

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OU_174255

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY



"Here our queen is! Here's the queen!" (p. 30)

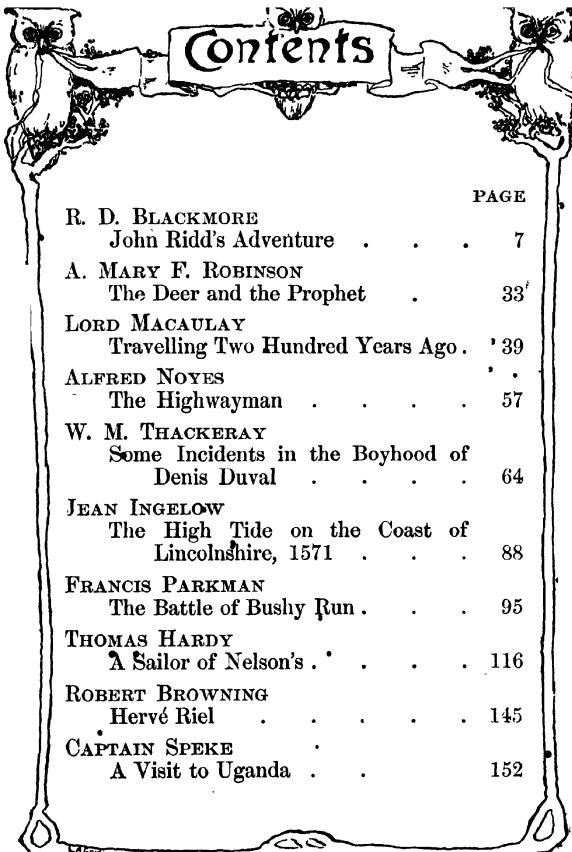
**THE OXFORD
READING
BOOKS**

VI



**LONDON
HUMPHREY·MILFORD
OXFORD·UNIVERSITY·PRESS**

REPRINTED 1923 IN ENGLAND
AT THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

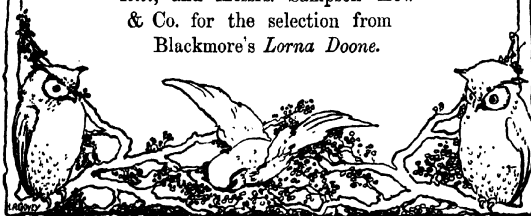


Contents

	PAGE
R. D. BLACKMORE	
John Ridd's Adventure	7
A. MARY F. ROBINSON	
The Deer and the Prophet	33
LORD MACAULAY	
Travelling Two Hundred Years Ago . .	39
ALFRED NOYES	
The Highwayman	57
W. M. THACKERAY	
Some Incidents in the Boyhood of Denis Duval	64
JEAN INGELow	
The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire, 1571	88
FRANCIS PARKMAN	
The Battle of Bushy Run	95
THOMAS HARDY	
A Sailor of Nelson's	116
ROBERT BROWNING	
Hervé Riel	145
CAPTAIN SPEKE	
A Visit to Uganda	152

	PAGE
R. L. STEVENSON	
<i>St. Ives' Escape</i>	169
LORD TENNYSON	
<i>The Lady of Shalott</i>	194
MUNGO PARK	
<i>Among the Moors</i>	201
GEORGE BORROW	
<i>A Welsh Inn</i>	229
CHARLES DICKENS	
<i>Doctor Marigold</i>	243

The Editor desires to thank Madame Duclaux (A. Mary F. Robinson), Mr. Thomas Hardy, and Mr. Alfred Noyes (with Messrs. W. Blackwood & Sons) for the selections bearing their names; also Mr. Lloyd Osbourne for the selection from Stevenson's *St. Ives*; Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co. for Browning's *Hervé Riel*, and Messrs. Sampson Low & Co. for the selection from Blackmore's *Lorna Doone*.





John Ridd's Adventure ·

I



ABOUT two miles below our farm, the Bagworthy water runs into the Lynn, and makes a real river of it. Thence it hurries away, with strength and a force of wilful waters, under the foot of a barefaced hill, and so to rocks and woods again, where the stream is covered over, and dark, heavy pools delay it. There are plenty of fish all down this way, and the further you go the bigger they be, having deeper grounds to feed in; and sometimes in the summer months, when Mother could spare me off the farm, I came down here, with Annie to help (because it was so lonely), and caught well-nigh a basketful of little trout and minnows, with a hook and a bit of worm on it, or a fern-web, or a blow-fly, hung from a hazel pulse-stick.

For of all the things I learned at Blundell's, only two abode with me, and one of these was the knack of fishing, and the other the art of swimming. And indeed they have a very rude manner of teaching children to swim there ; for the big boys take the little boys, and put them through a certain process, which they grimly call "sheep-washing." In the third meadow from the gate of the school, going up the river, there is a fine pool in the Lowman, where the Taunton brook comes in, and they call it "Taunton pool." The water runs down with a strong, sharp stickle, and then has a sudden elbow in it, where the small brook trickles in ; and on that side the bank is steep, four, or it may be five feet high, overhanging loamily ; but on the other side it is flat, pebbly, and fit to land upon. Now the large boys take the small boys, crying sadly for mercy, and thinking, mayhap, of their mothers ; with hands laid well at the back of their necks, they bring them up to the crest of the bank upon the eastern side, and make them strip their clothes off. Then the little boys, falling on their naked knees, blubber upwards piteously ; but the large boys know what is good for them, and will not be entreated. So they cast them down, one after other, into the splash of the water, and watch them go to the bottom first, and then come up and fight for it, with a blowing and a bubbling. It is a very fair sight to watch, when you know there is little danger ; because, although the pool is deep, the current is sure to wash a boy up on the stones, where the end of the depth is. As for me, they had no need to throw me more than once, because I jumped in of my own accord, thinking small things of the Lowman, after

the violent Lynn. Nevertheless, I learnt to swim there, as all the other boys did ; for the greatest point in learning that is to find that you must do it. I loved the water naturally, and could not long be out of it ; but even the boys who hated it most, came to swim in some fashion or other, after they had been flung, for a year or two, into the Taunton pool.

But now, although my sister Annie came to keep me company, and was not to be parted from me by the tricks of the Lynn stream, because I put her on my back and carried her across, whenever she could not leap it, or tuck up her things and take the stones ; yet so it happened that neither of us had been up the Bagworthy water. We knew that it brought a good stream down, as full of fish as of pebbles ; and we thought that it must be very pretty to make a way where no way was, nor even a bullock came down to drink. But whether we were afraid or not, I am sure I cannot tell, because it is so long ago ; but I think that had something to do with it. For Bagworthy water ran out of Doone valley, a mile or so from the mouth of it.

But when I was turned fourteen years old, and put into good small-clothes, buckled at the knee, and strong blue worsted hosen, knitted by my mother, it happened to me without choice, I may say, to explore the Bagworthy water. And it came about in this wise.

My mother had long been ailing, and not well able to eat much ; and there is nothing that frightens us so much as for people to have no love of their victuals. Now I chanced to remember, that once at the time of the holidays, I had brought dear Mother from Tiverton a jar

of pickled loaches, caught by myself in the Lowman river, and baked in the kitchen oven, with vinegar, a few leaves of bay, and about a dozen peppercorns. And Mother had said that, in all her life, she had never tasted anything fit to be compared with them. Whether she said so good a thing, out of compliment to my skill in catching the fish and cooking them, or whether she really meant it, is more than I can tell, though I quite believe the latter, and so would most people who tasted them : at any rate, I now resolved to get some loaches for her, and do them in the self-same manner, just to make her eat a bit.

Being resolved to catch some loaches, whatever trouble it cost me, I set forth without a word to any one, in the forenoon of St. Valentine's Day, 1675-6, I think it must have been. Annie should not come with me, because the water was too cold ; for the winter had been long, and snow lay here and there, in patches in the hollow of the banks, like a lady's gloves forgotten. And yet the spring was breaking forth, as it always does in Devonshire, when the turn of the days is over ; and though there was little to see of it, the air was full of feeling.

Let me be of any age, I never could forget that day, and how bitter cold the water was. For I doffed my shoes and hose, and put them into a bag about my neck ; and left my little coat at home, and tied my shirt-sleeves back to my shoulders. Then I took a three-pronged fork firmly bound to a rod with cord, and a piece of canvas kerchief, with a lump of bread inside it ; and so went into the pebbly water, trying to think how warm it was. For more than a mile all down the Lynn stream,



scarcely a stone I left unturned, being thoroughly skilled in the tricks of the loach, and knowing how he hides himself. For, being grey-spotted, and clear to see through, and something like a cuttle fish; only more substantial, he will stay quite still, where a streak of weed is in the rapid water, hoping to be overlooked, nor caring even to wag his tail. Then, being disturbed, he flips away like whalebone from the finger, and hies to a shelf of stone, and lies with his sharp head poked in under it ; or sometimes he bellies him into the mud and only shows his back-ridge. And that is the time to spear him nicely, holding the fork very gingerly, and allowing for the bent of it, which comes to pass, I know not how, at the tickle of air and water.

Or if your loach should not be abroad when first you come to look for him, but keeping snug in his little home, then you may see him come forth amazed at the quivering of the shingles, and oar himself and look at you, and then dart upstream like a little grey streak ; and then you must try to mark him in, and follow very daintily. So after that, in a sandy place, you steal up behind his tail to him, so that he cannot set eyes on you, for his head is upstream always, and there you see him abiding still, clear, and mild, and affable. Then, as he looks so innocent, you make full sure to prog him well, in spite of the wry of the water, and the sun making elbows to everything, and the trembling of your fingers. But when you gird at him lovingly, and have as good as gotten him, lo ! in the go-by of the river he is gone as a shadow goes, and only a little cloud of mud curls away from the prong he should have been on.



When I had travelled two miles or so, conquered now and then with cold, and coming out to rub my legs into a lively friction, and only fishing here and there because of the tumbling water ; suddenly, in an open space, where meadows spread about it, I found a good stream flowing softly into the body of our brook. And it brought, so far as I could guess by the sweep of it under my kneecaps, a larger power of clear water than the Lynn itself had ; only it came more quietly down, not being troubled with stairs and steps, as the fortune of the Lynn is, but gliding smoothly and forcibly as if upon some set purpose.

Hereupon I drew up, and thought, and reason was much inside me ; because the water was bitter cold, and my little toes were aching. So on the bank I rubbed

them well with a sprout of young sting-nettle, and having skipped about awhile, was kindly inclined to eat a bit.

Now all the turn of all my life hung upon that moment. But as I sat there munching a crust of Betty Muxworthy's sweet brown bread, and a bit of cold bacon along with it, and kicking my little red heels against the dry loam to keep them warm, I knew no more than fish under the fork what was going on over me. It seemed a sad business to go back now and tell Annie there were no loaches; and yet it was a frightful thing, knowing what I did of it, to venture, where no grown man durst, up the Bagworthy water. And please to recollect that I was only a boy in those days, fond enough of anything new, but not like a man to meet it.

However, as I ate more and more, my spirit arose within me, and I thought of what my father had been, and how he had told me a hundred times never to be a coward. And then I grew warm, and my little heart was ashamed of its pit-a-patting, and I said to myself, "Now if father looks, he shall see that I obey him." So I put the bag round my neck again, and buckled my breeches far up from the knee, expecting deeper water, and crossing the Lynn, went stoutly up under the branches which hang so dark on the Bagworthy river.

I found it strongly over-woven, turned and torn with thicket-wood, but not so rocky as the Lynn, and more inclined to go evenly. There were bars of chafed stakes stretched from the sides half-way across the current, and light outriders of pithy weed, and blades of last year's water-grass trembling in the quiet places, like a spider's threads, on the transparent stillness, with a tint

of olive moving it ; and here and there the sun came in, as if his light were sifted, making dance upon the waves, and shadowing the pebbles.

Here, although, affrighted often by the deep, dark places, and feeling that every step I took might never be taken backward, on the whole I had very comely sport of loaches, trout, and minnows, forking some and tickling some, and driving others to shallow nooks, whence I could bail them ashore. Now, if you have ever been fishing, you will not wonder that I was led on, forgetting all about danger, and taking no heed of the time, but shouting in a childish way whenever I caught a "whacker" (as we called a big fish at Tiverton); and in sooth there were very fine loaches here, having more lie and harbourage than in the rough Lynn stream, though not quite so large as in the Lowman, where I have even taken them to the weight of a quarter of a pound.

But in answer to all my shouts there never was any sound at all, except of a rocky echo, or a scared bird, hustling away, or the sudden dive of a water-vole ; and the place grew thicker and thicker, and the covert grew darker above me, until I thought that the fishes might have good chance of eating me, instead of my eating the fishes.

For now the day was falling fast behind the brown of the hill-tops, and the trees, being void of leaf and hard, seemed giants ready to beat me. And every moment, as the sky was clearing up for a white frost, the cold of the water got worse and worse, until I was fit to cry with it. And so, in a sorry plight, I came to an opening

in the bushes, where a great black pool lay in front of me, whitened with snow (as I thought) at the sides, till I saw it was only foam-froth.

Now, though I could swim with great ease and comfort, and feared no depth of water when I could fairly come to it, yet I had no desire to go over head and ears into this great pool, being so cramped and weary, and cold enough in all conscience, though wet only up to the middle, not counting my arms and shoulders. And the look of this black pit was enough to stop one from diving into it, even on a hot summer's day with sunshine on the water; I mean, if the sun ever shone there. As it was, I shuddered and drew back; not alone at the pool itself and the black air there was about it, but also at the whirling manner, and wisping of white threads upon it, in stripy circles round and round; and the centre still as jet.

But soon I saw the reason of the stir and depth of that great pit, as well as of the roaring sound which long had made me wonder. For skirting round one side, with very little comfort, because the rocks were high and steep, and the ledge at the foot so narrow, I came to a sudden sight and marvel, such as I never dreamed of. For, lo! I stood at the foot of a long pale slide of water, coming smoothly to me, without any break or hindrance, for a hundred yards or more, and fenced on either side with cliff, sheer, and straight, and shining. The water neither ran nor fell, nor leaped with any spouting, but made one even slope of it, as if it had been combed or planed, and looking like a plank of deal laid down a deep black staircase. However, there was no side-rail, nor

any place to walk upon, only the channel a fathom wide, and the perpendicular walls of crag shutting out the evening.

The look of this place had a sad effect, scaring me very greatly, and making me feel that I would give something, only to be at home again, with Annie cooking my supper, and our dog, "Watch," sniffing upward. But nothing would come of wishing; that I had long found out; and it only made one the less inclined to work without white feather. So I laid the case before me in a little council; not for loss of time, but only that I wanted rest, and to see things truly.

Then says I to myself,—“John Ridd, these trees, and pools, and lonesome rocks, and setting of the sunlight, are making a gruesome coward of thee. Shall I go back to my mother so, and be called her fearless boy?”

Nevertheless, I am free to own that it was not any fine sense of shame which settled my decision; for indeed there was nearly as much of danger in going back as in going on, and perhaps even more of labour, the journey being so roundabout. But that which saved me from turning back was a strange inquisitive desire, very unbecoming in a boy of little years; in a word, I would risk a great deal to know what made the water come down like that, and what there was at the top of it.

Therefore, seeing hard strife before me, I girt up my breeches anew, with each buckle one hole tighter, for the sodden straps were stretching and giving, and mayhap my legs were grown smaller from the coldness of it. Then I bestowed my fish around my neck more tightly, and not stopping to look much, for fear of fear, crawled

along over the fork of rocks, where the water had scooped the stone out ; and shunning thus the ledge from whence it rose, like the mane of a white horse, into the broad black pool, softly I let my feet into the dip and rush of the torrent.

And here I had reckoned without my host, although (as I thought) so clever ; and it was much but that I went down into the great black pool, and had never been heard of more ; and this must have been the end of me, except for my trusty loach-fork. For the green wave came down, like great bottles upon me, and my legs were gone off in a moment, and I had not time to cry out with wonder, only to think of my mother and Annie, and knock my head very sadly, which made it go round so that brains were no good, even if I had any. But all in a moment, before I knew aught, except that I must die out of the way, with a roar of water upon me, my fork, praise God, stuck fast in the rock, and I was borne up upon it. I felt nothing, except that here was another matter to begin upon ; and it might be worth while, or again it might not, to have another fight for it. But presently the dash of the water upon my face revived me, and my mind grew used to the roar of it ; and me-seemed I had been worse off than this when first flung into the Lowman.

Therefore I gathered my legs back slowly, as if they were fish to be landed, stopping whenever the water flew too strongly off my shin-bones, and coming along, without sticking out to let the wave get hold of me. And in this manner I won a footing, leaning well forward like a draught-horse, and balancing on my



strength as it were, with the ashen stake set behind me. Then I said to myself, "John Ridd, the sooner you get yourself out by the way you came, the better it will be for you." But to my great dismay and affright, I saw that no choice was left me now, except that I must climb somehow up that hill of water, or else be washed down into the pool, and whirl around till it drowned me. For there was no chance of fetching back, by the way I had gone down into it ; and further up was a hedge of rock on either side of the water-way, rising a hundred yards in height, and for all I could tell five hundred, and no place to set a foot in.

Having said the Lord's Prayer (which was all I knew), and made a very bad job of it, I grasped the good loach-stick under a knot, and steadied me with my left hand, and so with a sigh of despair began my course up the fearful torrent-way. To me it seemed half-a-mile at least of sliding water above me, but in truth it was little more than a furlong, as I came to know afterwards. It would have been a hard ascent, even without the slippery slime, and the force of the river over it, and I had scanty hope indeed of ever winning the summit. Nevertheless my terror left me, now I was face to face with it, and had to meet the worst ; and I set myself to do my best, with a vigour and sort of hardness, which did not then surprise me, but have done so ever since.

The water was only six inches deep, or from that to nine at the utmost, and all the way up I could see my feet looking white in the gloom of the hollow, and here and there I found resting-place, to hold on by the cliff

and pant awhile. And gradually as I went on, a warmth of courage breathed in me, to think that perhaps no other had dared to try that pass before me, and to wonder what Mother would say to it. And then came thought of my father also, and the pain of my feet abated.

How I went carefully, step by step, keeping my arms in front of me, and never daring to straighten my knees, is more than I can tell clearly, or even like now to think of, because it makes me dream of it. Only I must acknowledge, that the greatest danger of all was just where I saw no jeopardy, but ran up a patch of black ooze-weed in a very boastful manner, being now not far from the summit.

Here I fell very piteously, and was like to have broken my knee-cap, and the torrent got hold of my other leg, while I was indulging the bruised one. And then a vile knotting of cramp disabled me, and for a while I could only roar, till my mouth was full of water, and all my body was sliding. But the fright of that brought me to again, and my elbow caught in a rock-hole ; and so I managed to start again, with the help of more humility.

Now being in the most dreadful fright, because I was so near the top, and hope was beating within me, I laboured hard with both legs and arms, going like a mill, and grunting. At last the rush of forked water, where first it came over the lips of the fall, drove me into the middle, and I stuck awhile with my toe-balls on the slippery links of the pop-weed, and the world was green and gliddery, and I durst not look behind

me. Then I made up my mind to die at last ; for so my legs would ache no more, and my breath not pain my heart so ; only it did seem such a pity, after fighting so long to give in, and the light was coming upon me, and again I fought towards it ; then suddenly I felt fresh air, and fell into it headlong.

II

WHEN I came to myself again, my hands were full of young grass and mould ; and a little girl kneeling at my side was rubbing my forehead tenderly, with a dock-leaf and a handkerchief.

“Oh, I am so glad,” she whispered softly, as I opened my eyes and looked at her ; “now you will try to be better, won’t you ?”

I had never heard so sweet a sound as came from between her bright red lips, while there she knelt and gazed at me ; neither had I ever seen anything so beautiful as the large dark eyes intent upon me, full of pity and wonder. And then, my nature being slow, and perhaps, for that matter, heavy, I wandered with my hazy eyes down the black shower of her hair, as to my jaded gaze it seemed ; and where it fell on the turf, among it (like an early star) was the first primrose of the season. And since that day, I think of her, through all the rough storms of my life, when I see an early primrose. Perhaps she liked my countenance ; and indeed I know she did, because she said so afterwards ; although at the time she was too young to know what made her take to me. Not that I had any beauty, or ever pretended to have any, only a solid healthy face, which many girls have laughed at.



Thereupon I sat upright, with my little trident still in one hand, and was much afraid to speak to her, being conscious of my country-brogue, lest she should cease to like me. But she clapped her hands, and made a trifling dance around my back, and came to me on the other side, as if I were a great plaything.

"What is your name?" she said, as if she had every right to ask me; "and how did you come here, and what are these wet things in this great bag?"

"You had better let them alone," I said; "they are

loaches for my mother. But I will give you some, if you like."

"Dear me, how much you think of them! Why, they are only fish. But how your feet are bleeding! oh, I must tie them up for you. And no shoes nor stockings! Is your mother very poor, poor boy?"

"No," I said, being vexed at this; "we are rich enough to buy all this great meadow, if we chose; and here my shoes and stockings be."

"Why, they are quite as wet as your feet; and I cannot bear to see your feet. Oh, please to let me manage them; I will do it very softly."

"Oh, I don't think much of that," I replied; "I shall put some goose-grease to them. But how you are looking at me! I never saw any one like you before. My name is John Ridd. What is your name?"

"Lorna Doone," she answered, in a low voice, as if afraid of it, and hanging her head, so that I could see only her forehead and eyelashes; "if you please, my name is Lorna Doone; and I thought you must have known it."

Then I stood up, and touched her hand, and tried to make her look at me; but she only turned away the more. Young and harmless as she was, her name alone made guilt of her. Nevertheless I could not help looking at her tenderly, and the more when her blushes turned into tears, and her tears to long, low sobs.

"Don't cry," I said, "whatever you do. I am sure you have never done any harm. I will give you all my fish, Lorna, and catch some more for Mother; only don't be angry with me."

She flung her little soft arms up, in the passion of her tears, and looked at me so piteously, that what did I do but kiss her. It seemed to be a very odd thing, when I came to think of it, because I hated kissing so, as all honest boys must do. But she touched my heart with a sudden delight, like a cowslip-blossom (although there were none to be seen yet) and the sweetest flowers of spring.

Now, seeing how I heeded her, and feeling that I had kissed her, although she was such a little girl, eight years old or thereabouts, she turned to the stream in a bashful manner, and began to watch the water, and rubbed one leg against the other.

I for my part, being vexed at her behaviour to me, took up all my things to go, and made a fuss about it ; to let her know I was going. But she did not call me back at all, as I had made sure she would do ; moreover, I knew that to try the descent was almost certain death to me, and it looked as dark as pitch ; and so at the mouth I turned round again, and came back to her, and said, "Lorna."

"Oh, I thought you were gone," she answered ; "why did you ever come here ? Do you know what they would do to us, if they found you here with me ?"

"Beat us, I dare say, very hard, or me at least. They could never beat you."

"No. They would kill us both outright, and bury us here by the water ; and the water often tells me that I must come to that."

"But what should they kill me for ?"

"Because you have found the way up here, and they

never could believe it. Now, please to go ; oh please to go. They will kill us both in a moment. Yes, I like you very much ”—for I was teasing her to say it—“very much indeed, and I will call you John Ridd, if you like ; only please to go, John. And when your feet are well, you know, you can come and tell me how they are.”

“But I tell you, Lorna, I like you very much indeed, nearly as much as Annie, and a great deal more than Lizzie. And I never saw any one like you ; and I must come back again to-morrow, and so must you, to see me ; and I will bring you such a maun of things—there are apples still, and a thrush I caught with only one leg broken, and our dog has just had puppies”——

“Oh dear, they won’t let me have a dog. There is not a dog in the valley. They say they are such noisy things”——

“Only put your hand in mine,—what little things they are, Lorna !—and I will bring you the loveliest dog ; I will show you just how long he is.”

“Hush !” A shout came down the valley ; and all my heart was trembling, like water after sunset, and Lorna’s face was altered from pleasant play to terror. She shrank to me, and looked up at me, with such a power of weakness, that I at once made up my mind, to save her, or to die with her. A tingle went through all my bones, and I only longed for my carbine. The little girl took courage from me, and put her cheek quite close to mine.

“Come with me down the waterfall. I can carry you easily ; and Mother will take care of you.”



"No, no," she cried, as I took her up: "I will tell you what to do. They are only looking for me. You see that hole, that hole there?"

She pointed to a little niche in the rock, which verged the meadow, about fifty yards away from us. In the fading of the twilight I could just descry it.

"Yes, I see it; but they will see me crossing the grass to get there."

"Look! look!" She could hardly speak. "There is a way out from the top of it; they would kill me if I told it. Oh, here they come; I can see them."

The little maid turned as white as the snow which hung on the rocks above her, and she looked at the water, and then at me, and she cried, "Oh dear! oh dear!" And then she began to sob aloud, being so young and unready. But I drew her behind the withy-bushes, and close down to the water, where it was quiet, and shelving deep, ere it came to the lip of the chasm. Here they could not see either of us from the upper valley, and might have sought a long time for us, even when they came quite near, if the trees had been clad with their summer clothes. Luckily I had picked up my fish, and taken my three-pronged fork away.

Crouching in that hollow nest, as children get together in ever so little compass, I saw a dozen fierce men come down, on the other side of the water, not bearing any firearms, but looking lax and jovial, as if they were come from riding and a dinner taken hungrily. "Queen, queen!" they were shouting, here and there, and now and then: "Where the pest is our little queen gone?"

"They always call me 'queen,' and I am to be queen by and by," Lorna whispered to me, with her soft cheek on my rough one, and her little heart beating against me: "oh, they are crossing by the timber there, and then they are sure to see us."

"Stop," said I; "now I see what to do. I must get into the water, and you must go to sleep."

"To be sure, yes, away in the meadow there. But how bitter cold it will be for you!"

She saw in a moment the way to do it, sooner than I could tell her; and there was no time to lose.

"Now mind you never come again," she whispered over her shoulder, as she crept away with a childish twist, hiding her white front from me; "only I shall come sometimes—oh, here they are, Madonna!"

Daring scarce to peep, I crept into the water, and lay down bodily in it, with my head between two blocks of stone, and some flood-drift combing over me. The dusk was deepening between the hills, and a white mist lay on the river; but I, being in the channel of it, could see every ripple, and twig, and rush, and glazing of twilight above it, as bright as in a picture; so that to my ignorance there seemed to be no chance at all, but that the men must find me. For all this time, they were shouting, and swearing, and keeping such a hallabaloo, that the rocks all round the valley rang; and my heart quaked, so (what with this and the cold) that the water began to gurgle round me, and lap upon the pebbles.

Neither in truth did I try to stop it, being now so desperate, between the fear and the wretchedness; till

I caught a glimpse of the little maid, whose beauty and whose kindness had made me yearn to be with her. And then I knew that for her sake I was bound to be brave, and hide myself. She was lying beneath a rock, thirty or forty yards from me, feigning to be fast asleep, with her dress spread beautifully, and her hair drawn over her.

Presently one of the great rough men came round a corner upon her ; and there he stopped, and gazed awhile at her fairness and her innocence. Then he caught her up in his arms, and kissed her so that I heard him ; and if I had only brought my gun, I would have tried to shoot him.

"Here our queen is ! Here's the queen, here's the captain's daughter !" he shouted to his comrades ; "fast asleep, and hearty ! Now I have first claim to her ; and no one else shall touch the child. Back to the bottle, all of you !"

He set her dainty little form upon his great square shoulder, and her narrow feet in one broad hand ; and so in triumph marched away, with the silken length of her hair fetched out, like a cloud by the wind, behind her. This way of her going vexed me so, that I leaped upright in the water, and must have been spied by some of them, but for their haste to the wine-bottle. Of their little queen they took small notice, being in this urgency, although they had thought to find her drowned ; but trooped away, one after another, with kindly challenge to gambling, so far as I could make them out ; and I kept sharp watch, I assure you.

Going up that darkened glen, little Lorna, riding still

the largest and most fierce of them, turned and put up a hand to me ; and I put up a hand to her, in the thick of the mist and the willows.

She was gone, my little dear (though tall of her age and healthy) ; and when I got over my thriftless fright, I longed to have more to say to her. Her voice to me was so different from all I had ever heard before, as might be a sweet silver bell, intoned to the small chords of a harp. But I had no time to think about this, if I hoped to have any supper.

I crept into a bush for warmth, and rubbed my shivering legs on bark, and longed for Mother's fagot. Then, as daylight sank below the forget-me-not of stars, with a sorrow to be quit, I knew that now must be my time to get away, if there were any.

Therefore, wringing my sodden breeches, I managed to crawl from the bank to the niche in the cliff, which Lorna had shown me.

Through the dusk, I had trouble to see the mouth, at even five landyards of distance ; nevertheless I entered well, and held on by some dead fern-stems, and did hope that no one would shoot me.

But while I was hugging myself like this, with a boyish manner of reasoning, my joy was like to have ended in sad grief, both to myself and my mother, and haply to all honest folk who shall love to read this history. For hearing a noise in front of me, and like a coward not knowing where, but afraid to turn round or think of it, I felt myself going down some deep passage, into a pit of darkness. It was no good to catch the sides, for the whole thing seemed to go with

me. Then, without knowing how, I was leaning over a night of water.

This water was of black radiance, as are certain diamonds, spanned across with vaults of rock, and carrying no image, neither showing marge nor end, but centred (as it might be) with a bottomless indrawal.

With that chill and dread upon me, and the sheer rock all around, and the faint light heaving wavily on the silence of this gulf, I must have lost my wits, and gone to the bottom, if there were any.

But suddenly a robin sang (as they will do after dark, towards spring) in the brown fern and ivy behind me. I took it for our little Annie's voice (for she could call any robin), and gathering quick warm comfort, sprang up the steep way towards the starlight. Climbing back, as the stones glid down, I heard the cold greedy wave go lapping, like a blind black dog, into the distance of arches, and hollow depths of darkness.

From *Lorna Doone*, by R. D. BLACKMORE.





The Deer and the Prophet

A HUNTSMAN, enemy of those
 Who praise the prophet Mahomet,
 Far in the forest laid his net,
 And laid it deep in tangled brier-rose
 And tufts of daffodil and thyme and violet.

One early morning, pink and gray
 As early mornings are in May,
 A fallow deer went forth to take the air;
 And, wandering down the forest glades that way,
 She fell into the snare.

Alas, poor soul ! 't was all in vain
 She sought to venture back again,
 Or bounded forth with hurrying feet,
 Or plucked with horn and hoof the net;
 Too well the mazy toils were set
 Around her russet ankles neat.

All hope being gone, she bowed her innocent head
And wept. "O Heaven, that is most just," she said.
"In thy mysterious ends I acquiesce ;
Yet of thy mercy deign to bless
The little ones I left at home :
Twin fawns, still dreaming on their bracken-bed
When I went forth to roam,
And wandered careless where the net was spread.

"And yet, O Heaven, how shall they live,
Poor yearlings, if their mother die ?
Their only nourishment am I ;
They have no other food beside the milk I give,
And, save my breast, no warmth at night,
While still the frost lies crisp and white,
As lie it will until the roses blow."
And here she fetched so deep a sigh
That her petition could no further go.

Now as she hushed, the huntsman strode in sight,
Who every morning went that way
To see if Heaven had led the hoped-for prey
Into his nets by night.
And when he saw the fallow deer,
He stood and laughed aloud and clear,
And laid his hand upon her neck
Of russet with a snowy fleck,
And forth his hunting-knife he drew :
"Aha !" he cried, "my pretty dame,
Into my nets full easily you came ;
But forth again, my maiden, spring not you !"
And as he laughed, he would have slit
The throat that saw no help from it.

The Deer and the Prophet 35

But lo! a trembling took the air,
A rustling of the leaves about the snare;
And Some-one, dusk and slim,
There, sudden, stayed his hand, and smiled at him.

Now, never was there huntsman yet
Who, when the tangled snare was set,
And in the snare the comely game,
Endured the loosening of the net.
Our huntsman turned an angry face aflame,
And none the lesser was his wroth
To see none other, by my troth,
Than Mahomet himself, the immortal Mahomet,
Who stood beside the net.

“Ha, old Impostor!” he began—
But, “Peace!” the prophet said, “my man;
For while we argue, you and I,
The hungry fawns are like to die.
Nay, let the mother go. Within an hour, I say,
She shall return for thee to spare or slay;
Or, if she be not here,
Then I will stand your slave in surety for the deer.”
The huntsman turned and stared a while.
“For sure, the fool is void of guile!
Well, he shall be my slave i’ sooth,
And work as in his idle youth
He never worked, the rogue!” Our huntsman laughed
for glee,
And bent and loosed the tangles joyfully:
And forth the creature bounded, wild and free.
But when she reached the bracken-bed,
Where still the young ones lay abed

Below the hawthorn branches thick—

“Awake,” she cried, “my fawns, and milk me quick;
For I have left within the net
The very prophet Mahomet!”

“Ah!” cried the little fawns, and heard
(But understood not half a word).

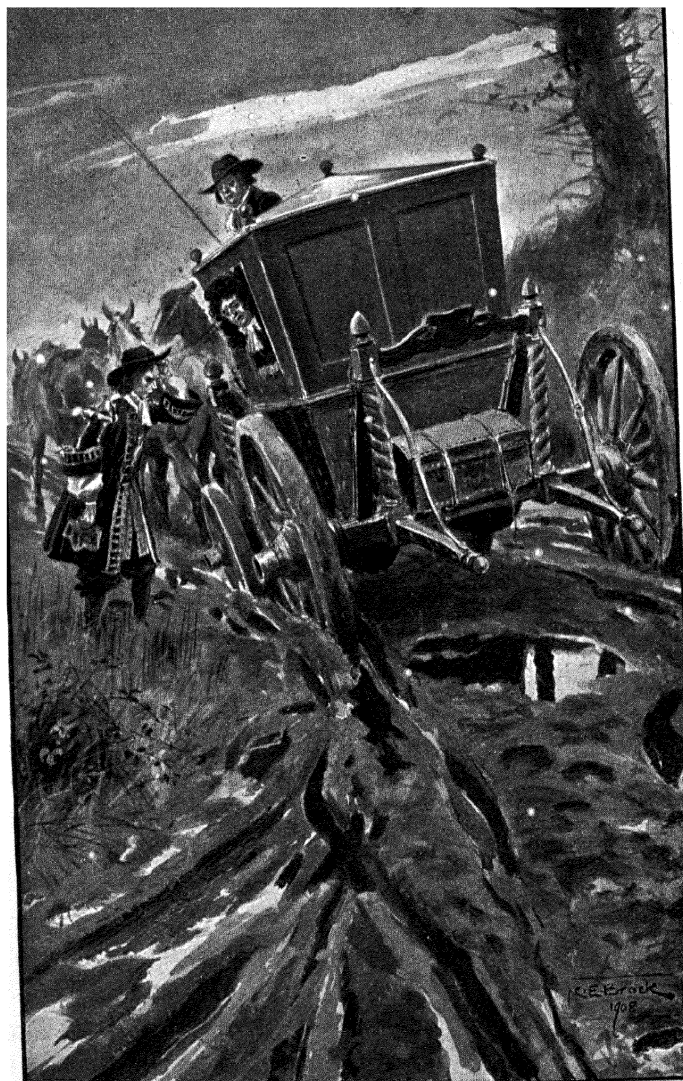
“Quick, quick, our little mother, quick away,
And come back all the quicklier!” cried the fawns,
And called a last good-bye;
And sat a little sad, they knew not why,
And watched their mother bounding, white and grey,
Dim in the distance, o’er the dewy lawns
And wide, unfriendly forests all in flower;
And so the deer returned within an hour.

