth. It was that I might add to my beauty and see even more admiration in my beloved's eyes. Of what use to me are my gorgeous gowns, my jewels, my flower-like face, since Anselm no longer delights to see me."

And for Anselm the pleasures of feasting and luxurious living soon palled. His wife could not laugh at his jokes, and in the wide world there was nothing for him to admire. Neither sunsets, nor courage, nor self-sacrifice. He could see no beauty in any face, thought or action. Lost to him were the delights of Poetry and all the loveliness of Nature.

"What is there in life," he cried, "but feasting and laughter? If only Jasmine could join with me in mocking at the absurdities of Man!"

Desperately he strove to restore laughter to his mirthless wife. He engaged a thousand jesters and promised a fortune to

him who should make her laugh. Everything human beings consider funny was shown to her. Orange peel was plentifully scattered outside the palace windows, and aged men encouraged to walk past, that they might step on the orange peel and fall. Then, by means of huge bellows purposely placed, their hats were blown from off their heads, in the hope that Jasmine would smile to see the poor old fellows vainly chasing their own headgear. But all in vain. Nothing amused Jasmine, neither physical misfortune nor the finest wit. Her mouth remained set. Daily Anselm laughed louder and longer, but into his laughter an ugly bitterness had come. It was now the laughter of mockery, no longer softened by admiration.

During that summer a child was born to Jasmine. For years she had longed for a baby, but now that the funny little creature squirmed in her arms, yawning, and making faces, she thought it merely ugly and turned from it in disgust.

A few months later the coachman's wife gave birth to a baby, and Jasmine went to visit her. She found her by the fire, nursing a red, hairless, wrinkled daughter that seemed to Jasmine the ugliest morsel in all the world. In speechless horror she stared at it. Opening wide its shapeless mouth, the baby stretched its tiny arms and gave a great yawn. With a joyful laugh, the mother clutched it to her heart. "Oh, you darling, darling!" she cried. "Could anyone not love anything so *funny?*"

"Is Love then born of Laughter?" cried poor Jasmine, and, full of bitter envy, she rushed from the room.

That same year a terrible war was waged and thousands of soldiers went forth to die. One day, Jasmine gazed out of the window. Brave music was playing, and with colours flying, a gallant host of youths marched past, their weeping mothers and sweethearts waving farewell.

"A disgusting sight, is it not?" said Anselm. "All these

boys striding off to be killed simply because their foolish kings have quarrelled!"

"Yes," replied Jasmine, her eyes full of tears. "But beautiful, too."

"Beautiful?" jeered her husband with a harsh, discordant laugh. "You fool! What beauty can there be in senseless sacrifice?" And, as now often happened, these two fell into loud and bitter wrangling.

Thus daily life became more and more unbearable to Anselm and Jasmine. In spite of all their wealth, boredom pressed heavily upon them. Since she could not laugh, and he could not admire, to both the world seemed full of senseless suffering.

"I can no longer bear this life," said Jasmine, one day. "Of what use is the beauty to which Anselm is blind? I will seek the Bargain House and buy back the Sense he sold. He will still have his purse with which to buy the luxuries he loves." And forth she went into the deep, dark forest.

An hour later, Anselm exclaimed:

"I can no longer bear this life. I will buy back Jasmine's humour that at least we may together mock at this senseless life. She will still have her purse to buy the fineries she loves." And forth he went into the deep, dark forest.

That evening Jasmine returned without her magic purse, rejoicing that her husband would once more delight in her beauty. She went to say good night to her little son, who lay in his cot, struggling to draw his tiny toes up into his mouth. The window was open. Suddenly he stretched forth his arms towards the shining moon. It looked so good to suck; he longed to grasp it. He struggled and bubbled and clutched, his crinkled face growing crimson with effort. How funny he looked! Suddenly, Jasmine found herself laughing—laughing—laughing until her whole body shook, and happy peals broke through her astonished lips. "Oh,

you darling, darling little joke," she cried, joyfully kissing her child.

At that moment in rushed Anselm, and stood transfixed at the dazzling beauty of his wife.

"Jasmine, Jasmine," he cried, "what has happened. Why are you so dazzlingly beautiful?"

"Because I have no longer a magic purse. I have bought you back your Sense, husband."

"You too?" cried Anselm; "and I have bought back your laughter."

"Then we are both poor! Oh, how funny!" cried Jasmine, her laughter growing louder and louder as they fell into one another's arms.

Thus Anselm and Jasmine parted with their magic purses, and had to work for their daily bread, but they lived happily ever afterwards in a world that was blessedly beautiful and blessedly funny.

The Joyous Ballad of the Parson and the Badger

HENRY NEWBOLT

Not far from Guildford town there lies
A house called Orange Grove,
And there his trade a Parson plies,
Whom all good people love.

Sing up, sing down, for Guildford town,
And sing for the Parson too!
I'll wager a penny you'll never find any
That's more of a sportsman true.

A neighbour came in haste one day
With a piteous tale to tell,
But "A badger, a badger," was all he could say,
When they answered the front door bell.

Sing in, sing out, there's a badger about,
Send word to the County Police.
He's playing the dickens with all the spring chickens,
And gobbling up the geese.

Forth to the fray the Parson goes
Beneath the midnight sky,
He threads the wood on the tip of his toes
And he climbs a fir-tree high.

Sing never a word, it's quite absurd
To expect a badger to come
And sit to be shot like a bottle or pot
To the sound of an idiot's hum!

The clock has struck both twelve and one,
His eyes are heavy as lead,
He heartily wishes the deed were done
And himself at home in bed.

Sing ho! Sing hey! the badger's away,
The Parson's up the tree:
It's horribly damp and he's got the cramp
And there's nothing at all to see.

The clock struck two, and then half-past,
The day began to break;
The badger came back to his earth at last
And found our friend awake.

Sing boom and bang! the welkin rang,
The Parson, "Hurrah!" he cried:
The badger lay there with his legs in the air
And an ounce of shot inside.

Happy at heart, though in pitiful plight,
The victor crawled away;
He slept the sleep of the just all night
And half of the following day.

Sing loud and strong, sing all day long,
Sing Yoicks! and Hullabaloo!
But I've had enough of this doggerel stuff
And so, I should think, have you!

"HE CLIMBED A FIR-TREE HIGH"

G. K. CHESTERTON

Though cats and birds be hardly friends,
We doubt the Maeterlinckian word
That must dishonour the White Cat,
Even to honour the Blue Bird.

And if once more in later days
His baseless charge the Belgian brings,
Great ghosts shall rise to vindicate
The right of cats to look at kings.

The Lord of Carabas shall come
In gold and ermine, silk and furs,
To tell of that immortal cat
That wore its boots and won its spurs.

THE LORD OF CARABAS SHALL COME
IN GOLD AND ERMINE, SILK AND FURS,
TO TELL OF THAT IMMORTAL CAT
THAT WORE ITS BOOTS AND WON ITS SPURS

Great Whittington shall show again
The state that London lends her Lord,
Where the great golden griffins bear
The blazon of the Cross and Sword.

And hear the ancient bells anew,
And talk and not ignobly brag
What glorious fortunes followed when
He let the cat out of the bag.

And Gray shall leave the graves of Stoke
To weep over a gold-fish bowl—
Cowper, who, beaming at his cat,
Forgot the shadow on his soul.

Then shall I rise and name aloud
The nicest cat I ever knew,
And make the fairy fancies pale
With half a hundred tales of you:

Till Pasht upon his granite throne
Glare with green eyes to hear the news
Jealous; and even Puss in Boots
Will wish that he were in your shoes.

When I shall pledge in saucers full
Of milk, on which the kitten thrives,
Feline felicities to you
And nine extremely prosperous lives.

Scenes in the Life of a Princess

CHARLES WHIBLEY

Ashridge

When Queen Mary was persuaded, falsely, that her throne could be made safe only by the death of her sister, then but eighteen years old, the Princess Elizabeth lay sick at Ashridge. One spring morning, as she tossed abed, 'twixt sleeping and waking, in the weariness of fever, she heard in the courtyard beneath her window the tramp of men, the clatter of horses' hoofs. Her affrighted servants brought her word that a guard of two hundred and fifty horsemen attended the Lords, who came with messages from the Queen, a guard larger than enough to keep watch over so frail a Princess. The house being thus begirt, Lord Thame and his companions, thrust their way into the presence of the Princess. To her demand that if not for courtesy, yet for modesty's sake, they should put off the delivery of their message till the morrow, they answered that their commission was to bring her to London, alive or dead.

"A sore commission," said the Princess, but a commission not to be gainsaid. And the Queen's doctors showed her little pity. She might be removed, said they, not without danger, yet without death.

So on the morrow, the sad cavalcade set forth. The Princess, that she might be the more darkly shielded from the public gaze, was borne in the Queen's own litter, which she presently bade to be opened, and thus she made her progress to Whitehall in the full view of the people. It was a tedious and a painful journey. From Ashridge, by St. Alban's, she came to South Mymms, where again she rested her weary body, and not until four suns had set did she reach the inhospitable Court of Mary, her Queen and her sister.

Whitehall

When she came to Whitehall, she was still a prisoner. It was as though she carried her dungeon with her. Whitehall was less kind even than the white high road, where at least she had found solace in the pity of the humble folk, who wept as she passed, and offered prayers for her safety. Fourteen days she spent in unfriended seclusion, with "no comfort but her innocence, no companion but her book." Not for her the freedom of the open air, the chatter of tongues, the laughter of friends. Her oft-repeated request to see her sister fell upon the deaf ears of her jailers. A princess of less courage would have quailed before the ill-omened silence which enwrapped her. And how could she hope to regain the Queen's affection, so long as the cunning servants of the Emperor and the King of France, Renard and Noailles, were there to distil the poison of hate and dread in Queen Mary's ear?

Knowing well that her foes were the Queen's friends, her friends the Queen's foes, she was still of a stout heart. When Gardiner, the Bishop of Winchester, resolute to entrap her, urged her to confess and to submit herself to the Queen's Majesty, "submission," said she proudly, "confessed a crime, and pardon belonged to a delinquent." For her part she had no crime to

confess, and she asked no pardon. So for her temerity she was told that two hundred Northern Whitecoats should guard her lodging that night, and that in the morn she should be secretly conveyed to the Tower. without her household, there to be kept a close prisoner.

The Tower

It was a Palm Sunday when she set forth, under a guard, to that place of ill-omen, the Tower of London. Hers was no triumphal progress; neither palm nor willow was carried in her honour. And well might she dread the journey, which she was forced to make. Within the dark walls of the Tower her mother had laid her fair head down upon the block; and what cause had she to hope for a happier destiny? As she left Whitehall, to her a place of durance, she looked up to the window of the Queen's bedchamber, hoping there to see some mark of favour, some signal of affection. The hope was vain, and in cold despair she came to the Stairs, where the barges awaited her. When she reached the Tower, she was bidden to enter at the Traitor's Gate, which at first she refused, and then stepping short so that her foot fell into the water, she spake these words to her obdurate jailer:

"Here landeth as true a subject, being prisoner, as ever landed at these stairs, since Julius Cæsar laid the first foundations of the Tower."

The Constable, a wry-faced ruffian, lurched forth savagely to receive her, and in a harsh voice told her that he would show her her lodging. Then she, being faint, "sat down," we are told, "upon a fair stone, at which time there fell a great shower of rain: the heavens themselves did seem to weep at such inhuman usage."

Presently she was locked and bolted in the Tower; her own servants were taken from her; to open her casement, that she might

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF A PRINCESS

"They answered that their commission was to bring her to London, alive or dead."

Drawn for "The Flying Carpet" by H. M. Brock

enjoy the fresh air of heaven, to walk in the garden—these were pleasures denied her. One sole thing was constantly demanded of her, that she should confess herself a rebel and submit herself to the Queen. Nobly did she refuse, and was left to silence and her own proud thoughts.

Hampton Court

She changed her prison, and kept unchanged her high courage. From the Tower she was carried to Woodstock. But what mattered it where the dungeon lay? The locks and bolts were no more easily burst asunder at Woodstock than at the Tower. And then of a sudden her keeper was bidden to bring her to Hampton Court, not as a free Princess, but as a guarded malefactor. At Colnbrook, where on the way she sojourned at the sign of the George, certain gentlemen, devoted to her service, came to do her homage. Instantly, at the Queen's command, they were sent about their business, and the Princess was bidden to enter Hampton Court, without an escort, and by the back gate, like the humblest menial. Again for many days she was left solitary and in silence, when she was summoned one night into the presence of the Queen, her sister, whose heavy hand she had felt unceasingly, whose face she had not seen for two long years. The Queen, sitting on her chair of State, took up her promise of loyalty sharply and shortly.

"Then you will not confess yourself," said she, "to be a delinquent, I see, but stand peremptorily upon your truth and innocence; I pray God they may so fall out."

To which the Princess replied: "If not, I neither require favour nor pardon at your Majesty's hands."

"Well," said the Queen, "then you stand so stiffly upon your faith and loyalty, that you suppose yourself to have been wrongfully punished and imprisoned."

"I cannot," replied the Princess, "nor must not say so to you."

"Why then belike," retorted the Queen, "you will report it to others."

"Not so," said the Princess. "I have borne and must bear the burden myself."

The two sisters never met again, but the Princess's courage in facing her fate was not in vain. Thenceforth she was eased of her imprisonment, and went to Ashridge in free custody, where she remained at her pleasure, until Queen Mary's death.

A Progress through London

In 1558 the Queen died, and the Princess Elizabeth, justified of her patience and her courage, was proclaimed Queen of England. In the loyal enthusiasm of her subjects, who had long since acclaimed her in their hearts, the years of solitude and imprisonment were forgotten. To the Tower, which she had left a captive, she returned a monarch, and passed in triumph through her City of London to Westminster. Everywhere she was welcomed by pageants and loyal discourse, until she came to the famous Abbey where she was crowned, to the contentment of her loyal lieges and to the honour and glory of her realm.

Neil and Tintinnabulum

AN INTERLUDE FOR PARENTS

BY J. M. BARRIE

1. *Early Days*

In writing a story a safe plan must be to imitate your favourite author. Until he was nine, when he abandoned the calling, Neil was my favourite author, and I therefore decide to follow his method of dividing the story into short chapters so as to make it look longer.

When he was nine I took him to his preparatory, he prancing in the glories of the unknown until the hour came for me to go, "the hour between the dog and the wolf," and then he was afraid. I said that in the holidays all would be just as it had been before, but the newly-wise one shook his head; and on my return home, when I wandered out unmanned to look at his tool-shed, I found these smashing words in his writing pinned to the door:

THIS ESTABLISHMENT IS NOW PERMANENTLY CLOSED.

I went white as I saw that Neil already understood life better than I did.

Soon again he was on the wing. Here is interesting autobiographical matter I culled years later from the fly-leaf of his *Cæsar*: "Aetat 12, height 4 ft. 11, biceps 8¼, kicks the beam at 6-2."

The reference is to a great occasion when Neil stripped at his preparatory (clandestinely) for a Belt with the word "Bruiser" on it. I am reluctant to boast about him (this is untrue), yet

must mention that he won the belt, with which (such are the ups and downs of life) he was that same evening gently belted by his preceptor.

It is but fair to Neil to add that he cut a glittering figure in those circles : captain of the footer, and twenty-six against Juddy's.

"And even then," his telegram to me said, "I was only bowled off my pads."

A rural cricket match in buttercup time with boys at play, seen and heard through the trees; it is surely the loveliest scene in England and the most disarming sound. From the ranks of the unseen dead, for ever passing along our country lanes on their eternal journey, the Englishman falls out for a moment to look over the gate of the cricket field and smile. Let Neil's 26 against Juddy's, the first and perhaps the only time he is to meet the stars on equal terms, be our last sight of him as a child. He is walking back bat in hand to the pavilion, an old railway carriage. An unearthly glory has swept over the cricket ground. He tries to look unaware of it; you know the expression and the bursting heart. Our smiling Englishman who cannot open the gate waits to make sure that this boy raises his cap in the one right way (without quite touching it, you remember), and then rejoins his comrades. Neil gathers up the glory and tacks it over his bed. "The End," as he used to say in his letters.

I never know him quite so well again. He seems henceforth to be running to me on a road that is moving still more rapidly in the opposite direction.

2. *The First Half*

The scene has changed. Stilled is the crow of Neil, for he is now but one of the lowliest at a great public school, where he reverberates but little. The scug Neil fearfully running errands

for his fag-master is another melancholy reminder of the brevity of human greatness.

Lately a Colossus he was now infinitely less than nothing. What shook him was not the bump as he fell, but the general indifference to his having fallen. He lay there like a bird in the grass winded by a blunt-headed arrow, and was cold to his own touch. The Bruiser Belt and his score against Juddy's had accompanied him to school on their own legs, one might say, so confident were they of a welcome from his mantelshelf, but after an hour he hid them beneath the carpet. Hidden by him all over that once alluring room, as in disgrace, were many other sweet trifles that went to the making of the flame that had been Neil; his laugh was secreted, say in the drawer of his desk; his pranks were stuffed into his hat-box, his fell ambitions were folded away between two pairs of trousers, and now and then a tear would mix with the soapy water as he washed his cheerless face.

In that dreadful month or more I am dug up by his needs and come again into prominence, gloating because he calls for me, sometimes unable to do more than stand afar off on the playing field, so that he may at least see me nigh though we cannot touch. The thrill of being the one needed, which I had never thought to know again. I have leant over a bridge, and enviously watching the gaiety of two attractive boys, now broken to the ways of school, have wished he was one of them, till I heard their language and wondered whether this was part of the necessary cost.

Leaden-footed Neil in the groves that were to become so joyous to him. He had to refashion himself on a harsher model, and he set his teeth and won, blaming me a little for not having broken to him the ugly world we can make it. One by one his hidden parts peeped out from their holes and ran to him, once more to make his wings; stronger wings than of yore, though some drops of dew had to be shaken off.

By that time my visits were being suffered rather than acclaimed. It was done with an exquisite politeness certainly, but before I was out of sight he had dived into some hilarious rumpus. Gladly for his sake I knew my place.

His first distinct success was as a gargler.

"You remember how I used to hate gargling at home," says an early letter, "and you forced me to do it. Jolly good thing

"WE GENERALLY GARGLE A SONG"

you did force me." His first "jolly" at that school. At once I began to count them.

"Everyone has to gargle just now," he continues, "and we all do it at the same time, and it must sound awfully rum to people passing along the street. We generally gargle a song, and there was a competition in 'Home, sweet Home' among the scugs at m' tutor's, and the judge said I gargled it longest."

Soon afterwards he had the exultation of being recognised as an entity by one of the masters.

"I was walking with Dolman mi.," his letter says, "and we met a new beak called Tiverley and he pretended to fence with me and said 'Whose incomparable little noodle are you?'" This, apparently, was all that happened, but Neil adds with obvious elation, "It was awfully decent of him." (Hail to thee, Tiverley, may "a house" anon be thy portion for heartening a new boy in the dwindling belief that he exists.)

Dolman mi. evidently had no run on this occasion, but he is older and more famous than Neil (which makes the thing the more flattering). It is a school whither many royal scions are sent, and when camera men go down to photograph the new one, Dolman mi. usually takes his place. He has already been presented to newspaper readers as the heir to three thrones. Of course it is the older boys who select, scrape and colour him (if necessary) for this purpose, but they must see something in him that the smaller boys don't see.

Neil's next step was almost a bound forward; he got a tanning from the head of the house. This also he took in the proper spirit, boasting indeed of the vigour with which Beverley had laid on. (Thee, also, Beverley, I salute, as the Immensity who raised Neil from the ranks of the lowly, the untanned.)

Quite the amiable, sensible little schoolboy, readers may be saying, but that Neil was amiable or sensible I indignantly deny.

He was merely waiting; that shapely but enquiring nose of his was only considering how best to strike once more for leadership. So when the time came he was ready; and he has been striking ever since, indeed, there is nothing that I think he so much resembles as a clock that has got out of hand.

All the other small boys in his house had the same opportunity, but they missed it. It was provided by some learned man (name already tossed to oblivion) who delivered unto them a lecture entitled *Help One Another*. The others behaved in the usual way, cheered the lecturer heartily when he took a drink of water, said "Silly old owl!" as they went out and at once forgot his Message. Not so Neil. With the clearness of vision that always comes to him when anything to his own advantage is toward, he saw that the time and the place and the loved one (himself) had arrived together. Portents in the sky revealed to him that his *métier* at school was to Help Others. There would be something sublime about it had he not also seen with the same vividness that he must make a pecuniary charge of threepence. He decided astutely to begin with W. W. Daly.

As we write these words an extraordinary change comes over our narrative. In the dead silence that follows this announcement to our readers you may hear, if you listen intently, a scurrying of feet, which is nothing less than Neil being chased out of the story. The situation is one probably unparalleled in fiction.

3. *Tintinnabulum*

Elated by your curiosity we now leave Neil for a moment (say, searching with his foot for a clean shirt among a pile of clothing on the floor), mount to the next landing and enter the second room on the left, the tenant of which immediately dives beneath his table under the impression that we are a fag-master shouting

"Boy." We drag him out and present him to you as W. W. Daly. He is five feet one, biceps 7¾, and would probably kick the beam at about 6½ stone. He is not yet celebrated for anything except for being able to stick pins into his arm up to the head; otherwise a creature of small account who, but for Neil's patronage, would never have risen to the distinction of being written about, except perhaps by his mother.

W. W.'s first contact with school was made dark by a strange infirmity, an incapacity to remember the Latin equivalent for the word "bell." Many Latin words were as familiar to him as his socks (perhaps even more so, for he often wears the socks of others), and those words he would give you on demand with the brightness of a boy eager to oblige; but daily did his tutor insist (like one who will have nothing for breakfast but eggs and bacon) on having "bell" alone. Daily was W. W. floored.

It is now that Neil appears with his sunny offer of Help. He took up the case so warmly that he entirely neglected his own studies, which is one of his failings. True he charged threepence (which we shall henceforth write as 3*d*., as it is so sure to come often into these chronicles), but this detracts little from his grandeur, for the mere apparatus required cost him what he calls a bob.

His first procedure was to affix to the bell-pull a card bearing in bold letters the device "Tintinnabulum." This seems simple but was complicated by there being no bell in W. W.'s room. Neil bought a bell (W. W. being "stony"), and round the walls he constructed a gigantic contrivance of wire and empty ginger-beer bottles, culminating at one end in the bell and at the other end in W. W.'s foot as he lay abed. The calculation, a well-founded one, was that if the sleeper tossed restlessly the bell would ring and he would awake. He was then, as instructed by Neil, first, to lie still but as alert as if visited by a ghost, and to think hard for the word. If, however, it still eluded him he was to turn

upon it the electric torch, kept beneath his pillow for this purpose and borrowed at 1*d.* per week from Dolman mi., spot the tricky "Tintinnabulum" in its lair and say the word over to himself a number of times before returning to his slumbers, something attempted, something done to earn a night's repose.

