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INTRODUCTION

THE famous writer Thomas Carlyle once said that the characters of King Lear and Macbeth were made out of the imagination of a man who must have known great sorrow, as Sir John Falstaff was the creation of one who laughed with his whole heart. He meant that a man and his work are always bound together ; there is no separating them. True literature always betrays its author. The subject of a man's work may be far outside himself ; it may be something in which, outwardly, he has no part or lot at all. But he is truly in it, all the same. In the old days the minstrel sang a song of battle and fighting to the death—a song that stood by itself, that he merely brought to expression. But his voice was in it, and the cadence of his tone, and the gesture of his hand ; and therefore the song became his song, a fragment of him. The material had been there almost from everlasting ; but, like the potter, he fashioned the work as it seemed good to him to make it.

Such a thing is true of most of our literature—the epic, the narrative, the story, the novel. From *The Canterbury Tales*, which, like the Walrus's tale, is full of many things, we may learn what kind of man Chaucer was ; Dickens himself is in the story of Mr Pickwick and Sam Weller ; and Charles Kingsley sails westward ho ! with Amyas Leigh. They did not consciously reveal themselves, for they wrote stories and poems of other things and other men. Only, in some way, their life and character are written across their work, like the watermark in a sheet of paper.

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Nevertheless, there is a type of literature in which the writer becomes the centre of what he writes. About the end of the Middle Ages men all over Europe began to awaken to an important fact—that they need no longer go on telling the old stories, preaching the same sermons, singing the same battle-songs. A new sense of freedom and liberty had come to them. The song became the expression of the singer's own feeling, his joy, or sorrow, or love, or hate. History and story had been put down, strangely and superstitiously often, without a comment or opinion on the part of him who wrote them. Now the writer began to express his own ideas and thought on the matter. Almost the first book like this in English was written by a famous man who lived about Shakespeare's time. It was Francis Bacon, who made a little collection of his thoughts on various subjects, and called them "essays." The French word *essayer* means 'to try,' 'to weigh,' a matter. So Bacon wrote of journeys, of death, of books, of gardens; he weighed these things up in his mind, and wrote down his thoughts about them—not what anyone in the world might think, but just his own idea and considering. The lyric or song, which belongs to poetry, and the essay, which belongs to prose, have this in common, that they are the expression of a man's mood; not his mere outward temper, but his inward heart; for 'mood' was the word meaning 'heart' in the Old English tongue. So men wrote, after Bacon's time, of the things that were in their thought, just as, after Shakespeare, they put their love into a song.

It is not hard to see, once the real nature of the essay is clear, that the essayist might bring his thought to bear upon a story—a tale heard in the street, or a piece of news in the newspaper, or some old legend, or some experience of his own. But he does not merely retell

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the tale. The story-writer and the novelist stand outside their own work as far as a writer can. They design a plot and crowd their story with incident, and imagine characters, and make a happy or a tragic ending. The tale is the thing. Not so the essayist. Here again he himself is all-important. He sits down and plays, as it were, with the story, tells it again, and puts his own spirit into it. Sometimes an old man by the fire on a winter night will recount a memory. And then the tale does not matter. It is the old man who makes it what it is, with the wave of his hand and the voice that breaks now and then into a chuckle of remembrance. The essayist is like him. He fashions his story with a gesture and a tone of voice and a laugh. The tale he tells becomes part of him in the end.

This book consists, in the main, of such 'essay-stories'—narrative essays, as they are called on the title-page. Charles Lamb tells, whimsically as only he could tell it, the tale of the feast of the New Year—not the mere tale, but a story enriched by his own quaint and gentle humour. He might have told it on New Year's Eve at supper-time, to his friends. So Addison, the great Spectator, lets the shilling tell its adventures as if he himself were the minted coin; he links himself up with old Sir John Mandeville in the story of "Frozen Voices," and with Mirza in his visions of time and eternity. And so, too, Goldsmith (the Spectator of London become the Citizen of the World) enters with the fop he has created; it is Beau Tibbs with Oliver Goldsmith showing beneath the gaudy coat and in the strange affectation. These essayists did not write the tale for itself; out of Christmas Day and Ash Wednesday Elia made a fantasy of his own genial humour; out of a shilling and Sir John Mandeville and Mirza Addison found a way to express his gentlemanly

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philosophy ; out of Beau Tibbs Goldsmith wove the texture of his own eccentric way of life. Upon the tales they told they set the seal of the individual, and made them essays.

There are other essayists in the book who take us a-journeying with them. The story is made on the way, as we walk and talk together, and find an inn here, or a boat there, or a little river to fish in, or the twilight over the sea. One (who another time made Long John Silver to our great and eternal comfort) sees and describes the folk on an emigrant train making the long journey across the plains. Another, an old man now, who has always loved the hills and rivers and trees, recounts an odd and fanciful tale of St Kilda. A third, who loved England and died for her, takes us as his friends westward in pursuit of spring. The last leads us with Grizzlebeard and a sailor and a poet out from "Petworth, little town," through the magic of Sussex, to the place where all men say farewell. These are tales men tell as they travel on the road, with the sun and wind upon them and a mile or two stretching ahead before nightfall.

This same individuality, this personal atmosphere, is no less present in those essayists who saw their story, and wrote down what they saw, as Bacon wrote of gardens and of books. Hazlitt went to watch a famous fives-player some hundred years ago. He writes of it as a newspaper correspondent might write of a test match or a tennis tournament. The newspaper-writer is indeed represented in this book with his essay upon a deathless journey by air. And beside these two—Hazlitt and the newspaper-writer—stands a quiet, observant woman, who went about her village and saw a cricket-match, and watched men rising up against machines. It is the commentary on the news that

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these write—the article that represents their thought upon the doings of the day.

There are one or two among the others who laugh in telling their tale—louder than Elia, if not so quaintly and gently. There is fun, more boyish fun than a mere twinkle of the eye, in Mr Gardiner's account of catching the train. Mr Lucas's conjurer and his rabbit are full of the same laughter; though in their joy, and in the happiness of Mr Grahame's Argonauts, there is a hint of the pathos that so often belongs to humour.

It is with this individuality of narrative in mind that we must read these essays. They are neither short stories nor novels. They are half a tale heard by chance, or a thing seen, or a deed done that can be told again; and the other half a man's 'mood'—the trick of his thought, or his voice, or his laughter. It is only by watching and listening carefully that we can hear the tale as it is meant to be told.

There are a few essays in this book called 'sketches.' Sometimes an artist comes down to the bridge where the church is above the river. Bit by bit the willow-trees, the flowing water, and the steeple appear upon the canvas. The picture is finished not in an hour, but in days, even weeks. Yet another time a man comes when the rain is glancing down, or when the frost is on the hedgerows, or the poppies in the corn; and he takes his pencil to sketch what he sees, in a minute or two. His sketch is quick, almost momentary, of a fleeting thing; unlike the picture which tries to reproduce faithfully the things that remain.

Here and there in this book there is a sketch like that, not in lines but in words. One of the passages comes from a book which its writer actually called his *Sketch Book*. Two or three others—particularly Mr Hutchinson's—are of nature. And in many of the story-essays

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the sketch element is present as a background or a setting for the tale. It is no wonder that the essayists who take us with them on a journey should sketch the road and the country round about it. They do. We can trace the quickly but skilfully drawn lines as we read what they have written.

So, like all essay-books, this is a book of companionship. The Romans thought of a friend as one who eats bread with you ; the Saxons thought of him as one who walks with you upon a journey. An essayist will do both ; he will speak his thought about a host of things. But it is best, perhaps, when he tells a tale at the weariest part of the journey, or over the meal in the evening-time.

NARRATIVE ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

THE STORY OF ALEXANDER SELKIRK

RICHARD STEELE

UNDER the title of this paper, I do not think it foreign to my design, to speak of a man born in Her Majesty's dominions, and relate an adventure in his life so uncommon, that it is doubtful whether the like has happened to any of human race. The person I speak of is Alexander Selkirk, whose name is familiar to men of curiosity, from the fame of his having lived four years and four months alone in the island of Juan Fernandez. I had the pleasure frequently to converse with the man soon after his arrival in England, in the year 1711. It was matter of great curiosity to hear him, as he is a man of good sense, give an account of the different revolutions in his own mind in that long solitude. When we consider how painful absence from company for the space of but one evening is to the generality of mankind, we may have a sense how painful this necessary and constant solitude was to a man bred a sailor, and ever accustomed to enjoy and suffer, eat, drink, and sleep, and perform all offices of life, in fellowship and company. He was put ashore from a leaky vessel, with the captain of which he had had an irreconcilable difference; and he chose rather to take his fate in this place, than in a crazy

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vessel, under a disagreeable commander. His portion were a sea-chest, his wearing clothes and bedding, a firelock, a pound of gunpowder, a large quantity of bullets, a flint and steel, a few pounds of tobacco, an hatchet, a knife, a kettle, a Bible, and other books of devotion, together with pieces that concerned navigation, and his mathematical instruments. Resentment against his officer, who had ill-used him, made him look forward on this change of life, as the more eligible one, till the instant in which he saw the vessel put off; at which moment, his heart yearned within him, and melted at the parting with his comrades and all human society at once. He had in provisions for the sustenance of life but the quantity of two meals, the island abounding only with wild goats, cats and rats. He judged it most probable that he should find more immediate and easy relief, by finding shell-fish on the shore, than seeking game with his gun. He accordingly found great quantities of turtles, whose flesh is extremely delicious, and of which he frequently ate very plentifully on his first arrival, till it grew disagreeable to his stomach, except in jellies. The necessities of hunger and thirst were his greatest diversions from the reflection on his lonely condition. When those appetites were satisfied, the desire of society was as strong a call upon him, and he appeared to himself least necessitous when he wanted everything; for the supports of his body were easily attained, but the eager longings for seeing again the face of man during the interval of craving bodily appetites, were hardly supportable. He grew dejected, languid, and melancholy scarce able to refrain from doing himself violence, till by degrees, by the force of reason, and frequent reading of the Scriptures, and turning his thoughts upon the study of navigation, after the space of eighteen months,

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he grew thoroughly reconciled to his condition. When he had made this conquest, the vigour of his health, disengagement from the world, a constant, cheerful, serene sky and a temperate air made his life one continual feast, and his being much more joyful than it had before been irksome. He now taking delight in everything, made the hut in which he lay, by ornaments which he cut down from a spacious wood, on the side of which it was situated, the most delicious bower, fanned with continual breezes, and gentle aspirations of wind, that made his repose after the chase equal to the most sensual pleasures.

I forgot to observe, that during the time of his dissatisfaction, monsters of the deep, which frequently lay on the shore, added to the terrors of his solitude; the dreadful howlings and voices seemed too terrible to be made for the human ears; but upon the recovery of his temper, he could with pleasure not only hear their voices, but approach the monsters themselves with great intrepidity. He speaks of sea-lions, whose jaws and tails were capable of seizing or breaking the limbs of a man, if he approached them: but at that time his spirits and life were so high, and he could act so regularly and unconcerned, that merely from being unruffled in himself, he killed them with the greatest ease imaginable: for observing, that though their jaws and tails were so terrible, yet the animals being mighty slow in working themselves round, he had nothing to do but place himself exactly opposite to their middle, and as close to them as possible, he dispatched them with his hatchet at will.

The precautions which he took against want, in case of sickness, was to lame kids when very young, so as that they might recover their health, but never be capable of speed. These he had in great numbers about

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his hut ; and when he was himself in full vigour, he could take at full speed the swiftest goat running up a promontory, and never failed of catching them but on a descent.

His habitation was extremely pestered with rats, which gnawed his clothes and feet when sleeping. To defend him against them, he fed and tamed numbers of young kitlings, who lay about his bed, and preserved him from the enemy. When his clothes were quite worn out, he dried and tacked together the skins of goats, with which he clothed himself, and was inured to pass through woods, bushes, and brambles with as much carelessness and precipitance as any other animal. It happened once to him, that running on the summit of a hill, he made a stretch to seize a goat, with which under him, he fell down a precipice, and lay helpless for the space of three days, the length of which time he measured by the moon's growth since his last observation. This manner of life grew so exquisitely pleasant, that he never had a moment heavy upon his hands ; his nights were untroubled, and his days joyous, from the practice of temperance and exercise. It was his manner to use stated hours and places for exercises of devotion, which he performed aloud, in order to keep up the faculties of speech, and to utter himself with greater energy.

When I first saw him, I thought, if I had not been let into his character and story, I could have discerned that he had been much separated from company, from his aspect and gesture ; there was a strong but cheerful seriousness in his look, and a certain disregard to the ordinary things about him, as if he had been sunk in thought. When the ship which brought him off the island came in, he received them with the greatest indifference, with relation to the prospect of going off

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with them, but with great satisfaction in an opportunity to refresh and help them. The man frequently bewailed his return to the world, which could not, he said, with all its enjoyments, restore him to the tranquillity of his solitude. Though I had frequently conversed with him, after a few months' absence he met me in the street, and though he spoke to me, I could not recollect that I had seen him ; familiar converse in this town had taken off the loneliness of his aspect, and quite altered the air of his face.

This plain man's story is a memorable example, that he is happiest who confines his wants to natural necessities ; and he that goes further in his desires, increases his wants in proportion to his acquisitions ; or to use his own expression, " I am now worth £800, but shall never be so happy as when I was not worth a farthing."

From " The Englishman "

A FAMOUS FIVES-PLAYER

WILLIAM HAZLITT

DIED at his house in Burbage Street, St Giles's, John Cavanagh, the famous hand fives-player. When a person dies who does any one thing better than any one else in the world, which so many others are trying to do well, it leaves a gap in society. It is not likely that any one will now see the game of fives played in its perfection for many years to come—for Cavanagh is dead, and has not left his peer behind him. It may be said that there are things of more importance than striking a ball against a wall—there are things, indeed, that make more noise and do as little good, such as making war and peace, making speeches and answering them, making verses and blotting them, making money and throwing it away. But the game of fives is what no one despises who has ever played at it. It is the finest exercise for the body, and the best relaxation for the mind. The Roman poet said that "Care mounted behind the horseman and stuck to his skirts." But this remark would not have applied to the fives-player. He who takes to playing at fives is twice young. He feels neither the past nor future "in the instant." Debts, taxes, "domestic treason, foreign levy, nothing can touch him further." He has no other wish, no other thought, from the moment the game begins, but that of striking the ball, of placing it, of *making* it! This Cavanagh was sure to do. Whenever he touched the ball there was an end of the chase. His eye was certain, his hand fatal, his presence of mind

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complete. He could do what he pleased, and he always knew exactly what to do. He saw the whole game, and played it; took instant advantage of his adversary's weakness, and recovered balls, as if by a miracle and from sudden thought, that every one gave for lost. He had equal power and skill, quickness and judgment. He could either outwit his antagonist by finesse, or beat him by main strength. Sometimes, when he seemed preparing to send the ball with the full swing of his arm, he would by a slight turn of his wrist drop it within an inch of the line. In general, the ball came from his hand, as if from a racket, in a straight, horizontal line; so that it was in vain to attempt to overtake or stop it. As it was said of a great orator that he never was at a loss for a word, and for the properest word, so Cavanagh always could tell the degree of force necessary to be given to a ball, and the precise direction in which it should be sent. He did his work with the greatest ease; never took more pains than was necessary; and while others were fagging themselves to death, was as cool and collected as if he had just entered the court. His style of play was as remarkable as his power of execution. He had no affectation, no trifling. He did not throw away the game to show off an attitude or try an experiment. He was a fine, sensible, manly player, who did what he could, but that was more than any one else could even affect to do. His blows were not undecided and ineffectual—lumbering like Mr Wordsworth's epic poetry, nor wavering like Mr Coleridge's lyric prose, nor short of the mark like Mr Brougham's speeches, nor wide of it like Mr Canning's wit, nor foul like the *Quarterly*, nor *let* balls like the *Edinburgh Review*. Cobbett and Junius together would have made a Cavanagh. He was the best *up-hill* player in the world; even when his adversary was fourteen, he

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would play on the same or better, and as he never flung away the game through carelessness and conceit, he never gave it up through laziness or want of heart. The only peculiarity of his play was that he never *volleyed*, but let the balls hop ; but if they rose an inch from the ground he never missed having them. There was not only nobody equal, but nobody second to him. It is supposed that he could give any other player half the game, or beat them with his left hand. His service was tremendous. He once played Woodward and Meredith together (two of the best players in England) in the Fives-court, St Martin's Street, and made seven-and-twenty aces following by services alone—a thing unheard of. He another time played Peru, who was considered a first-rate fives-player, a match of the best out of five games, and in the three first games, which of course decided the match, Peru got only one ace.

Cavanagh was an Irishman by birth, and a house-painter by profession. He had once laid aside his working-dress, and walked up, in his smartest clothes, to the Rosemary Branch to have an afternoon's pleasure. A person accosted him, and asked him if he would have a game. So they agreed to play for half-a-crown a game and a bottle of cider. The first game began—it was seven, eight, ten, thirteen, fourteen, all. Cavanagh won it. The next was the same. They played on, and each game was hardly contested. "There," said the unconscious fives-player, "there was a stroke that Cavanagh could not take : I never played better in my life, and yet I can't win a game. I don't know how it is!" However, they played on, Cavanagh winning every game, and the bystanders drinking the cider and laughing all the time. In the twelfth game, when Cavanagh was only four, and the stranger thirteen, a

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person came in and said, "What! are you here, Cavanagh?" The words were no sooner pronounced than the astonished player let the ball drop from his hand, and saying, "What! have I been breaking my heart all this time to beat Cavanagh?" refused to make another effort. "And yet, I give you my word," said Cavanagh, telling the story with some triumph, "I played all the while with my clenched fist." He used frequently to play matches at Copenhagen House for wagers and dinners. The wall against which they play is the same that supports the kitchen-chimney, and when the wall resounded louder than usual, the cooks exclaimed, "Those are the Irishman's balls," and the joints trembled on the spit! Goldsmith consoled himself that there were places where he too was admired: and Cavanagh was the admiration of all the fives-courts where he ever played. Mr Powell, when he played matches in the court in St Martin's Street, used to fill his gallery at half-a-crown a head with amateurs and admirers of talent in whatever department it is shown. He could not have shown himself in any ground in England but he would have been immediately surrounded with inquisitive gazers, trying to find out in what part of his frame his unrivalled skill lay, as politicians wonder to see the balance of Europe suspended in Lord Castlereagh's face, and admire the trophies of the British Navy lurking under Mr Croker's hanging brow. Now Cavanagh was as good-looking a man as the Noble Lord, and much better looking than the Right Hon. Secretary. He had a clear, open countenance, and did not look sideways or down, like Mr Murray the bookseller. He was a young fellow of sense, humour, and courage. He once had a quarrel with a waterman at Hungerford Stairs, and, they say, served him out in great style. In a word, there are

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hundreds at this day who cannot mention his name without admiration, as the best fives-player that perhaps ever lived (the greatest excellence of which they have any notion); and the noisy shout of the ring happily stood him in stead of the unheard voice of posterity!

The only person who seems to have excelled as much in another way as Cavanagh did in his was the late John Davies, the racket-player. It was remarked of him that he did not seem to follow the ball, but the ball seemed to follow him. Give him a foot of wall, and he was sure to make the ball. The four best racket-players of that day were Jack Spines, Jem Harding, Armitage, and Church. Davies could give any one of these two hands a time, that is, half the game, and each of these, at their best, could give the best player now in London the same odds. Such are the gradations in all exertions of human skill and art. He once played four capital players together, and beat them. He was also a first-rate tennis-player, and an excellent fives-player. In the Fleet or King's Bench he would have stood against Powell, who was reckoned the best open-ground player of his time. This last-mentioned player is at present the keeper of the Fives-court, and we might recommend to him for a motto over his door, "Who enters here, forgets himself, his country, and his friends." And the best of it is, that by the calculation of the odds, none of the three are worth remembering!

Cavanagh died from the bursting of a blood-vessel which prevented him from playing for the last two or three years. This, he was often heard to say, he thought hard upon him. He was fast recovering, however, when he was suddenly carried off, to the regret of all who knew him. As Mr Peel made it a

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qualification of the present Speaker, Mr Manners Sutton, that he was an excellent moral character, so Jack Cavanagh was a zealous Catholic, and could not be persuaded to eat meat on a Friday, the day on which he died. We have paid this willing tribute to his memory.

Let no rude hand deface it,
And his forlorn "*Hic jacet*"

From "Table Talk"

LEGEND OF THE MOOR'S LEGACY

WASHINGTON IRVING

JUST within the fortress of the Alhambra, in front of the royal palace, is a broad open esplanade, called the Place or Square of the Cisterns (La Plaza de los Aljibes), so called from being undermined by reservoirs of water, hidden from sight, and which have existed from the time of the Moors. At one corner of this esplanade is a Moorish well, cut through the living rock to a great depth, the water of which is cold as ice and clear as crystal. The wells made by the Moors are always in repute, for it is well known what pains they took to penetrate to the purest and sweetest springs and fountains. The one of which we now speak is famous throughout Granada, insomuch that water-carriers, some bearing great water-jars on their shoulders, others driving asses before them laden with earthen vessels, are ascending and descending the steep woody avenues of the Alhambra, from early dawn until a late hour of the night.

Fountains and wells, ever since the Scriptural days, have been noted gossiping-places in hot climates ; and at the well in question there is a kind of perpetual club kept up during the livelong day, by the invalids, old women, and other curious do-nothing folk of the fortress, who sit here on the stone benches, under an awning spread over the well to shelter the toll-gatherer from the sun, and dawdle over the gossip of the fortress, and question every water-carrier that arrives about the news of the city, and make long comments on every-

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thing they hear and see. Not an hour of the day but loitering housewives and idle maid-servants may be seen, lingering, with pitcher on head or in hand, to hear the last of the endless tattle of these worthies.

Among the water-carriers who once resorted to this well, there was a sturdy, strong-backed, bandy-legged little fellow, named Pedro Gil, but called Peregil for shortness, who had begun business with merely a great earthen jar which he carried upon his shoulder; by degrees he rose in the world, and was enabled to purchase an assistant of a correspondent class of animals, being a stout shaggy-haired donkey. On each side of this his long-eared *aide-de-camp*, in a kind of pannier, were slung his water-jars, covered with fig-leaves to protect them from the sun. There was not a more industrious water-carrier in all Granada, nor one more merry withal. The streets rang with his cheerful voice as he trudged after his donkey, singing forth the usual summer note that resounds through the Spanish towns: "*Quien quiere agua—agua mas fria que la nieve?*"—"Who wants water—water colder than snow? Who wants water from the well of the Alhambra, cold as ice and clear as crystal?" When he served a customer with a sparkling glass, it was always with a pleasant word that caused a smile; and if, perchance, it was a comely dame or dimpling damsel, it was always with a compliment to her beauty that was irresistible. Thus Peregil the Gallego was noted throughout all Granada for being one of the civilest, pleasantest, and happiest of mortals. Yet it is not he who sings loudest and jokes most that has the lightest heart. Under all this air of merriment, honest Peregil had his cares and troubles. He had a large family of ragged children to support, who were hungry and clamorous as a nest of young swallows, and beset him with their outcries for food whenever he

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came home of an evening. He had a helpmate, too, who was anything but a help to him. She had been a village beauty before marriage, noted for her skill at dancing the *bolero* and rattling the castanets; and she still retained her early propensities, spending the hard earnings of honest Peregil in frippery, and laying the very donkey under requisition for junketing parties into the country on Sundays and saints' days, and those innumerable holidays, which are rather more numerous in Spain than the days of the week. With all this she was a little of a slattern, something more of a lie-abed, and, above all, a gossip of the first water; neglecting house, household, and everything else, to loiter slipshod in the houses of her gossip neighbours.

He, however, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, accommodates the yoke of matrimony to the submissive neck. Peregil bore all the heavy dispensations of wife and children with as meek a spirit as his donkey bore the water-jars; and, however he might shake his ears in private, never ventured to question the household virtues of his slattern spouse.

He loved his children, too, even as an owl loves its owlets, seeing in them his own image multiplied and perpetuated; for they were a sturdy, long-backed, bandy-legged little brood. The great pleasure of honest Peregil was, whenever he could afford himself a scanty holiday, and had a handful of *maravedis* to spare, to take the whole litter forth with him, some in his arms, some tugging at his skirts, and some trudging at his heels, and to treat them to a gambol among the orchards of the Vega, while his wife was dancing with her holiday friends in the Angosturas of the Darro.

It was a late hour one summer night, and most of the water-carriers had desisted from their toils. The day had been uncommonly sultry; the night was one of

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those delicious moonlights which tempt the inhabitants of southern climes to indemnify themselves for the heat and inaction of the day, by lingering in the open air, and enjoying its tempered sweetness until after midnight. Customers for water were therefore still abroad. Peregil, like a considerate, painstaking father, thought of his hungry children. "One more journey to the well," said he to himself, "to earn a Sunday's *puchero* for the little ones. So saying, he trudged manfully up the steep avenue of the Alhambra, singing as he went, and now and then bestowing a hearty thwack with a cudgel on the flanks of his donkey, either by way of cadence to the song, or refreshment to the animal; for dry blows serve in lieu of provender in Spain for all beasts of burden.

When arrived at the well, he found it deserted by every one except a solitary stranger in Moorish garb, seated on a stone bench in the moonlight. Peregil paused at first and regarded him with surprise, not unmixed with awe, but the Moor feebly beckoned him to approach. "I am faint and ill," said he; "aid me to return to the city, and I will pay thee double what thou couldst gain by thy jars of water."

The honest heart of the little water-carrier was touched with compassion at the appeal of the stranger. "God forbid," said he, "that I should ask fee or reward for doing a common act of humanity." He accordingly helped the Moor on his donkey, and set off slowly for Granada, the poor Moslem being so weak that it was necessary to hold him on the animal to keep him from falling to the earth.

When they entered the city the water-carrier demanded whither he should conduct him. "Alas!" said the Moor, faintly, "I have neither home nor habitation; I am a stranger in the land. Suffer me

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to lay my head this night beneath thy roof, and thou shalt be amply repaid."

Honest Peregil thus saw himself unexpectedly saddled with an infidel guest, but he was too humane to refuse a night's shelter to a fellow-being in so forlorn a plight ; so he conducted the Moor to his dwelling. The children, who had sallied forth open-mouthed as usual on hearing the tramp of the donkey, ran back with affright when they beheld the turbaned stranger, and hid themselves behind their mother. The latter stepped forth intrepidly, like a ruffling hen before her brood when a vagrant dog approaches.

"What infidel companion," cried she, "is this you have brought home at this late hour to draw upon us the eyes of the inquisition?"

"Be quiet, wife," replied the Gallego ; "here is a poor sick stranger, without friend or home ; wouldst thou turn him forth to perish in the streets?"

The wife would still have remonstrated, for although she lived in a hovel, she was a furious stickler for the credit of her house ; the little water-carrier, however, for once was stiffnecked, and refused to bend beneath the yoke. He assisted the poor Moslem to alight, and spread a mat and a sheep-skin for him, on the ground, in the coolest part of the house ; being the only kind of bed that his poverty afforded.

In a little while the Moor was seized with violent convulsions, which defied all the ministering skill of the simple water-carrier. The eye of the poor patient acknowledged his kindness. During an interval of his fits he called him to his side, and addressing him in a low voice : "My end," said he, "I fear is at hand. If I die, I bequeath you this box as a reward for your charity" ; so saying, he opened his *albornoz*, or cloak, and showed a small box of sandal-wood, strapped round

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his body. "God grant, my friend," replied the worthy little Gallego, "that you may live many years to enjoy your treasure, whatever it may be." The Moor shook his head; he laid his hand upon the box, and would have said something more concerning it, but his convulsions returned with increasing violence, and in a little while he expired.

The water-carrier's wife was now as one distracted. "This comes," said she, "of your foolish good-nature, always running into scrapes to oblige others. What will become of us when this corpse is found in our house? We shall be sent to prison as murderers; and if we escape with our lives, we shall be ruined by notaries and *alguazils*."

Poor Peregil was in equal tribulation, and almost repented himself of having done a good deed. At length a thought struck him. "It is not yet day," said he; "I can convey the dead body out of the city, and bury it in the sands on the banks of the Xenil. No one saw the Moor enter our dwelling, and no one will know anything of his death."

So said, so done. The wife aided him; they rolled the body of the unfortunate Moslem in the mat on which he had expired, laid it across the ass, and Peregil set out with it for the banks of the river.

As ill-luck would have it, there lived opposite to the water-carrier a barber named Pedrillo Pedrigo, one of the most prying, tattling, and mischief-making of his gossip tribe. He was a weasel-faced, spider-legged varlet, supple and insinuating; the famous barber of Seville could not surpass him for his universal knowledge of the affairs of others, and he had no more power of retention than a sieve. It was said that he slept but with one eye at a time, and kept one ear uncovered, so that even in his sleep he might see and hear all that was

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going on: Certain it is, he was a sort of scandalous chronicle for the quidnuncs of Granada, and had more customers than all the rest of his fraternity.

This meddlesome barber heard Peregil arrive at an unusual hour at night, and the exclamations of his wife and children. His head was instantly popped out of a little window which served him as a look-out, and he saw his neighbour assist a man in Moorish garb into his dwelling. This was so strange an occurrence that Pedrillo Pedrugo slept not a wink that night. Every five minutes he was at his loophole, watching the lights that gleamed through the chinks of his neighbour's door, and before daylight he beheld Peregil sally forth with his donkey unusually laden.

The inquisitive barber was in a fidget; he slipped on his clothes, and, stealing forth silently, followed the water-carrier at a distance, until he saw him dig a hole in the sandy bank of the Xenil, and bury something that had the appearance of a dead body.

The barber hied him home, and fidgeted about his shop, setting everything upside down, until sunrise. He then took a basin under his arm, and sallied forth to the house of his daily customer the Alcalde.

The Alcalde had just risen. Pedrillo Pedrugo seated him in a chair, threw a napkin round his neck, put a basin of hot water under his chin, and began to mollify his beard with his fingers.

"Strange doings!" said Pedrugo, who played barber and newsmonger at the same time—"strange doings! Robbery, and murder, and burial all in one night!"

"Hey!—how!—what is that you say?" cried the Alcalde.

"I say," replied the barber, rubbing a piece of soap over the nose and mouth of the dignitary. for a Spanish barber disdains to employ a brush,— "I say that Peregil

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the Gallego has robbed and murdered a Moorish Mussulman, and buried him, this blessed night. *Malqita sea la noche*;—Accursed be the night for the same !”

“ But how do you know all this ? ” demanded the Alcalde.

“ Be patient, Señor, and you shall hear all about it,” replied Pedrillo, taking him by the nose and sliding a razor over his cheek. He then recounted all that he had seen, going through both operations at the same time, shaving his beard, washing his chin, and wiping him dry with a dirty napkin, while he was robbing, murdering, and burying the Moslem

Now it so happened that this Alcalde was one of the most overbearing, and at the same time most griping and corrupt curmudgeons in all Granada. It could not be denied, however, that he set a high value upon justice, for he sold it at its weight in gold. He presumed the case in point to be one of murder and robbery; doubtless there must be a rich spoil; how was it to be secured into the legitimate hands of the law? for as to merely entrapping the delinquent—that would be feeding the gallows; but entrapping the booty—that would be enriching the judge, and such, according to his creed, was the great end of justice. So thinking, he summoned to his presence his trustiest *alguazil*—a gaunt, hungry-looking varlet, clad, according to the custom of his order, in the ancient Spanish garb, a broad black beaver turned up at its sides; a quaint ruff; a small black cloak dangling from his shoulders; rusty black under-clothes that set off his spare wiry frame, while in his hand he bore a slender white wand, the dreaded insignia of his office. Such was the legal bloodhound of the ancient Spanish breed, that he put upon the traces of the unlucky water-carrier, and such was his speed and certainty, that he was upon the

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haunches of poor Peregil before he had returned to his dwelling, and brought both him and his donkey before the dispenser of justice.

The Alcalde bent upon him one of the most terrific frowns. "Hark ye, culprit!" roared he, in a voice that made the knees of the little Gallego smite together,—"hark ye, culprit! there is no need of denying thy guilt, everything is known to me. A gallows is the proper reward for the crime thou hast committed, but I am merciful, and readily listen to reason. The man that has been murdered in thy house was a Moor, an infidel, the enemy of our faith. It was doubtless in a fit of religious zeal that thou hast slain him. I will be indulgent, therefore; render up the property of which thou hast robbed him, and we will hush the matter up."

The poor water-carrier called upon all the saints to witness his innocence; alas! not one of them appeared; and if they had the Alcalde would have disbelieved the whole calendar. The water-carrier related the whole story of the dying Moor with the straightforward simplicity of truth, but it was all in vain. "Wilt thou persist in saying," demanded the judge, "that this Moslem had neither gold nor jewels, which were the object of thy cupidity?"

"As I hope to be saved, your worship," replied the water-carrier, "he had nothing but a small box of sandal-wood, which he bequeathed to me in reward for my services."

"A box of sandal-wood! a box of sandal-wood!" exclaimed the Alcalde, his eyes sparkling at the idea of precious jewels. "And where is this box? where have you concealed it?"

"An' it please your grace," replied the water-carrier, "it is in one of the panniers of my mule, and heartily at the service of your worship."

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He had hardly spoken the words, when the keen *alguazil* darted off, and reappeared in an instant with the mysterious box of sandal-wood. The Alcalde opened it with an eager and trembling hand; all pressed forward to gaze upon the treasure it was expected to contain; when, to their disappointment, nothing appeared within, but a parchment scroll, covered with Arabic characters, and an end of a waxen taper.

When there is nothing to be gained by the conviction of a prisoner, justice, even in Spain, is apt to be impartial. The Alcalde, having recovered from his disappointment, and found that there was really no booty in the case, now listened dispassionately to the explanation of the water-carrier, which was corroborated by the testimony of his wife. Being convinced, therefore, of his innocence, he discharged him from arrest; nay, more, he permitted him to carry off the Moor's legacy, the box of sandal-wood and its contents, as the well-merited reward of his humanity; but he retained his donkey in payment of costs and charges.

Behold the unfortunate little Gallego reduced once more to the necessity of being his own water-carrier, and trudging up to the well of the Alhambra with a great earthen jar upon his shoulder.

As he toiled up the hill in the heat of a summer noon, his usual good-humour forsook him. "Dog of an Alcalde!" would he cry, "to rob a poor man of the means of his subsistence, of the best friend he had in the world!" And then at the remembrance of the beloved companion of his labours, all the kindness of his nature would break forth. "Ah, donkey of my heart!" would he exclaim, resting his burden on a stone, and wiping the sweat from his brow,—“ah, donkey of my heart! I warrant me thou tainkest of thy

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old master ! I warrant me thou missest the water-jars—poor beast ! ”

To add to his afflictions, his wife received him, on his return home, with whimperings and repinings ; she had clearly the vantage-ground of him, having warned him not to commit the egregious act of hospitality which had brought on him all these misfortunes ; and, like a knowing woman, she took every occasion to throw her superior sagacity in his teeth. If her children lacked food, or needed a new garment, she could answer with a sneer, “ Go to your father—he is heir to King Chico of the Alhambra : ask him to help you out of the Moor’s strong box.”

Was ever poor mortal so soundly punished for having done a good action ? The unlucky Peregil was grieved in flesh and spirit, but still he bore meekly with the railings of his spouse. At length, one evening, when, after a hot day’s toil, she taunted him in the usual manner, he lost all patience. He did not venture to retort upon her, but his eye rested upon the box of sandal-wood, which lay on a shelf with lid half open, as if laughing in mockery at his vexation. Seizing it up, he dashed it with indignation to the floor. “ Unlucky was the day that I ever set eyes on thee,” he cried, “ or sheltered thy master beneath my roof ! ”

As the box struck the floor, the lid flew wide open, and the parchment scroll rolled forth.

Peregil sat regarding the scroll for some time in moody silence. At length rallying his ideas, “ Who knows,” thought he, “ but this writing may be of some importance, as the Moor seems to have guarded it with such care ? ” Picking it up therefore, he put it in his bosom, and the next morning, as he was crying water through the streets, he stopped at the shop of a Moor, a native of Tangiers, who sold trinkets and

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perfumery, in the Zacatín, and asked him to explain the contents.

The Moor read the scroll attentively, then stroked his beard and smiled. "This manuscript," said he, "is a form of incantation for the recovery of hidden treasure that is under the power of enchantment. It is said to have such virtue that the strongest bolts and bars, nay the adamantine rock itself, will yield before it!"

"Bah!" cried the little Gallego, "what is all that to me? I am no enchanter, and know nothing of buried treasure." So saying, he shouldered his water-jar, left the scroll in the hands of the Moor, and trudged forward on his daily rounds.

That evening, however, as he rested himself about twilight at the well of the Alhambra, he found a number of gossips assembled at the place, and their conversation, as is not unusual at that shadowy hour, turned upon old tales and traditions of a supernatural nature. Being all poor as rats, they dwelt with peculiar fondness upon the popular theme of enchanted riches left by the Moors in various parts of the Alhambra. Above all, they concurred in the belief that there were great treasures buried deep in the earth under the Tower of the Seven Floors.

These stories made an unusual impression on the mind of the honest Peregil, and they sank deeper and deeper into his thoughts as he returned alone down the darkling avenues. "If, after all, there should be treasure hid beneath that tower; and if the scroll I left with the Moor should enable me to get at it!" In the sudden ecstasy of the thought he had well-nigh let fall his water-jar.

That night he tumbled and tossed, and could scarcely get a wink of sleep for the thoughts that were bewildering his brain. Bright and early he repaired to the shop

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of the Moor, and told him all that was passing in his mind. "You can read Arabic," said he; "suppose we go together to the tower, and try the effect of the charm; if it fails, we are no worse off than before; but if it succeeds, we will share equally all the treasure we may discover."

"Hold," replied the Moslem; "this writing is not sufficient of itself; it must be read at midnight, by the light of a taper singularly compounded and prepared, the ingredients of which are not within my reach. Without such a taper the scroll is of no avail."

"Say no more!" cried the little Gallego; "I have such a taper at hand, and will bring it here in a moment." So saying, he hastened home, and soon returned with the end of yellow wax taper that he had found in the box of sandal-wood.

The Moor felt it and smelled of it. "Here are rare and costly perfumes," said he, "combined with this yellow wax. This is the kind of taper specified in the scroll. While this burns, the strongest walls and most secret caverns will remain open. Woe to him, however, who lingers within until it be extinguished. He will remain enchanted with the treasure."