“Now,” said the prophet, smiling, “kill
Or take the ransom, as you will.”
But on his knees the huntsman fell,
And cried aloud: “A miracle!
Nay, by my nets and hunting-knife,
I will not take the creature’s life;
And, for a slave, until I die,
Thou hast no trustier slave than I!”

No creature is so hard beset,
But lo! the undreamed-of Angel yet
May interpose his power, and change the end.
And no one is so poor a friend,
Or so diminished to the dust,
But may be worthy of a heavenly trust.

A. MARY F. ROBINSON.







Travelling Two Hundred Years Ago



OF all inventions, the alphabet and the printing press alone excepted, those inventions which abridge distance have done most for the civilization of our species. Every improvement of the means of locomotion benefits mankind morally and intellectually as well as materially, and not only facilitates the interchange of the various productions of nature and art, but tends to remove national and provincial antipathies, and to bind together all the branches of the great human family. In the seventeenth century the inhabitants of London were, for almost every practical purpose, farther from Reading than they now are from Edinburgh, and farther from Edinburgh than they now are from Vienna.

The subjects of Charles the Second were not, it is true, quite unacquainted with that principle which has, in our own time, produced an unprecedented revolution in human affairs, which has enabled navies to advance in the face of wind and tide, and battalions, attended by all their baggage and artillery, to traverse kingdoms at a pace equal to that of the fleetest race horse. The Marquess of Worcester had recently observed the expansive power of moisture rarefied by heat. After many experiments he had succeeded in constructing a rude steam engine, which he called a fire water-work, and which he pronounced to be an admirable and most forcible instrument of propulsion. But the Marquess was suspected to be a madman, and known to be a Papist. His inventions, therefore, found no favourable reception. His fire water-work might, perhaps, furnish matter for conversation at a meeting of the Royal Society, but was not applied to any practical purpose.

There were no railways, except a few made of timber, from the mouths of the Northumbrian coal pits to the banks of the Tyne. There was very little internal communication by water. A few attempts had been made to deepen and embank the natural streams, but with slender success. Hardly a single navigable canal had been even projected. The English of that day were in the habit of talking with mingled admiration and despair of the immense trench by which Lewis the Fourteenth had made a junction between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. They little thought that their country would, in the course of a few generations, be intersected, at the cost of private adventurers, by artificial rivers

Travelling Two Hundred Years Ago 41

making up more than four times the length of the Thames, the Severn, and the Trent together.

It was by the highways that both travellers and goods generally passed from place to place. And those highways appear to have been far worse than might have been expected from the degree of wealth and civilization which the nation had even then attained. On the best lines of communication the ruts were deep, the descents precipitous, and the way often such as it was hardly possible to distinguish, in the dusk, from the uninclosed heath and fen which lay on both sides. Ralph Thoresby, the antiquary, was in danger of losing his way on the great North road, between Barnby Moor and Tuxford, and actually lost his way between Doncaster and York. Pepys and his wife, travelling in their own coach, lost their way between Newbury and Reading. In the course of the same tour they lost their way near Salisbury, and were in danger of having to pass the night on the plain.

It was only in fine weather that the whole breadth of the road was available for wheeled vehicles. Often the mud lay deep on the right and the left; and only a narrow track of firm ground rose above the quagmire. At such times obstructions and quarrels were frequent, and the path was sometimes blocked up during a long time by carriers, neither of whom would break the way. It happened, almost every day, that coaches stuck fast, until a team of cattle could be procured from some neighbouring farm, to tug them out of the slough.

But in bad seasons the traveller had to encounter inconveniences still more serious. Thoresby, who was in the habit of travelling between Leeds and the capital,

has recorded, in his Diary, such a series of perils and disasters as might suffice for a journey to the Frozen Ocean or to the Desert of Sahara. On one occasion he learned that the floods were out between Ware and London, that passengers had to swim for their lives, and that a higgler had perished in the attempt to cross. In consequence of these tidings he turned out of the high road, and was conducted across some meadows, where it was necessary for him to ride to the saddle-skirts in water. In the course of another journey he narrowly escaped being swept away by an inundation of the Trent. He was afterwards detained at Stamford four days, on account of the state of the roads, and then ventured to proceed only because fourteen members of the House of Commons, who were going up in a body to Parliament, with guides and numerous attendants, took him into their company.

On the roads of Derbyshire travellers were in constant fear for their necks, and were frequently compelled to alight and lead their beasts. The great route through Wales to Holyhead was in such a state that, in 1685, a viceroy, going to Ireland, was five hours in travelling fourteen miles, from Saint Asaph to Conway. Between Conway and Beaumaris he was forced to walk great part of the way; and his lady was carried in a litter. His coach was, with great difficulty, and by the help of many hands, brought after him entire. In general, carriages were taken to pieces at Conway, and borne, on the shoulders of stout Welsh peasants, to the Menai Straits. In some parts of Kent and Sussex none but the strongest horses could, in winter, get through the

Travelling Two Hundred Years Ago 43

bog, in which, at every step, they sank deep. The markets were often inaccessible during several months. It is said that the fruits of the earth were sometimes suffered to 'rot in one place, while in another place, distant only a few miles, the supply fell far short of the demand. The wheeled carriages were, in this district, generally pulled by oxen.

When Prince George of Denmark visited the stately mansion of Petworth in wet weather, he was six hours in going nine miles ; and it was necessary that a 'body of sturdy hinds should be on each side of his 'coach, in order to prop it. Of the carriages which conveyed his retinue several were upset and injured. A letter from one of his gentlemen in waiting has been preserved, in which the unfortunate courtier complains that, during fourteen hours, he never once alighted, except when his coach was overturned or stuck fast in the mud.

One chief cause of the badness of the roads seems to have been the defective state of the law. Every parish was bound to repair the highways which passed through it. The peasantry were forced to give their gratuitous labour six days in the year. If this was not sufficient, hired labour was employed, and the expense was met by a parochial rate. That a route connecting two great towns, which have a large and thriving trade with each other, should be maintained at the cost of the rural population scattered between them is obviously unjust ; and this injustice was peculiarly glaring in the case of the great North road, which traversed very poor and thinly inhabited districts, and joined very rich and populous districts. Indeed it was not in the power of

the parishes of Huntingdonshire to mend a highway worn by the constant traffic between the West Riding of Yorkshire and London.

Soon after the Restoration this grievance attracted the notice of Parliament ; and an act, the first of our many turnpike acts, was passed, imposing a small toll on travellers and goods, for the purpose of keeping some parts of this important line of communication in good repair. This innovation, however, excited many murmurs ; and the other great avenues to the capital were long left under the old system. A change was at length effected, but not without much difficulty. For unjust and absurd taxation to which men are accustomed is often borne far more willingly than the most reasonable impost which is new. It was not till many toll bars had been violently pulled down, till the troops had in many districts been forced to act against the people, and till much blood had been shed, that a good system was introduced. By slow degrees reason triumphed over prejudice ; and our island is now crossed in every direction by near thirty thousand miles of turnpike road.

On the best highways heavy articles were, in the time of Charles the Second, generally conveyed from place to place by stage waggons. In the straw of these vehicles nestled a crowd of passengers, who could not afford to travel by coach or on horseback, and who were prevented by infirmity, or by the weight of their luggage, from going on foot. The expense of transmitting heavy goods in this way was enormous. From London to Birmingham the charge was seven pounds a ton ; from London to Exeter twelve pounds a ton. This was about

Travelling Two Hundred Years Ago 45



fifteen pence a ton for every mile, more by a third than was afterwards charged on turnpike roads, and fifteen times what is now demanded by railway companies. The cost of conveyance amounted to a prohibitory tax on many useful articles. Coal in particular was never seen except in the districts where it was produced, or in the districts to which it could be carried by sea, and was indeed always known in the South of England by the name of sea coal.

On byroads, and generally throughout the country north of York and west of Exeter, goods were carried by long trains of packhorses. These strong and patient beasts, the breed of which is now extinct, were attended by a class of men who seem to have borne much resem-

blance to the Spanish muleteers. A traveller of humble condition often found it convenient to perform a journey mounted on a packsaddle between two baskets, under the care of these hardy guides. The expense of this mode of conveyance was small. But the caravan moved at a foot's pace; and in winter the cold was often insupportable.

The rich commonly travelled in their own carriages, with at least four horses. Cotton, the facetious poet, attempted to go from London to the Peak with a single pair, but found at Saint Albans that the journey would be insupportably tedious, and altered his plan. A coach and six is in our time never seen, except as part of some pageant. The frequent mention therefore of such equipages in old books is likely to mislead us. We attribute to magnificence what was really the effect of a very disagreeable necessity. People, in the time of Charles the Second, travelled with six horses, because with a smaller number there was great danger of sticking fast in the mire. Nor were even six horses always sufficient. Vanbrugh, in the succeeding generation, described with great humour the way in which a country gentleman, newly chosen a member of Parliament, went up to London. On that occasion all the exertions of six beasts, two of which had been taken from the plough, could not save the family coach from being imbedded in a quagmire.

Public carriages had recently been much improved. During the years which immediately followed the Restoration, a diligence ran between London and Oxford in two days. The passengers slept at Beaconsfield. At

Travelling Two Hundred Years Ago 47

length, in the spring of 1669, a great and daring innovation was attempted. It was announced that a vehicle, described as the Flying Coach, would perform the whole journey between sunrise and sunset. This spirited undertaking was solemnly considered and sanctioned by the Heads of the University, and appears to have excited the same sort of interest which is excited in our own time by the opening of a new railway. The Vice-Chancellor, by a notice affixed in all public places, prescribed the hour and place of departure. The success of the experiment was complete. At six in the morning the carriage began to move from before the ancient front of All Souls College : and at seven in the evening the adventurous gentlemen who had run the first risk were safely deposited at their inn in London. The emulation of the sister University was moved ; and soon a diligence was set up which in one day carried passengers from Cambridge to the capital.

At the close of the reign of Charles the Second, flying carriages ran thrice a week from London to the chief towns. But no stage coach, indeed no stage waggon, appears to have proceeded further north than York, or further west than Exeter. The ordinary day's journey of a flying-coach was about fifty miles in the summer ; but in winter, when the ways were bad and the nights long, little more than thirty. The Chester coach, the York coach, and the Exeter coach generally reached London in four days during the fine season, but at Christmas not till the sixth day. The passengers, six in number, were all seated in the carriage. For accidents were so frequent that it would have been most perilous to mount

the roof. The ordinary fare was about twopence halfpenny a mile in the summer, and somewhat more in the winter.

This mode of travelling, which by Englishmen of the present day would be regarded as insufferably slow, seemed to our ancestors wonderfully and indeed alarmingly rapid. In a work published a few months before the death of Charles the Second, the flying coaches are extolled as far superior to any similar vehicles ever known in the world. Their velocity is the subject of special commendation, and is triumphantly contrasted with the sluggish pace of the continental posts. But with boasts like these was mingled the sound of complaint and invective. The interests of large classes had been unfavourably affected by the establishment of the new diligences ; and, as usual, many persons were, from mere stupidity and obstinacy, disposed to clamour against the innovation, simply because it was an innovation. It was vehemently argued that this mode of conveyance would be fatal to the breed of horses and to the noble art of horsemanship ; that the Thames, which had long been an important nursery of seamen, would cease to be the chief thoroughfare from London up to Windsor and down to Gravesend ; that saddlers and spurriers would be ruined by hundreds ; that numerous inns, at which mounted travellers had been in the habit of stopping, would be deserted, and would no longer pay any rent ; that the new carriages were too hot in summer and too cold in winter ; that the passengers were grievously annoyed by invalids and crying children ; that the coach sometimes reached the inn so late that it

Travelling Two Hundred Years Ago 49

was impossible to get supper, and sometimes started so early that it was impossible to get breakfast.

On these grounds it was gravely recommended that no public carriage should be permitted to have more than four horses, to start oftener than once a week, or to go more than thirty miles a day. It was hoped that, if this regulation were adopted, all except the sick and the lame would return to the old mode of travelling. Petitions embodying such opinions as these were presented to the king in council from several companies of the City of London, from several provincial towns, and from the justices of several counties. We smile at these things. It is not impossible that our descendants, when they read the history of the opposition offered by cupidity and prejudice to the improvements of the nineteenth century, may smile in their turn.

In spite of the attractions of the flying coaches, it was still usual for men who enjoyed health and vigour, and who were not encumbered by much baggage, to perform long journeys on horseback. If the traveller wished to move expeditiously he rode post. Fresh saddle horses and guides were to be procured at convenient distances along all the great lines of road. The charge was threepence a mile for each horse, and fourpence a stage for the guide. In this manner, when the ways were good, it was possible to travel, for a considerable time, as rapidly as by any conveyance known in England, till vehicles were propelled by steam. There were as yet no post chaises; nor could those who rode in their own coaches ordinarily procure

a change of horses. The King, however, and the great officers of state were able to command relays. Thus Charles commonly went in one day from Whitehall to Newmarket, a distance of about fifty-five miles through a level country ; and this was thought by his subjects a proof of great activity. Evelyn performed the same journey in company with the Lord Treasurer Clifford. The coach was drawn by six horses, which were changed at Bishop Stortford and again at Chesterford. The travellers reached Newmarket at night. Such a mode of conveyance seems to have been considered as a rare luxury confined to princes and ministers.

Whatever might be the way in which a journey was performed, the travellers, unless they were numerous and well armed, ran considerable risk of being stopped and plundered. The mounted highwayman, a marauder known to our generation only from books, was to be found on every main road. The waste tracts which lay on the great routes near London were especially haunted by plunderers of this class. Hounslow Heath on the great Western Road, and Finchley Common, on the great Northern Road, were perhaps the most celebrated of these spots. The Cambridge scholars trembled when they approached Epping Forest, even in broad daylight. Seamen who had just been paid off at Chatham were often compelled to deliver their purses on Gadshill, celebrated near a hundred years earlier by the greatest of poets as the scene of the depredations of Poin and Falstaff.

The public authorities seem to have been often at a loss how to deal with the plunderers. At one time it



was announced in the Gazette that several persons who were strongly suspected of being highwaymen, but against whom there was not sufficient evidence, would be paraded at Newgate in riding dresses: their horses would also be shown: and all gentlemen who had been robbed were invited to inspect this singular exhibition. On another occasion a pardon was publicly offered to a robber if he would give up some rough diamonds, of immense value, which he had taken when he stopped the Harwich mail. A short time after appeared another proclamation, warning the innkeepers that the eye of the government was upon them. Their criminal connivance, it was affirmed, enabled banditti to infest the roads with impunity.

It was necessary to the success and even to the safety of the highwayman that he should be a bold and skilful rider, and that his manners and appearance should be such as suited the master of a fine horse. He therefore held an aristocratical position in the community of thieves, appeared at fashionable coffee houses and gaming houses, and betted with men of quality on the race ground. Sometimes, indeed, he was a man of good family and education. A romantic interest therefore attached, and perhaps still attaches, to the names of freebooters of this class. The vulgar eagerly drank in tales of their ferocity and audacity, of their occasional acts of generosity and good nature, of their miraculous escapes, of their desperate struggles, and of their manly bearing at the bar and in the cart.

Thus it was related of William Nevison, the great robber of Yorkshire, that he levied a quarterly tribute

Travelling Two Hundred Years Ago 53

on all the northern drovers, and, in return, not only spared them himself, but protected them against all other thieves ; that he demanded purses in the most courteous manner ; that he gave largely to the poor what he had taken from the rich ; that his life was once spared by the royal clemency, but that he again tempted his fate, and at length died, in 1685, on the gailows of York. It was related how Claude Duval, the French page of the Duke of Richmond, took to the road, became captain of a formidable gang, and had the honour to be named first in a royal proclamation against notorious offenders ; how at the head of his troop he stopped a lady's coach, in which there was a booty of four hundred pounds ; how he took only one hundred, and suffered the fair owner to ransom the rest by dancing a coranto with him on the heath ; how his vivacious gallantry stole away the hearts of all women ; how his dexterity at sword and pistol made him a terror to all men ; how, at length, in the year 1670, he was seized when overcome by wine ; how dames of high rank visited him in prison, and with tears interceded for his life ; how the King would have granted a pardon, but for the interference of Judge Morton, the terror of highwaymen, who threatened to resign his office unless the law were carried into full effect ; and how, after the execution, the corpse lay in state with all the pomp of scutcheons, wax lights, black hangings and mutes, till the same cruel Judge, who had intercepted the mercy of the crown, sent officers to disturb the obsequies. In these anecdotes there is doubtless a large mixture of fable ; but they are not on that

account unworthy of being recorded ; for it is both an authentic and an important fact that such tales, whether false or true, were heard by our ancestors with eagerness and faith.

All the various dangers by which the traveller was beset were greatly increased by darkness. He was therefore commonly desirous of having the shelter of a roof during the night ; and such shelter it was not difficult to obtain. From a very early period the inns of England had been renowned. Our first great poet had described the excellent accommodation which they afforded to the pilgrims of the fourteenth century. Nine and twenty persons, with their horses, found room in the wide chambers and stables of the Tabard in Southwark. The food was of the best, and the wines such as drew the company on to drink largely. Two hundred years later, under the reign of Elizabeth, William Harrison gave a lively description of the plenty and comfort of the great hostelries. The Continent of Europe, he said, could show nothing like them. There were some in which two or three hundred people, with their horses, could without difficulty be lodged and fed. The bedding, the tapestry, above all, the abundance of clean and fine linen was matter of wonder. Valuable plate was often set on the tables. Nay, there were signs which had cost thirty or forty pounds.

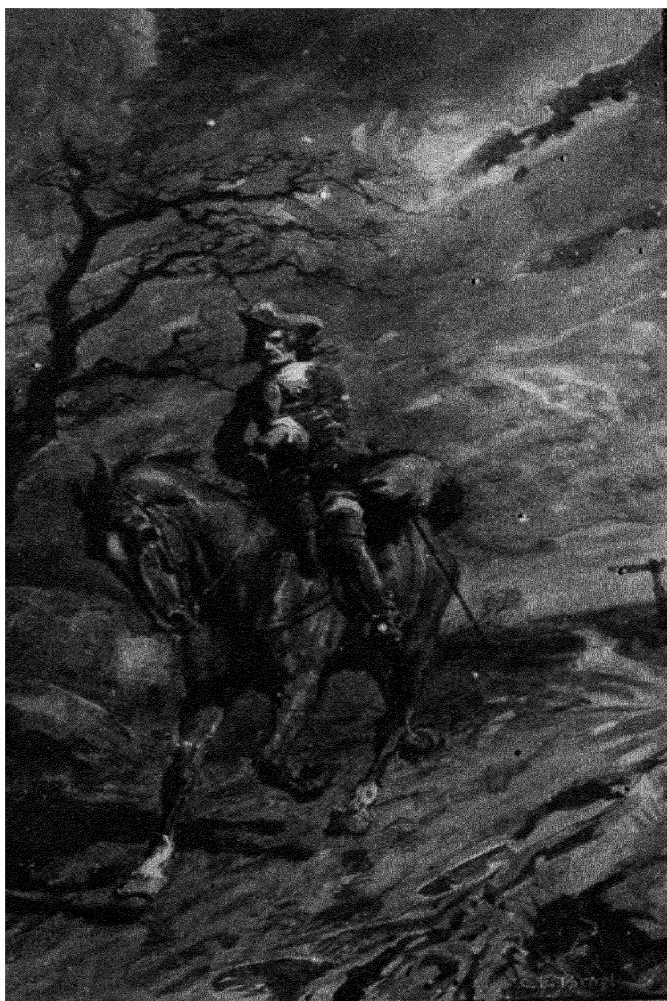
In the seventeenth century England abounded with excellent inns of every rank. The traveller sometimes, in a small village, lighted on a public house such as Walton has described, where the brick floor was swept

Travelling Two Hundred Years Ago 55

clean, where the walls were stuck round with ballads, where the sheets smelt of lavender, and where a blazing fire, a cup of good ale, and a dish of trouts fresh from the neighbouring brook, were to be procured at small charge. . At the larger houses of entertainment were to be found beds hung with silk, choice cookery, and claret equal to the best which was drunk in London. The innkeepers too, it was said, were not like other innkeepers. On the Continent the landlord was the tyrant of those who crossed the threshold. In England he was a servant. Never was an Englishman more at home than when he took his ease in his inn. Even men of fortune, who might in their own mansions have enjoyed every luxury, were often in the habit of passing their evenings in the parlour of some neighbouring house of public entertainment. They seem to have thought that comfort and freedom could in no other place be enjoyed in equal perfection. This feeling continued during many generations to be a national peculiarity. The liberty and jollity of inns long furnished matter to our novelists and dramatists. Johnson declared that a tavern chair was the throne of human felicity ; and Shenstone gently complained that no private roof, however friendly, gave the wanderer so warm a welcome as that which was to be found at an inn.

FROM MACAULAY'S *History*.





“The highwayman came riding.”

The Highwayman

PART ONE

I

THE wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees,
The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
And the highwayman came riding—

Riding—riding—

The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-door.

II

He'd a French cocked hat on his forehead, a bunch of lace
at his chin,
A coat of the claret velvet, and breeches of brown doe-skin ;
They fitted with never a wrinkle : his boots were up to the
thigh !

And he rode with a jewelled twinkle,

His pistol butts a-twinkle,

His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jewelled sky.

III

Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed in the dark inn-
yard,

And he tapped with his whip on the shutters, but all was
locked and barred ;

He whistled a tune to the window, and who should be
waiting there

But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,

Bess, the landlord's daughter,

Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

D

IV

And dark in the dark old inn-yard a stable-wicket creaked
Where Tim the ostler listened ; his face was white and
peaked ;

His eyes were hollows of madness, his hair like mouldy hay,
But he loved the landlord's daughter,

The landlord's red-lipped daughter ;
Dumb as a dog he listened, and he heard the robber say—

V

“ One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm after a prize to-night,
But I shall be back with the yellow gold before the morning
light ;

Yet, if they press me sharply, and harry me through the day,
Then look for me by moonlight,

Watch for me by moonlight,
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar
the way.”

VI

He rose upright in the stirrups ; he scarce could reach her
hand,

But she loosened her hair i' the casement ! His face burnt
like a brand

As the black cascade of perfume came tumbling over his
breast ;

And he kissed its waves in the moonlight,

(Oh, sweet black waves in the moonlight !)

Then he tugged at his rein in the moonlight, and galloped
away to the West.

PART TWO

I

He did not come in the dawning ; he did not come at noon ;
And out o' the tawny sunset, before the rise o' the moon
When the road was a gipsy's ribbon, looping the purple
moor,
A red-coat troop came marching—
Marching—marching—
King George's men came marching, up to the old inn-door.

II

They said no word to the landlord, they drank his ale instead,
But they gagged his daughter and bound her to the foot of
her narrow bed ;
Two of them knelt at her casement, with muskets at their
side !
There was death at every window ;
And hell at one dark window ;
For Bess could see, through her casement, the road that *he*
would ride.

III

They had tied her up to attention, with many a sniggering
jest ;
They had bound a musket beside her, with the barrel
beneath her breast !
“ Now keep good watch ! ” and they kissed her. She heard
the dead man say—
Look for me by moonlight ;
Watch for me by moonlight ;
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way !

IV

She twisted her hands behind her; but all the knots held good!
She writhed her hands till her fingers were wet with sweat or blood!
They stretched and strained in the darkness, and the hours crawled by like years,
Till, now, on the stroke of midnight,
Cold, on the stroke of midnight,
The tip of one finger touched it! The trigger at least was hers!

V

The tip of one finger touched it; she strove no more for the rest!
Up, she stood up to attention, with the barrel beneath her breast,
She would not risk their hearing; she would not strive again;
For the road lay bare in the moonlight;
Blank and bare in the moonlight;
And the blood of her veins in the moonlight throbbed to her love's refrain.

VI

Tlot-tlot; tlot-tlot! Had they heard it? The horse-hoofs ringing clear;
Tlot-tlot, tlot-tlot, in the distance? Were they deaf that they did not hear?
Down the ribbon of moonlight, over the brow of the hill,
The highwayman came riding,
Riding, riding!
The red-coats looked to their priming! She stood up, straight and still!



VII

Tlot-tlot, in the frosty silence! *Tlot-tlot*, in the echoing night!

Nearer he came and nearer! Her face was like a light!
Her eyes grew wide for a moment; she drew one last deep breath,

Then her finger moved in the moonlight,
Her musket shattered the moonlight,
Shattered her breast in the moonlight and warned him—
with her death.

VIII

He turned; he spurred to the Westward; he did not know
who stood

Bowed, with her head o'er the musket, drenched with her
own red blood!

Not till the dawn he heard it, and slowly blanched to hear
How Bess, the landlord's daughter,

The landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Had watched for her love in the moonlight, and died in the
darkness there.

IX

Back, he spurred like a madman, shrieking a curse to
the sky,

With the white road smoking behind him, and his rapier
brandished high!

Blood-red were his spurs i' the golden noon; wine-red was
his velvet coat;

When they shot him down on the highway,

Down like a dog on the highway,
And he lay in his blood on the highway, with the bunch of
lace at his throat.

.

The Highwayman

63

X

*And still of a winter's night, they say, when the wind is
in the trees,*

*When the moon is a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
When the road is a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
A highwayman comes riding—*

Riding—riding—

A highwayman comes riding, up to the old inn-door.

XI

*Over the cobbles he clatters and clangs in the dark inn-yard;
And he taps with his whip on the shutters, but all is locked
and barred;*

*He whistles a tune to the window, and who should be waiting
there*

But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,

Bess, the landlord's daughter,

Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

ALFRED NOYES.





Some Incidents in the Boyhood of Denis Duval

I. THE HIGHWAYMAN



AT Michaelmas, in the year 1776 (I promise you I remember the year), my dear and kind friend, Doctor Barnard, having to go to London with his rents, proposed to take me to London to see my other patron, Sir Peter Denis, between whom and the Doctor there was a great friendship; and it is to those dear friends that I owe the great good fortune which has befallen me in life. Indeed, when I think of what I might have been, and what I have escaped, my heart is full of thankfulness for the great mercies which have fallen to my

The Boyhood of Denis Duval 65

share. Well, at this happy and eventful Michaelmas of 1776, Doctor Barnard says to me, "Denis, my child, if thy mother will grant leave, I have a mind to take thee to see thy godfather, Sir Peter Denis, in London. I am going up with my rents, my neighbour Weston will share the horses with me, and thou shalt see the Tower, and Mrs. Salmon's waxwork, before thou art a week older."

You may suppose that this proposition made Master Denis Duval jump for joy. Of course I had heard of London, all my life, and talked with people who had been there, but that I should go myself to Admiral Sir Peter Denis's house, and see the play, Saint Paul's, and Mrs. Salmon's, here was a height of bliss I never had hoped to attain. I could not sleep for thinking of my pleasure; I had some money, and I promised to buy as many toys for Agnes as the Chevalier used to bring her. My mother said I should go like a gentleman, and turned me out in a red waistcoat with plate buttons, a cock to my hat, and ruffles to my shirts.

How I counted the hours of the night before our departure! I was up before the dawn packing my little valise. I got my little brass-barrelled pocket pistol, and I loaded it with shot. I put it away in my breast-pocket; and if we met with a highwayman I promised myself he should have my charge of lead in his face. The Doctor's post-chaise was at his stables not very far from us. The stable lanterns were alight, and Brown, the Doctor's man, cleaning the carriage, when Mr. Denis Duval came up to the stable door, lugging his portmanteau after him through the twilight. Was ever daylight so long a-coming?

Ah ; there come the horses at last ; the horses from the "King's Head," and old Pascoe, the one-eyed postilion. How well I remember the sound of their hoofs in that silent street ! I can tell everything that happened on that day : what we had for dinner—viz., veal cutlets, and French beans, at Maidstone ; where we changed horses ; and the colour of the horses.

"Here, Brown ! Here's my portmanteau ! I say, where shall I stow it ?"

"My portmanteau" was about as large as a good-sized apple-pie. I jump into the carriage and we drive up to the Rectory ; and I think the Doctor will never come out. There he is at last : with his mouth full of buttered toast, and I bob my head to him a hundred times out of the chaise window. Then I must jump out, forsooth. "Brown, shall I give you a hand with the luggage ?" say I, and I dare say they all laugh. Well, I am so happy that anybody may laugh who likes. The Doctor comes out, his precious box under his arm. I see dear Mrs. Barnard's great cap nodding at us out of the parlour window as we drive away from the Rectory door, to stop a hundred yards farther on at the Priory.

There at the parlour window stands my dear little Agnes, in a white frock, in a great cap with a blue riband and bow, and curls clustering over her face. I wish Sir Joshua Reynolds had painted thee in those days, my dear ; but thou wert the very image of one of his little ladies, that one who became Duchess of Buccleuch afterwards. There is my Agnes, and now presently comes out Mr. Weston's man and luggage, and it is

The Boyhood of Denis Duval 67

fixed on the roof. His master, Mr. George Weston, follows. This was the most good-natured of the two, and I shall never forget my sensation of delight, when I saw him bring out two holster-pistols, which he placed each in a pocket of the chaise. Is Tommy Chapman, the apothecary's son of Westgate, alive yet, and does he remember my wagging my head to him as our chaise whirled by? He was shaking a mat at the door of his father's shop as my lordship accompanied by my noble friends passed by.

First stage, Ham Street, "The Bear." A grey horse and a bay to change, I remember them. Second stage, Ashford. Third stage—I think I am asleep about the third stage: and no wonder, a poor little wretch who had been awake half the night before, and no doubt many nights previous, thinking of this wonderful journey. Fourth stage, Maidstone, "The Bell."

"And here we stop to dinner, Master Shrimpcatcher," says the Doctor, and I jump down out of the carriage, nothing loth. The Doctor followed with his box, of which he never lost sight.

The Doctor liked his ease in his inn, and took his sip of punch so comfortably, that I, for my part, thought he never would be gone. I was out in the stables and looking at the horses, and talking to the ostler who was rubbing his nags down. I dare say I had a peep into the kitchen, and at the pigeons in the inn-yard, and at all things which were to be seen at "The Bell," while my two companions were still at their interminable punch. It was an old-fashioned inn, with a gallery round the courtyard. Heaven bless us! Falstaff and

Bardolph may have stopped there on the road to Gadshill.

I was in the stable looking at the nags, when Mr. Weston comes out of the inn, looks round the court, opens the door of the post-chaise, takes out his pistols, looks at the priming, and puts them back again. Then we are off once more, and time enough too. It seemed to me many hours since we had arrived at that creaking old "Bell." And away we go through Addington, Eynesford, by mfles and miles of hop-gardens. I dare say I did not look at the prospect much, beautiful though it might be, my young eyes being for ever on the look-out for Saint Paul's and London.

Towards the close of the day Master Denis Duval fell asleep on Doctor Barnard's shoulder, and the good-natured clergyman did not disturb him.

I woke up with the sudden stoppage of the carriage. The evening was falling. We were upon a lonely common, and a man on horseback was at the window of the post-chaise.

"Give us out that box! and your money!" I heard him say in a very gruff voice. O heavens! we were actually stopped by a highwayman! It was delightful.

Mr. Weston jumped at his pistols very quick. "Here's our money, you scoundrel!" says he, and fired point-blank at the rogue's head. Confusion! The pistol missed fire. He aimed the second, and again no report followed!

"Some scoundrel has been tampering with these," says Mr. Weston, aghast.

"Come," says Captain Macheath, "come, your——"



W. P. G. 1001

But the next word the fellow spoke was a frightful oath ; for I took out my little pistol, which was full of shot, and fired it in his face. The man reeled, and I thought would have fallen out of his saddle. The postillion, frightened no doubt, clapped spurs to his horse, and began to gallop.

“Shan’t we stop and take that rascal, sir?” said I to the Doctor.

On which Mr. Weston gave a peevish kind of push at me, and said, “No, no. It is getting quite dark. Let us push on.” And, indeed, the highwayman’s horse had taken fright, and we could see him galloping away across the common.

I was so elated to think that I, a little boy, had shot a live highwayman, that I daresay I bragged outrageously of my action. We set down Mr. Weston at his inn in the Borough, and crossed London Bridge, and there I was in London at last. Yes, and that was the Monument, and then we came to the Exchange, and yonder, yonder was Saint Paul’s! We went up Holborn, and so to Ormond Street, where my patron lived in a noble mansion ; and where his wife, my Lady Denis, received me with a great deal of kindness. You may be sure the battle with the highwayman was fought over again, and I got due credit from myself and others for my gallantry.

Sir Peter and his lady introduced me to a number of their acquaintances as the little boy who shot the highwayman. They received a great deal of company, and I was frequently had in to their dessert. I suppose I must own that my home was below in the house-

The Boyhood of Denis Duval 71

keeper's room with Mrs. Jellicoe; but my Lady took such a fancy to me that she continually had me upstairs, took me out driving in her chariot, or ordered one of the footmen to take me to see the sights of the town, and sent me in his charge to the play. It was the last year Garrick performed; and I saw him in the play of "Macbeth," in a gold-laced blue coat with scarlet plush waistcoat and breeches. Ormond Street, Bloomsbury, was on the outskirts of the town then, with open country behind, stretching as far as Hampstead. Bedford House, north of Bloomsbury Square, with splendid gardens, was close by, and Montague House, where I saw stuffed camelopards, and all sorts of queer things from foreign countries. Then there were the Tower, and the Wax-works, and Westminster Abbey, and Vauxhall. What a glorious week of pleasure it was! At the week's end the kind Doctor went home again, and all those dear kind people gave me presents, and cakes, and money, and spoilt the little boy who shot the highwayman.

The affair was actually put in the newspapers, and who should come to hear of it but my gracious Sovereign himself. One day, Sir Peter Denis took me to see Kew Gardens and the new Chinese pagoda Her Majesty had put up. Whilst walking here, and surveying this pretty place, I had the good fortune to see His Majesty, walking with our most gracious Queen, the Prince of Wales, and, I think, two, or it may be three, of the Princesses. Her Majesty knew Sir Peter from having sailed with him, saluted him graciously, and engaged him in conversation. And the best of Monarchs, looking towards his humblest subject and servant, said, "What, what? Little

boy shot the highwayman! Shot him in the face! Shot him in the face!" On which the youthful Princesses graciously looked towards me, and the King, asking Sir Peter what my profession was to be, the Admiral said I hoped to be a sailor and serve His Majesty.