All this did W. W. conscientiously do, and if there was delay in bringing Tintinnabulum to heel the fault was not that of Neil, but of inferior youths who used to substitute cards inscribed "Honorificabilitudinitatibus," "Porringer," "Xylobalsamum," "Beelzebobulus," and other likely words.

Eventually he achieved; a hard-won ribbon for his benefactor whom we are about to call Neil for the last time.

There was a feeling among those who had betted on the result that it should be celebrated in no uncertain manner, and a dinner with speeches not being feasible (though undoubtedly he would have liked it), he was re-christened Tintinnabulum, and the name stuck.

So Tintinnabulum let it be henceforth in these wandering pages. Neil the disinherited may be pictured pattering back to me on his naked soles and knocking me up in the night.

"Neil," I cry (in dressing gown and a candle), "what has happened? Have you run away from school?"

"Rather not," says the plaintive ghost, shivering closer to the fire, "I was kicked out."

"By your tutor?" I ask blanching.

"No, by Tintinnabulum. He is becoming such a swell among the juniors that he despises me and the old times. And now he has kicked me out."

"Drink this hot milk, Neil, and tell me more. What are those articles you are hugging beneath your pyjamas?"

"They are the Bruiser Belt and the score against Juddy's. He threw them out after me."

"Don't take it so much to heart, Neil. I'll find an honoured place for them here, and you and I will have many a cosy talk by the fire about Tintinnabulum."

"I don't want to talk about him," he says, his hands so cold that he spills the milk, "I would rather talk about the days before there was him."

Well, perhaps that was what I meant.

Cruel Tintinnabulum.

4. *The Best Parlour Game*

Soon after the events described in our last chapter I knew from Tintinnabulum's letters that he was again Helping. They were nevertheless communications so guarded as to be wrapped in mystery.

His letters from school tend at all times to be more full of instruction for my guidance than of information about where he stands in his form. I notice that he worries less than did an older generation about how I am to dress when I visit him, but he is as pressing as ever that the postal order should be despatched at once, and firmly refuses to write at all unless I enclose stamped envelopes. On important occasions he even writes my letters for me, requesting me to copy them carefully and not to put in any words of my own, as when for some reason they have to be shown to his tutor. He then writes, "Begin 'Dear T.' (not 'Dearest T.'), "and end 'Yours affec.' (not 'Yours affectionately')."

The mysterious letters that preceded the holidays were concerned with W. W. Daly, whom I was bidden (almost ordered) to invite to our home for that lengthy period, "as his mother is to be away at that time on frightfully important business in which I have a hand."

I was instructed to write "Dear Mrs. Daly (not "dearest"), I understand that you are to be away on important business during the holidays, and so I have the pleasure to ask you to allow your son to spend the holidays with me and my boy who is a general favourite and very diligent. Come, come, I will take no refusal, and I am, Yours affec."

I did as I was told, but as I now heard of the lady for the first time I thought it wisest not to sign my letter to her "Yours affec." Thus did I fall a victim to Tintinnabulum's wiles.

What could this frightfully important business of Mrs. Daly's be in which he "had a hand"?

"ON IMPORTANT OCCASIONS HE EVEN WRITES MY LETTERS FOR ME."

You may say (when you hear of his dark design) that I should at once have insisted on an explanation, but explanations are barred in the sport that he and I play, which is the greatest of all parlour games, the Game of Trying to Know Each Other without asking questions. It is strictly a game for two, who, I suppose, should in perfect conditions be husband and wife; it is played silently and it never lasts less than a life-time. In panegyrics on love (a word never mentioned between us two players), the game is usually held to have ended in a draw when they understand each other so well that before the one speaks or acts the other knows what he or she is going to say or do. This, however, is a position never truly reached in the game, and if it were reached, such a state of coma for the players could only be relieved by a cane in the hand of the stronger, or by the other bolting, to show him that there was one thing about her which he had still to learn.

No, no, these doited lovers when they think the haven is in sight have set sail only. Tintinnabulum and I have made a hundred moves, but we are well aware that we don't know each other yet; at least, I don't know Tintinnabulum, I won't swear that he does not think that he at last knows me. So when he brought W. W. home with him for the holidays it was for me to find out without inquiry how he had been helping Mrs. Daly (and for what sum). He knew that I was cogitating, I could see his impertinent face regarding me demurely, as if we were at a chess board and his last move had puzzled me, which indeed was the situation.

All I knew of her was that she had lately remarried and that W. W. had been invited to spend his holidays with us while she was away on her honeymoon.

Good heavens, could Tintinnabulum have had some Helping part in the lady's marriage? This boy is beginning to scare me.

I studied him and W. W. at their meals and stole upon

them at their play. There could not have been more cherubic faces.

But then I remembered the two cherubic faces I had watched from a bridge.

5. *Tintinnabulum Eats an Apple*

I went to Tintinnabulum's bed-chamber and told him I could not rest until I knew what he had been doing to that lady. In the days of Neil it had been a room of glamour, especially the bed therein, where were performed nightly between 6.15 and 6.30 precisely, the brighter plays of Shakespeare, two actors, but not a sign of them anywhere unless you became suspicious of the hump in the coverlet. Never have the plays gone with greater merriment since Mr. Shakespeare made up "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in his Judith's hump.

No glamour of course in the room of a public school-boy, unless it was provided by his discarded raiment, which lay like islands on the floor. However, I found Tintinnabulum in affable humour, sitting tailor-like in bed, dressed in half of his pyjamas, reading a book and eating an apple. He had doubtless found the apple or the book just as he was about to enter the other half of his night attire.

"What could I have been doing to her?" he asked invitingly. (He likes to be hunted.)

The robing of him having been completed, I said with humorous intent, "You may have been luring her into matrimony against her better judgment."

"She is nuts on him," Tintinnabulum said, taking my remark seriously.

"But you can't have had anything to do with it?"

He nodded, with his teeth in the apple.

"Of course this is nonsense," I said, though with a sinking, "you don't know her."

"I didn't need to know her for a thing like that."

I tried sarcasm. "I should have thought it was essential."

He shook his head.

"I heard W. W. say to-day," I continued in the same vein, "that she is spending the honeymoon on the Riviera; you are not implying, are you, that it was you who sent her there?"

"At any rate, if it hadn't been for me," he replied, taking a good bite, "she wouldn't be on the Riviera and there wouldn't be a honeymoon."

I became alarmed. "Take that apple out of your mouth and tell me what you mean."

The mysterious boy of the so open countenance, as he told me the queer tale in bed that night, was superbly unaware of its queerness, and was more interested in standing on his head to see how far his feet would reach up the wall. He far exceeded the record that had been left by Neil.

"I wasn't the one who made her fond of the chappie," he said by way of beginning. "She did that bit herself."

"Very generous of you to give her that amount of choice," I conceded.

"But she stuck there," said he. "It was W. W. who told me how she had stuck. W. W. has a sister called Patricia. Their mother's name is Mildred. That is all I know about her," he added with great lightness of touch," except that I worked the marriage."

This was the first time I had heard of W. W.'s having a sister.

"He doesn't speak about her much," Tintinnabulum explained, "because they are twins. I say, don't let on to him that I told you he was a twin."

So far as I can gather, W. W. keeps the existence of his girl twin dark from boys in general in case it should make them think less of him.

"He didn't ask me to help him out till things were in an awful mess at home, and then he showed me some of Patricia's letters."

"If I were cross-examining you," I pointed out, "I should say that your statement is not quite clear. Tell the Jury what you mean, and don't blow the apple pits at the portrait of your uncle the bishop."

"I bet you I get him in the calves twice in three shots," he said.

"An ignoble ambition," I told him; "answer my question."

"Well, you see, Patricia had found out all about her mother's being fond of the man. His name begins with K, but I forget the rest of it."

I ventured to say that the least he could do for a man whose life he had so strangely altered was to remember his name.

"W. W. will know it," he said with the carelessness of genius.

"Even now," I pressed him, "I don't see where you come in. Did Patricia object to Mr. K.?"

"Oh, no, she thinks no end of him. So does W. W." He added handsomely, "I wouldn't have let her get married if they had shied at it."

"In that case——"

"It wasn't Patricia that was the bother," he explained, running the apple up and down his arm like a mouse, "it was Mrs. Daly. You know how funny ladies are about some things."

"I do not," I said severely.

"Well, it was about marrying a second time. Mrs. Daly couldn't make up her mind whether it would be fair to W. W. and Patricia. She knew they liked him all right, but not whether they liked him as much as that."

"Tell me how Patricia found all this out, and don't bump about so much."

"She was watching," he replied airily. "She is that kind. I daresay the thing wasn't difficult to find out if all the stuff she said in her letters to W. W. was true. They were awful letters, saying her mother was in anguishes about what was the best thing to do for her progeny. One letter would say, 'Mr. K. made a lovely impression on mother to-day and I don't think she can resist much longer.' Then the next would say, 'I fear all is up, for they have been crying together in the drawing-room, and when he left he banged the door.'"

"Their mother hadn't a notion," Tintinnabulum assured me, making an eyeglass of the apple, "that they knew there was anything in the wind."

"Nor would they have had any such notion," I rapped out, "if they had been children of an earlier date."

"I suppose we are cleverer now," he admitted. He became introspective. "I expect the war did it. It's rummy what a difference the war has made. Before the war no one could hold two eggs in his mouth and hop across a pole. Now everyone can do it."

I requested him to stick to the point.

"Why didn't Patricia the emancipated go to her mother and inform her that all was well?"

"That is the very thing W. W. and she bickered about in their letters. He was always writing to her to do that, but she said it would be unladylike."

"Very un-shingled of her to trouble about that," I got in. "But had she any proposal to make to W. W.?"

"Rather. She was always badgering W. W. to write to their mother saying they knew all and wanted her to go at it blind. She thought it would come better from him, being male. That

was what made him come to me in the end. He told me all about it and asked me if I could help."

"And what was your reply?" I asked with some interest. "Don't tell me," I added hurriedly (we were back at the game, you see), "I want to guess. You said immediately, 'All right'?"

He approved.

"Did it ever strike you," I enquired curiously, "that you might not be able to help?"

"I can't remember," the unfathomable one answered. "I say, would you like to see me do a dive over your head?"

Offer declined.

"You see," he continued, "W. W. is rather—rather——"

"Rather a retiring boy when there is trouble ahead," I suggested. "Well, what did you devise?"

"I said I couldn't do anything until I knew the colour of Patricia's hair and eyes."

This took me aback, though it is quite in Tintinnabulum's manner.

"How could that help?" I had to enquire instead of risking a move.

"I couldn't get a beginning," he insisted doggedly, "till I found out that." (To this day I don't know what he meant.)

"No difficulty in finding out from W. W.," I said.

Here I was wrong. W. W. had no idea of the colour of his dear little sister's eyes but presumed that, as he and she were twins, their eyes must be of the same hue. There followed a scene, undoubtedly worthy of some supreme artist, in which, by the light of a match, Tintinnabulum endeavoured to discover colour of W. W.'s eyes, W. W. being again unable to supply desired information. The match always going out just as Tintinnabulum was on the eve of discovery, it was decided by him that W. W. should write to his twin for particulars (letter dictated by Tintinnabulum).

Patricia's reply was, "Who is it that wants to know? Eyes too expressive to be blue, too lovely to be grey," and it irritated the two seekers after truth.

"We didn't ask her what colour they were not," Tintinnabulum said to me witheringly, "but what colour they were."

In the end, rather than bother any more with her, they risked putting her eyes down as browny black. This determined, Tintinnabulum apprized his client that Patricia was to write the letter that would make their mother happy. This nearly led to a rupture.

W. W. (*sitting*, as they say in the plays, though he might as well be standing): She can't write a letter to mother when they are living in the same house.

Tintinnabulum (*rising*, because W. W. sat): It would be a letter to you.

W. W. (*contemptibly*): That brings me into the thing again.

Tintinnabulum: Shut up and listen. The letter isn't to be posted. Your mother will find it lying open on Patricia's desk and read it on the sly.

W. W. (*nobly*): My mother never does things on the sly.

Tintinnabulum (*comprehensively*): Oh.

W. W. (*hedging*): What would the letter say?

Tintinnabulum: It would show her that you and Patricia knew what she was after and both wanted her to marry the chappie, and then she could put it back where she found it and never let on that she had seen it and make all her arrangements with a happy heart.

W. W.: That is what we want, but mother wouldn't read a letter on the sly.

Tintinnabulum (*after thinking it out when he should have been doing his prep.*): Look here, if she is so fussy we can tell Patricia to leave the letter open on the floor as if it had blown there, and then when your mother picks it up to put it back on the desk she can't help taking a look at it.

W. W.: Would that not be reading it on the sly?

Tintinnabulum (*with cheerful cynicism*): Not for a woman.

W. W. (*depressed*): It will be an awfully difficult letter to write.

Tintinnabulum (*exultant*): Fearfully.

W. W.: I don't think Patricia could do it.

Tintinnabulum: Not she. I'll do it. Then you copy my letter and she copies yours.

W. W.: 3*d.*?

Tintinnabulum: Tons more than that.

This scheme was carried out, Tintinnabulum, after a thoughtful study of Patricia's epistolary style, producing something in this manner, no doubt with the holy look on his face that is always there when he knows he is concocting a masterpiece. (I regret that he has forgotten what he said in the introductory passage, which dealt in an artful feminine manner with her garments and was probably a beauty.)

"Darling Doubly Doubly,

. . . oh dear, I am so unhappy because I fear the match between darlingest mummy and Mr. K. is not to be hit off. Oh dear, she blows hot and cold and it makes me bleed to see the poor man's anguishes, and you and me wanting it so much. If only I could think of a lady-like way to tell mummy that we know she wants it and that we want her to go ahead, but I cannot, and it would need a wonder of a man to do it. Oh dear, how lovely it would be, oh dear, how I wish I knew some frightfully clever person, oh dear——"

"I stopped there," Tintinnabulum told me. "I meant to put in a lot more before I finished, but I wouldn't let myself go on."

"Why?" I asked eagerly, aware that he had reached a great moment in his life.

"Because," he said heavily, "I saw all at once that I had come to the end." (We are so undemonstrative that I did not embrace him).

The letter was left as arranged, on Mrs. Daly's floor, and I may say at once that everything went as planned by the Master. Can we not see Mildred (all authors have a right to call their heroine by her Christian name), opening the door of that room? Her beautiful face is down-cast, all the luckier for Tintinnabulum and Co., for she at once sees the life-giving sheet. She picks it up, meaning to replace it on the desk whence it has so obviously fluttered, when a word catches her eye, and not intending to read she reads. An exquisite flush tints her face as she recognises Patricia's inimitable style. The happy woman is now best left to herself (Come away, Tintinnabulum, you imp).

Dear (not dearest) heroine, you little know who is responsible for your raptures, the indifferent lad now trying to twist one leg round his neck as he finishes his apple. Grudge us not the few minutes in which for literary purposes we have snatched you from the shores of the blue Mediterranean. Thither we now return you to cloudless days and to your K., roses in your cheeks (Tintinnabulum's roses). And you, O lucky K., when you encounter boys of thirteen, might do worse than have a mysterious prompting to give them a franc or so. I wish you both very happy, and I am, yours affec.

"Shall I send them your love?" I almost hear myself saying to Tintinnabulum.

"If you like," he replies, preoccupied with what is left of an apple when the apple itself has gone. For it must be admitted of him that he has not boasted of his achievement. His only comment was modesty itself, "Two bob," he said.

It is almost appalling to reflect that no woman who knows Tintinnabulum (and has two bob) need remain single. And

what character apples have, even when being consumed; if I had given him an orange or a pear this chapter would be quite different. With such deep thoughts I put out his light, and took away the other apple which he had hidden beneath his pillow.

6. *Nemesis*

As the holidays waned (and after W. W. was safely stowed away in bed) Tintinnabulum gratified me by being willing to talk about Neil. If you had heard us at it you would have sworn that those two had no very close connection, that Neil was merely some interesting whipper-snapper who had played about the house until the manlier Tintinnabulum arrived. He was always spoken of between us as Neil, which obviously suited Tintinnabulum's dignity, but I wonder how I took to it so naturally myself. I hope I am not a queer one.

By that arrangement Tintinnabulum can make artful enquiries, not unwistful, into his own past, and I can seem (thus goes the game) not to know that he is doing so. He can even commend Neil.

"Pretty decent of him," he says, discussing the Bruiser Belt and the score against Juddy's.

"I didn't think he had it in him," is even stronger about the sea-trout Neil had landed and been so proud of that he would not lie prone till it was put in a basin by his bedside. He had then slept with one arm over the basin.

Strongest of all is to say that Neil was mad, at present a term not only of approval but even of endearment at the only school that counts (Tintinnabulum speaking). Sometimes we talk of the dark period when Neil, weeping over his first Latin grammar, used to put a merry tune on the gramaphone to accompany his woe. He continued to weep as he studied, but always rose at the

right time to change the tune. This is a heart-breaker of a memory to me, and Tintinnabulum knows it and puts his hand deliciously on my shoulder (that kindest gesture of man to man).

"The gander must have been mad, quite mad," he says hurriedly.

How Neil would like to hear Tintinnabulum saying these nice things about him.

Perhaps we all have a Neil. Have you ever wakened suddenly in the night, certain that you heard a bell ring as it once rang or a knocking on your door as only one could knock or a voice of long ago, quite close? Sometimes you rise and wander the house; more often, after waiting alert for a repetition of the sound, you decide that you have been dreaming or that it was the creaking of a window or a board. But I daresay it was none of these things. I daresay it was your Neil.

Perhaps you have become something quite different from what he meant to be. Perhaps he wants to get into the house, not to gaze proudly at you but to strike you.

Some drop their Neil deliberately and can recall clearly the day of the great decision, but most are unaware that he has gone. For instance, it may have been Neil who married the lady and you who gradually took his place, so like him in appearance that she is as deceived as you. Or it may be that she has found you out and knows who it is that is knocking on the door trying to get back to her. You might be scared if you knew that though she is at this moment attending to your wants with a smile for you on her face, her passionate wish is to be done with you. On the other hand, you may be the better fellow of the two. Let us decide that this is how it is.

The last week of the holidays was darkened for Tintinnabulum and W. W. by the shadow of a letter demanded of them by their tutor. It had to be on one of three subjects:

(*a*) Your Favourite Walk.

(*b*) Your Favourite Game.
(*c*) What shall I do next Half?

A nasty tag attached to m' tutor's order said "the letter must be of great length." Little had they troubled about it till the end loomed, but then they rumbled wrathfully; well was it for their tutor he heard not what they said of him.

Tintinnabulum of course was merely lazy, or on principle resented writing anything for less than 3*d*. Grievous, however, was the burden on W. W., whose gifts lie not in a literary direction. He is always undone by his clear-headed way of putting everything he knows on any subject into the first sentence. He had a shot at (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*).

Attempt on (*a*). "My favourite walk is when I do not have far to go to it." (Here he stuck.)

Attempt on (*b*). "The game of cricket is my favourite game, and it consists of six stumps, two bats and a ball." After wandering round the table many times he added, "Nor must we forget the bails." (Stuck again.)

Attempt on (*c*). "Next half is summer half, so early school will be half an hour earlier." (Final stick.)

He then abandoned hope and would, I suppose, have had to run away to sea (if boys still do that) had not Help been nigh.

For a consideration (and you can now guess exactly how much it was) Tintinnabulum offered to write W. W.'s letter for him. I did not see it till later (as you shall learn), indeed the episode was purposely kept dark from me. The subject chosen was "My Favourite Walk," because Tintinnabulum had a book entitled Walks and Talks with the Little Ones, which never before had he thought might come in handy. Of course such a performer by no means confined himself to purloining from this work, though he did have something to say about how W. W. wandered along his walk carrying a little book into which he put "interesting

plants." Anything less like W. W. thus engaged I cannot conceive, unless it be Tintinnabulum himself.

The miscreant also carefully misspelt several words, as being natural to W. W. Unfortunately (his fatal weakness) he could not keep his own name out of the letter, and he made W. W. say that the favourite walk was "near the house of my kind friend Tintinnabulum, and you know him, sir, for he is in your house, and I mess with him, which is very lucky for me, all the scugs wanting to mess with him and nobody wanting me."

Could brainy critics, peeled for the pounce, read that human document they would doubtless pause to enquire into its hidden meaning. On the surface it was written (*a*) to get 3*d*. out of W. W., (*b*) to give relief to Tintinnabulum's ego. To the ordinary reader (with whom to-day we have no concern) this might suffice, but the digger would ask, what is the philosophy of life advanced by the author, is the whole thing an allegory and if so, what is Tintinnabulum's Message; in short, is he, like the commoner writers, merely saying what he says, or, like the big chaps, something quite different?

Had his tutor considered the letter thus, we might have had a most interesting analysis of it (and no one would have been more interested than Tintinnabulum). But though a favourite of mine (and also of Tintinnabulum) his tutor is just slightly Victorian, and he went for the letter like one of the illiterate.

It was not seen by me until the two hopefuls returned to school, when I received it from their tutor with another one which is uncommonly like it. Investigation has elicited the following data, for which kindly allow me to use (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) again, as I have taken a fancy to them.

(*a*) Letter is read and approved by W. W.

(*b*) W. W. on reflection objects to passage about the honour of messing with Tintinnabulum.

(*c*) Ultimatum issued by Tintinnabulum that the passage must be retained.

(*d*) MS. haughtily returned to the author.

(*e*) The author alters a few words and sends in letter as his own.

(*f*) W. W. has made a secret copy of the letter and sends it in as his, with the objectionable passage deleted.

(*g*) Their tutor smells a rat.

(*h*) He takes me into his confidence.

(*i*) Days pass but I remain inactive.

(*j*) He puts the affair into the hands of Beverley, the head of the house.

(*k*) Triumph of Miss Rachel.

Miss Rachel who is an old friend of ours is slight and frail, say 5 ft. 3, her biceps cannot be formidable and I question whether she could kick the beam however favourably it was placed for her. She is such an admirer of Tintinnabulum that he occasionally writhes, in his fuller knowledge of the subject.

Having led a quiet and uneventful life (so far as I know), Miss Rachel suddenly shoots into the light through her acquaintance with the Beverleys of Winch Park, which is, as it were, nothing; but the great Beverley, Beverley the thunderous, who is head of m' tutor's house, is a scion of that family; and now you see what a swell Miss Rachel has become. When Neil (as he then was) was entered for that great school she wrote to Beverley—fancy knowing someone who can write to Beverley—telling him (to Neil's indignation) what a darling her young friend was and hoping Beverley would look after him and make him his dear little fag. Months elapsed before a reply came, but when it did come it really referred to Tintinnabulum and contained these pregnant words: "As to the person in whom you are interested, I look after him a good deal, and the more I see of him the more I lick him."

Miss Rachel showed me the letter with exultation. So kind of him, she said, though she was a little distressed that a strapping fellow like Beverley should spell so badly.