It was now agreed between them to try the charm that very night. At a late hour, therefore, when nothing was stirring but bats and owls, they ascended the woody hill of the Alhambra, and approached that awful tower, shrouded by trees and rendered formidable by so many traditionary tales. By the light of a lantern they groped their way through bushes, and over fallen stones, to the door of a vault beneath the tower. With fear and trembling they descended a flight of steps cut into the rock. It led to an empty chamber, damp and drear, from which another flight of steps led to a deeper vault. In this way they descended four several flights,

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leading into as many vaults, one below the other, but the floor of the fourth was solid ; and though, according to tradition, there remained three vaults still below, it was said to be impossible to penetrate farther, the residue being shut up by strong enchantment. The air of this vault was damp and chilly, and had an earthy smell, and the light scarce cast forth any rays. They paused here for a time, in breathless suspense, until they faintly heard the clock of the watch-tower strike midnight ; upon this they lit the waxen taper, which diffused an odour of myrrh and frankincense and storax.

The Moor began to read in a hurried voice. He had scarce finished when there was a noise as of subterraneous thunder. The earth shook, and the floor, yawning open, disclosed a flight of steps. Trembling with awe, they descended, and by the light of the lantern found themselves in another vault covered with Arabic inscriptions. In the centre stood a great chest, secured with seven bands of steel, at each end of which sat an enchanted Moor in armour, but motionless as a statue, being controlled by the power of the incantation. Before the chest were several jars filled with gold and silver and precious stones. In the largest of these they thrust their arms up to the elbow, and at every dip hauled forth handfuls of broad yellow pieces of Moorish gold, or bracelets and ornaments of the same precious metal, while occasionally a necklace of Oriental pearl would stick to their fingers. Still they trembled and breathed short while cramming their pockets with the spoils ; and cast many a fearful glance at the two enchanted Moors, who sat grim and motionless, glaring upon them with unwinking eyes. At length, struck with a sudden panic at some fancied noise, they both rushed up the staircase, tumbled over one another into

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the upper apartment, overturned and extinguished the waxen taper, and the pavement again closed with a thundering sound.

Filled with dismay, they did not pause until they had groped their way out of the tower, and beheld the stars shining through the trees. Then, seating themselves upon the grass, they divided the spoil, determining to content themselves for the present with this mere skimming of the jars, but to return on some future night and drain them to the bottom. To make sure of each other's good faith, also, they divided the talismans between them, one retaining the scroll and the other the taper; this done, they set off with light hearts and well-lined pockets for Granada.

As they wended their way down the hill, the shrewd Moor whispered a word of counsel in the ear of the simple little water-carrier.

"Friend Peregil," said he, "all this affair must be kept a profound secret until we have secured the treasure, and conveyed it out of harm's way. If a whisper of it gets to the ear of the Alcalde, we are undone!"

"Certainly," replied the Gallego, "nothing can be more true."

"Friend Peregil," said the Moor, "you are a discreet man, and I make no doubt can keep a secret; but you have a wife."

"She shall not know a word of it," replied the little water-carrier, sturdily.

"Enough," said the Moor, "I depend upon thy discretion and thy promise."

Never was promise more positive and sincere; but, alas! what man can keep a secret from his wife? Certainly not such a one as Peregil the water-carrier, who was one of the most loving and tractable of hus-

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bands. On his return home, he found his wife moping in a corner. "Mighty well," cried she as he entered, "you've come at last, after rambling about until this hour of the night. I wonder you have not brought home another Moor as a house-mate." Then bursting into tears, she began to wring her hands and smite her breast. "Unhappy woman that I am!" exclaimed she "what will become of me? My house stripped and plundered by lawyers and *alguazils*; my husband a do-no-good, that no longer brings home bread to his family, but goes rambling about day and night, with infidel Moors! O my children! my children! what will become of us? We shall all have to beg in the streets!"

Honest Peregil was so moved by the distress of his spouse that he could not help whimpering also. His heart was as full as his pocket, and not to be restrained. Thrusting his hand into the latter he hauled forth three or four broad gold-pieces, and slipped them into her bosom. The poor woman stared with astonishment, and could not understand the meaning of this golden shower. Before she could recover from her surprise, the little Gallego drew forth a chain of gold and dangled it before her, capering with exultation, his mouth distended from ear to ear.

"What hast thou been doing, Peregil?" exclaimed the wife; "surely thou hast not been committing murder and robbery!"

The idea scarce entered the brain of the poor woman than it became a certainty with her. She saw a prison and a gallows in the distance, and a little bandy-legged Gallego hanging pendent from it; and, overcome by the horrors conjured up by imagination, fell into violent hysterics.

What could the poor man do? He had no other

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means of pacifying his wife, and dispelling the phantoms of her fancy, than by relating the whole story of his good fortune. This, however, he did not do until he had exacted from her the most solemn promise to keep it a profound secret from every living being.

To describe her joy would be impossible. She flung her arms round the neck of her husband, and almost strangled him with her caresses. "Now, wife," exclaimed the little man, with honest exultation, "what say you now to the Moor's legacy? Henceforth never abuse me for helping a fellow-creature in distress."

The honest Gallego retired to his sheep-skin mat, and slept as soundly as if on a bed of down. Not so his wife. She emptied the whole contents of his pockets upon the mat, and sat counting gold pieces of Arabic coin, trying on necklaces and earrings, and fancying the figure she should one day make when permitted to enjoy her riches.

On the following morning the honest Gallego took a broad golden coin, and repaired with it to a jeweller's shop in the Zacatín to offer it for sale, pretending to have found it among the ruins of the Alhambra. The jeweller saw that it had an Arabic inscription, and was of the purest gold; he offered, however, but a third of its value, with which the water-carrier was perfectly content. Peregil now bought new clothes for his little flock, and all kinds of toys, together with ample provisions for a hearty meal, and returning to his dwelling, set all his children dancing around him, while he capered in the midst, the happiest of fathers.

The wife of the water-carrier kept her promise of secrecy with surprising strictness. For a whole day and a half she went about, with a look of mystery and a heart swelling almost to bursting; yet she held her peace, though surrounded by her gossips. It is true

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she could not help giving herself a few airs, apologized for her ragged dress, and talked of ordering a new *basquiña*, all trimmed with gold lace and bugles, and a new lace *mantilla*. She threw out hints of her husband's intention of leaving off his trade of water-carrying, as it did not altogether agree with his health. In fact, she thought they should all retire to the country for the summer, that the children might have the benefit of the mountain air, for there was no living in the city in this sultry season.

The neighbours stared at each other, and thought the poor woman had lost her wits; and her airs and graces and elegant pretensions were the theme of universal scoffing and merriment among her friends the moment her back was turned.

If she restrained herself abroad, however, she indemnified herself at home, and putting a string of rich Oriental pearls round her neck, Moorish bracelets on her arms, and an *aigrette* of diamonds on her head, sailed backwards and forwards in her slattern rags about the room, now and then stopping to admire herself in a broken mirror. Nay, in the impulse of her simple vanity, she could not resist, on one occasion, showing herself at the window, to enjoy the effect of her finery on the passers by.

As the fates would have it, Pedrillo Pedrugo, the meddlesome barber, was at this moment sitting idly in his shop on the opposite side of the street, when his ever-watchful eye caught the sparkle of a diamond. In an instant he was at his loophole reconnoitring the slattern spouse of the water-carrier, decorated with the splendour of an Eastern bride. No sooner had he taken an accurate inventory of her ornaments, than he posted off with all speed to the Alcalde. In a little while the hungry *alguaril* was again on the scent, and

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before the day was over the unfortunate Peregil was once more dragged into the presence of the judge.

“ How is this, villain ! ” cried the Alcalde, in a furious voice. “ You told me that the infidel who died in your house left nothing behind but an empty coffer, and now I hear of your wife flaunting in her rags decked out with pearls and diamonds. Wretch that thou art ! prepare to render up the spoils of thy miserable victim, and to swing on the gallows that is already tired of waiting for thee.”

The terrified water-carrier fell on his knees, and made a full relation of the marvellous manner in which he had gained his wealth. The Alcalde, the *alguazil*, and the inquisitive barber listened with greedy ears to this Arabian tale of enchanted treasure. The *alguazil* was despatched to bring the Moor who had assisted in the incantation. The Moslem entered, half frightened out of his wits at finding himself in the hands of the harpies of the law. When he beheld the water-carrier standing with sheepish looks and downcast countenance, he comprehended the whole matter. “ Miserable animal,” said he, as he passed near him, “ did I not warn thee against babbling to thy wife ? ”

The story of the Moor coincided exactly with that of his colleague ; but the Alcalde affected to be slow of belief, and threw out menaces of imprisonment and rigorous investigation.

“ Softly, good Señor Alcalde,” said the Mussulman, who by this time had recovered his usual shrewdness and self-possession. “ Let us not mar fortune’s favours in the scramble for them. Nobody knows anything of this matter but ourselves ; let us keep the secret. There is wealth enough in the cave to enrich us all. Promise a fair division, and all shall be produced ; refuse, and the cave shall remain for ever closed.”

THE MOOR'S LEGACY

The Alcalde consulted apart with the *alguazil*. The latter was an old fox in his profession. "Promise anything," said he, "until you get possession of the treasure. You may then seize upon the whole, and if he and his accomplice dare to murmur, threaten them with the faggot and the stake as infidels and sorcerers."

The Alcalde relished the advice. Smoothing his brow and turning to the Moor: "This is a strange story," said he, "and may be true; but I must have ocular proof of it. This very night you must repeat the incantation in my presence. If there be really such treasure, we will share it amicably between us, and say nothing further of the matter; if ye have deceived me, expect no mercy at my hands. In the meantime you must remain in custody."

The Moor and the water-carrier cheerfully agreed to these conditions, satisfied that the event would prove the truth of their words.

Towards midnight the Alcalde sallied forth secretly, attended by the *alguazil* and the meddlesome barber, all strongly armed. They conducted the Moor and the water-carrier as prisoners, and were provided with the stout donkey of the latter to bear off the expected treasure. They arrived at the tower without being observed, and tying the donkey to a fig-tree, descended into the fourth vault of the tower.

The scroll was produced, the yellow waxen taper lighted, and the Moor read the form of incantation. The earth trembled as before, and the pavement opened with a thundering sound, disclosing the narrow flight of steps. The Alcalde, the *alguazil*, and the barber were struck aghast, and could not summon courage to descend. The Moor and the water-carrier entered the lower vault, and found the two Moors seated as before, silent and motionless. They removed two of the great

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jars, filled with golden coin and precious stones. The water-carrier bore them up one by one upon his shoulders, but though a strong-backed little man, and accustomed to carry burdens, he staggered beneath their weight, and found, when slung on each side of his donkey, they were as much as the animal could bear.

“ Let us be content for the present,” said the Moor ; “ here is as much treasure as we can carry off without being perceived, and enough to make us all wealthy to our heart’s desire.”

“ Is there more treasure remaining behind ? ” demanded the Alcalde.

“ The greatest prize of all,” said the Moor, “ a huge coffer bound with bands of steel, and filled with pearls and precious stones.”

“ Let us have up the coffer by all means,” cried the grasping Alcalde.

“ I will descend for no more,” said the Moor, doggedly ; “ enough is enough for a reasonable man—more is superfluous.”

“ And I,” said the water-carrier, “ will bring up no further burden to break the back of my poor donkey.”

Finding commands, threats, and entreaties equally vain, the Alcalde turned to his two adherents. “ Aid me,” said he, “ to bring up the coffer, and its contents shall be divided between us.” So saying, he descended the steps, followed with trembling reluctance by the *alguazil* and the barber.

No sooner did the Moor behold them fairly earthed than he extinguished the yellow taper ; the pavement closed with its usual crash, and the three worthies remained buried beneath it.

He then hastened up the different flights of steps, nor stopped until in the open air. The little water-carrier followed him as fast as his short legs would permit.

THE MOOR'S LEGACY

“ What hast thou done ? ” cried Peregil, as soon as he could recover breath. “ The Alcalde and the other two are shut up in the vault.”

“ It is the will of Allah ! ” said the Moor, devoutly.

“ And will you not release them ? ” demanded the Gallego.

“ Allah forbid ! ” replied the Moor, smoothing his beard. “ It is written in the book of fate that they shall remain enchanted until some future adventurer arrive to break the charm. The will of God be done ! ” So saying, he hurled the end of the waxen taper far among the gloomy thickets of the glen.

There was now no remedy ; so the Moor and the water-carrier proceeded with the richly laden donkey toward the city, nor could honest Peregil refrain from hugging and kissing his long-eared fellow-labourer, thus restored to him from the clutches of the law ; and, in fact, it is doubtful which gave the simple-hearted little man most joy at the moment, the gaining of the treasure, or the recovery of the donkey.

The two partners in good luck divided their spoil amicably and fairly, except that the Moor, who had a little taste for trinketry, made out to get into his heap the most of the pearls and precious stones and other baubles, but then he always gave the water-carrier in lieu magnificent jewels of massy gold, of five times the size, with which the latter was heartily content. They took care not to linger within reach of accidents, but made off to enjoy their wealth undisturbed in other countries. The Moor returned to Africa, to his native city of Tangiers, and the Gallego, with his wife, his children, and his donkey, made the best of his way to Portugal. Here, under the admonition and tuition of his wife, he became a personage of some consequence, for she made the worthy little man array his long body

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and short legs in doublet and hose, with a feather in his hat and a sword by his side, and laying aside his familiar appellation of Peregil, assume the more sonorous title of Don Pedro Gil: his progeny grew up a thriving and merry-hearted, though short and bandy-legged generation, while Señora Gil, befringed, belaced, and betasselled from her head to her heels, with glittering rings on every finger, became a model of slattern fashion and finery.

As to the Alcalde and his adjuncts, they remained shut up under the great Tower of the Seven Floors, and there they remain spellbound at the present day. Whenever there shall be a lack in Spain of meddling barbers, sharking *alguazils*, and corrupt *alcaldes*, they may be sought after; but if they have to wait until such time for their deliverance, there is danger of their enchantment enduring until doomsday.

From "The Alhambra"

NURSE'S STORIES

CHARLES DICKENS

THERE are not many places that I find it more agreeable to revisit when I am in an idle mood, than some places to which I have never been. For, my acquaintance with those spots is of such long standing, and has ripened into an intimacy of so affectionate a nature, that I take a particular interest in assuring myself that they are unchanged.

I never was in Robinson Crusoe's Island, yet I frequently return there. The colony he established on it soon faded away, and it is uninhabited by any descendants of the grave and courteous Spaniards, or of Will Atkins and the other mutineers, and has relapsed into its original condition. Not a twig of its wicker houses remains, its goats have long run wild again, its screaming parrots would darken the sun with a cloud of many flaming colours if a gun were fired there, no face is ever reflected in the waters of the little creek which Friday swam across when pursued by his two brother cannibals with sharpened stomachs. After comparing notes with other travellers who have similarly revisited the Island and conscientiously inspected it, I have satisfied myself that it contains no vestige of Mr Atkins's domesticity or theology, though his track on the memorable evening of his landing to set his captain ashore, when he was decoyed about and round about until it was dark, and his boat was stove, and his strength and spirits failed him, is yet plainly to be

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traced. So is the hill-top on which Robinson was struck dumb with joy when the reinstated captain pointed to the ship, riding within half a mile of the shore, that was to bear him away, in the nine-and-twentieth year of his seclusion in that lonely place. So is the sandy beach on which the memorable footstep was impressed, and where the savages hauled up their canoes when they came ashore for those dreadful public dinners, which led to a dancing worse than speech-making. So is the cave where the flaring eyes of the old goat made such a goblin appearance in the dark. So is the site of the hut where Robinson lived with the dog and the parrot and the cat, and where he endured those first agonies of solitude, which—strange to say—never involved any ghostly fancies; a circumstance so very remarkable, that perhaps he left out something in writing his record? Round hundreds of such objects hidden in the dense tropical foliage, the tropical sea breaks evermore; and over them the tropical sky, saving in the short rainy season, shines bright and cloudless.

Neither was I ever belated among wolves, on the borders of France and Spain; nor did I ever, when night was closing in and the ground was covered with snow, draw up my little company among some felled trees which served as a breast-work, and there fire a train of gunpowder so dexterously that suddenly we had three or four score blazing wolves illuminating the darkness around us. Nevertheless, I occasionally go back to that dismal region and perform the feat again; when indeed to smell the singeing and the frying of the wolves afire, and to see them setting one another alight as they rush and tumble, and to behold them rolling in the snow vainly attempting to put themselves out, and to hear their howlings taken up by all the echoes as

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well as by all the unseen wolves' within the woods, makes me tremble.

I was never in the robbers' cave, where Gil Blas' lived, but I often go back there and find the trap-door just as heavy to raise as it used to be, while that wicked old disabled Black lies everlastingly cursing in bed. I was never in Don Quixote's study, where he read his books of chivalry until he rose and hacked at imaginary giants, and then refreshed himself with great draughts of water, yet you couldn't move a book in it without my knowledge, or with my consent. I was never (thank Heaven) in company with the little old woman who hobbled out of the chest and told the merchant Abudah to go in search of the Talisman of Oromanes, yet I make it my business to know that she is well preserved and as intolerable as ever. I was never at the school where the boy Horatio Nelson got out of bed to steal the pears: not because he wanted any, but because every other boy was afraid: yet I have several times been back to this Academy, to see him let down out of window with a sheet. So with Damascus, and Bagdad, and Brobingnag (which has the curious fate of being usually misspelt when written), and Lilliput, and Laputa, and the Nile, and Abyssinia, and the Ganges, and the North Pole, and many hundreds of places—I was never at them, yet it is an affair of my life to keep them intact, and I am always going back to them.

But, when I was at Dullborough one day, revisiting the associations of my childhood, my experience in this wise was made quite inconsiderable and of no account, by the quantity of places and people—utterly impossible places and people, but none the less alarmingly real—that I found I had been introduced to by my nurse before I was six years old, and used to be forced to go back to at night without at all wanting to go. If

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we all knew our own minds (in a more enlarged sense than the popular acceptation of that phrase), I suspect we should find our nurses responsible for most of the dark corners we are forced to go back to, against our wills.

This female bard—may she have been repaid my debt of obligation to her in the matter of nightmares and perspirations!—reappears in my memory as the daughter of a shipwright. Her name was Mercy, though she had none on me. There was something of a shipbuilding flavour in the following story. As it always recurs to me in a vague association with calomel pills, I believe it to have been reserved for dull nights when I was low with medicine.

There was once a shipwright, and he wrought in a Government Yard, and his name was Chips. And his father's name before him was Chips, and *his* father's name before *him* was Chips, and they were all Chipsets. And Chips the father had sold himself to the Devil for an iron pot and a bushel of tenpenny nails and half a ton of copper and a rat that could speak; and Chips the grandfather had sold himself to the Devil for an iron pot and a bushel of tenpenny nails and half a ton of copper and a rat that could speak; and Chips the great-grandfather had disposed of himself in the same direction on the same terms; and the bargain had run in the family for a long long time. So, one day, when young Chips was at work in the Dock Slip all alone, down in the dark hold of an old Seventy-four that was haled up for repairs, the Devil presented himself, and remarked:

“ A Lemon has pips,
And a Yard has ships,
And I'll have Chips! ”

(I don't know why, but this fact of the Devil's

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expressing himself in rhyme was peculiarly trying to me.) Chips looked up when he heard the words, and there he saw the Devil with saucer eyes that squinted on a terrible great scale, and that struck out sparks of blue fire continually. And whenever he winked his eyes, showers of blue sparks came out, and his eyelashes made a clattering like flints and steels striking lights. And hanging over one of his arms by the handle was an iron pot, and under that arm was a bushel of tenpenny nails, and under his other arm was half a ton of copper, and sitting on one of his shoulders was a rat that could speak. So, the Devil said again :

“ A Lemon has pips,
And a Yard has ships,
And I'll have Chips ! ”

(The invariable effect of this alarming tautology on the part of the Evil Spirit was to deprive me of my senses for some moments.) So, Chips answered never a word, but went on with his work. “ What are you doing, Chips ? ” said the rat that could speak. “ I am putting in new planks where you and your gang have eaten old away,” said Chips. “ But we'll eat them too,” said the rat that could speak ; “ and we'll let in the water and drown the crew, and we'll eat them too.” Chips, being only a shipwright, and not a Man-of-war's man, said, “ You are welcome to it.” But he couldn't keep his eyes off the half a ton of copper or the bushel of tenpenny nails ; for nails and copper are a shipwright's sweethearts, and shipwrights will run away with them whenever they can. So, the Devil said, “ I see what you are looking at, Chips. You had better strike the bargain. You know the terms. Your father before you was well acquainted with them, and so were your grandfather and great-grandfather before him.” Says

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Chips, " I like the copper, and I like the nails, and I don't mind the pot, but I don't like the rat." Says the Devil, fiercely, " You can't have the metal without him—and *he's* a curiosity. I'm going." Chips, afraid of losing the half a ton of copper and the bushel of nails, then said, " Give us hold ! " So, he got the copper and the nails and the pot and the rat that could speak, and the Devil vanished. Chips sold the copper, and he sold the nails, and he would have sold the pot ; but whenever he offered it for sale, the rat was in it, and the dealers dropped it, and would have nothing to say to the bargain. So, Chips resolved to kill the rat, and, being at work in the Yard one day with a great kettle of hot pitch on one side of him and the iron pot with the rat in it on the other, he turned the scalding pitch into the pot, and filled it full. Then, he kept his eye upon it till it cooled and hardened, and then he let it stand for twenty days, and then he heated the pitch again and turned it back into the kettle, and then he sank the pot in water for twenty days more, and then he got the smelters to put it in the furnace for twenty days more, and then they gave it him out, red hot, and looking like red-hot glass instead of iron—yet there was the rat in it, just the same as ever ! And the moment it caught his eye, it said with a jeer :

" A Lemon has pips,
And a Yard has ships,
And I'll have Chips ! "

(For this Refrain I had waited since its last appearance, with inexpressible horror, which now culminated.) Chips now felt certain in his own mind that the rat would stick to him ; the rat, answering his thought, said, " I will—like pitch ! "

Now, as the rat leaped out of the pot when it had

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spoken, and made off, Chips began to hope that it wouldn't keep its word. But, a terrible thing happened next day. For, when dinner-time came, and the Dock-bell rang to strike work, he put his rule into the long pocket at the side of his trousers, and there he found a rat—not that rat, but another rat. And in his hat, he found another; and in his pocket-handkerchief, another; and in the sleeves of his coat, when he pulled it on to go to dinner, two more. And from that time he found himself so frightfully intimate with all the rats in the Yard, that they climbed up his legs when he was at work, and sat on his tools while he used them. And they could all speak to one another, and he understood what they said. And they got into his lodging, and into his bed, and into his teapot, and into his beer, and into his boots. And he was going to be married to a corn-chandler's daughter; and when he gave her a workbox he had himself made for her, a rat jumped out of it; and when he put his arm round her waist, a rat clung about her; so the marriage was broken off, though the banns were already twice put up—which the parish clerk well remembers, for, as he handed the book to the clergyman for the second time of asking, a large fat rat ran over the leaf. (By this time a special cascade of rats was rolling down my back, and the whole of my small listening person was overrun with them. At intervals ever since, I have been morbidly afraid of my own pocket, lest my exploring hand should find a specimen or two of those vermin in it.)

You may believe that all this was very terrible to Chips; but even all this was not the worst. He knew besides, what the rats were doing, wherever they were. So, sometimes he would cry aloud, when he was at his club at night, "Oh! Keep the rats out of the convicts'

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burying-ground! Don't let them do that!" Or, "There's one of them at the cheese down-stairs!" Or, "There's two of them smelling at the baby in the garret!" Or, other things of that sort. At last, he was voted mad, and lost his work in the Yard, and could get no other work. But King George wanted men, so before very long he got pressed for a sailor. And so he was taken off in a boat one evening to his ship, lying at Spithead, ready to sail. And so the first thing he made out in her as he got near her, was the figure-head of the old Seventy-four, where he had seen the Devil. She was called the *Argonaut*, and they rowed right under the bowsprit where the figure-head of the *Argonaut*, with a sheepskin in his hand and a blue gown on, was looking out to sea; and sitting staring on his forehead was the rat who could speak, and his exact words were these: "Chips ahoy! Old boy! We've pretty well eat them too, and we'll drown the crew, and will eat them too!" (Here I always became exceedingly faint, and would have asked for water, but that I was speechless.)

The ship was bound for the Indies; and if you don't know where that is, you ought to it, and angels will never love you. (Here I felt myself an outcast from a future state.) The ship set sail that very night, and she sailed, and sailed, and sailed. Chips's feelings were dreadful. Nothing ever equalled his terrors. No wonder. At last, one day he asked leave to speak to the Admiral. The Admiral giv' leave. Chips went down on his knees in the Great State Cabin. "Your Honour, unless your Honour, without a moment's loss of time, makes sail for the nearest shore, this is a doomed ship, and her name is the Coffin!" "Young man, your words are a madman's words." "Your Honour, no; they are ribbling us away." "They?" "Your

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Honour, them dreadful rats. Dust and hollowness where solid oak ought to be ! Rats nibbling a grave for every man on board ! Oh ! Does your Honour love your Lady and your pretty children ? ” “ Yes, my man, to be sure. ” “ Then, for God's sake, make for the nearest shore, for at this present moment the rats are all stopping in their work, and are all looking straight towards you with bare teeth, and are all saying to one another that you shall never, never, never, never, see your Lady and your children more. ” “ My poor fellow, you are a case for the doctor. Sentry, take care of this man ! ”

So, he was bled and he was blistered, and he was this and that, for six whole days and nights. So, then he again asked leave to speak to the Admiral. The Admiral giv' leave. He went down on his knees in the Great State Cabin. “ Now, Admiral, you must die ! You took no warning ; you must die ! The rats are never wrong in their calculations, and they make out that they'll be through, at twelve to-night. So, you must die !—With me and all the rest ! ” And so at twelve o'clock there was a great leak reported in the ship, and a torrent of water rushed in and nothing could stop it, and they all went down, every living soul. And what the rats—being water-rats—left of Chips, at last floated to shore, and sitting on him was an immense overgrown rat, laughing, that dived when the corpse touched the beach and never came up. And there was a deal of seaweed on the remains. And if you get thirteen bits of seaweed, and dry them and burn them in the fire, they will go off like in these thirteen words as plain as plain can be :

“ A Lemon has pips,
And a Yard has slips,
And I've got Chips ! ”

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The same female bard—descended, possibly, from those terrible old Scalds who seem to have existed for the express purpose of addling the brains of mankind when they begin to investigate languages—made a standing pretence which greatly assisted in forcing me back to a number of hideous places that I would by all means have avoided. This pretence was, that all her ghost stories had occurred to her own relations. Politeness towards a meritorious family, therefore, forbade my doubting them, and they acquired an air of authentication that impaired my digestive powers for life. There was a narrative concerning an unearthly animal foreboding death, which appeared in the open street to a parlour-maid who “went to fetch the beer” for supper; first (as I now recall it) assuming the likeness of a black dog, and gradually rising on its hind-legs and swelling into the semblance of some quadruped greatly surpassing a hippopotamus: which apparition—not because I deemed it in the least improbable, but because I felt it to be really too large to bear—I feebly endeavoured to explain away. But, on Mercy’s retorting with wounded dignity that the parlour-maid was her own sister-in-law, I perceived there was no hope, and resigned myself to this zoological phenomenon as one of my many pursuers. There was another narrative describing the apparition of a young woman who came out of a glass-case and haunted another young woman until the other young woman questioned it and elicited that its bones (Lord! To think of its being so particular about its bones!) were buried under the glass-case, whereas she required them to be interred, with every Undertaking solemnity up to twenty-four pound ten, in another particular place. This narrative I considered I had a personal interest in disproving, because we had glass-cases at home, and how, otherwise, was I

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to be guaranteed from the intrusion of young women requiring *me* to bury them up to twenty-four pound ten, when I had only twopence a week? But my remorseless nurse cut the ground from under my tender feet, by informing me that She was the other young woman; and I couldn't say "I don't believe you"; it was not possible.

Such are a few of the uncommercial journeys that I was forced to make, against my will, when I was very young and unreasoning. And really, as to the latter part of them, it is not so very long ago—now I come to think of it—that I was asked to undertake them once again, with a steady countenance.

From "The Uncommercial Traveller"

THE ADVENTURES OF A SHILLING

JOSEPH ADDISON

I WAS last night visited by a friend of mine, who has an inexhaustible fund of discourse, and never fails to entertain his company with a variety of thoughts and hints that are altogether new and uncommon. Whether it were in complaisance to my way of living or his real opinion, he advanced the following paradox, "That it required much greater talents to fill up and become a retired life, than a life of business." Upon this occasion he rallied very agreeably the busy men of the age, who only valued themselves for being in motion and passing through a series of trifling and insignificant actions. In the heat of his discourse, seeing a piece of money lying on my table, "I defy," says he, "any of these active persons to produce half the adventures that this twelpenny piece has been engaged in, were it possible for him to give us an account of his life."

My friend's talk made so odd an impression upon my mind, that soon after I was a-bed I fell insensibly into a most unaccountable reverie, that had neither moral nor design in it, and cannot be so properly called a dream as a delirium.

It thought that the shilling that lay upon the table reared itself upon its edge, and turning the face towards me, opened its mouth, and in a soft silver sound, gave me the following account of his life and adventures :

"I was born (says he) on the side of a mountain, near a little village of Peru, and made a voyage to England in an ingot, under the convoy of Sir Francis Drake. I

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was, soon after my arrival, taken out of my Indian habit, refined, naturalised, and put into the British mode, with the face of Queen Elizabeth on one side, and the arms of the country on the other. Being thus equipped, I found in me a wonderful inclination to ramble, and visit all parts of the new world into which I was brought. The people very much favoured my natural disposition, and shifted me so fast from hand to hand, that before I was five years old, I had travelled into almost every corner of the nation. But in the beginning of my sixth year, to my unspeakable grief, I fell into the hands of a miserable old fellow, who clapped me into an iron chest, where I found five hundred more of my own quality who lay under the same confinement. The only relief we had, was to be taken out and counted over in the fresh air every morning and evening. After an imprisonment of several years, we heard somebody knocking at our chest, and breaking it open with a hammer. This we found was the old man's heir, who, as his father lay a-dying, was so good as to come to our release : he separated us that very day. What was the fate of my companions I know not : as for myself, I was sent to the apothecary's shop for a pint of sack. The apothecary gave me to an herb-woman, the herb-woman to a butcher, the butcher to a brewer, and the brewer to his wife, who made a present of me to a non-conformist preacher. After this manner I made my way merrily through the world ; for, as I told you before, we shillings love nothing so much as travelling. I sometimes fetched in a shoulder of mutton, sometimes a play-book, and often had the satisfaction to treat a Templar at a twelpenny ordinary, or carry him, with three friends, to Westminster Hall.

“ In the midst of this pleasant progress which I made from place to place, I was arrested by a superstitious old

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woman, who shut me up in a greasy purse, in pursuance of a foolish saying, 'That while she kept a Queen Elizabeth's shilling about her, she should never be without money.' I continued here a close prisoner for many months, till at last I was exchanged for eight and forty farthings.

"I thus rambled from pocket to pocket till the beginning of the civil wars, when, to my shame be it spoken, I was employed in raising soldiers against the king: for being of a very tempting breadth, a sergeant made use of me to inveigle country fellows, and list them in the service of the parliament.

"As soon as he had made one man sure, his way was to oblige him to take a shilling of a more homely figure, and then practise the same trick upon another. Thus I continued doing great mischief to the crown.

"After many adventures, which it would be tedious to relate, I was sent to a young spendthrift, in company with the will of his deceased father. The young fellow, who I found was very extravagant, gave great demonstrations of joy at the receiving of the will: but opening it, he found himself disinherited and cut off from the possession of a fair estate, by virtue of my being made a present to him. This put him into such a passion, that after having taken me in his hand, and cursed me, he squirmed me away from him as far as he could fling me. I chanced to light in an unfrequented place under a dead wall, where I lay undiscovered and useless, during the usurpation of Oliver Cromwell.

"About a year after the king's return, a poor cavalier that was walking there about dinner-time, fortunately cast his eye upon me, and, to the great joy of us both, carried me to a cook's shop, where he dined upon me, and drank the king's health. When I came again into the world, I found that I had been happier in my retire-

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ment than I thought, having probably, by that means, escaped wearing a monstrous pair of breeches. .

“ Being now of great credit and antiquity, I was rather looked upon as a medal than an ordinary coin ; for which reason a gamester laid hold of me, and converted me to a counter, having got together some dozens of us for that use. We led a melancholy life in his possession, being busy at those hours wherein current coin is at rest, and partaking the fate of our master, being in a few moments valued at a crown, a pound, or a sixpence, according to the situation in which the fortune of the cards placed us. I had at length the good luck to see my master break, by which means I was again sent abroad under my primitive denomination of a shilling.

“ I shall pass over many other accidents of less moment, and hasten to that fatal catastrophe, when I fell into the hands of an artist, who conveyed me under ground, and with an unmerciful pair of shears, cut off my titles, clipped my brims, retrenched my shape, rubbed me to my inmost ring, and, in short, so spoiled and pillaged me, that he did not leave me worth a groat. You may think what a confusion I was in, to see myself thus curtailed and disfigured. I should have been ashamed to have shown my head, had not all my old acquaintance been reduced to the same shameful figure, excepting some few that were punched through the belly. In the midst of this general calamity, when everybody thought our misfortune irretrievable, and our case desperate, we were thrown into the furnace together, and (as it often happens with cities rising out of a fire) appeared with greater beauty and lustre than we could ever boast of before. What has happened to me since this change of sex which you now see, I shall take some other opportunity to relate. In the mean-

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time, I shall only repeat two adventures, as being very extraordinary, and neither of them having ever happened to me above once in my life. The first was, my being in a poet's pocket, who was so taken with the brightness and novelty of my appearance, that it gave occasion to the finest burlesque poem in the British language, entitled from me, 'The Splendid Shilling.' The second adventure, which I must not omit, happened to me in the year 1703, when I was given away in charity to a blind man; but indeed this was by a mistake, the person who gave me having heedlessly thrown me into the hat among a pennyworth of farthings."

From "The Tatler"

THE ARGONAUTS

KENNETH GRAHAME

THE advent of strangers, of whatever sort, into our circle had always been a matter of grave dubiety and suspicion. Indeed, it was generally a signal for retreat into caves and fastnesses of the earth, into unthreaded copses or remote outlying cow-sheds, whence we were only to be extricated by wily nursemaids, rendered familiar by experience with our secret runs and refuges. It was not surprising, therefore, that the heroes of classic legend, when first we made their acquaintance, failed to win our entire sympathy at once. "Confidence," says somebody, "is a plant of slow growth"; and these stately dark-haired demigods, with names hard to master and strange accoutrements, had to win a citadel already strongly garrisoned with a more familiar soldiery. Their chill foreign goddesses had no such direct appeal for us as the mocking, malicious fairies and witches of the North. We missed the pleasant alliance of the animal—the fox who spread the bushiest of tails to convey us to the enchanted castle, the frog in the well, the raven who croaked advice from the tree; and—to Harold especially—it seemed entirely wrong that the hero should ever be other than the youngest brother of three. This belief, indeed, in the special fortune that ever awaited the youngest brother, as such—the "Borough-English" of Faery—had been of baleful effect on Harold, producing a certain self-conceit and perkiness that called for physical correction. But even in our admonishment we were on his side;

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and as we distrustfully eyed these new arrivals, old Saturn himself seemed something of a *parvenu*.

Even strangers, however, if they be good fellows at heart, may develop into sworn comrades; and these gay swordsmen, after all, were of the right stuff. Perseus, with his cap of darkness and his wonderful sandals, was not long in winging his way to our hearts. Apollo knocked at Admetus's gate in something of the right fairy fashion. Psyche brought with her an orthodox palace of magic, as well as helpful birds and friendly ants. Ulysses, with his captivating shifts and strategies, broke down the final barrier, and henceforth the band was adopted and admitted into our freemasonry.

I had been engaged in chasing Farmer Larkin's calves—his special pride—round the field, just to show the man we hadn't forgotten him, and was returning through the kitchen-garden with a conscience at peace with all men, when I happened upon Edward, grubbing for worms in the dung-heap. Edward put his worms into his hat, and we strolled along together, discussing high matters of state. As we reached the tool-shed strange noises arrested our steps. Looking in, we perceived Harold, alone, rapt, absorbed, immersed in the special game of the moment. He was squatting in an old pig-trough that had been brought in to be tinkered, and as he rhapsodized, anon he waved a shovel over his head, anon dug it into the ground with the action of those who would urge Canadian canoes. Edward strode in upon him.

"What rot are you playing at now?" he demanded sternly.

Harold flushed up, but stuck to his pig-trough like a man. "I'm Jason," he replied defiantly, "and this is the *Argo*. The other fellows are here too, only you

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can't see them; and we're just going through the Hellespont, so don't you come bothering." And once more he plied the wine-dark sea.

Edward kicked the pig-trough contemptuously. "Pretty sort of *Argo* you've got!" said he.

Harold began to get annoyed. "I can't help it," he retorted. "It's the best sort of *Argo* I can manage, and it's all right if you only pretend enough. But *you* never could pretend one bit."

Edward reflected. "Look here," he said presently: "why shouldn't we get hold of Farmer Larkin's boat, and go right away up the river in a real *Argo*, and look for Medea, and the Golden Fleece, and everything? And I'll tell you what: I don't mind your being Jason, as you thought of it first."

Harold tumbled out of the trough in the excess of his emotion. "But we aren't allowed to go on the water by ourselves," he cried.

"No," said Edward, with fine scorn, "we aren't allowed; and Jason wasn't allowed either, I dare say. But he *went*!"

Harold's protest had been merely conventional: he only wanted to be convinced by sound argument. The next question was, How about the girls? Selina was distinctly handy in a boat; the difficulty about her was that if she disapproved of the expedition—and, morally considered, it was not exactly a Pilgrim's Progress—she might go and tell, she having just reached that disagreeable age when one begins to develop a conscience. Charlotte, for her part, had a habit of day-dreams, and was as likely as not to fall overboard in one of her rapt musings. To be sure, she would dissolve in tears when she found herself left out; but even that was better than a watery tomb. In fine, the public voice—and rightly, perhaps—was against the admission of the

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skirted animal, despite the precedent of Atalanta, who was one of the original crew.

"And now," said Edward, "who's to ask Farmer Larkin? I can't; last time I saw him he said when he caught me again he'd smack my head. You'll have to."

I hesitated, for good reasons. "You know those precious calves of his?" I began.

Edward understood at once. "All right," he said; "then we won't ask him at all. It doesn't much matter. He'd only be annoyed, and that would be a pity. Now let's set off."