I promise you I was a mighty grand personage when I went home; and both at Rye and Winchelsea scores of people asked me what the King said.

II. THE THREE GUINEAS

AMONG the sailors of Winchelsea was the father of one of my town playfellows, by name Hookham, a seafaring man, who had met with an accident at his business—strained his back—and was incapable of work for a time. Hookham was an improvident man; the rent got into arrears. My grandfather was his landlord, and, I fear me, not the most humane creditor in the world.

Now when I returned home after my famous visit to London, my patron, Sir Peter Denis, gave me two guineas, and my Lady made me a present of another. No doubt I should have spent this money had I received it sooner in London; but in our little town of Winchelsea there was nothing to tempt me in the shops, except a fowling-piece at the pawnbroker's, for which I had a great longing. But Mr. Triboulet wanted four guineas for the gun, and I had but three and would not go into debt. He would have given me the piece on credit, and frequently tempted me with it, but I resisted manfully, though I could not help hankering about the shop, and going again and again to look at the beautiful



gun. The stock fitted my shoulder to a nicety. It was of the most beautiful workmanship.

"Why not take it now, Master Duval," Monsieur Triboulet said to me, "and pay me the remaining guinea when you please? Ever so many gentlemen have been to look at it; and I should be sorry now, indeed I should, to see such a beauty go out of the town."

As I was talking to Triboulet (it may have been for the tenth time), some one came in with a telescope to pawn, and went away with fifteen shillings.

"Don't you know who that is?" says Triboulet (who was a chatterbox of a man). "That is John Hookham's wife. It is but hard times with them since John's accident. I have more of their goods here, and, *entre nous*, John has a hard landlord, and quarter day is just at hand."

I knew well enough that John's landlord was hard, as he was my own grandfather. "If I take my three pieces to Hookham," thought I, "he may find the rest of the rent." And so he did; and my three guineas went into my grandfather's pocket out of mine; and I suppose some one else bought the fowling-piece for which I had so longed.

"What, is it *you* who have given me this money, Master Denis?" said poor Hookham, who was sitting in his chair, groaning and haggard with his illness. "I can't take it—I ought not to take it."

"Nay," said I; "I should only have bought a toy with it, and if it comes to help you in distress, I can do without my plaything."

There was quite a chorus of benedictions from the poor family in consequence of this act of good-nature;

The Boyhood of Denis Duval 75

and I dare say I went away from Hookham's mightily pleased with myself and my own virtue.

It appears I had not been long gone when Mr. Joe Weston came in to see the man, and when he heard that I had relieved him, broke out into a flood of abuse against me, called me a scoundrel and impertinent jackanapes, who was always giving myself the airs of a gentleman, and flew out of the house in a passion. Mother heard of the transaction, too, and pinched my ear with a grim satisfaction. Grandfather said nothing, but pocketed my three guineas when Mrs. Hookham brought them; and, though I did not brag about the matter much, everything is known in a small town, and I got a great deal of credit for a very ordinary good action.

And now, strangely enough, Hookham's boy confirmed to me what certain good folks had hinted to good Doctor Barnard. "Swear," says Tom (with that wonderful energy we used to have as boys)—"swear, Denis, you never will tell! Well, then, those—you know who—the gentlemen—want to do you some mischief."

"What mischief can they do to an honest boy?" I asked.

"Oh, you don't know what they are," says Tom. "If they mean a man harm, harm will happen to him. Father says no man ever comes to good who stands in Mr. Joe's way. Where's John Wheeler, of Rye, who had a quarrel with Mr. Joe? He's in gaol. Mr. Barnes, of Playden, had words with him at Hastings market, and Barnes's ricks were burnt down before six months were over. How was Thomas Berry taken,

after deserting from the man-of-war? He is an awful man, Mr. Joe Weston is. Don't get into his way. Father says so. But you are not to tell—no, never—that he spoke about it. Don't go alone to Rye of nights, father says. Don't go on any—and you know what—any *fishing* business, except with those you know." And so Tom leaves me with a finger to his lips and terror in his face.

As for the *fishing*, though I loved a sail dearly, my mind was made up by good Doctor Barnard's advice to me. I would have no more night-fishing, such as I had seen sometimes as a boy; and when Rudge's apprentice one night invited me, and called me a coward for refusing to go, I showed him I was no coward as far as fisticuffs went, and stood out a battle with him; in which I do believe I should have proved conqueror, though the fellow was four years my senior, had not his ally, Miss Sukey Rudge, joined him in the midst of our fight, and knocked me down with the kitchen bellows, when they both belaboured me as I lay kicking on the floor.

Mr. Elder Rudge came in at the close of this dreadful combat, and his abandoned hussy of a daughter had the impudence to declare that the quarrel arose because I was rude to her. My little maid of Winchelsea heard of this battle, as she was daily hearing slanders against me from those *worthy* Mr. Westons; but she broke into a rage at the accusation, and said to the assembled gentlemen (as she told my good mother in after days), "Denis Duval is *not* wicked! He is brave and he is good. And it is not true, the story you tell against him. It is a lie!"



And now, once more it happened that my little pistol helped to confound my enemies, and was to me, indeed, a good weapon and defence. I was for ever popping at marks with this little piece of artillery. I polished, oiled, and covered it with the utmost care, and kept it in my little room in a box of which I had the key. One day, by a most fortunate chance, I took my school-fellow, Tom Parrot, who became a great crony of mine, into the room. We went upstairs by the private door of Rudge's house, and not through the shop, where Mademoiselle Figs and Monsieur the apprentice were serving their customers; and, arrived in my room, we boys opened my box, examined the precious pistol, screw, barrel, flints, powder-horn. &c., locked the box,

and went away to school, promising ourselves a good afternoon's sport on that half-holiday. Lessons over, I returned home to dinner, to find black looks from all the inmates of the house where I lived, from the grocer, his daughter, and his apprentice ; while even the little errand-boy who blacked the boots and swept the shop stared at me impertinently, and said, " Oh, Denis, ain't you going to catch it ! "

" What is the matter ? " I asked, very haughtily.

" Oh, my Lord ! we'll soon show your Lordship what is the matter." (This was a silly name I had in the town and at school, where, I believe, I gave myself not a few airs since I had worn my fine new clothes, and paid my visit to London.) " This accounts for his laced waistcoat, and his guineas which he flings about. Does your Lordship know these shillings, and this half-crown ? Look at them, Mr. Beales ! See the marks on them which I scratched with my own hand before I put them into the till from which my Lord took 'em."

Shillings ?—till ? What did they mean ?

" How dare you ask, you little hypocrite ! " screams out Miss Rudge. " I marked these shillings and this half-crown with my own needle, I did ; and of that I can take my Bible oath."

" Well, and what then ? " I asked, remembering how this young woman had not scrupled to bear false witness in another charge against me.

" What then ? They were in the till this morning, young fellow ; and you know well enough where they were found afterwards," says Mr. Beales. " Come, come ! This is a bad job. This is a sessions job, my lad."

The Boyhood of Denis Duval 79

"But where *were* they found?" again I asked.

"We'll tell you that before Squire Boroughs and the magistrates, you young vagabond!"

"You little viper, that have turned and stung me!"

"You precious young scoundrel!"

"You wicked little story-telling, good-for-nothing little thief!" cried Rudge, the apprentice, and Miss Rudge in a breath. I stood bewildered by their outcry, and, indeed, not quite comprehending the charge which they made against me.

"The magistrates are sitting at the Town Hall now. We will take the little villain there at once," says the grocer. "You bring the box with you, constable. What will his poor grandfather say?" And, wondering still at the charge made against me, I was about to walk through the streets to the Town Hall, passing on the way at least a score of our boys, who were enjoying their half-holiday. It was market-day, too, and the town full. It is forty years ago, but I dream about that dreadful day still; and, an old gentleman of sixty, fancy myself walking through Rye market with Mr. Beale's hand clutching my collar!

A number of our boys joined this dismal procession and accompanied me into the magistrates' room. "Denis Duval up for stealing money!" cries one. "This accounts for his fine clothes," sneers another. "He'll be hanged," says a third. The market people stare and crowd round and jeer. I feel as if in a horrible nightmare. We passed under the pillars of the Market House, up the steps to the Town Hall, where the magistrates were, who chose market-day for their sittings.

How my heart throbbed, as I saw my dear Doctor Barnard seated among them.

"Oh, Doctor," cries poor Denis, clasping his hands, "*you* don't believe me guilty?"

"Guilty of what?" cries the Doctor, from the raised table round which the gentlemen sat.

"Guilty of stealing."

"Guilty of robbing my till."

"Guilty of taking two half-crowns, three shillings, and two pence in copper, all marked," shrieked out Rudge, the apprentice, and Miss Rudge in a breath.

"Denny Duval steal sixpences!" cries the Doctor; "I would as soon believe he stole the dragon off the church steeple!"

"Silence, you boys! Silence in the court there, or flog 'em and turn 'em all out," says the 'magistrates' clerk. Some of our boys—friends of mine—who had crowded into the place, were hurrying at my kind Doctor Barnard's speech.

"It is a most serious charge," says the clerk.

"But what is the charge, my good Mr. Hickson? You might as well put me into the dock as that——"

"Pray, sir, will you allow the business of the court to go on?" asks the clerk testily. "Make your statement, Mr. Rudge, and don't be afraid of anybody. You are under the protection of the court, sir."

And now for the first time I heard the particulars of the charge made against me. Rudge, and his daughter after him, stated (on oath, I am shocked to say) that for some time past they had missed money from the till; small sums of money, in shillings and half-crowns,



they could not say how much. It might be two pounds, three pounds, in all ; but the money was constantly going. At last Miss Rudge said she was determined to mark some money, and did so ; and that money was found in that box which belonged to Denis Duval, and which the constable brought into court.

“Oh, gentlemen !” I cried out in agony, “it’s a wicked wicked lie, and it’s not the first she has told about me. A week ago she said I wanted to kiss her, and she and Bevil both set on me ; and I never wanted to kiss the nasty thing.”

“You did, you wicked boy !” cries Miss Sukey. “And Edward Bevil came to my rescue ; and you struck me, like a low, mean coward ; and we beat him well and served him right, the little abandoned boy.”

“And he kicked one of my teeth out—you did, you little villain !” roars Bevil, whose jaws had indeed suffered in that scuffle in the kitchen, when his precious sweetheart came to his aid with the bellows.

“He called me a coward, and I fought him fair, though he is ever so much older than me,” whimpers out the prisoner. “And Sukey Rudge set upon me, and beat me too ; and if I kicked him, he kicked me.”

“And since this kicking match they have found out that you stole their money, have they ?” says the Doctor, and turns round, appealing to his brother magistrates.

“Miss Rudge, please to tell the rest of your story,” calls out the justices’ clerk.

The rest of the Rudges’ story was, that having their suspicions roused against me, they determined to examine

The Boyhood of Denis Duval 83

my cupboards and boxes in my absence, to see whether the stolen objects were to be found ; and in my box they discovered the two marked half-crowns, the three marked shillings, a brass-barrelled pistol, which were now in court. "Me and Mr. Bevil, the apprentice, found the money in the box ; and we called my papa from the shop, and we fetched Mr. Beales, the constable, who lives over the way ; and when the little monster came back from school, we seized upon him, and brought him before your worships ; and hanging is what I said he would always come to," shrieks my enemy Miss Rudge.

"Why, I have the key of that box in my pocket now !" I cried out.

"We had means of opening it," says Miss Rudge, looking very red.

"Oh, if you have another key——" interposes the Doctor.

"We broke it open with the tongs and poker," says Miss Rudge, "me and Edward did it—I mean Mr. Bevil, the apprentice."

"When?" said I, in great tremor.

"When? When you were at school, you little miscreant! Half an hour before you came back to dinner."

"Tom Parrot, Tom Parrot!" I cried. "Call Tom Parrot, gentlemen. For goodness' sake call Tom!" I said, my heart beating so that I could hardly speak.

"Here I am, Denny," pipes Tom in the crowd ; and presently he comes up to their honours on the bench.

"Speak to Tom, Doctor, dear Doctor Barnard !" I continued. "Tom, when did I show you my pistol?"

"Just before ten o'clock school."

"What did I do?"

"You unlocked your box, took the pistol out of a handkerchief, showed it to me, and two flints, a powder-horn, a bullet mould, and some bullets, and put them back again, and locked the box."

"Was there any money in the box?"

"There was nothing in the box but the pistol, and the bullets and things. I looked into it. It was as empty as my hand."

"And Denis Duval has been sitting by you in school ever since?"

"Ever since—except when I was called up and caned for my Corderius," said Tom, with a roguish look; and there was a great laughter and shout of applause from our boys of Pocock's, when the testimony was given in their schoolfellow's favour.

My kind Doctor held his hand over the railing to me, and when I took it, my heart was so full that my eyes overflowed. I thought of little Agnes. What would she have felt if her Denis had been committed as a thief? I had such a rapture of thanks and gratitude that I think the pleasure of the acquittal was more than equivalent to the anguish of the accusation. What a shout all Pocock's boys sent up as I went out of the justice-room! We trooped joyfully down the stairs, and there were fresh shouts and hurrahs as we got down to the market. I saw Mr. Joe Weston buying corn at a stall. He only looked at me once. His grinding teeth and his clenched riding-whip did not frighten me in the least now.

As our joyful procession of boys passed by Partlett's

The Boyhood of Denis Duval 85

the pastry-cook's, one of the boys—Samuel Arbin—I remember the fellow well—a greedy boy, with a large beard and whiskers, though only fifteen years old—insisted that I ought to stand treat in consequence of my victory over my enemies. As far as a groat went, I said I was ready : for that was all the money I had.

“Oh, you story-teller!” cries the other. “What have you done with your three guineas which you were bragging about and showing to the boys at school? I suppose they were in the box when it was broken open.”

This Samuel Arbin was one of the boys who had jeered when I was taken in charge by the constable, and would have liked me to be guilty, I almost think. I am afraid I had bragged about my money when I possessed it, and may have shown my shining gold pieces to some of the boys in school.

“I know what he has done with his money!” broke in my steadfast crony, Tom Parrot. “He has given it away, every shilling of it, to a poor family who wanted it, and nobody ever knew *you* give away a shilling, Samuel Arbin,” he says.

“Unless he could get eighteenpence for it!” sang out another little voice.

“Tom Parrot, I'll break every bone in your body, as sure as my name is Arbin!” cried the other in a fury.

“Sam Arbin,” said I, “after you have finished Tom, you must try me ; or we'll do it now, if you like.”

To say the truth, I had long had an inclination to try my hand against Arbin. He was an ill friend to me, and amongst the younger boys a bully and a usurer to boot. The rest called out, “A ring ! a ring ! Let us go



on the green and have it out ! ” being in their innocent years always ready for a fight.

But this one was never to come off ; and (except in later days, when I went to revisit the old place, and ask for a half-holiday for my young successors at Pocock’s) I was never again to see the ancient school-room. While we boys were brawling in the market-place before the pastry-cook’s door, Doctor Barnard came up, and our quarrel was hushed in a moment.

“ What ! fighting and quarrelling already ? ” says the Doctor sternly.

“ It wasn’t Denny’s fault, sir ! ” cried out several of the boys. “ It was Arbin began.”

The Boyhood of Denis Duval 87

And, indeed, I can say for myself that in all the quarrels I have had in life—and they have not been few—I consider I *always* have been in the right.

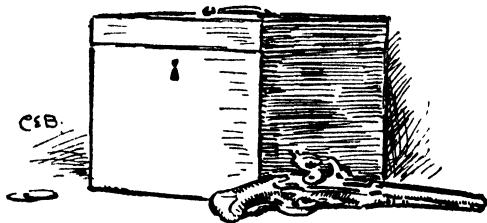
“Come along with me, Denny,” says the Doctor, taking me by the shoulder; and he led me away, and we took a walk in the town together; and as we passed old Ypres Tower, which was built by King Stephen, tney say, and was a fort in old days, but is used as the town-prison now—

“Suppose you had been looking from behind those bars now, Denny, and awaiting your trial at assizes? Yours would not have been a pleasant plight,” Doctor Barnard said.

“But I was innocent, sir! You know I was!”

“Yes. Praise be where praise is due. But if you had not providentially been able to prove your innocence—if you and your friend Parrot had not happened to inspect your box—you would have been in yonder place. Ha! there is the bell ringing for afternoon service, which my good friend Doctor Wing keeps up. What say you? Shall we go and—and—offer up our thanks, Denny—for—the immense peril from which—you have been—delivered?”

From *Denis Duval* by W. M. THACKERAY.





The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire, 1571

THE old mayor climbed the belfry tower,
The ringers ran by two, by three;
"Pull, if ye never pulled before;
Good ringers, pull your best," quoth he.
"Play up, play up, O Boston bells!
Ply all your changes, all your swells,
Play up 'The Brides of Enderby'!"

Men say it was a stolen tide—
The Lord that sent it, He knows all;
But in mine ears doth still abide
The message that the bells let fall:
And there was naught of strange, beside
The flights of mews and peewits pied,
By millions crouched on the old sea-wall.

The High Tide, Lincolnshire, 1571 89

I sat and spun within my door,
My thread brake off, I raised mine eyes!
The level sun, like ruddy ore,
Lay sinking in the barren skies;
And dark against day's golden death,
She moved where Lindis wandereth,—
My son's fair wife, Elizabeth.

“Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!” calling,
Ere the early dews were falling,
Far away I heard her song,
“Cusha! Cusha!” all along,
Where the reedy Lindis floweth,
Floweth, floweth,
From the meads where melick groweth.
Faintly came her milking-song.

“Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!” calling,
“For the dews will soon be falling;
Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
Mellow, mellow;
Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
Come up, Whitefoot; come up, Lightfoot;
Quit the stalks of parsley hollow,
Hollow, hollow;
Come up, Jetty, rise and follow,
From the clovers lift your head;
Come up, Whitefoot; come up, Lightfoot;
Come up, Jetty, rise and follow,
Jetty, to the milking-shed.”

All fresh the level pasture lay,
And not a shadow might be seen,
Save where full five good miles away
The steeple towered from out the green;

And lo! the great bell far and wide
Was heard in all the country side
That Saturday at eventide.

The swanherds, where their sedges are,
Moved on in sunset's golden breath;
The shepherd lads I heard afar,
And my son's wife, Elizabeth;
Till floating o'er the grassy sea
Came down that kindly message free,
"The Brides of Mavis Enderby."

Then some looked up into the sky,
And all along where Lindis flows
To where the goodly vessels lie,
And where the lordly steeple shows.
They said, "And why should this thing be,
What danger lowers by land or sea?
They ring the tune of Enderby!"

"For evil news from Mablethorpe,
Of pirate galleys warping down;
For ships ashore beyond the Scorpe,
They have not spared to wake the town;
But while the west is red to see,
And storms be none, and pirates flee,
Why ring 'The Brides of Enderby'?"

I looked without, and lo! my son
Came riding down with might and main.
He raised a shout as he drew on,
Till all the welkin rang again,
"Elizabeth! Elizabeth!"
(A sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my son's wife Elizabeth.)

The High Tide, Lincolnshire, 1571 91

“The old sea-wall” (he cried) “is down,
The rising tide comes on apace,
And boats adrift in yonder town
Go sailing up the market-place.”
He shook as one that looks on death :
“God save you, Mother!” straight he saith;
“Where is my wife Elizabeth?”

“Good son, where Lindis winds away,
With her two bairns I marked her long;
And ere yon bells began to play,
Afar I heard her milking-song.”
He looked across the grassy sea,
To right, to left, “Ho, Enderby!”
They rang “The Brides of Enderby!”

With that he cried and beat his breast;
For lo! along the river's bed
A mighty eygre reared his crest,
And up the Lindis raging sped.
It swept with thunderous noises loud,
Shaped like a curling, snow-white cloud,
Or like a demon in a shroud.

And rearing Lindis backward pressed,
Shook all her trembling banks amain;
Then madly at the eygre's breast
Flung up her weltering walls again.
Then banks came down with ruin and rout—
Then beaten foam flew round about—
Then all the mighty floods were out.

So far, so fast the eygre drave,
The heart had hardly time to beat

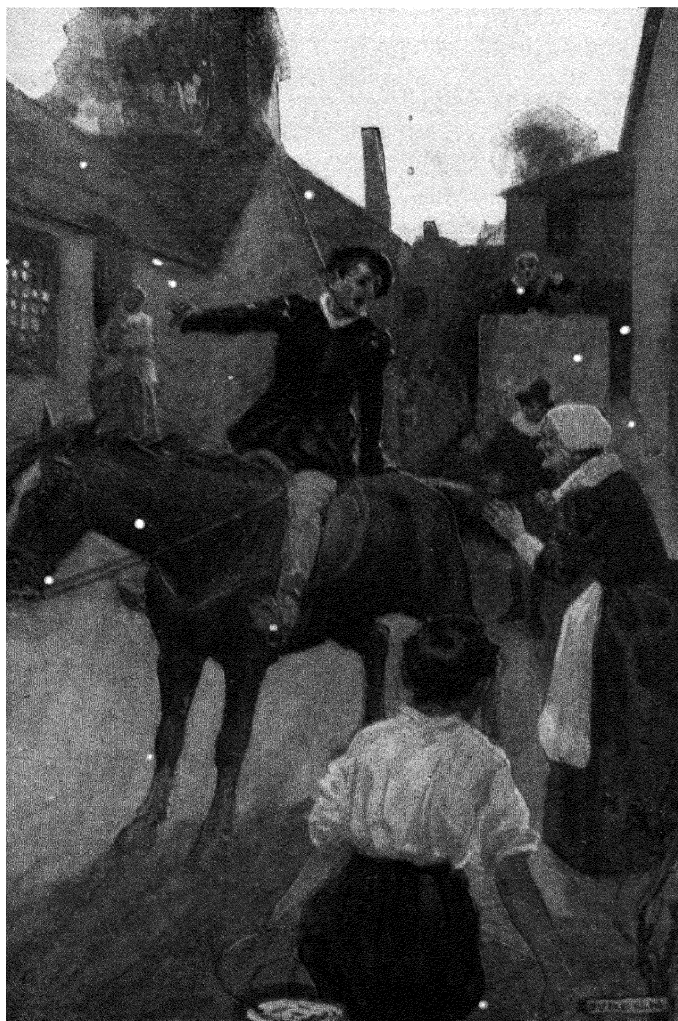
Before a shallow, seething wave
Sobbed in the grasses at our feet ;
The feet had hardly time to flee
Before it brake against the knee,
And all the world was in the sea.

Upon the roof we sat that night ;
The noise of bells went sweeping by ;
I marked the lofty beacon light
Stream from the church-tower, red and high—
A lurid mark and dread to see ;
And awsome bells they were to me,
That in the dark rang " Enderby."

They rang the sailor lads to guide
From roof to roof who fearless rowed ;
And I—my son was at my side,
And yet the ruddy beacon glowed :
And yet he moaned beneath his breath ;
" O come in life, or come in death !
O lost ! my love Elizabeth."

And didst thou visit him no more ?
Thou didst, thou didst, my daughter dear !
The waters laid thee at his door
Ere yet the early dawn was clear.
The pretty bairns in fast embrace,
The lifted sun shone on thy face,
Down drifted to thy dwelling-place.

That flow strewed wrecks about the grass ;
That ebb swept out the flocks to sea ;
A fatal ebb and flow, alas !
To many more than mine and me :



“The old sea-wall ” (he cried) “is down.”

But each will mourn his own (she saith),
And sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my son's wife Elizabeth.

I shall never hear her more
By the reedy Lindis shore,
"Cusha! Cusha! Cusla!" calling,
Ere the early dewes be falling;
I shall never hear her song,
"Cusha! Cusha!" all along,
Where the sunny Lindis floweth,
 Floweth, floweth;
'From the meads where melick groweth.
When the water, winding down,
Onward floweth to the town.

I shall never see her more
Where the reeds and rushes quiver.
 Shiver, quiver;
Stand beside the sobbing river,
Sobbing, throbbing in its falling,
To the sandy, lonesome shore;
I shall never hear her calling,
"Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
 Mellow, mellow;
Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
Come up, Whitefoot; come up, Lightfoot;
Quit your pipes of parsley hollow,
 Hollow, hollow;
Come up, Lightfoot, rise and follow:
 Lightfoot, Whitefoot,
 From your clovers lift your head;
Come up, Jetty, follow, follow,
 Jetty, to the milking-shed."

JEAN INGELow.



The Battle of Bushy Run

I



WHEN on Sunday, the third of July, Ourry's express rode into Carlisle with the disastrous news from Presqu' isle and the other outposts, he stopped for a moment in the village street to water his horse. A crowd of countrymen were instantly about him besieging him with questions. He told his ill-omened story; and added as, remounting, he rode towards Bouquet's tent, "The Indians will be here soon." All was now excitement and consternation. Messengers hastened out to spread the tidings; and every road and pathway leading into Carlisle was beset with the flying settlers, flocking thither for refuge. Soon rumours were heard that the Indians were come. Some of the fugitives had seen the smoke of burning

houses rising from the valleys ; and these reports were fearfully confirmed by the appearance of miserable wretches, who, half frantic with grief and dismay, had fled from blazing buildings and slaughtered families. A party of the inhabitants armed themselves and went out, to warn the living and bury the dead. Reaching Shearman's Valley, they found fields laid waste, stacked wheat on fire, and the houses yet in flames ; and they grew sick with horror at seeing a group of hogs tearing and devouring the bodies of the dead. As they advanced up the valley, everything betokened the recent presence of the enemy, while columns of smoke, rising among the surrounding mountains, showed how general was the work of destruction.

On the preceding day, six men, assembled for reaping the harvest, had been seated at dinner at the house of Campbell, a settler on the Juniata. Four or five Indians suddenly burst the door, fired among them, and then beat down the survivors with the butts of their rifles. One young man leaped from his seat, snatched a gun which stood in a corner, discharged it into the breast of the warrior who was rushing upon him, and leaping through an open window, made his escape. He fled through the forest to a settlement at some distance, where he related his story. Upon this, twelve young men volunteered to cross the mountain, and warn the inhabitants of the neighbouring Tuscarora valley. On entering it, they found that the enemy had been there before them. Some of the houses were on fire, while others were still standing with no tenants but the dead. Under the shed of a farmer the Indians had

The Battle of Bushy Run 97

been feasting off the flesh of the cattle they had killed, and the meat had not yet grown cold.

Pursuing their course, the white men found the spot where several detached parties of the enemy had united almost immediately before ; and they boldly resolved to follow, in order to ascertain what direction the marauders had taken. The trail led them up a deep and woody pass of the Tuscarora. Here the yell of the war-whoop and the din of firearms suddenly greeted them, and five of their number were shot down. Thirty warriors rose from their ambuscade, and rushed upon them. They gave one discharge, scattered, and ran for their lives. One of them, a boy named Charles Eliot, as he fled, plunging through the thickets, heard an Indian tearing the boughs behind him, in furious pursuit. He seized his powder-horn, poured the contents at random down the muzzle of his gun, threw in a bullet after them, without using the ramrod, and, wheeling about, discharged the piece into the breast of his pursuer. He saw the Indian shrink back and roll over into the bushes. He continued his flight ; but a moment after, a voice called his name. Turning to the spot, he saw one of his comrades stretched helpless upon the ground. This man had been mortally wounded at the first fire, but had fled a few rods from the scene of blood, before his strength gave out. Eliot approached him. "Take my gun," said the dying frontiersman. "Whenever you see an Indian, kill him with it, and then I shall be satisfied." Eliot, with several others of the party, escaped, and finally reached Carlisle, where his story excited a spirit of uncontrol-



lable wrath and vengeance among the fierce backwoodsmen. Several parties went out; and one of them, commanded by the sheriff of the place, encountered a band of Indians, routed them after a sharp fight, and brought in several scalps.

The surrounding country was by this time completely abandoned by the settlers, many of whom, not content with seeking refuge at Carlisle, continued their flight to the eastward, and headed by the clergyman of that place, pushed on to Lancaster, and even to Philadelphia. Carlisle presented a most deplorable spectacle. A multitude of the refugees, unable to find shelter in the town, had encamped in the woods or on the adjacent fields, erecting huts of branches and bark, and living on such charity as the slender means of the townspeople could supply. Passing among them, one would have witnessed every form of human misery. In these wretched encampments were men, women, and children bereft at one stroke of friends, of home, and the means of supporting life. Some stood aghast and bewildered at the sudden and fatal blow; others were sunk in the apathy of despair; others were weeping and moaning with irrepressible anguish. With not a few, the craven passion of fear drowned all other emotion, and day and night they were haunted with visions of the bloody knife and the reeking scalp; while in others every faculty was absorbed by the burning thirst for vengeance, and mortal hatred against the whole Indian race.

The miserable multitude were soon threatened with famine, and gathered in crowds around the tents of

Bouquet, begging relief, which he had not the heart to refuse. After a delay of eighteen days, the chief obstacles were overcome. Wagons and draught animals had, little by little, been collected, and provisions gathered among the settlements to the eastward. At length all was ready, and Bouquet broke up his camp, and began his march. The force under his command did not exceed five hundred men, of whom the most effective were the Highlanders of the forty-second regiment. The remnant of the seventy-seventh, which was also with him, was so enfeebled by West Indian exposures that Amherst had at first pronounced it fit only for garrison duty, and nothing but necessity had induced him to employ it on this arduous service. As the heavy wagons of the convoy lumbered along the street of Carlisle, guarded by the bare-legged Highlanders, in kilts and plaids, the crowd gazed in anxious silence; for they knew that their all was at stake on the issue of this dubious enterprise. There was little to reassure them in the thin frames and haggard look of the worn-out veterans; still less in the sight of sixty invalid soldiers, who, unable to walk, were carried in wagons, to furnish a feeble reinforcement to the small garrisons along the route. The desponding rustics watched the last gleam of the bayonets, the last flutter of the tartans, as the rear files vanished in the woods, then returned to their hovels, prepared for tidings of defeat, and ready, when they heard them, to abandon the country, and fly beyond the Susquehanna.

In truth, the adventure was no boy's play. In that gloomy wilderness lay the bones of Braddock and the

The Battle of Bushy Run 101

hundreds that perished with him. The number of the slain on that bloody day exceeded Bouquet's whole force ; while the strength of the assailants was inferior to that of the swarms who now infested the forests. Bouquet's troops were, for the most part, as little accustomed to the backwoods as those of Braddock ; but their commander had served seven years in America, and perfectly understood his work. He had attempted to engage a body of frontiersmen to join him on the march ; but they preferred to remain for the defence of their families. He was therefore forced to employ the Highlanders as flankers, to protect his line of march and prevent surprise ; but, singularly enough, these mountaineers were sure to lose themselves in the woods, and therefore proved useless. For a few days, however, his progress would be tolerably secure, at least from serious attack. His anxieties centred on Fort Ligonier, and he resolved to hazard the attempt to throw a reinforcement into it. Thirty of the best Highlanders were chosen, furnished with guides, and ordered to push forward with the utmost speed, avoiding the road, travelling by night on unfrequented paths, and lying close by day. The attempt succeeded. After resting several days at Bedford, where Ourry was expecting an attack, they again set out, found Fort Ligonier beset by Indians, and received a volley as they made for the gate ; but they entered safely, to the unspeakable relief of Blane and his beleaguered men.

Meanwhile, Bouquet's little army crept on its slow way along the Cumberland valley. Passing here and there a few scattered cabins, deserted or burnt to the

ground, they reached the hamlet of Shippensburg, somewhat more than twenty miles from their departure. Here, as at Carlisle, was gathered a starving multitude, who had fled from the knife and the tomahawk. Beyond lay a solitude whence every settler had fled. They reached Fort Loudon, on the declivity of Cove Mountain, and climbed the wood-encumbered defiles beyond. Far on their right stretched the green ridges of the Tuscarora; and, in front, mountain beyond mountain was piled against the sky. Over rocky heights and through deep valleys, they reached at length Fort Littleton, a provincial post, in which, with incredible perversity, the government of Pennsylvania had refused to place a garrison. Not far distant was the feeble little post of the Juniata, empty like the other; for the two or three men who held it had been withdrawn by Ourry. On the twenty-fifth day of July, they reached Bedford, hemmed in by encircling mountains. It was the frontier village and the centre of a scattered border population, the whole of which was now clustered in terror in and around the Fort; for the neighbouring woods were full of prowling savages. Ourry reported that for several weeks nothing had been heard from the westward, every messenger having been killed and the communication completely cut off. By the last intelligence Fort Pitt had been surrounded by Indians, and daily threatened with a general attack.

At Bedford, Bouquet had the good fortune to engage thirty backwoodsmen to accompany him. He lay encamped three days to rest men and animals, and then, leaving his invalids to garrison the Fort, put out again

The Battle of Bushy Run 103

into the sea of savage verdure that stretched beyond. The troops and convoy defiled along the road made by General Forbes in 1758, if the name of road can be given to a rugged track, hewn out by axemen through forests and swamps and up the 'steep acclivities of rugged mountains; shut in between impervious walls of trunks, boughs, and matted thickets, and overarched by a canopy of restless leaves. With difficulty and toil the wagons dragged slowly on, by hill and hollow, through brook and quagmire, over roots, rocks and stumps. Nature had formed the country for a war of ambuscades and surprises, and no pains were spared to guard against them. A band of backwoodsmen, led the way, followed closely by the pioneers; the wagons and the cattle were in the centre, guarded by the regulars; and a rear guard of backwoodsmen closed the line of march. Frontier riflemen scoured the woods far in front and on either flank, and made surprise impossible. Thus they toiled heavily on till the main ridge of the Alleghanies, a mighty wall of green, rose up before them; and they began their zigzag progress up the woody heights amid the sweltering heats of July.

The tongues of the panting oxen hung lolling from their jaws; while the pine-trees, scorching in the hot sun, diffused their resinous odours through the sultry air. At length from the windy summit the Highland soldiers could gaze around upon a boundless panorama of forest-covered mountains wilder than their own native hills. Descending from the Alleghanies, they entered upon a country less rugged and formidable in itself, but beset with constantly increasing dangers.



“The advance guard was hotly engaged.” (p. 106)

The Battle of Bushy Run 105

On the second of August they reached Fort Ligonier, about fifty miles from Bedford, and a hundred and fifty from Carlisle. The Indians who were about the place vanished at their approach, but the garrison could furnish no intelligence of the motions and designs of the enemy, having been completely blockaded for weeks. In this uncertainty, Bouquet resolved to leave behind the oxen and wagons, which formed the most cumbrous part of the convoy, in order to advance with greater celerity, and oppose a better resistance in case of attack.