More recently I had a letter from Tintinnabulum, which I showed to her as probably denoting the final transaction in the affair of the letter.

"W. W. and I," it announced very cheerily, "saw Beverley yesterday in his room and he gave each of us six of the best."

"How charming of Beverley!" Miss Rachel said.

"The best what?" she enquired, but I cannot have heard her, for I made no answer.

I learn that sometimes she thinks it was probably cakes and at other times fives balls, which she knows to be in great demand at that school. I shall not be surprised if Miss Rachel sends a dozen of the best to Beverley.

7. *How to Write a Collins*

I note that the dozen of the best shared by these two odd creatures seems to have made them pals again. The proof is that though they began the new half by messing with other youths they are now once more messing together.

"That priceless young cub, W. W.," occurs in one letter of Tintinnabulum's.

"W. W. is the lad for me," he says in the next.

Again, I have a note of thanks for hospitality from W. W. in which he remarks, "Tintinnabulum is as ripping as ever." This, however, is to be discounted, as, though the letter is signed W. W. Daly, I recognise in it another hand, I recognise this other hand so clearly that I can add a comment in brackets (3*d*.).

Yes, I can do so (because of a game I have long been playing), but any other person would be deceived, just as m' tutor was at

first deceived by the epistles on the favourite walk. He told me that these were so fragrant of W. W. that he had thought Tintinnabulum must be the copy-cat. Indeed, thus it was held until W. W. nobly made confession.

What I must face is this, that Tintinnabulum, being (alas) an artist, has been inside W. W. Not only so, he has since his return to school been inside at least half a dozen other boys, searching for Collinses for them.

A Collins, as no one, perhaps except Miss Austen, needs to be told, is the fashionable name for a letter of thanks for hospitality to a host or hostess. Thus W. W.'s letter to me was a Collins. Somehow its fame has spread through his house, and now Tintinnabulum is as one possessed, writing threepenny Collinses for the deficient. They are small boys as yet, but as the quality of his Help is trumpeted to other houses I conceive Fields, Blues and Choices knocking at his door and begging for a Collins. It will be a great day for Tintinnabulum when Beverley applies.

The Collins letter is a fine art in which those who try the hardest often fall most heavily, and perhaps even m' tutor or the Provost Himself, at his wit's end how to put it neatly this time, will yet crave a 3*d.* worth. It may even be that readers grown grey in the country's service, who quake at thought of the looming Collins, would like to have Tintinnabulum's address. It is refused; but I mention, to fret them, that his every Collins is guaranteed different from all his other Collinses, and to be so like the purchaser that it is a photograph.

If you were his client you could accept Saturday to Monday invitations with a light heart. But don't, when he is at your Collins, go near him and the babe lest he clutch it to his breast and growl. He has the great gift of growling, which will yet make him popular with another sex.

His concentration on the insides of others is of course very disturbing to me, but I should feel still more alarmed if I heard that he had abandoned the monetary charge and, for sheer love of the thing, was turning out Collinses gratis.

To-day there comes a ray of hope from a harassed tutor, who writes that Tintinnabulum has deserted the Collins for googly bowling, the secrets of which he is pursuing with the same terrific intensity. I can picture him getting inside the ball.

8. *He and I and Another*

You readers may smile when I tell you why I have indited these memories and fancies. It was not done for you but for me, being a foolish attempt to determine, by writing the things down (playing over by myself some of the past moves in the game), whether Tintinnabulum really does like me still. That he should do so is very important to me as he recedes farther from my ken down that road which hurries him from me. I cannot, however, after all, give myself a very definite answer. He no longer needs me of course, as Neil did, and he will go on needing me less. When I think of Neil I know that those were the last days in which I was alive.

Tintinnabulum's opinion of himself, except when he is splashing, is lowlier than was Neil's; some times in dark moods it is lowlier than makes for happiness. He has hardened a little since he was Neil, coarsened but strengthened. I comfort myself with the curious reflection that the best men I have known have had a touch of coarseness in them.

Perhaps I have made too much of the occasional yieldings of this boy whom I now know so superficially. The new life is building seven walls around him. Are such of his moves in the game as I can follow merely an expert's kindness to an indifferent player?

On the other hand, I learn from a friendly source that he has spoken of me with approval, once at least, as "mad, quite mad," and I know that my battered countenance, about which I am very "touchy" excites his pity as well as his private mirth. On the last night of the holidays he was specially gruff, but he slipped beneath my door a paper containing the words "I hereby solemnly promise never to give you cause for moral anxiety," and signed his name across a postage stamp to give the document a special significance. Nevertheless, W. W. and he certainly do at times exchange disturbing glances of which I am the object, and these, I notice, occur when I think I am talking well. Again, if I set off to tell a humorous story in company nothing can exceed the agony on Tintinnabulum's face. Yet I am uncertain that this is not a compliment, for if he felt indifferently toward me why should he worry about my fate?

During those holidays a master at his old preparatory sent me a letter he had received from Tintinnabulum (whom he called Neil), saying that as it was about me he considered I ought to read it. But I had not the courage to do so. Quite likely it was favourable, but suppose it hadn't been. Besides, it was not meant for me to see, and I cling to his dew-drop about my being mad. On the whole, I think he is still partial to me. Corroboration, I consider, was provided at our parting, when he so skilfully turned what began as a tear into a wink and gazed at me from the disappearing train with what I swear was a loving scowl.

What will become of Tintinnabulum? There was a horror looking for him in his childhood. Waking dreams we called them, and they lured Neil out of bed in the night. It was always the same nameless enemy he was seeking, and he stole about in various parts of the house in search of it, probing fiercely for it in cupboards, or standing at the top of the stairs pouring out invective and shouting challenges to it to come up. I have known the

small white figure defend the stair-head thus for an hour, blazing rather than afraid, concentrated on some dreadful matter in which, tragically, none could aid him. I stood or sat by him, like a man in an adjoining world, waiting till he returned to me, for I had been advised, warned, that I must not wake him abruptly. Gradually I soothed him back to bed, and though my presence there in the morning told him, in the light language we then adopted, that he had been "at it again" he could remember nothing of who the enemy was. It had something to do with the number 7; that was all we ever knew. Once I slipped from the room, thinking it best that he should wake to normal surroundings, but that was a mistake. He was violently agitated by my absence. In some vague way he seemed on the stairs to have known that I was with him and to have got comfort from it; he said he had gone back to bed only because he knew I should be there when he woke up. I found that he liked, "after he had been an ass," to wake up seeing me "sitting there doing something frightfully ordinary, like reading the newspaper," and you may be sure that thereafter that was what I was doing.

After he had been a year or two at his preparatory, Neil did a nice thing for me; one of a thousand. I had shaken my head over his standing so low in Maths, though he was already a promising classic, and had said that it was "great fun to be good at what one was bad at." A term or two later when he came home he thrust the Maths prize into my hand. "But it wasn't fun," he growled. (It was Neil's growl before it was Tintinnabulum's.) He came back to blurt out, "I did it because in those bad times you were always sitting there with the newspaper when I woke."

By becoming Tintinnabulum he is not done with his unknown foe, though I think they have met but once. On this occasion his dame had remained with him all night, as he had been slightly unwell, and she was amused, but nothing more. to see him, without

observing her, rise and search the room in a fury of words for something that was not there. The only word she caught was "seven." He asked them not to tell me of this incident, as he knew it would trouble me. I was told, and, indeed, almost expected the news, for I had sprung out of bed that night thinking I heard Neil once again defending the stair. By the time I reached Tintinnabulum it had ceased to worry him. "But when I woke I missed the newspaper," he said with his adorable smile, and again putting his hand on my shoulder. How I wished "the newspaper" could have been there. There are times when a boy can be as lonely as God.

What is the danger? What is it that he knows in the times during which he is shut away and that he cannot remember to tell to himself or to me when he wakes? I am often disturbed when thinking of him (which is the real business of my life), regretting

"I DID IT BECAUSE YOU WERE ALWAYS SITTING THERE WITH THE NEWSPAPER WHEN I WOKE"

that, in spite of advice and warnings, I did not long ago risk waking him abruptly, when, before it could hide, he might have clapped seeing eyes upon it, and thus been able to warn me. Then, knowing the danger, I would for ever after be on the watch myself, so that when the moment came, I could envelop him as with wings. These are, of course, only foolish fears of the dark, and with morning they all fly away. Tintinnabulum makes very merry over them. I have a new thought that, when he is inside me, he may leave them there deliberately to play upon my weakness for him and so increase his sock allowance. Is the baffling creature capable of this enormity? With bowed head I must admit he is. I make a note, to be more severe with him this half.

The Dream

HERBERT ASQUITH

My dream? Can I remember my dream?
    I was floating down the nursery stair,
And my little terrier ran in front
    With his feet treading on the air;
And when we came to the dining-room,
    The King and the Queen were there:
And father and mother, two and two;
And a baby elephant from the Zoo,
    Each on a golden chair;
And three soldiers, and Mary Rose
Riding an ostrich that pecked her toes,

    And Uncle Jim
    Looking very trim,
Eating a kipper.
    And, when they had sung to the King,
    They all sat down in a ring,
And played at hunt the slipper.

Then I saw a curling stream
    And yellow flow'rs in a meadow,
And six little green frogs
    Dancing a jig in the shadow:
And the tune came from a bough,
    "Tweet, tweet, quiver,"
Sung by a little brown bird
    That swayed above the river.

Then we all started to dance,
    And Aunt Rebecca too;
Uncle Jim began to prance,
    And the baby elephant blew
A curl of smoke from his cigar,
    As he sat and watched the evening star.
And the little brown bird sang on,
    Swaying above the river:
But a wind came whispering down,
    And the leaves began to shiver.

Then with a crackly sound
    Uncle Jim went flat:
    He turned into a cricket-bat;
But Aunt Rebecca grew very round
    And floated up like a black balloon,
    Higher and higher, into the Moon.

The stars fell out of the sky;
The baby elephant whined:
"Time to get up" said nurse:
And "Flap" went the blind.

MR SNOOGLES

BY ELIZABETH LOWNDES

Veronica lay very still in bed, then she stretched out as far as she could. Her feet travelled down to that cold region near where the sheets and blankets disappear under the mattress. She was certainly still awake, for one doesn't stretch in dreams, and if one did one would certainly wake up.

Then she cautiously raised herself upon one elbow and looked round, slowly, at the fire. Ever since Teddy had said that Mr. Snoogles lived up the chimney she had regarded the fire with much greater interest, not to say dread. Not that Mr. Snoogles was real. He was just fun. And yet, though Veronica knew he was only fun, she often wondered how he managed to fit in the inside of the chimney—if, that is, he was at all like father, or even Dr. Blackie (who wasn't at all big for a man). But then Teddy was the only person who claimed to have ever seen this person who had taken refuge in their chimneys, and he couldn't be made to describe him.

In the morning and in the afternoon Mr. Snoogles was much more amusing than any shop-bought game. Veronica would laugh over him, and invent long conversations in which he said such silly things! But when the evening crept on, and the fire crackled in the grate, and flickered on the walls, it made it all so

different. Why do things which aren't true make you think they are true, at night?

Veronica remembered uneasily a curious dream. She was no longer a big girl with short hair and long thin legs; she was a green velvet pin-cushion, and pins of various sizes and colours were just about to be stuck into her before she was sent off to a village bazaar. Though that was only a dream, for a long time she never saw a pin-cushion without thinking of herself as one. . . .

And now, to-night, she at last lay back in bed out of sight of the fire, and tried to plan adventures for the next day. Why did real adventures always pass her by?

Suddenly she heard a curious low rumbling sound. For a moment she hoped and yet dreaded that it came from the direction of the chimney, but when the sound got louder, as it did very soon, she burst out laughing, for it was only Teddy snoring. The door between their rooms was open, so no wonder she heard him. How funny, and how disappointing!

In time Veronica's eyes closed without her noticing it, and lying there, so comfortable and so warm in bed, just on that borderland of the ordinary world of lessons and rice pudding (when one expected something else with jam on it) and that other delicious world of dreams and vague sensations.

But all at once Veronica heard a great clatter. She sat up in bed and opened her eyes wide to see in the firelight a most curious little person. He had leapt out of the chimney and dropped all the fire-irons in a heap at his feet. She could see them lying there on the white woolly mat, all at sixes and sevens.

He was very small, about as high as the poker. He had large round eyes, nearly as round as two pennies. And on his head, perched on the very top, was the lid of the nursery kettle! It was a copper kettle, and was always kept very bright.

The stranger was dressed in black and his clothes fitted him quite tight, like a well-drawn-up stocking or a glove.

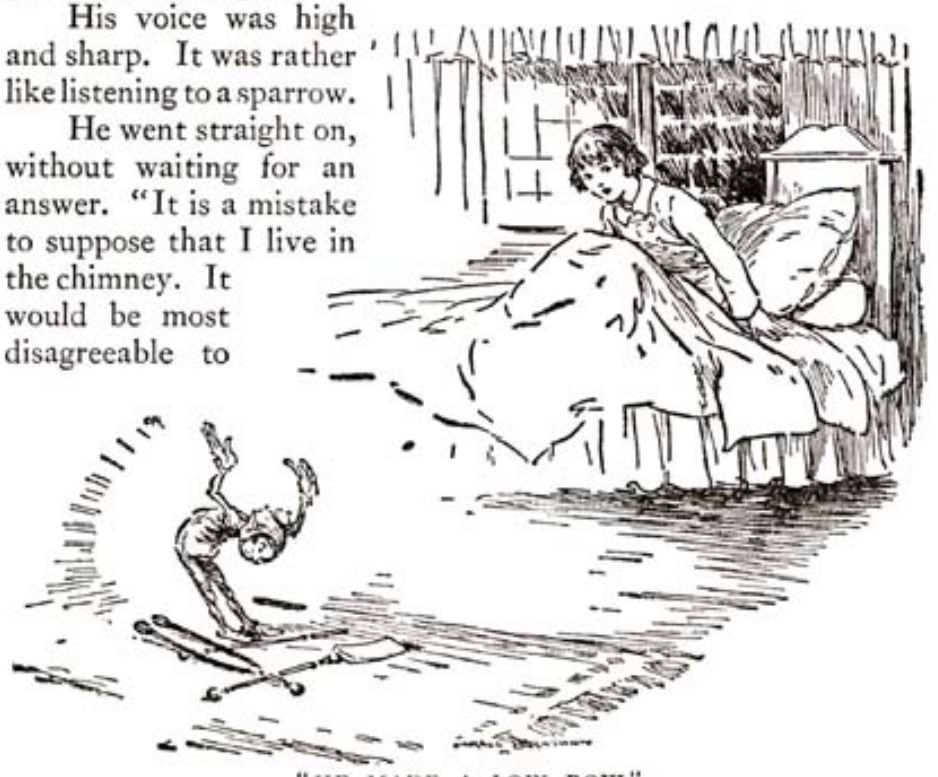
Veronica gazed at him, her eyes growing almost as round as his own.

Then he stamped his foot, and raising his arms over his head, he made a low bow.

"Madam, your wish to see me, though it is only prompted by idle curiosity, has brought me down from my kingdom among the chimney pots. I have a request to make to you. Will you take my place for a few hours? I am called away on urgent private affairs, but I cannot leave my work up there unless you will give me your help."

His voice was high and sharp. It was rather like listening to a sparrow.

He went straight on, without waiting for an answer. "It is a mistake to suppose that I live in the chimney. It would be most disagreeable to



"HE MADE A LOW BOW"

do so, as I should have thought you, who have imagination, would realize. But I am talking too much. I wait respectfully, Madam, for your answer. Will you help me?"

Veronica wriggled uncomfortably under the warm bedclothes.

"I will help you if I can." She was a cautious, as well as a truthful, child, so she added hastily, "I don't want to say I will, if I can't. And are you—*are* you Mr. Snoogles?"

The strange little man standing on the mat threw back his head so suddenly that the lid of the kettle fell off and bounced away behind the coal scuttle.

"Oh, how funny!" he laughed. "I shall add that to my collection. No, I'm *not* Mr. Snoogles; but I am the person whom your brother calls Mr. Snoogles."

"So Teddy *has* seen you after all. Sometimes I thought Mr. Snoogles was only a game."

"Indeed, I'm not a game. What a horrid thing to be! Imagine being a football?"

"Or a pin-cushion," said Veronica hastily. "I know because I believed I was one once, but only for a short time," she added, because she was truthful, but also in case Mr. Snoogles found a stray pin on the floor and, remembering what she had said, might stick it into her. He looked such a tidy man.

"I can assure you, Madam, that I will not request you to do anything at all difficult. I shall only require your services for a short period—say about ten years."

"*Ten years?* But in ten years I shall be quite old—that is, quite grown up. I shall be twenty-one."

"Well, what of that? My work is much more amusing than what you do all day—lessons, walks, quarrels."

Veronica felt a little taken aback.

"But I don't quarrel—that is to say, not much, not nearly as much as do our cousins in the country or as the long-haired family

we see in the park. Would you like to hear my names? I am not madam yet. You see, I am not married. And won't you sit down?"

"No, I never sit down. It's lazy. Proceed with your names. Though I know what I call you to myself."

"I was christened Elizabeth Veronica Sybella—now, what do *you* call me?"

"Never mind. Don't ask questions. It's bad manners."

Veronica felt annoyed, but she put her pride in her pocket and asked: "If I do what you want me to do—will you tell me then?"

"I shall if you deserve it."

What a horrid thing to say! How like a holiday governess! —the sort that Veronica and her brother had had last summer.

"We must be gone. You have been wasting *our* time. Not that time is money to me."

"Isn't it? It is to father, though how he makes it into money I don't know. I have so much time I could make such a lot of money if only I knew how to do it."

"Money is silly stuff. Look how easily it burns. Only yesterday I saw the kitchenmaid at No. 5 throw a five-pound note on to the fire. She didn't know what it was, poor silly girl, though she is very clever at washing cups and saucers. Come on now!"

Veronica jumped out of bed, and ran over to the fireplace.

"Do we go up there?" she said, looking at the chimney and then at the dying fire. "Won't it burn?"

"Not when you are with me. Fire is my servant. I am fire's lord and master. But if you feel at all nervous I will command it to die."

With these dramatic words Mr. Snoogles clapped his hands together and cried out: "Servant, hide thyself! Let thy light burn dim while we pass over you."

Instantly the coals grew grey and dusty.

Mr. Snoogles put out his hand, and taking Veronica's fingers firmly in his, he pulled her up, and soon she found herself being drawn up higher and higher.

"When we get to the top I will explain what you have to do."

Veronica said nothing. Adventure had come at last—the real thing, better than any story-book she had ever read, because it was happening to her—actually to her.

They suddenly came out into the night air. To the right, to the left, in fact, wherever she looked, were chimney-pots. Some had strange things on them like hats.

Then it was that Veronica noticed she had become about the same size as Mr. Snoogles. She did not feel cold, either, which was stranger still. But she sat down as she had been told, and gazed about her. High above, the stars were twinkling and the young moon was shining.

Mr. Snoogles coughed.

"Have you finished thinking your thoughts, and will you now think of mine?" he said crossly.

"I am so sorry. Please tell me yours."

"My business—and soon it will be *your* business, don't forget—is to be the Watchman of Fire and Smoke. Smoke is used for punishment because it is unpleasant. But Fire brings warmth and happiness. You will have power over them both, but you must keep Fire in his proper place. When you see things not going well in a house then send down Smoke. If they bear it well, and cease to think of themselves, call it back and ask Fire to burn brightly to warm them, and to make them feel happy and cheerful. If a live coal flies out on the mat, you must be there to make it go out. A house on fire is a terrible thing, and means you have not been doing your work properly." He waited a moment, then exclaimed: "I must be going soon, so do your best!"

"HAVE YOU FINISHED THINKING YOUR THOUGHTS"

"But how shall I——?" Veronica looked round, but Mr. Snoogles had vanished, and she found herself alone on the roof.

"I can't do it, it's too difficult," she said to herself, "much more difficult than learning a long speech out of Shakespeare. One can always do that if one really tries, but this——?"

. . . . . .

"Veronica, Veronica, I have been screaming at you for ages. There is a big fire outside! That empty house is burning down, I can see it from my window——"

Teddy was jumping about in his pyjamas. "Come along! Hurry up!" he shouted.

Veronica got out of bed as if she was dreaming. Then she cried in great distress, "It's my fault—that fire. Mr. Snoogles said I must not allow it to happen."

"Don't be so silly. Mr. Snoogles isn't real. Come along!"

The two children ran to the window, and in the excitement of watching the fire engines arrive, and the water pouring out of the great hose pipes Veronica forgot her part in this tragedy.

Later in the morning, as they were coming in from a walk, Veronica said, "Teddy, what was Mr. Snoogles really like when you saw him? Do tell me and I will tell you a great secret."

"Mr. Snoogles? I will show him to you."

Teddy took off his coat and hat, and running halfway up the stairs, he threw his coat round a pillar which marked the half landing. Then he put his cap on the round knot at the top.

"Veronica! Allow me to introduce you to Mr. Snoogles!"

"Teddy! D'you mean you never saw him really? I have."

"Of course I didn't. And you haven't either!"

Veronica said nothing to that. She knew better.

HERBERT ASQUITH

Bob has blown a hundred eggs,
Blue and olive, white and grey;
Warbler, nightingale, and thrush,
Bob has blown their songs away!

Low in spotless wool they rest,
Purest blue and clouded white,
Streaked with cinnamon and red,
Flecked with purples of the night;

Mute and gleaming, row on row,
Lie the tombstones of the spring!
What a chorus would there be
If those eggs began to sing!

The Two Sailors

JOHN LEA

This was one

There once was a sailor who never could bear
To rub any oil on the top of his hair,
And no one who loved him at sea or at home
Would offer the use of a brush and a comb.
He said (and what reason for doubting the tale?)
The very best brush is the breath of a gale,
While as to the comb—seek a better, in vain,
Than jolly good torrents of tropical rain.
So all round the world (and no cruise did he miss)
That singular sailor looked something like *this*.

This was the other one

There once was a sailor who lavished with care
Whole buckets of oil on the top of his hair,
And no one who loved him omitted to speak
In rapture of tresses so splendidly sleek.
He said (and who questions what mariners say?)
He brushed them and combed them each hour of the day.
For, up on the mast in the wildest of seas,
He never neglected such duties as these.
And so, as no chance he would lazily miss,
That singular sailor looked something like *this*.

Doctor Dolittle meets a Londoner in Paris

HUGH LOFTING

One day John Dolittle was walking alone in the Tuileries Gardens. He had been asked to come to France by some French naturalists who wished to consult him on certain new features to be added to the zoo in the Jardin des Plantes. The Doctor knew Paris well and loved it. To his way of thinking it was the perfect city—or would be, if it were not so difficult to get a bath there.

It had been raining all day, but now the sun was shining, and the gardens, fresh and wet, looked very beautiful. As the Doctor passed one of the many shrubberies he came upon a sparrow wallowing in a puddle in the middle of the gravel path.