We made our way down to the stream, and captured the farmer's boat without let or hindrance, the enemy being engaged in the hayfields. This 'river,' so called, could never be discovered by us in any atlas; indeed, our *Argo* could hardly turn in it without risk of shipwreck. But to us 'twas Orinoco, and the cities of the world dotted its shores. We put the *Argo's* head upstream, since that led away from the Larkin province. Harold was faithfully permitted to be Jason, and we shared the rest of the heroes among us. Then quitting Thessaly, we threaded the Hellespont with shouts, breathlessly dodged the Clashing Rocks, and coasted under the lee of the Siren-haunted isles. Lemnos was fringed with meadow-sweet, dog-roses dotted the Mysian shore, and the cheery call of the haymaking folk sounded along the coast of Thrace.

After some hour or two's seafaring, the prow of the *Argo* embedded itself in the mud of a landing-place, plashy with the tread of cows and giving on to a lane that led towards the smoke of human habitations. Edward jumped ashore, alert for exploration, and strode off without waiting to see if we followed; but I lingered behind, having caught sight of a moss-grown water-gate hard by, leading into a garden that,

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from the brooding quiet lapping it round, appeared to portend magical possibilities.

Indeed the very air within seemed stiller, as we circumspectly passed through the gate ; and Harold hung back shamefaced, as if we were crossing the threshold of some private chamber, and ghosts of old days were hustling past us. Flowers there were, everywhere ; but they drooped and sprawled in an overgrowth hinting at indifference ; the scent of heliotrope possessed the place as if actually hung in solid festoons from tall untrimmed hedge to hedge. No basket-chairs, shawls, or novels dotted the lawn with colour ; and on the garden front of the house behind the blinds were mostly drawn. A gray old sundial dominated the central sward, and we moved towards it instinctively, as the most human thing in sight. An antic motto ran round it, and with eyes and fingers we struggled at the decipherment.

“ TIME : TRYETH : TROTHER,” spelt out Harold at last. “ I wonder what that means ? ”

I could not enlighten him, nor meet his further questions as to the inner mechanism of the thing, and where you wound it up. I had seen these instruments before, of course, but had never fully understood their manner of working.

We were still puzzling our heads over the contrivance, when I became aware that Medea herself was moving down the path from the house. Dark-haired, supple, of a figure lightly poised and swayed, but pale and listless—I knew her at once, and having come out to find her, naturally felt no surprise at all. But Harold, who was trying to climb on to the top of the sundial, having a catlike fondness for the summit of things, started and fell prone, barking his chin and filling the pleasance with lamentation.

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Medea skimmed the ground swallowlike, and in a moment was on her knees comforting him, wiping the dirt out of his chin with her own dainty handkerchief, and vocal with soft murmurs of consolation.

"You needn't take on so about him," I observed politely. "He'll cry for just one minute, and then he'll be all right."

My estimate was justified. At the end of his regulation time Harold stopped crying suddenly, like a clock that had struck its hour; and with a serene and cheerful countenance wriggled out of Medea's embrace, and ran for a stone to throw at an intrusive blackbird.

"O you boys!" cried Medea, throwing wide her arms with abandonment. "Where have you dropped from? How dirty you are! I've been shut up here for a thousand years, and all that time I've never seen anyone under a hundred and fifty! Let's play at something, at once!"

"Rounders is a good game," I suggested. "Girls can play at rounders. And we could serve up to the sundial here. But you want a bat and a ball, and some more people."

She struck her hands together tragically. "I haven't a bat," she cried, "or a ball, or more people, or anything sensible whatever. Never mind; let's play at hide-and-peek in the kitchen-garden. And we'll race there, up to that walnut-tree; I haven't run for a century!"

She was so easy a victor, nevertheless, that I began to doubt, as I panted behind, whether she had not exaggerated her age by a year or two. She flung herself into hide-and-peek with all the gusto and abandonment of the true artist; and as she flitted away and reappeared, flushed and laughing divinely, the pale witch-*maiden* seemed to fall away from her, and she moved

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rather as that other girl I had read about, snatched from fields of daffodil to reign in shadow below, yet permitted now and again to revisit earth and light and the frank, caressing air.

Tired at last, we strolled back to the old sundial, and Harold, who never relinquished a problem unsolved, began afresh, rubbing his finger along the faint incisions, "*Time tryeth trothe*. Please, I want to know what that means?"

Medea's face drooped low over the sundial, till it was almost hidden in her fingers. "That's what I'm here for," she said presently, in quite a changed, low voice. "They shut me up here—they think I'll forget; but I never will—never, never! And he too—but I don't know—it is so long—I don't know!"

Her face was quite hidden now. There was silence again in the old garden. I felt clumsily helpless and awkward. Beyond a vague idea of kicking Harold, nothing remedial seemed to suggest itself.

None of us had noticed the approach of another she-creature—one of the angular and rigid class; how different from our dear comrade! The years Medea had claimed might well have belonged to her; she wore mittens too—a trick I detested in woman. "Lucy!" she said sharply, in a tone with 'aunt' writ large over it; and Medea started up guiltily.

"You've been crying," said the newcomer, grimly regarding her through spectacles. "And, pray, who are these exceedingly dirty little boys?"

"Friends of mine, Aunt," said Medea promptly, with forced cheerfulness. "I—I've known them a long time. I asked them to come."

The aunt sniffed suspiciously. "You must come indoors, dear," she said, "and lie down. The sun will give you a headache. And you little boys had better

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run away home to your tea. Remember, you should not come to pay visits without your nursemaid."

Harold had been tugging nervously at my jacket for some time, and I only waited till Medea turned and kissed a white hand to us as she was led away. Then I ran. We gained the boat in safety ; and " What an old dragon ! " said Harold.

" Wasn't she a beast ! " I replied. " Fancy the sun giving anyone a headache ! But Medea was a real brick. Couldn't we carry her off ? "

" We could if Edward was here," said Harold confidently.

The question was, What had become of that defaulting hero ? We were not left long in doubt. First, there came down the lane the shrill and wrathful clamour of a female tongue ; then Edward, running his best ; and then an excited woman hard on his heel. Edward tumbled into the bottom of the boat, gasping, " Shove her off ! " And shove her off we did, mightily, while the dame abused us from the bank in the self-same accents in which Alfred hurled defiance at the marauding Dane.

" That was just like a bit out of *Westward Ho !* " I remarked approvingly, as we sculled down the stream. " But what had you been doing to her ? "

" Hadn't been doing anything," panted Edward, still breathless. " I went up into the village and explored, and it was a very nice one, and the people were very polite. And there was a blacksmith's forge there, and they were shoeing horses, and the hoofs fizzled and smoked, and smelt so jolly ! I stayed there quite a long time. Then I got thirsty, so I asked that old woman for some water, and while she was getting it her cat came out of the cottage, and looked at me in a nasty sort of way, and said something I didn't like.

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So I went up to it just to—to teach it manners, and somehow or other, next minute it was up an apple-tree, spitting, and I was running down the lane with that old thing after me.”

Edward was so full of his personal injuries that there was no interesting him in Medea at all. Moreover, the evening was closing in, and it was evident that this cutting-out expedition must be kept for another day. As we neared home it gradually occurred to us that perhaps the greatest danger was yet to come; for the farmer must have missed his boat ere now, and would probably be lying in wait for us near the landing-place. There was no other spot admitting of debarkation on the home side; if we got out on the other and made for the bridge, we should certainly be seen and cut off. Then it was that I blessed my stars that our elder brother was with us that day. He might be little good at pretending, but in grappling with the stern facts of life he had no equal. Enjoining silence, he waited till we were but a little way from the fated landing-place, and then brought us in to the opposite bank. We scrambled out noiselessly and—the gathering darkness favouring us—crouched behind a willow, while Edward pushed off the empty boat with his foot. The old *Argo*, borne down by the gentle current, slid and grazed along the rushy bank; and when she came opposite the suspected ambush, a stream of imprecation told us that our precaution had not been wasted. We wondered, as we listened, where Farmer Larkin, who was bucolically bred and reared, had acquired such range and wealth of vocabulary. Fully realizing at last that his boat was derelict, abandoned, at the mercy of wind and wave—as well as out of his reach—he strode away to the bridge, about a quarter of a mile farther down; and as soon as we heard his boots clumping on the planks we

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nipped out, recovered the craft, pulled across, and made the faithful vessel fast to her proper moorings. Edward was anxious to wait and exchange courtesies and compliments with the disappointed farmer, when he should confront us on the opposite bank ; but wiser counsels prevailed. It was possible that the piracy was not yet laid at our particular door : Ulysses, I reminded him, had reason to regret a similar act of bravado, and—were he here—would certainly advise a timely retreat. Edward held but a low opinion of me as a counsellor, but he had a very solid respect for Ulysses.

From " The Golden Age "

ON CATCHING THE TRAIN

“ALPHA OF THE PLOUGH”

THANK heaven! I have caught it. . . . I am in a corner seat, the compartment is not crowded, the train is about to start, and for an hour and a half, while we rattle towards that haven of solitude on the hill that I have written of aforetime, I can read, or think, or smoke, or sleep, or talk, or write as I choose. I think I will write, for I am in the humour for writing. Do you know what it is to be in the humour for writing—to feel that there is a head of steam somewhere that must blow off? It isn't so much that you have something you want to say as that you must say something. And, after all, what does the subject matter? Any peg will do to hang your hat on. The hat is the thing. That saying of Rameau fits the idea to perfection. Some one was asking that great composer if he did not find difficulty in selecting a subject. “Difficulty? A subject?” said Rameau. “Not at all. One subject is as good as another. Here, bring me the *Dutch Gazette*.”

That is how I feel now, as the lights of London fade in our wake and the fresh air of the country blows in at the window. Subject? Difficulty? Here, bring me the *Dutch Gazette*. But while any subject would serve there is one of particular interest to me at this moment. It came into my mind as I ran along the platform just now. It is the really important subject of catching trains.

There are some people who make nothing of catching

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trains. They can catch trains with as miraculous an ease as Cinquevalli catches half-a-dozen billiard-balls. I believe they could catch trains in their sleep. They are never too early and never too late. They leave home or office with a quiet certainty of doing the thing that is simply stupefying. Whether they walk, or take a bus, or call a taxi, it is the same : they do not hurry, they do not worry, and when they find they are in time and that there's plenty of room they manifest no surprise.

I have in mind a man with whom I once went walking among the mountains on the French-Italian border. He was enormously particular about trains and arrangements the day or the week before we needed them, and he was wonderfully efficient at the job. But as the time approached for catching a train he became exasperatingly calm and leisured. He began to take his time over everything and to concern himself with the arrangements of the next day or the next week, as though he had forgotten all about the train that was imminent, or was careless whether he caught it or not. And when at last he had got to the train, he began to remember things. He would stroll off to get a timetable or to buy a book, or to look at the engine—especially to look at the engine. And the nearer the minute for starting the more absorbed he became in the mechanism of the thing, and the more animated was his explanation of the relative merits of the P.L.M. engine and the North-Western engine. He was always given up as lost, and yet always stepped in as the train was on the move, his manner aggravatingly unruffled, his talk pursuing the quiet tenor of his thought about engines or about what we should do the week after next.

Now I am different. I have been catching trains all my life, and all my life I have been afraid I shouldn't

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catch them. Familiarity with the habits of trains cannot get rid of a secret conviction that their aim is to give me the slip if it can be done. No faith in my own watch can affect my doubts as to the reliability of the watch of the guard or the station clock or whatever deccitful signal the engine-driver obeys. Moreover, I am oppressed with the possibilities of the delay on the road to the station. They crowd in on me like ghosts into the tent of King Richard. There may be a block in the streets, the bus may break down, the taxi-driver may be drunk or not know the way, or think I don't know the way, and take me round and round the squares as Tony Lumpkin drove his mother round and round the pond, or—in fact, anything may happen, and it is never until I am safely inside (as I am now) that I feel really happy.

Now, of course, this is a very absurd weakness. I ought to be ashamed to confess it. I am ashamed to confess it. And that is the advantage of writing under a pen name. You can confess anything you like, and nobody thinks any the worse of you. You ease your own conscience, have a gaol delivery of your failings—look them, so to speak, straight in the face, and pass sentence on them—and still enjoy the luxury of not being found out. You have all the advantages of a conviction without the nuisance of the penalty. Decidedly, this writing under a pen name is a great easerment of the soul.

It reminds me of an occasion on which I was climbing with a famous rock climber. I do not mind confessing (over my pen name) that I am not good on rocks. My companion on the rope kept addressing me at critical moments by the name of Saunders. My name, I rejoice to say, is not Saunders, and he knew it was not Saunders, but he had to call me something, and in the

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excitement of the moment could think of nothing but Saunders. Whenever I was slow in finding a handhold or foothold, there would come a stentorian instruction to Saunders to feel to the right or the left, or higher up or lower down. And I remember that I found it a great comfort to know that it was not I who was so slow, but that fellow Saunders. I seemed to see him as a laborious, futile person who would have been better employed at home looking after his hens. And so in these articles, I seem again to be impersonating the ineffable Saunders, of whom I feel at liberty to speak plainly. I see before me a long vista of self-revelations, the real title of which ought to be "The Showing Up of Saunders."

But to return to the subject. This train-fever is, of course, only a symptom. It proceeds from that apprehensiveness of mind that is so common and incurable an affliction. The complaint has been very well satirized by one who suffered from it. "I have had many and severe troubles in my life," he said, "*but most of them never happened.*" That is it. We people who worry about the trains and similar things live in a world of imaginative disaster. The heavens are always going to fall on us. We look ahead, like Christian, and see the lions waiting to devour us, and when we find they are only poor imitation lions, our timorous imagination is not set at rest, but invents other lions to scare us out of our wits.

And yet intellectually we know that these apprehensions are worthless. Experience has taught us that it is not the things we fear that come to pass, but the things of which we do not dream. The bolt comes from the blue. We take elaborate pains to guard our face, and get a thump in the small of the back. We propose to send the fire-engine to Ulster, and turn to see Europe

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in flames. Cowper put the case against all "fearful saints" (and sinners) when he said :

The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and will break
With blessings on your head.

It is the clouds you don't dread that swamp you. Cowper knew, for he too was an apprehensive mortal, and it is only the apprehensive mortal who really knows the full folly of his apprehensiveness.

Now, save once, I have never lost a train in my life. The exception was at Calais when the Brussels express did, in defiance of the time-table, really give me and others the slip, carrying with it my bag containing my clothes and the notes of a most illuminating lecture. I chased that bag all through Northern France and Belgium, inquiring at wayside stations, wiring to junctions, hunting among the mountains of luggage at Lille. It was at Lille that—— But the train is slowing down. There is the slope of the hillside, black against the night sky, and among the trees I see the glimmer of a light beckoning me as the lonely lamp in Greenhead Ghyll used to beckon Wordsworth's Michael. The night is full of stars, the landscape glistens with a late frost : it will be a jolly two miles' tramp to that beacon on the hill.

From "Pebbles on the Shore"

THE LETTER-BELL

WILLIAM HAZLITT

COMPLAINTS are frequently made of the vanity and shortness of human life, when, if we examine its smallest details, they present a world by themselves. The most trifling objects, retraced with the eye of memory, assume the vividness, the delicacy, and importance of insects seen through a magnifying glass. There is no end of the brilliancy or the variety. The habitual feeling of the love of life may be compared to "one entire and perfect chrysolite," which, if analysed, breaks into a thousand shining fragments. Ask the sum-total of the value of human life, and we are puzzled with the length of the account, and the multiplicity of items in it: take any one of them apart, and it is wonderful what matter for reflection will be found in it! As I write this, the *Letter-Bell* passes; it has a lively, pleasant sound with it, and not only fills the street with its importunate clamour, but rings clear through the length of many half-forgotten years. It strikes upon the ear, it vibrates to the brain, it wakes me from the dream of time, it flings me back upon my first entrance into life, the period of my first coming up to town, when all around was strange, uncertain, adverse—a hubbub of confused noises, a chaos of shifting objects—and when this sound alone, startling me with the recollection of a letter I had to send to the friends I had lately left, brought me as it were to myself, made me feel that I had links still connecting me with the universe, and gave me hope and patience

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to persevere. At that loud-tinkling, interrupted sound, the long line of blue hills near the place where I was brought up waves in the horizon, a golden sunset hovers over them, the dwarf oaks rustle their red leaves in the evening breeze, and the road from Wem to Shrewsbury, by which I first set out on my journey through life, stares me in the face as plain, but, from time and change, not less visionary and mysterious than the pictures in the *Pilgrim's Progress*. How often have I put off writing a letter till it was too late! How often have I had to run after the postman with it—now missing, now recovering, the sound of his bell—breathless, angry with myself—then hearing the welcome sound come full round a corner—and seeing the scarlet costume which set all my fears and self-reproaches at rest! I do not recollect having ever repented giving a letter to the postman or wishing to retrieve it after he had once deposited it in his bag. What I have once set my hand to, I take the consequences of, and have been always pretty much of the same humour in this respect. I am not like the person who, having sent off a letter to his mistress, who resided a hundred and twenty miles in the country, and disapproving, on second thoughts, of some expressions contained in it, took a post-chaise and four to follow and intercept it the next morning.

The dustman's bell, with its heavy monotonous noise, and the brisk, lively tinkle of the muffin-bell, have something in them, but not much. They will bear dilating upon with the utmost licence of inventive prose. All things are not alike *conductors* to the imagination. A learned Scotch professor found fault with an ingenious friend and arch-critic for cultivating a rookery on his grounds: the professor declared "he would as soon think of encouraging a *froggery*." This

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was barbarous as it was senseless. Strange, that a country that has produced the *Scotch Novels* and *Gertrude of Wyoming* should want sentiment!

The postman's double knock at the door the next morning is "more german to the matter." How that knock often goes to the heart! We distinguish to a nicety the arrival of the Twopenny or the General Post. The summons of the latter is louder and heavier, as bringing news from a greater distance, and as, the longer it has been delayed, fraught with a deeper interest. We catch the sound of what is to be paid—eightpence, ninepence, a shilling—and our hopes generally rise with the postage. How we are provoked at the delay in getting change—at the servant who does not hear the door! Then if the postman passes, and we do not hear the expected knock, what a pang is there! It is like the silence of death—of hope! We think he does it on purpose, and enjoys all the misery of our suspense. I have sometimes walked out to see the Mail-Coach pass, by which I had sent a letter, or to meet it when I expected one. I never see a Mail-Coach, for this reason, but I look at it as the bearer of glad tidings—the messenger of fate. I have reason to say so. The finest sight in the metropolis is that of the Mail-Coaches setting off from Piccadilly. The horses paw the ground, and are impatient to be gone, as if conscious of the precious burden they convey. There is a peculiar secrecy and despatch, significant and full of meaning, in all the proceedings concerning them. Even the outside passengers have an erect and supercilious air, as if proof against the accidents of the journey. In fact, it seems indifferent whether they are to encounter the summer's heat or winter's cold, since they are borne on through the air in a winged chariot. The Mail-Carts drive up; the transfer of packages is

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made, and, at a signal given, they start off, bearing the irrevocable scrolls that give wings to thought, and that bind or sever hearts for ever. How we hate the Putney and Brentford stages that draw up in a line after they are gone ! Some persons think the sublimest object in nature is a ship launched on the bosom of the ocean ; but give me, for my private satisfaction, the Mail-Coaches that pour down Piccadilly of an evening, tear up the pavement, and devour the way before them to the Land's End !

From " Sketches and Essays "

CONJURER AND CONFEDERATE

E. V. LUCAS

I. THE CONJURER

AMBITION takes men differently. This would enter Parliament, and That would have a play accepted at the Court ; This would reach the North Pole, and That would live at Chislehurst ; while a fifth would be happy if only he had a motor-car. Speaking for myself, my ambition has always been to have a conjurer perform under my own roof, and it has just happened. I obtained him from the Stores.

No one, I suppose, will be taken in by the statement that I was engaging this wizard for the children ; it was really for myself. Much as the children enjoyed his tricks and his banter (so fascinating, as one of his testimonials said, to the family of the Countess of —), it was I who enjoyed him most, because I helped him with his preparations ; saw him unpack his wonderful bags and lay the sacred paraphernalia on the table ; procured for him such articles as he required ; and so forth. I have never been so near magic before. Like all great men when one comes closely in touch with them, he was quite human, quite like ourselves : so much so, indeed, that in addition to his fee he wanted his cab fare both ways. It is very human to want things both ways.

I have been wondering how long it would take me to learn to be a conjurer, and if it is not too late to begin. I used to meditate a course of billiard lessons from one

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of the great players, but I gave that up long ago. I realised that a man who wants to play billiards must have no other ambition. Billiards is all. But one might surely in the course of a winter acquire something more than the rudiments of conjuring, and I would pay a guinea a lesson with pleasure. I don't want to be a finished conjurer. I merely want to do three tricks with reasonable dexterity. Of course, if one can do three tricks one can do thirty, but it is three and three only I have in mind: (1) I want to borrow a watch and put it in a pestle and mortar and grind it to powder and then fire a pistol at a loaf of bread and find the watch whole again in the midst of the crumb; (2) I want to borrow a tall hat and throw in flour and break eggs into it and stir it all up, and hold it over a spirit lamp for a second, and then produce a beautiful warm cake; (3) I want to find hen's eggs in old men's beards and little girls' hair. Tricks with cards and money and so forth I don't mind about, because I would always rather see them done than do them—there is such fascination in the clean, swift movements of the conjurer with cards, his perfect mastery of his fingers, the supple beauty of his hands. And tricks with machinery I would gladly forgo.

My conjurer's most popular trick was, of course, that which calls upon the co-operation of a rabbit. I wrote to him in advance to insist on this. No man who at a children's party produces a live rabbit, particularly when it is very small and kicking and also black and white, is making a mistake. No matter what has gone before, this apparition will seal his popularity. The end crowns the work (as I could say in Latin if I liked). It was not only to the children that this trick was welcome, but to an elderly literary friend of mine, with whom I have collaborated more than once, and into

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whose life I hoped to get a little brightness by inducing him to bring the tall hat which the wizard should borrow. The thought filled him with excitement. It was bringing radiance indeed into his life to know that this old hat, which had done nothing more romantic than keep his head warm all these years, was to be used for magical purposes, and have a real rabbit extracted from it.

As with pensive melancholy I watched the conjurer packing up, he told me that he had two more performances that evening, and had been in constant request (I think I give his exact words) all through the winter months. What a life! I can think of nothing more pleasant than to live thus, continually mystifying fresh groups of people—with cab fares both ways and a satisfactory fee: to be for ever in the winter months extracting eggs from old gentlemen's beards and little girls' hair, passing cards right through one's body, catching half-crowns in the air, finding a thousand-and-one things in tall hats. This is to live indeed, to say nothing of the additional rapture of having a fund of facetiæ that not only ordinary children but the offspring of countesses find irresistible.

And in the summer months what does he do? Probably he is thinking out new tricks, squandering his winter wealth (the very reverse of the bee), catching rabbits.

II. THE CONFEDERATE

“ My mother has told me of fields, meadows, and hedges; but I have never seen them. She has told me also of guns, and dogs, and ferrets, and all the perils of the warren life; but of these I know nothing too. It is very unlikely that I ever shall; for I am in love

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with my art, and will not abandon it until I must. My mother says I must before very long, because I am growing so fast ; but I mean to keep small. I shall eat very little ; I eat hardly anything now. I couldn't bear to change this wonderful career.

" This is my second winter, and I go into his pocket quite easily still. Why should every one grow big ? There are dwarf men ; why not dwarf rabbits ?

" My mother says that when I am too big I shall just live in a hutch all day and see no one. But I would not do that ; I would die sooner. It is very easy to die if you want to.

" What sort of a life do you think I should have if I could not help my master, *and knew that another was helping him instead ?* That would be the terrible part. Once it happened to me, when I was ill and my brother went to a party for me. I suffered agonies all the evening. I seemed to hear the children laughing, and see them all open-mouthed with amazement and rapture when he was pulled kicking out of the empty hat. It was terrible. I lay there sobbing and biting my claws. But it was all right when he came back, for I heard my master saying to his wife that *Tommy* (that is my brother's name) was a fool. ' Too heavy, too,' he added, and then he brought me, with his own hands, a new crisp lettuce to see if I could eat again, and I ate it all, and have never been ill since.

" I dare say if I was an ordinary stage conjurer's rabbit I could bear old age better. But we do not do that, we go to children's parties. There is all the difference in the world.

" You have no idea how many children I see. And to hear them laugh ; that is the best ! I hear them laugh all the time, but I see them only for a minute or two. You must understand that until my trick comes

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on—and it is usually a late one—I lie all comfortable, although quivering with excitement, in my basket. I can't see, but I can hear everything. Of course I know exactly what is happening, although I can't see it. I know the order of the tricks perfectly. Now he's catching money in the air, I say to myself. Now he's finding an egg in a little girl's hair. Now he's passing cards through his body; and so on. And then comes the great moment when I hear him say, 'For my next trick I shall require the loan of a hat. Can anyone oblige me with a tall hat? As this is a rather messy trick, I don't care to use my own.' They always laugh at that; but they little think what those words are meaning to a small black rabbit in a basket, and how my heart is beating.

"Then the trick begins: first my master takes out of the hat a great bunch of flags, then heaps of flowers, then Japanese lanterns, and then a wig. I must not tell you how this is done, but I know; and I must not tell you how or when I am put into the hat, because that might lead you to think less of my master's magic; but after the wig has been taken out and they are all laughing, there is a moment . . . Then my heart seems to stand quite still. When I come to myself I hear my master say, 'Excuse me, sir, but you carry very odd things in your hat. I thought the wig was the last of them; but here is one more.' I cannot see the children, but I know exactly how they are looking while he says this—all leaning forward, with their mouths open and their eyes so bright. And then my master takes hold of my ears, pulls me up with a swift movement which hurts a little, but I don't mind (mind!), and waves me in the air. How I kick, how they scream with delight! 'Oh, the little darling!' they cry. 'Oh, the sweet!' 'The pet!'

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“How could I give this up? What has life for me without my art?”

“Sometimes when we are performing in a small house where there is no platform, the little girls make a rush for me and seize me from my master and hug me and kiss me. I have been a good deal squeezed now and then; but I know it is because I have done well. If I had not kicked so bravely they would not be so eager to hold me and love me. It is homage to art. But my master soon takes me from them and puts me in my basket again. I am afraid he has rather a jealous disposition.”

From "Character and Comedy"

REJOICINGS UPON THE NEW YEAR'S COMING OF AGE

CHARLES LAMB

THE *Old Year* being dead, and the *New Year* coming of age, which he does, by Calendar Law, as soon as the breath is out of the old gentleman's body, nothing would serve the young spark but he must give a dinner upon the occasion, to which all the *Days* in the year were invited. The *Festivals*, whom he deputed as his stewards, were mightily taken with the notion. They had been engaged time out of mind, they said, in providing mirth and good cheer for mortals below; and it was time they should have a taste of their own bounty. It was stiffly debated among them whether the *Fasts* should be admitted. Some said the appearance of such lean, starved guests, with their mortified faces, would pervert the ends of the meeting. But the objection was overruled by *Christmas Day*, who had a design upon *Ash Wednesday* (as you shall hear), and a mighty desire to see how the old Domine would behave himself in his cups. Only the *Vigils* were requested to come with their lanterns, to light the gentlefolks home at night.

All the *Days* came to their day. Covers were provided for three hundred and sixty-five guests at the principal table; with an occasional knife and fork at the side-board for the *Twenty-Ninth of February*.

I should have told you, that cards of invitation had been issued. The carriers were the *Hours*; twelve little, merry, whirligig foot-pages, as you should desire

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to see, that went all round, and found out the persons invited well enough, with the exception of *Easter Day*, *Shrove Tuesday*, and a few such *Moveables*, who had lately shifted their quarters.

Well, they all met at last—foul *Days*, fine *Days*, all sorts of *Days*, and a rare din they made of it. There was nothing but, Hail ! fellow *Day*, well met—brother *Day*—sister *Day*,—only *Lady Day* kept a little on the aloof, and seemed somewhat scornful. Yet some said *Twelfth Day* cut her out and out, for she came in a tiffany suit, white and gold, like a queen on a frost-cake, all royal, glittering, and *Epiphanous*. The rest came, some in green, some in white—but old *Lent and his family* were not yet out of mourning. *Rainy Days* came in, dripping ; and sunshiny *Days* helped them to change their stockings. *Wedding Day* was there in his marriage finery, a little the worse for wear. *Pay Day* came late, as he always does ; and *Doomsday* sent word—he might be expected.

April Fool (as my young lord's jester) took upon himself to marshal the guests, and wild work he made with it. It would have posed old Erra Pater to have found out any given *Day* in the year to erect a scheme upon—good *Days*, bad *Days*, were so shuffled together, to the confounding of all sober horoscopy.

He had stuck the *Twenty-First of June* next to the *Twenty-Second of December*, and the former looked like a Maypole siding a marrow-bone. *Ash Wednesday* got wedged in (as was concerted) betwixt *Christmas* and *Lord Mayor's Days*. Lord ! how he laid about him ! Nothing but barons of beef and turkeys would go down with him—-to the great greasing and detriment of his new sackcloth bib and tucker. And still *Christmas Day* was at his elbow, plying him with the wassail-bowl, till he roared, and hiccupp'd, and protested there was no

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faith in dried ling, but commended it to the devil for a sour, windy, acrimonious, censorious, hy-po-crit-crit-critical mess, and no dish for a gentleman. Then he dipt his fist into the middle of the great custard that stood before his *left-hand neighbour*, and daubed his hungry beard all over with it, till you would have taken him for the *Last Day in December*, it so hung in icicles.

At another part of the table, *Shrove Tuesday* was helping the *Second of September* to some cock broth,—which courtesy the latter returned with the delicate thigh of a hen pheasant—so that there was no love lost for that matter. The *Last of Lent* was spunging upon *Shrove-tide's* pancakes; which *April Fool* perceiving, told him that he did well, for pancakes were proper to a *good fry-day*.

It beginning to grow a little duskish, *Candlemas* lustily bawled out for lights, which was opposed by all the *Days*, who protested against burning daylight. Then fair water was handed round in silver ewers, and the *same lady* was observed to take an unusual time in *Washing* herself.

May Day, with that sweetness which is peculiar to her, in a neat speech proposing the health of the founder crowned her goblet (and by her example the rest of the company) with garlands. This being done, the lordly *New Year*, from the upper end of the table, in a cordial but somewhat lofty tone, returned thanks. He felt proud on an occasion of meeting so many of his worthy father's late tenants, promised to improve their farms, and at the same time to abate (if anything was found unreasonable) in their rents.

At the mention of this, the four *Quarter Days* involuntarily looked at each other, and smiled; *April Fool* whistled to an old tune of "New Brooms"; and a

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surly old rebel at the farther end of the table (who was discovered to be no other than the *Fifth of November*) muttered out, distinctly enough to be heard by the whole company, words to this effect—that “when the old one is gone, he is a fool that looks for a better.” Which rudeness of his, the guests resenting, unanimously voted his expulsion; and the malcontent was thrust out neck and heels into the cellar, as the properest place for such a *boutefeu* and firebrand as he had shown himself to be.

Order being restored—the young lord (who, to say truth, had been a little ruffled, and put beside his oratory) in as few, and yet as obliging words as possible, assured them of entire welcome; and, with a graceful turn, singling out poor *Twenty-Ninth of February*, that had sate all this while mumchance at the side-board, begged to couple his health with that of the good company before him—which he drank accordingly; observing that he had not seen his honest face any time these four years, with a number of endearing expressions besides. At the same time removing the solitary *Day* from the forlorn seat which had been assigned him, he stationed him at his own board, somewhere between the *Greek Calends* and *Latter Lammas*.

Ash Wednesday, being now called upon for a song, with his eyes fast stuck in his head, and as well as the Canary he had swallowed would give him leave, struck up a Carol, which *Christmas Day* had taught him for the nonce; and was followed by the latter, who gave “*Miserere*” in fine style, hitting off the mumping notes and lengthened drawl of *Old Mortification* with infinite humour. *April Fool* swore they had exchanged conditions; but *Good Friday* was observed to look extremely grave; and *Sunday* held her fan before her face that she might not be seen to smile.

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All this while *Valentine's Day* kept courting pretty *May*, who sate next him, slipping amorous *billets-doux* under the table, till the *Dog Days* (who are naturally of a warm constitution) began to be jealous, and to bark and rage exceedingly. *April Fool*, who likes a bit of sport above measure, and had some pretensions to the lady besides, as being but a cousin once removed,—clapped and halloo'd them on; and as fast as their indignation cooled, those mad wags, the *Ember Days*, were at it with their bellows, to blow it into a flame; and all was in a ferment, till old Madam *Septuagesima* (who boasts herself the *Mother of the Days*) wisely diverted the conversation with a tedious tale of the lovers which she could reckon when she was young, and of one Master *Rogation Day* in particular, who was for ever putting the *question* to her; but she kept him at a distance, as the chronicle would tell—by which I apprehend she meant the Almanack. Then she rambled on to the *Days that were gone*, the *good old Days*, and so to the *Days before the Flood*—which plainly showed her old head to be little better than crazed and doited.

Day being ended, the *Days* called for their cloaks and greatcoats, and took their leaves. *Lord Mayor's Day* went off in a Mist, as usual; *Shortest Day* in a deep black Fog, that wrapt the little gentleman all round like a hedgehog. Two *Vigils*—so watchmen are called in heaven—saw *Christmas Day* safe home—they had been used to the business before. Another *Vigil*—a stout, sturdy patrol, called the *Eve of St Christopher*—seeing *Ash Wednesday* in a condition little better than he should be—e'en whipt him over his shoulders, pick-a-back fashion, and *Old Mortification* went floating home singing:

On the bat's back do I fly,

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and a number of old snatches besides, between drunk and sober ; but very few Aves or Penitentiaries (you may believe me) were among them. *Longest Day* set off westward in beautiful crimson and gold—the rest, some in one fashion, some in another ; but *Valentine* and pretty *May* took their departure together in one of the prettiest silvery twilights a Lover's Day could wish to set in.

From "The Essays of Elia"

THE CHARACTER OF THE MAN IN BLACK

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

THOUGH fond of many acquaintances, I desire an intimacy only with a few. The man in black, whom I have often mentioned, is one whose friendship I could wish to acquire, because he possesses my esteem. His manners, it is true, are tingured with some strange inconsistencies ; and he may be justly termed a humorist in a nation of humorists. Though he is generous even to profusion, he affects to be thought a prodigy of parsimony and prudence ; though his conversation be replete with the most sordid and selfish maxims, his heart is dilated with the most unbounded love. I have known him profess himself a man-hater, while his cheek was glowing with compassion ; and, while his looks were softened into pity, I have heard him use the language of the most unbounded ill-nature. Some affect humanity and tenderness, others boast of having such dispositions from nature ; but he is the only man I ever knew who seemed ashamed of his natural benevolence. He takes as much pains to hide his feelings as any hypocrite would to conceal his indifference ; but on every unguarded moment the mask drops off, and reveals him to the most superficial observer.

In one of our late excursions into the country, happening to discourse upon the provision that was made for the poor in England, he seemed amazed how any of his countrymen could be so foolishly weak as to relieve occasional objects of charity, when the laws had

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made such ample provision for their support. In every parish-house, says he, the poor are supplied with food, clothes, fire, and a bed to lie on ; they want no more, I desire no more myself ; yet still they seem discontented. I am surprised at the inactivity of our magistrates, in not taking up such vagrants, who are only a weight upon the industrious : I am surprised that the people are found to relieve them, when they must be at the same time sensible that it, in some measure, encourages idleness, extravagance, and imposture. Were I to advise any man for whom I had the least regard, I would caution him by all means not to be imposed upon by their false pretences : let me assure you, Sir, they are impostors, every one of them, and rather merit a prison than relief.

He was proceeding in this strain earnestly, to dissuade me from an imprudence of which I am seldom guilty, when an old man, who still had about him the remnants of tattered finery, implored our compassion. He assured us that he was no common beggar, but forced into the shameful profession, to support a dying wife, and five hungry children. Being prepossessed against such falsehoods, his story had not the least influence upon me : but it was quite otherwise with the man in black : I could see it visibly operate upon his countenance, and effectually interrupt his harangue. I could easily perceive that his heart burned to relieve the five starving children, but he seemed ashamed to discover his weakness to me. While he thus hesitated between compassion and pride I pretended to look another way, and he seized this opportunity of giving the poor petitioner a piece of silver, bidding him, at the same time, in order that I should not hear, go work for his bread and not tease passengers with such impertinent falsehoods for the future.

As he had fancied himself quite unperceived, he

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continued, as he proceeded, to rail against beggars with as much animosity as before ; he threw in some episodes on his own amazing prudence and economy, with his profound skill in discovering impostors ; he explained the manner in which he would deal with beggars were he a magistrate, hinted at enlarging some of the prisons for their reception, and told two stories of ladies that were robbed by beggar-men. He was beginning a third to the same purpose, when a sailor with a wooden leg once more crossed our walks, desiring our pity, and blessing our limbs. I was for going on without taking any notice, but my friend looking wistfully upon the poor petitioner, bid me stop, and he would show me with how much ease he could at any time detect an impostor.

He now therefore assumed a look of importance, and in an angry tone began to examine the sailor, demanding in what engagement he was thus disabled and rendered unfit for service. The sailor replied, in a tone as angrily as he, that he had been an officer on board a private ship of war, and that he had lost his leg abroad, in defence of those who did nothing at home. At this reply, all my friend's importance vanished in a moment ; he had not a single question more to ask ; he now only studied what method he should take to relieve him unobserved. He had, however, no easy part to act, as he was obliged to preserve the appearance of ill-nature before me, and yet relieve himself by relieving the sailor. Casting, therefore, a look upon some bundles of chips which the fellow carried in a string at his back, my friend demanded how he sold his matches : but, not waiting for a reply, desired in a surly tone to have a shilling's worth. The sailor seemed at first surprised at his demand, but soon recollected himself, and presented his whole bundle. " Here, master," says he, " take all my cargo, and a blessing into the bargain."

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It is impossible to describe with what an air of triumph my friend marched off with his new purchase ; he assured me that he was firmly of opinion that those fellows must have stolen their goods, who could thus afford to sell them at half value. He informed me of several different uses to which those chips might be applied ; he expatiated largely upon the savings that would result from lighting candles with a match, instead of thrusting them into the fire. He averred that he would as soon have parted with a tooth as his money to those vagabonds, unless for some valuable consideration. I cannot tell you how long this panegyric upon frugality and matches might have continued, had not his attention been called off by another object more distressful than either of the former. A woman in rags, with one child in her arms, and another on her back, was attempting to sing ballads, but with such a mournful voice that it was difficult to determine whether she was singing or crying. A wretch, who in the deepest distress still aimed at good-humour, was an object my friend was by no means capable of withstanding : his vivacity and his discourse were instantly interrupted ; upon this occasion, his very dissimulation had forsaken him. Even in my presence he immediately applied his hands to his pockets, in order to relieve her ; but guess his confusion when he found he had already given away all the money he carried about him to former objects. The misery painted in the woman's visage was not half so strongly expressed as the agony in his. He continued to search for some time, but to no purpose, till, at length recollecting himself, with a face of ineffable good nature, as he had no money, he put into her hands his shilling's worth of matches !