Thus relieved, the army resumed its march on the fourth, taking with them three hundred and fifty pack-horses and a few cattle, and at nightfall encamped at no great distance from Ligonier. Within less than a day's march in advance lay the dangerous defiles of Turtle Creek, a stream flowing at the bottom of a deep hollow, flanked by steep declivities, along the foot of which the road at that time ran for some distance. Fearing that the enemy would lay an ambuscade at this place, Bouquet resolved to march on the following day as far as a small stream called Bushy Run ; to rest here until night, and then, by a forced march, to cross Turtle Creek under cover of the darkness.

II

ON the morning of the fifth, the tents were struck at an early hour, and the troops began their march through a country broken with hills and deep hollows, covered with the tall, dense forest, which spread for countless leagues around. By one o'clock, they had advanced seventeen miles ; and the guides assured

them that they were within half a mile of Bushy Run, their proposed resting-place. The tired soldiers were pressing forward with renewed alacrity, when suddenly the report of rifles from the front sent a thrill along the ranks ; and as they listened, the firing thickened into a fierce, sharp rattle ; while shouts and whoops, deadened by the intervening forest, showed that the advance guard was hotly engaged. The two foremost companies were at once ordered forward to support it ; but, far from abating, the fire grew so rapid and furious as to argue the presence of an enemy at once numerous and resolute. At this, the convoy was halted, the troops formed into line, and a general charge was ordered. Bearing down through the forest with fixed bayonets, they drove the yelping assailants before them, and swept the ground clear.

But at the very moment of success, a fresh burst of whoops and firing was heard from either flank ; while a confused noise from the rear showed that the convoy was attacked. It was necessary instantly to fall back for its support. Driving off the assailants, the troops formed in a circle around the crowded and terrified horses. Though they were new to the work, and though the numbers and movements of the enemy, whose yelling resounded on every side, were concealed by the thick forest, yet no man lost his composure ; and all displayed a steadiness which nothing but implicit confidence in their commander could have inspired. And now ensued a combat of a nature most harassing and discouraging. Again and again, now on this side and now on that, a crowd of Indians rushed up, pouring in a heavy fire,

The Battle of Bushy Run 107

and striving with furious outcries to break into the circle. A well-directed volley met them, followed by a steady charge of the bayonet. They did not wait an instant to receive the attack, but leaping backwards from tree to tree, soon vanished from sight, only to renew their attack with unabated ferocity in another quarter. Such was their activity that very few of them were hurt ; while the British, less expert in bush-fighting, suffered severely. Thus the fight went on, without intermission, for several hours until the forest 'grew dark with approaching night. Upon this, the Indians gradually slackened their fire, and the exhausted soldiers found time to rest.

It was impossible to change their ground in the enemy's presence, and the troops were obliged to encamp upon the hill where the combat had taken place, though not a drop of water was to be found there. Fearing a night attack, Bouquet stationed numerous sentinels and outposts to guard against it ; while the men lay down upon their arms, preserving the order they had maintained during the fight. Having completed the necessary arrangements, Bouquet, doubtful of surviving the battle of the morrow, wrote to Sir Jeffrey Amherst, in a few clear, concise words, an account of the day's events. His letter concludes as follows : "Whatever our fate may be, I thought it necessary to give your Excellency this early information, that you may, at all events, take such measures as you will think proper with the provinces, for their own safety, and the effectual relief of Fort Pitt ; as, in case of another engagement, I fear insurmountable difficul-



ties in protecting and transporting our provisions, being already so much weakened by the losses of this day, in men and horses, besides the additional necessity of carrying the wounded, whose situation is truly deplorable."

The condition of these unhappy men might well awaken sympathy. About sixty soldiers, besides several officers, had been killed or disabled. A space in the centre of the camp was prepared for the reception of the wounded, and surrounded by a wall of flour-bags from the convoy, affording some protection against the bullets which flew from all sides during the fight. Here they lay upon the ground, enduring agonies of thirst, and waiting, passive and helpless, the issue of the battle. Deprived of the animating thought that their lives and safety depended on their own exertions ; surrounded by

a wilderness, and by scenes to the horror of which no degree of familiarity could render the imagination callous, they must have endured mental sufferings, compared to which the pain of their wounds was slight. In the probable event of defeat, a fate inexpressibly horrible awaited them ; while even victory would not ensure their safety, since any great increase in their numbers would render it impossible for their comrades to transport them.

Nor was the condition of those who had hitherto escaped an enviable one. Though they were about equal in number to their assailants, yet the dexterity and alertness of the Indians, joined to the nature of the country, gave all the advantages of a greatly superior force. The enemy were, moreover, exulting in the fullest confidence of success ; for it was in these very forests that, eight years before, they had nearly destroyed twice their number of the best British troops. Throughout the earlier part of the night, they kept up a dropping fire upon the camp ; while, at short intervals, a wild whoop from the thick surrounding gloom told with what fierce eagerness they waited to glut their vengeance on the morrow. The camp remained in darkness, for it would have been dangerous to build fires within its precincts, to direct the aim of the lurking marksmen. Surrounded by such terrors, the men snatched a disturbed and broken sleep, recruiting their exhausted strength for the renewed struggle of the morning.

With the earliest dawn of day, and while the damp cool forest was still involved in twilight, there arose

around the camp a general burst of those horrible cries which form the ordinary prelude of an Indian battle. Instantly, from every side at once, the enemy opened their fire, approaching under cover of the trees and bushes, and levelling with a close and deadly aim. Often, as on the previous day, they would rush up with furious impetuosity, striving to break into the ring of troops. They were repulsed at every point ; but the British, though constantly victorious, were beset with undiminished perils, while the violence of the enemy seemed every moment on the increase. True to their favourite tactics, they would never stand their ground when attacked, but vanished at the first gleam of the levelled bayonet, only to appear again the moment the danger was past. The troops, fatigued by the long march and equally long battle of the previous day, were maddened by the torments of thirst, "more intolerable," says their commander, "than the enemy's fire." They were fully conscious of the peril in which they stood, of wasting away by slow degrees beneath the shot of assailants at once so daring, so cautious, and so active, and upon whom it was impossible to inflict any decisive injury. The Indians saw their distress, and pressed them closer and closer, redoubling their yells and howlings ; while some of them, sheltered behind trees, assailed the troops in bad English with abuse and derision.

Meanwhile the interior of the camp was a scene of confusion. The horses, secured in a crowd near the wall of flour-bags which covered the wounded, were often struck by the bullets, and wrought to the height

The Battle of Bushy Run 111

of terror by the mingled din of whoops, shrieks, and firing. They would break away by half scores at a time, burst through the ring of troops and the outer circle of assailants, and scour madly up and down the hillsides ; while many of the drivers, overcome by the terrors of a scene in which they could bear no active part, hid themselves among the bushes and could neither hear nor obey orders.

It was now about ten o'clock. Oppressed with heat, fatigue, and thirst, the distressed troops still maintained a weary and wavering defence, encircling the convoy in a yet unbroken ring. They were fast falling in their ranks, and the strength and spirits of the survivors had begun to flag. If the fortunes of the day were to be retrieved, the effort must be made at once ; and happily the mind of the commander was equal to the emergency. In the midst of the confusion he conceived a masterly stratagem. Could the Indians be brought together in a body, and made to stand their ground when attacked, there could be little doubt of the result ; and to effect this object, Bouquet determined to increase their confidence, which had already mounted to an audacious pitch. Two companies of infantry, forming a part of the ring which had been exposed to the hottest fire, were ordered to fall back into the interior of the camp ; while the troops on either hand joined their files across the vacant space, as if to cover the retreat of their comrades.

These orders, given at a favourable moment, were executed with great promptness. The thin line of troops who took possession of the deserted part of the

circle were, from their small numbers, brought closer in towards the centre. The Indians mistook these movements for a retreat. Confident that their time was come, they leaped up on all sides, from behind the trees and bushes, and with fearful screeches rushed headlong towards the spot, pouring in a heavy and galling fire. The shock was too violent to be long endured. The men struggled to maintain their posts; but the Indians seemed on the point of breaking into the heart of the camp, when the aspect of affairs was suddenly reversed. The two companies, who had apparently abandoned their position, were in fact destined to begin the attack; and they now sallied out from the circle at a point where a depression in the ground, joined to the thick growth of trees, concealed them from the eyes of the Indians. Making a short *détour* through the woods, they came round upon the flank of the furious assailants, and fired a close volley into the midst of the crowd. Numbers were seen to fall; yet though completely surprised, and utterly at a loss to understand the nature of the attack, the Indians faced about with the greatest intrepidity, and returned the fire. But the Highlanders, with yells as wild as their own, fell on them with the bayonet. The shock was irresistible, and they fled before the charging ranks in a tumultuous throng.

Orders had been given to two other companies, occupying a contiguous part of the circle, to support the attack whenever a favourable moment should occur; and they had therefore advanced a little from their position, and lay close crouched in ambush. The



fugitives, pressed by the Highland bayonets, passed directly across their front ; upon which they rose, and poured among them a second volley, no less destructive than the first. This completed the rout. The four companies uniting drove the flying savages through the woods, giving them no time to rally or reload their empty rifles, killing many, and scattering the rest in hopeless confusion.

While this took place at one part of the circle, the troops and the savages had still maintained their respective positions at the other ; but when the latter perceived the total rout of their comrades, and saw the troops advancing to assail them, they also lost heart and fled. The discordant outcries which had so long deafened the ears of the English soon ceased altogether, and not a living Indian remained near the spot. About sixty corpses lay scattered over the ground. Among them were found those of several prominent chiefs, while the blood which stained the leaves of the bushes showed that numbers had fled wounded from the field. The soldiers took but one prisoner, whom they shot to death like a captive wolf. The loss of the British in the two battles surpassed that of the enemy, amounting to eight officers and one hundred and fifteen men.

Having been for some time detained by the necessity of making litters for the wounded, and destroying the stores which the flight of most of the horses made it impossible to transport, the army moved on, in the afternoon, to Bushy Run. Here they had scarcely formed their camp when they were again fired upon by a body of Indians, who, however, were soon repulsed.

The Battle of Bushy Run 115

On the next day they resumed their progress towards Fort Pitt, distant about twenty-five miles, and though frequently annoyed on the march by petty attacks, they reached their destination, on the tenth, without serious loss. It was a joyful moment both to the troops and to the garrison. The latter, it will be remembered, were left surrounded and hotly pressed by the Indians, who had beleaguered the place from the twenty-eighth of July to the first of August, when, hearing of Bouquet's approach, they had abandoned the siege, and marched to attack him. From this time the garrison had seen nothing of them until the morning of the tenth, when, shortly before the army appeared, they had passed the Fort in a body, raising the scalp-yell, and displaying their disgusting trophies to the view of the English.

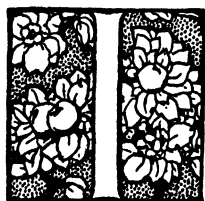
The battle of Bushy Run was one of the best contested actions ever fought between white men and Indians. If there was any disparity of numbers, the advantage was on the side of the troops; and the Indians had displayed throughout a fierceness and intrepidity matched only by the steady valour with which they were met. In the provinces the victory excited equal joy and admiration, especially among those who knew the incalculable difficulties of an Indian campaign. The Assembly of Pennsylvania passed a vote expressing their sense of the merits of Bouquet, and of the service he had rendered to the province. He soon after received the additional honour of the formal thanks of the King.

FROM PARKMAN'S *Conspiracy of Pontiac*.



A Sailor of Nelson's

I. BOB LOVEDAY VOLUNTEERS



T was the 3rd of September, but the King's watering-place still retained its summer aspect. The royal bathing machine had been drawn out just as Bob reached Gloucester Buildings, and he waited a minute, in the lack of other distraction, to look on. Immediately that the King's machine had entered the water a group of florid men with fiddles, violoncellos, a trombone, and a drum, came forward, packed themselves into another machine that was in waiting, and were drawn out into the waves in the King's rear. All that was to be heard for a few minutes were the slow pulsations of the sea; and then a deafening noise burst from the interior of the second machine with power enough to split the boards

asunder ; it was the condensed mass of musicians inside, striking up the strains of "God save the King," as his Majesty's head rose from the water. Bob took off his hat and waited till the end of the performance, which, intended as a pleasant surprise to George III by the loyal burghers, was possibly in the watery circumstances tolerated rather than desired by that dripping monarch.

Loveday then passed on to the harbour, where he remained awhile, looking at the busy scene of loading and unloading craft and swabbing the decks of yachts ; at the boats and barges rubbing against the quay wall, and at the houses of the merchants, some ancient structures of solid stone, others green-shuttered, with heavy wooden bow-windows which appeared as if about to drop into the harbour by their own weight. All these things he gazed upon, and thought of one thing—that he had caused great misery to his brother John.

The town clock struck, and Bob retraced his steps till he again approached the Esplanade and Gloucester Lodge, where the morning sun blazed in upon the house fronts, and not a spot of shade seemed to be attainable. A huzzaing attracted his attention, and he observed that a number of people had gathered before the King's residence, where a brown curricie had stopped, out of which stepped a hale man in the prime of life, wearing a blue uniform, gilt epaulettes, cocked hat, and sword, who crossed the pavement and went in. Bob went up and joined the group. "What's going on ?" he said.

"Captain Hardy," replied a bystander.

"What of him?"

"Just gone in—waiting to see the King."

"But the captain is in the West Indies?"

"No. The fleet is come home; they can't find the French anywhere."

"Will they go and look for them again?" asked Bob.

"O yes. Nelson is determined to find 'em. As soon as he's refitted he'll put to sea again. Ah, here's the King coming in."

Bob was so interested in what he had just heard that he scarcely noticed the arrival of the King and a body of attendant gentlemen. He went on thinking of his new knowledge: Captain Hardy was come. He was doubtless staying with his family at their small manor-house at Pos'ham, a few miles from Overcombe, where he usually spent the intervals between his different cruises.

Loveday returned to the mill without further delay; and shortly explaining that John was very well, and would come soon, went on to talk of the arrival of Nelson's captain.

"And is he come at last?" said the miller, throwing his thoughts years backwards. "Well can I mind when he first left home to go on board the *Helena* as midshipman!"

"That's not much to remember. I can remember it too," said Mrs. Loveday.

"'Tis more than twenty years ago anyhow. And more than that, I can mind when he was born; I was a lad, serving my 'prenticeship at the time. He has been in this house often and often when 'a was young. When



he came home after his first voyage he stayed about here a long time, and used to look in at the mill whenever he went past. 'What will you be next, sir?' said Mother to him one day as he stood with his back to the doorpost. 'A lieutenant, Dame Loveday,' says he. 'And what next?' says she. 'A commander.' 'And next?' 'Next, post-captain.' 'And then?' 'Then it will be almost time to die.' I'd warrant that he'd mind it to this very day if you were to ask him."

Bob heard all this with a manner of preoccupation, and soon retired to the mill. Thence he went to his room by the back passage, and taking his old seafaring garments from a dark closet in the wall conveyed them to the loft at the top of the mill, where he occupied the

remaining spare moments of the day in brushing the mildew from their folds, and hanging each article by the window to get aired. In the evening he returned to the loft, and dressing himself in the old salt suit, went out of the house unobserved by anybody, and ascended the road towards Captain Hardy's native village and present temporary home.

The shadeless downs were now brown with the drougths of the passing summer, and few living things met his view, the natural rotundity of the elevation being only occasionally disturbed by the presence of a barrow, a thorn-bush, or a piece of dry wall which remained from some attempted enclosure. By the time that he reached the village it was dark, and the larger stars had begun to shine when he walked up to the door of the old-fashioned house which was the family residence of the Hardys.

"Will the captain allow me to wait on him to-night?" inquired Loveday, explaining who and what he was.

The servant went away for a few minutes, and then told Bob that he might see the captain in the morning.

"If that's the case, I'll come again," replied Bob, quite cheerful that failure was not absolute.

He had left the door but a few steps when he was called back and asked if he had walked all the way from Overcombe Mill on purpose.

Loveday replied modestly that he had done so.

"Then will you come in?" He followed the speaker into a small study or office, and in a minute or two Captain Hardy entered.

The captain at this time was a bachelor of thirty-five,

rather stout in build, with light eyes, bushy eyebrows, a square broad face, plenty of chin, and a mouth whose corners played between humour and grimness. He surveyed Loveday from top to toe.

"Robert Loveday, sir, son of the miller at Overcombe," said Bob, making a low bow.

"Ah! I remember your father, Loveday," the gallant seaman replied. "Well, what do you want to say to me?" Seeing that Bob found it rather difficult to begin, he leant leisurely against the mantelpiece, and went on, "Is your father well and hearty? I have not seen him for many, many years."

"Quite well, thank 'ee."

"You used to have a brother in the army, I think? What was his name—John? A very fine fellow, if I recollect."

"Yes, cap'n; he's there still."

"And you are in the merchant service."

"Late first mate of the brig *Pewit*."

"How is it you are not on board a man-of-war?"

"Ay, sir, that's the thing I've come about," said Bob, recovering confidence. "I should have been, but 'tis womankind has hampered me. I've waited and waited on at home because of a young woman—lady, I might have said, for she's sprung from a higher class of society than I. Her father was a landscape painter—maybe you've heard of him, sir? The name is Garland."

"He painted that view of our village here," said Captain Hardy, looking towards a dark little picture in the corner of the room.

Bob looked, and went on, as if to the picture.



"Well, sir, I have found that—— However, the press-gang came a week or two ago, and didn't get hold of me. I didn't care to go aboard as a pressed man."

"There has been a severe impressment. It is, of course, a disagreeable necessity, but it can't be helped."

"Since then, sir, something has happened that makes me wish they had found me, and I have come to-night to ask if I could enter on board your ship the *Victory*."

The captain shook his head severely, and presently observed: "I am glad to find that you think of entering the service, Loveday: smart men are badly wanted. But it will not be in your power to choose your ship."

"Well, well, sir; then I must take my chance elsewhere," said Bob, his face indicating the disappointment he would not fully express. "'Twas only that I felt

I would much rather serve under you than anybody else, my father and all of us being known to ye, Captain Hardy, and our families belonging to the same parts."

Captain Hardy took Bob's altitude more carefully. "Are you a good practical seaman?" he asked musingly.

"Ay, sir, I believe I am."

"Active? Fond of skylarking?"

"Well, I don't know about the last. I think I can say I am active enough. I could walk the yard-arm, if required, cross from mast to mast by the stays, and do what most fellows do who call themselves spry."

The captain then put some questions about the details of navigation, which Loveday, having luckily been used to square rigs, answered satisfactorily. "As to reefing topsails," he added, "if I don't do it like a flash of lightning, I can do it so that they will stand blowing weather. The *Pewit* was not a dull vessel, and when we were convoyed home from Lisbon, she could keep well in sight of the frigate scudding at a distance, by putting on full sail. We had enough hands aboard to reef topsails man-o'-war fashion, which is a rare thing in these days, sir, now that able seamen are so scarce on trading craft. And I hear that men from square-rigged vessels are liked much the best in the Navy, as being more ready for use. So that I shouldn't be altogether so raw," said Bob earnestly, "if I could enter on your ship, sir. Still, if I can't, I can't."

"I might ask for you, Loveday," said the captain, thoughtfully, "and so get you there that way. In

short, I think I may say I will ask for you. So consider it settled."

"My thanks to you, sir," said Loveday.

"You are aware that the *Victory* is a smart ship, and that cleanliness and order are, of necessity, more strictly insisted upon there than in some others?"

"Sir, I quite see it."

"Well, I hope you will do your duty as well on a line-of-battle ship as you did when mate of the brig, for it is a duty that may be serious."

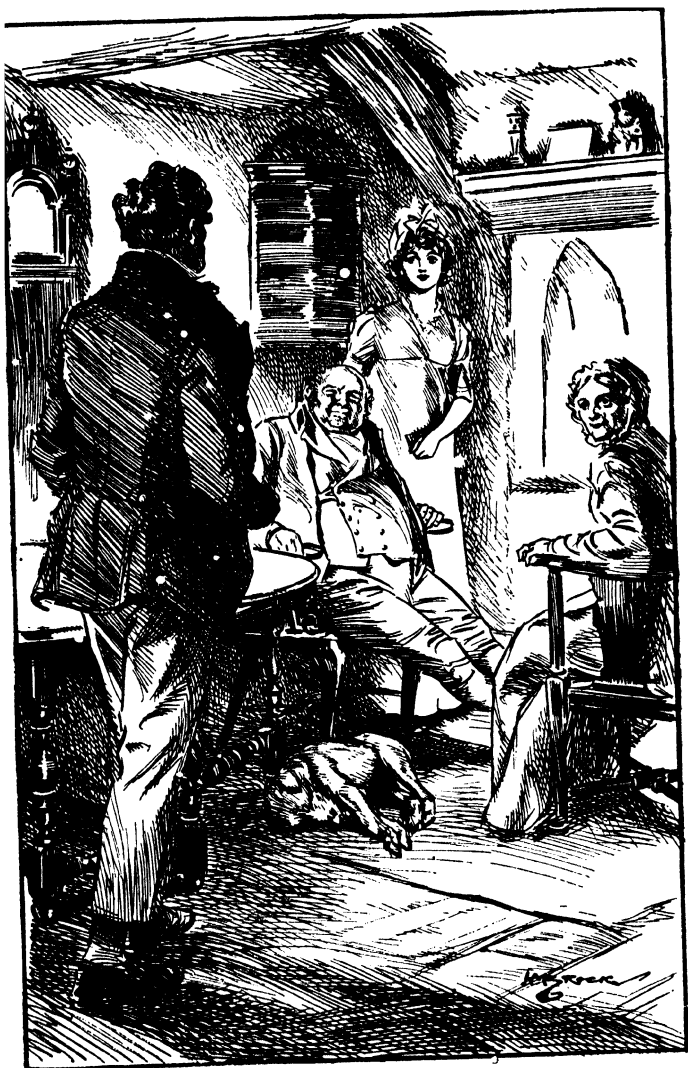
Bob replied that it should be his one endeavour; and receiving a few instructions for getting on board the guardship and being conveyed to Portsmouth, he turned to go away.

"You'll have a stiff walk before you fetch Overcombe Mill this dark night, Loveday," concluded the captain, peering out of the window. "I'll send you in a glass of grog to help 'ee on your way."

The captain then left Bob to himself, and when he had drunk the grog that was brought in he started homeward, with a heart not exactly light, but large with a patriotic cheerfulness, which had not diminished when, after walking so fast as to be beaded with perspiration, he entered his father's door.

They were all sitting up for him, and at his approach anxiously raised their sleepy eyes, for it was nearly eleven o'clock.

"There, I knew he'd not be much longer!" cried Anne, jumping up and laughing in her relief. "They have been thinking you were very strange and silent to-day, Bob; you were not, were you?"



"What's the matter, Bob?" said the miller; for Bob's countenance was sublimed by his recent interview, like that of a priest just come from the *penetralia* of the temple.

"He's in his mate's clothes, just as when he came home!" observed Mrs. Loveday.

They all saw now that he had something to tell. "I am going away," he said when he had sat down. "I am going to enter on board a man-of-war, and perhaps it will be the *Victory*."

"Going?" said Anne, faintly.

"Now, don't you mind it, there's a dear," he went on solemnly, taking her hand in his own. "And you, Father, don't you begin to take it to heart" (the miller was looking grave). "The press-gang has been here, and though I showed them that I was a free man, I am going to show everybody that I can do my duty."

None of the other three answered, Anne and the miller having their eyes bent upon the ground, and the former trying to repress her tears.

"Now, don't you grieve, either of you," he continued, "nor vex yourselves that this has happened. Please not to be angry with me, Father, for deserting you and the mill, where you want me, for I *must go*. For these three years we and the rest of the country have been in fear of the enemy; trade has been hindered; poor folk made hungry; and many rich folk made poor. There must be a deliverance, and it must be done by sea. I have seen Captain Hardy, and I shall serve under him if so be I can."

"Captain Hardy?"

"Yes. I have been to his house at Pos'ham, where he's staying with his sisters ; walked there and back, and I wouldn't have missed it for fifty guineas. I hardly thought he would see me ; but he did see me ; and he hasn't forgot you."

Bob then opened his tale in order, relating graphically the conversation to which he had been a party, and they listened with breathless attention.

"Well, if you must go, you must," said the miller with emotion ; "but I think it somewhat hard that, of my two sons, neither one of 'em can be got to stay and help me in my business as I get old."

"Don't trouble and vex about it," said Mrs. Loveday soothingly. "They are both instruments in the hands of Providence, chosen to chastise that Corsican ogre, and do what they can for the country in these trying years."

"That's just the shape of it, Mrs. Loveday, said Bob.

"And he'll come back soon," she continued, turning to Anne. "And then he'll tell us all he has seen, and the glory that he's won, and how he has helped to sweep that scourge Buonaparty off the earth."

"When be you going, Bob ?" his father inquired.

"To-morrow, if I can. I shall call at the barracks and tell John as I go by. When I get to Portsmouth——."

A burst of sobs in quick succession interrupted his words ; they came from Anne, who till that moment had been sitting as before with her hand in that of Bob, and apparently quite calm. Mrs. Loveday jumped up, but

before she could say anything to soothe the agitated girl she had calmed herself with the same singular suddenness that had marked her giving way. "I don't mind Bob's going," she said. "I think he ought to go. Don't suppose, Bob, that I want you to stay!"

After this she left the apartment, and went into the little side room where she and her mother usually worked. In a few moments Bob followed her. When he came back he was in a very sad and emotional mood. Anybody could see that there had been a parting of profound anguish to both.

"She is not coming back to-night," he said.

"You will see her to-morrow before you go?" said her mother.

"I may or I may not," he replied. "Father and Mrs. Loveday, do you go to bed now. I have got to look over my things and get ready; and it will take me some little time. If you should hear noises, you will know it is only myself moving about."

When Bob was left alone he suddenly became brisk, and set himself to overhaul his clothes and other possessions in a business-like manner. By the time that his chest was packed, such things as he meant to leave at home folded into cupboards, and what was useless destroyed, it was past two o'clock. Then he went to bed, so softly that only the creak of one weak stair revealed his passage upward. At the moment that he passed Anne's chamber-door her mother was bending over her as she lay in bed, and saying to her, "Won't you see him in the morning?"

"No, no," said Anne. "I would rather not see him!"

I have said that I may. But I shall not. I cannot see him again ! ”

When the family got up next day Bob had vanished. It was his way to disappear like this, to avoid affecting scenes at parting. By the time that they had sat down to a gloomy breakfast Bob was in the boat of a Budmouth waterman, who pulled him alongside the guardship in the roads, where he laid hold of the man-rope, mounted, and disappeared from external view. In the course of the day the ship moved off, set her royals, and made sail for Portsmouth, with five hundred new hands for the service on board, consisting partly of pressed men and partly of volunteers, among the latter being Robert Loveday.

II. A SPECK ON THE SEA

JOHN was surprised when he next went to the mill to find how glad they all were to see him. From the moment of Bob's return to the bosom of the deep Anne had had no existence on land ; people might have looked at her human body and said she had flitted thence. The sea and all that belonged to the sea was her daily thought and her nightly dream. John at once noticed her lorn, abstracted looks, pitied her,—how much he pitied her!—and asked when they were alone if there was anything he could do.

“There are two things,” she said, with almost childish eagerness in her tired eyes.

“They shall be done.”



“The first is to find out if Captain Hardy has gone back to his ship ; and the other is—O if you will do it, John !—to get me newspapers whenever possible.”

After this duologue John was absent for a space of three hours, and they thought he had gone back to barracks. He entered, however, at the end of that time, took off his forage-cap, and wiped his forehead.

“You look tired, John,” said his father.

“O no.” He went through the house till he had found Anne Garland.

“I have only done one of those things,” he said to her.

“What, already ? I didn’t hope for or mean to-day.”

“Captain Hardy is gone from Pos’ham. He left

some days ago. We shall soon hear that the fleet has sailed."

"You have been all the way to Pos'ham on purpose? How good of you!"

"Well, I was anxious to know myself when Bob is likely to leave. I expect now that we shall soon hear from him."

Two days later he came again. He brought a newspaper, and what was better, a letter for Anne, franked by the first lieutenant of the *Victory*.

"Then he's aboard her," said Anne, as she eagerly took the letter.

It was short, but as much as she could expect in the circumstances, and informed them that the captain had been as good as his word, and had gratified Bob's earnest wish to serve under him. The ship, with Admiral Lord Nelson on board, and accompanied by the frigate *Euryalus*, was to sail in two days for Plymouth, where they would be joined by others, and thence proceed to the coast of Spain.

Anne lay awake that night thinking of the *Victory*, and of those who floated in her. To the best of Anne's calculation that ship of war would, during the next twenty-four hours, pass within a few miles of where she herself then lay. Next to seeing Bob, the thing that would give her more pleasure than any other in the world was to see the vessel that contained him—his floating city, his sole dependence in battle and storm—upon whose safety from winds and enemies hung all her hope.

The morrow was market-day at the seaport, and in

this she saw her opportunity. A carrier went from Overcombe at six o'clock thither, and having to do a little shopping for herself she gave it as a reason for her intended day's absence, and took a place in the van. When she reached the town it was still early morning, but the borough was already in the zenith of its daily bustle and show. The King was always out-of-doors by six o'clock, and such cock-crow hours at Gloucester Lodge produced an equally forward stir among the population. She alighted, and passed down the esplanade, as fully thronged by persons of fashion at this time of mist and level sunlight as a watering-place in the present day is at four in the afternoon. Dashing bucks and beaux in cocked hats, black feathers, ruffles and frills, stared at her as she hurried along; the beach was swarming with bathing women, wearing waistbands that bore the national refrain "God save the King," in gilt letters; the shops were all open, and Sergeant Stanner, with his sword-stuck bank-notes and heroic gaze, was beating up at two guineas and a crown, the crown to drink His Majesty's health.

She soon finished her shopping, and then, crossing over into the old town, pursued her way along the coast-road to Portland. At the end of an hour she had been rowed across the Fleet (which then lacked the convenience of a bridge), and reached the base of Portland Hill. The steep incline before her was dotted with houses, showing the pleasant peculiarity of one man's doorstep being behind his neighbour's chimney, and slabs of stone as the common material for walls, roof, floor, pig-sty, stable-manger, door-scraper, and

garden-stile. Anne gained the summit, and followed along the central track over the huge lump of freestone which forms the peninsula, the wide sea prospect extending as she went on. Weary with her journey, she approached the extreme southerly peak of rock, and gazed from the cliff at Portland Bill, or Beal, as it was in those days more correctly called.

The wild, herbless, weather-worn promontory was quite a solitude, and, saving the one old lighthouse about fifty yards up the slope, scarce a mark was visible to show that humanity have ever been near the spot. Anne found herself a seat on a stone, and swept with her eyes the tremulous expanse of water around her that seemed to utter a ceaseless unintelligible incantation. Out of the three hundred and sixty degrees of her complete horizon two hundred and fifty were covered by waves, the *coup d'œil* including the area of troubled waters known as the Race, where two seas met to effect the destruction of such vessels as could not be mastered by one. She counted the craft within her view ; there were five ; no, there were only four ; no, there were seven, some of the specks having resolved themselves into two. They were all small coasters, and kept well within sight of land.

Anne sank into a reverie. Then she heard a slight noise on her left hand, and turning beheld an old sailor, who had approached with a glass. He was levelling it over the sea in a direction to the south-east, and somewhat removed from that in which her own eyes had been wandering. Anne moved a few steps thitherward, so as to uncloseto her view a deeper sweep on that



side, and by this discovered a ship of far larger size than any which had yet dotted the main before her. Its sails were for the most part new and clean, and in comparison with its rapid progress before the wind the small brigs and ketches seemed standing still. Upon this striking object the old man's glass was bent.

"What do you see, sailor?" she asked.

"Almost nothing," he answered. "My sight is so gone off lately that things, one and all, be but a November mist to me. And yet I fain would see to-day. I am looking for the *Victory*."

"Why?" she said quickly

"I have a son aboard her. He's one of three from these parts. There's the captain, there's my son Ned,

and there's young Loveday of Overcombe—he that lately joined."

"Shall I look for you?" said Anne, after a pause.

"Certainly, mis'ess, if so be you please."

Anne took the glass, and he supported it by his arm. "It is a large ship," she said, "with three masts, three rows of guns along the side, and all her sails set."

"I guessed as much."

"There is a little flag in front—over her bowsprit."

"The jack."

"And there's a large one flying at her stern."

"The ensign."

"And a white one on her fore-topmast."

"That's the admiral's flag, the flag of my Lord Nelson. What is her figure-head, my dear?"

"A coat of arms, supported on this side by a sailor."

Her companion nodded with satisfaction. "On the other side of that figure-head is a marine."

"She is twisting round in a curious way, and her sails sink in like old cheeks, and she shivers like a leaf upon a tree."

"She is in stays, for the larboard tack. I can see what she's been doing. She's been reaching close in to avoid the flood tide, as the wind is to the sou'-west, and she's bound down; but as soon as the ebb made, d'ye see, they made sail to the west'ard. Captain Hardy may be depended upon for that; he knows every current about here, being a native."

"And now I can see the other side; it is a soldier where a sailor was before. You are *sure* it is the *Victory*?"

"I am sure!"

After this a frigate came into view—the *Euryalus*—sailing in the same direction. Anne sat down, and her eyes never left the ships. "Tell me more about the *Victory*," she said.

"She is the best sailer in the service, and she carries a hundred guns. The heaviest be on the lower deck, the next size on the middle deck, the next on the main and upper decks. My son Ned's place is on the lower deck, because he's short, and they put the short men below."

Bob, though not tall, was not likely to be specially selected for shortness. She pictured him on the upper deck, in his snow-white trousers and jacket of navy blue, looking perhaps towards the very point of land where she then was.

The great silent ship, with her population of blue-jackets, marines, officers, captain, and the admiral who was not to return alive, passed like a phantom the meridian of the Bill. Sometimes her aspect was that of a large white bat, sometimes that of a grey one. In the course of time the watching girl saw that the ship had passed her nearest point; the breadth of her sails diminished by foreshortening, till she assumed the form of an egg on end. After this something seemed to twinkle, and Anne, who had previously withdrawn from the old sailor, went back to him, and looked again through the glass. The twinkling was the light falling upon the cabin windows of the ship's stern. She explained it to the old man.

"Then we see now what the enemy have seen but

once. That was in seventy-nine, when she sighted the French and Spanish fleet off Scilly, and she retreated because she feared a landing. Well, 'tis a brave ship, and she carries brave men ! ”

Anne's tender bosom heaved, but she said nothing, and again became absorbed in contemplation.