"Why, I declare!" he muttered to himself, hurrying forward. "It's Cheapside!"

The small bird, evidently quite accustomed to human traffic, was far too busy with his bathing to notice anyone's approach.

"How do you do, Cheapside?" said the Doctor in sparrow language. "Who on earth would ever have thought of finding you here?"

The sparrow stopped his fluttering and wallowing and looked up through the water that ran down in big drops off his towsled head-feathers.

"Jiminy Crickets!" he exclaimed. "It's the Doc himself!"

"'HOW DO YOU DO, CHEAPSIDE?' SAID THE DOCTOR IN SPARROW LANGUAGE"

"How do you come to be in Paris?" asked John Dolittle.

"Oh, it's all Becky's doing," grumbled Cheapside, hopping out of the puddle and fluttering his wings to dry them. "I'm satisfied to stay in London, goodness knows. But every Spring it's the same way: 'Let's take a hop over to the Continong,' says she. 'The horse-chestnuts will just be budding.' 'We got horse-chestnut trees in Regent's Park,' I says to 'er. 'Ah,' says she, 'but not like the ones in the Twiddle-didee Gardens. Oh, I love Paris in the Spring,' she says . . . It's always the same way: every year she drags me over 'ere. Sentiment, I reckon it is. You see, Doc, me and Becky met one another first 'ere—right 'ere in the Twiddle-didee Gardens. I recognised 'er as a London Sparrow—you can tell 'em the world over—and we got talkin'. You know the way those things 'appen. She wanted to build our first nest up there in the Lufer Palace. But I says, 'No,' hemphatic. 'Let's go back to St. Paul's,' I says. 'I know a place in St. Edmund's left ear what 'as all the stonework in Paris beat 'ollow as a nestin' place. Besides,' I says, 'we don't want our children growing up talkin' no foreign language! We're Londoners,' I says: 'let's go back to London.'"

"Yes," said the Doctor. "Even I guessed you were a London sparrow, before I recognised you, because——"

"Because I was washin'," Cheapside finished. "That's true: these 'ere foreign birds don't run to water much."

"That's a fine puddle you have there," said the Doctor. "I've half a mind to ask you to lend it to me. You know, I've been trying to get a bath myself ever since I've been in Paris—without success so far. After all, even a puddle is better than nothing. When I asked them at the *pension* where I'm staying could I have a bath, they seemed to think I was asking for the moon."

"Oh, I can tell you where you can get a bath, Doctor, a good one," said the sparrow. "Just the other side of that shrubbery

over there there's an elegant marble pond, with a fountain and statues in the middle. You can hang your bath-towel on the statue and use the fountain for a shampoo. Just helegant!—But of course you'd have to do it after dark. Anybody washin' in Paris is liable to get arrested—not because you 'ad no clothes on, mind you. Oh no, the French is very sensible about that. Look at all these statues: they don't wear no clothes—and in summer-time it's much cooler for 'em. But washin'? That's another matter. Over 'ere they're very suspicious of anybody washin'. Just the same you could manage a tub in the marble pond late at night, easy—because there's hardly anybody in the gardens then."

"My gracious! I've a good mind to try it, Cheapside," said the Doctor. "I haven't had a bath in over a week."

"Well," said the Cockney sparrow, "you meet me here at midnight and me and Becky will guide you to the pond and keep a look-out while you get a wash."

. . . . .

There was a half moon that night. And when, a few minutes before twelve o'clock, John Dolittle came into the Tuileries Gardens with a bath-towel over his arm, the first person he saw was a French policeman. Not wishing to be taken for a suspicious character, he thrust the bath-towel beneath his coat and hurried past the shrubbery as though bent on important business.

But he had not gone very far before he was overtaken by Cheapside and his wife, Becky.

"Don't get worried, Doc, don't get worried," said the sparrow. "That bobby only goes by about once every 'alf-hour. 'E won't be back for a while. Come over 'ere and we'll show you your dressing-room."

John Dolittle was thereupon conducted to a snug retreat in the heart of a big shrubbery.

"Nobody can see you 'ere," said Cheapside. "And as soon as you're ready all you've got to do is to 'op round that privet-'edge, sprint across the little lawn and there's your bath waitin' for you. Me and Becky will keep a look-out. And if any danger comes along we'll whistle."

Five minutes later the famous naturalist was wallowing luxuriously in the marble pond. The night was softly brilliant with moonlight, and the statues in the centre of the pool stood out palely against the dark mass of the trees behind.

John Dolittle had paused a moment with a cake of soap uplifted in his hand, utterly enchanted by the beauty of the scene, when he heard Cheapside hoarsely whispering to him from a branch overhead.

"Look out! Hide quick! Someone coming!"

Now the Doctor had left his bath-towel on the base of the statue. At Cheapside's warning he splashed wildly out to get it before attempting a retreat to the shrubbery. Breathless, he finally reached the fountain. But just as he was about to grasp the towel Becky called from the other side of the pond:

"Cheapside! There is another party coming in at the other gate! The Doctor can never make it in time."

John Dolittle, waist-deep in the water at the foot of the statue, looked about him in despair.

"Gracious! What shall I do then?" he cried drawing the bath-towel over his shoulders.

"You'll have to be a statue," hissed Cheapside the quick thinker. "Hop up on to the pedestal. They'll never know the difference in this light. When they go by you can come down. Hurry! They're quite close. I can see their heads over the top of the hedge."

Swiftly winding his bath-towel about him, John Dolittle sprang up on to the pedestal and crouched in a statuesque pose. The marble group was of Neptune the sea-god and several attendant figures. John Dolittle, M.D., became one of the attendant

figures. His hand raised to shade his eyes from an imaginary sun, he gazed seaward with a stony stare.

"Fine!" whispered Cheapside, flying on to the base of the statue. "No one could tell you from the real thing. Just keep still and you'll be all right. They won't stay, I don't expect. Here they come. Don't get nervous, now. Bless me, I believe they're English too!—Tourists. Well, did you ever?"

A man and a woman, strolling through the gardens by one of the many crossing paths, had now paused at the edge of the pond and, to John Dolittle's horror, were gazing up at the statue in the centre of it. They were both elderly; they both carried umbrellas; and they both wore spectacles.

"I'll bet they're short-sighted, Doc," whispered Cheapside comfortingly. "Don't worry."

"Dear me, Sarah," sighed the man. "What a beautiful night! The moon and the trees and the fountain. And such an imposing statue!—The sea-god Neptune with his mermaids and mermen."

"Lancelot," said the woman shortly, "let us hurry home. You'll get your bronchitis worse in this damp air. I don't like the statue at all. I never saw such fat creatures. Just look at that one on the corner there—the one with his hand up scanning the horizon. Why, he's stouter than the butcher at home!"

"Humph!" muttered Cheapside beneath his breath. "It don't seem to me as though *you* 'ave any figure to write 'ome about, Mrs. Scarecrow."

At this moment a large flying beetle landed on the Doctor's neck and nearly spoiled everything.

"Good gracious, Sarah!" cried the man. "I thought I saw one of the figures move, the fat one."

The tourist adjusted his spectacles and, coming a little closer to the edge of the pond, stared very hard. But Cheapside, to add a touch of convincing realism, flew up on to the merman's

shoulder, kicked the beetle into the pond with a secret flick of his foot and burst into a flood of carefree song.

"No, Sarah," said the man. "I was mistaken. See, there is a bird sitting on his shoulder. How romantic! Must be a nightingale."

"*Will* you come home, Lancelot?" snapped the woman. "You won't feel so romantic when your cough comes back. It must be after midnight."

"But you know, Sarah," said the man, as he was almost forcibly dragged away, "*I* don't think he's too fat. They had to be stout, those marine people: they floated better that way. Dear me, Paris is a beautiful city!"

As the footsteps died away down the moonlit path, John Dolittle sighed a great sigh of relief and came to life.

"Cheapside," said he, stretching his stiff arms, "you could never guess who those people were. My sister Sarah and her husband, the Reverend Lancelot Dingle. It's funny, Cheapside, but whenever I am in an awkward or ridiculous situation Sarah seems bound to turn up. Of course she and her husband would just *have* to come touring Paris at the exact hour when I was taking a bath in the Tuileries Gardens. Ah well, thank goodness the pond kept them off from getting any closer to me!"

"Well, listen, Doc," said the London sparrow: "I think you had better be gettin' along yourself now. It's about time for that bobby to be coming round again."

"Yes, you're right," said the Doctor. And he slid back into the water, waded to the edge and stepped out on to dry ground.

But John Dolittle's troubles were not over yet. While he was still no more than half way to his "dressing-room" there came another warning shout from Cheapside

"Look out!—Here he comes!"

This time flight seemed the only course. The policeman

had seen the culprit disappear into the shrubbery. Breaking into a run, he gave chase.

"Don't stop, Doc!" cried Cheapside. "Grab your clothes and get out the other side—Becky! Hey, Becky! Keep that policeman busy a minute."

The Doctor did as he was told. Seizing his clothes in a pile as he rushed through the shrubbery, he came out at the other end like an express train emerging from a tunnel. Here Cheapside met him and led him across a lawn to another group of bushes. Behind this he hurriedly got into his clothes. Meanwhile Becky kept the policeman busy by furiously pecking him in the neck and making it necessary for him to stop and beat her off.

However, she could not of course keep this up for long. And if John Dolittle had not been an exceptionally quick dresser he could never have got away. In one minute and a quarter, collar and tie in one hand, soap and towel in the other, he left his second dressing-room on the run and sped for the gate and home.

The loyal Cheapside was still with him; but the sparrow was now so convulsed with laughter that he could scarcely keep up, even flying.

"I don't see what you find so funny about it," panted the Doctor peevishly as he slowed down at the gate and began putting on his collar. "I had a very narrow escape from getting arrested."

"Yes, and you'd have gone to jail, too," gasped Cheapside. "It's no light offence, washing in this country. But that wasn't what I was laughing at."

"Well, what was it, then?" asked the Doctor, feeling for a stud in his pocket.

"The Reverend Dingle took me for a nightingale!" tittered the Cockney sparrow. "I must go back and tell Becky that. So long, Doc! You'll be all right now. That bobby's lost you altogether. . . . After all, you got your bath. See you in Puddleby next month."

Vice-versa

ANY FATHER TO ANY DAUGHTER

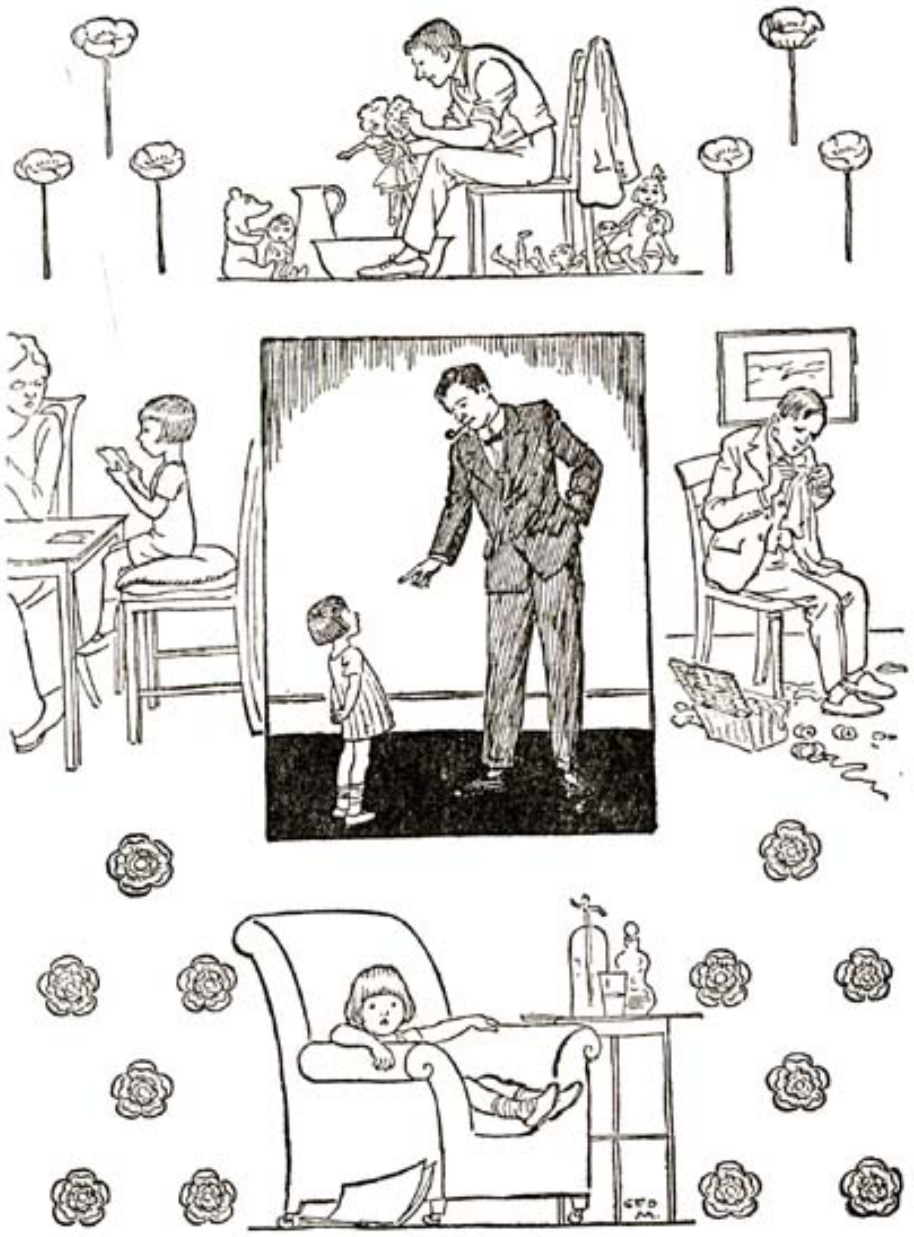
HENRY NEWBOLT

If buttercups were white and pink,
And roses green and blue,
Then you instead of me could think,
And I instead of you.

Then I could daily give your doll
Her early evening tub,
While you in easy-chairs could loll
At some or other Club.

Then I could spell p-i-g pidge,
And learn to sew like Nurse;
While you could take a hand at bridge,
And murmur "Zooks!" or worse.

Oh, it would be as fresh a sight
As ever yet was seen,
If buttercups were pink and white
And roses blue and green.



KITTEEN

BY

MARGARET KENNEDY

I sat beside the ingle-nook,
The fire was glowing;
The pot was bubbling on the hook,
The wind was blowing.
In the shadows of the room
Ghosts were hiding;
From the furthest, deepest gloom
They came gliding.
At the back of me I knew
Crowds were creeping.
Through the house the storm-wind blew,
Flames went leaping,
Awful shadows on the wall
Set me screaming.
Close at hand came Someone's call:
"Sure she's dreaming!

What have you seen?
Kitteen!
Tell us, what have you seen?"

In the brown bog by the lake
There are stacks of drying peat;
When by chance that way I take,
Past I run with flying feet;
For once when, wandering carelessly,
I came into that lonely place,
I watched a peat stack close to me
And saw it had a wrinkled face!
All old women sitting round,
Each one in a long brown cloak;
They gazed and gazed upon the ground
With eyes like stones, and never spoke.
Then I turned my back and fled
Up our hill, with stumbling feet;
In a doorway Someone said:
"She's as white as any sheet!
What did you see?
Kitteen machree!
Tell us, what did you see?"

Gilbert

CLEMENCE DANE

I am the aunt of Annabel. Annabel is coming next Friday to the birthday party she ought to have had a month ago; but she had measles instead. I am anxious for Annabel to enjoy herself. Whom shall I ask to meet her?

Annabel is five—a gracious-mannered five, with a smooth bobbed head of red hair, eyes like lilacs, and a generously curved mouth. She is a darling. She is also a devil. She never allows me or anyone else a quiet moment with her mother when she is in the room: indeed, she owns her parents and regards all visitors as her perquisites. She owns also, and can use with disastrous effect on my borders, a scooter and a tricycle. She can adjust the wireless set and listen in at in her pleasure to Bournemouth, Cardiff or London. She swears at the dog in broad Devon, and has her ideas about her frocks. But she cannot read or tie her own shoes or tell the time.

Annabel is coming to tea on Friday. How am I to keep her amused? Shall I invite Philip Collins, that hard-working child, proprietor of stickle-backs, my particular friend? Will there be anything left of Philip if I do—or of Annabel? Philip is seven. With only a year or so between them they ought to get on. And yet, how did I feel towards seven when I was five? Across the white magic-lantern circle of my memory a shadow flits, a leggy, olive-green shadow, with fur at its neck and wrists, and I recognise Gilbert, and pause.

Annabel is so much more sophisticated and so much more of a baby than we were ever allowed to be, that the Gilbert adventure could hardly happen to her. She would say she didn't like him and be done with it. And yet—suppose she didn't! Suppose she suffered him in silence like her aunt before her! I do want Annabel to enjoy herself.

"SHE OWNS THAT I CAN USE WITH DISASTROUS EFFECT ON MY BORDERS, A SCOOTER AND A TRICYCLE"

You must not think that there was any harm in Gilbert. He was, I see now, a nice, polite little boy. My Aunt Angela said so. He was as nice a boy, I daresay, as Philip, who is—perhaps—to make Annabel's acquaintance next Friday. But he was long and, as it was a fancy-dress ball, his mother had dressed him in

greenery-yallery tights, and a doublet with moleskin at the neck and wrists. Now, when you are no older than Annabel and own a live mole which you keep in the ring-dove's cage, you do not feel friendly to people who wear moleskin. (No, I don't know what happened to the ring-dove, though I remember that she lived for some time in the kitchen in a straw-coloured wicker-work cage, and was incessantly laying eggs that wouldn't hatch and croo-rooing over them in a lamentable voice which made the nursery feel that the whole bitter business was the nursery's fault.)

It is not too much to say that from the moment I set eyes upon Gilbert I felt for him that unreasoning sick dislike of which only a child is capable, and which it never attempts to explain. I never said a word to my Aunt Angela about Gilbert, though I noted him with a prophetic shudder as I followed her across the shining, slippery floor. Indeed, nobody could help noticing Gilbert. It was not only that he was so much longer than anybody else, so prominent among the Joan of Arcs and Pierrots and Geishas, but that he was such a pervasive dancer: he seemed to be behaving beautifully with everybody at once. There was a horrible fascination in his smiling efficiency: he wasn't shy like everyone else: he didn't mind what he did: and he did it well. He was a handsome boy too, for my Aunt Angela said so. Indeed, I can best fix him for you by recalling the fact that when I saw Lewis Waller come upon the stage as Robin Hood I instantly, and for the first time in fifteen years, remembered Gilbert.

Before I could pull on my white silk mittens, my aunt (I knew she would) had caught Gilbert and introduced him to me, and he wrote his name on my programme and his own, and his moleskin wrist—his mole must have been an older and oilier mole than mine—rubbed against my bare hand. In the frantic subsequent attempts to scrub off the feel, I spilled water down my new frock, my fancy-dress of yellow satin petals over a green satin

skirt, with three green satin leaves dangling from the neck; for I, in that hour, was a primrose.

But washing my hands and drying my frock only took up a dance and a half: Gilbert and his Berlin Polka were still to be faced.

I had an idea. I would anticipate Gilbert: I would have a partner of my own. I marked one down, a rosy, bewildered little girl in sparkles: a Snow-white—a Fairy-queen—what did I care? I gave her her orders; for she was only four. She was to look out for me when number seven began. She was to refuse to dance with anyone else. She was dancing the Berlin polka with me—did she understand?—with me: and if a green boy with moleskin on his wrists asked her where I was, well—there I wasn't! Did she quite understand?

I was still passionately explaining the situation when the music of number six struck up, and her partner, a Father Christmas smaller than herself, jogged her away. I can still see so clearly the bunchy little figure—we were not so particular about the cut of our clothes as is Annabel's generation—and the alarmed dark eyes and hot cheeks as she looked back at me over her winged shoulder. As for me, I had to put in the perilous time somehow. I hid.

I found a beautiful place to hide in, a room with cane chairs and palms, and one or two screened recesses with two chairs and a table in each. I sat me down in the only empty recess and listened to the music, and wondered whether Gilbert had begun to look for me yet. Soon a young lady with bare shoulders and a young gentleman with an eye-glass arrived, looked in, departed, and shortly returned again. It was quite evident that they wanted my refuge. I wasn't going to let them have it. I was terrified of them both, but I was still more terrified of Gilbert.

Said the young gentleman:

"What are you doing here?" and he called me "little girl!"

Said I, firmly, but I was on the edge of tears:

"I am waiting for my partner," and felt that I lied, for I was not exactly waiting for Gilbert.

"Oh, indeed!" said the young gentleman, and stared again, and whispered to the young lady with the white shoulders, and the

"HE STARED AT ME REPROACHFULLY"

young lady whispered back. You cannot think how miserable I felt. They went away at last; but they, and my lie—a lie was a lie in those days—had ruined my haven. I slipped out as the music stopped, and instantly the young gentleman and the young lady got up from two chairs under a palm and sat down behind my screen, while—oh horror!—Gilbert's green and questing length crossed and re-crossed the lighted swirling space

on the other side of the draped doorway. I knew—who better?—whom he sought. I backed into the dark corner formed by the wall and the other side of the screen, too much occupied with Gilbert's next move to attend to the murmurs on the other side of it. But the sitters-out were sensitive; or I, effacing myself as much as possible, must have pushed against the screen. Slowly, over the top, rose the head of the young gentleman. He stared down at me reproachfully and I, in a paralysis of embarrassment, stared up at him. You cannot think how tall the screen seemed, and how terrible the face of the young gentleman to the eyes of five. Nothing was said. How long he was prepared to stare at me I do not know, for his eye-glass was more than I could bear: at that moment even Gilbert was easier to face. I sidled back into the ballroom, worming my way as self-effacingly as possible in and out between mothers and empty chairs, till a familiar glitter caught my eye. It was my partner, my illegal partner, so soft, so rosy, so cosy, so blessedly harmless, so very much smaller than I. She was not pleased to see me (I realise now that I must have been as awful to her as Gilbert to me) but what did that matter? I grasped her hurriedly by a hand and a wing:

"One, two, three," I prompted: and we put our feet into the second position. But fate was looking after the little girl in sparkles, not after me.

"My dance, I think." Gilbert, cool, easy, adequate, even remembered to bow. "I've been looking for you everywhere!" he said and he put out moleskinny hands.

"I'm dancing with *her*," I muttered. It was my last throw. But at that a new voice interposed:

"Oh, Mary, you mustn't take the little girl away from her partner!" And the fairy queen, inexpressible relief in her eyes, pulled her hand out of mine and retired upon her mother.

I danced with Gilbert.