From "The Citizen of the World"

THE HISTORY OF THE MAN IN BLACK

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

AS there appeared something reluctantly good in the character of my companion, I must own it surprised me what could be his motives for thus concealing virtues which others take such pains to display. I was unable to repress my desire of knowing the history of a man who thus seemed to act under continual restraint, and whose benevolence was rather the effect of appetite than reason.

It was not, however, till after repeated solicitations he thought proper to gratify my curiosity. "If you are fond," says he, "of hearing hair-breadth escapes, my history must certainly please; for I have been for twenty years upon the very verge of starving, without ever being starved.

"My father, the younger son of a good family, was possessed of a small living in the church. His education was above his fortune, and his generosity greater than his education. Poor as he was, he had his flatterers still poorer than himself; for every dinner he gave, they returned an equivalent in praise, and this was all he wanted. The same ambition that actuates a monarch at the head of an army influenced my father at the head of his table; he told the story of the ivy-tree, and that was laughed at; he repeated the jest of the two scholars and one pair of breeches, and the company laughed at that; but the story of Taffy in the Sedan-chair was sure to set the table in a roar: thus his

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pleasure increased in proportion to the pleasure he gave ; he loved all the world, and he fancied all the world loved him.

“ As his fortune was but small, he lived up to the very extent of it ; he had no intentions of leaving his children money, for that was dross ; he was resolved they should have learning ; for learning, he used to observe, was better than silver or gold. For this purpose, he undertook to instruct us himself ; and took as much pains to form our morals, as to improve our understanding. We were told that universal benevolence was what first cemented society ; we were taught to consider all the wants of mankind as our own ; to regard the human face divine with affection and esteem ; he wound us up to be mere machines of pity, and rendered us incapable of withstanding the slightest impulse made either by real or fictitious distress ; in a word, we were perfectly instructed in the art of giving away thousands, before we were taught the more necessary qualifications of getting a farthing.

“ I cannot avoid imagining, that thus refined by his lessons out of all my suspicion, and divested even of all the little cunning which nature had given me, I resembled, upon my first entrance into the busy and insidious world, one of those gladiators who were exposed without armour in the Amphitheatre at Rome. My father, however, who had only seen the world on one side, seemed to triumph in my superior discernment ; though my whole stock of wisdom consisted in being able to talk like himself upon subjects that once were useful, because they were then topics of the busy world, but that now were utterly useless, because connected with the busy world no longer.

“ The first opportunity he had of finding his expectations disappointed, was in the very middling figure I

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made in the university ; he had flattered himself that he should soon see me rising into the foremost rank in literary reputation, but was mortified to find me utterly unnoticed and unknown. His disappointment might have been partly ascribed to his having overrated my talents, and partly to my dislike of mathematical reasonings, at a time when my imagination and memory, yet unsatisfied, were more eager after new objects than desirous of reasoning upon those I knew. This did not, however, please my tutor, who observed, indeed, that I was a little dull ; but at the same time allowed that I seemed to be very good-natured, and had no harm in me.

“ After I had resided at college seven years, my father died, and left me—his blessing. Thus shoved from shore without ill-nature to protect, or cunning to guide, or proper stores to subsist me in so dangerous a voyage, I was obliged to embark in the wide world at twenty-two. But, in order to settle in life, my friends *advised* (for they always advise when they begin to despise us), they advised me, I say, to go into orders.

“ To be obliged to wear a long wig, when I liked a short one, or a black coat, when I generally dressed in brown, I thought was such a restraint upon my liberty that I absolutely rejected the proposal. A priest in England is not the same mortified creature with a bonze in China : with us, not he that fasts best, but eats best, is reckoned the best liver ; yet I rejected a life of luxury, indolence, and ease, from no other consideration but that boyish one of dress. So that my friends were now perfectly satisfied I was undone ; and yet they thought it a pity for one who had not the least harm in him, and was so very good-natured.

“ Poverty naturally begets dependence, and I was admitted as flatterer to a great man. At first I was surprised that the situation of a flatterer at a great

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man's table could be thought disagreeable : there was no great trouble in listening attentively when his lordship spoke, and laughing when he looked round for applause. This even good manners might have obliged me to perform. I found, however, too soon, that his lordship was a greater dunce than myself ; and from that very moment flattery was at an end. I now rather aimed at setting him right, than at receiving his absurdities with submission : to flatter those we do not know is an easy task ; but to flatter our intimate acquaintances, all whose foibles are strongly in our eye, is drudgery insupportable. Every time I now opened my lips in praise, my falsehood went to my conscience ; his lordship soon perceived me to be very unfit for service ; I was therefore discharged ; my patron at the same time being graciously pleased to observe that he believed I was tolerably good-natured, and had not the least harm in me.

“ Disappointed in ambition, I had recourse to love. A young lady, who lived with her aunt, and was possessed of a pretty fortune in her own disposal, had given me, as I fancied, some reason to expect success. The symptoms by which I was guided were striking. She had always laughed with me at her awkward acquaintance, and at her aunt among the number ; she always observed that a man of sense would make a better husband than a fool, and I as constantly applied the observation in my own favour. She continually talked in my company, of friendship and the beauties of the mind, and spoke of Mr Shrimp my rival's high-heeled shoes with detestation. These were circumstances which I thought strongly in my favour ; so, after resolving, and re-resolving, I had courage enough to tell her my mind. Miss heard my proposal with serenity, seeming at the same time to study the figures of her

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fan. Out at last it came : There was but one small objection to complete our happiness, which was no more than—that she was married three months before to Mr Shrimp, with high-heeled shoes ! By way of consolation, however, she observed, that, though I was disappointed in her, my addresses to her aunt would probably kindle her into sensibility ; as the old lady always allowed me to be very good-natured, and not to have the least share of harm in me

“ Yet still I had friends, numerous friends, and to them I was resolved to apply. O Friendship ! thou fond soother of the human breast, to thee we fly in every calamity ; to thee the wretched seek for succour ; on thee the care-tired son of misery fondly relies ; from thy kind assistance the unfortunate always hopes relief, and may be ever sure of—disappointment ! My first application was to a city-scrivener, who had frequently offered to lend me money, when he knew I did not want it. I informed him that now was the time to put his friendship to the test ; that I wanted to borrow a couple of hundreds for a certain occasion, and was resolved to take it up from him. And pray, Sir, cried my friend, do you want all this money ? Indeed I never wanted it more, returned I. I am sorry for that, cries the scrivener, with all my heart ; for they who want money when they come to borrow, will always want money when they should come to pay.

“ From him I flew with indignation to one of the best friends I had in the world, and made the same request. Indeed, Mr Drybone, cries my friend, I always thought it would come to this. You know, Sir, I would not advise you but for your good ; but your conduct has hitherto been ridiculous in the highest degree, and some of your acquaintance always thought you a very silly fellow. Let me see, you want two hundred pounds.

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Do you only want two hundred, Sir, exactly? To confess a truth, returned I, I shall want three hundred; but then I have another friend, from whom I can borrow the rest. Why then, replied my friend, if you would take my advice (and you know I should not presume to advise you but for your own good), I would recommend it to you to borrow the whole sum from that other friend; and then one note will serve for all, you know.

“Poverty now began to come fast upon me; yet instead of growing more provident or cautious as I grew poor, I became every day more indolent and simple. A friend was arrested for fifty pounds; I was unable to extricate him, except by becoming his bail. When at liberty, he fled from his creditors, and left me to take his place. In prison I expected greater satisfactions than I had enjoyed at large. I hoped to converse with men in this new world, simple and believing like myself, but I found them as cunning and as cautious as those in the world I had left behind. They spunged up my money whilst it lasted, borrowed my coals, and never paid for them, and cheated me when I played at cribbage. All this was done because they believed me to be very good-natured, and knew that I had no harm in me.

“Upon my first entrance into this mansion, which is to some the abode of despair, I felt no sensations different from those I experienced abroad. I was now on one side the door, and those who were unconfined were on the other: this was all the difference between us. At first, indeed, I felt some uneasiness, in considering how I should be able to provide this week for the wants of the week ensuing; but, after some time, if I found myself sure of eating one day, I never troubled my head how I was to be supplied another. I seized every precarious meal with the utmost good-humour;

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indulged no rants of spleen at my situation ; never called down Heaven and all the stars to behold me dining upon a halfpenny worth of radishes ; my very companions were taught to believe that I liked salad better than mutton. I contented myself with thinking, that all my life I should either eat white bread or brown ; considered that all that happened was best ; laughed when I was not in pain, took the world as it went, and read Tacitus often, for want of more books and company.

“ How long I might have continued in this torpid state of simplicity I cannot tell, had I not been roused by seeing an old acquaintance, whom I knew to be a prudent blockhead, preferred to a place in the government. I now found that I had pursued a wrong track, and that the true way of being able to relieve others was first to aim at independence myself ; my immediate care, therefore, was to leave my present habitation, and make an entire reformation in my conduct and behaviour. For a free, open, undesigning deportment, I put on that of closeness, prudence, and economy. One of the most heroic actions I ever performed, and for which I shall praise myself as long as I live, was the refusing half-a-crown to an old acquaintance, at the time when he wanted it, and I had it to spare ; for this alone I deserve to be decreed an ovation.

“ I now therefore pursued a course of uninterrupted frugality, seldom wanted a dinner, and was consequently invited to twenty. I soon began to get the character of a saving hunk that had money, and insensibly grew into esteem. Neighbours have asked my advice in the disposal of their daughters ; and I have always taken care not to give any. I have contracted a friendship with an alderman, only by observing that if we take a farthing from a thousand pounds it

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will be a thousand pounds no longer. I have been invited to a pawnbroker's table, by pretending to hate gravy; and am now actually upon treaty of marriage with a rich widow, for only having observed that the bread was rising. If ever I am asked a question, whether I know it or not, instead of answering, I only smile and look wise. If a charity is proposed, I go about with the hat, but put nothing in myself. If a wretch solicits my pity, I observe that the world is filled with impostors, and take a certain method of not being deceived, by never relieving. In short I now find the truest way of finding esteem, even from the indigent, is to give away nothing, and thus have much in our power to give."

From "The Citizen of the World"

THE CHARACTER OF AN IMPORTANT TRIFLER

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

THOUGH naturally pensive, yet I am fond of gay company, and take every opportunity of thus dismissing the mind from duty. From this motive, I am often found in the centre of a crowd ; and wherever pleasure is to be sold, am always a purchaser. In those places, without being remarked by any, I join in whatever goes forward ; work my passions into a similitude of frivolous earnestness, shout as they shout, and condemn as they happen to disapprove. A mind thus sunk for a while below its natural standard is qualified for stronger flights, as those first retire who would spring forward with greater vigour.

Attracted by the serenity of the evening, my friend and I lately went to gaze upon the company in one of the public walks near the city. Here we sauntered together for some time, either praising the beauty of such as were handsome, or the dresses of such as had nothing else to recommend them. We had gone thus deliberately forward for some time, when, stopping on a sudden, my friend caught me by the elbow, and led me out of the public walk. I could perceive by the quickness of his pace, and by his frequently looking behind, that he was attempting to avoid somebody who followed : we now turned to the right, then to the left, as we went forward he still went faster, but in vain ; the person whom he attempted to escape hunted us through every doubling, and gained upon us each moment : so

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that at last we fairly stood still, resolving to face what we could not avoid.

Our pursuer soon came up, and joined us with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance. My dear Drybone, cries he, shaking my friend's hand, where have you been hiding this half a century? Positively I had fancied you were gone to cultivate matrimony and your estate in the country. During the reply, I had an opportunity of surveying the appearance of our new companion: his hat was pinched up with peculiar smartness; his looks were pale, thin, and sharp; round his neck he wore a broad black riband, and in his bosom a buckle studded with glass; his coat was trimmed with tarnished twist; he wore by his side a sword with a black hilt; and his stockings of silk, though newly washed, were grown yellow by long service. I was so much engaged with the peculiarity of his dress, that I attended only to the latter part of my friend's reply, in which he complimented Mr Tibbs on the taste of his clothes, and the bloom in his countenance. Pshaw, pshaw, Will, cried the figure, no more of that, if you love me: you know I hate flattery, on my soul I do; and yet, to be sure, an intimacy with the great will improve one's appearance, and a course of venison will fatten; and yet, faith, I despise the great as much as you do: but there are a great many honest fellows among them; and we must not quarrel with one half, because the other wants weeding. If they were all such as my Lord Mudler, one of the most good-natured creatures that ever squeezed a lemon, I should myself be among the number of their admirers. I was yesterday to dine at the Duchess of Piccadilly's. My lord was there. Ned, says he to me, Ned, says he, I'll hold gold to silver, I can tell where you were poaching last night.

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Ah, Tibbs, thou'art a happy fellow, cried my companion, with looks of infinite pity ; I hope your fortune is as much improved as your understanding in such company ? Improved, replied the other ; you shall know—but let it go no farther—a great secret—five hundred a year to begin with.—My lord's word of honour for it—his lordship took me down in his own chariot yesterday, and we had a *tête-à-tête* dinner in the country, where we talked of nothing else. I fancy you forget, Sir, cried I, you told us but this moment of your dining yesterday in town. Did I say so ? replied he coolly ; to be sure if I said so, it was so—dined in town : egad, now I do remember, I did dine in town : but I dined in the country too ; for you must know, my boys, I eat two dinners. By the bye, I am grown as nice as the devil in my eating. I'll tell you a pleasant affair about that : We were a select party of us to dine at Lady Grogram's, an affected piece, but let it go no farther ; a secret : well, there happened to be no assafoetida in the sauce to a turkey, upon which, says I, I'll hold a thousand guineas, and say, done first, that—but dear Drybone, you are an honest creature, lend me half-a-crown for a minute or two, or so, just till—but hearkee, ask me for it the next time we meet, or it may be twenty to one but I forget to pay you.

When he left us, our conversation naturally turned upon so extraordinary a character. His very dress, cries my friend, is not less extraordinary than his conduct. If you meet him this day, you find him in rags ; if the next, in embroidery. With those persons of distinction of whom he talks so familiarly, he has scarcely a coffee-house acquaintance. However, both for the interests of society, and perhaps for his own, Heaven has made him poor, and while all the world perceive his wants, he fancies them concealed from

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every eye. An agreeable companion, because he understands flattery ; and all must be pleased with the first part of his conversation, though all are sure of its ending with a demand on their purse. While his youth countenances the levity of his conduct, he may thus earn a precarious subsistence : but when age comes on, the gravity of which is incompatible with buffoonery, then will he find himself forsaken by all ; condemned in the decline of life to hang upon some rich family whom he once despised, there to undergo all the ingenuity of studied contempt, to be employed only as a spy upon the servants, or a bugbear to fright the children into obedience.

From "The Citizen of the World"

THE CHINESE PHILOSOPHER VISITS BEAU TIBBS

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

I AM apt to fancy I have contracted a new acquaintance whom it will be no easy matter to shake off. My little beau yesterday overtook me again in one of the public walks, and slapping me on the shoulder, saluted me with an air of the most perfect familiarity. His dress was the same as usual, except that he had more powder in his hair, wore a dirtier shirt, a pair of temple spectacles, and his hat under his arm.

As I knew him to be a harmless, amusing little thing, I could not return his smiles with any degree of severity ; so we walked forward on terms of the utmost intimacy, and in a few minutes discussed all the usual topics preliminary to particular conversation.

The oddities that marked his character, however, soon began to appear ; he bowed to several well-dressed persons, who by their manner of returning the compliment appeared perfect strangers. At intervals he drew out a pocket-book, seeming to take memorandums before all the company, with much importance and assiduity. In this manner he led me through the length of the whole walk, fretting at his absurdities, and fancying myself laughed at not less than him by every spectator.

When we were got to the end of our procession, " Blast me," cries he, with an air of vivacity, " I never saw the park so thin in my life before ! there's no company at all to-day ; not a single face to be seen." No

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company ! interrupted I peevishly ; * no company where there is such a crowd ? why, man, there's too much. What are the thousands that have been laughing at us but company ? " Lord, my dear," returned he, with the utmost good-humour, " you seem immensely chagrined : but blast me, when the world laughs at me, I laugh at the world, and so we are even. My Lord Trip, Bill Squash the Creolan, and I, sometimes make a party at being ridiculous ; and so we say and do a thousand things for the joke's sake. But I see you are grave, and if you are for a fine grave sentimental companion, you shall dine with me and my wife to-day ; I must insist on't : I'll introduce you to Mrs Tibbs, a lady of as elegant qualifications as any in nature ; she was bred, but that's between ourselves, under the inspection of the Countess of Allnight. A charming body of voice ; but no more of that, she will give us a song. You shall see my little girl too, Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Tibbs, a sweet pretty creature ; I design her for my Lord Drumstick's eldest son ; but that's in friendship, let it go no farther ; she's but six years old, and yet she walks a minuet, and plays on the guitar immensely already. I intend she shall be as perfect as possible in every accomplishment. In the first place, I'll make her a scholar : I'll teach her Greek myself, and learn that language purposely to instruct her ; but let that be a secret."

Thus saying, without waiting for a reply, he took me by the arm, and hauled me along. We passed through many dark alleys and winding ways ; for, from some motives to me unknown, he seemed to have a particular aversion to every frequented street ; at last, however, we got to the door of a dismal-looking house in the outlets of the town, where he informed me he chose to reside for the benefit of the air.

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We entered the lower door, which ever seemed to lie most hospitably open ; and I began to ascend an old and creaking staircase, when, as he mounted to show me the way, he demanded whether I delighted in prospects ; to which answering in the affirmative, " Then," says he, " I shall show you one of the most charming in the world, out of my window : we shall see the ships sailing, and the whole country for twenty miles round, tip top, quite high. My Lord Swamp would give ten thousand guineas for such a one ; but as I sometimes pleasantly tell him, I always love to keep my prospects at home, that my friends may visit me the oftener."

By this time we were arrived as high as the stairs would permit us to ascend, till we came to what he was facetiously pleased to call the first floor down the chimney ; and knocking at the door, a voice from within demanded, who's there ? My conductor answered that it was him. But this not satisfying the querist, the voice again repeated the demand ; to which he answered louder than before ; and now the door was opened by an old woman with cautious reluctance.

When we were got in, he welcomed me to his house with great ceremony, and turning to the old woman, asked where was her lady ? " Good troth," replied she in a peculiar dialect, " she's washing your twa shirts at the next door, because they have taken an oath against lending out the tub any longer." " My two shirts," cried he in a tone that faltered with confusion, " what does the idiot mean ? " " I ken what I mean weel enough," replied the other : " she's washing your twa shirts at the next door, because——" " Fire and fury, no more of thy stupid explanations," cried he ; " go and inform her we have got company. Were that Scotch hag to be for ever in my family, she would

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never learn politeness, nor forget that absurd poisonous accent of hers, or testify the smallest specimen of breeding or high life ; and yet it is very surprising too, as I had her from a parliament man, a friend of mine from the Highlands, one of the politest men in the world ; but that's a secret."

We waited some time for Mrs Tibbs' arrival, during which interval I had a full opportunity of surveying the chamber and all its furniture ; which consisted of four chairs with old wrought bottoms, that he assured me were his wife's embroidery ; a square table that had been once japanned ; a cradle in one corner, a lumber cabinet in the other ; a broken shepherdess, and a mandarin without a head, were stuck over the chimney ; and round the walls several paltry unframed pictures, which, he observed, were all his own drawing. " What do you think, Sir, of that head in the corner, done in the manner of Grisoni ? there's the true keeping in it ; it is my own face, and though there happens to be no likeness, a Countess offered me a hundred for its fellow ; I refused her, for, hang it, that would be mechanical, you know."

The wife at last made her appearance, at once a slattern and a coquette ; much emaciated, but still carrying the remains of beauty. She made twenty apologies for being seen in such odious dishabille, but hoped to be excused, as she had stayed all night at the gardens with the Countess, who was excessively fond of the horns. " And, indeed, my dear," added she, turning to her husband, " his lordship drank your health in a bumper."—" Poor Jack," cries he, " a dear good-natured creature. I know he loves me. But I hope, my dear, you have given orders for dinner ; you need make no great preparations neither, there are but three of us ; something elegant, and little will do ; a

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turbot, an ortolan, a——” “ Or what do you think, my dear,” interrupts the wife, “ of a nice pretty bit of ox-cleek, piping hot, and dressed with a little of my own sauce ? ”—“ The very thing,” replies he, “ it will eat best with some smart bottled beer ; but be sure to let us have the sauce his Grace was so fond of. I hate your immense loads of meat ; that is country all over ; extremely disgusting to those who are in the least acquainted with high life.”

By this time my curiosity began to abate, and my appetite to increase : the company of fools may at first make us smile, but at last never fails of rendering us melancholy ; I therefore pretended to recollect a prior engagement, and, after having shown my respect to the house, according to the fashion of the English, by giving the old servant a piece of money at the door, I took my leave ; Mrs Tibbs assuring me, that dinner, if I stayed, would be ready at least in less than two hours.

From "The Citizen of the World"

A VERY CURIOUS ACCOUNT OF THE ISLAND OF ST KILDA

H. G. HUTCHINSON

A GREAT many people have been to Skye, despite the hardships of the journey, for the English are an adventurous race, but Skye is but half-way—nay, but a fraction of the way—to a much less familiar and more remote island—the island of St Kilda.

I ought, perhaps, to have mentioned before that the party—the more or less permanent party, so to say, besides guests coming from time to time for a day or two—in Skye included an old friend of Colonel Burscough's, a certain Professor Flegg. Mr Flegg was a man of prodigious learning. In what particular line his learning lay I was always afraid to ask, but I fancy that it was almost universal—in all lines. Not only so, but he was incomparably the most modest, courteous, and self-depreciating man I have ever met. One of the principal pleasures which Bob expected from our autumn in Skye was the observation of the Professor, whom he profanely termed "old Flegg."

"You'll see," he said, "old Flegg'll be rigged out in a high hat and a paper collar and a kilt; you see if he isn't."

In this alluring prospect we were disappointed. "Old Flegg" wore much the same clothes—rusty black—as it is to be supposed that he wore in London, with the addition of a 'fore and aft' cap, which did not at all look as if it belonged to him. We had considerable

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entertainment, however, in instructing Mr Flegg in the use of the gun.

"I have observed, my dear sir," he said, with his deferential courtesy, "I have observed that firearms are safest when carried at the port."

Putting this conclusion into practice, he used to stride over the moor with his 'firearm' held perpendicularly, with both hands in front of him, recalling to mind the hare in *Struwelpeter* who had stolen the huntsman's gun. What made him a less desirable companion on the moor was that Bob had insidiously advised him to "Swing your gun when you fire, Professor, so as to make the shot scatter more"; which advice, zealously followed by the Professor, 'scattered' not only the shot, but the whole shooting party.

For all and sundry such counsels the Professor always expressed his courteous gratitude—surely the most simple-minded of learned men!

Now, the Professor, in common with the rest of us, experienced a yearning desire to know something of that lonely little island of St Kilda, away out, all by itself, weathering the Atlantic storms, far beyond those outer Hebrides whose outlines we could well distinguish, across the Minch, from the northern corner of Skye. Professor Flegg had suffered cruelly in crossing even that small nearly land-locked offshoot of the Minch betwixt Skye and the mainland; for of the Flegg that arrived at Strome Ferry but Flegg- x (an unknown but large quantity) reached Portree. *A fortiori*, to what power would not that unknown x be raised in crossing that stretch of open Atlantic which lay betwixt us and St Kilda! Professor Flegg concluded, therefore, to satisfy by proxy his scientific interest in the remote island.

We talked much beforehand of our intention of visiting it, and were greatly confirmed in our purpose

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by the incredulity shown by Colonel Burscough about the chances of our ever getting there. As the steamer was advertised to start for St Kilda at an unseasonably early hour in the morning, Bob and I set off after dinner, and drove into Portree the evening before. Arriving at the chief hostelry at about 11 P.M., we fought our way through a dense atmosphere of peat and tobacco smoke, to be informed by the host that a large meeting of the Landlord Abolition Society, or some such philanthropic evangel, was being held in the town. The crofters had mustered in great force, as was apparent from the all-pervading atmosphere of peat-smoke by which they are ubiquitously attended. All the beds in the hotel were taken, and crofters were slumbering, several deep, both on and below the billiard-table. Menaces, bribes, and entreaties succeeded in securing for our use two chairs apiece, on which we betook ourselves to such rest as we might snatch, after bidding the waiter, on pain of death, wake us in time in the morning to catch the steamer for St Kilda.

What with the discomfort of the couch and the Gaelic snores of the circumjacent crofters I was but in my first beauty sleep when the waiter lightly touched me on the shoulder.

"The boat will be awa' in half an hour," said he.

"Indeed," I said, and glanced at Bob, who slept profoundly. "Hush!" I whispered to the waiter. "Is it a fine morning?"

"Na'," said he, "it's a gae stormy morn."

"Then go away again," I whispered; "and, whatever you do, don't wake us till the boat's clean away."

For a quarter of an hour I was uneasy—terribly anxious lest Bob should awake in time for us to catch the steamer. At length I heard her whistle, and sank peacefully to rest as if I were on a bed of *viderdown*.

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"I say—hi!" It was Bob's voice that awoke me about an hour later. "I say, what time is it?"

"About eight, I think," I said, looking at my watch.

"Eight!" he said. "But the steamer goes—I mean went—at seven!"

"So I believe," I said.

"Oh, lor! and that confounded waiter never woke us!"

"That confounded waiter" had a very severe time of it with Mr Robert Burscough a few minutes later. The waiter asserted that he had awakened me at half-past six, and that I had then told him to go away and not come back till the boat had gone.

"You see," I said to Bob, "it must be that wretched trick I have of talking in my sleep."

At all events the steamer was gone. There was not much good waiting for the next, for it did not go for six weeks.

"The question is," as Bob said, "what are we to do? We cannot possibly go back and let on we've never been. We'd better cruise about for three days somewhere, and then go back and tell them that we've been there."

We decided we would go a walking tour. Its distance was to be determined at the pleasure of the one who should first call a halt; the pace of walking by the pace of him who walked the slower. This understanding is as indispensable to the success of a pedestrian tour as of a cavalry charge.

"Tell you what we might do," Robert Burscough suggested; "get leave from the Sheriff to fish the Skoebost. We can borrow rods here and send them back from Sligachan to-morrow."

The Skoebost, the pride of Skye, recalls forcibly, by the colour and velocity of its waters, the Regent's Park Canal. It meanders sluggishly through low-lying

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moorland. It runs deep between its banks, and only in a storm of wind and rain are its waters sufficiently troubled for the artificial fly to delude the eye of the hungry salmon. These conditions were excellently fulfilled on the present occasion, but few fish were in the river, and we caught but one—a nine-pound grilse.

The grilse we presented to the inn-keeper's wife at Sligachan, which we reached about nightfall, thoroughly soaked to the skin. We went to bed while our clothes were dried and our salmon cooked; then got up to eat him, and then to bed again to sleep him off.

A quaint little place is that Sligachan, beneath the overwhelming Cuchullins. It is your duty to go up one of the Cuchullins every day that you are at Sligachan, but we left our duty undone. We took it very easy. We strolled along the not too uneven tenor of our way, encountering in each corrie a fresh bevy of tourists. Each tourist carried a long crook-handled stick, to show he was a Scotchman, but dropped his h's, which he had left behind in London. There was great excitement among one party of them. One of its members was gazing through a telescope at a stag which he saw on the mountain-side. When his eye was satisfied with seeing, he handed his glass to another of his party, who gave a prolonged "whew-ew-ew!" to indicate his appreciation of the noble animal, and handed the telescope to another. When they had all looked and "whew-ew-ew-ed," they politely invited Bob and myself to look also. We looked and "whew-ew-ew-ed"; then gave the telescope back to the tourists, thanked them, and went our way.

After this it seemed, as the novelists say, as if an indefinable something had come between us. We were not to each other what we had been. I determined that I would make a clean breast of it.

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"Bob," I said, "did you see that stag?"

"Well," said he, "did you?"

"Well, I really was not certain whether I made it out quite clearly or not. There was something, you know, that perhaps might have been a stag."

"Yes; that was just my feeling too," he said. "It might have been a stag, you know."

"Oh, yes," I said, "it might have been a stag, but I do not think I can honestly say that I saw one."

"Well, I don't think I should like to swear to it, either," he said.

"It is a great pity," I said; "I should like to have seen one."

We afterwards heard that there are no deer on that part of the Cuchullins.

After this explanation we proceeded in much harmony to call at the house of a friend, with whom we spent the greater part of the day in sea-otter hunting. We were in luck to fall in for this fun, which can only be followed at low tides. These Skye sea-otters are not the sea-otter from which the finest fur is taken, but are mere river-otters come down to the seaside for change of air. They live in cairns by the seaside, from which they can be ousted by a plucky terrier; but in most states of tide the bolt-hole is so near the sea that they are out and under water before you can get a shot at them. We visited one or two cairns in vain, much to the disappointment of the three terriers, each of which was an exact facsimile of the other two. We cruised about from cairn to cairn in a little yacht, with the three small doggies in the dinghy towing behind. Failing their otter-bait, they fell on each other tooth and nail, for exercise, and continued the contest regardless of rebuke until their master drew the dinghy alongside, and, seizing the nearest doggie by the tail, hauled him

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on board the yacht, with the others, who had a fast hold with their teeth, depending from him like a string of sausages.

At the third cairn we were more successful. A fine worrying in the heart of the cairn of stones was succeeded by a rush and scramble, and out bolted an old otter, followed by one half-grown. With a bang! bang! our host had bagged them both, whilst songs of thanksgiving went up from the mouths of all the fishes who beheld it.

By afternoon of the next day we reckoned it time we should return from St Kilda. The evening was mainly occupied with preparing an account of the voyage and the island. This was the easier that we knew almost nothing at all about it. Our scope was practically unlimited. We thought it likely, however, that we knew as much as Colonel Burscough or Professor Flegg, so that any departure from the truth was likely to be undetected. Bob assured me that he knew there were native cavalry upon the island, because he had lately read in *Truth* of a gentleman holding a commission in the "St Kilda Horse."

"They're something like the Maltese Fencibles, or the Cape Mounted Rifles, you know," he said. But this did not seem much on which to base an exhaustive account of the island and its general society.

"It seems to me," I said, "as if I remembered hearing that they live almost entirely on one animal, like the Esquimaux on the reindeer, or the North American Indians on the buffalo. I wish I could remember the name of the animal, but, of course, it's some sort of seal. It couldn't be anything else. I expect we shall have to call it 'a peculiar species of seal.'"

I was very sorry that I could not remember the

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proper name of the creature. I puzzled over it all the evening, but could not get it. Just, however, as I was lighting my candle to go to bed the idea seemed to flash out with the match.

"I've got it," I said triumphantly. "Foumart—that's it. I am pleased to have remembered. That'll make the whole thing all right. It won't be so very far from the truth now."

"Never mind. So much the better," said Bob. He was disappointed—I could see that—though he strove to make the best of it. It was hard to be forced from the alluring paths of fiction into the hard and stern reality of fact. "I'm glad you've remembered the name," he forced himself to say. "Don't forget it again before morning. Good night!"

We got our account into proper order the next morning, and, timing things well, reached home about five o'clock in the afternoon. A light rain was falling, and down by the mouth of the burn, not far from the house, we beheld a familiar object. It was Professor Flegg. He was sitting on a little stool. He was completely enveloped, save for his head, in a voluminous mackintosh. Over his head he held a large umbrella. He was seated on the brink of the stream, above which stuck out, motionless, his fishing-rod, while through his powerful spectacles he closely watched his cork which wobbled on the water.

"I say, old Flegg clot-fishing!" Bob whispered to me in huge delight.

A 'clot' is a very unpleasant confusion of worms and worsted. An eel, endeavouring to disengage a worm, entangles his fangs in the worsted. The fisherman gently raises him to the top of the water, then gives a violent whip back of the rod over his head, and Master Eel, losing his tooth-hold a second too late, finds

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himself flying a considerable distance up country, where—on dry land—Mr Man has him at a disadvantage.

As we came upon Mr Flegg thus assiduously employed, it was evident that an eel was wickedly coquetting with him. Momentary agitation every now and then affected his float, agitation which manifested itself throughout all Flegg—even to the ribs of the umbrella. At length Mr Flegg prepared for decisive action. He allowed the umbrella to fall backwards. He raised the rod very gently, then whipped it up over his head with such energy that he threw himself backward off the little stool, while the eel, after flying through the air like a pterodactyl, descended very nearly in Bob's eye.

I left Bob to secure and decapitate the eel, while I proceeded to try and separate Mr Flegg from his umbrella. He had lost his spectacles, without which he could see no more than his spectacles could without him.

"Indeed, my dear sir, I am deeply indebted to you," he said, as I replaced them on his nose. "Has our friend Robert succeeded in securing our quarry?"

The latter came up at the moment with the wriggling but decapitated body of the eel. Mr Flegg was intensely pleased and excited. He did not care at all that he had ruined his umbrella, which was compound and complex-fractured and dislocated in all directions. He had caught six eels, and now he insisted upon carrying them home himself. It was but a hundred yards, but six eels are bad to carry. Mr Flegg would get all but one firmly wedged between his fingers, and then, in putting in the last, the first would wriggle loose, and then one in the middle would come out and demoralize the whole arrangement. It was just like 'pigs in clover.'

"Their vitality, my dear sir, is truly prodigious,"

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Mr Flegg justly said. "I have, to-day, my dear sir, been severely bitten by one from which I had already severed the head."

"Oh! now really, Mr Flegg," Bob ejaculated, "that is trying us a bit too high. How in the world could it bite when it had no head to bite with?"

"It was with the jaws of the severed head that it bit me, my dear sir," Mr Flegg answered with grave courtesy. "Naturally it was not the headless body."

"I beg your pardon," said Bob. "I did not understand."

Acting on a prearranged plan, we determined to give the family but a very general description of St Kilda until we arrived at the reading of our written narrative. We reported that we had had a pleasant time, and heard and seen much that was new and strange, and had jotted down, for the edification of the home-stayers, an account of the strange life, habits, and circumstances of the St Kilda islanders, which Bob promised to read to the company after dinner.

"It was, indeed, considerate of you, my dear sir," said Mr Flegg, as Bob unrolled his manuscript, "to have been at the pains of committing to writing your doubtless deeply interesting and instructive experiences."

"Not at all, Mr Flegg; it was a pleasure, I assure you," Bob said pleasantly. "I will pass over," he went on, "an account I have sketched in, principally for my own satisfaction, of the incidents of the voyage—or, perhaps, you would like to hear it?"

No one expressed any fervent desire to do so, so Bob, a little disappointed, said, "Very well; if you don't care for that, I will at once go on to the description of St Kilda."

"As you draw near the island," he began his reading, "your ears are assailed by a loud and constantly

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increasing moaning or bellowing—a weird and dreadful sound, mingling, as it does, with the roar of the waves, which dash ceaselessly upon the precipitous shore. The terrifying noise proceeds from a beast named “foumart” by the inhabitants of the island, who are entirely dependent on this creature for their food, for the wigwams they live in, and indeed for their very existence. The “foumart” would appear to be a cross between the right whale and the seal, being amphibious in its habits, and having its dwelling in the caves by the seaside. It feeds entirely upon fish, in the catching of which it displays an almost incredible swiftness, and it is by taking advantage of this peculiarity that the islanders are enabled to capture it.”

“Pardon me, my dear sir, but one moment,” Mr Flegg interrupted. “I am indeed at a loss to understand how it can be by taking advantage of its incredible swiftness——”

“*Almost* incredible,” Bob softly corrected.

Mr Flegg acknowledged the correction by an inclination of his head, and repeated his remark in a much amended form: “I do not fully understand, my dear sir, how its undoubtedly marvellous swiftness can at all aid the islanders in effecting its capture.”

“No, no, Mr Flegg; it’s not that. It’s the peculiarity of its feeding on fish that does that,” Bob explained.

“Why, hang it all, boy,” said Colonel Burscough, “there’s nothing so very peculiar in that. Why, I eat fish myself sometimes. We all eat fish. You did not go all the way to St Kilda to find an animal that ate fish!”

“Oh, no, indeed, Uncle; certainly not. Perhaps I had better go on,” said Bob hastily; and as no one moved an amendment he continued the reading of his manuscript:

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“ ‘ They ’—that’s the islanders—‘ having by some means peculiar to themselves (for they have no apparatus which we should deem at all suitable for such a purpose) contrived to capture a great number of fish, thrust into their bodies’ (the fishes’ bodies, you know) ‘ large fishhooks, and setting them floating upon the water at the end of long, stout fishing-lines, watch eagerly until they are pounced upon and swallowed by the voracious fougart—’ ”

“ Pardon me for one instant if I again interrupt you, my dear sir,” said Mr Flegg ; “ but I think that even you yourself, despite the privilege you have had of exploring the island, must regard it as a singular fact that a people completely destitute of such apparatus as we should deem suitable for the capture of fish, should yet find no apparent difficulty whatever in the procuring of such articles as fishhooks and long fishing-lines ! ”

“ Eh ? Yes. Rum thing that, isn’t it ? ” said Bob, much perplexed. “ Did you ask the Master of the Horse about that ? ” he said, referring to me.

“ They are a most peculiar people, Mr Flegg,” I said ; “ most peculiar. No ; I forgot to put that point to the Master of the Horse. I wish I had thought of it, but I did not.”

“ And who the mischief is the Master of the Horse ? ” Colonel Burscough asked.

“ Oh, don’t you know, Uncle ? ” said Bob with gentle surprise. “ He’s commander of the cavalry—of the St Kilda Horse, as they are called. He had a long talk with him,” he added, indicating me.

“ A very interesting companion,” I observed.

“ Indeed ! ” said Colonel Burscough. “ Go on, Robert.”

“ ‘—voracious fougart,’ ” said Bob, picking up the

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thread of his parable. " ' No sooner has the dainty fish, with the cruel barbed hook imbedded in it, disappeared down the maw of the fougart, than the islanders, who have been lying in wait, seize the other or shoreward end of the line, fasten it to a horse—or, if necessary, a pair, or even, on occasion, a team—which they have kept in readiness for the purpose, and drive up country, dragging the loudly-bellowing fougart at the end of the rope behind them. The islanders then fall upon the beast with sharpened stones, loud cries, and pieces of bottle-glass which have been left by previous excursionists to the island, and in an almost incredibly short space of time the fougart is skinned, his flesh laid aside for eating, and his fat carefully preserved for melting down into oil for lamps made out of his own skull.