The *Victory* was fast dropping away. She was on the horizon, and soon appeared hull down. That seemed to be like the beginning of a greater end than her present vanishing. Anne Garland could not stay by the sailor any longer, and went about a stone's throw off, where she was hidden by the inequality of the cliff from his view. The vessel was now exactly end on, and stood out in the direction of the Start, her width having contracted to the proportion of a feather. She sat down again, and mechanically took out some biscuits that she had brought, foreseeing that her waiting might be long. But she could not eat one of them ; eating seemed to jar with the mental tenseness of the moment ; and her undeviating gaze continued to follow the lessened ship with the fidelity of a balanced needle to a magnetic stone, all else in her being motionless.

The courses of the *Victory* were absorbed into the main, then her topsails went, and then her top-gallants. She was now no more than a dead fly's wing on a sheet of spider's web ; and even this fragment diminished. Anne could hardly bear to see the end, and yet she resolved not to flinch. The admiral's flag sank behind the watery line, and in a minute the very truck of the last topmast stole away. The *Victory* was gone.

Anne's lip quivered as she murmured, without remov-

ing her wet eyes from the vacant and solemn horizon :
“ ‘They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters——’

“ ‘These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep,’ ” was returned by a man’s voice from behind her.

Looking round quickly, she saw a soldier standing there; and the grave eyes of John Loveday bent on her.

“ ‘Tis what I was thinking,” she said, trying to be composed.

“ You were saying it,” he answered gently.

“ Was I?—I did not know it . . . How came you here ? ” she presently added.

“ I have been behind you a good while ; but you never turned round.”

“ I was deeply occupied,” she said in an undertone.

“ Yes—I too came to see him pass. I heard this morning that Lord Nelson had embarked, and I knew at once that they would sail immediately. The *Victory* and *Euryalus* are to join the rest of the fleet at Plymouth. There was a great crowd of people assembled to see the admiral off; they cheered him and the ship as she dropped down. He took his coffin on board with him, they say.”

“ His coffin ! ” said Anne, turning deadly pale. “ Something terrible, then, is meant by that ! O, why *would* Bob go in that ship ? Doomed to destruction from the very beginning like this ! ”

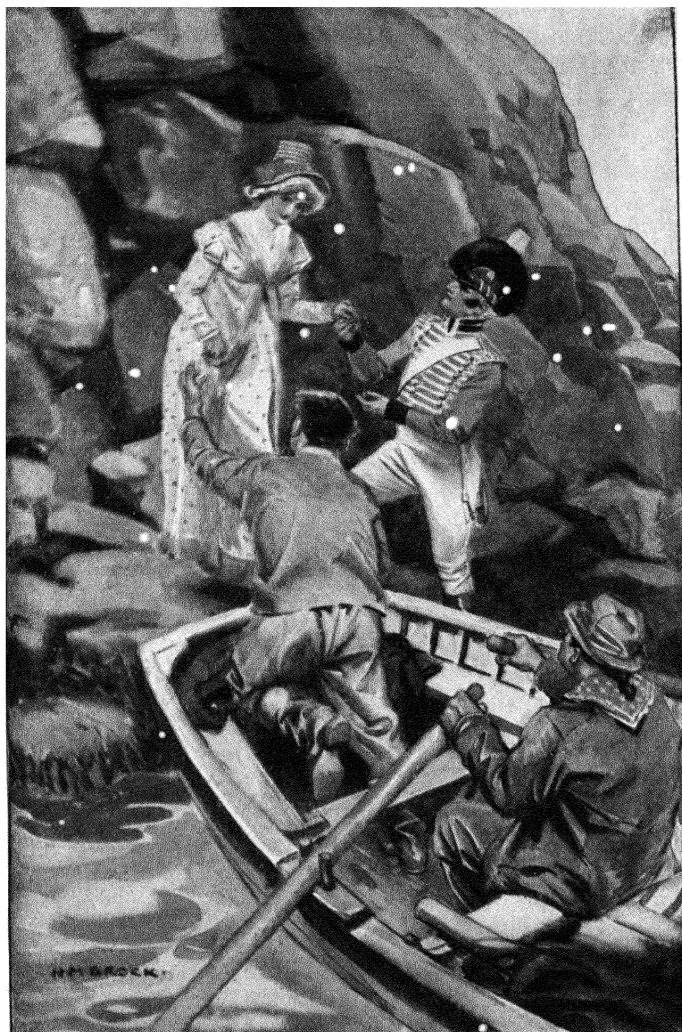
“ It was his determination to sail under Captain Hardy, and under no one else,” said John. “ There may be hot work ; but we must hope for the best.”



And observing how wretched she looked, he added, "But won't you let me help you back? If you can walk as far as Hope Cove it will be enough. A lerret is going from there across the bay homeward to the harbour in the course of an hour; it belongs to a man I know, and they can take one passenger, I am sure."

She turned her back upon the Channel, and by his help soon reached the place indicated. The boat was lying there, as he had said. She found it to belong to the old man who had been with her at the Bill, and was in charge of his two younger sons. The trumpet major helped her into it over the slippery blocks of stone, one of the young men spread his jacket for her to sit on, and as soon as they pulled from shore John climbed up the blue-grey cliff, and disappeared over the top, to return to the mainland by road.

Anne was in the town by three o'clock. The trip in the stern of the lerret had quite refreshed her, with the help of the biscuits, which she had at last been able to eat. The van from the port to Overcombe did not start till four o'clock, and feeling no further interest in the gaieties of the place she strolled on past the King's house to the outskirts, her mind settling down again upon the possibly sad fate of the *Victory* when she found herself alone. She did not hurry on; and finding that even now there wanted another half-hour to the carrier's time, she turned into a little lane to escape the inspection of the numerous passers-by. Here all was quite lonely and still, and she sat down under a willow-tree, absently regarding the landscape, which had begun to put on the rich tones of declining summer, but which



“The trumpet-major helped her into it.”

to her was as hollow and faded as a theatre by day. She could hold out no longer ; burying her face in her hands she wept without restraint.

Some yards behind her was a little spring of water, having a stone margin round it to prevent the cattle from treading in the sides and filling it up with dirt. While she wept two elderly gentlemen entered unperceived upon the scene, and walked on to the spring's brink. Here they paused and looked in, afterwards moving round it, and then stooping as if to smell or taste its waters. The spring was, in fact, a sulphurous one, then recently discovered by a physician who lived in the neighbourhood ; and it was beginning to attract some attention, having by common report contributed to effect such wonderful cures as almost passed belief. After a considerable discussion, apparently on how the pool might be improved for better use, one of the two elderly gentlemen turned away, leaving the other still probing the spring with his cane. The first stranger, who wore a blue coat with gilt buttons, came on in the direction of Anne Garland, and seeing her sad posture went quickly up to her, and said abruptly, "What is the matter?"

Anne, who in her grief had observed nothing of the gentlemen's presence, withdrew her handkerchief from her eyes and started to her feet. She instantly recognized her interrogator as the King.

"What, what, crying?" his Majesty inquired kindly. "How is this?"

"I—I have seen a dear friend go away, sir," she faltered, with downcast eyes.



"An!—partings are sad—very sad—for us all. You must hope your friend will return soon. Where is he or she gone?"

"I don't know, your Majesty."

"Don't know—how is that?"

"He is a sailor on board the *Victory*."

"Then he has reason to be proud," said the King with interest. "He is your brother?"

Anne tried to explain what he was, but could not, and blushed with painful heat.

"Well, well, well; what is his name?"

In spite of Anne's confusion and low spirits, her womanly shrewdness told her at once that no harm

could be done by revealing Bob's name; and she answered, "His name is Robert Loveday, sir."

"Loveday—a good name. I shall not forget it. Now dry your cheeks, and don't cry any more. Loveday—Robert Loveday." " "

Anne curtseyed, the King smiled good-humouredly, and turned to rejoin his companion, who was afterwards heard to be Dr.—, the physician in attendance at Gloucester Lodge. This gentleman had in the meantime filled a small phial with the medicinal water, which he carefully placed in his pocket; and on the King coming up they retired together and disappeared. Thereupon Anne, now thoroughly aroused, followed the same way with a gingerly tread, just in time to see them get into a carriage which was in waiting at the turning of the lane.

She quite forgot the carrier, and everything else in connexion with riding home. Flying along the road rapidly and unconsciously, when she awoke to a sense of her whereabouts she was so near to Overcombe as to make the carrier not worth waiting for. She had been borne up in this hasty spurt at the end of a weary day by visions of Bob promoted to the rank of admiral, or something equally wonderful, by the King's special command, the chief result of the promotion being, in her arrangement of the piece, that he would stay at home and go to sea no more. But she was not a girl who indulged in extravagant fancies long, and before she reached home she thought that the King had probably forgotten her by that time, and her troubles, and her lover's name.

From *The Trumpet Major*, by THOMAS HARDY.

Hervé Riel

On the Sea and at the Hogue, sixteen hundred ninety-two,
 Did the English fight the French,—woe to France!
 And, the thirty-first of May, helter skelter through the blue,
 Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a shoal of sharks
 pursue,

Came crowding ship on ship to Saint-Malo on the Rance,
 With the English fleet in view.

'Twas the squadron that escaped, with the victor in full
 chase;

First and foremost of the drove, in his great ship,
 Damfreville;

Close on him fled, great and small,

Twenty-two good ships in all;

And they signalled to the place,

“Help the winners of a race!

Get us guidance, give us harbour, take us quick—or,
 quicker still,

Here's the English can and will!”

Then the pilots of the place put out brisk and leapt on board;

“Why, what hope or chance have ships like these to pass?”
 laughed they:

“Rocks to starboard, rocks to port, all the passage scarred
 and scored,—

Shall the ‘Formidable’ here, with her twelve and eighty guns,

Think to make the river-mouth by the single narrow way,

Trust to enter—where 'tis ticklish for a craft of twenty
 tons,

And with flow at full beside?

Now, 'tis slackest ebb of tide.

Reach the mooring? Rather say,

While rock stands or water runs,

Not a ship will leave the bay!”



Then was called a council straight.

Brief and bitter the debate :

“Here’s the English at our heels; would you have them
take in tow

All that’s left us of the fleet, linked together stern and bow,
For a prize to Plymouth Sound?

Better run the ships aground!”

(Ended Damfreville his speech).

“Not a minute more to wait!

Let the Captains all and each

Shove ashore, then blow up, burn the vessels on the beach!

France must undergo her fate.

“Give the word!” But no such word

Was ever spoke or heard;

For up stood, for out stepped, for in struck amid all these
—A Captain? A Lieutenant? A Mate—first, second, third?



No such man of mark, and meet
With his betters to compete!

But a simple Breton sailor pressed by Tourville for the fleet,
A poor coasting-pilot he, Hervé Riel the Croisickese.

And "What mockery or malice have we here?" cries Hervé
Riel:

"Are you mad, you Malouins? Are you cowards, fools,
or rogues?

Talk to me of rocks and shoals, me who took the soundings,
tell

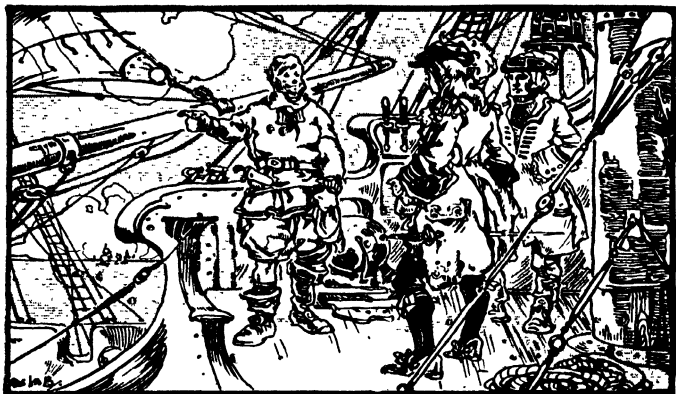
On my fingers every bank, every shallow, every swell

'Twixt the offing here and Grève where the river
disembogues?

Are you bought by English gold? Is it love the lying's for?
Morn and eve, night and day,

Have I piloted your bay,

Entered free and anchored fast at the foot of Solidor.



Burn the fleet and ruin France? That were worse than
fifty Hogues!

Sirs, they know I speak the truth? Sirs, believe me,
there's a way!

Only let me lead the line,

Have the biggest ship to steer,

Get this 'Formidable' clear,

Make the others follow mine,

And I lead them, most and least, by a passage I know well,

Right to Solidor past Grève,

And there lay them safe and sound;

And if one ship misbehave,—

Keel so much as grate the ground,

Why, I've nothing but my life,—here's my head!" cries
Hervé Riel.

Not a minute more to wait.

"Steer us in, then, small and great!

[its chief.

Take the helm, 'lead the line, save the squadron!" cried

“Captains, give the sailor place !

He is Admiral, in brief.”

Still the north-wind, by God's grace !

See the noble fellow's face

As the big ship, with a bound,

Clears the entry like a ho'nd,

Keeps the passage, as its inch of way were the wide sea's
profound !

See, safe thro' shoal and rock,

How they follow in a flock,

Not a ship that misbehaves, not a keel that grates the
ground,

Not a spar that comes to grief !

The peril, see, is past.

All are harboured to the last,

And just as Hervé Riel hollas “Anchor !” — sure as
fate,

Up the English come,—too late !

So, the storm subsides to calm :

They see the green trees wave

On the heights o'erlooking Grève.

Hearts that bled are staunch'd with balm.

“Just our rapture to enhance,

Let the English rake the bay,

Gnash their teeth and glare askance

As they cannonade away !

'Neath rampired Solidor pleasant riding on the Rance !”

How hope succeeds despair on each Captain's countenance !

Out burst all with one accord,

“This is Paradise for Hell !

Let France, let France's King

Thank the man that did the thing !”

What a shout, and all one word,

“Hervé Riel !”

As he stepped in front once more,
Not a symptom of surprise
In the frank blue Breton eyes,
Just the same man as before.

Then said Damfreville, "My friend,
I must speak out at the end,
Though I find the speaking hard.
Praise is deeper than the lips :
You have saved the King his ships,
You must name your own reward.
'Faith, our sun was near eclipse !
Demand whate'er you will,
France remains your debtor still.
Ask to heart's content and have! or my name's not
Damfreville."

Then a beam of fun outbroke
On the bearded mouth that spoke,
As the honest heart laughed through
Those frank eyes of Breton blue :
"Since I needs must say my say,
Since on board the duty's done,
And from Malo Roads to Croisic Point, what is it but
a run ?—
Since 't is ask and have, I may—
Since the others go ashore—
Come! A good whole holiday!
Leave to go and see my wife, whom I call the Belle
Aurore?"
That he asked and that he got,—nothing more.
Name and deed alike are lost :
Not a pillar nor a post
In his Croisic keeps alive the feat as it befell;

Not a head in white and black
On a single fishing smack,
In memory of the man but for whom had gone to wrack
All that France saved from the fight whence England
bore the bell.

Go to Paris : rank on rank,
Search the heroes flung pell-mell
On the Louvre, face and flank !
You shall look long enough ere you come to Hervé Riel.
So, for better and for worse,
Hervé Riel, accept my verse !
In my verse Hervé Riel, do thou once more
Save the squadron, honour France, love thy wife the Belle
Aurore !

ROBERT BROWNING.





A Visit to Uganda

I

TO-DAY the king sent his pages to announce his intention of holding a levee in my honour. I prepared for my first presentation at court, attired in my best, though in it I cut a poor figure in comparison with the display of the dressy Waganda. They wore neat bark cloaks resembling the best yellow corduroy cloth, crimp and well set, as if stiffened with starch, and over that, as upper-cloaks, a patchwork of small antelope skins, which I observed were sewn together as well as any English glovers could have pieced them; whilst their head-dresses, generally, were abrus turbans, set off with highly-polished boar-tusks, stick-charms, seeds, beads, or shells; and on their necks, arms, and ankles they

wore other charms of wood, or small horns stuffed with magic powder, and fastened on by strings generally covered with snake-skin. With N'yamgundũ, Maũla, the pages, and myself on the flanks, the Union-Jack carried by the kirangozi guide led the way, followed by twelve men as guard of honour, dressed in red flannel cloaks, and carrying their arms sloped, with fixed bayonets; whilst in their rear were the rest of my men, each carrying some article as a present.

On the march towards the palace, the admiring courtiers, wonder-struck at such an unusual display, exclaimed, in raptures of astonishment, some with both hands at their mouths, and others clasping their heads with their hands, "Irungi! irungi!" which may be translated "Beautiful! beautiful!" I walked along up the broad high road into a cleared square, which divides Mtésa's domain on the south from his Kamraviona's, or commander-in-chief's, on the north, and then turned into the court. The palace or entrance quite surprised me by its extraordinary dimensions, and the neatness with which it was kept. The whole brow and sides of the hill on which we stood were covered with gigantic grass huts, thatched as neatly as so many heads dressed by a London barber, and fenced all round with the tall yellow reeds of the common Uganda tiger-grass; whilst within the enclosure, the lines of huts were joined together, or partitioned off into courts, with walls of the same grass. It is here most of Mtésa's three or four hundred women are kept, the rest being quartered chiefly with his mother, known by the title of N'yamasoré, or queen-dowager. They stood in little groups at

the doors, looking at us, and evidently passing their own remarks, and enjoying their own jokes, on the triumphal procession. At each gate as we passed, officers on duty opened and shut it for us, jingling the big bells which are hung upon them, as they sometimes are at shop-doors, to prevent silent, stealthy entrance.

The first court passed, I was even more surprised to find the unusual ceremonies that awaited me. Three courtiers of high dignity stepped forward to greet me, dressed in the most scrupulously neat fashions. Men, women, bulls, dogs, and goats, were led about by strings; cocks and hens were carried in men's arms; and little pages, with rope-turbans, rushed about, conveying messages, as if their lives depended on their swiftness, every one holding his skin-cloak tightly round him lest his naked legs might by accident be shown.

This, then, was the ante-reception court; and I might have taken possession of the hut, in which musicians were playing and singing on large nine-stringed harps, like the Nubian tambira, accompanied by harmonicons. By the chief officers in waiting, however, who thought fit to treat us like Arab merchants, I was requested to sit on the ground outside in the sun with my servants. Now, I had made up my mind never to sit upon the ground as the natives and Arabs are obliged to do, nor to make my obeisance in any other manner than is customary in England, though the Arabs had told me that from fear they had always complied with the manners of the court. I felt that if I did not stand up for my social position at once, I should be treated with



contempt during the remainder of my visit, and thus lose the vantage-ground I had assumed of appearing rather as a prince than a trader, for the purpose of better gaining the confidence of the king. To avert over-hastiness, however—for my servants began to be alarmed as I demurred against doing as I was bid—I allowed five minutes to the court to give me a proper reception, saying, if it were not conceded I would then walk away.

Nothing, however, was done. My own men, knowing me, feared for me, as they did not know what a “savage” king would do in case I carried out my threat; whilst the Waganda, lost in amazement at what seemed little less than blasphemy, stood still as posts. The affair ended by my walking straight away home, giving Bombay orders to leave the present on the ground, and to follow me.

Although the king is said to be unapproachable, excepting when he chooses to attend court—a ceremony which rarely happens—intelligence of my hot wrath and hasty departure reached him in an instant. He first, it seems, thought of leaving his toilet-room to follow me, but, finding I was walking fast and had gone far, changed his mind, and sent Wakungu running after me. Poor creatures! they caught me up, fell upon their knees, and implored I would return at once, for the king had not tasted food, and would not until he saw me. I felt grieved at their touching appeals; but, as I did not understand all they said, I simply replied by patting my heart and shaking my head, walking if anything all the faster.

On my arrival at my hut, Bombay and others came in, wet through with perspiration, saying the king had heard of all my grievances. If I desired it, I might bring my own chair with me, for he was very anxious to show me great respect—although such a seat was exclusively the attribute of the king, no one else in Uganda daring to sit on an artificial seat.

My point was gained, so I cooled myself with coffee and a pipe, and returned rejoicing in my victory. After returning to the second tier of huts from which I had retired, everybody appeared to be in a hurried, confused state of excitement, not knowing what to make out of so unprecedented an exhibition of temper. In the most polite manner, the officers in waiting begged me to be seated on my iron stool, which I had brought with me, whilst others hurried in to announce my arrival. But for a few minutes only I was kept in suspense, when a band of music, the musicians wearing on their backs long-haired goat-skins, passed me, dancing as they went along, like bears in a fair, and playing on reed instruments worked over with pretty beads in various patterns, from which depended leopard-cat skins—the time being regulated by the beating of long hand-drums.

II

THE mighty king was now reported to be sitting on his throne in the state hut of the third tier. I advanced, hat in hand, with my guard of honour following, formed in "open ranks," who in their turn were followed by the bearers carrying the present. I did not walk straight up to him as if to shake hands, but went outside the

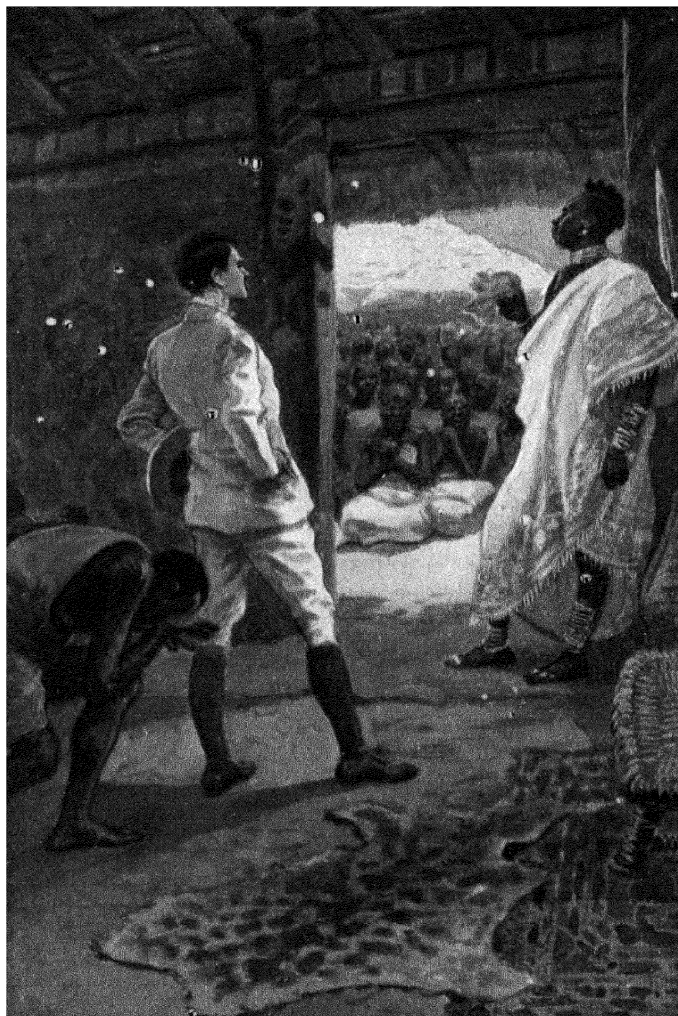
ranks of a three-sided square of squatting Wakungü, all habited in skins, mostly cow-skins ; some few of whom had, in addition, leopard-cat skins girt round the waist, the sign of royal blood. Here I was desired to halt and sit in the glaring sun ; so I donned my hat, mounted my umbrella, a phenomenon which set them all a-wondering and laughing, ordered the guard to close ranks, and sat gazing at the novel spectacle !

A more theatrical sight I never saw. The king, a good-looking, well-figured, tall young man of twenty-five, was sitting on a red blanket spread upon a square platform of royal grass, encased in tiger-grass reeds, scrupulously well dressed in a new mbügü. The hair of his head was cut short, excepting on the top, where it was combed up into a high ridge, running from stem to stern like a cock's comb. On his neck was a very neat ornament—a large ring, of beautifully-worked small beads, forming elegant patterns by their various colours. On one arm was another bead ornament, prettily devised ; and on the other a wooden charm, tied by a string covered with snake-skin. On every finger and every toe he had alternate brass and copper rings ; and above the ankles, halfway up to the calf, a stocking of very pretty beads. Everything was light, neat, and elegant in its way ; not a fault could be found with the taste of his “getting up.” For a handkerchief he held a well-folded piece of bark, and a piece of gold-embroidered silk, which he constantly employed to hide his large mouth when laughing, or to wipe it after a drink of plantain-wine, of which he took constant and copious draughts from neat little gourd-cups,

administered by his ladies-in-waiting. A white dog, spear, shield, and women—the Uganda cognisance—were by his side, as also a knot of staff officers, with whom he kept up a brisk conversation on one side ; and on the other was a band of Wichwézi, or lady-sorcerers.

I was now asked to draw nearer within the hollow square of squatters, where leopard-skins were strewed upon the ground, and on them was placed a large copper kettledrum, surmounted with brass bells on arching wires, along with two other smaller drums covered with cowrie-shells, and beads of colour worked into patterns. I now longed to open conversation, but knew not the language, and no one near me dared speak, or even lift his head from fear of being accused of eyeing the women ; so the king and myself sat staring at one another for full an hour—I mute, but he pointing and remarking with those around him on the novelty of my guard and general appearance, and even requiring to see my hat lifted, the umbrella shut and opened, and the guards face about and show off their red cloaks—for such wonders had never been seen in Uganda.

Then, finding the day waning, he sent Maŭla on an embassy to ask me if I had seen him ; and on receiving my reply, “Yes, for full one hour,” I was glad to find him rise, spear in hand, lead his dog, and walk unceremoniously away through the enclosure into the fourth tier of huts ; for this being a pure levée day no business was transacted. The king’s gait in retiring was intended to be very majestic, but did not succeed in conveying to me that impression. It was the



"I found him standing on a red blanket."

traditional walk of his race, founded on the step of the lion ; but the outward sweep of the legs, intended to represent the stride of the noble beast, appeared to me only to realise a very ludicrous kind of waddle, which made me ask Bombay if anything serious was the matter with the royal person.

I had now to wait for some time, almost as an act of humanity ; for I was told the state secret, that the king had retired to break his fast and eat for the first time since hearing of my arrival ; but the repast was no sooner over than he prepared for the second act, to show off his splendour, and I was invited in, with all my men, to the exclusion of all his own officers save my two guides. Entering as before, I found him standing on a red blanket, leaning against the right portal of the hut, talking and laughing, handkerchief in hand, to a hundred or more of his admiring wives, who, all squatting on the ground outside, in two groups, were dressed in new mbügüs. My men dared not advance upright, nor look upon the women, but, stooping, with lowered head and averted eyes, came cringing after me. Unconscious myself, I gave loud and impatient orders to my guard, rebuking them for moving like frightened geese, and, with hat in hand, stood gazing on the fair sex till directed to sit and cap.

Mtésa then inquired what messages were brought from Rūmanika ; to which Maūla, delighted with the favour of speaking to royalty, replied by saying, Rūmanika had gained intelligence of Englishmen coming up the Nile to Gani and Kidi. The king acknowledged the truthfulness of their story, saying he had heard the

same himself ; and both Wakungü, as is the custom in Uganda, thanked their lord in a very enthusiastic manner, kneeling on the ground—for no one can stand in the presence of his majesty—in an attitude of prayer, and throwing out their hands as they repeated the words, N'yanzig, N'yanzig, ai N'yanzig Mkahma wangi, &c., &c., for a considerable time ; when, thinking they had done enough of this, and heated with the exertion, they threw themselves flat upon their stomachs, and, floundering about like fish on land, repeated the same words over again and again, and rose doing the same, with their faces covered with earth ; for majesty in Uganda is never satisfied till subjects have grovelled before it like the most abject worms. This conversation over, after he had gazed at me, and chatted with his women for a considerable time, the second scene ended.

The third scene was more easily arranged, for the day was fast declining. He simply moved with his train of women to another hut, where, after seating himself upon his throne, with his women around him, he invited me to approach the nearest limits of propriety, and to sit as before. Again he asked me if I had seen him—evidently desirous of indulging in his regal pride ; so I made the most of the opportunity thus afforded me of opening a conversation by telling him of those grand reports I had formerly heard about him, which induced me to come all this way to see him, and the trouble it had cost me to reach the object of my desire ; at the same time taking a gold ring from off my finger, and presenting it to him, I said, “This is a small token of friendship ; if you will inspect

it, it is made after the fashion of a dog-collar, and, being the king of metals, gold, is in every respect appropriate to your illustrious race."

He said, in return, "If friendship is your desire, what would you say if I showed you a road by which you might reach your home in one month?" Now everything had to be told to Bombay, then to Nasib, my Kiganda interpreter, and then to either Maŭla or N'yamgundŭ, before it was delivered to the king, for it was considered indecorous to transmit any message to his majesty excepting through the medium of one of his officers. Hence I could not get an answer put in, for as all Waganda are rapid and impetuous in their conversation, the king, probably forgetting he had put a question, hastily changed the conversation and said, "What guns have you got? Let me see the one you shoot with." I wished still to answer the first question first, but no one dared to deliver my statement. I then said, "I had brought the best shooting-gun in the world—Whitworth's rifle—which I begged he would accept, with a few other trifles; and, with his permission, I would lay them upon a carpet at his feet, as is the custom of my country when visiting sultans." He assented, sent all his women away, and had a mbŭgŭ spread for the purpose, on which Bombay, obeying my order, first spread a red blanket, and then opened each article one after the other, when Nasib, according to the usage already mentioned, smoothed them down with his dirty hands, or rubbed them against his sooty face, and handed them to the King to show him there was no poison or witchcraft in them.

Mtésa appeared quite confused with the various wonders as he handled them, made silly remarks, and pondered over them like a perfect child, until it was quite dark. Torches were then lit, and guns, pistols, powder, boxes, tools,^o beads—the whole collection, in short—were tossed together topsy-turvy, bundled into mbügüs, and carried away by the pages. Mtésa now said, “It is late, and time to break up ; what provisions would you wish to have ?” I said, “A little of every thing, but no one thing constantly.” “And would you like to see me to-morrow ?” “Yes, every day.” “Then you can’t to-morrow, for I have business ; but the next day come if you like. You can now go away, and here are six pots of plantain-wine for you ; my men will search for food to-morrow.”

23rd.—At noon Mtésa sent his pages to invite me to his palace. I went, with my guard of honour and my stool, but found I had to sit waiting in an ante-hut three hours with his commander-in-chief and other high officers before he was ready to see me. During this time Wasoga minstrels, playing on tambira, and accompanied by boys playing on a harmonicon, kept us amused ; and a small page, with a large bundle of grass, came to me and said, “The King hopes you won’t be offended if required to sit on it before him ; for no person in Uganda, however high in office, is ever allowed to sit upon anything raised above the ground, nor can anybody but himself sit upon such grass as this ; it is all that his throne is made of. The first day he only allowed you to sit on your stool to appease your wrath.”

On consenting to do in “Rome as the Romans do,”



when my position was so handsomely acknowledged, I was called in, and found the court sitting much as it was on the first day's interview, only that the number of squatting Wakungū was much diminished ; and the king, instead of wearing his ten brass and copper rings, had my gold one on his third finger. This day, however, was cut out for business, as, in addition to the assemblage of officers, there were women, cows, goats, fowls, confiscations, baskets of fish, baskets of small antelopes, porcupines, and curious rats caught by his gamekeepers, bundles of mbūgū, &c., &c., made by his linendrapers, coloured earths and sticks by his magician, all ready for presentation ; but, as rain fell, the court broke up, and I had nothing for it but to walk about under my umbrella, indulging in angry reflections against the haughty king for not inviting me into his hut.

When the rain had ceased, and we were again called in, he was found sitting in state as before, but this time with the head of a black bull placed before him, one horn of which, knocked off, was placed alongside, whilst five living cows walked about the court.

I was now requested to shoot the cows as quickly as possible ; but having no bullets for my gun, I borrowed the revolving pistol I had given him, and shot all five in a second of time ; but as the last one, only wounded, turned sharply upon me, I gave it the sixth bullet and settled it. Great applause followed this *wonderful* feat, and the cows were given to my men. The king now loaded one of the carbines I had given him with his own hands, and giving it full-cock to a page, told him to go out and shoot a man in the outer court ;

which was no sooner accomplished than the little urchin returned to announce his success, with a look of glee such as one would see in the face of a boy who had robbed a bird's nest, caught a trout, or done any other boyish trick. The king said to him, "And did you do it well?" "Oh, yes. capitally." He spoke the truth, no doubt, for he dared not have trifled with the king; but the affair created hardly any interest. I never heard, and there appeared no curiosity to know, what individual human being the urchin had deprived of life.

25th.—The king invited me to shoot with him—really buffaloes—close to the palace; but as the pages had been sent off in a hurry, without being fully instructed, I declined, on the plea that I had always been gulled and kept waiting, or treated with incivility, for hours before I obtained an interview; and as I did not wish to have any more ruptures in the palace, I proposed Bombay should go to make proper arrangements for my reception on the morrow—as anyhow, at present I felt indisposed. The pages dreaded their master's wrath, departed for a while, and then sent another lad to tell me he was sorry to hear I felt unwell, but he hoped I would come if only for a minute, bringing my medicines with me, for he himself felt pain. That this second message was a forged one I had no doubt, for the boys had not been long enough gone; still, I packed up my medicines and went, leaving the onus, should any accident happen, upon the mischievous story-bearers.

As I anticipated, on my arrival at the palace I found

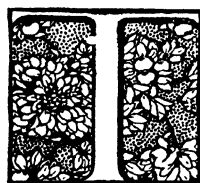
the king was not ready to receive me, and the pages desired me to sit with the officers in waiting till he might appear. I found it necessary to fly at once into a rage, called the pages a set of deceiving young blackguards, turned upon my heel, and walked straight back through the courts, intending to leave the palace. Everybody was alarmed ; information of my retreat at once reached the king, and he sent his 'Wakungũ to prevent my egress. These officers passed me, as I was walking hurriedly along under my umbrella, in the last court, and shut the entrance gate in front of me. This was too much, so I stamped, and, pointing my finger, vowed in every language I knew, that if they did not open the gate again, as they had shut it, at once, and that, too, before my face, I would never leave the spot I stood upon alive. Terror-stricken, the Wakungũ fell on their knees before me, doing as they were bid ; and, to please them, I returned at once, and went up to the king, who, now sitting on his throne, asked the officers how they had managed to entice me back ; to which they all replied in a breath, n'yanzigging heartily, "Oh, we were so afraid—he was so terrible ! but he turned at once as soon as we opened the gate." "How ? what gate ? tell us all about it ?" And when the whole story was fully narrated, the matter was thought a good joke. After pausing a little, I asked the king what ailed him, for I was sorry to hear he had been sick ; but instead of replying, he shook his head, as much as to say, I had put a very uncouth question to his majesty—and ordered some men to shoot cows.

From Speke's *Sources of the Nile*.