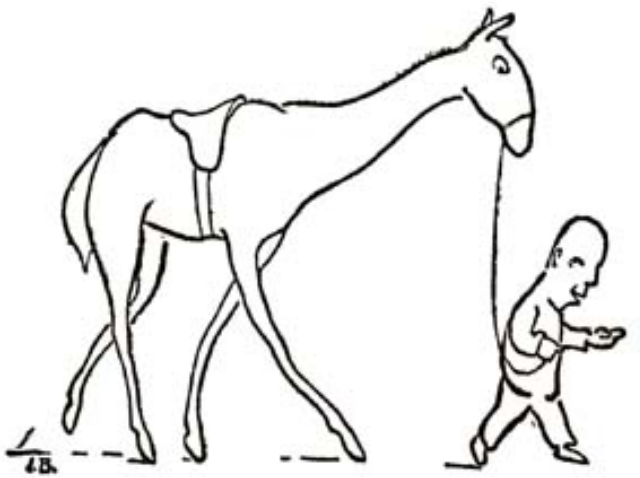
The last straw was hearing my Aunt Angela telling my mother, in the cab coming home, that it was pretty to see how the child had enjoyed herself.

Now I wonder how Annabel would have dealt with Gilbert? Her childhood is not my childhood. I read *Pickwick* at five, while Annabel is satisfied with *Teddy Tail:* that fancy-dress ball was my first party, while Annabel goes to dances twice a week. Annabel's emotions could never have been in the least like mine. And yet, five years old in the eighteen-nineties is nearer five years old in the nineteen-twenties than five years old will ever be to a contemporary aunt. If I ask my nice Philip Collins to tea—such a handsome boy!—such good manners!—how am I to be certain that I am not inflicting a Gilbert upon Annabel? On the other hand, Annabel might have liked Gilbert. He was a popular person that evening: and Annabel has never kept moles.

Annabel does not think me young. She asked me yesterday If I had ever spoken to Queen Elizabeth; but she likes to hear what I did in that Palæolithic age when I was little. I will tell her about Gilbert when I tuck her up to-night, and see what she says.

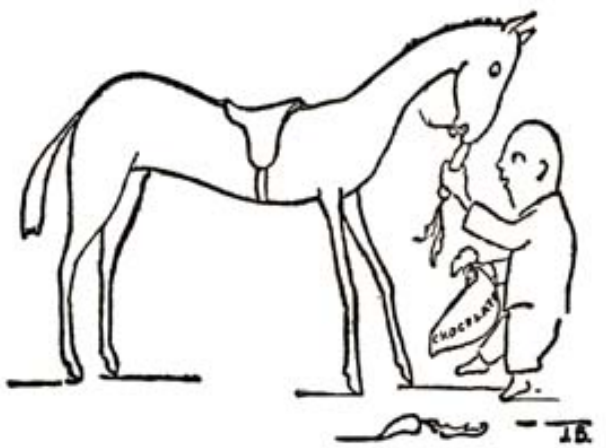
Jack and His Pony, Tom

H. Belloc

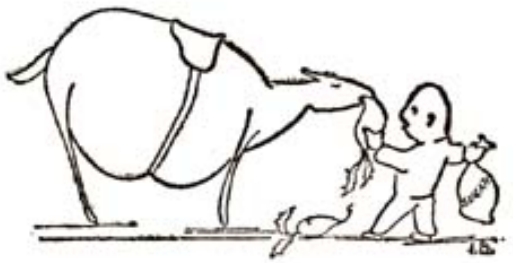


Jack had a little pony, Tom.
He frequently would take it from
The stable where it used to stand
And give it sugar with his hand.
He also gave it oats and hay
And carrots twenty times a day
And grass in basket-fuls and greens

And swedes and mangels: also beans;
And patent foods from various sources
And bread—which isn't good for horses—
And chocolate and apple-rings,
And lots and lots of other things
The most of which do not agree
With Polo Ponies such as he,



And all in such a quantity
As ruined his digestion wholly
And turned him from a Pono Poly
—I mean a Polo Pony—into
A case that clearly must be seen to,
Because he swelled and swelled and swelled.
Which, when the kindly boy beheld,
He gave it medicine by the pail
In malted milk, and nutmeg ale,
And yet it only swelled the more
Until its stomach touched the floor;



And then it heaved and groaned as well
And staggered, till at last it fell
And found it could not rise again.
Jack wept and prayed—but all in vain.
The pony died, and, as it died,
Kicked him severely in the side.

MORAL

Kindness to animals should be
Attuned to their brutality.

Tom and His Pony, Jack

H. BELLOC

Tom had a little pony, Jack:
He vaulted lightly on its back
And galloped off for miles and miles,
A-leaping hedges, gates and stiles,
And shouting "Yoicks!" and "Tally-Ho!"
And "Heads I win!" and "Tails below!"
And many another sporting phrase.
He rode like this for several days,
Until the pony, feeling tired,

Collapsed, looked heavenward and expired.
His father made a fearful row.
He said, "By Gum! You've done it now!
Here lies, a Carcase on the ground,
No less than five and twenty pound!
Indeed, the value of the beast
Would probably have much increased.
His teeth were false; and all were told
That he was only four years old.
Oh! Curse it all! I tell you plain
I'll never let you ride again."

MORAL

His father died when he was twenty,
And left three horses—which is plenty.

WALTER DE LA MARE

How such an odd and curious notion had ever come into Miss Rawlings's mind, not even Miss Rawlings herself could have said. When had it come? She could not answer even that question either. It had simply stolen in little by little like a beam of sunshine into a large room.

Not of course into an empty room, for Miss Rawlings had many things to think about. She was by far the most important person in the Parish, and everyone—from Archdeacon Tomlington and his two curates, Mr. Moffat and Mr. Timbs, down to little old Mrs. Ort the hump-backed charwoman who lived in the top attic of a cottage down by Clopbourne—or, as they called it, Clobburne—Bridge, everyone knew how *practical* she was.

But once that sunny beam had begun to steal into Miss Rawlings's mind and into her life, it had lightened up with its precious gold everything that was there. It was nevertheless a fantastic notion, simply because it could not possibly be true. How could Miss Rawlings ever have lost a little girl if there had never been any little girl to lose? Yet that exactly was Miss

Rawlings's idea. It had flitted into her imagination like a nimble, bright-feathered bird. And once it was really there, she never hesitated to talk about it; not at all.

"My little girl, you know," she would say with a little emphatic nod and a pleasant smile on her broad face. Or rather, "My little gal"—for she always pronounced the word as if it rhymed with Sal—the short for Sarah. This, too, was an odd thing; for Miss Rawlings had been brought up by her parents with the very best education, and seldom mispronounced even such words as Chloe or Psyche or epitome or misled. And so far as I know—which is not very far—and apart from shall and pal and Hal, there is not a single word of one syllable in our enormous English language that is pronounced like Sal; for Pall Mall, of course, is pronounced Pell Mell. Still, Miss Rawlings did talk about her little girl, and she called her, her little gal.

It never occurred to anybody in the Parish—not even to Mr. Timbs—to compare the Little Gal to a gay little bird or to a beam of sunshine. Mrs. Tomlington said indeed that it was merely a bee in Miss Rawlings's bonnet. But whether or not, partly because she delighted in bright colours, and partly because, in fashion or out, she had entirely her own taste in dress, there could not be a larger or brighter or flowerier bonnet for any bee to be *in*. Apart from puce silk and maroon velvet and heliotrope feathers and ribbons and pom-poms and suchlike, Miss Rawlings's bonnets invariably consisted of handsome spreading flowers—blue-red roses, purple pansies, mauve cineraria—a complete little garden for any bee's amusement. And this bee sang rather than buzzed in it the whole day long.

You might almost say it had made a new woman of her. Miss Rawlings had always been active and positive and good-humoured and kind. But now her spirits were so much more animated. She went bobbing and floating through the Parish like a balloon.

Her *interest* in everything seemed to have first been multiplied by nine, and then by nine again. And eighty-one times anything is a pretty large quantity. Beggars, gipsies, hawkers, crossing-sweepers, blind men positively smacked their lips when they saw Miss Rawlings come sailing down the street. Her heart was like the Atlantic, and they like row-boats on the deep—especially the blind men. As for her donations to the Parochial Funds, they were first doubled, then trebled, then quadrupled.

There was, first, for example, the Fund for giving all the little parish girls and boys not only a bun and an orange and a tree at Christmas and a picnic with Veal and Ham Pie and Ice Pudding in June, but a Jack-in-the-Green on May-day and a huge Guy on November the 5th, with Squibs and Roman Candles and Chinese Crackers and so on. There was not only the Fund for the Delight of Infants of Every Conceivable Description; there was also the Wooden-Legged Orphans' Fund. There was the Home for Manx and Tabby Cats; and the Garden by the River with the willows for Widowed Gentlewomen. There was the Threepenny-Bit-with-a-Hole-in-It Society; and the Organ Grinders' Sick Monkey and Blanket Fund, and there was the oak-beamed Supper Room in "The Three Wild Geese" for the use of Ancient Mariners—haggis and toad-in-the-hole, and plum duff and jam roley-poley. And there were many others. If Miss Rawlings had been born in another parish, it would have been a sad thing indeed for the cats and widows and orphans and organ monkeys in her own.

With such a power and quantity of money, of course, writing cheques was very much like just writing in birthday-books. Still you can give too much to any Fund; though very few people make the attempt. But Miss Rawlings was a practical woman. Besides, Miss Rawlings knew perfectly well that charity must at any rate *begin* at home, so all this time she was keeping what the

Ancient Mariners at the "Three Wild Geese" called a "weather eye" wide open for her lost Little Gal. But how, it may be asked, could she keep any kind of an eye open for a lost Little Gal, when she didn't know what the lost Little Gal was like? And the answer to that is that Miss Rawlings knew perfectly well.

She may not have known where the absurd notion came from, or when, or why; but she knew that. She knew what the Little Gal looked like as well as a mother thrush knows what an egg looks like; or Sir Christopher Wren knew what a cathedral looks like. But as with the Thrush and Sir Christopher, a good many little things had happened to Miss Rawlings first. And this quite apart from the old wooden doll she used to lug about when she was seven, called Quatta.

One morning, for example, Miss Rawlings had been out in her carriage and was thinking of nothing in particular, just day-dreaming, when not very far from the little stone bridge at Clobburne she happened to glance up at a window in the upper parts of a small old house. And at that window there seemed to show a face with dark bright eyes watching her. Just a glimpse. I say *seemed*, for when in the carriage Miss Rawlings rapidly twisted her head to get a better view, she discovered either that there had been nobody there at all, or that the somebody had swiftly drawn back, or that the bright dark eyes were just too close-together flaws in the diamond-shaped bits of glass. In the last case what Miss Rawlings had seen was mainly "out of her mind." But if so, it went back again and stayed there. It was excessively odd, indeed, how clear a remembrance that glimpse left behind it.

Then again, Miss Rawlings, like her great-aunt Felicia, had always enjoyed a weakness for taking naps in the train, the flowers and plumes and bows in her bonnet nodding the while above her head. The sound of the wheels on the iron lines was like a

lullaby; the fields trailing softly away beyond the window drowsed her eyes. Whether asleep or not, she would generally close her eyes and at least appear to be napping. And not once, or twice, but three separate times, owing to a screech of the whistle or a jolt of the train, she had suddenly opened them again to find herself staring out (rather like a large animal in a field) at a little girl sitting on the opposite seat, who, in turn, had already fixed *her* eyes on Miss Rawlings's countenance. In every case there had been a look of intense, patient interest on the little girl's face.

Perhaps Miss Rawlings's was a countenance that all little girls are apt to look at with extreme interest—especially when the owner of it is asleep in the train. It was a broad countenance with a small but powerful nose with a round tip. There was a good deal of fresh colour in the flat cheeks beneath the treacle-coloured eyes; and the hair stood out like a wig beneath the huge bonnet. Miss Rawlings, too, had a habit of folding her kid-gloved hands upon her lap as if she was an image. None the less, you could hardly call it only "a coincidence" that these little girls were so much alike, and so much like the face at the window. And so very much like the real lost Little Gal that had always, it seemed, been at the back of Miss Rawlings's mind.

Not that there had ever been any kind of a ghost in Miss Rawlings's family. Her family was far too practical for that; and her mansion was most richly furnished. All I mean is that each one of these little girls happened to have a rather narrow face, a brown pigtail, rather small dark brown bright eyes and narrow hands, and except for the one at the window, they wore round beaver hats and buttoned coats. No; there was no ghost *there*. What Miss Rawlings was after was an absolutely real Little Gal. And her name was Barbara Allan.

This sounds utterly absurd. But so it had come about. For a long time—having talked about her Little Gal again and again to

the Archdeacon and Mrs. Tomlington and Mr. Moffat and other ladies and gentlemen in the Parish, Miss Rawlings had had no name at all for her small friend. But one still summer evening, there being a faint red in the sky, while she was wandering gently about her immense drawing-room, she had happened to open a book lying on an "occasional" table. It was a book of poetry—crimson and gilt-edged, with a brass clasp—and on the very page under her nose she had read this line:

"Fell in love with Barbara Allan."

The words ran through her mind like wildfire. Barbara Allan—it was *the* name! Or how very like it! An echo? Certainly some words and names *are* echoes of one another—sisters or brothers once removed, so to speak. Tomlington and Pocklingham, for example; or quince and shrimp; or angelica and cyclamen. All I mean is that the very instant Miss Rawlings saw that printed "Barbara Allan," it ran through her heart like an old tune in a nursery. It *was* her Little Gal, or ever so near it—as near, that is, as any name can be to a thing, viz., crocus, or comfit, or shuttlecock, or mistletoe, or pantry.

Now, if Miss Rawlings had been of royal blood and had lived in a fairy-tale; if, that is, she had been a Queen in Grimm—it would have been a quite ordinary thing that she should be seeking a little lost Princess, or badly in need of one. But except that her paternal grandfather was a Sir Samuel Rawlings, she was but very remotely connected with royalty. Still, if you think about it, seeing that once upon a time there were only marvellous Adam and beautiful Eve in the Garden, that is in the whole wide world, and seeing that all of Us as well as all of the earth's Kings and Queens must have descended from them, *therefore* all of Us must have descended from Kings and Queens. So too with Miss Rawlings. But—unlike Mrs. Tomlington—she had not come down by the grand staircase.

Since then Miss Rawlings did not live in a fairy-tale nor in Grimm, but was a very real person in a very real Parish, her friends and acquaintances were all inclined in private to agree with Mrs. Tomlington that her Little Gal was nothing but a bee in her bonnet. And that the longer it stayed there the louder it buzzed. Indeed, Miss Rawlings almost began to think of nothing else. She became absent-minded, quite forgetting her soup and fish and chicken and French roll when she sat at dinner. She left on the gas. She signed cheques for the Funds without looking back at the counterfoils to see what she had last subscribed. She gave brand-new mantles and dolmens away to the Rummagers; ordered coals from her fishmonger's; rode third class with a first class ticket; addressed a postcard to Mrs. Tomfoolington—almost every kind of absent-minded thing you can imagine.

And now she was always searching: even in the house sometimes; even in the kitchen quarters. And her plump country maids would gladly help too. "No, m'm, she ain't here." "No, m'm, we ain't a-seed her yet." "Lor', yes'm, the rooms be ready."

Whenever Miss Rawlings rose from her chair, she would at once peer sharply out of the window to see if any small creature were passing in the street beyond the drive. When she went a-walking, she was frequently all but run over by cabs and vans and phaetons and gigs, because she was looking the other way after a vanishing pigtail. Not a picture-shop, not a photographer's could she pass without examining every single face exhibited in the window. And she never met a friend, or the friend of a friend, or conversed with a stranger without, sure enough, beginning to talk about Young Things. Puppies or kittens or lambs, perhaps, first, and then gradually on to little boys. And then, with a sudden whisk of her bonnet, to Little Girls.

Long, long ago now she had learnt by heart the whole of "Barbara Allan":

". . . She had not gane a mile but twa,
When she heard the dead-bell ringing,
And every jow that the dead-bell gied,
It cryed, *Woe to Barbara Allan!*

'O mother, mother, make my bed!
O make it saft and narrow!
Since my love died for me to-day,
I'll die for him to-morrow.'"

Oh dear, how sad it was; and you never knew! Could it be, could it be, she cried one day to herself, that the dead, lovely Barbara Allan of the poem had got by some means muddled up in Time, and was in actual fact *her* Little Gal? Could it be that the maiden-name of the wife of Miss Allan's father had been Rawlings?

Miss Rawlings was far too sensible merely to wonder about things. She at once enquired of Mr. Moffat (who had been once engaged to her dearest friend, Miss Simon, now no more) whether he knew anything about Barbara Allan's family. "The family, Felicia?" Mr. Moffat had replied, his bristling eyebrows high in his head. And when, after a visit to the British Museum, Mr. Moffat returned with only two or three pages of foolscap closely written over with full particulars of the ballad and with "biographical details" of Bishop Percy and of Allan Ramsay and of Oliver Goldsmith and of the gentleman who had found the oldest manuscript copy of it in Glamis Castle, or some such ancient edifice, and of how enchantingly Samuel Pepys's friend, Mrs. Knipp, used to sing him the air—but nothing else: Miss Rawlings very reluctantly gave up all certainty of this. "It still might be my Little Gal's family," she said, "and on the other hand it might not." And she continued to say over to herself with infinite sorrow in her deep rich voice, that tragic stanza:

She had not gane a mile but twa,
When she heard the dead-bell ringing,
And every jow that the dead-bell gied,
It cryed, *Woe to Barbara Allan!*

And "Oh no! not Woe," she would say in her heart.

Soon after this, Miss Rawlings fell ill. A day or two before she took to her bed, she had been walking along Laburnum Avenue, and had happened to see the pupils of the Miss Miffinses' Young Ladies' Seminary taking the air. Now, the last two and smallest of these pupils—of the Crocodile, as rude little boys call it—were walking arm in arm with the nice English mistress, chattering away like birds in a bush. Both of them were rather narrow little creatures, both wore beaver hats beneath which dangled brown pigtails. It was yet one more astonishing moment, and Miss Rawlings had almost broken into a run—as much of a run, that is, as being of so stout and ample a presence she was capable of—in order to get a glimpse of their faces.

But, alas! and alack! the wrought-iron gates of the school were just round the corner of Laburnum Avenue, and the whole Crocodile had completely disappeared into the great stone porch beyond by the time she had come in sight of the two Monkey-Puzzles on the lawn, and the brass curtain bands to the windows.

Miss Rawlings stood and gazed at these—for the moment completely forgetting polite manners. The hurry and excitement had made her hot and breathless: and the wind was in the east. It dispirited her, and instead of ringing the bell and asking for the Miss Miffinses, she had returned home and had at once written an invitation to the whole school to come to tea the following Sunday afternoon. In a moment of absent-mindedness, however, she left the note on her little rose-wood secretaire beside the silver inkstand that had belonged to Sir Samuel. And two days

afterwards—on the Friday, that is, the month being February—she had been seized with Bronchitis.

It was a rather more severe attack than was usual for Miss Rawlings, even in foggy November, and it made Miss Rawlings's family physician a little anxious. There was no immediate danger, he explained to Nurse Murphy; still care is care. And Miss Rawlings, being so rich and so important to the Parish, he at once decided to invite an eminent Consultant to visit his patient—a Sir James Jolliboy Geoghehan who lived in Harley Street and knew more about Bronchitis (Harley Street being also in a foggy parish) than any other medical man in Europe or in the United States of America (which are not usually foggy places).

Fortunately, Sir James took quite as bright and sanguine a view of his patient as did Miss Rawlings's family physician. There Miss Rawlings lay, propped up against her beautiful down pillows with the frills all round, and a fine large pale blue-ribboned bed cap stood up on her large head. She was breathing pretty fast, and her temperature, according to both the gentlemen's thermometers, was 102.6.

A large copper kettle was ejecting clouds of steam from the vast cheerful fire in the vast brass and steel grate, with the Cupids in the chimneypiece. There were medicine bottles on the little table and not only Nurse Murphy stood grave but brave on the other side of the bed, but, even still more Irish Nurse O'Brien also. Now, the more solemn *she* looked the more her face appeared to be creased up in a gentle grin.

Miss Rawlings panted as she looked at them all. Her eye was a little absent, but she too was smiling. For if there was one thing Miss Rawlings was certain to do, it was to be cheerful when most other people would be inclined to be depressed. As she knew she was ill she felt bound to be smiling. She even continued to smile when Sir James murmured, "*And* the tongue?" And

she assured Sir James that though it was exceedingly kind of him to call it wasn't in the least necessary. "I frequently have bronchitis," she explained, "but I never die." Which sounded a little like "rambling."

When Sir James and the family physician had gone downstairs and were closeted together in the gilded Library, Sir James at once asked this question: "What, my dear sir, was our excellent patient remarking about a Miss Barbara Allan? Has she a relative of the name?"

At this Miss Rawlings's family physician looked a little confused. "No, no; oh dear no," he exclaimed. "It's merely a little fancy, a caprice. Miss Rawlings has a notion there is a little girl belonging to her somewhere—probably of that name, you know. Quite harmless. An aberration. In fact, I indulge it; I indulge it. Miss Rawlings is a most able, sagacious, energetic, philanthropic, practical, generous, and—and—humorous lady. The fancy, you see, has somehow attached itself to the *name* Barbara Allan—a heroine, I believe, in one of Sir Walter Scott's admirable fictions. Only that. Nothing more."

Sir James, a tall man, peered down at Miss Rawlings's family physician over his gold pince-nez. "I once had a patient, my dear Dr. Sheppard," he replied solemnly in a voice a good deal deeper but not so rich as Miss Rawlings's, "who had the amiable notion that she was the Queen of Sheba and that I was King Solomon. A *most* practical woman. She left me three hundred guineas in her will, for a mourning ring." He thereupon explained (in words that his patient could not possibly have understood, but that Dr. Sheppard understood perfectly), that Miss Rawlings was in no immediate danger and that she was indeed quite a comfortable little distance from Death's Door. Still, bronchitis *is* bronchitis; so let the dear lady be humoured as much as possible. "Let her have the very best nurses, excellent creatures; and all

the comforts." He smiled as he said these words, as if Dr. Sheppard was a long-lost brother. And he entirely approved not only of the nice sago puddings, the grapes, the de-licious beef-juice (with toast *or* a rusk), the barley water and the physic, but of as many Barbara Allans as Miss Rawlings could possibly desire. And all that he said sounded so much like the chorus of "Yeo, ho, ho," or "Away to Rio," or "The Anchor's Weighed," that one almost expected Dr. Sheppard to join in.

Both gentlemen then took their leave, and Dr. Sheppard having escorted Sir James to his brougham (for this was before the days of machine carriages), the two nurses retired from the window and Miss Rawlings sank into a profound nap.

In a few days Miss Rawlings was much, much, much better. Her temperature was 97.4. Her breathing no more than twenty-four or five to the minute—at most. The flush had left her cheeks, and she had finished three whole bottles of medicine. She devoured a slice from the breast of a chicken and said she enjoyed her sago pudding. The nurses *were* pleased.