" ' The myriad uses to which these people put this single animal are almost inconceivable. It is to the islanders of St Kilda what the buffalo is to the North American Indian, the reindeer to the Esquimaux. With its skins they wall their wigwams and make their clothes—which, in form, are a modification of the Highland kilt. Its teeth they use for necklaces, earrings, and other ornamental purposes. Its flesh is their sole means of subsistence——' "

" Can it be, my dear sir, that they eat none of the fish which, as you have stated in your most interesting and instructive description, they capture in such numbers as bait for the allurements of the voracious fougart ? " asked Mr Flegg.

" You asked the Master of the Horse that question, I think," said Bob, referring again to me, " and he said ' no fish. ' "

" ' No fish,' said the Master of the Horse." I replied.

" ' With regard to the social habits of the islanders, ' "

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Bob resumed, " ' we were unable, I regret to say, to learn any details. So far as we could gather, however, cannibalism is almost unknown among them, except under stress of the greatest pressure; and even in those circumstances it is only the very old or the very young—those, in fact, who are unfit for work, that is, for fougart hunting—who fall victims. Other details, many of them, doubtless, of absorbing interest, we were unable to gather, owing to the great difficulty of conversing with a savage people, ignorant of every language but their own——' "

" Pardon my once more interrupting you, my dear sir," said Mr Flegg, " but I had understood that our friend here had conversed at no inconsiderable length with the Master of the Horse, who indeed proved, I believe I am correct in stating, a most interesting companion ! "

" Gestures, Mr Flegg—purely by gestures," I explained.

" Must have been a *blamed* interesting companion," the Colonel observed dryly.

" I have frequently read and heard it stated, my dear sir," said Mr Flegg, addressing Colonel Burscough, " that amongst savage peoples the faculty of conversing by means of gestures has reached a degree of development quite inconceivable to us who have had few occasions for the interchange of our ideas through such a medium. "

" You're quite right, Mr Flegg," I said. " It's simply inconceivable. "

" ' When we turn, ' " Bob resumed, " ' to the geological aspect of St Kilda, we find everywhere a uniform character of carboniferous limestone and basaltic trap. Igneous formations of every kind——' "

" Oh ! hang it all, boy," broke in the Colonel im-

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patiently, 'skip all that, for goodness' sake. Go on to the next heading.'

"Very well, Uncle," Bob answered submissively; and, after turning to a new page and hunting about it for a little while, went on: "'The flora of this interesting but most bleak-looking island is of a most meagre description. Tufts of stunted, wind-swept grass——'"

"Oh! hang it all, my dear boy, I don't want to hurt your feelings," said the Colonel, "but upon my word, we don't want to hear all that. Haven't you got any more about the people to tell us?"

"Well, I am afraid, do you know, Uncle," said Bob slowly, as he turned over the pages, "I am afraid there's nothing more that would interest you very much. You see," he said, as he laid the manuscript reverently on the table, "it's very hard to learn much about the people of a new country when you can't speak their language. I think I've given you all the information we managed to pick up."

"May I express to you my thanks, my dear sir," said Mr Flegg, courteously, "for the very interesting information which you have been kind enough to collate for us. Will you permit me the great privilege of re-perusing your manuscript at my leisure? I am convinced that it will contain much of interest to myself, as a man of science, in that portion which you have left unread; for from that which you have been good enough to read to us I have derived not only much entertainment, but much information which to me was new."

"It would be new to most people, I fancy, Mr Flegg," I said. "There are few who have had the privilege to visit St Kilda. Bob and I may reckon ourselves uncommonly fortunate."

"Indeed, my dear sir, you may," said Mr Flegg, as

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he took up his candlestick and prepared to carry off Bob's manuscript with him to bed.

"Do you think of publishing it, Bob?" Colonel Burscough asked, as we proceeded to follow Mr Flegg's example.

"Well, I had not thought of it," he answered. "You see, I do not quite know what sort of periodical would care to put it in."

"You might try *Knowledge*," I suggested.

"Yes, I think you'd better," said Colonel Burscough, dryly. "Or, perhaps you'd better first try *Truth*."

"Uncle twigs it's all gammon," Bob whispered to me as we went upstairs, "but we boshed old Flegg to rights."

The next morning, before breakfast, Bob noticed a fresh book on the sitting-room table. It was Maunder's *Treasury of Natural History*. One of the leaves was dog's-eared down, and it opened readily at that place. Running his eye idly down the page, Bob's attention was caught by the following heading :

Fulmar (*Procellaria glacialis*). A palmiped bird, belonging to the Petrel family.

He read the article through, and then he called me from the breakfast-room.

"Look here," he said, taking me to the table where the book lay open, and pointing to the article under heading "Fulmar."

The concluding sentences ran thus: "Pennant, speaking of those" (that is, those fulmars) "which inhabit the Isle of St Kilda, says: 'No bird is of such use to the islanders as this: the fulmar supplies them with oil for their lamps, down for their beds, a delicacy for their tables, a balm for their wounds, and a medicine for their distempers.' The female is said to lay one

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white and very brittle egg, which she hatches about the middle of June."

There was a very curious pause as we looked at each other after reading the article.

"Blame me," observed Bob, "if it wasn't a bird! We'd got the name pretty right, too, all but a letter or two; but how the dickens were we going to know it was a bird?"

I was silent.

"It seems to me," he went on plaintively, "a kind of breach of confidence of the fulmar, its being a bird."

"They say its egg's brittle," I said vaguely, not seeking to excuse it, but because no other remark occurred to me.

Bob took no notice of the observation, but turned back to the flyleaf of the book, where he found the name of Mr Flegg. He pointed to the name with his forefinger, and then he said, "Did you ever read a poem of Bret Harte's—'The Heathen Chinees'?"

"Yes, I have. Why?" I said, thinking the question rather irrelevant.

"Why, it strikes me that Bret Harte studied Ah Sin from Mr Flegg"; and he shut up the book with a bang, and we went, with much impaired appetites, to breakfast.

The next day the book was gone. Mr Flegg had probably taken it to his bedroom. Nor did he ever again allude to the island of St Kilda and to that creation of a splendid fancy, the fougart, save to thank Bob, with his usual courtesy, when he returned the manuscript.

From "When Life was New"

THE SECOND OF NOVEMBER, 1902

HILAIRE BELLOC

I WOKE sharply and suddenly from a dream in that empty room. It was Grizzlebeard that had put his hand upon my shoulder. The late winter dawn was barely glimmering, and there was mist upon the heath outside and rime upon the windows.

I woke and shuddered. For in my dream I had come to a good place, the place inside the mind, which is all made up of remembrance and of peace. Here I had seemed to be in a high glade of beeches, standing on soft, sweet grass on a slope very high above the sea ; the air was warm and the sea was answering the sunlight, very far below me. It was such a place as my own Downs have made for me in my mind, but the Downs transfigured, and the place was full of glory and of content, height and great measurement fit for the beatitude of the soul. Nor had I in that dream any memory of loss, but rather a complete end of it, and I was surrounded, though I could not see them, with the return of all those things that had ever been my own. But this was in the dream only ; and when I woke it was to the raw world and the sad uncertain beginnings of a little winter day.

Grizzlebeard, who had woken me, said gravely :

“ We must be up early. Let us waken the others also, and take the road, for we are near the end of our journey. We have come to the term and boundary of this short passage of ours, and of our brief companionship, for we must reach the county border

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in these early hours. So awake, and waken the others."

Then I woke the other two, who also stirred and looked wearily at the thin, grey light, but rose in their turn, and then I said to Grizzlebeard :

" Shall we not eat before we start to the place after which we shall not see each other any more ? "

But he said, " No, we have but a little way to go, and when we have gone that little way together, we will break a crust between us, and pledge each other if you will, and then we shall never see each other any more."

The others also said that this was the way in which the matter should be accomplished.

Yielding to them, therefore (for I perceived that they were greater than I), we went out into the morning mist and walked through it sturdily enough, but silent, the sounds of our footsteps coming close into our ears, blanketed and curtained by the fog. For a mile and second mile and a third no one of us spoke a word to another. But as I walked along I looked furtively first to one side and then to the other, judging my companions, whom chance had given me for these few hours ; and it seemed to me (whether from the mist or what not) that they were taller than men ; and their eyes avoided my eyes.

When we had come to Treyford, Grizzlebeard, who was by dumb assent at this moment our leader, or at any rate certainly mine, took that lane northward which turns through Redlands and up to the hill of Elstead and its inn. Then for the first time he spoke and said :

' Here we will break a loaf, and pledge each other for the last time.'

Which we did, all sitting quite silent, and then again we took the road, and went forward as we had gone

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forward before, until we came to Harting. And when we came to Harting, just in the village street of it, Grizzlebeard, going forward a little more quickly, drew with him his two companions, and they stood before me, barring the road as it were, and looking at me kindly, but halting my advance.

I said to them, a little afraid, "Do you make for our parting now? We are not yet come to the county border!"

But Grizzlebeard said (the others keeping silent):

"Yes. As we met upon this side of the county border, so shall we part before we cross it. Nor shall you cross it with us. But these my companions and I, when we have crossed it must go each to our own place: but you are perhaps more fortunate, for you are not far from your home."

When he had said this, I was confused to wonder from his voice and from the larger aspect of himself and his companions, whether indeed they were men.

". . . And is there," I said, "in all the county another such company of four; shall I find even one companion like any of you? Now who is there to-day that can pour out songs as you can at every hour and make up the tunes as well? And even if they could so sing, would any such man or men be of one faith with me?"

"Come back with me," I said, "along the crest of the Downs; we will overlook together the groves at Lavington and the steep at Bury Combe, and then we will turn south and reach a house I know of upon the shingle, upon the tide, near where the Roman palaces are drowned beneath the Owers; and to-night once more, and if you will for the last time, by another fire we will sing yet louder songs, and mix them with the noise of the sea."

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But Grizzlebeard would not even linger. He looked at me with a dreadful solemnity and said :

“ No ; we are all three called to other things. But do you go back to your home, for the journey is done.”

Then he added (but in another voice) : “ There is nothing at all that remains : nor any house ; nor any castle, however strong ; nor any love, however tender and sound ; nor any comradeship among men, however hardy. Nothing remains but the things of which I will not speak, because we have spoken enough of them already during these four days. But I who am old will give you advice, which is this—to consider chiefly from now onward those permanent things which are, as it were, the shores of this age and the harbours of our glittering and pleasant but dangerous and wholly changeful sea.”

When he had said this (by which he meant Death), the other two, looking sadly at me, stood silent also for about the time in which a man can say good-bye with reverence. Then they all three turned about and went rapidly and with a purpose up the village street.

I watched them, straining my sad eyes, but in a moment the mist received them and they had disappeared.

I went up in gloom, by the nearest spur, on to the grass and into the loneliness of the high Downs that are my brothers and my repose ; and, once upon their crest, setting my face eastward I walked on in a fever for many hours back towards the places from which we had come ; and below me as I went was that good landscape in which I had passed such rare and memorable hours.

I still went on, through little spinnies here and there, and across the great wave tops and rolls of the hills, and

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as the day proceeded and the light declined about me I still went on, now dipping into the gaps where tracks and roads ran over the chain, now passing for a little space into tall and silent woods wherever these might stand. And all the while I came nearer and nearer to an appointed spot of which a memory had been fixed for years in my mind. But as I strode, with such a goal in view, an increasing loneliness oppressed me, and the air of loss and the echo of those profound thoughts which had filled the last words we four had exchanged together.

It was in the grove above Lavington, near the mounds where they say old kings are buried, that I, still following the crest of my hills, felt the full culmination of all the twenty tides of mutability which had thus run together to make a skerry in my soul. I saw and apprehended, as a man sees or touches a physical thing, that nothing of our sort remains, and that even before my county should cease to be itself I should have left it. I recognised that I was (and I confessed) in that attitude of the mind wherein men admit mortality; something had already passed from me—I mean that fresh and vigorous morning of the eyes wherein the beauty of this land had been reflected as in a tiny mirror of burnished silver. Youth was gone out apart; it was loved and regretted, and therefore no longer possessed.

Then, as I walked through this wood more slowly, pushing before me great billows of dead leaves, as the bows of a ship push the dark water before them, this side and that, when the wind blows full on the middle of the sail and the water answers loudly as the ship sails on, so I went till suddenly I remembered with the pang that catches men at the clang of bells what this time was in November; it was the Day of the Dead. All

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that day I had so moved and thought alone and fasting, and now the light was falling. I had consumed the day in that deep wandering on the heights alone, and now it was evening. Just at that moment of memory I looked up and saw that I was there. I had come upon that lawn which I had fixed for all these hours to be my goal.

It is the great platform just over Barl'ton, whence all the world lies out before one. Eastward into the night for fifty miles stretched on the wall of the Downs, and it stretched westward towards the coloured sky where a full but transfigured daylight still remained. Southward was the belt of the sea, very broad, as it is from these bare heights, and absolutely still; nor did any animal move in the brushwood near me to insult the majesty of that silence. Northward before me and far below swept the Weald.

The haze had gone; the sky was faint and wintry, but pure throughout its circle, and above the Channel hung largely the round of the moon, still pale, because the dark had not yet come.

But though she had been worshipped so often upon such evenings and from such a place, a greater thing now moved and took me from her, and turning round I looked north from the ridge of the steep escarpment over the plain to the rivers and the roofs of the Weald. I would have blessed them had I known some form of word or spell which might convey an active benediction, but as I knew none such, I repeated instead the list of their names to serve in place of a prayer.

The river Arun, a valley of sacred water; and Amberley Wild brook, which is lonely with reeds at evening; and Burton Great House, where I had spent nights in November; and Lavington also and Hidden Byworth; and Fittleworth next on, and Egdean Side,

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all heath and air ; and the lake and the pine-trees at the mill ; and Petworth, little town.

All the land which is knit in with our flesh, and yet in which a man cannot find an acre nor a wall of his own.

I knew as this affection urged me that verse alone would satisfy something at least of that irremediable desire. I lay down therefore at full length upon the short grass which the sheep also love, and taking out a little stump of pencil that I had, and tearing off the back of a letter, I held my words prepared.

My metre, which at first eluded me (though it had been with me in a way for many hours) was given me by these chance lines that came :

. . . and therefore even youth that dies
May leave of right its legacies.

I put my pencil upon the paper, doubtfully, and drew little lines, considering my theme. But I would not long hesitate in this manner, for I knew that all creation must be chaos first, and then gestures in the void before it can cast out the completed thing. So I put down in fragments this line and that ; and thinking first of how many children below me upon that large and fruitful floor were but entering what I must perforce abandon, I wrote down :

. . . and of mine opulence I leave
To every Sussex girl and boy
My lot in universal joy.

Having written this down, I knew clearly what was in my mind.

The way in which our land and we mix up together and are part of the same thing sustained me, and led on the separate parts of my growing poem towards me ; introducing them one by one ; till at last I wrote down this further line :

One with our random fields we grow.

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And since I could not for the moment fill in the middle of the verse, I wrote the end, which was already fashioned :

. . . because of lineage and because
The soil and memories out of mind
Embranch and broaden all mankind.

Ah ! but if a man is part of and is rooted in one steadfast piece of earth, which has nourished him and given him his being, and if he can on his side lend it glory and do it service (I thought), it will be a friend to him for ever, and he has outflanked Death in a way.

And I shall pass [thought I], but this shall stand
Almost as long as No-man's Land.

"No, certainly," I answered to myself aloud, "he does not die!" Then from that phrase there ran the fugue, and my last stanzas stood out clear at once, complete and full, and I wrote them down as rapidly as writing can go.

He does not die [I wrote] that can bequeath
Some influence to the land he knows,
Or dares, persistent, interwreath
Love permanent with the wild hedgerows ;
He does not die, but still remains
Substantiate with his darling plains.

The spring's superb adventure calls
His dust athwart the woods to flame ;
His boundary river's secret falls
Perpetuate and repeat his name.
He rides his loud October sky :
He does not die. He does not die.

The beeches know the accustomed head
Which loved them, and a peopled air
Beneath their benediction spread
Comforts the silence everywhere ;
For native ghosts return and these
Perfect the mystery in the trees.

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So, therefore, though myself be crosst
The shuddering of that dreadful day
When friend and fire and home are lost
And even children drawn away—
The passer-by shall hear me still,
A boy that sings on Duncton Hill.

Full of these thoughts and greatly relieved by their metrical expression, I went, through the gathering darkness, southward across the Downs to my home.

From "The Four Men"

THE GRAVE OF WINTER

EDWARD THOMAS

WHEN I awoke at six the light was good, but it was the light of rain. One thrush alone was singing, a few starlings whistled. And the rain lasted until half-past eight. Then the sunlight enshrined itself in the room, the red road glistened, a Lombardy poplar at Kilve Court waved against a white sky only a little blemished by gray, and I started again westward. The black stain of yesterday's fire on the hill was very black, the new privet leaves very green, and the stitchwort very white in the arches of the drenched grass. The end of the rain, as I hoped, was sung away by missel-thrushes in the roadside oaks, by a chain of larks' songs which must have reached all over England.

I had some thoughts of branching off on one of the green lanes to the left, that would have led me past a thatched cottage or two up to the ridge of the Quantocks, to Stowborrow Hill, Beacon Hill, Thorncombe Hill, Great Hill, Will's Neck, Lydeard Hill, Cothelstone Hill, and down to Taunton; but I kept to my road of last night as far as West Quantoxhead. There, beyond the fountain, I entered the road between ranks of lime trees towards Stogumber. Before I had gone a mile the rain returned, and made the roads so bad that I had to take to the highway from Williton to Taunton, and so saw no more of Bicknoller than its brown tower. But I had hopes of the weather, and the rain did no harm to the flowers of periwinkle and saurustinus in

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the hedges I was passing, and only added a sort of mystery of inaccessibleness to the west wall of the Quantocks, with which I was now going parallel. It was a wall coloured in the main by ruddy dead bracken and dark gorse, but patched sometimes with cultivated strips and squares of green, and trenched by deep coombs of oak, and by the shallow, winding channels of streams—streams not of water but of the most emerald grass. Seagulls mingled with the rooks in the nearer fields. The only people on the road were road-menders working with a steam-roller; the corduroys of one were stained so thoroughly by the red mud of the Quantocks, and shaped so excellently by wear to his tall, spare figure, that they seemed to be one with the man. It reminded me of "Lee Boo," and how the Pelew Islanders doubted whether the clothes and bodies of the white men did not "form one substance," and when one took off his hat they were struck with astonishment, "as if they thought it had formed part of his head."

The rain ceased just soon enough not to prove again the vanity of waterproofs. I have, it is true, discovered several which have brought me through a storm dry in parts, but I have also discovered that sellers of waterproofs are among the worst of liars, and that they communicate their vice with their goods. The one certain fact is that nobody makes a garment or suit which will keep a man both dry and comfortable if he is walking in heavy and beating rain. Suits of armour have, of course, been devised to resist rain, but at best they admit it at the neck. The ordinary (and extraordinary) waterproof may keep a man dry from neck to groin, though it is improbable exceedingly that both neck and wrists will escape. As for the legs, the rain gets at the whole of them with the aid of wind and capillary attraction. Whoever wore a coat that kept his knees

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dry in a beating rain? I am not speaking of waterproof tubes reaching to the feet. They may be sold, they may even be bought. They may be useful, but not for walking in.

For moderate showers one waterproof is about as good as another. The most advertised have the advantage of being expensive, and conferring distinction otherwise: they are no better, and wear worse, than a thing at two-thirds of the price which is never advertised at all. In such a one I was riding now, and I got wet only at the ankles. It actually kept my knees dry in the heavy rain near Timsbury. But if I had been walking I should have been intolerably hot and embarrassed in this, and very little less so in the lighter, more distinguished, more expensive garment. Supposing that a thorough waterproof exists, so light as to be comfortable in mild weather, it is certain to have the grave disadvantage of being easily tearable, and therefore of barring the wearer from woods.

Getting the body wet even in cold weather is delicious, but getting clothes and parts of the body wet, especially about and below the knee, is detestable. Trousers, and still more breeches, when wet through, prove unfriendly to man, and in some degree to boy. If the knees were free and the feet bare, I should think there would be no impediment left to bliss for an active man in shower or storm, except that he would provoke, evoke, and convoke laughter, and ninety-nine out of a hundred would prefer to this all the evils of rain and of waterproofs. It is to save our clothes and to lessen the discomfort of them that a waterproof is added.

At first thought it is humiliating to realise that we have spent many centuries in this climate and never produced anything to keep us dry and comfortable in rain. But who are we that complain? Not

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farmers, labourers, and fishermen, but people who spend much time out of doors by choice. We can go indoors when it rains; only, we do not wish to, because so many of the works of rain are good—in the skies, on the earth, in the souls of men and also of birds. When youth is over we are not carried away by our happiness so far as to ignore soaked boots and trousers. We like hassocks to kneel on, and on those hassocks we pray for a waterproof. As the prayer is only about a hundred years old—a hundred years ago there were no such beings—it is not surprising that the answer has not arrived from that distant quarter. Real outdoor people have either to do without waterproofs, or what they use would disable us from our pleasures. Naturally, they have done nothing to solve our difficulties. They have not written poetry for us, they have not made waterproofs for us. They do not read our poetry, they do not wear our waterproofs. We must solve the question by complaint and experiment, or by learning to go wet—an increasingly hard lesson for a generation that multiplies conveniences and inconveniences rather faster than it does an honest love of sun, wind, and rain, separately and all together.

By the time I reached Crowcombe, the sun was bright. This village, standing at the entrance to a great cloudy coomb of oaks and pine trees, is a thatched street containing the "Carew Arms," a long, white inn having a small porch, and over it a signboard bearing a coat of arms and the words "*J'espère bien.*" The street ends in a cross, a tall, slender, tapering cross of stone, iron-brown and silver-spotted. Here also sang a chifffchaff, like a clock rapidly ticking. The church is a little beyond, near the rookery of Crowcombe Court. Its red tower on the verge of the high roadside bank is set at the north-west corner in such a way—

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perhaps it is not quite at right angles—that I looked again and again up to it, as at a man in a million.

After passing Flaxpool, a tiny cluster of dwellings and ricks, with a rough, rising orchard, then a new-made road with a new signpost to Bridgwater, and then a thatched white inn called the "Stag's Head," I turned off for West Bagborough, setting my face toward the wooded flank of Bagborough Hill. Bagborough Church and Bagborough House stand at the edge of the wood. The village houses either touch the edge of the road, or, where it is very steep, lie back behind walls which were hanging their white and purple clouds of alyssum and aubretia down to the wayside water. Rain threatened again, and I went into the inn to eat and see what would happen. Two old men sat in the small settle at the fireside talking of the cold weather, for so they deemed it. Bent, grinning old men they were, using rustic, deliberate, grave speech, as they drank their beer and ate a few fancy biscuits. One of them was so old that never in his life had he done a stroke of gardening on a Good Friday; he knew a woman that did so once when he was a lad, and she perished shortly after in great pain. His own wife, even now, was on her death-bed; she had eaten nothing for weeks, and was bad-tempered, though still sensible. But when the rain at last struck the window like a swarm of bees, and the wind drove the smoke out into the room, the old man was glad to be where he was, not out of doors or up in the death room. His talk was mostly of the weather, and his beans, and his peas, which he was so pleased with that he was going to send over half a pint of them to the other old man. The biscuits they were eating set him thinking of better biscuits. For example, now, a certain kind made formerly at Watchet was very good. But the best of all were Half Moon biscuits.

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They had a few caraways in them, which they did not fear, because, old as they were, they were not likely to have leisure for appendicitis. Half a one in your cup of tea in the morning would *plim out* and fill the cup. They told me the street, the side of the street, the shop, its neighbours on either side, in Taunton, where I might hope to buy Half Moon biscuits even in the twentieth century. The whitening sky and the drops making the window pane dazzle manifested the storm's end, and the old men thought of the stag hounds, which were to meet that day. . . . Just above Bagborough there, seven red stags had been seen, not so long ago.

It was hot again at last as I climbed away from the valley and its gently sloping green and rosy squares and elmy hedges, up between high, loose banks of elder and brier, and much tall arum, nettle, and celandine, and one plant of honesty from the last cottage garden. High as it was, the larch coppice on the left far up had a chiffchaff singing in it, and honeysuckle still interwove itself in the gorse and holly of the roadside. A parallel, deep-worn, green track mounted the hill, close on my right, and there was a small square ruin covered with ivy above it among pine trees. It was not the last building. A hundred feet up, in a slight dip, I came to a farm-house, Tilbury Farm. Both sides of the road there are lined by mossy banks and ash and beech trees, and deep below, southward, on the right hand, I saw through the trees the gray mass of Cothelstone Manor-house beside its lake, and twelve miles off in the same direction the Wellington obelisk on the Black Down Hills. A stone seat on the other side of the trees commands both the manor house beneath and the distant obelisk. The seat is in an arched-over recess in the thickness of a square wall of masonry, six or seven feet in height and breadth. A cocval old hawthorn, spare

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and solitary, sticks out from the base of the wall. The whole is surmounted by a classic stone statue of an emasculated man larger than human, nude except for some drapery falling behind, long-haired, with left arm uplifted, and under its feet a dog; and it looks straight over at the obelisk. I do not know if the statue and the obelisk are connected, nor, if so, whether the statue represents the Iron Duke, his king, or a classic deity; the mutilation is against the last possibility. Had the obelisk not been so plainly opposite, I should have taken the figure for some sort of a god, the ponderous, rustic-classic fancy of a former early nineteenth-century owner of Cothelstone Manor. The statue and masonry darkened and bitten by weather, in that high, remote, commanding place, has in any case long outgrown the original conception and intention, and become a class-rustical, romantic what-you-please, waiting for its poet or prose-poet. I should have liked very well, on such a day, in such a position, to think it a Somerset Pan or Apollo, but could not. It was mainly pathetic and partly ridiculous. In the mossy bank behind it the first wood-sorrel flower drooped its white face among primroses and green moschatel knobs; they made the statue, lacking ivy and moss, seem harsh and crude. Some way farther on, where the beeches on that hand come to an end, two high stout pillars, composed of alternate larger and smaller layers of masonry, stand gateless and as purposeless as the king, duke, or god.

For a while I rested in a thatched shed at the summit, nine hundred and ninety-seven feet up, where the road turns at right angles and makes use of the ridge track of the Quantocks. A roller made of a fir trunk gave me a seat, and I looked down this piece of road, which is lined by uncommonly bushy beeches, and over at Cothelstone Hill, a dome of green and ruddy grasses in

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the south-east, sprinkled with thorn trees and capped by the blunt tower of a beacon. The primrose roots hard by me had each sufficient flowers to make a child's handful.

Turning to the left again, when the sign-post declared it seven and three-quarter miles to Bridgwater, I found myself on a glorious sunlit road without hedge, bank, or fence on either side, proceeding through fern, gorse, and ash trees scattered over mossy slopes. Down the slopes I looked across the flat valley to the Mendips and Brent Knoll, and to the Steep and Flat Holms, resting like clouds on a pale, cloudy sea ; what is more, through a low-arched rainbow I saw the blueness of the hills of South Wales. The sun had both dried the turf and warmed it. The million gorse petals seemed to be flames sown by the sun. By the side of the road were the first bluebells and cowslips. They were not growing there, but some child had gathered them below at Stowey or Durleigh, and then, getting tired of them, had dropped them. They were beginning to wilt, but they lay upon the grave of Winter. I was quite sure of that. Winter may rise up through mould alive with violets and primroses and daffodils, but when cowslips and bluebells have grown over his grave he cannot rise again : he is dead and rotten, and from his ashes the blossoms are springing. Therefore, I was very glad to see them. Even to have seen them on a railway station seat in the rain, brought from far off on an Easter Monday, would have been something ; here, in the sun, they were as if they had been fragments fallen out of that rainbow over against Wales. I had found Winter's grave ; I had found Spring, and I was confident that I could ride home again and find Spring all along the road. Perhaps I should hear the cuckoo by the time I was again at the Avon, and see cowslips tall

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on ditchsides and short on chalk slopes, bluebells in all hazel copses, orchises everywhere in the lengthening grass, and flowers of rosemary and crown-imperial in cottage gardens, and in the streets of London cowslips, bluebells, and the unflower-like yellow-green spurge. . . . Thus I leapt over April and into May, as I sat in the sun on the north side of Cothelstone Hill on that 28th day of March, the last day of my journey westward to find the Spring.

From "In Pursuit of Spring"

BOYS AND WASPS'-NESTS

H. G. HUTCHINSON

THERE are many reasons, as appears to the mature judgment, why it can no longer be as amusing as it once was to be a boy, and one of the most convincing is that the taking of wasps'-nests has become an operation of such supreme simplicity that there remains in it no mystery, no quick sense of peril, no heroism or excitement at all. I am very far indeed from saying that it is in reality less perilous than it used to be ; am even concerned to think that it is fraught with a far more deadly risk ; but the delightful and immediate sense of the peril has been taken clean out of it, and that is at once a loss in itself and also a reason why the peril is so deadly. The perilous sensation served as a perpetual warning for the avoidance of the actual danger. Now there is no warning.

The way in which the boy, according to my observation of him, proceeds to-day when he desires to take a wasps'-nest is to tamper with the usually rather fragile honesty of some under-gardener or groom, to persuade him to go to the village grocer or chemist of the nearest small town, to sign before that high functionary a paper setting forth that he requires a poison for the purpose of the destruction of wasps'-nests, and to give the innocent-looking white powder, which he will receive in exchange for that signed protestation, into the heedless hands of the boy. All that there remains to do is to lay some of this candid dust in the perilous mouth of the nest—an affair which may involve just a little

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danger from the stings if it be done in the light of day, but may be compassed with no risk at all after the sun has gone down and all respectable wasps are safely abed; and in spite of the candid innocence of its appearance, this dust is in reality so deadly that in a very few minutes there will not be a wasp left alive, or with so much of life remaining as to make it an active stinger, in the largest nest of which the doorway has been thus besprinkled. The nest may then be dug out at pleasure and at leisure, and the authorities, who know nothing of chemistry and pay no heed to the composition of the powder which has such far-carrying effects, think no more of the matter than that the garden is well rid of a nest of brigands and that they are blessed in the possession of a boy so good and clever that he can take the nest without being stung. If they realised any portion of the truth that this dust is composed of one of the strongest poisons—namely, cyanide of potassium—that the chemist can serve out, as pernicious to their clever boy as to the wasps themselves, so that a very small portion of it, licked from his fingers, would still his useful energies for ever, they might regard his enterprises against the wasps with a less satisfied mind and begin to wonder whether the safeguards provided by the law against the sale of poisons ought not to be enforced rather more strictly than they are.

But all this danger, greater though it probably is than any which we used to incur in our own long-gone boyhood, has very little of the allurements of those more obvious risks. In the first place, there was then the confection of the 'devil,' entrancing work dealing with a thing so named as to give us a peculiar satisfaction in that it permitted us to use that word, scarcely rebuked by authority, which on no other occasion could have excused, and a thing in itself to be handled delicately, apt to

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develop dangerous energy, compounded chiefly of the old black powder of the muzzle-loading days. Then, added delight and mystery, it was necessary to wait, for the active employment of the engine of death, until night had fallen and all good wasps had retired within their nests, unwitting the explosion which was to suffocate them. We had to creep out darkling, down the black avenues of the orchard, to the spot well marked in the daylight hours, accompanied by that ineffable odour of burnt lacquer from the dark lantern which is associated so closely with the finest enterprises of boyhood. Then there would be the insertion of the 'devil' into the door of the nest; the match, frequently lit and expiring, at length successfully igniting the Satanic tail; and then the interval of suspense before the sulphurous fumes could be trusted to have done their work so that the nest could be dug out with comparative impunity. In the fact that the impunity was no better than comparative, that a few vagrant wasps, returning from some unnatural and nocturnal enterprise, or sheltered by special circumstance from the fumes of death, would generally get up the coat-sleeve or the trouser-leg, and do their best to avenge some of the myriad wrongs of their tribe, lay much of the joy and the excitement. For, of course, it did not content us to leave the diabolical work to its own conclusion; we must needs delve down to the nest and satisfy ourselves that all its inhabitants were helpless, wonder at the marvel of the concentric *papier-maché* constructions of the cells, and the larvæ in all processes of development from white and shapeless worms to striped and perfect insects, count the number of the potential queens, and exhibit a generally intelligent interest in the microcosm which we had undertaken to destroy. Nor was this work of final execution wholly

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one of supererogation. The majority of the insects would be no more than stupefied by the fumes, whether from the powder-devil or from the naphtha-soaked rag which we sometimes used similarly in its stead. Thereby hangs a very moving tale, for on one conspicuous occasion, having obtained permission of the authorities to bring the dug-out nest, placed on a tray, into the drawing-room for the inspection, after dinner, of the guests of the house, the nest was afterwards delivered to the butler, with strict injunctions that it should be immersed in a pail of water until the morning, which would have had the effect of extinguishing any spark of vitality still remaining in any of its inmates. The high official, however, preferred to "think" rather than obey; and, thinking, as he reported subsequently, that all the wasps were dead, left the nest on the tray in his pantry until the morrow. On the opening of the door of the pantry in the morning he was met by a crowd of revived and wrathful wasps, which caused him to close the door again hurriedly, and retreat with much loss of dignity and a considerable number of stings about his person. After an interval for repairing damage, a fresh advance was sounded, and a strong force of two gardeners clad in the defensive armour used for taking swarms of bees stormed the pantry, transferred the nest, rather too tardily, into the pail which should have received it overnight, and after an immense slaughter of stragglers the peace of the pantry was restored. The actual nest itself was of no value for any of our purposes, but the grubs, and even the dead wasps, were appreciated by fowls and pheasants, and the former were useful bait for fish. The chief reason, however, why this dark, nocturnal business of wasps'-nest-taking enjoyed the distinction, rare among our pursuits, of receiving sanction from the high authorities was, of

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course, that it meant the destruction of many eaters of fruits and spoilers of the peace of picnics. It is not at all a just opinion that the work of the wasp is altogether evil for the human race, for the wasp is a destroyer of flies and grubs and many creatures more noxious than itself; but it is the opinion which is common, and which was firmly held by those who were arbiters, so far as we were unable to evade them, of our boyhood's destinies. Therefore they approved and encouraged this industry of the dark hours, which would probably have gone forward hardly at all less merrily without that august approval, for the sake of its own intrinsic attractions. But how would it be now when those attractions are so much diminished, because the nature of the danger attaching to the industry has become so much less in evidence, and at the same time, and partly for the same reason, fraught with so much more real risk?

From "Nature's Moods and Tenses"

A COUNTRY CRICKET-MATCH

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD

I DOUBT if there be any scene in the world more animating or delightful than a cricket-match—I do not mean a set match at Lord's Ground for money, hard money, between a certain number of gentlemen and players, as they are called—people who make a trade of that noble sport, and degrade it into an affair of bettings, and hedgings, and cheatings, it may be, like boxing or horse-racing ; nor do I mean a pretty *fête* in a gentleman's park, where one club of cricketing dandies encounter another such club, and where they show off in graceful costume to a gay marquee of admiring belles, who condescend so to purchase admiration, and while away a long summer morning in partaking cold collations, conversing occasionally, and seeming to understand the game—the whole being conducted according to ball-room etiquette, so as to be exceedingly elegant and exceedingly dull. No ! the cricket that I mean is a real solid old-fashioned match between neighbouring parishes, where each attacks the other for honour and a supper, glory and half-a-crown a man. If there be any gentleman amongst them, it is well—if not, it is so much the better. Your gentleman cricketer is in general rather an anomalous character. Elderly gentlemen are obviously good for nothing ; and young beaux are, for the most part, hampered and trammelled by dress and habit ; the stiff cravat, the pinched-in waist, the dandy-walk—oh, they will never do for cricket ! Now, our country lads, accustomed to the flail or the hammer

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(your blacksmiths are capital hitters) have the free use of their arms ; they know how to move their shoulders ; and they can move their feet too—they can run ; then they are so much better made, so much more athletic, and yet so much lissomer—to use a Hampshire phrase, which deserves at least to be good English. Here and there, indeed, one meets with an old Etonian, who retains his boyish love for that game which formed so considerable a branch of his education ; some even preserve their boyish proficiency, but in general it wears away like the Greek, quite as certainly, and almost as fast ; a few years of Oxford, or Cambridge, or the continent, are sufficient to annihilate both the power and the inclination. No ! a village match is the thing—where our highest officer—our conductor (to borrow a musical term) is but a little farmer's second son ; where a day-labourer is our bowler, and a blacksmith our long-stop ; where the spectators consist of the retired cricketers, the veterans of the green, the careful mothers, the girls, and all the boys of two parishes, together with a few amateurs, little above them in rank, and not at all in pretension ; where laughing and shouting, and the very ecstasy of merriment and good-humour prevail : such a match, in short, as I attended yesterday, at the expense of getting twice wet through, and as I would attend to-morrow, at the certainty of having that ducking doubled.

For the last three weeks our village has been in a state of great excitement, occasioned by a challenge from our north-western neighbours, the men of B., to contend with us at cricket. Now, we have not been much in the habit of playing matches. Three or four years ago, indeed, we encountered the men of S., our neighbours south-by-east, with a sort of doubtful success, beating them on our own ground, whilst they

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in the second match returned the compliment on theirs. This discouraged us. Then an unnatural coalition between a high-church curate and an evangelical gentleman-farmer drove our lads from the Sunday-evening practice, which, as it did not begin before both services were concluded, and as it tended to keep the young men from the ale-house, our magistrates had winked at if not encouraged. The sport, therefore, had languished until the present season, when under another change of circumstances the spirit began to revive. Half-a-dozen fine active lads, of influence amongst their comrades, grew into men and yearned for cricket; an enterprising publican gave a set of ribands: his rival, mine host of the Rose, an outdoor by profession, gave two; and the clergyman and his lay ally, both well-disposed and good-natured men, gratified by the submission to their authority, and finding, perhaps, that no great good resulted from the substitution of public-houses for out-of-door diversions, relaxed. In short, the practice recommenced, and the hill was again alive with men and boys, and innocent merriment; but farther than the riband matches amongst ourselves nobody dreamed of going, till this challenge—we were modest, and doubted our own strength. The B. people, on the other hand, must have been braggers born, a whole parish of gasconaders. Never was such boasting! such crowing! such ostentatious display of practice! such mutual compliments from man to man—bowler to batter, batter to bowler! It was a wonder they did not challenge all England. It must be confessed that we were a little astounded; yet we firmly resolved not to decline the combat; and one of the most spirited of the new growth, William Grey by name, took up the glove in a style of manly courtesy, that would have done honour to a knight in the days of chivalry.—“ We were

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not professed players," he said, " being little better than school-boys, and scarcely older ; but, since they had done us the honour to challenge us, we would try our strength. It would be no discredit to be beaten by such a field."