St. Ives' Escape

I



THE time for our escape drew near, and the nearer it came the less we seemed to enjoy the prospect. There is but one side on which this castle can be left either with dignity or safety ; but as there is the main gate and guard, and the chief street of the upper city, it is not to be thought of by escaping prisoners. In all other directions an abominable precipice surrounds it, down the face of which (if anywhere at all) we must regain our liberty. By our concurrent labours in many a dark night, working with the most anxious precautions against noise, we had made out to pierce below the curtain about the south-west corner, in a place they call the *Devil's Elbow*. From the heel of the masonry,

the rascally breakneck precipice descended sheer among waste lands, scattered suburbs of the city, and houses in the building. I had never the heart to look for any length of time—the thought that I must make the descent in person some dark night robbing me of breath; and, indeed, on anybody not a seaman or a steeple-jack, the mere sight of the *Devil's Elbow* wrought like an emetic.

I don't know where the rope was got, and doubt if I much cared. It was not that which perplexed me, but whether, now that we had it, it would serve our turn. Its length, indeed, we made a shift to fathom out; but who was to tell us how that length compared with the way we had to go? Day after day, there would be always some of us stolen out to the *Devil's Elbow* and making estimates of the descent, whether by a bare guess or the dropping of stones. A private of pioneers remembered the formula for that—or else remembered part of it and obligingly invented the remainder.

I had never any real confidence in that formula; and even had we got it from a book, there were difficulties in the way of application that might have daunted Archimedes. We durst not drop any considerable pebble lest the sentinels should hear, and those that we dropped we could not hear ourselves. We had never a watch—or none that had a second-hand; and though every one of us could guess a second to a nicety, all somehow guessed it differently. In short, if any two set forth upon this enterprise, they invariably returned with two opinions, and often with

a black eye in the bargain. I looked on upon these proceedings, although not without laughter, yet with impatience and disgust. I am one that cannot bear to see things botched or gone upon with ignorance; and the thought that some poor fellow was to hazard his bones upon such premises revolted me. Had I guessed the name of that unhappy first adventurer, my sentiments might have been livelier still.

The designation of this personage was indeed all that remained for us to do; and even in that we had advanced so far that the lot had fallen on Shed B. It had been determined to mingle the bitter and the sweet; and whoever went down first, the whole of his shed-mates were to follow next in order. This caused a good deal of joy in Shed B, and would have caused more if it had not still remained to choose our pioneer. In view of the ambiguity in which we lay as to the length of the rope and the height of the precipice, and of the fact that this gentleman was to climb down from fifty to seventy fathoms on a pitchy night, on a rope entirely free, and with not so much as an infant child to steady it at the bottom, a little backwardness was perhaps excusable. But it was, in our case, more than a little. The truth is, we were all womanish fellows about a height; and I have myself been put, more than once, *hors de combat* by a less affair than the rock of Edinburgh Castle.

We discussed it in the dark and between the passage of the rounds; and it was impossible for any body of men to show a less adventurous spirit. Some were persuaded it was safe, and could prove the same by

argument ; but if they had good reasons why some one else should make the trial, they had better still why it should not be themselves. Others, again, condemned the whole idea as insane ; among these, as ill-luck would have it, a seaman of the fleet ; who was the most dispiriting of all. The height, he reminded us, was greater than the tallest ship's mast, the rope entirely free ; and he as good as defied the boldest and strongest to succeed. We were relieved from this dead-lock by our sergeant-major, of dragoons.

"Comrades," said he, "I believe I rank you all ; and for that reason, if you really wish it, I will be the first myself. At the same time, you are to consider what the chances are that I may prove to be the last, as well. I am no longer young—I was sixty near a month ago. Since I have been a prisoner, I have made for myself a little *bedaine*. My arms are all gone to fat. And you must promise not to blame me if I fail and make a mess of the whole thing."

"We cannot hear of such a thing," said I. "M. Laclas is the oldest man here ; and, as such, he should be the very last to offer. It is plain, we must draw lots."

"No," said M. Laclas ; "you put something else in my head ! There is one here who owes a pretty candle to the others, for they have kept his secret. Besides, the rest of us are only rabble ; and he is another affair altogether. Let Champdivers—let the noble go the first."

I confess there was a notable pause before the noble in question got his voice. But there was no room for choice. I had been so ill-advised, when I first joined the regiment, as to take ground on my nobility. I had



been often rallied on the matter in the ranks, and had passed under the by-names of Monseigneur and *the Marquis*. It was now needful that I should justify myself and take a fair revenge.

Any little hesitation I may have felt passed entirely unnoticed, from the lucky incident of a round happening at that moment to go by. And during the interval of silence there occurred something that sent my blood to the boil. There was a private in our shed called Clausel, a man of a very ugly disposition. He had made one of the followers of Goguelat ; but, whereas Goguelat had always a kind of monstrous gaiety about him, Clausel was no less morose than he was evil-minded. He was sometimes called *the General*, and sometimes by a name too ill-mannered for repetition.

As we all sat listening, this man's hand was laid on my shoulder, and his voice whispered in my ear: "If you don't go, I'll have you hanged, Marquis!"

As soon as the round was past—"Certainly, gentlemen!" said I. "I w'll give you a lead, with all the pleasure in the world. But, first of all, there is a hound here to be punished. M. Clausel has just insulted me, and dishonoured the French army; and I demand that he run the gauntlet of this shed."

There was but one voice asking what he had done, and, as soon as I told them, but one voice agreeing to the punishment. The General was, in consequence, extremely roughly handled, and the next day was congratulated by all who saw him on his new decorations. It was lucky for us that he was one of the prime movers and believers in our project of escape, or he had certainly revenged himself by a denunciation. As for his feelings towards myself, they appeared, by his looks, to surpass humanity; and I made up my mind to give him a wide berth in the future.

Had I been able to go down that instant, I believe I could have carried it well. But it was already too late—the day was at hand. The rest had still to be summoned. Nor was this the extent of my misfortune; for the next night, and the night after, were adorned with a perfect galaxy of stars, and showed every cat that stirred in a quarter of a mile. During this interval, I have to direct your sympathies on the Vicomte de Saint-Yves! All addressed me softly, like folk round a sick bed. Our Italian corporal, who had got a dozen of oysters from a fishwife, laid them at

my feet, as though I were a pagan idol ; and I have never since been wholly at my ease in the society of shellfish. He who was the best of our carvers brought me a snuff-box, which he had just completed, and which, while it was yet in hand, he had often declared he would not part with under fifteen dollars. I believe the piece was worth the money too ! And yet the voice stuck in my throat with which I must thank him. I found myself, in a word, to be fed up like a prisoner in a camp of anthropophagi, and honoured like the sacrificial bull. And what with these annoyances, and the risky venture immediately ahead, I found my part a trying one to play.

It was a good deal of a relief when the third evening closed about the castle with volumes of sea-fog. The lights of Princes Street sometimes disappeared, sometimes blinked across at us no brighter than the eyes of cats ; and five steps from one of the lanterns on the ramparts it was already groping dark. We made haste to lie down. Had our jailers been upon the watch, they must have observed our conversation to die out unusually soon. Yet I doubt if any of us slept. Each lay in his place, tortured at once with the hope of liberty and the fear of a hateful death. The guard call sounded ; the hum of the town declined by little and little. On all sides of us, in their different quarters, we could hear the watchmen cry the hours along the street. Often enough, during my stay in England, have I listened to these gruff or broken voices ; or perhaps gone to my window when I lay sleepless, and watched the old gentleman hobble by upon the causeway with

his cape and his cap, his hanger and his rattle. It was ever a thought with me how differently that cry would re-echo in the chamber of lovers, beside the bed of death, or in the condemned cell. I might be said to hear it that night myself in the condemned cell ! At length a fellow with a voice like a bull's began to roar out in the opposite thoroughfare :

"Past yin o'clock, and a dark, haary moarnin'.

At which we were all silently afoot.

As I stole about the battlements towards the—gallows, I was about to write—the sergeant-major, perhaps doubtful of my resolution, kept close by me, and occasionally proffered the most indigestible reassurances in my ear. At last I could bear them no longer.

"Be so obliging as to let me be!" said I. "I am neither a coward nor a fool. What do *you* know of whether the rope be long enough? But I shall know it in ten minutes!"

The good old fellow laughed in his moustache, and patted me.

It was all very well to show the disposition of my temper before a friend alone; before my assembled comrades the thing had to go handsomely. It was then my time to come on the stage; and I hope I took it handsomely.

"Now, gentlemen," said I, "if the rope is ready, here is the criminal!"

The tunnel was cleared, the stake driven, the rope extended. As I moved forward to the place, many of my comrades caught me by the hand and wrung it, an attention I could well have done without.



“Keep an eye on Clausel!” I whispered to Laclas ; and with that, got down on my elbows and knees, took the rope in both hands, and worked myself, feet foremost, through the tunnel. When the earth failed under my feet, I thought my heart would have stopped ; and a moment after I was demeaning myself in mid-air like a drunken jumping-jack. I have never been a model of piety, but at this juncture prayers and a cold sweat burst from me simultaneously.

The line was knotted at intervals of eighteen inches ; and to the inexpert it may seem as if it should have been even easy to descend. The trouble was, this wretched piece of rope appeared to be inspired, not with life alone, but with a personal malignity against myself. It turned to the one side, paused for a moment, and then spun me like a toasting jack to the other ; slipped like an eel from the clasp of my feet ; kept me all the time in the most outrageous fury of exertion ; and dashed me at intervals against the face of the rock. I had no eyes to see with ; and I doubt if there was anything to see but darkness. I must occasionally have caught a gasp of breath, but it was quite unconscious. And the whole forces of my mind were so consumed with losing hold and getting it again, that I could scarce have told whether I was going up or coming down.

Of a sudden I knocked against the cliff with such a thump as almost bereft me of my sense ; and, as reason twinkled back, I was amazed to find that I was in a state of rest, that the face of the precipice here inclined outwards at an angle which relieved me almost

wholly of the burthen of my own weight, and that one of my feet was safely planted on a ledge. I drew one of the sweetest breaths in my experience, hugged myself against the rope, and closed my eyes in a kind of ecstasy of relief. It occurred to me next to see how far I was advanced on my unlucky journey, a point on which I had not a shadow of an idea. I looked up; there was nothing above me but the blackness of the night and the fog. I craned timidly forward and looked down. There, upon a floor of darkness, I beheld a certain pattern of hazy lights, some of them aligned as in thoroughfares, others standing apart as in solitary houses; and before I could well realize it, or had in the least estimated my distance, a wave of nausea and vertigo warned me to lie back and close my eyes. In this situation I had really but the one wish, and that was: something else to think of! Strange to say, I got it; a veil was torn from my mind, and I saw what a fool I was—what fools we had all been—and that I had no business to be thus dangling between earth and heaven by my arms. The only thing to have done was to have attached me to a rope and lowered me, and I had never the wit to see it till that moment.

I filled my lungs, got a good hold on my rope, and once more launched myself on the descent. As it chanced, the worst of the danger was at an end, and I was so fortunate as to be never again exposed to any violent concussion. Soon after I must have passed within a little distance of a bush of wallflower, for the scent of it came over me with that impression of reality which characterizes scents in darkness. This made me

a second landmark, the ledge being my first. I began accordingly to compute intervals of time : so much to the ledge, so much again to the wallflower, so much more below. If I were not at the bottom of the rock, I calculated I must be near indeed to the end of the rope, and there was no doubt that I was not far from the end of my resources. I began to be light-headed and to be tempted to let go—now arguing that I was certainly arrived within a few feet of the level and could safely risk a fall, anon persuaded I was still close at the top, and it was idle to continue longer on the rock. In the midst of which I came to a bearing on plain ground, and had nearly wept aloud. My hands were as good as flayed, my courage entirely exhausted, and, what with the long strain and the sudden relief, my limbs shook under me with more than the violence of ague, and I was glad to cling to the rope.

But this was no time to give way. I had (by God's single mercy) got myself alive out of that fortress ; and now I had to try to get the others, my comrades. There was about a fathom of rope to spare ; I got it by the end, and searched the whole ground thoroughly for anything to make it fast to. In vain ; the ground was broken and stony, but there grew not there so much as a bush of furze.

“Now then,” thought I to myself, “here begins a new lesson, and I believe it will prove richer than the first. I am not strong enough to keep this rope extended. If I do not keep it extended the next man will be dashed against a precipice. There is no reason why he should have my extravagant good luck. I see no

reason why he should not fall—nor any place for him to fall on but my head.”

From where I was now standing there was occasionally visible, as the fog lightened, a lamp in one of the barrack windows, which gave me a measure of the height he had to fall and the horrid force that he must strike me with. What was yet worse, we had agreed to do without signals; every so many minutes by Laclas' watch another man was to be started from the battlements. Now, I had seemed to myself to be about half an hour in my descent, and it seemed near as long again that I waited, straining on the rope for my next comrade to begin. I began to be afraid that our conspiracy was out, that my friends were all secured, and that I should pass the remainder of the night, and be discovered in the morning, vainly clinging to the rope's end like a hooked fish upon an angle. I could not refrain, at this ridiculous image, from a chuckle of laughter. And the next moment I knew, by the jerking of the rope, that my friend had crawled out of the tunnel and was fairly launched on his descent.

It appears it was the sailor who had insisted on succeeding me: as soon as my continued silence had assured him the rope was long enough, Gautier, for that was his name, had forgotten his former arguments, and shown himself so extremely forward, that Laclas had given way. It was like the fellow, who had no harm in him beyond an instinctive selfishness. But he was like to have paid pretty dearly for the privilege. Do as I would, I could not keep the rope as I could have wished it; and he ended at last by falling on me

from a height of several yards, so that we both rolled together on the ground. As soon as he could breathe he cursed me beyond belief, wept over his finger, which he had broken, and cursed me again. I bade him be still and think shame of himself to be so great a cry-baby. Did he not hear the round going by above? I asked ; and who could tell but what the noise of his fall was already remarked, and the sentinels at the very moment leaning upon the battlements to listen ?

The round, however, went by, and nothing was discovered ; the third man came to the ground quite easily ; the fourth was, of course, child's play ; and before there were ten of us collected, it seemed to me that, without the least injustice to my comrades, I might proceed to take care of myself.

I knew their plan : they had a map, and an almanack, and designed for Grangemouth, where they were to steal a ship. Suppose them to do so, I had no idea they were qualified to manage it after it was stolen. Their whole escape, indeed, was the most haphazard thing imaginable ; only the impatience of captives and the ignorance of private soldiers would have entertained so misbegotten a device ; and though I played the good comrade and worked with them upon the tunnel, but for the lawyer's message I should have let them go without me. Well, now they were beyond my help, as they had always been beyond my counselling ; and, without word said or leave taken, I stole out of the little crowd. It is true I would rather have waited to shake hands with Laclas, but in the last man who had descended I thought I recognized Clausel, and

since the scene in the shed, my distrust of Clausel was perfect. I believed the man to be capable of any infamy, and events have since shown that I was right.

II

I HAD two views. The first was, naturally, to get clear of Edinburgh Castle and the town, to say nothing of my fellow prisoners; the second to work to the southward so long as it was night, and be near Swanston Cottage by morning. What I should do there and then, I had no guess, and did not greatly care, being a devotee of a couple of divinities called Chance and Circumstance. Prepare, if possible; where it is impossible, work straight forward, and keep your eyes open and your tongue oiled. Wit and a good exterior—there is all life in a nutshell.

I had at first a rather chequered journey; got involved in gardens, butted into houses, and had even once the misfortune to awake a sleeping family, the father of which, as I suppose, menaced me from the window with a blunderbuss. Altogether, though I had been some time gone from my companions, I was still at no great distance, when a miserable accident put a period to the escape. Of a sudden the night was divided by a scream. This was followed by the sound of something falling, and that again by the report of a musket from the Castle battlements. It was strange to hear the alarm spread through the city. In the fortress drums were beat and a bell rung backwards. On all hands the watchmen sprang their rattles. Even

in that limbo or no-man's-land where I was wandering, lights were made in the houses ; sashes were flung up ; I could hear neighbouring families converse from window to window, and at length I was challenged myself.

"What's that ?" cried a big voice.

I could see it proceeded from a big man in a big nightcap, leaning from a one-pair window ; and as I was not yet abreast of his house, I judged it was more wise to answer. This was not the first time I had had to stake my fortunes on the goodness of my accent in a foreign tongue ; and I have always found the moment inspiring, as a gambler should. Pulling around me a sort of great coat I had made of my blanket, to cover my sulphur-coloured livery—"A friend !" said I.

"What like's all this collieshangie ?" said he.

I had never heard of a collieshangie in my days, but with the racket all about us in the city, I could have no doubt as to the man's meaning.

"I do not know, sir, really," said I ; "but I suppose some of the prisoners will have escaped."

"Humph !" says he.

"Oh, sir, they will be soon taken," I replied : "it has been found in time. Good morning, sir !"

"Ye walk late, sir ?" he added.

"Oh, surely not," said I, with a laugh. "Earlyish, if you like !" which brought me finally beyond him, highly pleased with my success.

I was now come forth on a good thoroughfare, which led (as well as I could judge) in my direction. It brought me almost immediately through a piece of



street, whence I could hear close by the springing of a watchman's rattle, and where I suppose a sixth part of the windows would be open, and the people, in all sorts of night gear, talking with a kind of tragic gusto from one to another. Here, again, I must run the gauntlet of a half-dozen questions, the rattle all the while sounding nearer; but as I was not walking inordinately quick, as I spoke like a gentleman, and the lamps were too dim to show my dress, I carried it off once more. One person, indeed, inquired where I was off to at that hour. I replied vaguely and cheerfully, and as I escaped at one end of this dangerous pass I could see the watchman's lantern entering by the other. I was now safe on a dark country highway, out of sight of lights and out of the fear of watchmen. And yet I had not gone over a hundred yards before a fellow made an ugly rush at me from the roadside. I avoided him with a leap, and stood on guard, cursing my empty hands, wondering whether I had to do with an officer or a mere footpad, and scarce knowing which to wish. My assailant stood a little; in the thick darkness I could see him bob and sidle as though he were fainting at me for an advantageous onfall. Then he spoke.

"My good friend," says he, and at the first word I pricked my ears, "my good friend, will you oblige me with a little necessary information? Which road to Cramond?"

I laughed out clear and loud, stepped up to the convivialist, took him by the shoulders and faced him about. "My good friend," said I, "I believe I know what is best for you much better than yourself, and may God forgive you the fright you have given me!

There, get you gone to Edinburgh!" And I gave a shove, which he obeyed with the passive agility of a ball, and disappeared incontinently in the darkness down the road by which I had myself come.

Once clear of this foolish fellow, I went on again up a gradual hill, descended on the other side through the houses of a country village, and came at last to the bottom of the main ascent leading to the Pentlands and my destination. I was some way up when the fog began to lighten; a little farther, and I stepped by degrees into a clear starry night, and saw in front of me, and quite distinct, the summits of the Pentlands, and behind, the valley of the Forth and the city of my late captivity buried under a lake of vapour. I had but one encounter—that of a farm-cart, which I heard, from a great way ahead of me, creaking nearer in the night, and which passed me about the point of dawn like a thing seen in a dream, with two silent figures in the inside nodding to the horse's steps. I presume they were asleep; by the shawl about her head and shoulders, one of them should be a woman. Soon, by concurrent steps, the day began to break and the fog to subside and roll away. The east grew luminous and was barred with chilly colours, and the Castle on its rock, and the spires and chimneys of the upper town, took gradual shape, and arose, like islands, out of the receding cloud. All about me was still and sylvan; the road mounting and winding, with nowhere a sign of any passenger, the birds chirping, I suppose for warmth, the boughs of the trees knocking together, and the red leaves falling in the wind.

It was broad day, but still bitter cold and the sun not up, when I came in view of my destination. A single gable and chimney of the cottage peeped over the shoulder of the hill ; not far off, and a trifle higher on the mountain, a tall old whitewashed farmhouse stood among the trees, beside a falling brook ; beyond were rough hills of pasture. I bethought me that shepherd folk were early risers, and if I were once seen skulking in that neighbourhood it might prove the ruin of my prospects ; took advantage of a line of hedge, and worked myself up in its shadow till I was come under the garden wall of my friends' house. The cottage was a little quaint place of many rough-cast gables and grey roofs. It had something the air of a rambling infinitesimal cathedral, the body of it rising in the midst two storeys high, with a steep-pitched roof, and sending out upon all hands (as it were chapter-houses, chapels, and transepts) one storeyed and dwarfish projections. To add to this appearance it was grotesquely decorated with crockets and gargoyles, ravished from some mediæval church. The place seemed hidden away, being not only concealed in the trees of the garden, but, on the side on which I approached it, buried as high as the eaves by the rising of the ground. About the walls of the garden there went a line of well-grown elms and beeches, the first entirely bare, the last still pretty well covered with red leaves, and the centre was occupied with a thicket of laurel and holly, in which I could see arches cut and paths winding.

I was now within hail of my friends, and not much the better. The house appeared asleep ; yet if I attempted

to wake any one, I had no guarantee it might not prove either the aunt with the gold eyeglasses (whom I could only remember with trembling), or some ass of a servant-maid who should burst out screaming at sight of me. Higher up I could hear and see a shepherd shouting to his dogs and striding on the rough sides of the mountain, and it was clear I must get to cover without loss of time. No doubt the holly thickets would have proved a very suitable retreat, but there was mounted on the wall a sort of sign-board not uncommon in the country of Great Britain, and very damping to the adventurous: *Spring Guns and Man-traps* was the legend that it bore. I have learned since that these advertisements, three times out of four, were in the nature of Quaker guns on a disarmed battery; but I had not learned it then, and even so, the odds would not have been good enough. For a choice, I would a hundred times sooner be returned to Edinburgh Castle and my corner in the bastion, than to leave my foot in a steel trap or have to digest the contents of an automatic blunderbuss. There was but one chance left—that Ronald or Flora might be the first to come abroad; and in order to profit by this chance if it occurred, I got me on the cope of the wall in a place where it was screened by the thick branches of a beech, and sat there waiting.

As the day wore on, the sun came very pleasantly out. I had been awake all night, I had undergone the most violent agitations of mind and body, and it is not so much to be wondered at, as it was exceedingly unwise and foolhardy, that I should have dropped into a doze. From this I awakened to the characteristic

sound of digging, looked down, and saw immediately below me the back view of a gardener in a stable waistcoat. Now he would appear steadily immersed in his business; anon, to my more immediate terror, he would straighten his back, stretch his arms, gaze about the otherwise deserted garden, and relish a deep pinch of snuff. It was my first thought to drop from



the wall upon the other side. A glance sufficed to show me that even the way by which I had come was now cut off, and the field behind me already occupied by a couple of shepherds' assistants and a score or two of sheep. I have named the talismans on which I habitually depend, but here was a conjuncture in which both were wholly useless. The copestone of a wall

arrayed with broken bottles is no favourable rostrum ; and I might be as eloquent as Pitt, and as fascinating as Richelieu, and neither the gardener nor the shepherd lads would care a halfpenny. In short, there was no escape possible from my absurd position ; there I must continue to sit until one or other of my neighbours should raise his eyes and give the signal for my capture.

The part of the wall on which (for my sins) I was posted could be scarce less than twelve feet high on the inside ; the leaves of the beech which made a fashion of sheltering me were already partly fallen ; and I was thus not only perilously exposed myself, but enabled to command some part of the garden walks and (under an evergreen arch) the front lawn and windows of the cottage. For long nothing stirred except my friend with the spade ; then I heard the opening of a sash ; and immediately after saw Miss Flora appear in a morning wrapper and come strolling hitherward between the borders, pausing and visiting her flowers — herself as fair.

There was a friend ; *here*, immediately beneath me, an unknown quantity—the gardener : how to communicate with the one and not attract the notice of the other ? To make a noise was out of the question ; I dared scarce to breathe. I held myself ready to make a gesture as soon as she should look, and she looked in every possible direction but the right one. She was interested in the vilest tuft of chickweed, she gazed at the summit of the mountain, she came even immediately below me and conversed on the most fastidious topics with the gardener ; but to the top of that wall she would not dedicate a glance ! At last she began to

retrace her steps in the direction of the cottage ; whereupon, becoming quite desperate, I broke off a piece of plaster, took a happy aim, and hit her with it in the nape of the neck. She clapped her hand to the place, turned about, looked on all sides for an explanation, and spying me (as indeed I was parting the branches to make it the more easy), half uttered and half swallowed down again a cry of surprise.

The gardenér was erect upon the instant.

"What's your will, miss?" said he.

Her readiness amazed me. She had already turned and was gazing in the opposite direction. "There's a child among the artichokes," she said.

"The Plagues of Egyp' ! *I'll* see to them !" cried the gardener truculently, and with a hurried waddle disappeared among the evergreens.

That moment she turned, and came running towards me, her arms stretched out, her face incarnadined for the moment with heavenly blushes, the next pale as death. "Monsieur de Saint Yves !" she said.

"My dear young lady," I said, "this is a shocking liberty—I know it ! But what else was I to do ?"

"You have escaped?" said she.

"If you call this escape," I replied.

"But you cannot possibly stop there !" she cried.

"I know it," said I. "And where am I to go ?"

She struck her hands together. "I have it !" she exclaimed. "Come down by the beech trunk—you must leave no footprint in the border—quickly, before Robie can get back ! I am the henwife here : I keep the key · you must go into the hen-house—for the moment."

I was by her side at once. Both cast a hasty glance at the blank windows of the cottage and so much as was visible of the garden alleys ; it seemed there was none to observe us. She caught me by the sleeve and ran. It was no time for compliments : hurry breathed upon our necks ; and I ran along with her to the next corner of the garden, where a wired court and a board hovel standing in a grove of trees advertised my place of refuge. She thrust me in without a word ; the bulk of the fowls were at the same time emitted ; and I found myself the next moment locked in alone with half-a-dozen sitting hens.

From *St. Ives*, by R. L. STEVENSON.





The Lady of Shalott

PART I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky ;
And thro' the field the road runs by
 To many-tower'd Camelot ;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
 Slide the heavy barges trail'd
 By slow horses; and unhail'd
 The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd,
 Skimming down to Camelot:
 But who hath seen her wave her hand?
 Or at the casement seen her stand?
 Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
 In among the bearded barley,
 Hear a song that echoes cheerly
 From the river winding clearly,
 Down to tower'd Camelot:
 And by the moon the reaper weary,
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
 Listening, whispers, "'Tis the fairy
 Lady of Shalott."

PART II

There she weaves by night and day
 A magic web with colours gay.
 She has heard a whisper say,
 A curse is on her if she stay
 To look down to Camelot.
 She knows not what the curse may be,
 And so she weaveth steadily,
 And little other care hath she,
 The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
 That hangs before her all the year,
 Shadows of the world appear.
 There she sees the highway near
 Winding down to Camelot:

There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market-girls,
 Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
 Goes by to tower'd Camelot;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
 The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often through the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
 And music, went to Camelot:
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;
"I am half sick of shadows," said
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
 Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
 Beside remote Shalott.



"Out flew the web and floated wide ;
The mirror crack'd from side to side."

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.

The bridle bells rang merrily

As he rode down to Camelot :
And from his blazon'd baldrick slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burn'd like one burning flame together,

As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd ;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode ;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,

As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She look'd down to Camelot

Out flew the web and floated wide ;
The mirror crack'd from side to side ;
"The curse is come upon me !" cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over tower'd Camelot ;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay ;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right—
The leaves upon her falling light—
Thro' the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot :
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Sixth Reading Book

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,

Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.

For ere she reach'd upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,

The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.

Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name—

The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they cross'd themselves for fear,

All the knights at Camelot:

But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
The Lady of Shalott."

TENNYSON.



Among the Moors

I



ABOUT five o'clock we came in sight of Benowm, the residence of Ali. It presented to the eye a great number of dirty-looking tents, scattered without order, over a large space of ground ; and among the tents appeared large herds of camels, cattle, and goats. We reached the skirts of the camp a little before sunset, and, with much entreaty, procured a little water. My arrival was no sooner observed, than the people who drew water at the wells threw down their buckets, those in the tents mounted their horses, and men, women, and children came running or galloping towards me.

I soon found myself surrounded by such a crowd that I could scarcely move ; one pulled my clothes, another took off my hat, a third stopped me to examine

my waistcoat buttons, and a fourth called out, *La illah el allah Mahomet rasowl allahi*, and signified, in a threatening manner, that I must repeat those words. We reached at length the king's tent, where we found a great number of people, men and women, assembled. Ali was sitting upon a black leather cushion, clipping a few hairs from his upper lip, a female attendant holding up a looking-glass before him. He appeared to be an old man, of the Arab cast, with a long white beard; and he had a sullen and indignant aspect. He surveyed me with attention, and inquired of the Moors if I could speak Arabic; being answered in the negative, he appeared much surprised, and continued silent.

The surrounding attendants, and especially the ladies, were abundantly more inquisitive; they asked a thousand questions, inspected every part of my apparel, searched my pockets, and obliged me to unbutton my waistcoat, and display the whiteness of my skin; they even counted my toes and fingers, as if they doubted whether I was in truth a human being.

In a little time the priest announced evening prayers; but before the people departed, the Moor, who had acted as interpreter, informed me that Ali was about to present me with something to eat; and looking round, I observed some boys bringing a wild hog, which they tied to one of the tent strings, and Ali made signs to me to kill and dress it for supper. Though I was very hungry, I did not think it prudent to eat any part of an animal so much detested by the Moors, and therefore told him that I never ate such food. They then untied the hog, in hopes that it would run immediately at me—

for they believe that a great enmity subsists between hogs and Christians—but in this they were disappointed, for the animal no sooner regained his liberty, than he began to attack indiscriminately every person that came in his way, and at last took shelter under the couch upon which the king was sitting.

The assembly being thus dissolved, I was conducted to the tent of Ali's chief slave, but was not permitted to enter, nor allowed to touch anything belonging to it. I requested something to eat, and a little boiled corn, with salt and water, was at length sent me in a wooden bowl; and a mat was spread upon the sand before the tent, on which I passed the night, surrounded by the curious multitude.

At sunrise, Ali, with a few attendants, came on horseback to visit me, and signified that he had provided a hut for me, where I would be sheltered from the sun. I was accordingly conducted thither, and found the hut comparatively cool and pleasant. It was constructed of corn stalks set up on end, in the form of a square, with a flat roof of the same materials, supported by forked sticks, to one of which was tied the wild hog before mentioned. This animal had certainly been placed there by Ali's order, out of derision to a Christian; and I found it a very disagreeable inmate, as it drew together a number of boys, who amused themselves by beating it with sticks, until they had so irritated the hog that it ran and bit at every person within its reach.

I was no sooner seated in this my new habitation, than the Moors assembled in crowds to behold me; but

I found it rather a troublesome levee, for I was obliged to take off one of my stockings, and show them my foot, and even to take off my jacket and waistcoat to show them how my clothes were put on and off; they were much delighted with the curious contrivance of buttons. All this was to be repeated to every succeeding visitor; for such as had already seen these wonders, insisted on their friends seeing the same; and in this manner I was employed, dressing and undressing, buttoning and unbuttoning, from noon to night. About eight o'clock, Ali sent me for supper some kouskous and salt and water, which was very acceptable, being the only victuals I had tasted since morning.

I observed that, in the night, the Moors kept regular watch, and frequently looked into the hut to see if I was asleep; and if it was quite dark, they would light a wisp of grass. About two o'clock in the morning, a Moor entered the hut, probably with a view to steal something, or perhaps to murder me; and groping about, he laid his hand upon my shoulder. As night visitors were at best but suspicious characters, I sprang up the moment he laid his hand upon me: and the Moor, in his haste to get off, stumbled over my boy, and fell with his face upon the wild hog, which returned the attack by biting the Moor's arm. The screams of this man alarmed the people in the king's tent, who immediately conjectured that I had made my escape, and a number of them mounted their horses, and prepared to pursue me.

I observed upon this occasion that Ali did not sleep in his own tent, but came galloping up on a white horse



from a small tent at a considerable distance: indeed, the tyrannical and cruel behaviour of this man made him so jealous of every person around him, that even his own slaves and domestics knew not where he slept. When the Moors had explained to him the cause of this outcry, they all went away, and I was permitted to sleep quietly until morning.

March 13.—With the returning day 'commenced the same round of insult and irritation: the boys assembled to beat the hog, and the men and women to plague the Christian. It is impossible for me to describe the behaviour of a people who study mischief as a science, and exult in the miseries and misfortunes of their fellow-creatures. It is sufficient to observe that the rudeness, ferocity, and fanaticism, which distinguish the Moors from the rest of mankind, found here a proper subject whereon to exercise their propensities. I was a *stranger*, I was *unprotected*, and I was a *Christian*; each of these circumstances is sufficient to drive every spark of humanity from the heart of a Moor; but when all of them, as in my case, were combined in the same person, and a suspicion prevailed withal, that I had come as a *spy* into the country, the reader will easily imagine that, in such a situation, I had everything to fear. Anxious, however, to conciliate favour, and, if possible, to afford the Moors no pretence for ill treating me, I readily complied with every command, and patiently bore every insult; but never did any period of my life pass away so heavily: from sunrise to sunset was I obliged to suffer, with an unruffled countenance, the insults of the rudest savages on earth.

The Moors, though very indolent themselves, are rigid taskmasters, and keep every person under them in full employment. My boy Demla was sent to the woods to collect withered grass for Ali's horses ; and, after a variety of projects concerning myself, they at last found out an employment for me ; this was no other than the respectable office of *barber*. I was to make my first exhibition in this capacity in the royal presence, and to be honoured with the task of shaving the head of the young prince of Ludamar. I accordingly seated myself upon the sand, and the boy, with some hesitation, sat down beside me.

A small razor, about three inches long, was put into my hand, and I was ordered to proceed ; but whether from my own want of skill, or the improper shape of the instrument, I unfortunately made a slight incision in the boy's head, at the very commencement of the operation ; and the king observing the awkward manner in which I held the razor, concluded that his son's head was in very improper hands, and ordered me to resign the razor, and walk out of the tent. This I considered as a very fortunate circumstance ; for I had laid it down as a rule, to make myself as useless and insignificant as possible, as the only means of recovering my liberty.

March 18.—Four Moors arrived from Jarra with Johnson, my interpreter, having seized him before he had received any intimation of my confinement ; and bringing with them a bundle of clothes that I had left at Damán Jumma's house, for my use, in case I should return by the way of Jarra. Johnson was led into Ali's



They searched every part of my apparel."

tent and examined ; the bundle was opened, and I was sent for to explain the use of the different articles. I was happy, however, to find that Johnson had committed my papers to the charge of one of Daman's wives. When I had satisfied Ali's curiosity respecting the different articles of apparel, the bundle was again tied up, and put into a large cowskin bag, that stood in a corner of the tent.