Now, naturally, of course, Miss Rawlings's illness increased her anxiety to find Barbara Allan as quickly as ever she could. After all, you see, we all of us have only a certain number of years to live, and a year lasts only twelve calendar months, and the shortest month is only twenty-eight days (excluding Leap Year). So if you want to do anything badly it is better to begin at once, and go straight on.

The very first day she was out in Mr. Dubbins's invalid chair she met her dear friend Mr. Moffat in Combermere Grove, and he stood conversing with her for a while under the boughs of almost as wide a spreading chestnut-tree as the village blacksmith's in the poem. Mr. Moffat always looked as if he ought to have the comfort of a sleek, bushy beard. If he had, it is quite certain it would have wagged a good deal as he listened to Miss Rawlings.

"What I am about to do, my dear Mr. Moffat, is advertise," she cried, and in such a powerful voice that the lowest fronds of the leafing chestnut-tree over her head slightly trembled as they hung a little listlessly on their stalks in the spring sunshine.

"Advertise, my dear Felicia?" cried Mr. Moffat. "And what for?"

"Why, my dear old friend," replied Miss Rawlings, "for Barbara Allan to be sure."

Mr. Moffat blinked very rapidly, and the invisible beard wagged more than ever. And he looked hard at Miss Rawlings's immense bonnet as if he actually expected to see that busy bee; as if he even feared it might be a Queen Bee and would produce a complete hive.

But after bidding him good-bye with yet another wag of the bonnet and a "Yes, thank you, Dubbins," Miss Rawlings was as good as her word. She always was. Three days afterwards there appeared in the *Times*, and in the *Morning Post*, and in the *Daily Telegraph*, and five days later, in the *Spectator*, the following:

> WANTED as soon as possible, by a lady who has lost her as long as she can remember, a little girl of the name (probably) of Barbara Allan, or of a name that *sounds* like Barbara Allan. The little girl is about ten years old. She has a rather three-cornered shaped face, with narrow cheek-bones, and bright brown eyes. She is slim, with long fingers, and wears a pigtail and probably a round beaver hat. She shall have an *exceedingly* happy home and Every Comfort, and her friends (or relatives) will be amply rewarded for all the care and kindness they have bestowed upon her, for the first nine years or more of her life.

You should have seen Miss Rawlings reading that advertisement over and over. Her *Times* that morning had a perfume as of the spices of Ambrosia. But even Miss Rawlings could not have hoped that her advertisement would be so rapidly and spontaneously and abundantly answered. The whole day of every day of the following week her beautiful wrought-iron gates were opening and shutting and admitting all kinds and sorts and shapes and sizes of little girls with brown eyes, long fingers, pigtails and beaver hats, *about* ten years of age. And usually an Aunt or a Step-mother or the Matron of an Orphanage or a Female Friend accompanied each candidate.

There were three genuine Barbara Allans. But one had reddish hair and freckles; the second, curly flaxen hair that refused to keep to the pigtail-ribbon into which it had been tied; and the third, though her hair was brown, had grey speckled eyes, and looked to be at least eleven. Apart from these three, there were numbers and numbers of little girls whose Christian name was Barbara, but whose surname was Allison or Angus or Anson or Mallings or Bulling or Dalling or Spalding or Bellingham or Allingham, and so on and so forth. Then there were Marjories and Marcias and Margarets, Norahs and Doras, and Rhodas and Marthas, all of the name of Allen, or Allan or Alleyne or Alyn, and so on. And there was one little saffron-haired creature who came with a very large Matron, and whose name was Dulcibella Dobbs.

Miss Rawlings, with her broad bright face and bright little eyes, smiled at them all from her chair, questioned their Aunts and their Step-mothers, and their Female Friends, and coveted every single one of them, including Dulcibella Dobbs. But you *must* draw the line somewhere, as Euclid said to his little Greek pupils when he sat by the sparkling waves of the Ægean Sea and drew triangles in the sand. And Miss Rawlings felt in her heart

that it was kinder and wiser and more prudent and proper to keep strictly to those little girls with the three-cornered faces, high cheek-bones, "really" bright brown eyes and with truly appropriate pigtails. With these she fell in love again and again and again.

There was no doubt in the world that she had an exceedingly motherly heart, but very few mothers could so nicely afford to *give it rein*. Indeed, Miss Rawlings would have drawn the line nowhere, I am afraid, if it had not been for the fact that she had only ten thousand pounds or so a year.

There were tears in her eyes when she bade the others goodbye. And to everyone she gave not one bun, not one orange, but a *bag* of oranges and a *bag* of buns. And not merely a bag of ordinary denia oranges and ordinary currant buns, but a bag of Jaffas and a bag of Bath. And she thanked their Guardianesses for having come such a long way, and would they be offended if she paid the fare? Only one was offended, but then her fare had cost only 3*d*.—2*d*. for herself, and 1*d*. (half price) for the little Peggoty Spalding she brought with her. And Miss Rawlings paid *her* sixpence.

She kept thirty little ten-year-olds altogether, and you never saw so many young fortunate smiling pigtailed creatures so much alike. And Miss Rawlings, having been so successful, withdrew her advertisements from the *Times* and the *Morning Post* and the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Spectator*, and she bought a most beautiful Tudor house called Trafford House, with one or two wings to it that had been added in the days of Good Queen Anne, and William and Mary, which stood in entirely its own grounds not ten miles from the Parish boundary. The forest trees in its park were so fine—cedars, sweet chestnuts, and ash and beech and oak—that you could only get a glimpse of its chimneys from the entrance to the drive.

Things *are* often curious in this world, and coincidences are almost as common as centipedes. So Miss Rawlings was more happy than surprised when, on looking over this mansion, she counted (and to make sure counted again) exactly thirty little bedrooms, with some larger ones over for a matron, a nurse, some parlourmaids, some housemaids, some tweeny-maids and a boy to clean the button boots and shoes. When her legal adviser explained to her that this establishment, what with the little chests-of-drawers, basins and ewers, brass candlesticks, oval looking-glasses, mahogany beds, three-legged stools, dimity curtains, woolly rugs, not to speak of chiffoniers, what-nots, hot-water bottles, soup ladles, and so on and so forth; not to mention a uniform with brass buttons for the man with whiskers at the park gate, would cost her at least six thousand a year, that bee in Miss Rawlings's bonnet buzzed as if indeed it *was* a whole hive gone a-swarming.

"Well, now, my dear Mr. Wilkinson," she said, "I made a little estimate myself, being a *business* woman, and it came to £6,004 10*s*. 0*d*. How reasonable! I shall be over four pounds in pocket."

So, in a few weeks everything was ready; new paint, new gravel on the paths, geraniums in the flower-beds, quilts as neat as daisies on a lawn on the mahogany beds, and the thirty Barbara Allans sitting fifteen a side at the immensely long oak table (where once in Henry VIII's time monks had eaten their fish on Fridays), the matron with the corkscrew curls at the top and the chief nurse in her starched cap at the bottom. And Miss Rawlings, seated in the South bow-window in an old oak chair with her ebony and ivory stick and her purple bonnet, smiling at her Barbara Allans as if she had mistaken Trafford House for the Garden of Eden.

And I must say every single pigtail of the complete thirty bobbed as merrily as roses in June over that first Grand Tea—

blackberry jelly, strawberry jam, home-made bread, plum cake, the best beef-dripping for those who had not a sweet or a milk tooth, Sally Lunns, heather honey, maids-of-honour, and an enormous confection of marchpane, with cupids and comfits and silver bells and thirty little candles standing up in the midst of the table like St. Paul's Cathedral on the top of Ludgate Hill in the great city of London. It was a lucky thing for the Thirty's insides that Grand Teas are not every-day teas.

And so, when all the thirty Pigtails had sung a Latin grace put out of English by Mr. Moffat and set to a tune composed by a beloved uncle of Miss Rawlings, who also was now no more, the Grand Tea came to an end. Whereupon the Thirty (looking themselves like yet another Crocodile with very fat joints) came

"THAT FIRST GRAND TEA"

and said good-night to Miss Rawlings, though some of them could scarcely speak. And as Miss Rawlings knew that not *all* little girls like being kissed by comparative strangers, she just shook hands with each, and smiled at them as if her motherly heart would almost break. And Dr. Sheppard was Medical Adviser to the thirty little Pigtailers, and Mr. Moffat came every other Sunday to hear their catechisms.

And this was the order of the day with the Pigtails in their home. At half-past seven in Summer, and at nine in Winter, the boy in buttons rang an immense bell, its clapper tied round with a swab of cotton-wool, to prevent it from clanging too sonorously. This great quiet bell was not only to waken from their last sweet dreams the slumbering Pigtails in their little beds, but to tell them they had yet another half-hour between the blankets before they had to get up. Then, hair-brushes, tooth-brushes, nail-brushes, as usual. Then, "When morning gilds the sky," and breakfast in the wide white room with the primrose curtains looking out into the garden. And if any Pigtail happened to have been not quite so good as usual on the previous day, she was allowed—if she asked for it—to have a large plateful of porridge, with or without salt, for a punishment. No less than ninety-nine such platefuls were served out in the first year—the Pigtails were so high-spirited. Still, it can be imagined what a thirty-fold sigh of relief went up when breakfast on December 31st was over and there hadn't been a hundredth.

From nine *a.m.* to twelve *p.m.* the Pigtails were one and all exceedingly busy. Having made their beds they ran out into the garden and woods: some to bathe in the stream, some to listen to the birds, some to talk and some to sing; some to paint and some to play, and some to read and some to dance, and some just to sit; and some, high up in a beech-tree, to learn poems, to make up poems and even to read each other's. It all depended on the

weather. The sun shone, the rooks cawed, the green silken leaves whispered; and Miss Rawlings would stand looking up at them in their venturous perch as fondly as a cat at its kittens. There was not at last a flower or a tree or an insect or a star in those parts—or a bird or a little beast or a fish or a toadstool or a moss or a pebble that the little Pigtails did not know by heart. And the more they knew them the more closely they looked at them, and the more closely they looked at them the more they loved them and the more they knew them—round and round and round and round.

From twelve to one there were "Lessons"; then dinner, and tongues like jackdaws raiding a pantry for silver spoons. In the afternoon those who went for a walk towards the stranger parts, went for a walk. Some stayed at home in a little parlour

"HIGH UP IN A BEECH-TREE TO LEARN POEMS"

and sang in chorus together like a charm of wild birds. Some did their mending and darning, their hemming and feather-stitching, and some did sums. Some played on the fiddle, and some looked after their bullfinches and bunnies and bees and guinea-pigs and ducks. Then there were the hens and the doves and the calves and the pigs to feed, and the tiny motherless lambs, too (when lambs there were) with bottles of milk. And sometimes of an afternoon Miss Rawlings would come in and sit at a window just watching her Pigtails, or would read them a story. And Dr. Sheppard asseverated not once, but three times over, that if she went on bringing them sweetmeats and candies and lollipops and suckets to such an *extent*, not a single sound white ivory tooth of their nine hundred or so would be left in the Pigtails' heads. So Miss Rawlings kept to Sundays.

At five was tea-time: jam on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; jelly on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays; and both on Sundays. From six to seven there were "Lessons," and when the little Pigtails were really tired, which was always before nine, they just slipped off to bed. Some of them had munched their supper biscuits and were snug in bed indeed even before the rest had sung the evening hymn. And the evening hymn was always "Eternal Father"—for being all of them so extremely happy they could not but be "in peril on the deep." For happiness in this world may fly away like birds in corn, or butterflies before rain. And on Sundays they sang "Lead, kindly light" too, because Miss Rawlings's mother had once been blessed by the great and blessed Cardinal Newman. And one Pigtail played the accompaniment on her fiddle, and one on the sweet-tongued viola, and one on the harpsichord; for since Miss Rawlings had read "Barbara Allan" she had given up pianofortes. And then, sleepy and merry and chattering, they all trooped up to bed.

So this was their Day. And all night, unseen, the stars shone

in their splendour above the roof of Trafford House, or the white-faced moon looked down upon the sleeping garden and the doves and the pigs and the lambs and the flowers. And at times there was a wind in the sky among the clouds; and at times frost in the dark hours settled like meal wheresoever its cold brightness might find a lodging. And when the little Pigtails awoke, there would be marvellous cold fronds and flowerets on their window-panes, and even sometimes a thin crankling slat of ice in their water-jugs. On which keen winter mornings you could hear their teeth chattering like monkeys cracking nuts. And so time went on.

On the very next June 1, there was a prodigious Garden Party at Trafford House, with punts on the lake and refreshments and lemonade in a tent in the park, and all the Guardianesses and Aunts and Stepmothers and Matrons and Female Friends were invited to come and see Miss Rawlings's little Pigtails. And some brought their sisters, and some their nieces and nephews. There were Merry-go-Rounds, Aunt Sallies, Frisk-and-Come-Easies, a Punch and Judy Show, a Fat Man, a Fortune-Teller, and three marvellous acrobats from Hong Kong. And there were quantities of things to eat and lots to see, and Kiss-in-the-Ring, and all broke up after fireworks and "God Save the Queen" at half-past nine.

The house, as I keep on saying, was called Trafford House, but the *Home* was called "The Home of all the little Barbara Allans and such like, with Brown Eyes, Narrow Cheekbones, Beaver Hats, and Pigtails, Ltd." And it was "limited" because there could be only thirty of them, and time is not Eternity.

And now there were only three things that prevented Miss Rawlings from being too intensely happy to go on being alive; and these three were as follows: (*a*) She wanted to live always at the House—but how could the Parish get on without her?

(*b*) What was she going to do when the Pigtailers became 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, etc., and grown-up? And (*c*) How could she ever possibly part with any of them or get any more?

For, you see, Miss Rawlings's first-of-all Barbara Allan was aged 10, and had somehow managed to stay there. But because, I suppose, things often go right in this world when we are not particularly noticing them, and don't know how, all these difficulties simply melted away at last like butter in the sun.

In the first place, Miss Rawlings did at last (in 1888, to be exact, one year after Queen Victoria's first Jubilee), did, I say, at last go to live at the Home of all the little Barbara Allans and such like with Brown Eyes, Beaver Hats, and Pigtails, Ltd. She was called The Matron's Friend, so as not to undermine the discipline. When her Parish wanted her, which was pretty often, the Parish (thirty or forty strong) came to see her in her little parlour overlooking the pond with the punts and the water-lilies.

Next, though how, who can say, the little Pigtails somehow did not grow up, even though they must have grown older. Something queer happened to their Time. It cannot have been what just the clocks said. If there wasn't more of it, there was infinitely more *in* it. It was like air and dew and sunbeams and the South Wind to them all. You simply could not tell what next. And, apart from all that wonderful learning, apart even from the jam and jelly and the Roast Beef of Old England, they went on being just the right height and the right heart for ten. Their brown eyes never lost their light and sparkle. No wrinkles ever came in their three-cornered faces with the high cheek-bones; and not a single grey or silver hair into their neat little pigtails that could at any rate be seen.

Next, therefore, Miss Rawlings never had to part with any of them or to search or advertise for any more.

Yet another peculiar thing was that Miss Rawlings grew more

PIGTAILS, LTD.

"There were quantities of things to eat, and lots to see, and Kiss-in-the-Ring."

Drawn for "The Flying Carpet"
by Susan Pearse

and more like a Pigtail herself. She grew younger. She laughed like a school-girl. Her face became a little narrower, even the cheekbones seemed not to be so wide. As for her bonnets, as time "went on," they grew up instead of broadwise. And when she sat in Church with the Thirty, in the third pew down from Mrs. Tomlington's, you might almost have supposed she herself was a widish pigtail, just a little bit dressed up.

It is true that in the very secretest corner of her heart of hearts she was still looking for the one and only absolute little Barbara Allan of her life-long day-dream; but that is how things go. And the thought of it brought only a scarcely perceptible grave glance of hope and enquiry into her round brown eyes. But underneath—oh dear me, yes—she was almost too happy and ordinary and good-natured and homely a Miss Rawlings to be telling this story about at all.

We all die at last—just journey on—and so did Miss Rawlings. And so did the whole of the Thirty, and the matron, and the chief nurse, and Mr. Moffat, and Dr. Sheppard, and the Man with whiskers at the park gates, *and* the Boy who cleaned the button-boots; parlour-maids, tweeny-maids, Mrs. Tomlington and all.

And if you would like to see the Old House and the little graves, you take the first turning on the right as you leave the Parish Church on your left, and walk on until you come to a gate-post beyond the mile-stone. A path crossing the fields—sometimes of wheat, sometimes of turnips, sometimes of barley or oats or swedes—brings you to a farm in the hollow with a duck-pond, guinea-fowl roosting in the pines at evening, and a lovely old thatched barn where the fantailed doves croon in the sunshine. You then cross the yard and come to a lane beside a wood of thorn and hazel. This bears a little East, and presently after ascending the hill beyond the haystack you will see—if it is still

there—The Home of all the little Barbara Allans and such like with Brown Eyes, Beaver Hats and Pigtails, Ltd.

And not very far away is a little smooth-mown patch of turf with a beautiful thatched wall round it, which Mr. Moffat consecrated himself. And there, side by side, sleep the Little Thirty, with their pigtails beside their narrow bones. And there lie the tweeny-maids, the parlour-maids, the Man with whiskers at the park gate, and the Boy who cleaned the button-boots. And there Miss Rawlings, too. And when the last trump sounds, up they will get as happy as wood-larks, and as sweet and fresh as morning mushrooms. But if you want to hear any more about *that*, please turn to the Poems of Mr. William Blake.

(*From Lady Trenchard's Visitor's Book*)

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

What is it makes the Perfect Host?
Not wine and coffee, eggs and toast,
For these you can get just as well
In any dreary good hotel;
Not resolute attempts to please,
For money will procure you these.
The Perfect Host thinks vastly less
Of comfort than of happiness.
He's happy; and the overflow
Belongs to those who come and go.
Within his house you'll hear no quarrels
And very little talk of morals,
He does not lead a perfect life,
He sometimes has a perfect wife.
But this of all his points is best—
He does not want a perfect guest;
And even when you go too far
He's friendly with you as you are.

The Spark

A. PEMBURY

The daylight was fading, and shadowy gloom
Was creeping and crawling all over the room,
When out of the fire, like a star in the dark,
There leapt to the fender a bright little spark.

"Ha, ha, little children!" it chuckled with glee,
"I've something to tell you, so listen to me!
This morning, Tom Dull, whom I never admire,
Was sitting in front of this very same fire;
And, as it burned dimly, was heard to remark:
'Oh, Mary! There's nothing in here but a spark!'

"The spark was myself, and I thought, Well-a-day!
It's hard to be judged in that impudent way.
But stuck to my labours, and shortly, you know,
Had warmed up the coals to a beautiful glow.

"I called from their slumbers, the fairies of flame,
And out on the carpet they merrily came,
And up all the curtains, a marvel to view,
They climbed as no others are able to do.

"They peeped in the corners where shadows lay hid,
And chuckled: 'We've found you! Come out!' and
they did.
Thus, darting about in the liveliest play,
They caught all the shadows and drove them away.

"I'm certain they laughed, though you think it absurd;
For never a sound of that laughter was heard.
Yet where is the wonder, for who will dispute
That hearts often laugh when the lips are quite mute?

"That's all. But in parting, oh, take it from me
That sparks of endeavour, though tiny to see,
May quickly grow stronger and end, as you guess,
In lighting the beautiful fire of success.
My task is accomplished. Good-bye!" said the spark—
And, giving one flash, he went out in the dark.

Theophania

ADELAIDE PHILLPOTTS

Peter-Wise was a clever young peasant who lived in a little village that looked like a dimple in the hillside. He owned fifty mooing cows, one hundred baaing sheep, forty grunting pigs, two hundred clacking fowls—and a bellowing bull. And he prophesied that in ten years' time he would have doubled these numbers. But with all this wealth, Peter-Wise lacked the most important creature of all—a wife. Without a wife, what is the use of fifty cows, one hundred sheep, forty pigs, two hundred fowls—and a bull?

Now Peter-Wise declared that he would not marry a maiden who was less than seventeen or more than twenty-two years old, and in the village there were only six girls between these ages who were not already betrothed or wed. Of these six, therefore—all of whom, being brought up on cream and honey and wheaten bread and saffron cake and wild strawberries, were bonny and plump and fair to see—Peter-Wise decided to choose the cleverest, who, nevertheless, must be just the least bit less clever than he was. So, to discover which was the cleverest, for, busy man that he was with his cows and his sheep and his pigs and his fowls—and his bull, he had not the time to woo each separately, he resolved to set them three tasks: one to try their fingers; one to try their brains; one to try their imaginations; and to marry her who succeeded best in the three.

So Peter-Wise summoned Mary and Sally and Polly and Minnie and Lucy, and Theophania, called Tiffany for short—these were the names of the girls—and said to them:

"Children, I will marry whichever of you can perform to the best advantage these three tasks: first, to darn a hole in the heel of a sock; secondly, to open, without touching the keyhole, the

"I WILL MARRY WHICHEVER OF YOU CAN PERFORM THREE TASKS"

big barn door which is always locked; thirdly, to catch the moon and put it into a wash-tub."

Mary and Sally and Polly and Minnie and Lucy said:

"Oh, the sock is easy enough, but the door and the moon——"

Theophania, called Tiffany for short, said: "The door and the moon should be easy enough, but the sock——"

The three trials were to take place in the morning, afternoon and evening respectively. So in the morning the six maidens assembled in Peter-Wise's parlour—Mary and Sally and Polly and Minnie and Lucy in their best flowered-prints—Tiffany in a green smock; Tiffany had brown eyes, but the eyes of the others were five different shades of blue: speedwell, cornflower, lupin, forget-me-not, and chicory.

Peter-Wise gave them each a sock, out of which he had cut the heel, and left them for an hour to darn the hole. When he came back the six socks were lying on the table in a heap, finished. He examined them carefully. Then he said:

"Five of these socks are so perfectly darned that not one exceeds another in excellence. The sixth, however, is very badly done—a mere cobble. Come forward in turn, and let her who darned *this* sock claim it."

Mary tripped forward, looked at the sock, turned up her nose a little and shook her pretty head. "Not mine," said she. Then came Sally and Polly and Minnie and Lucy, also turning up their noses a little and shaking their pretty heads and saying: "Not mine," "Not mine," "Not mine," "Not mine." Lastly, with a twinkle in her eye, came Theophania, called Tiffany for short.

"Mine," she said. "I never, never shall be able to darn."

"The first task is over," announced Peter-Wise. "This afternoon meet me outside the big barn door which is always locked, at three o'clock."

And away trotted Mary and Sally and Polly and Minnie and Lucy and Tiffany.

At three o'clock they met outside the big barn door, wearing pink and yellow and blue and white and green sunbonnets, and

fluttering together like butterflies, except Tiffany, who did not wear a bonnet at all, and she stood by herself, thinking.

Peter-Wise said:

"This door, as you know, is always kept locked. Here is the key. Now, let me see which of you can open it without touching the keyhole, for I assure you it can quite easily be done."