Having accepted the wager of battle, our champion began forthwith to collect his forces. William Grey is himself one of the finest youths that one shall see—tall, active, slender and yet strong, with a piercing eye full of sagacity, and a smile full of good humour—a farmer's son by station, and used to hard work as farmers' sons are now, liked by everybody, and admitted to be an excellent cricketer. He immediately set forth to muster his men, remembering with great complacency that Samuel Long, a bowler *comme il y en a peu*, the very man who had knocked down nine wickets, had beaten us, bowled us out at the fatal return match some years ago at S., had luckily, in a remove of a quarter of a mile last Lady-day, crossed the boundaries of his old parish, and actually belonged to us. Here was a stroke of good fortune ! Our captain applied to him instantly ; and he agreed at a word. Indeed, Samuel Long is a very civilised person. He is a middle-aged man who looks rather old amongst our young lads, and whose thickness and breadth give no token of remarkable activity ; but he is very active, and so steady a player ! so safe ! We had half gained the match when we had secured him. He is a man of substance, too, in every way ; owns one cow, two donkeys, six pigs, and geese and ducks beyond count—dresses like a farmer, and owes no man a shilling—and all this from pure industry, sheer day-labour. Note that your good cricketer is commonly the most industrious man in the parish ; the habits that make him such are precisely those which make a good workman—steadiness, sobriety, and

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activity—Samuel Long might pass for the *beau ideal* of the two characters. Happy were we to possess him ! Then we had another piece of good luck. James Brown, a journeyman blacksmith and a native, who, being of a rambling disposition, had roamed from place to place for half-a-dozen years, had just returned to settle with his brother at another corner of our village, bringing with him a prodigious reputation in cricket and in gallantry—the gay Lothario of the neighbourhood. He is said to have made more conquests in love and in cricket than any blacksmith in the county. To him also went the indefatigable William Grey, and he also consented to play. No end to our good fortune ! Another celebrated batter, called Joseph Hearne, had likewise recently married into the parish. He worked, it is true, at the A. mills, but slept at the house of his wife's father in our territories. He also was sought and found by our leader. But he was grand and shy ; made an immense favour of the thing ; courted courting and then hung back—"Did not know that he could be spared ; had partly resolved not to play again—at least not this season ; thought it rash to accept the challenge ; thought they might do without him——" "Truly I think so too," said our spirited champion ; "we will not trouble you, Mr Hearne."

Having thus secured two powerful auxiliaries, and rejected a third, we began to reckon and select the regular native forces. Thus ran our list : William Grey, 1 ; Samuel Long, 2 ; James Brown, 3 ; George and John Simons, one capital, the other so-so—an uncertain hitter, but a good fieldsman, 5 ; Joel Brent, excellent, 6 ; Ben Appleton—here was a little pause—Ben's abilities at cricket were not completely ascertained ; but then he was so good a fellow, so full of fun and waggery ! no doing without Ben. So he figured in

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the list, 7; George Harris—a short halt there too! Slowish—slow but sure. I think the proverb brought him in, 8; Tom Coper—oh, beyond the world, Tom Coper! the red-headed gardening lad, whose left-handed strokes send *her* (a cricket-ball, like that other moving thing, a ship, is always of the feminine gender), send her spinning a mile, 9; Harry Willis, another blacksmith, 10.

We had now ten of our eleven, but the choice of the last occasioned some demur. Three young Martins, rich farmers of the neighbourhood, successively presented themselves, and were all rejected by our independent and impartial general for want of merit—*cricketal* merit. “Not good enough,” was his pithy answer. Then our worthy neighbour the half-pay lieutenant, offered his services—he, too, though with some hesitation and modesty, was refused—“Not quite young enough” was his sentence. John Strong, the exceeding long son of our dwarfish mason, was the next candidate—a nice youth—everybody likes John Strong—and a willing, but so tall and so limp, bent in the middle—a thread-paper, six-feet high! We were all afraid that, in spite of his name, his strength would never hold out. “Wait till next year, John,” quoth William Grey, with all the dignified seniority of twenty speaking to eighteen. “Coper’s a year younger,” said John. “Coper’s a foot shorter,” replied William: so John retired: and the eleventh man remained unchosen, almost to the eleventh hour. The eve of the match arrived, and the post was still vacant, when a little boy of fifteen, David Willis, brother to Harry, admitted by accident to the last practice, saw eight of them out, and was voted in by acclamation.

That Sunday evening’s practice (for Monday was the important day) was a period of great anxiety, and, to

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say the truth, of great pleasure. • There is something strangely delightful in the innocent spirit of party. To be one of a numerous body, to be authorised to say *we*, to have a rightful interest in triumph or defeat, is gratifying at once to social feeling and to personal pride. There was not a ten-year-old urchin or a septuagenary woman in the parish who did not feel an additional importance, a reflected consequence, in speaking of "our side." An election interests in the same way; but that feeling is less pure. Money is there, and hatred, and politics, and lies. Oh, to be a voter, or a voter's wife, comes nothing near the genuine and hearty sympathy of belonging to a parish, breathing the same air, looking on the same trees, listening to the same nightingales! Talk of a patriotic elector! Give me a parochial patriot, a man who loves his parish! Even we, the female partisans, may partake the common ardour. I am sure I did. I never, though tolerably eager and enthusiastic at all times, remember being in a more delicious state of excitement than on the eve of that battle. Our hopes waxed stronger and stronger. Those of our players who were present were excellent. William Grey got forty notches off his own bat; and that brilliant hitter, Tom Coper, gained eight from two successive balls. As the evening advanced, too, we had encouragement of another sort. A spy, who had been despatched to reconnoitre the enemy's quarters, returned from their practising ground with a most consolatory report. "Really," said Charles Grover, our intelligence—a fine old steady judge, one who had played well in his day—"they are no better than so many old women. Any five of ours would beat their eleven." This sent us to bed in high spirits.

Morning dawned less favourably. The sky promised a series of deluging showers, and kept its word as English

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skies are wont to do on such occasions ; and a lamentable message arrived at the headquarters from our trusty comrade, Joel Brent. His master, a great farmer, had begun the hay-harvest that very morning, and Joel, being as eminent in one field as in another, could not be spared. Imagine Joel's plight ! the most ardent of all our eleven ! a knight held back from the tourney ! a soldier from the battle ! The poor swain was inconsolable. At last, one who is always ready to do a good-natured action, great or little, set forth to back his petition : and, by dint of appealing to the public spirit of our worthy neighbour and the state of the barometer, talking alternately of the parish honour and thunder-showers, of lost matches and sopped hay, he carried his point, and returned triumphantly with the delighted Joel.

In the meantime we became sensible of another defalcation. On calling over our roll, Brown was missing ; and the spy of the preceding night, Charles Grover—the universal scout and messenger of the village, a man who will run half-a-dozen miles for a pint of beer, who does errands for the very love of the trade, who, if he had been a lord, would have been an ambassador—was instantly despatched to summon the truant. His report spread general consternation. Brown had set off at four o'clock in the morning to play in a cricket-match at M., a little town twelve miles off, which had been his last residence. Here was desertion ! Here was treachery ! Here was treachery against that goodly state, our parish ! To send James Brown to Coventry was the immediate resolution ; but even that seemed too light a punishment for such delinquency. Then how we cried him down ! At ten on Sunday night (for the rascal had actually practised with us, and never said a word of his intended disloyalty) he was our

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faithful mate, and the best player (take him for all in all) of the eleven. At ten in the morning he had run away, and we were well rid of him ; he was no batter compared with William Grey or Tom Coper ; not fit to wipe the shoes of Samuel Long, as a bowler ; nothing of a scout to John Simmons ; the boy David Willis was worth fifty of him :

I trust we have within our realm,
Five hundred good as he,

was the universal sentiment. So we took tall John Strong, who, with an incurable hankering after the honour of being admitted, had kept constantly with the players, to take the chance of some such accident—we took John for our *pis-aller*. I never saw any one prouder than the good-humoured lad was of this not very flattering piece of preferment.

John Strong was elected, and Brown sent to Coventry ; and when I first heard of his delinquency, I thought the punishment only too mild for the crime. But I have since learned the secret history of the offence (if we could know the secret histories of all offences, how much better the world would seem than it does now !) and really my wrath is much abated. It was a piece of gallantry, of devotion to the sex, or rather a chivalrous obedience to one chosen fair. I must tell my readers the story. Mary Allen, the prettiest girl of M., had, it seems, revenged upon our blacksmith the numberless inconsistencies of which he stood accused. He was in love over head and ears, but the nymph was cruel. She said no, and no, and no, and poor Brown, three times rejected, at last resolved to leave the place, partly in despair, and partly in that hope which often mingles strangely with a lover's despair, the hope that when he was gone he should be missed. He came home

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to his 'brother's accordingly; but for five weeks he heard nothing from or of the inexorable Mary, and was glad to beguile his own "vexing thoughts" by endeavouring to create in his mind an artificial and factitious interest in our cricket-match—all unimportant as such a trifle must have seemed to a man in love. Poor James, however, is a social and warm-hearted person, not likely to resist a contagious sympathy. As the time for the play advanced, the interest which he had at first affected became genuine and sincere; and he was really, when he left the ground on Sunday night, almost as enthusiastically absorbed in the event of the next day as Joel Brent himself. He little foresaw the new and delightful interest which awaited him at home, where, on the moment of his arrival, his sister-in-law and confidante presented him with a billet from the lady of his heart. It had, with the usual delay of letters sent by private hands in that rank of life, loitered on the road, in a degree inconceivable to those who are accustomed to the punctual speed of the post, and had taken ten days for its twelve miles' journey. Have my readers any wish to see this *billet-doux*? I can show them (but in strict confidence) a literal copy. It was addressed,

For mistur jem browne
blaxmith by
S.

The inside ran thus:

Mistur browne this is to Inform yew that oure parish plays bramley men next monday is a week i think we shall lose without yew, from your humbell servant to command

MARY ALLEN

Was there ever a prettier relenting? a summons

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more flattering, more delicate, more irresistible? The precious epistle was undated; but, having ascertained who brought it, and found, by cross-examining the messenger, that the Monday in question was the very next day, we were not surprised to find that "Mistur browne" forgot his engagement to us, forgot all but Mary and Mary's letter, and set off at four o'clock the next morning to walk twelve miles, and play for her parish, and in her sight. Really we must not send James Brown to Coventry—must we? Though if, as his sister-in-law tells our damsel Harriet he hopes to do, he should bring the fair Mary home as his bride, he will not greatly care how little we say to him. But he must not be sent to Coventry—True-love forbid!

At last we were all assembled, and marched down to H. common, the appointed ground, which, though in our dominions according to the map, was the constant practising place of our opponents, and *terra incognita* to us. We found our adversaries on the ground as we expected, for our various delays had hindered us from taking the field so early as we wished; and, as soon as we had settled all preliminaries, the match began.

But, alas! I have been so long settling my preliminaries, that I have left myself no room for the detail of our victory, and must squeeze the account of our grand achievements into as little compass as Cowley, when he crammed the names of eleven of his mistresses into the narrow space of four eight-syllable lines. *They* began the warfare—those boastful men of B. And what think you, gentle reader, was the amount of their innings? These challengers—the famous eleven—how many did they get? Think! imagine! guess!—You cannot?—Well!—they got twenty-two, or, rather, they got twenty; for two of theirs were short notches, and would never have been allowed, only that,

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seeing what they were made of, we and our umpires were not particular.—They should have had twenty more if they had chosen to claim them. Oh, how well we fielded! and how well we bowled! our good play had quite as much to do with their miserable failure as their bad. Samuel Long is a slow bowler, George Simmons a fast one, and the change from Long's lobbing to Simmons's fast balls posed them completely. Poor simpletons! they were always wrong, expecting the slow for the quick, and the quick for the slow. Well, we went in. And what were our innings? Guess again!—guess! A hundred and sixty-nine! in spite of soaking showers, and wretched ground, where the ball would not run a yard, we headed them by a hundred and forty-seven; and then they gave in, as well they might. William Grey pressed them much to try another innings. "There was so much chance," as he courteously observed, "in cricket, that advantageous as our position seemed, we might, very possibly, be overtaken. The B. men had better try." But they were beaten sulky, and would not move—to my great disappointment; I wanted to prolong the pleasure of success. What a glorious sensation it is to be for five hours together winning—winning—winning! always feeling what a whist-player feels when he takes up four honours, seven trumps! Who would think that a little bit of leather, and two pieces of wood, had such a delightful and delighting power!

The only drawback on my enjoyment was the failure of the pretty boy, David Willis, who, injudiciously put in first, and playing for the first time in a match amongst men and strangers, who talked to him, and stared at him, was seized with such a fit of shamefaced shyness, that he could scarcely hold his bat, and was bowled out without a stroke, from actual nervousness. "He

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will come off that," Tom Coper says—I am afraid he will. I wonder whether Tom had ever any modesty to lose. Our other modest lad, John Strong, did very well; his length told in fielding, and he got good fame. Joel Brent, the rescued mower, got into a scrape, and out of it again; his fortune for the day. He ran out his mate, Samuel Long; who, I do believe, but for the excess of Joel's eagerness, would have stayed in till this time, by which exploit he got into sad disgrace; and then he himself got thirty-seven runs, which redeemed his reputation. William Grey made a hit which actually lost the cricket-ball. We think she lodged in a hedge, a quarter of a mile off, but nobody could find her. And George Simmons had nearly lost his shoe, which he tossed away in a passion, for having been caught out, owing to the ball glancing against it. These, together with a very complete somerset of Ben Appleton, our long-stop, who floundered about in the mud, making faces and attitudes as laughable as Grimaldi, none could tell whether by accident or design, were the chief incidents of the scene of action. Amongst the spectators nothing remarkable occurred, beyond the general calamity of two or three drenchings, except that a form, placed by the side of a hedge, under a very insufficient shelter, was knocked into the ditch, in a sudden rush of the cricketers to escape a pelting shower, by which means all parties shared the fate of Ben Appleton, some on land and some by water; and that, amidst the scramble, a saucy gipsy of a girl contrived to steal from the knee of the demure and well-apparelled Samuel Long, a smart handkerchief which his careful dame had tied round it to preserve his new (what is the mincing feminine word?)—his new—inexpressibles; thus reversing the story of Desdemona, and causing the new Othello to call aloud for his handkerchief, to the

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great diversion of the company. And so we parted ; the players retired to their supper, and we to our homes ; all wet through, all good-humoured and all happy—except the losers.

To-day we are happy too. Hats, with ribands in them, go glancing up and down ; and William Grey says, with a proud humility, " We do not challenge any parish ; but if we be challenged, we are ready."

From " Our Village "

THE INCENDIARY

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD

NO one that had the misfortune to reside during the last winter in the disturbed districts of the South of England will ever forget the awful impression of that terrible time. The silly gatherings of the misguided peasantry amongst the wild hills, partly heath and partly woodland, of which so much of the northern part of Hampshire is composed—dropping in one by one, and two by two, in the gloom of evening, or the dim twilight of a November morning; or the open and noisy meetings of determined men at noontide in the streets and greens of our Berkshire villages, and even sometimes in the very churchyards, sallying forth in small but resolute numbers to collect money or destroy machinery, and compelling or persuading their fellow-labourers to join them at every farm they visited; or the sudden appearance and disappearance of those large bodies, who sometimes remained together to the amount of several hundreds for many days, and sometimes dispersed, one scarcely knew how, in a few hours; their daylight marches on the high road, regular and orderly as those of an army; or their midnight visits to lonely houses, lawless and terrific as the descent of pirates, or the incursions of *banditti*—all brought close to us a state of things which we never thought to have witnessed in peaceful and happy England. In the sister island, indeed, we had read of such horrors, but now they were brought home to our very household hearths; we tasted of fear, the bitterest cup that an

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imaginative woman can taste, in all its agonizing varieties, and felt, by sad experience, the tremendous difference between that distant report of danger, with which we had so often fancied that we sympathized, and the actual presence of danger itself. Such events are salutary, inasmuch as they show to the human heart its own desperate self-deceit. I could not but smile at the many pretty letters of condolence and fellow-feeling which I had received from writers who wrote far too well to feel anything, who most evidently felt nothing ; but the smile was a melancholy one—for I recollected how often, not intending to feign, or suspecting that I was feigning, I myself had written such.

Nor were the preparations for defence, however necessary, less shocking than the apprehensions of attack. The hourly visits of bustling parish officers, bristling with importance (for our village, though in the centre of the insurgents, continued uncontaminated—"faithful amidst the unfaithful found"—and was, therefore, quite a rallying point for loyal men and true) ; the swearing in of whole regiments of petty constables ; the stationary watchmen, who every hour, to prove their vigilance, sent in some poor wretch, beggar or matchseller, or rambling child, under the denomination of suspicious persons ; the mounted patrol, whose deep "all's well," which ought to have been consolatory, was about the most alarming of all alarming sounds ; the soldiers, transported from place to place in carts the better to catch the rogues, whose local knowledge gave them great advantage in a dispersal ; the grave processions of magistrates and gentlemen on horseback ; and, above all, the nightly collecting of arms and armed men within our own dwelling, kept up a continual sense of nervous inquietude.

Fearful, however, as were the realities, the rumours

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were a hundredfold more alarming. Not an hour passed but, from some quarter or other, reports came pouring in of mobs gathering, mobs assembled, mobs marching upon us. Now the high roads were blockaded by the rioters, travellers murdered, soldiers defeated, and the magistrates, who had gone out to meet and harangue them, themselves surrounded and taken by the desperate multitude. Now the artisans—the commons, so to say, of B.—had risen to join the peasantry, driving out the gentry and tradespeople, while they took possession of their houses and property, and only detaining the mayor and aldermen as hostages. Now that illustrious town held loyal, but was besieged. Now the mob had carried the place, and artisans, constables, tradespeople, soldiers, and magistrates, the mayor and corporation included, were murdered to a man, to say nothing of women and children; the market-place running with blood, and the town hall filled with dead bodies. This last rumour, which was much to the taste of our villagers, actually prevailed for several hours; terrified maid-servants ran shrieking about the house, and every corner of the village street realized Shakespeare's picture of "a smith swallowing a tailor's news."

So passed the short winter's day. With the approach of night came fresh sorrows; the red glow of fires gleaming on the horizon, and mounting into the middle sky; the tolling of bells; and the rumbling sound of the engines clattering along from place to place, and often, too often, rendered useless by the cutting of the pipe after they had begun to play—a dreadful aggravation of the calamity, since it proved that among those who assembled, professedly to help, were to be found favourers and abettors of the concealed incendiaries. Oh the horror of those fires, breaking forth night after

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night, sudden, yet expected, always seeming nearer than they actually were, and always said to have been more mischievous to life and property than they actually had been ! Mischievous enough they were, Heaven knows ! A terrible and unholy abuse of the most beautiful and comfortable of the elements, a sinful destruction of the bounties of Providence, an awful crime against God and man. Shocking it was to behold the peasantry of England becoming familiarized with this tremendous power of evil—this desperate, yet most cowardly sin. •

The blow seemed to fall, too, just where it might least have been looked for—on the unoffending, the charitable, the kind ; on those who were known only as the labourer's friends, to impoverish whom was to take succour, assistance, and protection from the poor. One of the objects of attack in our own immediate neighbourhood was a widow lady between eighty and ninety ; the best of the good, the kindest of the kind. Occurrences like this were in every way dreadful. They made us fear (and such fear is a revengeful passion, and comes near to hate) the larger half of our species. They weakened our faith in human nature.

The revulsion was, however, close at hand. A time came which changed the current of our feelings—a time of retribution. The fires were quenched ; the riots were put down ; the chief of the rioters were taken. Examination and commitment were the order of the day ; the crowded gaols groaned with their overload of wretched prisoners ; soldiers were posted at every avenue to guard against possible escape ; and every door was watched night and day by miserable women—the wives, mothers, or daughters of the culprits, praying for admission to their unfortunate relatives. The danger was fairly over, and pity had succeeded to fear.

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Then, above all, came the special commission : the judges in threefold dignity ; the array of counsel ; the crowded court ; the solemn trial ; the awful sentence ; all the more impressive from the merciful feeling which pervaded the government, the counsel, and the court. My father, a very old magistrate, being chairman of the bench as well as one of the grand jury ; and the then high sheriff, with whom it is every way an honour to claim acquaintance, being his intimate friend, I saw and knew more of the proceedings of this stirring time than usually falls to the lot of women, and took a deep interest in proceedings which had in them a thrilling excitement, as far beyond acted tragedy as truth is beyond fiction.

I shall never forget the hushed silence of the auditors, a dense mass of human bodies, the heads only visible, ranged tier over tier to the very ceiling of the lofty hall ; the rare and striking importance which that silence and the awfulness of the occasion gave to the mere official forms of a court of justice, generally so hastily slurred over and slightly attended to ; the unusual seriousness of the counsel ; the watchful gravity of the judges ; and, more than all, the appearance of the prisoners themselves, belonging mostly to the younger classes of the peasantry, such men as one is accustomed to see in the fields, on the road, or the cricket ground, with sunburnt faces, and a total absence of reflection or care, but who now, under the influence of a keen and bitter anxiety, had acquired not only the sallow paleness proper to a prison, but the look of suffering and of thought, the brows contracted and brought low over the eyes, the general sharpness of feature and elongation of countenance, which gave an expression of intellect, a certain momentary elevation, even to the commonest and most vacant of human faces.

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Such is the power of an absorbing passion, a great and engrossing grief. One man only amongst the large number whom I heard arraigned (for they were brought out by tens and by twenties) would, perhaps, under other circumstances, have been accounted handsome; yet a painter would at that moment have found studies in many.

I shall never forget, either, the impression made on my mind by one of the witnesses. Several men had been arraigned together for machine-breaking. All but one of them had employed counsel for their defence, and under their direction had called witnesses to character, the most respectable whom they could find—the clergy and overseers of their respective parishes, for example—masters with whom they had lived, neighbouring farmers or gentry, or even magistrates—all that they could muster to grace or credit their cause. One poor man alone had retained no counsel, offered no defence, called no witness, though the evidence against him was by no means so strong as that against his fellow-prisoners, and it was clear that his was exactly the case in which testimony to character would be of much avail. The defence had ended, and the judge was beginning to sum up, when suddenly a tall, gaunt, upright figure, with a calm, thoughtful brow, and a determined but most respectful demeanour, appeared in the witnesses' box. He was dressed in a smock frock, and was clean and respectable in appearance, but evidently poor. The judge interrupted himself in his charge to inquire the man's business, and, hearing that he was a voluntary witness for the undefended prisoner, proceeded to question him, when the following dialogue took place. The witness's replies, which seemed to me then, and still do so, very striking from their directness and manliness, were delivered with the same humble

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boldness of tone and manner that characterised the words.

Judge : " You are a witness for the prisoner, an unsummoned witness ? "

" I am, my lord. I heard that he was to be tried to-day, and have walked twenty miles to speak the truth of him, as one poor man may do of another."

" What is your situation in life ? "

" A labourer, my lord ; nothing but a day-labourer."

" How long have you known the prisoner ? "

" As long as I have known anything. We were play-mates together, went to the same school, have lived in the same parish. I have known him all my life."

" And what character has he borne ? "

" As good a character, my lord, as a man need work under."

It is pleasant to add that this poor man's humble testimony was read from the judge's notes, and mentioned in the judge's charge, with full as much respect, perhaps a little more, than the evidence of clergymen and magistrates for the rest of the accused ; and that, principally from this direct and simple tribute to his character, the prisoner in question was acquitted.

To return, however, from my evil habit of digressing (if I may use an Irish phrase) before I begin, and making my introduction longer than my story, a simple sin to which, in many instances, and especially in this, I am fain to plead guilty—to come back to my title and my subject—I must inform my courteous readers that the case of arson which attracted most attention and excited most interest in this part of the country, was the conflagration of certain ricks, barns, and farm buildings in the occupation of Richard Mayne ; and that, not so much from the value of the property consumed (though that value was considerable), as on account of the

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character and situation of the prisoner, whom, after a long examination, the magistrates found themselves compelled to commit for the offence. I did not hear this trial, the affair having occurred in the neighbouring county ; and do not, therefore, vouch for " the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," as one does when an ear-witness ; but the general outline of the story will suffice for our purpose.

Richard Mayne was a wealthy yeoman of the old school, sturdy, boisterous, bold, and kind, always generous, and generally good-natured, but cross-grained and obstinate by fits, and sometimes purse-proud—after the fashion of men who have made money by their own industry and shrewdness. He had married late in life, and above him in station, and had now been for two or three years a widower with one only daughter, a girl of nineteen, of whom he was almost as fond as of his greyhound Mayfly, and for pretty much the same reason—that both were beautiful and gentle, and his own, and both admired and coveted by others—that Mayfly had won three cups, and that Lucy had refused four offers.

A sweet and graceful creature was Lucy Mayne. Her mother, a refined and cultivated woman, the daughter of an unbeneficed clergyman, had communicated, perhaps unconsciously, much of her own taste to her daughter. It is true, that most young ladies, even of her own station, would have looked with great contempt on Lucy's acquirements, who neither played nor drew, and was wholly, in the phrase of the day, unaccomplished ; but then she read Shakespeare and Milton, and the poets and prose writers of the Jameses' and Charleses' times, with a perception and relish of their beauty very uncommon in a damsel under twenty ; and when her father boasted of his Lucy as the cleverest as well as the prettiest lass within ten miles, he was not

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so far wrong as many of his hearers were apt to think him.

After all, the person to whom Lucy's education owed most was a relation of her mother's, a poor relation, who, being left a widow with two children almost totally destitute, was permitted by Richard Mayne to occupy one end of a small farmhouse, about a mile from the old substantial manorial residence which he himself inhabited, whilst he farmed the land belonging to both. Nothing could exceed his kindness to the widow and her family ; and Mrs Owen, a delicate and broken-spirited woman, who had known better days, and was now left with a sickly daughter and a promising son dependent on the precarious charity of relatives and friends, found in the free-handed and open-hearted farmer and his charming little girl her only comfort. He even restored to her the blessing of her son's society, who had hitherto earned his living by writing for an attorney in the neighbouring town, but whom her wealthy kinsman now brought home to her, and established as the present assistant and future successor of the master of a well-endowed grammar-school in the parish, Farmer Mayne being one of the trustees, and all-powerful with the other functionaries joined in the trust, and the then schoolmaster in so wretched a state of health as almost to insure a speedy vacancy.

In most instances, such an exertion of an assumed rather than a legitimate authority, would have occasioned no small prejudice against the party protected ; but Philip Owen was not to be made unpopular, even by the unpopularity of his patron. Gentle, amiable, true, and kind—kind both in word and deed—it was found absolutely impossible to dislike him. He was clever, too, very clever, with a remarkable aptitude for teaching, as both parents and boys soon found to their

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mutual satisfaction ; for the progress of one half-year of his instruction equalled that made in a twelvemonth under the old *régime*. He must also, one should think, have been fond of teaching, for, after a hard day's fagging at Latin and English, and writing and accounts, and all the drudgery of a boys' school, he would make a circuit of a mile and a half home in order to give Lucy Mayne a lesson in French or Italian. For a certainty, Philip Owen must have had a strong natural turn for playing the pedagogue, or he never would have gone so far out of his way just to read Fenelon and Alfieri with Lucy Mayne.

So for two happy years matters continued. At the expiration of that time, just as the old schoolmaster, who declared that nothing but Philip's attention had kept him alive so long, was evidently on his deathbed, Farmer Mayne suddenly turned Mrs Owen, her son, and her sick daughter out of the house, which, by his permission, they had hitherto occupied ; and declared publicly that whilst he held an acre of land in the parish, Philip Owen should never be elected master of the grammar-school—a threat which there was no doubt of his being able to carry into effect. The young man, however, stood his ground ; and sending off his mother and sister to an uncle in Wales, who had lately written kindly to them, hired a room at a cottage in the village, determined to try the event of an election, which the languishing state of the incumbent rendered inevitable.

The cause of Farmer Mayne's inveterate dislike to one whom he had so warmly protected, and whose conduct, manners, and temper had procured him friends wherever he was known, nobody could assign with any certainty. Perhaps he had unwittingly trodden on Mayfly's foot, or had opposed some prejudice of her master's, but his general carefulness not to hurt any-

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thing, or offend anybody, rendered either of these conjectures equally improbable ; perhaps he had been found only too amiable by the farmer's other pet—those lessons in languages were dangerous things !—and when Lucy was seen at church with a pale face and red eyes, and when his landlord Squire Hawkins's blood hunter was seen every day at Farmer Mayne's door, it became currently reported and confidently believed that the cause of the quarrel was a love affair between the cousins, which the farmer was determined to break off, in order to bestow his daughter on the young lord of the manor.

Affairs had been in this posture for about a fortnight, and the old schoolmaster was just dead, when a fire broke out in the rickyard of Farley Court, and Philip Owen was apprehended and committed as the incendiary. The astonishment of the neighbourhood was excessive ; the rector and half the farmers of the place offered to become bail, but the offence was not bailable ; and the only consolation left for the friends of the unhappy young man was the knowledge that the trial would speedily come on, and their internal conviction that an acquittal was certain.

As time wore on, however, their confidence diminished. The evidence against him was terribly strong. He had been observed lurking about the rickyard with a lantern, in which a light was burning, by a lad in the employ of Farmer Mayne, who had gone thither for hay to fodder his cattle about an hour before the fire broke out. At eleven o'clock the haystack was on fire, and at ten Robert Doyle had mentioned to James White, another boy in Farmer Mayne's service, that he had seen Mr Philip Owen behind the great rick. Farmer Mayne himself had met him at half-past ten (as he was returning from B. market) in the lane leading from the

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rickyard towards the village, and had observed him throw something he held in his hand into the ditch. Humphry Harris, a constable employed to seek for evidence, had found the next morning a lantern answering to that described by Robert Doyle, in the part of the ditch indicated by Farmer Mayne, which Thomas Brown, the village shopkeeper, in whose house Owen slept, identified as having lent to his lodger in the early part of the evening. A silver pencil, given to Owen by the mother of one of his pupils, and bearing his full name on the seal at the end, was found close to where the fire was discovered ; and, to crown all, the curate of the village, with whom the young man's talents and character had rendered him a deserved favourite, had unwillingly deposed that he had said " it might be in his power to take a great revenge on Farmer Mayne," or words to that effect ; whilst a letter was produced from the accused to the farmer himself intimating that one day he would be sorry for the oppression which he had exercised towards him and his. These two last facts were much relied upon as evincing malice, and implying a purpose of revenge from the accused towards the prosecutor ; yet there were many who thought that the previous circumstances might well account for them without reference to the present occurrence, and that the conflagration of the ricks and farm buildings might, under the spirit of the time (for fires were raging every night in the surrounding villages), be merely a remarkable coincidence. The young man himself simply denied the fact of setting fire to any part of the property or premises ; inquired earnestly whether any lives had been lost, and still more earnestly after the health of Miss Lucy ; and on finding that she had been confined to her bed by fever and delirium, occasioned, as was supposed, by the fright, ever since that unhappy

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occurrence, relapsed into a gloomy silence, and seemed to feel no concern or interest in the issue of the trial.

His friends, nevertheless, took kind and zealous measures for his defence, engaged counsel, sifted testimony, and used every possible means, in the assurance of his innocence, to trace out the true incendiary. Nothing, however, could be discovered to weaken the strong chain of circumstantial evidence, or to impeach the credit of the witnesses, who, with the exception of the farmer himself, seemed all friendly to the accused, and most distressed at being obliged to bear testimony against him. On the eve of the trial the most zealous of his friends could find no ground of hope except in the chances of the day; Lucy, for whom alone the prisoner asked, being still confined by severe illness.

The judges arrived—the whole terrible array of the special commission; the introductory ceremonies were gone through; the cause was called on, and the case proceeded with little or no deviation from the evidence already cited. When called upon for his defence, the prisoner again asked if Lucy Mayne were in court; and hearing that she was ill in her father's house, declined entering into any defence whatsoever. Witnesses to character, however, pressed forward—his old master, the attorney, the rector and curate of the parish, half the farmers of the village, everybody, in short, who ever had an opportunity of knowing him, even his reputed rival, Mr Hawkins, who, speaking, he said, on the authority of one who knew him well, professed himself confident that he could not be guilty of a bad action—a piece of testimony that seemed to strike and affect the prisoner more than anything that had passed; evidence to character crowded into court, but all was of no avail against the strong chain of concurrent facts; and the judge was preparing to sum up, and the jury

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looking as if they had already condemned, when suddenly a piercing shriek was heard in the hall, and pale, tottering, dishevelled, Lucy Mayne rushed into her father's arms, and cried out with a shrill, despairing voice that "she was the only guilty; that she had set fire to the rick; and that if they killed Philip Owen for her crime, they would be guilty of murder."

The general consternation may be imagined, especially that of the farmer, who had left his daughter almost insensible with illness, and still thought her light-headed. Medical assistance, however, was immediately summoned, and it then appeared that what she said was most true; that the lovers, for such they were, had been accustomed to deposit letters in one corner of that unlucky hayrick; that having seen from her chamber window Philip Owen leaving the yard, she had flown with a taper in her hand to secure the expected letter, and, alarmed at her father's voice, had run away so hastily, that she had, as she now remembered, left the lighted taper amidst the hay; that then the fire came, and all was a blank to her until, recovering that morning from the stupor succeeding to delirium, she had heard that Philip Owen was to be tried for his life from the effect of her carelessness, and had flown to save him she knew not how!

The sequel may be guessed: Philip was, of course, acquitted: everybody, even the very judge, pleaded for the lovers; the young landlord and generous rival added his good word; and the schoolmaster of Farley and his pretty wife are at this moment one of the best and happiest couples in his Majesty's dominions.

From "Our Village"

THE STAGE COACH

WASHINGTON IRVING

Omne bene
Sine pœnâ
Tempus est ludendi,
Venit hora
Absque morâ
Libros deponendi.

Old Holiday School Song

IN the preceding paper I have made some general observations on the Christmas festivities of England, and am tempted to illustrate them by some anecdotes of a Christmas passed in the country ; in perusing which I would most courteously invite my reader to lay aside the austerity of wisdom, and to put on that genuine holiday spirit which is tolerant of folly, and anxious only for amusement.

In the course of a December tour in Yorkshire, I rode for a long distance in one of the public coaches, on the day preceding Christmas. The coach was crowded, both inside and out, with passengers, who, by their talk, seemed principally bound to the mansions of relations or friends, to eat the Christmas dinner. It was loaded also with hampers of game, and baskets and boxes of delicacies ; and hares hung dangling their long ears about the coachman's box, presents from distant friends for the impending feast. I had three fine rosy-cheeked school-boys for my fellow-passengers inside, full of the buxom health and manly spirit which I have observed in the children of this country. They were returning

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home for the holidays in high glee, and promising themselves a world of enjoyment. It was delightful to hear the gigantic plans of the little rogues, and the impracticable feats they were to perform during their six weeks' emancipation from the abhorred thralldom of book, birch, and pedagogue. They were full of anticipations of the meeting with the family and household, down to the very cat and dog; and of the joy they were to give their little sisters by the presents with which their pockets were crammed; but the meeting to which they seemed to look forward with the greatest impatience was with Bantam, which I found to be a pony, and according to their talk, possessed of more virtues than any steed since the days of Bucephalus. How he could trot! how he could run! and then such leaps as he would take—there was not a hedge in the whole country that he could not clear.

They were under the particular guardianship of the coachman, to whom, whenever an opportunity presented, they addressed a host of questions, and pronounced him one of the best fellows in the world. Indeed, I could not but notice the more than ordinary air of bustle and importance of the coachman, who wore his hat a little on one side, and had a large bunch of Christmas greens stuck in the buttonhole of his coat. He is always a personage full of mighty care and business, but he is particularly so during this season, having so many commissions to execute in consequence of the great interchange of presents. And here, perhaps, it may not be unacceptable to my untravelled readers, to have a sketch that may serve as a general representation of this very numerous and important class of functionaries, who have a dress, a manner, a language, an air, peculiar to themselves, and prevalent throughout the fraternity; so that, whenever an English stage-

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coachman may be seen, he cannot be mistaken for one of any other craft or mystery.

He has commonly a broad, full face, curiously mottled with red, as if the blood had been forced by hard feeding into every vessel of the skin ; he is swelled into jolly dimensions by frequent potations of malt liquors, and his bulk is still further increased by a multiplicity of coats, in which he is buried like a cauliflower, the upper one reaching to his heels. He wears a broad-brimmed, low-crowned hat ; a huge roll of coloured handkerchief about his neck, knowingly knotted and tucked in at the bosom ; and has in summer time a large bouquet of flowers in his buttonhole ; the present, most probably, of some enamoured country lass. His waistcoat is commonly of some bright colour, striped, and his small-clothes extend far below the knees, to meet a pair of jockey-boots which reach about half-way up his legs.

All this costume is maintained with much precision ; he has a pride in having his clothes of excellent materials ; and, notwithstanding the seeming grossness of his appearance, there is still discernible that neatness and propriety of person which is almost inherent in an Englishman. He enjoys great consequence and consideration along the road ; has frequent conferences with the village housewives, who look upon him as a man of great trust and dependence ; and he seems to have a good understanding with every bright-eyed country lass. The moment he arrives where the horses are to be changed, he throws down the reins with something of an air, and abandons the cattle to the care of the ostler ; his duty being merely to drive from one stage to another. When off the box, his hands are thrust into the pockets of his great coat, and he rolls about the inn yard with an air of the most absolute

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lordliness. Here he is generally surrounded by an admiring throng of ostlers, stable-boys, shoeblacks, and those nameless hangers-on that infest inns and taverns, and run errands, and do all kinds of odd jobs, for the privilege of battening on the drippings of the kitchen and the leakage of the taproom. These all look up to him as to an oracle ; treasure up his cant phrases ; echo his opinions about horses and other topics of jockey lore ; and above all, endeavour to imitate his air and carriage. Every ragamuffin that has a coat to his back thrusts his hands in the pockets, rolls in his gait, talks slang, and is an embryo Coachey.

Perhaps it might be owing to the pleasing serenity that reigned in my own mind, that I fancied I saw cheerfulness in every countenance throughout the journey. A stage coach, however, carries animation always with it, and puts the world in motion as it whirls along. The horn, sounded at the entrance of a village, produces a general bustle. Some hasten forth to meet friends, some with bundles and bandboxes to secure places, and in the hurry of the moment can hardly take leave of the group that accompanies them. In the meantime the coachman has a world of small commissions to execute. Sometimes he delivers a hare or pheasant ; sometimes jerks a small parcel or newspaper to the door of a public-house ; and sometimes, with knowing leer and words of sly import, hands to some half-blushing, half-laughing housemaid an odd-shaped *billet-doux* from some rustic admirer. As the coach rattles through the village, everyone runs to the window, and you have glances on every side of fresh country faces and blooming giggling girls. At the corners are assembled juntos of village idlers and wise men, who take their stations there for the important purpose of seeing company pass ; but the sagest knot is generally at the blacksmith's, to whom the

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passing of the coach is an event fruitful of much speculation. The smith, with the horse's heel in his lap, pauses as the vehicle whirls by ; the cyclops round the anvil suspend their ringing hammers, and suffer the iron to grow cool ; and the sooty spectre in brown paper cap, labouring at the bellows, leans on the handle for a moment, and permits the asthmatic engine to heave a long-drawn sigh, while he glares through the murky smoke and sulphureous gleams of the smithy.