The same evening Ali sent three of his people to inform me, that there were many thieves in the neighbourhood, and that to prevent the rest of my things from being stolen, it was necessary to convey them all into his tent. My clothes, instruments, and everything that belonged to me, were accordingly carried away ; and though the heat and dust made clean linen very necessary and refreshing, I could not procure a single shirt out of the small stock I had brought along with me. Ali was, however, disappointed, by not finding among my effects the quantity of gold and amber that he expected ; but to make sure of everything, he sent the same people, on the morning following, to examine whether I had anything concealed about my person. They, with their usual rudeness, searched every part of my apparel, and stripped me of all my gold, amber, my watch, and one of my pocket compasses. I had fortunately, in the night, buried the other compass in the sand ; and this, with the clothes I had on, was all that the tyranny of Ali had now left me.

The gold and amber were highly gratifying to Moorish avarice, but the pocket compass soon became an object of superstitious curiosity. Ali was very desirous to be

informed why that small piece of iron, the needle, always pointed to the Great Desert ; and I found myself somewhat puzzled to answer the question. To have pleaded my ignorance, would have created a suspicion that I wished to conceal the real truth from him ; I therefore told him that my mother resided far beyond the sands of Sahara, and that whilst she was alive the piece of iron would always point that way, and serve as a guide to conduct me to her, and that if she was dead, it would point to her grave. Ali now looked at the compass with redoubled amazement ; turned it round and round repeatedly ; but observing that it always pointed the same way, he took it up with great caution, and returned it to me, manifesting that he thought there was something of magic in it, and that he was afraid of keeping so dangerous an instrument in his possession.

March 20.—This morning a council of chief men was held in Ali's tent respecting me ; their decisions, though they were all unfavourable to me, were differently related by different persons. Some said that they intended to put me to death ; others, that I was only to lose my right hand ; but the most probable account was that which I received from Ali's own son, a boy about nine years of age, who came to me in the evening, and, with much concern, informed me that his uncle had persuaded his father to put out my eyes, which they said resembled those of a cat, and that all the Bushreens had approved of this measure. His father, however, he said, would not put the sentence into execution until Fatima the queen, who was at present in the north, had seen me.

March 21.—Anxious to know my destiny, I went to the King early in the morning; and as a number of Bushreens were assembled, I thought this a favourable opportunity of discovering their intentions. I therefore began by begging his permission to return to Jarra; which was flatly refused; his wife, he said, had not yet seen me, and I must stay until she came to Benown, after which I should be at liberty to depart; and that my horse, which had been taken away from me the day after I arrived, should be again restored to me.

Unsatisfactory as this answer was, I was forced to appear pleased; and as there was little hope of making my escape, at this season of the year, on account of the excessive heat, and the total want of water in the woods, I resolved to wait patiently until the rains had set in, or until some more favourable opportunity should present itself—but *hope deferred maketh the heart sick*. This tedious procrastination from day to day, and the thoughts of travelling through the Negro kingdoms in the rainy season, which was now fast approaching, made me very melancholy; and having passed a restless night, I found myself attacked, in the morning, by a smart fever. I had wrapped myself close up in my cloak, with a view to induce perspiration, and was asleep when a party of Moors entered the hut, and, with their usual rudeness, pulled the cloak from me. I made signs to them that I was sick, and wished much to sleep; but I solicited in vain; my distress was a matter of sport to them, and they endeavoured to heighten it by every means in their power.

This studied and degrading insolence, to which I was constantly exposed, was one of the bitterest ingredients in the cup of captivity, and often made life itself a burden to me. In these distressing moments I have frequently envied the situation of the slave, who, amidst all his calamities, could still possess the enjoyment of his own thoughts ; a happiness to which I had for some time been a stranger. Wearied out with such continual insults, and perhaps a little peevish from the fever, I trembled lest my passion might unawares overleap the bounds of prudence, and spur me to some sudden act of resentment, when death must be the inevitable consequence. In this perplexity I left my hut, and walked to some shady trees at a little distance from the camp, where I lay down.

But even here persecution followed me, and solitude was thought too great an indulgence for a distressed Christian. Ali's son, with a number of horsemen, came galloping to the place, and ordered me to rise and follow them. I begged they would allow me to remain where I was, if it was only for a few hours ; but they paid little attention to what I said ; and after a few threatening words, one of them pulled out a pistol from a leather bag, that was fastened to the pommel of his saddle, and presenting it towards me, snapped it twice. He did this with so much indifference, that I really doubted whether the pistol was loaded ; he cocked it a third time, and was striking the flint with a piece of steel, when I begged them to desist, and returned with them to the camp.

When we entered Ali's tent, we found him much out



of humour. He called for the Moor's pistol, and amused himself for some time with opening and shutting the pan ; at length, taking up his powder-horn, he fresh primed it ; and turning round to me with a menacing look, said something in Arabic, which I did not understand. I desired my boy, who was sitting before the tent, to inquire what offence I had committed ; when I was informed that having gone out of the camp without Ali's permission, they suspected that I had some design of making my escape ; and that in future, if I was seen without the skirts of the camp, orders had been given that I should be shot by the first person that observed me.

In the afternoon, the horizon, to the eastward, was thick and hazy, and the Moors prognosticated a sand wind ; which accordingly commenced on the morning following, and lasted, with slight intermissions, for two days. The force of the wind was not in itself very great ; it was what a seaman would have denominated a *stiff breeze* ; but the quantity of sand and dust carried before it was such as to darken the whole atmosphere. It swept along from east to west, in a thick and constant stream, and the air was at times so dark and full of sand, that it was difficult to discern the neighbouring tents. As the Moors always dress their victuals in the open air, this sand fell in great plenty among the kouskous ; it readily adhered to the skin, when moistened by perspiration, and formed a cheap and universal hair-powder. The Moors wrap a cloth round their face to prevent them from inhaling the sand, and always turn their backs to the wind when

they look up, to prevent the sand falling into their eyes.

March 28.—This morning a large herd of cattle arrived from the eastward ; and one of the drivers, to whom Ali had lent my horse, came into my hut with the leg of an antelope as a present, and told me that my horse was standing before Ali's tent. In a little time Ali sent one of his slaves to inform me, that, in the afternoon, I must be in readiness to ride out with him, as he intended to show me to some of his women.

About four o'clock, Ali, with six of his courtiers, came riding to my hut, and told me to follow them. I readily complied. But here a new difficulty occurred. The Moors, accustomed to a loose and easy dress, could not reconcile themselves to the appearance of my *nankeen breeches*, which they said were inelegant, and as this was a visit to ladies, Ali ordered my boy to bring out the loose cloak which I had always worn since my arrival at Benowm, and told me to wrap it close round me. We visited the tents of four different ladies, at every one of which I was presented with a bowl of milk and water. All these ladies were remarkably corpulent, which is considered here as the highest mark of beauty. They were very inquisitive, and examined my hair and skin with great attention ; but affected to consider me as a sort of inferior being to themselves, and would knit their brows, and seemed to shudder, when they looked at the whiteness of my skin. In the course of this evening's excursion, my dress and appearance afforded infinite mirth to the company, who galloped round me, as if they were baiting a wild animal ; twirling

their muskets round their heads, and exhibiting various feats of activity and horsemanship, seemingly to display their superior prowess over a miserable captive.

The Moors are certainly very good horsemen. They ride without fear ; their saddles, being high before and behind, afford them a very secure seat ; and if they chance to fall, the whole country is so soft and sandy, that they are very seldom hurt. Their greatest pride, and one of their principal amusements, is to put the horse to its full speed, and then stop him with a sudden jerk, so as frequently to bring him down upon his haunches. Ali always rode upon a milk-white horse, with its tail dyed red. He never walked, unless he went to say his prayers ; and even in the night, two or three horses were always kept ready saddled, at a little distance from his own tent. The Moors set a very high value upon their horses ; for it is by their superior fleetness that they are enabled to make so many predatory excursions into the Negro countries. They feed them three or four times a day, and generally give them a large quantity of sweet milk in the evening, which the horses appear to relish very much.

April 7.—About four o'clock in the afternoon, a whirlwind passed through the camp with such violence that it overturned three tents, and blew down one side of my hut. These whirlwinds come from the Great Desert, and at this season of the year are so common, that I have seen five or six of them at one time. They carry up quantities of sand to an amazing height, which resemble, at a distance, so many moving pillars of smoke.

The scorching heat of the sun upon a dry and sandy country makes the air insufferably hot. Ali having robbed me of my thermometer, I had no means of forming a comparative judgment ; but in the middle of the day, when the beams of the vertical sun are seconded by the scorching wind from the Desert, the ground is frequently heated to such a degree, as not to be borne by the naked foot ; even the Negro slaves will not run from one tent to another without their sandals. At this time of the day, the Moors lie stretched at length in their tents, either asleep, or unwilling to move ; and I have often felt the wind so hot, that I could not hold my hand in the current of air, which came through the crevices of my hut, without feeling sensible pain.

April 8.—This day the wind blew from the south-west, and in the night there was a heavy shower of rain, accompanied by thunder and lightning.

April 10.—In the evening the tabala, or large drum, was beat to announce a wedding, which was held at one of the neighbouring tents. A great number of people of both sexes assembled, but without that mirth and hilarity which take place at a Negro wedding : here was neither singing nor dancing, nor any other amusement that I could perceive. A woman was beating the drum, and the other women joining at times like a chorus, by setting up a shrill scream, and at the same time moving their tongues from one side of the mouth to the other with great celerity. I was soon tired, and had returned to my hut, where I was sitting almost asleep, when an old woman entered, with a wooden bowl in her hand, and signified that she had brought



me a present from the bride. Before I could recover from the surprise which this message created, the woman discharged the contents of the bowl full in my face. Finding that it was filthy water with which, among the Hottentots, a priest is said to sprinkle a new married couple, I began to suspect that the old lady was actuated by mischief, or malice ; but she gave me seriously to understand that it was a nuptial benediction from the bride herself, and which, on such occasions, is always received by the young unmarried Moors as a mark of distinguished favour. This being the case, I wiped my face, and sent my acknowledgments to the lady. The wedding drum continued to beat, and the women to sing, or rather whistle, all night. About nine in the morning, the bride was brought in state from her mother's tent, attended by a number of women who carried her tent (a present from her husband), some bearing up the poles, others holding by the strings ; and in this manner they marched, whistling as formerly, until they came to the place appointed for her residence, where they pitched the tent. The husband followed, with a number of men leading four bullocks, which they tied to the tent strings ; and having killed another, and distributed the beef among the people, the ceremony was concluded.

II

ONE whole month had now elapsed since I was led into captivity, during which time each returning day brought me fresh distresses. I watched the lingering course of the sun with anxiety, and blessed his evening

beams as they shed a yellow lustre along the sandy floor of my hut ; for it was then that my oppressors left me, and allowed me to pass the sultry night in solitude and reflection.

About midnight a bowl of kouskous, with some salt and water, was brought for me and my two attendants ; this was our common fare, and it was all that was allowed us to allay the cravings of hunger, and support nature for the whole of the following day ; for it is to be observed that this was the Mahomedan Lent ; and as the Moors keep the fast with a religious strictness, they thought it proper to compel me, though a Christian, to a similar observance. Time, however, somewhat reconciled me to my situation. I found that I could bear hunger and thirst better than I expected ; and at length I endeavoured to beguile the tedious hours by learning to write Arabic. The people who came to see me, soon made me acquainted with the characters ; and I discovered, that by engaging their attention in this way, they were not so troublesome as otherwise they would have been. Indeed, when I observed any person whose countenance I thought bore malice towards me, I made it a rule to ask him, either to write in the sand himself, or to decipher what I had already written, and the pride of showing his superior attainments generally induced him to comply with my request.

April 14.—As Queen Fatima had not yet arrived, Ali proposed to go to the north, and bring her back with him ; but as the place was two days' journey from Benowm, it was necessary to have some refreshment on the road ; and Ali, suspicious of those about him, was

so afraid of being poisoned, that he never ate anything but what was dressed under his own immediate inspection. A fine bullock was therefore killed, and the flesh being cut up into thin slices, was dried in the sun : and this, with two bags of dry kouskous, formed his travelling provisions.

Previous to his departure the black people of the town of Benown came, according to their annual custom, to show their arms, and bring their stipulated tribute of corn and cloth. They were but badly armed. twenty-two with muskets, forty or fifty with bows and arrows, and nearly the same number of men and boys, with spears only. They arranged themselves before the tent, where they waited until their arms were examined and some little disputes settled.

About midnight on the 16th, Ali departed quietly from Benown, accompanied by a few attendants. He was expected to return in the course of nine or ten days.

April 24.—We had been for some days in daily expectation of Ali's return from Saheel (or the north country) with his wife Fatima. In the meanwhile Mansong, king of Bambarra, had sent to Ali for a party of horse to assist in storming Gedingooma. With this demand Ali had not only refused to comply, but had treated the messengers with great haughtiness and contempt; upon which Mansong gave up all thoughts of taking the town, and prepared to chastise Ali for his contumacy.

Things were in this situation, when, on the 29th of April, a messenger arrived at Benown with the disagreeable intelligence that the Bambarra army was

approaching the frontiers of Ludamar. This threw the whole country into confusion; and in the afternoon Ali's son, with about twenty horsemen, arrived at Benowm. He ordered all the cattle to be driven away immediately, all the tents to be struck, and the people to hold themselves in readiness to depart at daylight the next morning.

April 30.—At daybreak the whole camp was in motion. The baggage was carried upon bullocks, the two tent poles being placed on each side, and the different wooden articles of the tent distributed in like manner; the tent cloth was thrown over all, and upon this were commonly placed one or two women, for the Moorish women are very bad walkers. The king's favourites rode upon camels, with a saddle of a particular construction, and a canopy to shelter them from the sun. We proceeded to the northward until noon, when the king's son ordered the whole company, except two tents, to enter a thick low wood, which was upon our right. I was sent along with the two tents, and arrived in the evening at a Negro town called Farani; here we pitched the tents in an open place, at no great distance from the town.

The hurry and confusion which attended this decampment prevented the slaves from dressing the usual quantity of victuals; and lest their dry provisions should be exhausted before they reached their place of destination (for as yet none but Ali and the chief men knew whither we were going), they thought proper to make me observe this day as a day of fasting.

May 1.—As I had some reason to suspect that this



day was also to be considered as a fast, I went in the morning to the Negro town of Farani, and begged some provisions from the Dooty, who readily supplied my wants, and desired me to come to his house every day during my stay in the neighbourhood. These hospitable people are looked upon by the Moors as an abject race of slaves, and are treated accordingly. Two of Ali's household slaves, a man and a woman, who had come along with the two tents, went this morning to water the cattle from the town wells, at which there began to be a great scarcity. When the Negro women observed the cattle approaching, they took up their pitchers and ran with all possible haste towards the town ; but before they could enter the gate, they were stopped by the

slaves, who compelled them to bring back the water they had drawn for their own families, and empty it into the troughs for the cattle. When this was exhausted, they were ordered to draw water until such time as the cattle had all drunk ; and the woman slave actually broke two wooden bowls over the heads of the black girls, because they were somewhat dilatory in obeying her commands.

May 3.—We departed from the vicinity of Farani, and after a circuitous route through the woods, arrived at Ali's camp in the afternoon. This encampment was larger than that of Benown, and was situated in the middle of a thick wood about two miles distant from a Negro town, called Bubaker. I immediately waited upon Ali, in order to pay my respects to Queen Fatima, who had come with him from Saheel. He seemed much pleased with my coming ; shook hands with me, and informed his wife that I was the Christian. She was a woman of the Arab cast, with long black hair, and remarkably corpulent. She appeared at first rather shocked at the thought of having a Christian so near her ; but when I had (by means of a Negro boy, who spoke the Mandingo and Arabic tongues) answered a great many questions, which her curiosity suggested, respecting the country of the Christians, she seemed more at ease, and presented me with a bowl of milk, which I considered as a very favourable omen.

The heat was now almost insufferable ; all nature seemed sinking under it. The distant country presented to the eye a dreary expanse of sand, with a few stunted trees and prickly bushes, in the shade of which the

hungry cattle licked up the withered grass, while the camels and goats picked off the scanty foliage. The scarcity of water was greater here than at Benowm. Day and night the wells were crowded with cattle, lowing and fighting with each other to come at the troughs ; excessive thirst made many of them furious ; others, being too weak to contend for the water, endeavoured to quench their thirst by devouring the black mud from gutters near the wells ; which they did with great avidity, though it was commonly fatal to them.

This great scarcity of water was felt severely by all the people of the camp, and by none more than myself ; for though Ali allowed me a skin for containing water, and Fatima, once or twice, gave me a small supply when I was in distress, yet such was the barbarous disposition of the Moors at the wells, that when my boy attempted to fill the skin, he commonly received a sound drubbing for his presumption. Every one was astonished that the slave of a Christian should attempt to draw water from wells which had been dug by the followers of the Prophet. This treatment at length so frightened the boy that I believe he would sooner have perished with thirst than attempt again to fill the skin. He therefore contented himself with begging water from the Negro slaves that attended the camp, and I followed his example, but with very indifferent success ; for though I let no opportunity slip, and was very urgent in my solicitations, both to the Moors and the Negroes, I was but ill supplied, and frequently passed the night in the situation of Tantalus. No sooner had I shut my eyes than fancy would convey me to the streams and rivers of



my native land ; there, as I wandered along the verdant brink, I surveyed the clear stream with transport, and hastened to swallow the delightful draught ;—but alas ! disappointment awakened me, and I found myself a lonely captive, perishing of thirst, amidst the wilds of Africa.

One night, having solicited in vain for water at the camp, and being quite feverish, I resolved to try my fortune at the wells, which were about half a mile distant from the camp. Accordingly, I set out about midnight, and being guided by the lowing of the cattle, soon arrived at the place, where I found the Moors very busy drawing water. I requested permission to drink, but was driven away with outrageous abuse. Passing,

however, from one well to another, I came at last to one where there was only an old man and two boys. I made the same request to this man, and he immediately drew me up a bucket of water; but, as I was about to take hold of it, he recollected that I was a Christian, and fearing that his bucket might be polluted by my lips, he dashed the water into the trough, and told me to drink from thence. Though this trough was none of the largest, and three cows were already drinking in it, I resolved to come in for my share; and kneeling down, thrust my head between two of the cows, and drank with great pleasure, until the water was nearly exhausted, and the cows began to contend with each other for the last mouthful.

In adventures of this nature I passed the sultry month of May, during which no material change took place in my situation. Ali still considered me as a lawful prisoner; and Fatima, though she allowed me a larger quantity of victuals than I had been accustomed to receive at Benowm, had as yet said nothing on the subject of my release. In the meantime the frequent changes of wind, the gathering clouds, and distant lightning, with other appearances of approaching rain, indicated that the wet season was at hand; when the Moors annually evacuate the country of the Negroes, and return to the skirts of the Great Desert. This made me consider that my fate was drawing towards a crisis, and I resolved to wait for the event without any seeming uneasiness; but circumstances occurred which produced a change in my favour more suddenly than I had foreseen, or had reason to expect.

The case was this: the fugitive Kaartans, who had taken refuge in Ludamar, finding the Moors were about to leave them, and dreading the resentment of their own sovereign, whom they had so basely deserted, offered to treat with Ali for two hundred Moorish horsemen to co-operate with them in an effort to expel Daisy from Gedingooma; for until Daisy should be vanquished or humbled, they considered that they could neither return to their native towns, nor live in security in any of the neighbouring kingdoms. With a view to extort money from these people, by means of this treaty, Ali dispatched his son to Jarra, and prepared to follow him in the course of a few days.

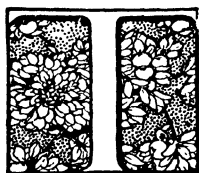
This was an opportunity of too great consequence to me to be neglected. I immediately applied to Fatima (who, I found, had the chief direction in all affairs of State), and begged her interest with Ali, to give me permission to accompany him to Jarra. This request, after some hesitation, was favourably received. Fatima looked kindly on me, and, I believe, was at length moved with compassion towards me. My bundles were brought from the large cowskin bag that stood in the corner of Ali's tent, and I was ordered to explain the use of the different articles, and show the method of putting on the boots, stockings, &c., with all which I cheerfully complied, and was told that, in the course of a few days, I should be at liberty to depart.

From MUNGO PARK'S *Travels*.





A Welsh Inn



THE place at which I had arrived was at a considerable altitude, and commanded an extensive view to the south, west, and north. Heights upon heights rose behind it to the east. From here the road ran to the south for a little way nearly level, then turned abruptly to the east, and was more steep than ever. After the turn, I had a huge chalk cliff towering over me on the right, and a chalk precipice on my left. Night was now coming on fast, and, rather to my uneasiness, masses of mist began to pour down the sides of the mountain. I hurried on, the road making frequent turnings.

Presently the mist swept down upon me, and was so thick that I could only see a few yards before me. I was now obliged to slacken my pace, and to advance with some degree of caution. I moved on in this way for some time, when suddenly I heard a noise, as if a number of carts were coming rapidly down the hill. I stopped, and stood with my back close against the high bank. The noise drew nearer, and in a minute I saw indistinctly through the mist, horses, carts, and forms of men passing. In one or two cases the wheels appeared to be within a few inches of my feet. I let the train go by, and then cried out in English, "Am I right for Gutter Vawr?"

"Hey?" said a voice, after a momentary interval.

"Am I right for Gutter Vawr?" I shouted yet louder.

"Yes, sure!" said a voice, probably the same.

I went on, whilst the train continued its way rumbling down the mountain. At length I gained the top, where the road turned and led down a steep descent towards the south-west. It was now quite night, and the mist was of the thickest kind. I could just see that there was a frightful precipice on my left, so I kept to the right, hugging the side of the hill. As I descended I heard every now and then loud noises in the vale, probably proceeding from stone quarries. I was drenched to the skin, nay, through the skin, by the mist.

When I had proceeded about a mile I saw blazes down below, resembling those of furnaces, and soon after came to the foot of the hill. It was here pouring with rain, but I did not put up my umbrella, as it was

impossible for me to be more drenched than I was. Crossing a bridge over a kind of torrent, I found myself amongst some houses. I entered one of them from which a blaze of light and a roar of voices proceeded, and, on inquiring of an old woman who confronted me in the passage, I found that I had reached my much needed haven of rest, the inn of Gutter Vawr in the county of Glamorgan.

The old woman who confronted me in the passage of the inn turned out to be the landlady. On learning that I intended to pass the night at her house, she conducted me into a small room on the right-hand side of the passage, which proved to be the parlour. It was cold and comfortless, for there was no fire in the grate. She told me, however, that one should be lighted, and going out, presently returned with a couple of buxom wenches, who I soon found were her daughters. The good lady had little or no English; the girls, however, had plenty, and of a good kind too. They soon lighted a fire, and then the mother inquired if I wished for any supper.

"Certainly," said I, "for I have not eaten anything since I left Llandovery. What can I have?"

"We have veal and bacon," said she.

"That will do," said I; "fry me some veal and bacon, and I shan't complain. But pray tell me what prodigious noise is that which I hear on the other side of the passage?"

"It is only the miners and the carters in the kitchen making merry," said one of the girls.

"Is there a good fire there?" said I.

"O yes," said the girl, "we have always a good fire in the kitchen."

"Well then," said I, "I shall go there until supper is ready, for I am wet to the skin, and this fire casts very little heat."

"You will find them a rough set in the kitchen," said the girl.

"I don't care if I do," said I; "when people are rough I am civil, and I have always found that civility beats roughness in the long run." Then going out I crossed the passage and entered the kitchen.

It was nearly filled with rough unkempt fellows smoking, drinking, whistling, singing, shouting, or jabbering, some in a standing, some in a sitting posture. My entrance seemed at once to bring everything to a dead stop; the smokers ceased to smoke, the hand that was conveying the glass or the mug to the mouth was arrested in air, the hurly-burly ceased, and every eye was turned upon me with a strange inquiring stare.

Without allowing myself to be disconcerted I advanced to the fire, spread out my hands before it for a minute, gave two or three deep ahs of comfort, and then turning round said: "Rather a damp night, gentlemen—fire cheering to one who has come the whole way from Llandovery—Taking a bit of a walk in Wales, to see the scenery and to observe the manners and customs of the inhabitants—Fine country, gentlemen, noble prospects, hill and dale—Fine people too—open-hearted and generous; no wonder! descendants of the Ancient Britons—Hope I don't intrude—other



room rather cold and smoking—If I do will retire at once—don't wish to interrupt any gentlemen in their avocations or deliberations—scorn to do anything ungenteel or calculated to give offence—hope I know how to behave myself—ought to do so—learnt grammar at the High School at Edinburgh.”

“Offence, intrusion!” cried twenty voices. “God bless your honour! no intrusion and no offence at all—sit down—sit here—won't you drink?”

“Please to sit here, sir,” said an old grimy-looking man, getting up from a seat in the chimney-corner—“this is no seat for me whilst you are here, it belongs to you—sit down in it,” and laying hold of me he compelled me to sit down in the chair of dignity, whilst half-a-dozen hands pushed mugs of beer towards my face; these, however, I declined to partake of on the very satisfactory ground that I had not taken supper, and that it was a bad thing to drink before eating, more especially after coming out of a mist.

“Have you any news to tell of the war, sir?” said a large rough fellow, who was smoking a pipe.

“The last news that I heard of the war,” said I, “was that the snow was two feet deep at Sebastopol.”

“I heard three,” said the man; “however, if there be but two it must be bad work for the poor soldiers. I suppose you think that we shall beat the Russians in the end.”

“No, I don't,” said I; “the Russians are a young nation and we are an old; they are coming on and we are going off; every dog has its day.”

“That's true,” said the man; “but I am sorry that

you think we shall not beat the Russians, for the Russians are a bad set."

"Can you speak Welsh?" said a darkish man with black bristly hair and a small inquisitive eye.

"O, I know two words in Welsh," said I, "bara y caws."

"That's bread and cheese," said the man, then turning to a neighbour of his he said in Welsh: "He knows nothing of Cumraeg, only two words; we may say anything we please; he can't understand us. What a long nose he has!"

"Mind that he is not nosing us," said his neighbour. "I should be loth to wager that he doesn't understand Welsh; and after all he didn't say that he did not, but got off by saying he understood those two words."

"No, he doesn't understand Welsh," said the other; "no Sais understands Welsh, and this is a Sais. Now with regard to that piece of job-work which you and I undertook." And forthwith he and the other entered into a disquisition about the job-work.

The company soon got into its old train, drinking and smoking and making a most terrific hullabaloo. Nobody took any farther notice of me. I sat snug in the chimney-corner, trying to dry my wet things, and as the heat was very great, partially succeeded. In about half-an-hour one of the girls came to tell me that my supper was ready, whereupon I got up and said: "Gentlemen, I thank you for your civility; I am now going to supper; perhaps before I turn in for the night I may look in upon you again." Then without waiting for an answer I left the kitchen and went into the other

room, where I found a large dish of veal cutlets and fried bacon awaiting me, and also a smoking bowl of potatoes. Ordering a jug of ale I sat down, and what with hunger and the goodness of the fare, for everything was first-rate, made one of the best suppers I ever made in my life.

Supper over, I betook myself again to the kitchen. Almost as soon as I entered, the company, who seemed to be discussing some point, and were not making much, hurly-burly, became silent and looked at me in a suspicious and uneasy manner. I advanced towards the fire. The old man who had occupied the seat in the chimney-corner and had resigned it to me, had again taken possession of it. As I drew near to the fire he looked upon the ground, and seemed by no means disposed to vacate the place of honour; after a few moments, however, he got up and offered me the seat with a slight motion of his hand and without saying a word. I did not decline it, but sat down, and the old gentleman took a chair near.

Universal silence now prevailed; sullen looks were cast at me; and I saw clearly enough that I was not welcome. Frankness was now my only resource. "What's the matter, gentlemen?" said I; "you are silent and don't greet me kindly; have I given you any cause of offence?" No one uttered a word in reply for nearly a minute, when the old man said slowly and deliberately: "Why, sir, the long and short of it is this: we have got it into our heads that you understand every word of our discourse; now, do you or do you not?"



"Understand every word of your discourse," said I ;
"I wish I did ; I would give five pounds to understand
every word of your discourse."

"That's a clever attempt to get off, sir," said the old
man, "but it won't exactly do. Tell us whether you know
more Welsh than bara y caws ; or to speak more plainly,
whether you understand a good deal of what we say."

"Well," said I, "I do understand more Welsh than
bara y caws—I do understand a considerable part of
a Welsh conversation—moreover, I can read Welsh."

"Well, sir, that is speaking plain, and I will tell you
plainly that we don't like to have strangers among us
who understand our discourse, more especially if they
be gentlefolks."

"That's strange," said I ; "a Welshman or foreigner, gentle or simple, may go into an inn in England, and nobody cares a straw whether he understands the discourse of the company or not."

"That may be the custom in England," said the old man ; "but it is not so in Wales."

"What have you got to conceal?" said I. "I suppose you are honest men."

"I hope we are, sir," said the old man ; "but I must tell you, once for all, that we don't like strangers to listen to our discourse."

"Come," said I, "I will not listen to your discourse, but you shall listen to mine. I have a wonderful deal to say if I once begin ; I have been everywhere."

"Well, sir," said the old man, "if you have anything to tell us about where you have been and what you have seen, we shall be glad to hear you."

"Have you ever been in Russia?" shouted a voice, that of the large rough fellow who asked me the question about the Russian war.

"O yes, I have been in Russia," said I.

"Well, what kind of a country is it?"

"Very different from this," said I, "which is a little country up in a corner, full of hills and mountains ; that is an immense country, extending from the Baltic Sea to the confines of China, almost as flat as a pancake, there not being a hill to be seen for nearly two thousand miles."

"A very poor country, isn't it, always covered with ice and snow?"

"O no ; it is one of the richest countries in the

world, producing all kinds of grain, with noble rivers intersecting it, and in some parts covered with stately forests. In the winter, which is rather long, there is a good deal of ice and snow, it is true, but in the summer the weather is warmer, than here."

"And are there any towns and cities in Russia, sir, as there are in Britain?" said the old man, who had resigned his seat in the chimney-corner to me; "I suppose not, or, if there be, nothing equal to Hereford or Bristol, in both of which I have been."

"O yes," said I, "there are plenty of towns and cities. The two principal ones are Moscow and Saint Petersburg, both of which are capitals. Moscow is a fine old city, far up the country, and was the original seat of empire. In it there is a wonderful building called the Kremlin, situated on a hill. It is partly palace, partly temple, and partly fortress. In one of its halls are I don't know how many crowns, taken from various kings, whom the Russians have conquered. But the most remarkable thing in the Kremlin is a huge bell in a cellar or cave, close by one of the churches; it is twelve feet high, and the sound it gives when struck with an iron bar, for there are no clappers to Russian bells, is so loud that the common Russians say it can be heard over the empire. The other city, Saint Petersburg, where the court generally reside, is a modern and very fine city; so fine indeed, that I have no hesitation in saying that neither Bristol nor Hereford is worthy to be named in the same day with it. Many of the streets are miles in length and straight as an arrow. The Nefsky Prospect, as it is called, a street

which runs from the grand square, where stands the Emperor's palace, to the monastery of Saint Alexander Nefsky, is nearly thræ miles in length and is full of noble shops and houses. The Neva, a river twice as broad and twice as deep as the Thames, and whose waters are clear as crystal, runs through the town, having on each side of it a superb quay, fenced with granite, which affords one of the most delightful walks imaginable. If I had my choice of all the cities of the world to live in, I would choose Saint Petersburg."

"And did you ever see the Emperor?" said the rough fellow, whom I have more than once mentioned, "did you ever see the Emperor Nicholas?"

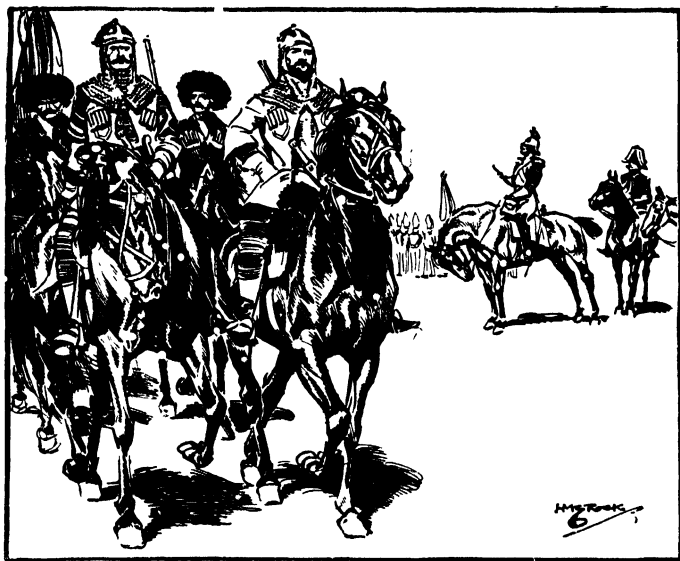
"O yes; I have seen him frequently."

"Well, what kind of a man is he? we should like to know."

"A man of colossal stature, with a fine, noble, but rather stern and severe aspect. I think I now see him, with his grey cloak, cocked hat, and white waving plumes, striding down the Nefsky Prospect, and towering by a whole head over other people."

"Bravo! Did you ever see him at the head of his soldiers?"

"O yes! I have seen the Emperor review forty thousand of his chosen troops in the Champs de Mars, and a famous sight it was. There stood the great, proud man looking at his warriors as they manœuvred before him. Two-thirds of them were cavalry, and each horseman was mounted on a beautiful blood charger of Cossack or English breed, and arrayed in a superb uniform. The blaze, glitter, and glory were



too much for my eyes, and I was frequently obliged to turn them away. The scene upon the whole put me in mind of an immense field of tulips of various dyes, for the colours of the dresses, of the banners and the plumes, were as gorgeous and manifold as the hues of those queenly flowers."

"Bravo!" said twenty voices; "the gentleman speaks like an areithiwr. Have you been in other countries besides Russia?"

"O yes! I have been in Turkey, the people of which are not Christians, but frequently put Christians to shame by their good faith and honesty. I have been in the land of the Maugrabins, or Moors—a people who

live on a savoury dish, called couscousoo, and have the gloomiest faces and the most ferocious hearts under heaven. I have been in Italy, whose people, though the most clever in the world, are the most unhappy. I have been in Portugal, the people of which supply the whole world with wine, and drink only water themselves. I have been in Spain, a very fine country, the people of which are never so happy as when paying other folks' reckonings. I have been—but the wind is blowing wildly without, and the rain pelting against the windows ;—this is a capital night for a ghost story : shall I tell you a ghost story which I learnt in Spain ?”

“Yes, sir, pray do ; we all love ghost stories. Do tell us the ghost story of Spain.”

Thereupon I told the company Lope de Vega's ghost story, which is decidedly the best ghost story in the world.