"How can we open a locked door without a key?" said Mary and Sally and Polly and Minnie and Lucy in dismay, and each thought—"It is useless trying the handle—besides, I should look so foolish, and the others would jeer."

But Tiffany—who always thought her own thoughts, not other people's—thought something quite different.

"We give it up," sorrowfully said Mary and Sally and Polly and Minnie and Lucy.

"And you?" asked Peter-Wise of Tiffany.

Tiffany thought: "Because the door has always been locked before, that doesn't prove it is locked to-day. Anyhow, here goes!" And she marched up to the big barn door, turned the handle, and—opened it wide!

"Oh!" cried Mary and Sally and Polly and Minnie and Lucy. "But it is always locked!"

"It wasn't to-day," said Theophania, called Tiffany for short; and she could not help laughing, kindly, at the five expressions of surprise on the five fair faces.

"The second task is over," said Peter-Wise. "Now go and borrow your mothers' wash-tubs, wait till the moon rises, catch it, and put it in the tub. Then come and fetch me."

"But," said Tiffany, "there is only one moon."

"Exactly," he replied, "therefore only one of you can succeed."

Mary and Sally and Polly and Minnie and Lucy whispered together.

"He is making sport of us," they agreed. "Not even Tiffany can catch the moon. We must give it up." And each of them said in her heart: "After all, so-and-so would make a much better husband."

So they gave it up.

But in the evening Tiffany came to Peter-Wise and said:

"THERE, SURE ENOUGH, WAS THE ROUND, SILVER MOON"

"I have caught the moon and put it into mother's wash-tub. Come and see."

"Caught the moon!" exclaimed Peter. "But there it is up in the sky!"

"Not at all," replied she. "That is not the moon."

The night was still and warm. Peter-Wise followed Tiffany to a water-meadow, in the middle of which was her mother's wash-tub.

"There!" she cried, pointing. "Go and see if the moon isn't in that tub."

So he went up to it, looked over the edge, and there, sure enough, was the round, silver moon shining up at him.

"Well, but there are not two moons," he said, looking at the other moon in the sky.

"How foolish you are!" said Tiffany. "That moon in the sky is just the reflection of the real moon in this tub."

Peter-Wise was determined to make sure, so he took a penny out of his pocket and dropped it into the tub. It fell through the moon with a splash.

"Oh ho!" he exclaimed. "Whoever heard of a penny falling through the moon? This moon is made of water."

"Nobody ever tried to throw a penny through before," said Tiffany.

Then Peter-Wise kicked the tub, and the moon began to wobble. A piece of it splashed over the edge on to his boots.

"Whoever heard of the moon being spilt?" he asked.

"Nobody ever tried to spill it before," said Tiffany.

Peter-Wise stroked his chin.

"I have it!" he cried, and grasping the tub, heaved it sideways and upset the mock moon on to the grass, where with little watery sighs it slowly disappeared.

"So much for your moon," said he. "And behold its reflection is still in the sky!" But Tiffany only laughed and laughed and laughed.

"Yes," said Peter to himself, "she is certainly the cleverest girl in the village, but just the least bit less clever than I am. I will marry her." And aloud he said:

"Theophania, you shall, in spite of the sock and the moon that was not a moon, be my wife."

"Peter-Wise," she answered, "you shall not win me so easily. There is a task that *you* shall perform for *me* before I will marry you."

"Well, that is only fair after all," said he, rather taken aback.

"It is quite out of the question for me to marry you before I can darn a sock," she continued, "but in six years I shall have perfected myself in that difficult art. Will you wait for me six years?"

This she said to try his love.

"I will wait," said he, who really loved her, and knew something about women.

Now, at the end of three months Peter-Wise was still waiting for Theophania, and she realised that he would keep his word for the rest of the six years. But meanwhile she had learnt to darn as beautifully as Mary and Sally and Polly and Minnie and Lucy, who by this time were betrothed respectively to John and James and William and Tom and Adam. So she came to him one day with an example of her darning, and said:

"Peter, it has not taken me so long to learn to darn as I thought it would. How would it be if we were married *before* the six years are up?"

"We will get married whenever you please, dear heart," he said, not surprised.

"Well then," she replied, "—to-morrow."

And they were married at eleven o'clock the next morning.

The Weasel in the Storeroom

(*La Fontaine, Fables, III.*, 17)

EDWARD MARSH

Into a storeroom once Miss Weasel came,
Through a small hole squeezing her lank lean frame:
From illness she had grown so slender.
Once in, she made complete surrender
To her capacious appetite,
Nibbling and guzzling day and night.
The life she led, Lord only knew,
Or the amount of bacon she got through—
Small wonder she grew chubby, plump, and sleek!
After this diet for a week,
She heard some noise which made her wish to egress.
Where was the hole? She scuttled to and fro.
Surely 'twas this one? No—then this? Still less.
"Well, bless my soul!" she said, "'twas here, I know,
I wriggled through, hardly a week ago."
A rat perceived how she was troubled.
"Since you've been here," said he, "your paunch has doubled.
Thin you came in, and thin you must go out."

This has been said to others, I've no doubt;
But Reader, be it far from you or me
To press the delicate analogy.*

*The allusion is to the tribunal set up by Colbert to enquire into the peculations of the Financiers.

Love the Jealous

W. H. Davies

I praised the daisies on my lawn,
And then my lady mowed them down.
  My garden stones, improved by moss,
  She moved—and that was Beauty's loss.
When I adored the sunlight, she
Kept a bright fire indoors for me.
    She saw I loved the birds, and that
    Made her one day bring home a cat.
She plucks my flowers to
  deck each room,
And make me follow where
  they bloom.

Because my friends were kind and many,
  She said—"What need has Love of any?"
What is my gain, and what my loss?
Fire without sun, stones bare of moss,
  Daisies beheaded, one by one;

The birds cat-hunted, friends all
  gone—
These are my losses: yet, I swear,
A love less jealous in its care
Would not be worth the changing skin
That she and I are living in.

The Magic Medicine

BY DENIS MACKAIL

Once upon a time there was a very naughty little girl called Freda. She was what is known as an only child, and so you might have thought that her father and mother and her grandparents and her uncles and aunts and her nurse would have had all the more time for teaching her to be good. But though this was perfectly true, and they all worked very hard at saying "Don't do that, Freda," or "Put that down at once!" she continued to be extremely naughty.

She never tried to be polite to anybody, she used to tear her clothes on purpose, she used to break her toys, and walk in puddles, and snatch things from other children, and say things that weren't true, and eat gravel and blow bubbles in her milk. If there are any other naughty things that I have forgotten to mention, then she did them too. And when she was scolded, instead of saying

she was sorry, she used to lie down on the ground and bellow at the top of her voice.

For this reason the people who knew her best grew to be rather careful about scolding her—especially in the Park, where her behaviour had often attracted quite a crowd; but, of course, the only result of this was that she became far naughtier than ever.

Is that perfectly clear? Well, now we come to the story.

One afternoon she was taken to a children's party, where there was not only a bran-pie but also a conjuror. Freda was fairly good while she was being dressed, and still fairly good while she was driving there in the taxi with her nurse, but as soon as she got to the party itself she just let herself go. She made a face at a little boy who was smaller than she was until he cried and had to be taken to sit upstairs. She snatched a balloon from another child and burst it, so that the child also cried and had to be taken to sit upstairs. And when the bran-pie came in, she felt about in it for nearly two minutes until she had found the largest parcel —which, of course, is cheating—and afterwards, because she didn't like what was inside, she forced another little girl to change presents with her, and the other little girl cried and had to be taken to sit upstairs.

And when the conjuror was in the middle of his most difficult trick and had just got to the part where he was going to cut open an orange and take out of it a watch which he had borrowed from the father of the little girl who was giving the party, I am sorry to say that Freda shouted out: "It isn't the same orange!"

This was exceedingly naughty of her, and distressed the conjuror more than I can say, as well as spoiling all the pleasure of the good children who thought it *was* the same orange. And several of them were so much upset that they cried, and had to be taken to sit upstairs.

Freda's nurse had seen her doing all these naughty things, but she had said to herself: "It's no use my saying anything to Miss Freda now, because if I do she will only lie down on the floor and bellow at the top of her voice. It will be better to speak to her about it when we get home." So she contented herself by making a stern face when she thought that Freda and no one else could see her. Only, as a matter of fact, she did this just at the wrong moment and missed Freda altogether, and only succeeded in frightening a little boy in a kilt. And he cried, and had to be taken to sit upstairs.

So Freda went on being naughtier and naughtier, and the room upstairs became fuller and fuller of other children, but the lady whose little girl was giving the party didn't like to say anything because she thought, "Freda is an only child, and, anyhow, I needn't ask her another time." And Freda's nurse didn't like to say anything because (as I have already told you) she was afraid that Freda might disgrace her by lying down on the floor and bellowing at the top of her voice.

Is that all perfectly clear? Well, now we get on to what happened next.

All the children went into the dining-room, where there were so many buns and chocolates and crackers and pink cakes and sandwiches and other things of this nature that their eyes nearly popped out of their heads. And in the middle of the biggest table there was an enormous cake, and on the top of the enormous cake there was a rather smaller cake, and on the top of the rather smaller cake there was a golden star.

And as soon as Freda saw this golden star, she pointed at it (which, of course, she shouldn't have done) and said in a very loud, clear voice: "I WANT THAT STAR."

If only her nurse had heard these words, she would most certainly have said something which would have made Freda lie

down on the floor and bellow at the top of her voice. For there is no need to explain how naughty it is to point at things in other people's houses and say that you want them. No grown-up person would ever dream of doing a thing like that.

But, as a matter of fact, the nurse had just met another nurse who was a great friend of hers, and although they had had a long talk in the Park only that very morning, they still found they had so much to tell each other that neither of them heard what Freda was saying.

Is that all perfectly clear? Well, now Freda really *is* going to be naughty.

For I am grieved to say that, having pushed a number of other children out of the way (several of whom cried and had to be taken to sit upstairs) she went on pushing until she had got right up to the middle table. And then, when no one was looking, she stood up very quickly on a chair and snatched at the golden star.

I really don't know what, exactly, she meant to do with it, because she had no pocket in her party frock; and very likely if she had been left to herself she would have got tired of the golden star and dropped it under the table.

But just at this moment a little boy in a white silk blouse looked up and saw what she had done.

"Oh!" he said, in a very loud, clear voice. "Freda has taken the golden star."

And all the other children began to shout and tell each other that Freda had taken the golden star. And Freda's nurse heard the noise, and came quickly to see what had happened.

"What's the matter, Miss Freda?" she said. "What did you do?"

"Nothing," said Freda.

"She did," said a little girl who had just lost all her front teeth. "She took the golden star off the top of the cake."

"Put it back at once," said Freda's nurse.

"Shan't!" said Freda.

And then the nurse saw it in her hand and tried to take it from her. And Freda never stopped to think what the star might be made of, but put it very quickly into her mouth, and crunched it into three bits, and swallowed them all with one swallow.

"I've swallowed it," she said.

Her nurse turned first pink, then white, and then green in the face.

"Put it out at once," she said.

"I can't," said Freda. "It's gone."

"Oh dear," said the nurse. "Does anyone know what that star was made of?"

But nobody knew what the star was made of. Even the mother of the little girl whose party it was didn't know.

"What did it taste like?" they asked Freda.

But she had swallowed it so quickly that she didn't know.

"You're a very naughty little girl," said the nurse. And of course you can all guess what happened then. Freda got off her chair and lay down on the floor, and began to bellow at the top of her voice.

But it was far too serious a case to be treated merely by sending her to sit upstairs. For all that anyone knew the star might have been made of the most deadly kind of poison. So Freda's nurse ran off and found her shawl, and she picked her up off the floor (where she was still bellowing at the top of her voice) and wrapped the shawl round her and carried her away and put her into a taxi, and they drove back to Freda's home, and she missed the dancing altogether—which served her perfectly right.

And when they got home, the nurse went to the cupboard in the corner of the room and took out a very large bottle and a

very small glass, and filled the very small glass from the very large bottle, and then she said to Freda:

"Now you must drink this."

At these words Freda lay down on the floor and bellowed at the top of her voice.

"If you don't drink it," said the nurse, "you will have a terrible pain."

"Whoo-hoo-hoo," said Freda (for this was the way that she bellowed), and she crawled right under the table—in her best frock—and stayed there.

"Now, Miss Freda," said the nurse presently, when everything else had failed, "I shall put this glass on the table here, and I shall go upstairs and turn on your bath, and if you haven't drunk it by the time I come back again, I shall be very angry indeed."

Then she left the room, and after a second Freda came out from under the table and picked up the glass and sloshed all the slimy stuff in it into the fireplace, and it spluttered and fizzed and disappeared from sight.

And when she had done this, she was terribly frightened.

She was so frightened that when the nurse came back and said, "Ah, that's a good little girl. I see you've drunk it all up nicely," she never said anything at all. She didn't even bellow at the top of her voice.

All the time she was having her bath she was trying to say what she had done, but she never could quite bring herself to do it. And after she was in bed she called out suddenly to her nurse, meaning to say what she had done with the slimy stuff in the little glass; but when the nurse came in, she just couldn't get it out. She pretended that she had wanted a drink of water, and the nurse gave it her and went away again, and Freda was left alone —still feeling terribly frightened.

"Supposing," she thought, "that star really *was* made of poison. Supposing that stuff I threw in the fire might have saved me. Oh dear, if the poison kills me now, it will be all my own fault."

It was a long time before she could go to sleep, and in the morning she hadn't been awake for more than five minutes when it all came back to her. But she had left it so long now, that it was quite impossible to tell anyone.

Is that all perfectly clear? Well, now I'll tell you something that Freda doesn't know to this day.

The mother of the little girl who had given the party had been so anxious about Freda that the very first thing in the morning she had telephoned to the shop where the cake had come from, and had asked the lady there what the star was made of. And the lady had said: "Sugar." And the mother of the little girl who had given the party had telephoned to Freda's house and had asked to speak to Freda's nurse and had told her that the star was made of sugar. And when Freda's nurse heard this she was very much relieved, but at the same time she wasn't going to tell Freda that she had made her drink that slimy stuff (as she thought) for nothing at all. "If I do that," she said to herself, "I shall never get Miss Freda to drink any medicine again."

So she said nothing; and Freda—who of course hadn't drunk even a drop of the slimy stuff—went about wondering when the poison was going to begin working, and whether it would hurt horribly when it did.

She was so frightened now that if only she could have got at the large bottle, she would have drunk it all up without saying anything—and that really *would* have made her ill. But she couldn't get at the large bottle, because the cupboard was out of her reach.

And so what do you think she did?

She went to the china pig in which she kept all her money, and she shook it and rattled it and waved it and waggled it until

at last a very bright sixpence (which her grandfather had once given her) rolled out on to the floor. And she picked up this sixpence, and waited carefully until her nurse went up to the bathroom to wash out the party frock which had got all dirty from being under the table last night, and then she ran downstairs very quickly and let herself out by the front door and ran off to the chemist's shop, which was just round the corner.

The chemist was a very old man with spectacles, and in the ordinary way Freda was rather frightened of him, but she was still more frightened of being poisoned, so she pushed open his door—which always made a little bell ring—and went straight up to his counter and knocked on it with her sixpence.

Presently the old chemist came out and looked at her through his spectacles.

"And what can I do for you, miss?" he said.

"I want to buy some medicine," said Freda, "that would save someone from being poisoned by a golden star on the top of a cake at a party. And it mustn't cost more than sixpence, because that's all I've got."

"Dear, dear," said the chemist. "And are you the little girl who ate the golden star?"

Freda would have liked to say "No," but she didn't dare.

"Yes," she said, in a very small voice.

"Dear, dear," said the chemist again. "That wasn't very good of you, was it?"

"No," said Freda, in a still smaller voice.

"And when did you eat it?" asked the old chemist.

"Yesterday," said Freda.

"And do you still feel quite well?" asked the old chemist.

"Yes," said Freda. "But I only pretended to drink the slimy stuff they gave me last night, and I'm afraid the poison may still be waiting inside me."

"It seems to me," said the chemist, "that what you really need is some medicine to make you good. Eh?"

He looked at her very hard through his spectacles as he said this, and Freda agreed at once.

"Very well," said the chemist. "You've come to me just in time. When I close this shop to-night I'm never coming back, and next week they're going to start pulling it down. But I've got just one dose of medicine for naughty children left, and you shall have it now."

Then he took Freda round behind the counter, and she watched him while he poured a little from one bottle, and a few drops from another, and a teaspoonful from a third, and just a dash from a fourth. And he mixed them all together until the stuff fizzed and turned pink, and then he poured most of it away and gave the rest to Freda.

"If you drink this," he said, "it will make you good for twenty-four hours."

She drank it down, and it tasted delicious.

"Thank you very much," she said. "And here's the sixpence."

"Thank *you*, miss," said the old chemist. "And here's your change."

And he gave Freda half-a-crown from his pocket, and she ran back home as fast as she could and found the front door still open. So she ran right up to the nursery, and she dropped the half-crown into the china pig, and just at that moment the nurse came down from the bathroom.

"Why, Miss Freda," she said; "how quiet you've been."

"I cannot see," said Freda, "why any child should ever be anything but quiet. Can you, my dear nurse?"

She was good now, you see, because the pink medicine was beginning to work. And this is the way that good children talk. But the nurse couldn't make it out.

"Well," she said, with a laugh, "I'm sure it's strange to hear you say that, Miss Freda."

"I fear," said Freda, "that I have often been extremely thoughtless in the past, and that I have often allowed my temper to get the better of me, with the result that I have lain down on the floor and bellowed at the top of my voice. I can only express my regret that this should have been so, and my hope that you will overlook the trouble which I must have given you."

The nurse opened her mouth very wide and stared.

"Good gracious, Miss Freda!" she said. "What *has* come over you?"

"Nothing, that I am aware of," said Freda. "And now, if you will be good enough to dress me, I think it is time for us to go up to the Park."

The nurse was more puzzled than ever, for Freda used almost always to make a fuss about going out. But she was still more puzzled by the time they came in again. For Freda hadn't walked in a single puddle, she had insisted on keeping her gloves on, she hadn't run, she hadn't shouted, and she had refused to play with her usual friends because she said their games were so noisy and rough.

At lunch time she asked for a second helping of plain rice-pudding, and ate every scrap of it.

"This can't last," said the nurse to herself. But it did. And after tea, when Freda went down to the drawing-room, she quite terrified her mother by asking to be taught a hymn—although her father had just offered to play at tigers with her.

At half-past six she kissed her father and mother and went up to bed without being fetched. While she was having her bath, instead of splashing—and screaming when it was time to come out—she told her nurse how she had decided to give all her toys to the poor children who hadn't got any. As soon as she was put to bed, she lay quietly down and went fast to sleep.

The nurse and Freda's mother had a long talk together that evening.

"I don't see how she can be ill, mum," said the nurse, "because she's eaten everything, and made no fuss about it at all. I just can't make it out."

"I don't like it," said Freda's mother. "There's nothing we can do now, and she's certainly sleeping very peacefully—though I've never seen that look on her face before. But if she's no different in the morning, I shall send for the doctor."

In the morning Freda was just the same, and her mother sent for the doctor.

"It is very kind of you, dear mother," said Freda, when she was told, "but I am feeling perfectly well. Would it not be better if the doctor were to visit some of the poor children in the hospital?"

And this alarmed Freda's mother so much that she went quickly to the telephone, and asked Dr. Tomlinson to put off all his other patients and come at once. When he arrived, he found Freda sitting bolt upright in her little chair and reading a lesson-book.

"Well, my little dear," he said, "and how do you feel this morning?"

"It is very good of you to ask," said Freda. "I am happy to say that I am in the best of health. However, if you have a few minutes to spare, perhaps you would be kind enough to hold my book, and see whether I have yet learnt this beautiful poem about the poor little chimney-sweep."

The doctor did nothing of the sort.

"I'm very glad you sent for me," he told Freda's mother, and he picked Freda up and felt her pulse and looked at her tongue and put his head first against her chest and then against her back.

"Well," he said at length; "this beats me. The child seems to be perfectly well, and yet . . ." And he scowled

and puffed out his cheeks and walked up and down, while all the time Freda's mother and the nurse waited in the utmost anxiety.

And then all of a sudden the clock struck, and as it was twenty-four hours since Freda had swallowed the magic dose, the effect vanished in a single instant.

The grown-up people who were watching her saw her jump out of the chair, and fling the lesson-book on the ground.

"Now, now," said Dr. Tomlinson, "oughtn't you to be more careful with that pretty book?"

Freda gave one look at him, and then she lay down on the floor and bellowed at the top of her voice.

"Thank heaven!" said her mother.

"Our dear little Miss Freda has come back to us," said the nurse.

"Hum-ha," said Dr. Tomlinson. "Yes, I think we have cured her."

He had to say this, you see, because he was a doctor. But Freda's mother was so glad that her little girl was herself once more, that she thanked him over and over again. And all the time Freda lay on the floor and bellowed at the top of her voice, and from that moment she was just as naughty as ever she had been before.

I hope that's all perfectly clear. Some people say that this story will encourage little girls to be naughty, by making them think that their parents and nurses prefer them like that. I should be very sorry if this were so, but of course it's no use pretending that anything happened otherwise than I have said.

Freda never had another dose of the magic medicine, because the old chemist never came back to his shop, and—as he had said—the next week the men came and began to pull it down. But of course she didn't go on being naughty for ever, because after a bit she grew up, and now she actually has a little girl of her own. And if there's one thing that's absolutely certain, it is that all grown-up people are always good.

The Rhyme of Captain Gale

A. Pembury

Oh, Captain Gale who sails the sea,
When waves are high and winds are free,
Will kiss his hand, to make it plain
How much he scorns the hurricane;
A most imprudent thing to do
While sailing on the ocean blue.

He walks his deck, I've heard it said,
When wiser sailors lie in bed,
And far upon the lonely foam,
He takes his food as if at home
(Including plates of greasy stew);
A thing that I could never do.

His ship may toss, his ship may pitch,
He doesn't mind a morsel which;
And never seems to care a bit
How deep the sea is under it—
Though this, to me, beyond a doubt,
Is something he should care about.
But sailors always were, to me,
A singular community.