Perhaps the impending holiday might have given a more than usual animation to the country, for it seemed to me as if everybody was in good looks and good spirits. Game, poultry, and other luxuries of the table, were in brisk circulation in the villages ; the grocers', butchers', and fruiterers' shops were thronged with customers. The housewives were stirring briskly about, putting their dwellings in order ; and the glossy branches of holly, with their bright red berries, began to appear at the windows. The scene brought to mind an old writer's account of Christmas preparations : " Now capons and hens, besides turkeys, geese, and ducks, with beef and mutton—must all die—for in twelve days a multitude of people will not be fed with a little. Now plums and spice, sugar and honey, square it among pies and broth. Now or never must music be in tune, for the youth must dance and sing to get them a heat, while the aged sit by the fire. The country maid leaves half her market, and must be sent again, if she forgets a pack of cards on Christmas eve. Great is the contention of holly and ivy, whether master or dame wears the breeches. Dice and cards benefit the butler ; and if the cook do not lack wit, he will sweetly lick his fingers."

I was roused from this fit of luxurious meditation, by a shout from my little travelling companions. They

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had been looking out of the coach windows for the last few miles, recognising every tree and cottage as they approached home, and now there was a general burst of joy—"There's John! and there's old Carlo! and there's Bantam!" cried the happy little rogues, clapping their hands.

At the end of the lane there was an old sober-looking servant in livery, waiting for them; he was accompanied by a superannuated pointer, and by the redoubtable Bantam, a little old rat of a pony, with a shaggy mane and long rusty tail, who stood dozing quietly by the roadside, little dreaming of the bustling times that awaited him.

I was pleased to see the fondness with which the little fellows leaped about the steady old footman, and hugged the pointer; who wriggled his whole body for joy. But Bantam was the great object of interest; all wanted to mount at once, and it was with some difficulty that John arranged that they should ride by turns, and the eldest should ride first.

Off they set at last; one on the pony, with the dog bounding and barking before him, and the others holding John's hands; both talking at once, and overpowering him with questions about home, and with school anecdotes. I looked after them with a feeling in which I do not know whether pleasure or melancholy predominated; for I was reminded of those days when, like them, I had neither known care nor sorrow, and a holiday was the summit of earthly felicity. We stopped a few moments afterwards to water the horses, and on resuming our route, a turn of the road brought us in sight of a neat country seat. I could just distinguish the forms of a lady and two young girls in the portico, and I saw my little comrades, with Bantam, Carlo, and old John, trooping along the carriage road. I leaned

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out of the coach window, in hopes of witnessing the happy meeting, but a grove of trees shut it from my sight.

In the evening we reached a village where I had determined to pass the night. As we drove into the great gateway of the inn, I saw on one side the light of a rousing kitchen fire beaming through a window. I entered, and admired, for the hundredth time, that picture of convenience, neatness, and broad, honest enjoyment, the kitchen of an English inn. It was of spacious dimensions, hung round with copper and tin vessels highly polished, and decorated here and there with a Christmas green. Hams, tongues, and flitches of bacon were suspended from the ceiling; a smoke-jack made its ceaseless clanking beside the fireplace, and a clock ticked in one corner. A well-scoured deal table extended along one side of the kitchen, with a cold round of beef and other hearty viands upon it, over which two foaming tankards of ale seemed mounting guard. Travellers of inferior order were preparing to attack this stout repast, while others sat smoking and gossiping over their ale on two high-backed oaken settles beside the fire. Trim housemaids were hurrying backwards and forwards under the directions of a fresh bustling landlady; but still seizing an occasional moment to exchange a flippant word, and have a rallying laugh with the group round the fire. The scene completely realised Poor Robin's humble idea of the comforts of mid-winter :

Now trees their leafy hats do bare
To reverence Winter's silver hair ;
A handsome hostess, merry host,
A pot of ale now and a toast,
Tobacco and a good coal fire,
Are things this season doth require.*

* *Poor Robin's Almanac*, 1684.

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I had not been long at the inn when a post-chaise drove up to the door. A young gentleman stepped out, and by the light of the lamps I caught a glimpse of a countenance which I thought I knew. I moved forward to get a nearer view, when his eye caught mine. I was not mistaken ; it was Frank Bracebridge, a sprightly good-humoured young fellow, with whom I had once travelled on the continent. Our meeting was extremely cordial, for the countenance of an old fellow-traveller always brings up the recollection of a thousand pleasant scenes, odd adventures, and excellent jokes. To discuss all these in a transient interview at an inn was impossible ; and finding that I was not pressed for time, and was merely making a tour of observation, he insisted that I should give him a day or two at his father's country seat, to which he was going to pass the holidays, and which lay at a few miles' distance. " It is better than eating a solitary Christmas dinner at an inn," said he, " and I can assure you of a hearty welcome in something of the old-fashioned style." His reasoning was cogent, and I must confess the preparation I had seen for universal festivity and social enjoyment had made me feel a little impatient of my loneliness. I closed, therefore, at once, with his invitation ; the chaise drove up to the door, and in a few moments I was on my way to the family mansion of the Bracebridges.

From "The Sketch Book"

GIPSIES

JOSEPH ADDISON

AS I was yesterday riding out in the fields with my friend Sir Roger, we saw at a little distance from us a troop of gipsies. Upon the first discovering of them, my friend was in some doubt whether he should not exert the Justice of the Peace upon such a band of lawless vagrants ; but not having his clerk with him, who is a necessary counsellor on those occasions, and fearing that his poultry might fare the worse for it, he let the thought drop : but at the same time gave me a particular account of the mischiefs they do in the country, in stealing people's goods and spoiling their servants. " If a stray piece of linen hangs upon an hedge," says Sir Roger, " they are sure to have it ; if a hog loses his way in the fields, it is ten to one but he becomes their prey ; our geese cannot live in peace for them : if a man prosecutes them with severity, his hen-roost is sure to pay for it. They generally straggle into these parts about this time of the year, and set the heads of our servant-maids so agog for husbands, that we do not expect to have any business done as it should be whilst they are in the country. I have an honest dairy-maid who crosses their hands with a piece of silver every summer, and never fails being promised the handsomest young fellow in the parish for her pains. Your friend the butler has been fool enough to be seduced by them ; and, though he is sure to lose a knife, a fork, or a spoon every time his fortune is told him, generally shuts himself up in the pantry with an old

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gipsy for above half an hour once in a twelvemonth. Sweethearts are the things they live upon, which they bestow very plentifully upon all those that apply themselves to them. You see now and then some handsome young jades among them : the sluts have very often white teeth and black eyes."

Sir Roger, observing that I listened with great attention to his account of a people who were so entirely new to me, told me, that if I would they should tell us our fortunes. As I was very well pleased with the knight's proposal, we rid up and communicated our hands to them. A Cassandra of the crew, after having examined my lines very diligently, told me, that I loved a pretty maid in a corner, that I was a good woman's man, with some other particulars which I do not think proper to relate. My friend Sir Roger alighted from his horse, and exposing his palm to two or three of them that stood by him, they crumpled it into all shapes, and diligently scanned every wrinkle that could be made in it ; when one of them who was elder and more sun-burnt than the rest, told him that he had a widow in his line of life ; upon which the knight cried, " Go, go, you are an idle baggage " ; and at the same time smiled upon me. The gipsy finding he was not displeased in his heart, told him after a farther inquiry into his hand, that his true love was constant, and that she should dream of him to-night : my old friend cried, " Pish," and bid her go on. The gipsy told him that he was a bachelor, but would not be so long ; and that he was dearer to somebody than he thought ; the knight still repeated that she was an idle baggage, and bid her go on. " Ah, master," says the gipsy, " that roguish leer of yours makes a pretty woman's heart ache ; you haven't that simper about the mouth for nothing." The uncouth gibberish with which all this

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was uttered, like the darkness of an oracle, made us the more attentive to it. To be short, the knight left the money with her that he had crossed her hand with, and got up again on his horse.

As we were riding away, Sir Roger told me, that he knew several sensible people who believed these gipsies now and then foretold very strange things ; and for half an hour together appeared more jocund than ordinary. In the height of his good humour, meeting a common beggar upon the road who was no conjuror, as he went to relieve him, he found his pocket was picked ; that being a kind of palmistry at which this race of vermin are very dexterous.

I might here entertain my reader with historical remarks on this idle profligate people, who infest all the countries in Europe, and live in the midst of governments in a kind of commonwealth by themselves. But instead of entering into observations of this nature, I shall fill the remaining part of my paper with a story which is still fresh in Holland, and was printed in one of our monthly accounts about twenty years ago. " As the *Trekschuyt*, or the hackney boat, which carries passengers from Leyden to Amsterdam, was putting off, a boy running along the side of the canal desired to be taken in ; which the master of the boat refused, because the lad had not quite money enough to pay the usual fare. An eminent merchant being pleased with the looks of the boy, and secretly touched with compassion towards him, paid the money for him, and ordered him to be taken on board. Upon talking with him afterwards, he found that he could speak readily in three or four languages, and learned upon further examination that he had been stolen away when he was a child by a gipsy, and had rambled ever since with a gang of these strollers up and down several parts of

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Europe. It happened that the merchant, whose heart seems to have inclined towards the boy by a secret kind of instinct, had himself lost a child some years before. The parents after a long search for him, gave him for drowned in one of the canals with which that country abounds ; and the mother was so afflicted at the loss of a fine boy, who was her only son, that she died for grief of it. Upon laying together all particulars, and examining the several moles and marks by which the mother used to describe the child when he was first missing, the boy proved to be the son of the merchant whose heart had so unaccountably melted at the sight of him. The lad was very well pleased to find a father who was so rich, and likely to leave him a good estate ; the father on the other hand was not a little delighted to see a son return to him, whom he had given for lost, with such a strength of constitution, sharpness of understanding, and skill of languages." Here the printed story leaves off, but if I may give credit to reports, our linguist, having received such extraordinary rudiments towards a good education, was afterwards trained up in everything that becomes a gentleman ; wearing off by little and little all the vicious habits and practices that he had been used to in the course of his peregrinations ; nay, it is said, that he has since been employed in foreign courts upon national business, with great reputation to himself and honour to those who sent him, and that he has visited several countries as a public minister, in which he formerly wandered as a gipsy.

From "The Spectator."

THE EMIGRANT TRAIN

R. L. STEVENSON

ALL this while I had been travelling by mixed trains, where I might meet with Dutch widows and little German gentry fresh from table. I had been but a latent emigrant ; now I was to be branded once more, and put apart with my fellows. It was about two in the afternoon of Friday that I found myself in front of the Emigrant House, with more than a hundred others, to be sorted and boxed for the journey. A white-haired official, with a stick under one arm, and a list in the other hand, stood apart in front of us, and called name after name in the tone of a command. At each name you would see a family gather up its brats and bundles and run for the hindmost of the three cars that stood awaiting us, and I soon concluded that this was to be set apart for the women and children. The second or central car, it turned out, was devoted to men travelling alone, and the third to the Chinese. The official was easily moved to anger at the least delay ; but the emigrants were both quick at answering their names, and speedy in getting themselves and their effects on board.

The families once housed, we men carried the second car without ceremony by simultaneous assault. I suppose the reader has some notion of an American railroad car, that long, narrow wooden box, like a flat-roofed Noah's ark, with a stove and a convenience, one at either end, a passage down the middle, and transverse benches upon either hand. Those destined

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for emigrants on the Union Pacific are only remarkable for their extreme plainness, nothing but wood entering in any part into their constitution, and for the usual inefficacy of the lamps, which often went out and shed but a dying glimmer even while they burned. The benches are too short for anything but a young child. Where there is scarce elbow-room for two to sit, there will not be space enough for one to lie. Hence the company, or rather, as it appears from certain bills about the Transfer Station, the company's servants, have conceived a plan for the better accommodation of travellers. They prevail on every two to chum together. To each of the chums they sell a board and three square cushions stuffed with straw, and covered with thin cotton. The benches can be made to face each other in pairs, for the backs are reversible. On the approach of night the boards are laid from bench to bench, making a couch wide enough for two, and long enough for a man of the middle height ; and the chums lie down side by side upon the cushions with the head to the conductor's van and the feet to the engine. When the train is full, of course this plan is impossible, for there must not be more than one to every bench, neither can it be carried out unless the chums agree. It was to bring about this last condition that our white-haired official now bestirred himself. He made a most active master of ceremonies, introducing likely couples, and even guaranteeing the amiability and honesty of each. The greater the number of happy couples the better for his pocket, for it was he who sold the raw material of the beds. His price for one board and three straw cushions began with two dollars and a half ; but before the train left, and, I am sorry to say, long after I had purchased mine, it had fallen to one dollar and a half.

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The match-maker had a difficulty with me ; perhaps, like some ladies, I showed myself too eager for union at any price ; but certainly the first who was picked out to be my bedfellow, declined the honour without thanks. He was an old, heavy, slow-spoken man, I think from Yankeeland, looked me all over with great timidity, and then began to excuse himself in broken phrases. He didn't know the young man, he said. The young man might be very honest, but how was he to know that ? There was another young man whom he had met already in the train ; he guessed *he* was honest, and would prefer to chum with *him* upon the whole. All this without any sort of excuse, as though I had been inanimate or absent. I began to tremble lest everyone should refuse my company, and I be left rejected. But the next in turn was a tall, strapping, long-limbed, small-headed, curly-haired Pennsylvania Dutchman, with a soldierly smartness in his manner. To be exact, he had acquired it in the navy. But that was all one ; he had at least been trained to desperate resolves, so he accepted the match, and the white-haired swindler pronounced the connubial benediction, and pocketed his fees.

The rest of the afternoon was spent in making up the train. I am afraid to say how many baggage-wagons followed the engine, certainly a score ; then came the Chinese, then we, then the families, and the rear was brought up by the conductor in what, if I have it rightly, is called his caboose. The class to which I belonged was of course far the largest, and we ran over, so to speak, to both sides ; so that there were some Caucasians among the Chinamen, and some bachelors among the families. But our own car was free from admixture, save for one little boy of eight or nine who had the whooping-cough. At last, about six, the long

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train crawled out of the Transfer Station and across the wide Missouri river to Omaha, westward bound.

It was a troubled uncomfortable evening in the cars. There was thunder in the air, which helped to keep us restless. A man played many airs upon the cornet, and none of them were much attended to, until he came to "Home, Sweet Home." It was truly strange to note how the talk ceased at that, and the faces began to lengthen. I have no idea whether musically this air is to be considered good or bad; but it belongs to that class of art which may be best described as a brutal assault upon the feelings. Pathos must be relieved by dignity of treatment. If you wallow naked in the pathetic, like the author of "Home, Sweet Home," you make your hearers weep in an unmanly fashion; and even while yet they are moved, they despise themselves and hate the occasion of their weakness. It did not come to tears that night, for the experiment was interrupted. An elderly, hard-looking man, with a goatee beard and about as much appearance of sentiment as you would expect from a retired slaver, turned with a start and bade the performer stop that "damned thing." "I've heard about enough of that," he added; "give us something about the good country we're going to." A murmur of adhesion ran round the car; the performer took the instrument from his lips, laughed and nodded, and then struck into a dancing measure; and, like a new Timotheus, stilled immediately the emotion he had raised.

The day faded; the lamps were lit; a party of wild young men, who got off next evening at North Platte, stood together on the stern platform, singing "The Sweet By-and-bye" with very tuneful voices; the chums began to put up their beds; and it seemed as if the business of the day were at an end. But it was not

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so ; for, the train stopping at the same station, the cars were instantly thronged with the natives, wives and fathers, young men and maidens, some of them in little more than night-gear, some with stable-lanterns, and all offering beds for sale. Their charge began with twenty-five cents a cushion, but fell, before the train went on again, to fifteen, with the bed-board gratis, or less than one-fifth of what I had paid for mine at the Transfer. This is my contribution to the economy of future emigrants.

A great personage on an American train is the newsboy. He sells books (such books !), papers, fruit, lollipops, and cigars ; and on emigrant journeys, soap, towels, tin washing basins, tin coffee pitchers, coffee, tea, sugar, and tinned eatables, mostly hash or beans and bacon. Early next morning the newsboy went around the cars, and chumming on a more extended principle became the order of the hour. It requires but a copartnery of two to manage beds ; but washing and eating can be carried on most economically by a syndicate of three. I myself entered a little after sunset into articles of agreement and became one of the firm of Pennsylvania, Shakespeare, and Dubuque. Shakespeare was my own nickname on the cars ; Pennsylvania that of my bedfellow ; and Dubuque, the name of a place in the State of Iowa, that of an amiable young fellow going west to cure an asthma, and retarding his recovery by incessantly chewing or smoking, and sometimes chewing and smoking together. I have never seen tobacco so sillily abused. Shakespeare bought a tin washing dish, Dubuque a towel, and Pennsylvania a brick of soap. The partners used these instruments, one after another, according to the order of their first awaking ; and when the firm had finished there was no want of borrowers. Each filled the tin dish at the

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water-filter opposite the stove, and retired with the whole stock in trade to the platform of the car. There he knelt down, supporting himself by a shoulder against the woodwork or one elbow crooked about the railing, and made a shift to wash his face and neck and hands ; a cold, an insufficient, and, if the train is moving rapidly, a somewhat dangerous toilet.

On a similar division of expense, the firm of Pennsylvania, Shakespeare, and Dubuque supplied themselves with coffee, sugar, and necessary vessels ; and their operations are a type of what went on through all the cars. Before the sun was up the stove would be brightly burning ; at the first station the natives would come on board with milk and eggs and coffee cakes ; and soon from end to end the car would be filled with little parties breakfasting upon the bed-boards. It was the pleasantest hour of the day.

There were meals to be had, however, by the wayside : a breakfast in the morning, a dinner somewhere between eleven and two, and supper from five to eight or nine at night. We had rarely less than twenty minutes for each ; and if we had not spent many another twenty minutes waiting for some express upon a side track among miles of desert, we might have taken an hour to each repast and arrived at San Francisco up to time. For haste is not the foible of an emigrant train. It gets through on sufferance, running the gauntlet among its more considerable brethren ; should there be a block, it is unhesitatingly sacrificed ; and they cannot, in consequence, predict the length of the passage within a day or so. Civility is the main comfort that you miss. Equality, though conceived very largely in America, does not extend so low down as to an emigrant. Thus in all other trains, a warning cry of "All aboard!" recalls the passengers to take their seats ; but as soon

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as I was alone with emigrants, and from the Transfer all the way to San Francisco, I found this ceremony was pretermitted; the train stole from the station without note of warning, and you had to keep an eye upon it even while you ate. The annoyance is considerable, and the disrespect both wanton and petty.

Many conductors, again, will hold no communication with an emigrant. I asked a conductor one day at what time the train would stop for dinner; as he made no answer I repeated the question, with a like result; a third time I returned to the charge, and then Jack-in-office looked me coolly in the face for several seconds and turned ostentatiously away. I believe he was half-ashamed of his brutality; for when another person made the same inquiry, although he still refused the information, he condescended to answer, and even to justify his reticence in a voice loud enough for me to hear. It was, he said, his principle not to tell people where they were to dine; for one answer led to many other questions, as what o'clock it was? or, how soon should we be there? and he could not afford to be eternally worried.

As you are thus cut off from the superior authorities, a great deal of your comfort depends on the character of the newsboy. He has it in his power indefinitely to better and brighten the emigrant's lot. The newsboy with whom we started from the Transfer was a dark, bullying, contemptuous, insolent scoundrel, who treated us like dogs. Indeed, in his case, matters came nearly to a fight. It happened thus: he was going his rounds through the cars with some commodities for sale, and coming to a party who were at *Seven-up* or *Cascino* (our two games), upon a bed-board, slung down a cigar box in the middle of the cards, knocking one man's hand to the floor. It was the last straw. In a moment the

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whole party were upon their feet, the cigars were upset, and he was ordered to "get out of that directly, or he would get more than he reckoned for." The fellow grumbled and muttered, but ended by making off, and was less openly insulting in the future. On the other hand, the lad who rode with us in this capacity from Ogden to Sacramento, made himself the friend of all, and helped us with information, attention, assistance, and a kind countenance. He told us where and when we should have our meals, and how long the train would stop; kept seats at table for those who were delayed, and watched that we should neither be left behind nor yet unnecessarily hurried. You who live at home at ease, can hardly realise the greatness of this service, even had it stood alone. When I think of that lad coming and going, train after train, with his bright face and civil words, I see how easily a good man may become the benefactor of his kind. Perhaps he is discontented with himself, perhaps troubled with ambitions; why, if he but knew it, he is a hero of the old Greek stamp; and while he thinks he is only earning a profit of a few cents, and that perhaps exorbitant, he is doing a man's work, and bettering the world.

I must tell here an experience of mine with another newsboy. I tell it because it gives so good an example of that uncivil kindness of the American, which is perhaps their most bewildering character to one newly landed. It was immediately after I had left the emigrant train; and I am told I looked like a man at death's door, so much had this long journey shaken me. I sat at the end of a car, and the catch being broken, and myself feverish and sick, I had to hold the door open with my foot for the sake of air. In this attitude my leg debarred the newsboy from his box of merchandise.

THE EMIGRANT TRAIN

I made haste to let him pass when I observed that he was coming ; but I was busy with a book, and so once or twice he came upon me unawares. On these occasions he most rudely struck my foot aside ; and though I myself apologised, as if to show him the way, he answered me never a word. I chafed furiously and I fear the next time it would have come to words. But suddenly I felt a touch upon my shoulder, and a large juicy pear was put into my hand. It was the newsboy, who had observed that I was looking ill and so made me this present out of a tender heart. For the rest of the journey I was petted like a sick child ; he lent me newspapers, thus depriving himself of his legitimate profit on their sale and came repeatedly to sit by me and cheer me up.

From "Across the Plains"

GOING DOWN WITH VICTORY

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

BUT the grandest chapter of our experience, within the whole mail-coach service, was on those occasions when we went down from London with the news of victory. A period of about ten years stretched from Trafalgar to Waterloo ; the second and third years of which period (1806 and 1807) were comparatively sterile ; but the other nine (from 1805 to 1815 inclusively) furnished a long succession of victories ; the least of which, in such a contest of Titans, had an inappreciable value of position—partly for its absolute interference with the plans of our enemy, but still more for its keeping alive through central Europe the sense of a deep-seated vulnerability in France. Even to tease the coasts of our enemy, to mortify them by continual blockades, to insult them by capturing if it were but a baubling schooner under the eyes of their arrogant armies, repeated from time to time a sullen proclamation of power lodged in one quarter to which the hopes of Christendom turned in secret. How much more loudly must this proclamation have spoken in the audacity of having bearded the *élite* of their troops, and having beaten them in pitched battles ! Five years of life it was worth paying down for the privilege of an outside place on a mail-coach, when carrying down the first tidings of any such event. And it is to be noted that, from our insular situation, and the multitude of our frigates disposable for the rapid transmission of intelligence, rarely did any unauthorised rumour steal away a

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prelibation from the first aroma of the regular despatches. The government news was generally the earliest news.

From eight p.m., to fifteen or twenty minutes later, imagine the mails assembled on parade in Lombard Street, where, at that time, and not in St Martin's-le-Grand, was seated the General Post Office. In what exact strength we mustered I do not remember ; but, from the length of each separate *attelage*, we filled the street, though a long one, and though we were drawn up in double file. On *any* night the spectacle was beautiful. The absolute perfection of all the appointments about the carriages and the harness, their strength, their brilliant cleanliness, their beautiful simplicity—but, more than all, the royal magnificence of the horses—were what might first have fixed the attention. Every carriage, on every morning in the year, was taken down to an official inspector for examination—wheels, axles, linchpins, pole, glasses, lamps, were all critically probed and tested. Every part of every carriage had been cleaned, every horse had been groomed, with as much rigour as if they belonged to a private gentleman ; and that part of the spectacle offered itself always. But the night before us is a night of victory ; and, behold ! to the ordinary display, what a heart-shaking addition !—horses, men, carriages, all are dressed in laurels and flowers, oak leaves and ribbons. The guards, as being officially his Majesty's servants, and of the coachmen such as are within the privilege of the post-office, wear the royal liveries of course ; and as it is summer (for all the *land* victories were naturally won in summer), they wear, on this fine evening, these liveries exposed to view, without any covering of upper coats. Such a costume, and the elaborate arrangement of the laurels in their hats, dilate their hearts, by giving to them openly a personal connection with the great news, in

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which already they have the general interest of patriotism. That great national sentiment surmounts and quells all sense of ordinary distinctions. Those passengers who happen to be gentlemen are now hardly to be distinguished as such except by dress ; for the usual reserve of their manner in speaking to the attendants has on this night melted away. One heart, one pride, one glory, connects every man by the transcendent bond of his national blood. The spectators, who are numerous beyond precedent, express their sympathy with these fervent feelings by continual hurrahs. Every moment are shouted aloud by the post-office servants, and summoned to draw up, the great ancestral names of cities known to history through a thousand years—Lincoln, Winchester, Portsmouth, Gloucester, Oxford, Bristol, Manchester, York, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth, Stirling, Aberdeen—expressing the grandeur of the empire by the antiquity of its towns, and the grandeur of the mail establishment by the diffusive radiation of its separate missions. Every moment you hear the thunder of lids locked down upon the mail-bags. That sound to each individual mail is the signal for drawing off, which process is the finest part of the entire spectacle. Then come the horses into play. Horses ! can these be horses that bound off with the action and gestures of leopards ? What stir !—what sea-like ferment !—what a thundering of wheels !—what a trampling of hoofs !—what a sounding of trumpets !—what farewell cheers—what redoubling peals of brotherly congratulation, connecting the name of the particular mail—“ Liverpool for ever ! ”—with the name of the particular victory—“ Badajoz for ever ! ” or “ Salamanca for ever ! ” The half-slumbering consciousness that, all night long and all the next day—perhaps for even a longer period—many of these

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mails, like fire racing along a train of gunpowder, will be kindling at every instant new successions of burning joy, has an obscure effect of multiplying the victory itself, by multiplying to the imagination into infinity the stages of its progressive diffusion. A fiery arrow seems to be let loose, which from that moment is destined to travel, without intermission, westwards for three hundred miles—northwards for six hundred; and the sympathy of our Lombard Street friends at parting is exalted a hundredfold by a sort of visionary sympathy with the yet slumbering sympathies which in so vast a succession we are going to awake.

Liberated from the embarrassments of the city, and issuing into the broad uncrowded avenues of the northern suburbs, we soon begin to enter upon our natural pace of ten miles an hour. In the broad light of the summer evening, the sun, perhaps, only just at the point of setting, we are seen from every storey of every house. Heads of every age crowd to the windows—young and old understand the language of our victorious symbols—and rolling volleys of sympathising cheers run along us, behind us, and before us. The beggar, rearing himself against the wall, forgets his lameness—real or assumed—thinks not of his whining trade, but stands erect, with bold exulting smiles, as we pass him. The victory has healed him, and says, Be thou whole! Women and children, from garrets alike and cellars, through infinite London, look down or look up with loving eyes upon our gay ribbons and our martial laurels; sometimes kiss their hands; sometimes hang out, as signals of affection, pocket-handkerchiefs, aprons, dusters, anything that, by catching the summer breezes, will express an aerial jubilation. On the London side of Barnet, to which we draw near within a few minutes after nine, observe that private

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carriage which is approaching us. The weather being so warm, the glasses are all down ; and one may read, as on the stage of a theatre, everything that goes on within. It contains three ladies—one likely to be 'mamma,' and two of seventeen or eighteen, who are probably her daughters. What lovely animation, what beautiful unpremeditated pantomime, explaining to us every syllable that passes, in these ingenuous girls ! By the sudden start and raising of the hands, on first discovering our laurelled equipage !—by the sudden movement and appeal to the elder lady from both of them—and by the heightened colour on their animated countenances, we can almost hear them saying, " See, see ! Look at their laurels ! Oh, mamma ! there has been a great battle in Spain ; and it has been a great victory." In a moment we are on the point of passing them. We passengers—I on the box, and the two on the roof behind me—raise our hats to the ladies ; the coachman makes his professional salute with the whip ; the guard even, though punctilious on the matter of his dignity as an officer under the Crown, touches his hat. The ladies move to us, in return, with a winning graciousness of gesture ; all smile on each side in a way that nobody could misunderstand, and that nothing short of a grand national sympathy could so instantaneously prompt. Will these ladies say that we are nothing to *them* ? Oh, no ; they will not say *that*. They cannot deny—they do not deny—that for this night they are our sisters ; gentle or simple, scholar or illiterate servant, for twelve hours to come, we on the outside have the honour to be their brothers. Those poor women, again, who stop to gaze upon us with delight at the entrance of Barnet, and seem, by their air of weariness, to be returning from labour—do you mean to say that they are washerwomen and charwomen ? Oh, my poor

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friend, you are quite mistaken. I assure you they stand in a far higher rank ; for this one night they feel themselves by birth-right to be daughters of England, and answer to no humbler title.

Every joy, however, even rapturous joy—such is the sad law of earth—may carry with it grief, or fear of grief, to some. Three miles beyond Barnet, we see approaching us another private carriage, nearly repeating the circumstances of the former case. Here, also, the glasses are all down—here, also, is an elderly lady seated ; but the two daughters are missing ; for the single young person sitting by the lady's side, seems to be an attendant—so I judge from her dress, and her air of respectful reserve. The lady is in mourning ; and her countenance expresses sorrow. At first she does not look up ; so that I believe she is not aware of our approach, until she hears the measured beating of our horses' hoofs. Then she raises her eyes to settle them painfully on our triumphal equipage. Our decorations explain the case to her at once ; but she beholds them with apparent anxiety, or even with terror. Some time before this, I, finding it difficult to hit a flying mark, when embarrassed by the coachman's person and reins intervening, had given to the guard a *Courier* evening paper, containing the Gazette, for the next carriage that might pass. Accordingly he tossed it in, so folded that the huge capitals expressing some such legend as—**GLORIOUS VICTORY**, might catch the eye at once. To see the paper, however, at all, interpreted as it was by our ensigns of triumph, explained everything ; and, if the guard were right in thinking the lady to have received it with a gesture of horror, it could not be doubtful that she had suffered some deep personal affliction in connexion with this Spanish war.

Here, now, was the case of one who, having formerly

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suffered, might, erroneously perhaps, be distressing herself with anticipations of another similar suffering. That same night, and hardly three hours later, occurred the reverse case. A poor woman, who too probably would find herself, in a day or two, to have suffered the heaviest of afflictions by the battle, blindly allowed herself to express an exultation so unmeasured in the news and its details, as gave to her the appearance which amongst Celtic Highlanders is called *fey*. This was at some little town where we changed horses an hour or two after midnight. Some fair or wake had kept the people up out of their beds, and had occasioned a partial illumination of the stalls and booths, presenting an unusual but very impressive effect. We saw many lights moving about as we drew near ; and perhaps the most striking scene on the whole route was our reception at this place. The flashing of torches and the beautiful radiance of blue lights (technically, Bengal lights) upon the heads of our horses ; the fine effect of such a showery and ghostly illumination falling upon our flowers and glittering laurels ; whilst all around ourselves, that formed a centre of light, the darkness gathered on the rear and flanks in massy blackness ; these optical splendours, together with the prodigious enthusiasm of the people, composed a picture at once scenical and affecting, theatrical and holy. As we stayed for three or four minutes, I alighted ; and immediately from a dismantled stall in the street, where no doubt she had been presiding through the earlier part of the night, advanced eagerly a middle-aged woman. The sight of my newspaper it was that had drawn her attention upon myself. The victory which we were carrying down to the provinces on *this* occasion, was the imperfect one of Talavera—imperfect for its results, such was the virtual treachery of the

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Spanish general, Cuesta, but not imperfect in its ever-memorable heroism. I told her the main outline of the battle. The agitation of her enthusiasm had been so conspicuous when listening, and when first applying for information, that I could not but ask her if she had not some relative in the Peninsular army. Oh, yes; her only son was there. In what regiment? He was a trooper in the 23rd Dragoons. My heart sank within me as she made that answer. This sublime regiment, which an Englishman should never mention without raising his hat to their memory, had made the most memorable and effective charge recorded in military annals. They leaped their horses—*over* a trench where they could, *into* it, and with the result of death or mutilation when they could *not*. What proportion cleared the trench is nowhere stated. Those who *did*, closed up and went down upon the enemy with such divinity of fervour (I use the word *divinity* by design: the inspiration of God must have prompted this movement to those whom even then he was calling to his presence), that two results followed. As regarded the enemy, this 23rd Dragoons, not, I believe, originally three hundred and fifty strong, paralysed a French column, six thousand strong, then ascended the hill, and fixed the gaze of the whole French army. As regarded themselves, the 23rd were supposed at first to have been barely not annihilated; but eventually, I believe, about one in four survived. And this, then, was the regiment—a regiment already for some hours glorified and hallowed to the ear of all London, as lying stretched, by a large majority, upon one bloody aceldama—in which the young trooper served whose mother was now talking in a spirit of such joyous enthusiasm. Did I tell her the truth? Had I the heart to break up her dreams? No. To-morrow, said I to myself—

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to-morrow, or the next day, will publish the worst. For one night more, wherefore should she not sleep in peace? After to-morrow, the chances are too many that peace will forsake her pillow. This brief respite, then, let her owe to *my* gift and *my* forbearance. But, if I told her not of the bloody price that had been paid, not, therefore, was I silent on the contributions from her son's regiment to that day's service and glory. I showed her not the funeral banners under which the noble regiment was sleeping. I lifted not the overshadowing laurels from the bloody trench in which horse and rider lay mangled together. But I told her how these children dear of England, officers and privates, had leaped their horses over all obstacles as gaily as hunters to the morning's chase. I told her how they rode their horses into the mists of death (saying to myself, but not saying to *her*), and laid down their young lives for thee, O mother England! as willingly—poured out their noble blood as cheerfully—as ever, after a long day's sport, when infants, they had rested their wearied heads upon their mother's knees, or had sunk to sleep in her arms. Strange it is, yet true, that she seemed to have no fears for her son's safety, even after this knowledge that the 23rd Dragoons had been memorably engaged; but so much was she enraptured by the knowledge that *his* regiment, and therefore that *he*, had rendered conspicuous service in the dreadful conflict—a service which had actually made them, within the last twelve hours, the foremost topic of conversation in London—so absolutely was fear swallowed up in joy—that, in the mere simplicity of her fervent nature, the poor woman threw her arms round my neck, as she thought of her son, and gave to *me* the kiss which secretly was meant for *him*.

From "The English Mail-coach"

THE VISION OF MIRZA

JOSEPH ADDISON

WHEN I was at Grand Cairo I picked up several Oriental manuscripts, which I have still by me. Among others I met with one entitled, *The Visions of Mirza*, which I have read over with great pleasure. I intend to give it to the public when I have no other entertainment for them ; and shall begin with the first vision, which I have translated word for word as follows :

“ On the fifth day of the moon, which according to the custom of my forefathers I always kept holy, after having washed myself, and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hills of Bagdat, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer. As I was here airing myself on the top of the mountains, I fell into a profound contemplation on the vanity of human life ; and passing from one thought to another, ‘ Surely,’ said I, ‘ man is but a shadow and life a dream.’ Whilst I was thus musing, I cast my eyes towards the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the habit of a shepherd, with a little musical instrument in his hand. As I looked upon him, he applied it to his lips and began to play upon it. The sound of it was exceeding sweet, and wrought into a variety of tunes that were inexpressibly melodious, and altogether different from anything I had ever heard. They put me in mind of those heavenly airs that are played to the departed souls of good men upon their first arrival in paradise, to wear out the impressions of

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their last agonies, and qualify them for the pleasures of that happy place. My heart melted away in secret raptures.

“ I had been often told that the rock before me was the haunt of a genius, and that several had been entertained with music who had passed by it, but never heard that the musician had before made himself visible. When he had raised my thoughts, by those transporting airs which he played, to taste the pleasure of his conversation, as I looked upon him like one astonished, he beckoned to me, and by the waving of his hand directed me to approach the place where he sat. I drew near with that reverence which is due to a superior nature ; and as my heart was entirely subdued by the captivating strains I had heard, I fell down at his feet and wept. The genius smiled upon me with a look of compassion and affability that familiarized him to my imagination, and at once dispelled all the fears and apprehensions with which I approached him. He lifted me from the ground, and taking me by the hand, ‘ Mirza,’ said he, ‘ I have heard thee in thy soliloquies ; follow me.’

“ He then led me to the highest pinnacle of the rock, and placed me on the top of it. ‘ Cast thy eyes eastward,’ said he, ‘ and tell me what thou seest.’ ‘ I see,’ said I, ‘ a huge valley and a prodigious tide of water rolling through it.’ ‘ The valley that thou seest is the vale of misery, and the tide of water that thou seest is part of the great tide of eternity.’ ‘ What is the reason,’ said I, ‘ that the tide I see rises out of a thick mist at one end, and again loses itself in a thick mist at the other ?’ ‘ What thou seest,’ said he, ‘ is that portion of eternity which is called time, measured out by the sun, and reaching from the beginning of the world to its consummation.’ ‘ Examine now,’ said he, ‘ this sea

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that is thus bounded with darkness at both ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in it.' 'I see a bridge,' said I, 'standing in the midst of the tide.' 'The bridge thou seest,' said he, 'is human life; consider it attentively.' Upon a more leisurely survey of it, I found that it consisted of threescore and ten entire arches, with several broken arches, which, added to those that were entire, made up the number about an hundred. As I was counting the arches the genius told me that this bridge consisted at first of a thousand arches; but that a great flood swept away the rest, and left the bridge in the ruinous condition I now beheld it. 'But tell me further,' said he, 'what thou discoverest on it.' 'I see multitudes of people passing over it,' said I, 'and a black cloud hanging on each end of it.' As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the passengers dropping through the bridge, into the great tide that flowed underneath it; and upon farther examination, perceived there were innumerable trap-doors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the passengers no sooner trod upon, but they fell through them into the tide and immediately disappeared. These hidden pitfalls were set very thick at the entrance of the bridge, so that throngs of people no sooner broke through the cloud, but many of them fell into them. They grew thinner towards the middle, but multiplied and lay closer together towards the end of the arches that were entire.

"There were indeed some persons, but their number was very small, that continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches, but fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent with so long a walk.