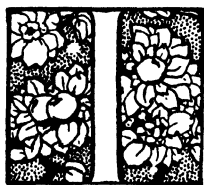
Long and loud was the applause which followed the conclusion of the grandest ghost story of the world, in the midst of which I got up, bade the company good night, and made my exit. Shortly afterwards I desired to be shown to my sleeping apartment. It was a very small room upstairs, in the back part of the house ; and I make no doubt was the chamber of the two poor girls, the landlady's daughters. Forthwith divesting myself of my habiliments, which were steaming like a boiling tea-kettle, I got into bed between the blankets, and in a minute was fast in the arms of Morpheus.

FROM GEORGE BORROW'S *Wild Wales*.



Doctor Marigold

I



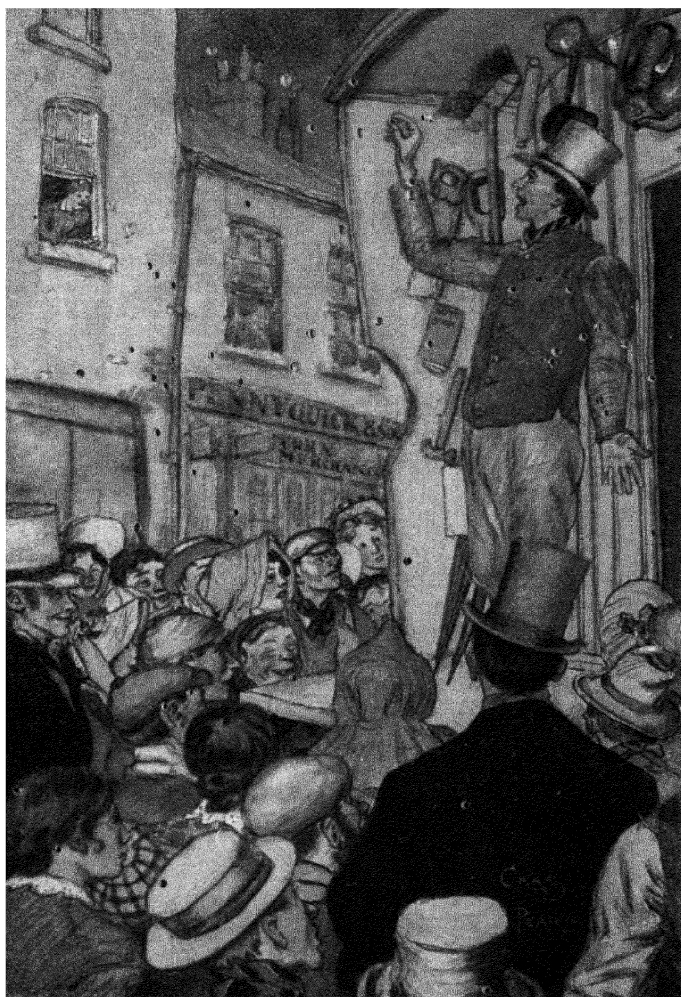
AM a Cheap Jack, and my own father's name was Willum Marigold. I was born on the King's highway. In consequence of the doctor's being a very kind gentleman, and accepting no fee but a tea-tray, I was named Doctor, out of gratitude and compliment to him. There you have me, Doctor Marigold.

I am at present a middle-aged man of a broadish build, in cords, leggings, and a sleeved waistcoat the strings of which are always gone behind. Repair them how you will, they go like fiddle-strings. I am partial to a white hat, and I like a shawl round my neck worn loose and easy. Sitting down is my favourite posture. If I have a taste in point of personal jewelry, it is

mother-of-pearl buttons. There you have me again, as large as life.

I courted my wife from the footboard of the cart. I did indeed. She was a Suffolk young woman, and it was in Ipswich market-place, right opposite the corn-chandler's shop. I had noticed her up at a window last Saturday that was, appreciating highly. I had taken to her, and I had said to myself, "If not already disposed of, I'll have that lot." Next Saturday, I pitched the cart on the same pitch, and I was in very high feather indeed, keeping 'em laughing the whole of the time, and getting off the goods briskly.

At last I took out of my waistcoat-pocket a small lot wrapped in soft paper, and I put it this way (looking up at the window where she was). "Now here, my blooming English maidens, is an article, the 'last article of the present evening's sale, which I offer to only you, and I won't take a bid of a thousand pounds from any man alive. Now what is it? Why, I'll tell you what it is. It's made of fine gold, and it's not broken, though there's a hole in the middle of it; and it's stronger than any fetter that ever was forged, though it's smaller than any finger in my set of ten. Now what else is it? Come, I'll tell you. It's a wedding-ring. Now I'll tell you what I'm going to do with it. I'm not going to offer this lot for money; but I mean to give it to the next of you beauties that laughs, and I'll pay her a visit to-morrow morning at exactly half after nine o'clock as the chimes go, and I'll take her out for a walk to put up the banns." *She* laughed, and got the ring handed up to her. When I called in the



"Now what is it? Come, I'll tell you."

morning, she says, "O dear. It's never you, and you never mean it?"

"It's ever me," says I, "and I am ever yours, and I ever mean it." So we got married, after being put up three times—which, by the bye, is quite in the Cheap Jack way again, and shows once more how the Cheap Jack customs pervade society.

She wasn't a bad wife, but she had a temper.

We might have had such a pleasant life. A roomy cart, with the large goods hung outside, and the bed slung underneath it when on the road, an iron pot and a kettle, a fireplace for the cold weather, a chimney for the smoke, a hanging shelf and a cupboard, a dog and a horse. What more do you want? You draw off upon a bit of turf in a green lane or by the roadside, you hobble your old horse and turn him grazing, you light your fire upon the ashes of the last visitors, you cook your stew, and you wouldn't call the Emperor of France your father. But have a temper in the cart, flinging language and the hardest goods in stock at you, and where are you then? Put a name to your feelings.

The worst of it was, we had a daughter born to us, and I love children with all my heart. When my wife was in her furies she beat the child.

Little Sophy was such a brave child. She grew to be quite devoted to her poor father, though he could do so little to help her. She had a wonderful quantity of shining dark hair, all curling natural about her.

Such a brave child I said she was.

"Don't you mind next time, father dear," she would whisper to me, with her little face still flushed, and her

bright eyes still wet ; "if I don't cry out, you may know I'm not much hurt. And even if I do cry out, it will only be to get Mother to let go and leave off."

Yet in other respects her mother took great care of her. Her clothes were always clean and neat, and her mother was never tired at working at 'em.

Our being down in the marshy country in unhealthy weather, I consider the cause of Sophy's taking bad low fever.

The Cheap Jack business had been worse than ever I had known it, what with one thing and what with another, and I was run dry of money. For which reason, one night at that period of little Sophy's being so bad, either we must have come to a dead-lock for victuals and drink, or I must have pitched the cart as I did.

I couldn't get the dear child to lie down or leave go of me, and indeed I hadn't the heart to try, so I stepped out on the footboard with her holding round my neck. They all set up a laugh when they saw us, and one chuckle-headed Joskin (that I hated for it) made the bidding, "Tuppence for her."

"Now, you country boobies," says I, feeling as if my heart was a heavy weight at the end of a broken sash-line, "I give you notice that I am 'going to charm the money out of your pockets, and to give you so much more than your money's worth that you'll only persuade yourselves to draw your Saturday night's wages ever again afterwards by the hopes of meeting me to lay 'em out with, which you never will. Now let's know what you want to-night, and you shall have it."

"But first of all, shall I tell you why I have got this little girl round my neck? You don't want to know? Then you shall. She belongs to the Fairies. She's a fortune-teller. She can tell me all about you in a whisper, and can put me up to whether you're going to buy a lot or leave it. Now do you want a saw? No, she says you don't because you're too clumsy to use one. Else here's a saw which would be a lifelong blessing to a handy man, at four shillings, at three and six, at three, at two and six, at two, at eighteen-pence. Now I am going to ask her what you do want." (Then I whispered, "Your head burns so, that I am afraid it hurts you bad, my pet," and she answered, without opening her heavy eyes, "Just a little, Father.")

"O! This little fortune-teller says it's a memorandum-book you want. Then why didn't you mention it? Here it is. Look at it. Two hundred pages—if you don't believe me, count 'em—ready ruled for your expenses, an everlastingly pointed pencil to put 'em down with, a double-bladed penknife to scratch 'em out with, a book of printed tables to calculate your income with, and a camp-stool to sit down upon while you give your mind to it! Stop! And an umbrella to keep the moon off when you give your mind to it on a pitch-dark night. Now I won't ask you how much for the lot, but how little? How little are you thinking of? Don't be ashamed to mention it, because my fortune-teller knows already." (Then making believe to whisper, I kissed her, and she kissed me.) "Why, she says you are thinking of as little as three and three-pence! I couldn't have believed it, even of you, unless



she told me. Three and threepence! And a set of printed tables in the lot that'll calculate your income up to forty thousand a year. With an income of forty thousand a year, you grudge three and threepence! Well, then, I'll tell you my opinion. I so despise the threepence, that I'd sooner take three shillings. There. For three shillings, three shillings, three shillings! Gone. Hand 'em over to the lucky man."

As there had been no bid at all, everybody looked about and grinned at everybody, while I touched little Sophy's face and asked her if she felt faint, or giddy. "Not very, Father. It will soon be over." Then turning from the pretty patient eyes, which were opened now, and seeing nothing but grins across my lighted grease-pot, I went on again in my Cheap Jack "Where's the butcher?" (My sorrowful eye had just caught sight of a fat young butcher on the outside of the crowd.) "She says the good luck is the butcher's. Where is he?"

Everybody handed on the blushing butcher to the front, and there was a roar, and the butcher felt himself obliged to put his hand in his pocket, and take the lot. The party so picked out, in general, does feel obliged to take the lot—good four times out of six. Then we had another lot, the counterpart of that one, and sold it sixpence cheaper, which is always very much enjoyed. Then we had the ladies' lot—the teapot, tea-caddy, glass sugar-basin, half-a-dozen spoons, and caudle-cup—and all the time I was making similar excuses to give a look or two and say a word or two to my poor child. It was while the second ladies' lot was

holding 'em enchained that I felt her lift herself a little on my shoulder, to look across the dark street.

"What troubles you, darling?"

"Nothing troubles me, Father. I am not at all troubled. But don't I see a pretty churchyard over there?"

"Yes, my dear."

"Kiss me twice, dear Father, and lay me down to rest upon that churchyard grass so soft and green." I staggered back into the cart with her head dropped on my shoulder, and I said to her mother, "Quick! Shut the door! Don't let those laughing people see."

"What's the matter?" she cried. "O woman, woman," I told her, "you'll never catch my little Sunday by her hair again, for she has flown away from me."

Maybe those were harder words than I meant, but from that time forth my wife took to brooding, and would sit in the cart or walk beside it, hours on stretch, with her arms crossed, and her eyes looking at the ground. By and by she died.

Being naturally of a tender turn, I had dreadful lonely feelings on me after this. I conquered 'em at selling times, having a reputation to keep (not to mention keeping myself), but they got me down in private, and rolled me over. It was under those circumstances that I became acquainted with a giant. I might have been too high to fall into conversation with him, had it not been for my lonely feelings. For the general rule is, going round the country, to draw the line at dressing up. When a man can't trust his getting a

living to his own undisguised abilities, you consider him below your sort. And this giant when on view figured as a Roman.

He was a languid young man, which I attribute to the distance betwixt his extremities. He had a little head and less in it, he had weak eyes and weak knees, and altogether you couldn't look at him without feeling that there was greatly too much of him both for his joints and his mind. But he was an amiable though timid young man, and we became acquainted when he was walking to ease the horse betwixt two fairs. He was called Rinaldo di Velasco, his name being Pickleson.

This giant, otherwise Pickleson, mentioned to me under the seal of confidence that, beyond his being a burden to himself, his life was made a burden to him by the cruelty of his master towards a step-daughter who was deaf and dumb. Her mother was dead, and she had no living soul to take her part, and was used most hardly. She travelled with his master's caravan only because there was nowhere to leave her, and this giant, otherwise Pickleson, did go so far as to believe that his master often tried to lose her.

When I heard this account from the giant, otherwise Pickleson, and likewise that the poor girl had beautiful long dark hair, and was often pulled down by it and beaten, I couldn't see the giant through what stood in my eyes.

His master's name was Mim, a very hoarse man, and I knew him to speak to. I went to that Fair as a mere civilian, leaving the cart outside the town, and I looked

about the back of the vans while the performing was going on, and at last, sitting dozing against a muddy cart-wheel, I came upon the poor girl who was deaf and dumb. She was just the same age that my own daughter would have been, if her pretty head had not fallen down upon my shoulder that unfortunate night.

To cut it short, I spoke confidentially to Mim while he was beating the gong outside betwixt two lots of Pickleson's publics, and I put it to him, "She lies heavy on your own hands; what'll you take for her?" His reply was, "A pair of braces."

"Now I'll tell you," said I, "what I'm going to do with you. I'm going to fetch you half-a-dozen pair of the primeest braces in the cart, and then to take her away with me."

"I'll believe it when I've got the goods, and no sooner," said Mim. I made all the haste I could, lest he should think twice of it, and the bargain was completed.

It was happy days for both of us when Sophy and I began to travel in the cart. I at once gave her the name of Sophy, to put her ever towards me in the attitude of my own daughter. We soon made out to begin to understand one another, through the goodness of Heaven, when she knew that I meant true and kind by her. In a very little time she was wonderfully fond of me.

You'd have laughed if you could have seen me trying to teach Sophy. At first I was helped—you'd never guess by what—milestones. I got some large alphabets in a box, all the letters separate on bits of bone, and



saying we were going to WINDSOR, I gave her those letters in that order, and then at every milestone I showed her those same letters in that same order again, and pointed towards the abode of royalty. Another time I gave her CART, and then chalked the same upon the cart. Another time I gave her DOCTOR MARIGOLD, and hung a corresponding inscription outside my waistcoat. People that met us might stare a bit and laugh, but what did I care, if she caught the idea? She caught it after long patience and trouble, and then we did begin to get on swimmingly, I believe you! At first she was a little given to consider me the cart, and the cart the abode of royalty, but that soon wore off.

We had our signs, too, and they were hundreds in number. Sometimes she would sit looking at me and considering hard how to communicate with me about something fresh—how to ask me what she wanted explained—and then she was so like my child with those years added to her, that I half-believed it was herself, trying to tell me where she had been to up in the skies, and what she had seen since that unhappy night when she flew away. She had a pretty face, and now that there was no one to drag at her bright dark hair, and it was all in order, there was a something touching in her looks that made the cart most peaceful and most quiet, though not at all melancholy.

The way she learnt to understand any look of mine was truly surprising. When I sold of a night, she would sit in the cart unseen by the people outside, and would give an eager look into my face when I looked in, and

would hand me straight the precise article or articles I wanted. And then she would clap her hands, and laugh for joy. And as for me, seeing her so bright, and remembering what she was when I first lighted on her, starved and beaten and ragged, leaning asleep against the muddy cart-wheel, it gave me such heart that I gained a greater height of reputation than ever, and I put Pickleson down (by the name of Mim's Travelling Giant, otherwise Pickleson) for a five-pound note in my will.

This happiness went on in the cart till she was sixteen years old, by which time I began to feel not satisfied that I had done my whole duty by her, and to consider that she ought to have better teaching than I could give her. It drew many tears on both sides when I commenced explaining my views to her ; But what's right is right, and you can't either by tears or laughter do away with its character.

So I took her hand in mine, and I went with her one day to the Deaf and Dumb Establishment in London, and when the gentleman came to speak to us, I said to him : " Now I'll tell you what I'll do with you, sir. I am nothing but a Cheap Jack, but of late years I have laid by for a rainy day notwithstanding. This is my only daughter (adopted), and you can't produce a deafer nor a dumber. Teach her the most that can be taught her in the shortest separation that can be named, state the figure for it, and I am game to put the money down. I won't bate you a single farthing, sir, but I'll put down the money here and now, and I'll thankfully throw you in a pound to take it. There ! "

The gentleman smiled, and then, "Well, well," said he, "I must first know what she has learned already. How do you communicate with her?"

Then I showed him, and she wrote in printed writing many names of things and so forth; and we held some sprightly conversation, Sophy and I, about a little story in a book which the gentleman showed her, and which she was able to read.

"This is most extraordinary," said the gentleman; "is it possible that you have been her only teacher?"

"I have been her only teacher, sir," I said, "besides herself."

"Then," said the gentleman, and more acceptable words were never spoken to me, "you're a clever fellow, and a good fellow."

This he makes known to Sophy, who kisses his hands, clasps her own, and laughs and cries upon it.

We saw the gentleman four times in all, and when he took down my name and asked how in the world it ever chanced to be Doctor, it came out that he was own nephew by the sister's side, if you'll believe me, to the very Doctor that I was called after. This made our footing still easier, and he said to me:

"Now, Marigold, tell me what more do you want your adopted daughter to know?"

"I want her, sir, to be cut off from the world as little as can be, considering her deprivations, and therefore to be able to read whatever is written, with perfect ease and pleasure."

"My good fellow," urged the gentleman, opening his eyes wide, "why, *I* can't do that myself."

I took his joke, and gave him a laugh, and I mended my words accordingly.

"What do you mean to do with her afterwards?" asked the gentleman, with a sort of doubtful eye. "To take her about the country?"

"In the cart, sir, but only in the cart. She will live a private life, you understand, in the cart. I should never think of bringing her infirmities before the public. I wouldn't make a show of her for any money."

The gentleman nodded, and seemed to approve.

"Well," said he, "can you part with her for two years?"

"To do her that good—yes, sir.

"There's another question," says the gentleman, looking towards her, "can she part with you for two years?"

I don't know that it was a harder matter of itself (for the other was hard enough to me), but it was harder to get over. However, she was pacified to it at last, and the separation betwixt us was settled. How it cut up both of us when it took place, and when I left her at the door in the dark of an evening, I don't tell. But I know this; remembering that night, I shall never pass that same establishment without a heartache and a swelling in the throat.

II

THE loneliness that followed in the cart was not the old loneliness, because there was a term put to it, however long to look forward to; and because I could think, when I was at all down, that she belonged to me and I belonged to her. Always planning for her



coming back, I bought in a few months' time another cart, and what do you think I planned to do with it? I'll tell you. I planned to fit it up with shelves and books for her reading, and to have a seat in it where I could sit and see her read, and think that I had been her first teacher. Not hurrying over the job, I had the fittings knocked together in contriving ways under my own inspection, and here was her bed in a berth with curtains, and there was her reading-table, and here was her writing-desk, and elsewhere were her books in rows upon rows, pictures and no pictures, bindings and no bindings, gilt-edged and plain, just as I could pick 'em

up for her in lots up and down the county. And when I had got together pretty well as many books as the cart would neatly hold, a new scheme came into my head, which, as it turned out, kept my time and attention a good deal employed, and helped me over the two years' stile.

Without being of an avaricious temper, I liked to be the owner of things. I shouldn't wish, for instance, to go partners with yourself in the Cheap Jack cart. It's not that I mistrust you, but that I'd rather know it was mine. Similarly, very likely you'd rather know it was yours. Well! A kind of a jealousy began to creep into my mind when I reflected that all those books would have been read by other people long before they were read by her. It seemed to take away from her being the owner of 'em. In this way, the question got into my head: Couldn't I have a book new-made express for her, which she should be the first to read?

It pleased me, that thought did; and as I never was a man to let a thought sleep, I set to work at it.

Often had I regretted that she never had heard me on the footboard, and that she never could hear me. My conclusion was that I would begin her book with some account of myself, so that through reading a specimen or two of me on the footboard, she might form an idea of my merits there.

Well! Having formed that resolution, then came the question of a name. How did I hammer that hot iron into shape? This way. The most difficult explanation I had ever had with her was, how I came to be called

Doctor, and yet was no Doctor. After all, I felt that I had failed of getting it correctly into her mind, with my utmost pains. But trusting to her improvement in two years, I thought that I might trust to her understanding it when she should come to read it as put down by my own hand. Then I thought I would try a joke with her and watch how it took, by which of itself I might fully judge of her understanding it.

We had first discovered the mistake we had dropped into, through her having asked me to prescribe for her when she had supposed me to be a Doctor in a medical point of view ; so, thought I, " Now, if I give this book the name of my Prescriptions, and if she catches the idea that my only Prescriptions are for her amusement and interest—to make her laugh in a pleasant way, or to make her cry in a pleasant way—it will be a delightful proof to both of us that we have got over our difficulty." It fell out to absolute perfection. For when she saw the book, as I had it got up—the printed and pressed book—lying on her desk in her cart, and saw the title, DOCTOR MARIGOLD'S. PRESCRIPTIONS, she looked at me for a moment with astonishment, then fluttered the leaves, then broke out laughing in the most charming way, then felt her pulse and shook her head, then turned the pages, pretending to read them most attentively, then kissed the book to me, and put it to her bosom with both her hands. I never was better pleased in all my life.

This same book took up all my spare time. At last it was done, and the two years' time was gone after all the other time gone before it, and where it's all

gone to, who knows? The new car was finished—yellow outside, relieved with vermilion, and brass fittings—the old horse was put in it, a new one and a boy being laid on for the Cheap Jack cart, and I cleaned myself up to go and fetch her. Bright, cold weather it was, cart-chimneys smoking, carts pitched on a piece of waste ground over at Wandsworth, where you may see 'em from the Sou'-Western Railway when not upon the road. (Look out of the right-hand window going down.)

"Marigold," said the gentleman, giving his hand, "I am very glad to see you."

"Yet I have my doubts, sir," said I, "if you can be half as glad to see me as I am to see you."

"The time has appeared so long, has it, Marigold?"

"I won't say that, sir, considering its real length; but——"

"What a start, my good fellow!"

Ah! I should think it was. Grown such a woman, so pretty, so intelligent, so expressive. I knew then that she must be really like my child, or I could never have known her, standing quiet by the door.

"You are affected," says the gentleman in a kindly manner.

"I feel, sir," said I, "that I am but a rough chap in a sleeved waistcoat."

"I feel," said the gentleman, "that it was you who raised her from misery and degradation, and brought her into communication with her kind. But why do we converse alone together, when we can converse so well with her? Address her in your own way."

"I am such a rough chap in a sleeved waistcoat, sir."

said I, "and she is such a graceful woman, and she stands so quiet at the door."

"Try if she moves at the old sign," said the gentleman.

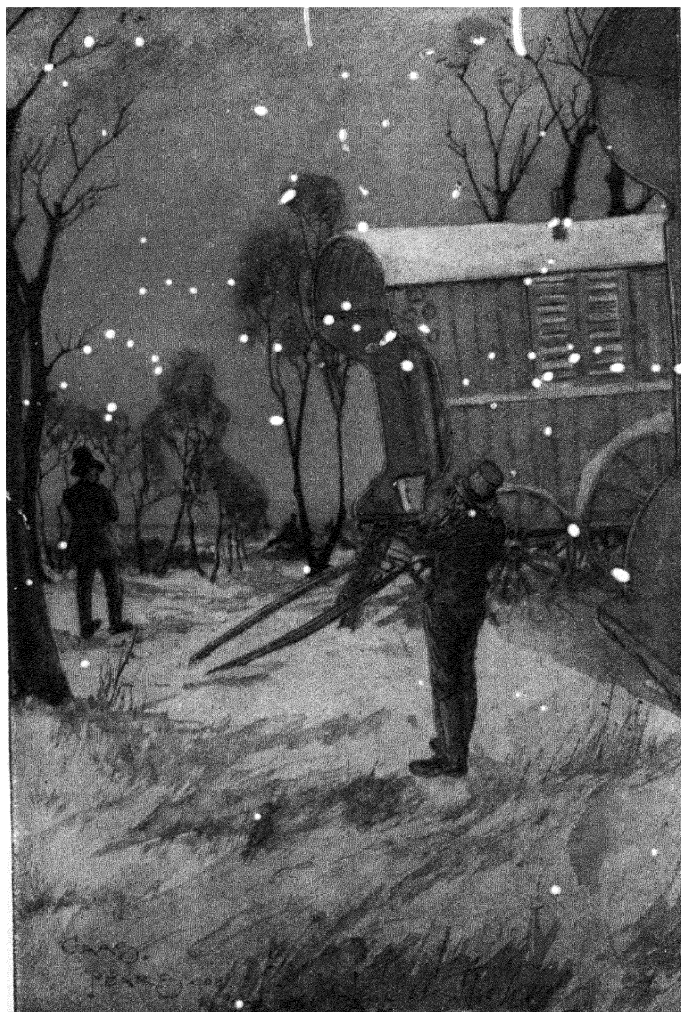
They had got it up together on purpose to please me. For when I gave her the old sign, she rushed to my feet, and dropped upon her knees, holding up her hands to me with pouring tears of love and joy; and when I took her hands and lifted her, she clasped me round the neck, and lay there; and I don't know what a fool I didn't make of myself, until we all three settled down into talking without sound, as if there was a something soft and pleasant spread over the whole world for us.

So every item of my plan was crowned with success. Content and joy went with us as the wheels of the two carts went round, and the same stopped with us when the two carts stopped.

But I had left something out of my calculations.

We were down at Lancaster, and I had done two nights more than fair average business in the open square there, near the end of the street where Mr. Sly's King's Arms and Royal Hotel stands. Mim's travelling giant, otherwise Pickleson, happened at the self-same time to be trying it on in the town. The genteel style was adopted with him. No hint of a van. Green baize alcove leading up to Pickleson in an Auction Room.

I went to the Auction Room in question, and I found it entirely empty of everything but echoes and mouldiness, with the single exception of Pickleson on a piece of red drugget. This suited my purpose, as I wanted a private and confidential word with him, which was: "Pickleson. Owing much happiness to you, I put you in



"I sent a hail after him."

(p. 266)

my will for a five-pound note; but, to save trouble, here's four pounds ten down, which may equally suit your views, and let us so conclude the transaction."

Pickleston, who up to that remark had had the dejected appearance of a long Roman rushlight that couldn't anyhow get lighted, brightened up at his top extremity, and made his acknowledgements in a way which (for him) was parliamentary eloquence.

But what was to the present point in the remarks of the travelling giant, otherwise Pickleson, was this: "Doctor Marigold,"—I give his words without a hope of conveying their feebleness,—“who is the strange young man that hangs about your carts?”

“The strange young *man*?” I gave him back, thinking that he meant her, and his languid circulation had dropped a syllable.

“Doctor,” he returned, with a pathos calculated to draw a tear from even a manly eye, “I am weak, but not so weak yet as that I don’t know my words. I repeat them, Doctor. The strange young man.”

It then appeared that Pickleson, being forced to stretch his legs (not that they wanted it) only at times when he couldn’t be seen for nothing, to wit in the dead of the night and towards daybreak, had twice seen hanging about my carts, in that same town of Lancaster where I had been only two nights, this same unknown young man.

It put me rather out of sorts. What it meant as to particulars I no more foreboded then than you forebode now, but it put me rather out of sorts. Towards morning I kept a look-out for the strange young man, and—what was more—I saw the strange young man. He was

well dressed and well looking. He waited very nigh my carts, watching them as if he was taking care of them, and soon after daybreak turned and went away. I sent a hail after him, but he never started, nor looked round, nor took the smallest notice.

We left Lancaster within an hour or two, on our way towards Carlisle. Next morning, at daybreak, I looked out again for the strange young man. I did not see him. But next morning I looked out again, and there he was once more. I sent another hail after him, but as before he gave not the slightest sign of being at all disturbed. This put a thought into my head. Acting on it I watched him in different manners and at different times not necessary to enter into, till I found that this strange young man was deaf and dumb.

The discovery turned me over, because I knew that a part of that establishment where she had been was allotted to young men (some of them well off), and I thought to myself, "If she favours him, where am I? and where is all that I have worked and planned for?" Hoping—I must confess to the selfishness—that she might *not* favour him, I set myself to find out. At last I was by accident present at a meeting between them in the open air, looking on, leaning behind a fir-tree without their knowing it. It was a moving meeting for all the three parties concerned. I knew every syllable that passed between them as well as they did. I listened with my eyes, which had come to be as quick and true with deaf and dumb conversation as my ears with the talk of people that can speak. He was going out to China as clerk in a merchant's house, which his father had been before

him. He was in circumstances to keep a wife, and he wanted her to marry him and go along with him. She persisted, no. He asked if she didn't love him. Yes, she loved him dearly, dearly; but she could never disappoint her beloved, good, noble, generous, and I-don't know-what-all father (meaning me, the Cheap Jack in the sleeved waistcoat); and she would stay with him, Heaven bless him! though it was to break her heart. Then she cried most bitterly, and that made up my mind.

While my mind had been in an unsettled state about her favouring this young man, I had felt so unreasonable towards Pickleson, that it was well for him he had got his legacy down. For I often thought, "If it hadn't been for this same weak-minded giant, I might never have come to trouble my head and vex my soul about the young man." But once that I knew she loved him—once that I had seen her weep for him—it was a different thing. I made it right in my mind with Pickleson on the spot, and I shook myself together to do what was right by all.

She had left the young man by that time (for it took a few minutes to get me thoroughly well shaken together), and the young man was leaning against another of the fir-trees,—of which there was a cluster,—with his face upon his arm. I touched him on the back. Licking up and seeing me, he said, in our deaf-and-dumb talk, "Do not be angry."

"I am not angry, good boy. I am your friend. Come with me."

I left him at the foot of the steps of the Library Cart, and I went up alone. She was drying her eyes.

"You have been crying, my dear"

"Yes, Father."

"Why?"

"A headache."

"Not a heartache?"

"I said a headache, Father."

"Doctor Marigold must prescribe for that headache."

She took up the book of my Prescriptions, and held it up with a forced smile; but seeing me keep still and look earnest, she softly laid it down again, and her eyes were very attentive.

"The Prescription is not there, Sophy."

"Where is it?"

"Here, my dear."

I brought her young husband in, and I put her hand in his, and my only farther words to both of them were these: "Doctor Marigold's last Prescription. To be taken for life." After which I bolted.

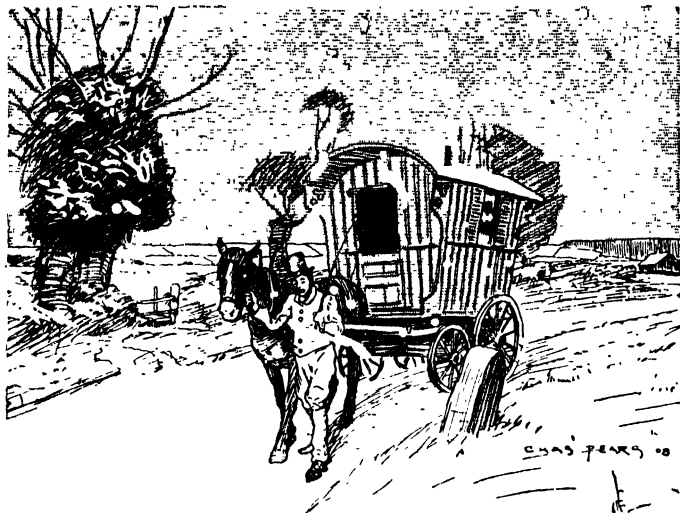
When the wedding came off, I mounted a coat (blue, and bright buttons) for the first and last time in all my days, and I gave Sophy away with my own hand. There were only us three and the gentleman who had had charge of her for those two years. I gave the wedding dinner of four in the Library Cart. Pigeon-pie, a leg of pickled pork, a pair of fowls, and suitable garden stuff. The best of drinks. I gave them a speech, and the gentleman gave us a speech, and all our jokes told, and the whole went off like a sky-rocket. In the course of the entertainment I explained to Sophy that I should keep the Library Cart as my living-cart when not upon the road, and that I should keep all her books for her



just as they stood, till she came back to claim them. So she went to China with her young husband, and it was a parting sorrowful and heavy, and I got the boy I had another service ; and so as of old, when my child and wife were gone, I went plodding along alone, with my whip over my shoulder, at the old horse's head.

Sophy wrote me many letters, and I wrote her many letters. About the end of the first year she sent me one in an unsteady hand : " Dearest father, not a week ago I had a darling little daughter, but I am so well that they let me write these words to you. Dearest and best father, I hope my child may not be deaf and dumb, but I do not yet know." When I wrote back, I hinted the question ; but as Sophy never answered that question, I felt it to be a sad one, and I never repeated it. For a long time our letters were regular, but then they got irregular, through Sophy's husband being moved to another station, and through my being always on the move. But we were in one another's thoughts, I was equally sure, letters or no letters.

Five years, odd months, had gone since Sophy went away. I was still the King of the Cheap Jacks, and at a greater height of popularity than ever. I had had a first-rate autumn of it, and on the twenty-third of December, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four, I found myself at Uxbridge, Middlesex, clean sold out. So I jogged up to London with the old horse, light and easy, to have my Christmas-Eve and Christmas-Day alone by the fire in the Library Cart, and then to buy a regular new stock of goods all round, to sell 'em again and get the money.



I am a neat hand at cookery, and I'll tell you what I knocked up for my Christmas-Eve dinner in the Library Cart. I knocked up a beefsteak-pudding for one, with two kidneys, a dozen oysters, and a couple of mushrooms thrown in. It's a pudding to put a man in good humour with everything. Having relished that pudding and cleared away, I turned the lamp low, and sat down by the light of the fire, watching it as it shone upon the backs of Sophy's books.

Sophy's books so brought up Sophy's self, that I saw her touching face quite plainly, before I dropped off dozing by the fire. This may be a reason why Sophy, with her deaf-and-dumb child in her arms, seemed to stand silent by me all through my nap. I was on the road, off the road, in all sorts of places north and south

and west and east, and still she stood silent by me, with her silent child in her arms. Even when I woke with a start, she seemed to vanish, as if she had stood by me in that very place only a single instant before.

I had started at a real sound, and the sound was on the steps of the cart. It was the light hurried tread of a child, coming clambering up. That tread of a child had once been so familiar to me, that for half a moment I believed I was going to see a little ghost.

But the touch of a real child was laid upon the outer handle of the door, and the handle turned, and the door opened a little way, and a real child peeped in,—a bright little comely girl with large dark eyes.

Looking full at me, the tiny creature took off her white of a straw hat, and a quantity of dark curls fell all about her face. Then she opened her lips, and said in a pretty voice,

“Grandfather!”

“Ah, my God,” I cried out. “She can speak!”

“Yes, dear grandfather. And I am to ask you whether there was any one that I remind you of.”

In a moment Sophy was round my neck, as well as the child, and her husband was wringing my hand with his face hid, and we all had to shake ourselves together before we could get over it. And when we did begin to get over it, and I saw the pretty child talking, pleased and quick and eager and busy, to her mother, in the signs that I had first taught her mother, the happy and yet pitying tears fell rolling down my face.

CHARLES DICKENS (adapted).