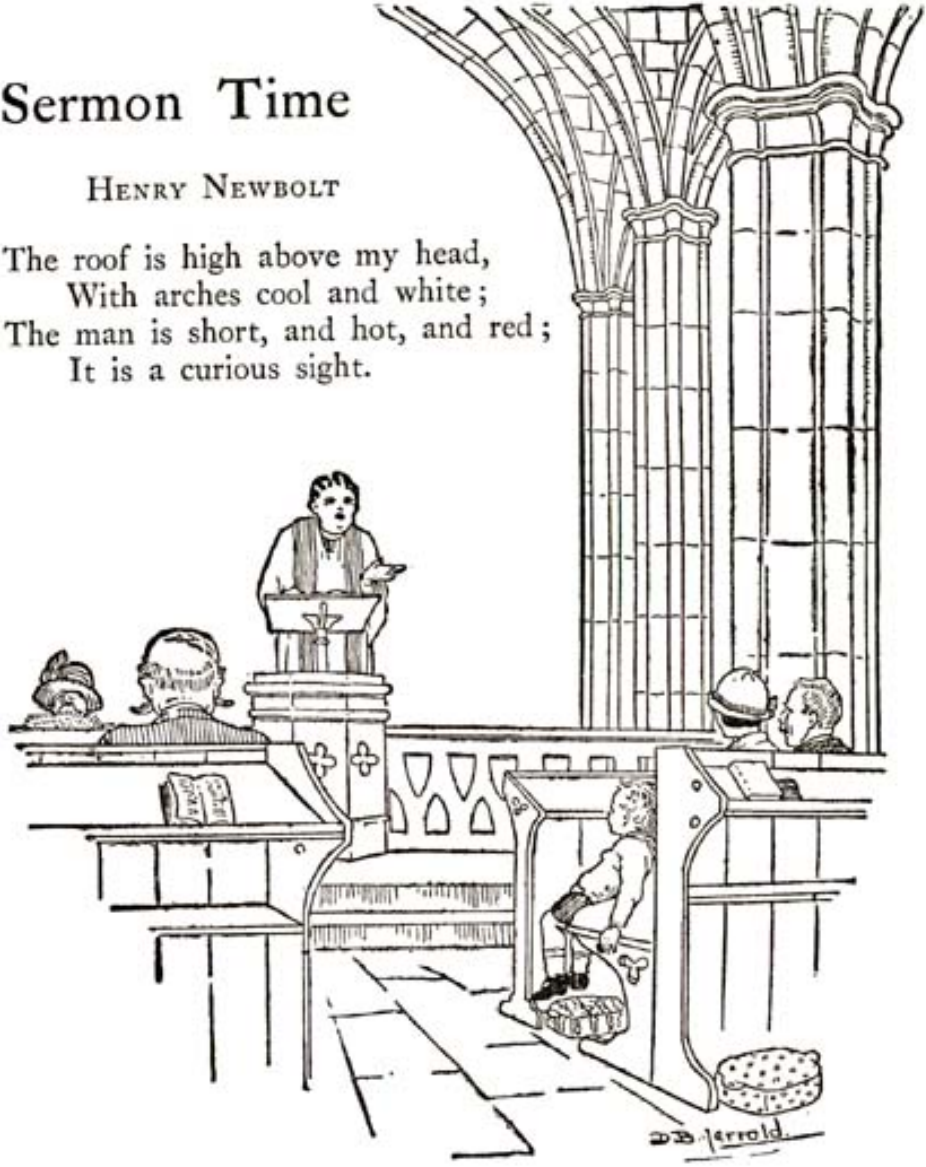
THE FAIRIES ARE MISCHIEFING DOROTHY DELL!

Painted for "The Flying Carpet"
by Mabel Lucie Attwell

Sermon Time

HENRY NEWBOLT

The roof is high above my head,
With arches cool and white;
The man is short, and hot, and red;
It is a curious sight.



CYNTHIA ASQUITH

Once upon a time there lived two boys who were each called Olaf. One had golden curls clustered all over his head—curls so glittering that every woman's hand must touch their brightness: and to look into his eyes was to see the gleam of blue sky through two rounded windows. In short, he was the most beautiful child that his mother had ever seen.

The other Olaf was crowned with dark curls—blue-black as the plumage of a crow. And to look into his eyes was to see twin stars shine up through the brown depths of a mountain stream. In short, he was the most beautiful child that his mother had ever seen.

Now, these two Olafs had both been born on exactly the same day, but Olaf the Fair was the son of a mighty King, and lived in

a dreadfully big palace, and Olaf the Dark was the son of a poor shepherd, and lived in a dreadfully small cottage.

When Olaf the Fair learned to walk, he staggered across a vast floor, and if he tumbled, it was only to sink into the soft depths of thick carpets. In his nursery there was nothing dangerous—not even the corners were allowed to be sharp—so he never knew the fun of watching bruises turn from plain brown to yellow and purple and green.

But Olaf the Dark learned to walk in quite a different way; he staggered across an uneven floor of cold stone, in a small room, crowded with things from whose sharp corners Pain constantly darted out at him. The hard floor seemed to rise up and smite him, first in one place and then in another. His mother was always kissing these places to make them well. He liked these kisses and was proud of his scarred body, especially of the red knees across which his seven skins were never seen all at once. His knees generally looked as though raspberry jam had been spread over them.

Just as you do, both Olafs hated to go to bed, but, just as you do, to bed they both had to go. Olaf the Fair plunged his bright head into a large pillow—so soft that it almost met across his nose, whilst the small pillow on which Olaf the Dark laid his dark head was so bumpy and so hard that in the morning his bruised ear would often ache, he knew not why.

Both boys loved to eat and drink. Olaf the Fair was fed on every sort of delicious food. You should have seen his nursery table piled high with glowing fruits, coloured cakes and trembling jellies. Chicken came every day, and there was always jam for tea. Olaf the Dark seldom swallowed anything more dainty than lumpy porridge, black

bread and just a very little bacon. Yet he often knew a treat, that was far greater than any of the dainties in the palace, and this was the taste of his plain food when he was very hungry—so hungry that his empty place was just beginning to hurt.

His father lay all crumpled up with rheumatism, so that, almost as soon as Olaf the Dark could walk, he had to shoulder the shepherd's heavy staff, whistle to the sheep-dog, and stride forth to guard his father's flocks.

Watching the baa-ing sheep as they nibbled the short grass, their bells tinkling as they moved, the lonely little shepherd-boy shivered in the cold, wet winds of winter and gasped in the scorching heats of summer. He would have liked to stay at home, learning to read by the leaping fire whilst his mother stirred the porridge, but day after day, he had to put on his little sheepskin suit, and go out to be hurt by hailstones, terrified by thunder or soaked in the snow.

The year Olaf the Fair was born his father died, so he became king, the smallest king that ever was seen. His crown was heavy and made his head ache. His sad, smiling mother said he must learn how to be a wise king. This meant doing hundreds and hundreds of lessons. Whilst ten tutors tried to stuff figures and facts into his head, he would stare out through the windows wistfully watching all the different sorts of weather. Oh, how he longed to be out in the hail, the thunder, or the snow!

One day as Olaf the Dark sat by his sheep on the high hillside and played on his flute to keep himself company, a huge brown mastiff came into sight. Olaf's faithful sheep-dog pricked his ears and low thunder rumbled in his shaggy throat. The fierce mastiff sped along the ground, and in the blinking of an eye the two dogs had flown at one another's throats. Terrified, Olaf the Dark strove with his staff to beat them apart, but all in vain. Fortunately four horsemen, who were the little king's escort, now

galloped up and, leaping from their saddles, contrived to separate the foam-flecked, blood-spattered dogs.

"Well for thee, lad, we were at hand," said the tallest of the men. "'Twould have gone ill with thy mongrel had he harmed the king's pet."

"It was your dog's fault! He attacked mine!" indignantly answered Olaf the Dark.

"Hush!" said the man roughly. "Here is the king. Bow down to him, you saucy lad!"

For Olaf the Fair had just ridden up. The man held the reins of the snow-white palfrey and the little king dismounted to assure himself of his mastiff's safety.

Now, Olaf the Dark had never even seen a picture-book, and at the dazzling sight of Olaf the Fair he gasped in amazement. The little king was clad in velvet of shimmering blue, edged with shining silver and on his head was a crown of gold.

He approached the shepherd-boy, and the two Olafs, who were of exactly the same size, stared long at one another.

"I'm glad your dog is not harmed. How long have you had him?" said the king. "Wolf was only given to me yesterday."

"Sentry is my father's," answered the shepherd. "He had him before I was born."

"How old are you?" asked the king.

"I was seven years yesterday," answered the shepherd.

"Were you? That's funny!" exclaimed the king. "Why I had my seventh birthday yesterday, too. But, who is with you? Surely you aren't allowed to stay out by yourself, are you?"

"I *have* to stay out," replied the shepherd. "I should like to go home."

"You'd like to go home? Funny! Why, I'd give anything to be allowed to sit on that silvery frost! Have you been playing with those nice woolly sheep for long? What pretty bells they've

got! And wherever did you get that splendid crook'd staff? I'd like to have one just like that," chattered the little king.

"Sire," broke in the tall man with a low bow. "We must return home. His Excellency your Tutor-in-Chief said that only one hour could be spared from your Majesty's studies to-day."

Olaf the Fair stamped his foot.

"Oh, bother!" he cried. "I can't bear to go in to yawny lessons! I want to stay out in the shinyness. I say, Boy, when have you got to go home and do lessons?"

"Don't do any lessons," grunted Olaf the Dark.

"You don't do any lessons?" exclaimed Olaf the Fair. "Oh, you *are* a lucky one! How long will you stay out?"

"Till it gets dark. The sheep must graze till then."

"Till it gets dark? Oo-oo-oo-ee! Lovely! I've never been out in the night. I would like to see how the stars get there. Have you ever seen one just pricking through the blackness? But, where's your coat? 'Twill surely be cold before 'tis dark."

"Don't have a coat."

"Don't you wear anything but just that one dead sheep? It must be beautifully comfortable. My clothes are so hot and heavy," said the king, tugging at his rich robes.

"Sire?" pleaded the attendant.

"All right, I'm coming," said Olaf the Fair, and reluctantly mounting his palfrey, he turned its arched neck towards the distant palace. "Good-bye, Boy. Wish I could stay and play with you and your sheep."

Wistfully Olaf the Dark gazed after the gay figure of the king disappearing into the rising mists, and as he rode away, Olaf the Fair turned his head, weary with the weight of his crown, and stared long at the solitary figure of the sturdy little shepherd. Disconsolately, he listened to the tinkling bells till they died away in the distance.

Deep in thought, his forgotten flute on the grass, the shepherd boy sat on. Hours passed. The sun sank in flaming glories of orange and gold. Dusk thickened into darkness and heavy drops of rain fell coldly on his bare head. Still pondering, Olaf the Dark at last rose and wearily drove his drowsy sheep towards home.

He sat down to his supper. Silently he spooned his burnt porridge and gnawed at his crust of black bread.

"What's come to thee, son?" asked his mother. "I miss the gabble of thy tongue."

"I've seen the king, mother," said Olaf, and he told her the story of the dog fight.

"Seen his small majesty, have you? To think of it! Born the very same day as you, he was. Be you two boys much of a size?"

"Yes, he's no taller nor I and I guess I'm the stronger. But oh, mother, the lovely horse he was riding, and the clothes he had on him, and the glittering crown on his head! 'Twas as though he had caught rays from the sun itself! Oh, mother, I'd like to be a king the same as him, and ride around in coloured clothes, nor need to mind no silly sheep."

"Is it wanting to be a king you are, Olaf?" laughed his mother. "Sure, there's no contentment under the sun. But I'm thinking a good shepherd's better nor a bad king, and they're saying to be a good king's no easy calling—subjects being more unaccountable troublesome than sheep themselves. Anyways, you two lads have the same God to serve, and sure you can serve Him from a cottage just as easy as from a palace. To be a good shepherd's a proud thing, I'm thinking, and as for the rheumatics, they enters the joints be you high or be you low."

But Olaf the Dark was not to be consoled. For the first time he noticed the shabbiness of his sheepskin suit, and the smallness of the cottage. Discontentedly he looked around.

"What would the king's palace be like?" he asked.

"Oh!" said his mother. "They do say it be all marble and gold with thousands of lights a-twinkling from the ceiling, and I've heard as the wee king sleeps in a bed that's bigger nor this room and the roof of it's of gold and there be curtains to it."

Olaf the Dark blinked.

"Oo-oo-oo-ee!" he sighed, as though sucking the sweetest of sweets.

. . . . .

Now, that same evening, when bedtime came, Olaf the Fair pressed his face against the cold bars of the window and stared wistfully at the spangled blue-blackness outside. He thought with envy of the shepherd-boy out there all alone on the hidden hill. For the little king yearned to go out while darkness was spread over the earth. How mysterious the world looked! What, he wondered, happened to all the ordinary daylight things during the night? If he were outside would he be able to see his shadow and what would the flowers and the trees be doing?

After he had climbed into his high, soft, golden bed, the queen came in to say good night.

"Oh, mother!" he said, snuggling into her white arms, "I've done such a dreadful, dreadful lot of lessons to-day."

"Poor little Olaf," said the Queen, kissing her son.

"Oh, mother," the little king continued, "I saw such a nice boy to-day out on the hill. And isn't he lucky? He doesn't do any lessons at all, and he's allowed to stay out by himself with nothing but a lot of sheep. Mayn't I have some nice woolly sheep to play with, mother?"

"Sheep aren't toys, Olaf. They're duties, like lessons. The boy must have been a shepherd."

"Duties, are they, mother? Then I'd much rather do

sheep than do lessons. But was he a real shepherd, that boy? Why, he's only my age! Oh, mother, can't I be a shepherd?"

"You are a sort of shepherd, Olaf. But you've got human beings to look after instead of animals. I want you to be so good a king that I shall be proud that you were my baby. That's why you have to work so hard."

"I do try, mother. But I wish I was a proper out-of-doors shepherd. And please, mother, must I always wear my crown? It is so heavy, and it bites my forehead."

"Yes, darling. I am afraid you must. Your crown is to remind you that you are a king and not your own master. Now go to sleep and dream that you are a shepherd and have to shiver out of doors in all the cold and wet. You'd soon be glad to wake up in your own bed."

But Olaf the Fair was not to be persuaded.

"I'd love to be out in the rain!" he exclaimed. "I hate indoors, and I'd like to be dressed in a dead sheep."

Days, weeks, months passed away, and Olaf the Fair and Olaf the Dark still continued to think of one another. More and more did the little king weary of the long lessons which kept him indoors and of all the solemn attendants who surrounded him. More and more did he pine to be free and wander at will over the hillside. Above all he yearned to go out into the night and feel the darkness. When he looked up at the sad, solemn moon, he would thrill with a strange, unaccountable excitement. The moon! She flooded the earth with a queer, transforming light that drew him out of all sleepiness and made his soul shiver till his body became too excited to lie still. Passionately he envied the shepherd-boy out there in the darkness, playing his flute beneath the pine trees. One night the longing grew too strong, and, as he tossed on his golden bed, it flashed into his memory that the bars of the window in the great hall

were wide enough apart to allow his body to squeeze through them. (This was long before even kings had glass in their windows.)

He sat upright. The leaves of the trees just outside rustled mysteriously and tiny twigs tapped against the bars, beckoning him out of bed. Yes, his mind was made up. He was going to escape and run out into the strange silvery light that the moon was making. With hammering heart he slid from his high bed and tip-toed towards the door. There was a low growl, and the mastiff raised his huge head. Oh, heavens, if he were to bark, or follow, he would surely arouse the man who slept just outside across the door! But, fortunately, Olaf remembered the bone he was to give his dog next morning, and in a moment busy sounds of scrunching and gulping filled the room.

One danger passed. But now Olaf must step across the body of the man who, with a dagger in his mouth, guarded his royal master's door. Supposing the man were awake. Then the adventure would become impossible and Olaf would have to return to the dreariness of trying to go to sleep. Trembling, he turned the handle and pulled the door towards him. Regular breathing reassured him. The man was fast asleep. Softly as snow falls on snow, the boy stepped across the huge form and hastened on swift feet down the long, empty corridor. Shafts of moonlight gleamed through the round windows and shone on the armour stacked against the wall. How strange the palace seemed in this light!

A little scared, Olaf slipped down the wide, shallow steps of the huge staircase. Now he was in the great hall. The night wind blew in and the tapestries trembled on the walls. Olaf shivered with something that was more than cold. High up in the sky a pale moon raced through white trailing clouds. She looked as if she were being pursued.

"THE TWO BOYS STARED AT ONE ANOTHER"

"I must get out! I must get out!" said Olaf aloud. "I must get out and run after her."

He reached the window and seized the bars. Oh, heavens, what was this? Consternation crushed into his heart, for criss-cross along the iron bars there now ran new horizontal ones. Alas! alas! he had adventured too late. Impossible now to squeeze through to liberty. His palace was a prison. In vain he tugged at the cruel bars. They could not even be shaken. He stamped his foot. Strong sobs shook his small body; tears scalded his eyes.

But what was this he saw through the dancing blur of his tears? Exactly opposite, a face stared through at him! The moon had raced behind a cloud and her light was dim. Was he looking into a mirror instead of out of doors? No, this pale face was surrounded with dark hair, and now his fingers felt the touch of other warm fingers. Yes, other hands were clasping the forbidding bars, and sobs that were not his own fell on his ear. The moon again sailed forth into the open sky and clearly Olaf the Fair recognised the face of the shepherd-boy, the constant thought of whom had so much quickened his discontent. Yes, it was Olaf the Dark, who, shivering from the cold, stood outside and wistfully gazed at the warmth and wealth within.

The one craning in, the other craning out, the two boys stared at one another.

"Why are you crying, Boy?" asked Olaf the Fair.

"Because I can't get in," sobbed the little shepherd. "Why are you crying?"

"Because I can't get out," sobbed the little king.

"Do you want to get *in?*"
"Do you want to get *out?*" } shrilled two surprised voices.

"Funny!" they both said, and their next sobs rode up on the top of two little laughs and their tears fell into the cracks made by their smiles.

Yes, they both laughed and the laughter stretched their hearts, so that Understanding could enter in and open the door to Contentment. Some people can only laugh at jokes. If you can laugh at your life even while it makes you cry, you have learnt more than a thousand schoolroom lessons can teach you, and your face will be safe from ever growing ugly through sullenness.

"Why ever do you want to get in here?" asked the king.

"Because it looks so lovely—all gorgeous and glowing. I want to know what it feels like inside. I'm so cold—I'm quite blue and I mustn't go home till morning breaks. I thought I'd squeeze through the bars and 'catch warm' and then go back to my sheep. There they are. Do you hear their bells? But why ever do you want to get out?"

"Because I hate the palace. Ugh! It's a great big prison. Besides, I want to feel the moonlight, dance in it, alone and free, and I want to be cold. I've never been cold."

"Wish I were you!" said both boys at once, smiling as they sighed.

"Where's your lovely golden crown?" asked Olaf the Dark. "Don't you always wear it?"

"Oh, no. I don't sleep in it. I hang it on its peg. I hate it!"

"Oh, I did want to try it on."

"You wouldn't like it. It makes my head ache. It's so heavy. I'd much rather have a staff like that crooked one of yours."

"It's awfully heavy," sighed the shepherd.

"Heavy?" exclaimed Olaf the Fair. "I don't see how a heavy thing in your hand could matter. Push it through. I want to hold it."

"Fetch me your crown, then, and we'll exchange."

Olaf the Fair knew that it was dangerous to return to his room to fetch the crown. Supposing the mastiff should bark and awaken the man. But he longed to handle the shepherd's staff.

"All right, I'll fetch it," he said and tiptoed up the stairs. Stealthily he stepped across the sleeping man, and the dog, recognising his master's scent, made no sound. Olaf seized the crown and hastened back to the moon-flooded window.

"Here it is," he said, pushing the crown through the bars that were just wide enough to let it through. "Try it on, and give me your staff."

Exultantly, the shepherd placed the gleaming crown on his dark head while the king grabbed at the tall crook.

"It isn't a bit heavy! I can't feel it!" they both exclaimed.

Then for a few minutes they chattered, comparing one another's days: the little king complaining of confinement and of being always in a crowd, the little shepherd complaining of having to stay out of doors and be all alone.

"Mother says I am the servant of my subjects," said the king. "And oh, I've got such an awful lot of them! I'd far rather be the master of sheep, as you are."

"I'm not their master," replied the shepherd. "I'm no better than their slave. Father says so. Besides, they're really yours. They've all got little crowns stamped on their backs."

"Have they? That's funny! Why, my sceptre's the shape of a shepherd's crook."

As they talked, Olaf the Dark felt the crown beginning to eat into his forehead. Heavier and heavier it grew until his brows ached and his head drooped. Meanwhile, in Olaf the Fair's hand the staff which had seemed so light grew heavier and heavier. Surely it must be made of lead, he thought, and at last with a sigh he changed it into his other arm. At the same moment, with a groan, the shepherd tore the crown from his head.

"Phew! it *is* a weight! How can you wear it all day?" he said, pushing it back through the bars.

"Phew! it *is* a weight," said the king, poking the staff through the bars. "I can't think how you can carry it all day."

"Funny," they both said, and they laughed quite loud; the king, feeling proud of his head that could carry so heavy a weight, and the shepherd feeling proud of his right arm, grown strong from carrying so heavy a staff.

"The dawn breaks," he said. "I must return to my sheep."

"Come again," cried the king. "Come again and talk to me."

So once in every year the little shepherd returned to the palace walls and through the bars the boys talked long and eagerly. The king always told the shepherd how stuffy it was within, and the shepherd always told the king how cold it was outside, and during the rest of the year, whenever the king's discontentment grew, he remembered the weeping boy who had tried so hard to get *in*. And whenever the shepherd wearied of his lot, he remembered the boy who wept because he could not get *out*.

The king knew that the shepherd never forgot the heaviness of a king's crown, and the shepherd knew that the king never forgot the heaviness of a shepherd's staff, and thus each was braced to bear his own burden; for it is a fact that our burdens are only unendurable when no one understands how heavy is their weight.

These two boys grew into men. Sorrows they had—as all men have, yet to each was given much happiness, for the one was a good king and the other a good shepherd. Far and wide Olaf the Fair was famed as the "Shepherd of all his People," and Olaf the Dark, who guarded the royal sheep, was called the "King of all Shepherds."

The Simple Way

JOHN LEA

Said Mr. Wise: "I'm one of those
Who think a short and pleasant doze
Will aid in solving, yea or nay,
Such problems as perplex the day."

So, sitting in a comfy chair,
He stretched his slippers, then and there,
Toward the fire that glowed and leapt,
And very soon he soundly slept.

He soundly slept, or so he thinks,
For little more than forty winks,
Then rose with more than common might
And went and set the world aright.

To each expectant boy he showed
The shortest and the straightest road
That leads to fortune and to fame
For those who like to play the game.

To all the girls he made it clear
How smiles and patience grace the year,
And how a placid mind will foil
The wear and tear of daily toil.

He settled in the smartest way
The hottest questions of the day,
And, by a magic mode of thought,
So deftly on opinion wrought,
That politicians failed to see
Why they should longer disagree,
And forthwith formed, by joint consent,
One party in our parliament.

In short, his triumphs were so bright
While setting all the world aright,
That when he waked, 'twas sorrow deep
To find the labours of his sleep
Had failed the slightest mark to make
Upon the world he'd left awake.

Finis

HENRY NEWBOLT

Night is come,
    Owls are out;
Beetles hum
    Round about.

Children snore
    Safe in bed,
Nothing more
    Need be said.

The End.