"I passed some time in the contemplation of this wonderful structure, and the great variety of objects which it presented. My heart was filled with a deep melancholy to see several dropping unexpectedly in the

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midst of mirth and jollity, and catching at everything that stood by them to save themselves. Some were looking up towards the heavens in a thoughtful posture, and in the midst of a speculation stumbled and fell out of sight. Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles that glittered in their eyes and danced before them, but often when they thought themselves within the reach of them, their footing failed and down they sunk.

“ The genius seeing me indulge myself in this melancholy prospect, told me I had dwelt long enough upon it ; ‘ Take thine eyes off the bridge,’ said he, ‘ and tell me if thou yet seest anything thou dost not comprehend.’ Upon looking up, ‘ What mean,’ said I, ‘ those great flights of birds that are perpetually hovering about the bridge, and settling upon it from time to time ? I see vultures, harpies, ravens, cormorants, and among many other feathered creatures, several little winged boys, that perch in great numbers upon the middle arches.’ ‘ These,’ said the genius, ‘ are envy, avarice, superstition, despair, love, with the like cares and passions, that infect human life.’

“ I here fetched a deep sigh. ‘ Alas,’ said I, ‘ man was made in vain. How is he given away to misery and mortality ! tortured in life, and swallowed up in death !’ The genius, being moved with compassion towards me, bid me quit so uncomfortable a prospect. ‘ Look no more,’ said he, ‘ on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for eternity ; but cast thine eye on that thick mist into which the tide bears the several generations of mortals that fall into it.’ I directed my sight as I was ordered, and (whether or no the good genius strengthened it with a supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was before too thick for the eye to penetrate) I saw the valley

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opening at the further end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean, that had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The clouds still rested on one half of it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it ; but the other appeared to me a vast ocean planted with innumerable islands, that were covered with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining seas that ran among them. I could see persons dressed in glorious habits with garlands upon their heads passing among the trees, lying down by the sides of the fountains, or resting on the beds of flowers ; and could hear a confused harmony of singing birds, falling waters, human voices, and musical instruments. Gladness grew in me upon the discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle, that I might fly away to those happy seats ; but the génius told me there was no passage to them, except through the gates of death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. ' The islands,' said he, ' that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the seashore ; there are myriads of islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching farther than thine eye, or even thine imagination, can extend itself. These are the mansions of good men after death, who, according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among these several islands, which abound with pleasures of different kinds and degrees, suitable to the reli'hes and perfections of those who are settled in them ; every island is a paradise, accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, O Mirza, habitations worth contending for ? Does life appear miserable, that gives thee opportunities of earning such

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a reward? Is death to be feared, that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain, who has such an eternity reserved for him.' I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on these happy islands. At length, said I, 'Show me now, I beseech thee, the secrets that lie hid under those dark clouds which cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of adamant.' The genius making me no answer, I turned about to address him a second time, but I found that he had left me. I then turned again to the vision which I had been so long contemplating, but, instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy islands, I saw nothing but the long hollow valley of Bagdat, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing upon the sides of it."

From "The Spectator"

FROZEN VOICES

JOSEPH ADDISON

THERE are no books which I more delight in than in travels, especially those that describe remote countries, and give the writer an opportunity of showing his parts without incurring any danger of being examined or contradicted. Among all authors of this kind, our renowned countryman Sir John Mandeville has distinguished himself by the copiousness of his invention and greatness of his genius. The second to Sir John I take to have been Ferdinand Mendez Pinto, a person of infinite adventure and unbounded imagination. One reads the voyages of these two great wits with as much astonishment as the travels of Ulysses in Homer, or of the Red-Cross Knight in Spenser. All is enchanted ground and fairy land.

I have got into my hands, by great chance, several manuscripts of these two eminent authors, which are filled with greater wonders than any of those they have communicated to the public ; and indeed, were they not so well attested, would appear altogether improbable. I am apt to think the ingenious authors did not publish them with the rest of their works, lest they should pass for fictions and fables ; a caution not unnecessary when the reputation of their veracity was not yet established in the world. But as this reason has now no further weight, I shall make the public a present of these curious pieces at such times as I shall find myself unprovided with other subjects.

The present paper I intend to fill with an extract of

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Sir John's journal, in which that learned and worthy knight gives an account of the freezing and thawing of several short speeches which he made in the territories of Nova Zembla. I need not inform my reader that the author of *Hudibras* alludes to this strange quality in that cold climate, when, speaking of abstracted notions clothed in a visible shape, he adds that apt simile :

Like words congealed in northern air.

Not to keep my reader any longer in suspense, the relation put into modern language is as follows :

“ We were separated by a storm in the latitude of 73, insomuch that only the ship which I was in, with a Dutch and a French vessel, got safe into a creek of Nova Zembla. We landed in order to refit our vessels and store ourselves with provisions. The crew of each vessel made themselves a cabin of turf and wood, at some distance from each other, to fence themselves against the inclemencies of the weather, which was severe beyond imagination. We soon observed that in talking to one another we lost several of our words, and could not hear one another at above two yards' distance, and that, too, when we sat very near the fire. After much perplexity, I found that our words froze in the air before they could reach the ears of the person to whom they were spoken. I was soon confirmed in this conjecture, when, upon the increase of the cold, the whole company grew dumb, or rather deaf ; for every man was sensible, as we afterwards found, that he spoke as well as ever ; but the sounds no sooner took air than they were condensed and lost. It was now a miserable spectacle to see us nodding and gaping at one another, every man talking and no man heard. One might observe a seaman that could hail a ship at a

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league distance, beckoning with his hands, straining his lungs, and tearing his throat, but all in vain.

Nec vox, nec verba, sequuntur.

“ We continued here three weeks in this dismal plight. At length, upon a turn of wind, the air about us began to thaw. Our cabin was immediately filled with a dry clattering sound, which I afterwards found to be the crackling of consonants that broke above our heads, and were often mixed with a gentle hissing, which I imputed to the letter *s*, that occurs so frequently in the English tongue. I soon after felt a breeze of whispers rushing by my ear ; for those being of a soft and gentle substance, immediately liquefied in the warm wind that blew across our cabin. These were soon followed by syllables and short words, and at length by entire sentences, that melted sooner or later, as they were more or less congealed ; so that we now heard everything that had been spoken during the whole three weeks that we had been silent, if I may use that expression. It was now very early in the morning, and yet to my surprise I heard somebody say ‘ Sir John, it is midnight, and time for the ship’s crew to go to bed.’ This I knew to be the pilot’s voice, and upon recollecting myself, I concluded that he had spoken these words to me some days before, though I could not hear them before the present thaw. My reader will easily imagine how the whole crew was amazed to hear every man talking, and see no man opening his mouth. In the midst of this great surprise we were all in, we heard a volley of oaths and curses lasting for a long while, and uttered in a very hoarse voice, which I knew belonged to the boatswain, who was a choleric fellow, and had taken his opportunity of cursing and swearing at me when he thought I could not hear him ;

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for I had several times given him the strappado on that account, as I did not fail to repeat it for these his pious soliloquies when I got him on shipboard.

“ I must not omit the names of several beauties in Wapping, which were heard every now and then, in the midst of a long sigh that accompanied them ; as ‘ Dear Kate ! ’ ‘ Pretty Mrs Peggy ! ’ ‘ When shall I see my Sue again ? ’ This betrayed several amours which had been concealed till that time, and furnished us with a great deal of mirth in our return to England.

“ When this confusion of voices was pretty well over, though I was afraid to offer at speaking, as fearing I should not be heard, I proposed to visit the Dutch cabin, which lay about a mile farther up into the country. My crew were extremely rejoiced to find they had again recovered their hearing, though every man uttered his voice with the same apprehensions that I had done :

Et timide verba intermissa retentat.

“ At about half a mile’s distance from our cabin, we heard the groanings of a bear, which at first startled us ; but upon inquiry we were informed by some of our company that he was dead, and now lay in salt, having been killed upon that very spot about a fortnight before in the time of the frost. Not far from the same place we were likewise entertained with some posthumous snarls and barkings of a fox.

“ We at length arrived at the little Dutch settlement, and upon entering the room, found it filled with sighs that smelt of brandy, and several other unsavoury sounds that were altogether inarticulate. My valet, who was an Irishman, fell into so great a rage at what he heard, that he drew his sword ; but not knowing where to lay the blame, he put it up again. We were

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stunned with these confused noises, but did not hear a single word till about half an hour later, which I ascribed to the harsh and obdurate sounds of that language, which wanted more time than ours to melt and become audible.

“ After having here met with a very hearty welcome, we went to the French cabin, who, to make amends for their three weeks' silence, were talking and disputing with greater rapidity and confusion than ever I heard in an assembly even of that nation. Their language, as I found, upon the first giving of the weather, fell asunder and dissolved. I was here convinced of an error into which I had before fallen ; for I fancied, that for the freezing of the sound, it was necessary for it to be wrapped up, and, as it were, preserved in breath ; but I found my mistake when I heard the sound of a kit playing a minuet over our heads. I asked the occasion of it ; upon which one of the company told me that it would play there above a week longer if the thaw continued : ‘ For,’ says he, ‘ finding ourselves bereft of speech we prevailed upon one of the company, who had this musical instrument about him, to play to us from morning to night ; all which time we employed in dancing, in order to dissipate our chagrin, *et tuer le temps.*’ ”

Here Sir John gives very good philosophical reasons why the kit could be heard during the frost ; but as they are something prolix I pass over them in silence, and shall only observe that the honourable author seems, by his quotations, to have been well versed in the ancient poets, which perhaps raised his fancy above the ordinary pitch of historians, and very much contributed to the embellishment of his writings.

From "The Tatler"

THE FIRST KNIGHTS OF THE AIR

WHEN Sir Francis Drake, the first Englishman to circumnavigate the world, then a very big and mysterious place, reached Deptford, Queen Elizabeth went down in State and knighted him on the deck of the *Golden Hind*. It was her habit to distinguish prowess and virtue without over-much regard to the wealth or position of the persons who received her favours. The Queen also gave Drake an elaborate crest, depicting on a globe a ship trained about with hawsers by a hand issuing out of the clouds, the motto being *Auxilio Divino*, but the pioneer navigator preferred a simpler device, an eagle displayed, emblematic of power and speed. We stand face to face with an achievement which may fittingly be set side by side in the pages of history with that of the great seaman of the sixteenth century, and the King, so Mr Winston Churchill announced yesterday, has decided to confer knighthoods on the two men who have flown the Atlantic—the two eagles of this new century. They will become, and very fittingly, Knights Commander of the Order of the British Empire. To-day they will travel down to Windsor to be received by His Majesty. Throughout this country and the Empire satisfaction will be expressed that the King should, in this Elizabethan manner, have set the seal of pride of the British people on an exploit which, apart from its romantic appeal to the imagination, marks the conquest of the air by man and the opening of a new era in the means of communication between the Old World and the New,

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separated by the broad expanse of the Atlantic. The very success of these two knights of the air—the very absence of misfortune—has somewhat tended to conceal the magnitude of their triumph. We can only obtain an adequate conception of what their landing in Ireland signifies in human endurance and skill and engineering perfection if we look back, seeking for a vantage-point of observation. As they rose from St John's to explore the upper world of cloud and fog and sleet, they might have contrasted their experience with that of the discoverer of this, the oldest Dominion of the British Empire. The first journey to Newfoundland was undertaken by Sir Humphrey Gilbert. He set out from Plymouth in the *Delight*, with four other little ships, on 11th June, 1583, and considered himself the happiest of mortals when on 30th July, after buffeting the winds and seas for seven weeks, he sighted the northern shores of the land of his adventurous quest. Now the leagues of ocean separating Ireland from Newfoundland have been covered—not by sea, but by air—in less than sixteen hours. The two airmen put out on their journey a week ago, after tea-time, and they landed in Ireland for breakfast the next morning.

At yesterday's lunch, when these two modest and yet proud young men were presented with the prize offered by the *Daily Mail* for the first non-stop Atlantic flight, Mr Churchill described this air voyage as "one of the greatest events in the history of human progress." While we have become powerfully equipped with all the resources garnered and applied by the scientist and the engineer, our race has also preserved the audacity, the courage, the physical qualities, and the vision of "the old heroic bygone times." The triumph is an individual one in the sense that the State had little or nothing to do with it. The attempt was undertaken in

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as full knowledge of peril as Sir Humphrey Gilbert possessed when he set forth in his frail little vessel in the sixteenth century. For the upper atmosphere in which these men travelled had never been explored before from shore to shore ; little was known of the forces to be encountered. When Columbus discovered the American continent after ninety days, his contemporaries no doubt regarded his voyage as a freak performance, likely to be only infrequently repeated. The time was to come, nevertheless, when the crossing of the Atlantic in ships not very dissimilar from his was regarded as a commonplace, even before the steam-engine began to annihilate distance. And now the timid and sceptical may declare that these two knights of the air have merely proved that what was thought impossible is possible, and that there, for all practical purposes, the matter rests. We are convinced that these men of little faith are wrong. We are at the opening of a new era of travel. No one can set a limit to the application of the new power of the air which has been conferred on this generation. It may be that there will be many set-backs, but by a process of evolutionary discovery, long or short, cheap or costly in human life, the air trail, now traced from the American continent to Europe, will assuredly be followed by millions of men, as well as women. The age of miracles has not ended, for the internal combustion engine, in association with audacity and skill such as these two gallant airmen have exhibited, has placed within the reach of man avenues of communication which may yet become as familiar as the sea lanes along which the great liners now pass from shore to shore.

"The Daily Telegraph," June 21, 1919

THE SQUIRE'S STORY

ELIZABETH GASKELL

IN the year 1769 the little town of Barford was thrown into a state of great excitement by the intelligence that a gentleman (and "quite the gentleman," said the landlord of the George Inn), had been looking at Mr Clavering's old house. This house was neither in the town nor in the country. It stood on the outskirts of Barford, on the roadside leading to Derby. The last occupant had been a Mr Clavering—a Northumberland gentleman of good family—who had come to live in Barford while he was but a younger son; but when some elder branches of the family died, he had returned to take possession of the family estate. The house of which I speak was called the White House, from its being covered with a greyish kind of stucco. It had a good garden to the back, and Mr Clavering had built capital stables, with what were then considered the latest improvements. The point of good stabling was expected to let the house, as it was in a hunting county; otherwise it had few recommendations. There were many bedrooms; some entered through others, even to the number of five, leading one beyond the other; several sitting-rooms of the small and poky kind, wainscotted round with wood, and then painted a heavy slate colour; one good dining-room and a drawing-room over it, both looking into the garden, with pleasant bow-windows.

Such was the accommodation offered by the White House. It did not seem to be very tempting to

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strangers, though the good people of Barford rather piqued themselves on it, as the largest house in the town; and as a house in which 'townspeople' and 'county people' had often met at Mr Clavering's friendly dinners. To appreciate this circumstance of pleasant recollection, you should have lived some years in a little country town, surrounded by gentlemen's seats. You would then understand how a bow or a courtesy from a member of a county family elevates the individuals who receive it almost as much, in their own eyes, as the pair of blue garters fringed with silver did Mr Bickerstaff's ward. They trip lightly on air for a whole day afterwards. Now Mr Clavering was gone, where could town and county mingle?

I mention these things that you may have an idea of the desirability of the letting of the White House in the Barfordites' imagination; and to make the mixture thick and slab, you must add for yourselves the bustle, the mystery, and the importance which every little event either causes or assumes in a small town; and then, perhaps, it will be no wonder to you that twenty ragged little urchins accompanied the 'gentleman' aforesaid to the door of the White House; and that, although he was above an hour inspecting it under the auspices of Mr Jones, the agent's clerk, thirty more had joined themselves on to the wondering crowd before his exit, and awaited such crumbs of intelligence as they could gather before they were threatened or whipped out of hearing distance. Presently out came the 'gentleman' and the lawyer's clerk. The latter was speaking as he followed the former over the threshold. The gentleman was tall, well-dressed, handsome; but there was a sinister cold look in his quick-glancing, light blue eye, which a keen observer might not have liked. There were no keen observers among the boys, and ill-condi-

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tioned gaping girls. But they stood too near ; inconveniently close ; and the gentleman, lifting up his right hand, in which he carried a short riding-whip, dealt one or two sharp blows to the nearest, with a look of savage enjoyment on his face as they moved away whimpering and crying. An instant after, his expression of countenance had changed.

“ Here ! ” said he, drawing out a handful of money, partly silver, partly copper, and throwing it into the midst of them. “ Scramble for it ! fight it out, my lads ! come this afternoon, at three, to the George, and I'll throw you out some more.” So the boys hurrahed for him as he walked off with the agent's clerk. He chuckled to himself, as over a pleasant thought. “ I'll have some fun with those lads,” he said ; “ I'll teach 'em to come prowling and prying about me. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll make the money so hot in the fire-shovel that it shall burn their fingers. You come and see the faces and the howling. I shall be very glad if you will dine with me at two ; and by that time I may have made up my mind respecting the house.”

Mr Jones, the agent's clerk, agreed to come to the George at two, but, somehow, he had a distaste for his entertainer. Mr Jones would not like to have said, even to himself, that a man with a purse full of money, who kept many horses, and spoke familiarly of noblemen—above all, who thought of taking the White House—could be anything but a gentleman ; but still the uneasy wonder as to who this Mr Robinson Higgins cou'd be, filled the clerk's mind long after Mr Higgins, Mr Higgins's servants, and Mr Higgins's stud had taken possession of the White House.

The White House was re-stuccoed (this time of a pale yellow colour), and put into thorough repair by the

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accommodating and delighted landlord ; while his tenant seemed inclined to spend any amount of money on internal decorations, which were showy and effective in their character, enough to make the White House a nine days' wonder to the good people of Barford. The slate-coloured paints became pink, and were picked out with gold ; the old-fashioned banisters were replaced by newly gilt ones ; but, above all, the stables were a sight to be seen. Since the days of the Roman Emperor never was there such provision made for the care, the comfort, and the health of horses. But every one said it was no wonder, when they were led through Barford, covered up to their eyes, but curving their arched and delicate necks, and prancing with short high steps, in repressed eagerness. Only one groom came with them ; yet they required the care of three men. Mr Higgins, however, preferred engaging two lads out of Barford ; and Barford highly approved of his preference. Not only was it kind and thoughtful to give employment to the lounging lads themselves, but they were receiving such a training in Mr Higgins's stables as might fit them for Doncaster or Newmarket. The district of Derbyshire in which Barford was situated, was too close to Leicestershire not to support a hunt and a pack of hounds. The master of the hounds was a certain Sir Harry Manley, who was *aut* a huntsman *aut nullus*. He measured a man by the " length of his fork," not by the expression of his countenance, or the shape of his head. But as Sir Harry was wont to observe, there was such a thing as too long a fork, so his approbation was withheld until he had seen a man on horseback ; and if his seat there was square and easy, his hand light, and his courage good, Sir Harry hailed him as a brother.

Mr Higgins attended the first meet of the season, not as a subscriber but as an amateur. The Barford hunts-

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men piqued themselves on their bold riding ; and their knowledge of the country came by nature ; yet this new strange man, whom nobody knew, was in' at the death, sitting on his horse, both well breathed and calm, without a hair turned on the sleek skin of the latter, supremely addressing the old huntsman as he hacked off the tail of the fox ; and he, the old man, who was testy even under Sir Harry's slightest rebuke, and flew out on any other member of the hunt that dared to utter a word against his sixty years' experience as stable-boy, groom, poacher, and what not—he, old Isaac Wormeley, was meekly listening to the wisdom of this stranger, only now and then giving one of his quick, up-turning, cunning glances, not unlike the sharp o'er-canny looks of the poor deceased Reynard, round whom the hounds were howling, unadmonished by the short whip, which was now tucked into Wormeley's well-worn pocket. When Sir Harry rode into the copse—full of dead brushwood and wet tangled grass—and was followed by the members of the hunt, as one by one they cantered past, Mr Higgins took off his cap and bowed—half deferentially, half insolently—with a lurking smile in the corner of his eye at the discomfited looks of one or two of the laggards. “ A famous run, sir,” said Sir Harry. “ The first time you have hunted in our country ; but I hope we shall see you often.”

“ I hope to become a member of the hunt, sir,” said Mr Higgins.

“ Most happy—proud, I'm sure, to receive so daring a rider among us. You took the Cropper-gate, I fancy ; while some of our friends here ”—scowling at one or two cowards by way of finishing his speech. “ Allow me to introduce myself—master of the hounds,” he fumbled in his waistcoat pocket for the card on which his name was formally inscribed. “ Some of our friends here are

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kind enough to come home with me to dinner ; might I ask for the honour ? ”

“ My name is Higgins,” replied the stranger, bowing low. “ I am only lately come to occupy the White House at Barford, and I have not as yet presented my letters of introduction.”

“ Hang it ! ” replied Sir Harry ; “ a man with a seat like yours, and that good brush in your hand, might ride up to any door in the county (I’m a Leicestershire man!), and be a welcome guest. Mr Higgins, I shall be proud to become better acquainted with you over my dinner-table.”

Mr Higgins knew pretty well how to improve the acquaintance thus begun. He could sing a good song, tell a good story, and was well up in practical jokes ; with plenty of that keen worldly sense, which seems like an instinct in some men, and which in this case taught him on whom he might play off such jokes, with impunity from their resentment, and with a security of applause from the more boisterous, vehement, or prosperous. At the end of twelve months Mr Robinson Higgins was, out-and-out, the most popular member of the Barford hunt ; had beaten all the others by a couple of lengths, as his first patron, Sir Harry, observed one evening, when they were just leaving the dinner-table of an old hunting squire in the neighbourhood.

“ Because, you know,” said Squire Hearn, holding Sir Harry by the button—“ I mean, you see, this young spark is looking sweet upon Catherine ; and she’s a good girl, and will have ten thousand pounds down, the day she’s married, by her mother’s will ; and—excuse me, Sir Harry—but I should not like my girl to throw herself away.”

Though Sir Harry had a long ride before him, and but the early and short light of a new moon to take it in, his

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kind heart was so much touched by Squire Hearn's trembling, tearful anxiety, that he stopped and turned back into the dining-room to say, with more asseverations than I care to give :

“ My good Squire, I may say, I know that man pretty well by this time ; and a better fellow never existed. If I had twenty daughters he should have the pick of them.”

Squire Hearn never thought of asking the grounds for his old friend's opinion of Mr Higgins ; it had been given with too much earnestness for any doubts to cross the old man's mind as to the possibility of its not being well founded. Mr Hearn was not a doubter, or a thinker, or suspicious by nature ; it was simply his love for Catherine, his only child, that prompted his anxiety in this case ; and, after what Sir Harry had said, the old man could totter with an easy mind, though not with very steady legs, into the drawing-room, where his bonny, blushing daughter Catherine and Mr Higgins stood close together on the hearth-rug—he whispering, she listening with downcast eyes. She looked so happy, so like her dead mother had looked when the Squire was a young man, that all his thought was how to please her most. His son and heir was about to be married, and bring his wife to live with the Squire ; Barford and the White House were not distant an hour's ride ; and, even as these thoughts passed through his mind, he asked Mr Higgins, if he could not stay all night—the young moon was already set—the roads would be dark—and Catherine looked up with a pretty anxiety, which, however, had not much doubt in it, for the answer.

With every encouragement of this kind from the old Squire, it took everybody rather by surprise when one morning it was discovered that Miss Catherine Hearn

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was missing ; and when, according to the usual fashion in such cases, a note was found, saying that she had eloped with " the man of her heart," and gone to Gretna Green, no one could imagine why she could not quietly have stopped at home and been married in the parish church. She had always been a romantic, sentimental girl ; very pretty and very affectionate, and very much spoiled, and very much wanting in common sense. Her indulgent father was deeply hurt at this want of confidence in his never-varying affection ; but when his son came, hot with indignation from the Baronet's (his future father-in-law's house, where every form of law and of ceremony was to accompany his own impending marriage), Squire Hearn pleaded the cause of the young couple with imploring cogency, and protested that it was a piece of spirit in his daughter, which he admired and was proud of. However, it ended with Mr Nathaniel Hearn's declaring that he and his wife would have nothing to do with his sister and her husband. " Wait till you've seen him, Nat ! " said the old Squire, trembling with his distressful anticipations of family discord. " He's an excuse for any girl. Only ask Sir Harry's opinion of him." " Confound Sir Harry ! So that a man sits his horse well, Sir Harry cares nothing about anything else. Who is this man—this fellow ? Where does he come from ? What are his means ? Who are his family ? "

" He comes from the south—Surrey or Somersetshire, I forget which ; and he pays his way well and liberally. There's not a tradesman in Barford but says he cares no more for money than for water ; he spends like a prince, Nat. I don't know who his family are, but he seals with a coat of arms, which may tell you if you want to know—and he goes regularly to collect his rents from his estates in the south. Oh, Nat ! if you would but be

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friendly, I should be as well pleased with Kitty's marriage as any father in the county."

Mr Nathaniel Hearn gloomed, and muttered an oath or two to himself. The poor old father was reaping the consequences of his weak indulgence to his two children. Mr and Mrs Nathaniel Hearn kept apart from Catherine and her husband; and Squire Hearn durst never ask them to Levison Hall, though it was his own house. Indeed, he stole away as if he were a culprit whenever he went to visit the White House; and if he passed a night there, he was fain to equivocate when he returned home the next day; an equivocation which was well interpreted by the surly, proud Nathaniel. But the younger Mr and Mrs Hearn were the only people who did not visit at the White House. Mr and Mrs Higgins were decidedly more popular than their brother and sister-in-law. She made a very pretty, sweet-tempered hostess, and her education had not been such as to make her intolerant of any want of refinement in the associates who gathered round her husband. She had gentle smiles for townspeople as well as county people; and unconsciously played an admirable second in her husband's project of making himself universally popular.

But there is some one to make ill-natured remarks, and draw ill-natured conclusions from very simple premises, in every place; and in Barford this bird of ill-omen was a Miss Pratt. She did not hunt—so Mr Higgins's admirable riding did not call out her admiration. She did not drink—so the well-selected wines, so lavishly dispensed among his guests, could never mollify Miss Pratt. She could not bear comic songs, or buffo stories—so, in that way, her approbation was impregnable. And these three secrets of popularity constituted Mr Higgins's great charm. Miss Pratt sat and watched. Her face looked immoveably grave at

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the end of any of Mr Higgins's best stories ; but there was a keen, needle-like glance of her unwinking little eyes, which Mr Higgins felt rather than saw, and which made him shiver, even on a hot day, when it fell upon him. Miss Pratt was a dissenter, and, to propitiate this female Mordecai, Mr Higgins asked the dissenting minister whose services she attended, to dinner ; kept himself and his company in good order ; gave a handsome donation to the poor of the chapel. All in vain—Miss Pratt stirred not a muscle more of her face towards graciousness ; and Mr Higgins was conscious that, in spite of all his open efforts to captivate Mr Davis, there was a secret influence on the other side, throwing in doubts and suspicions, and evil interpretations of all he said or did. Miss Pratt, the little, plain old maid, living on eighty pounds a year, was the thorn in the popular Mr Higgins's side, although she had never spoken one uncivil word to him ; indeed, on the contrary, had treated him with a stiff and elaborate civility.

The thorn—the grief to Mrs Higgins was this. They had no children ! Oh ! how she would stand and envy the careless, busy motion of half a dozen children ; and then, when observed, move on with a deep, deep sigh of yearning regret. But it was as well.

It was noticed that Mr Higgins was remarkably careful of his health. He ate, drank, took exercise, rested, by some secret rules of his own ; occasionally bursting into an excess, it is true, but only on rare occasions—such as when he returned from visiting his estates in the south, and collecting his rents. That unusual exertion and fatigue—for there were no stage-coaches within forty miles of Barford, and he, like most country gentlemen of that day, would have preferred riding if there had been—seemed to require some strange excess to compensate for it ; and rumours went

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through the town that he shut himself up, and drank enormously for some days after his return. But no one was admitted to these orgies.

One day—they remembered it well afterwards—the hounds met not far from the town ; and the fox was found in a part of the wild heath, which was beginning to be enclosed by a few of the more wealthy townspeople, who were desirous of building themselves houses rather more in the country than those they had hitherto lived in. Among these, the principal was a Mr Dudgeon, the attorney of Barford, and the agent for all the county families about. The firm of Dudgeon had managed the leases, the marriage-settlements, and the wills, of the neighbourhood for generations. Mr Dudgeon's father had the responsibility of collecting the landowners' rents just as the present Mr Dudgeon had at the time of which I speak : and as his son and his son's son have done since. Their business was an hereditary estate to them ; and with something of the old feudal feeling was mixed a kind of proud humility at their position towards the squires whose family secrets they had mastered, and the mysteries of whose fortunes and estates were better known to the Messrs Dudgeon than to themselves.

Mr John Dudgeon had built himself a house on Wildbury Heath ; a mere cottage as he called it : but though only two stories high, it spread out far and wide, and workpeople from Derby had been sent for on purpose to make the inside as complete as possible. The gardens too were exquisite in arrangement, if not very extensive ; and not a flower was grown in them but of the rarest species. It must have been somewhat of a mortification to the owner of this dainty place when, on the day of which I speak, the fox, after a long race, during which he had described a circle of many miles, took refuge in

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the garden ; but Mr Dudgeon put a good face on the matter when a gentleman hunter, with the careless insolence of the squires of those days and that place, rode across the velvet lawn, and tapping at the window of the dining-room with his whip-handle, asked permission—no ! that is not it—rather, informed Mr Dudgeon of their intention—to enter his garden in a body, and have the fox unearthed. Mr Dudgeon compelled himself to smile assent, with the grace of a masculine Griselda ; and then he hastily gave orders to have all that the house afforded of provision set out for luncheon, guessing rightly enough that a six hours' run would give even homely fare an acceptable welcome. He bore without wincing the entrance of the dirty boots into his exquisitely clean rooms ; he only felt grateful for the care with which Mr Higgins strode about, laboriously and noiselessly moving on the tip of his toes, as he reconnoitred the rooms with a curious eye.

“ I'm going to build a house myself, Dudgeon ; and, upon my word, I don't think I could take a better model than yours.”

“ Oh ! my poor cottage would be too small to afford any hints for such a house as you would wish to build, Mr Higgins,” replied Mr Dudgeon, gently rubbing his hands nevertheless at the compliment.

“ Not at all ! not at all ! Let me see. You have dining-room, drawing-room,”—he hesitated, and Mr Dudgeon filled up the blank as he expected.

“ Four sitting-rooms and the bedrooms. But allow me to show you over the house. I confess I took some pains in arranging it, and, though far smaller than what you would require, it may, nevertheless, afford you some hints.”

So they left the eating gentlemen with their mouths and their plates quite full, and the scent of the fox over-

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powering that of the hasty rashers of ham ; and they carefully inspected all the ground-floor rooms. Then Mr Dudgeon said :

“ If you are not tired, Mr Higgins—it is rather my hobby, so you must pull me up if you are—we will go upstairs, and I will show you my sanctum.”

Mr Dudgeon's sanctum was the centre room, over the porch, which formed a balcony, and which was carefully filled with choice flowers in pots. Inside, there were all kinds of elegant contrivances for hiding the real strength of all the boxes and chests required by the particular nature of Mr Dudgeon's business : for although his office was in Barford, he kept (as he informed Mr Higgins) what was the most valuable here, as being safer than an office which was locked up and left every night. But, as Mr Higgins reminded him with a sly poke in the side, when next they met, his own house was not over-secure. A fortnight after the gentlemen of the Barford hunt lunched there, Mr Dudgeon's strong-box—in his sanctum upstairs, with the mysterious spring-bolt to the window invented by himself, and the secret of which was only known to the inventor and a few of his most intimate friends, to whom he had proudly shown it ;—this strong-box, containing the collected Christmas rents of half a dozen landlords (there was then no bank nearer than Derby), was rifled ; and the secretly rich Mr Dudgeon had to stop his agent in his purchases of paintings by Flemish artists, because the money was required to make good the missing rents.

The Dogberries and Verges of those days were quite incapable of obtaining any clue to the robber or robbers ; and though one or two vagrants were taken up and brought before Mr Dunover and Mr Higgins, the magistrates who usually attended in the court-room at Barford, there was no evidence brought against them,

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and after a couple of nights' durance in the lock-ups they were set at liberty. But it became a standing joke with Mr Higgins to ask Mr Dudgeon, from time to time, whether he could recommend him a place of safety for his valuables ; or, if he had made any more inventions lately for securing houses from robbers.

About two years after this time—about seven years after Mr Higgins had been married—one Tuesday evening, Mr Davis was sitting reading the news in the coffee-room of the George Inn. He belonged to a club of gentlemen who met there occasionally to play at whist, to read what few newspapers and magazines were published in those days, to chat about the market at Derby, and prices all over the country. This Tuesday night it was a black frost ; and few people were in the room. Mr Davis was anxious to finish an article in the *Gentleman's Magazine* ; indeed, he was making extracts from it, intending to answer it, and yet unable with his small income to purchase a copy. So he stayed late ; it was past nine, and at ten o'clock the room was closed. But while he wrote, Mr Higgins came in. He was pale and haggard with cold ; Mr Davis, who had had for some time sole possession of the fire, moved politely on one side, and handed to the new comer the sole London newspaper which the room afforded. Mr Higgins accepted it, and made some remark on the intense coldness of the weather ; but Mr Davis was too full of his article, and intended reply, to fall into conversation readily. Mr Higgins hitched his chair nearer to the fire, and put his feet on the fender, giving an audible shudder. He put the newspaper on one end of the table near him, and sat gazing into the red embers of the fire, crouching down over them as if his very marrow were chilled. At length he said :

“ There is no account of the murder at Bath in that

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paper?" Mr Davis, who had finished taking his notes, and was preparing to go, stopped short, and asked:

"Has there been a murder at Bath? No! I have not seen anything of it—who was murdered?"

"Oh! it was a shocking, terrible murder!" said Mr Higgins, not raising his look from the fire, but gazing on with his eyes dilated till the whites were seen all round them. "A terrible, terrible murder! I wonder what will become of the murderer? I can fancy the red glowing centre of that fire—look and see how infinitely distant it seems, and how the distance magnifies it into something awful and unquenchable."

"My dear sir, you are feverish; how you shake and shiver!" said Mr Davis, thinking privately that his companion had symptoms of fever, and that he was wandering in his mind.

"Oh, no!" said Mr Higgins. "I am not feverish. It is the night which is so cold." And for a time he talked with Mr Davis about the article in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, for he was rather a reader himself, and could take more interest in Mr Davis's pursuits than most of the people at Barford. At length it drew near to ten, and Mr Davis rose up to go home to his lodgings.

"No, Davis, don't go. I want you here. We will have a bottle of port together, and that will put Saunders into good humour. I want to tell you about this murder," he continued, dropping his voice, and speaking hoarse and low. "She was an old woman, and he killed her, sitting reading her Bible by her own fireside!" He looked at Mr Davis with a strange searching gaze, as if trying to find some sympathy in the horror which the idea presented to him.

"Who do you mean, my dear sir? What is this murder you are so full of? No one has been murdered here."

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“ No, you fool ! I tell you it was in Bath ! ” said Mr Higgins, with sudden passion ; and then calming himself to most velvet-smoothness of manner, he laid his hand on Mr Davis’s knee, there, as they sat by the fire, and gently detaining him, began the narration of the crime he was so full of ; but his voice and manner were constrained to a stony quietude : he never looked in Mr Davis’s face ; once or twice, as Mr Davis remembered afterwards, his grip tightened like a compressing vice.

“ She lived in a small house in a quiet old-fashioned street, she and her maid. People said she was a good old woman ; but for all that she hoarded and hoarded, and never gave to the poor. Mr Davis, it is wicked not to give to the poor—wicked—wicked, is it not ? I always give to the poor, for once I read in the Bible that ‘ Charity covereth a multitude of sins.’ The wicked old woman never gave, but hoarded her money, and saved, and saved. Some one heard of it ; I say she threw a temptation in his way, and God will punish her for it. And this man—or it might be a woman, who knows ?—and this person—heard also that she went to church in the mornings, and her maid in the afternoons ; and so—while the maid was at church, and the street and the house quite still, and the darkness of a winter afternoon coming on—she was nodding over the Bible—and that, mark you ! is a sin, and one that God will avenge sooner or later ; and a step came in the dusk up the stair, and that person I told you of stood in the room. At first he—no ! At first, it is supposed—for, you understand, all this is mere guess work—it is supposed that he asked her civilly enough to give him her money, or to tell him where it was ; but the old miser defied him, and would not ask for mercy and give up her keys, even when he threatened her, but looked him in the face as if he had

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been a baby—Oh, God! Mr Davis, I once dreamt when I was a little innocent boy that I should commit a crime like this, and I wakened up crying; and my mother comforted me—that is the reason I tremble so now—that and the cold, for it is very very cold!”

“But did he murder the old lady?” asked Mr Davis. “I beg your pardon, sir, but I am interested by your story.”

“Yes! he cut her throat; and there she lies yet in her quiet little parlour, with her face upturned and all ghastly white, in the middle of a pool of blood. Mr Davis, this wine is no better than water; I must have some brandy!”

Mr Davis was horror-struck by the story, which seemed to have fascinated him as much as it had done his companion.

“Have they got any clue to the murderer?” said he. Mr Higgins drank down half a tumbler of raw brandy before he answered.

“No! no clue whatever. They will never be able to discover him, and I should not wonder—Mr Davis—I should not wonder if he repented after all, and did bitter penance for his crime; and if so—will there be mercy for him at the last day?”

“God knows!” said Mr Davis, with solemnity. “It is an awful story,” continued he, rousing himself; “I hardly like to leave this warm light room and go out into the darkness after hearing it. But it must be done,” buttoning on his great coat—“I can only say I hope and trust they will find out the murderer and hang him—If you’ll take my advice, Mr Higgins, you’ll have your bed warmed, and drink a treacle-posset just the last thing; and, if you’ll allow me, I’ll send you my answer to Philologus before it goes up to old Urban.”

The next morning Mr Davis went to call on Miss

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Pratt, who was not very well ; and by way of being agreeable and entertaining, he related to her all he had heard the night before about the murder at Bath ; and really he made a very pretty connected story out of it, and interested Miss Pratt very much in the fate of the old lady—partly because of a similarity in their situations ; for she also privately hoarded money, and had but one servant, and stopped at home alone on Sunday afternoons to allow her servant to go to church.

“ And when did all this happen ? ” she asked.

“ I don't know if Mr Higgins named the day ; and yet I think it must have been on this very last Sunday.”

“ And to-day is Wednesday. Ill news travels fast.”

“ Yes, Mr Higgins thought it might have been in the London newspaper.”

“ That it could never be. Where did Mr Higgins learn all about it ? ”

“ I don't know, I did not ask ; I think he only came home yesterday : he had been south to collect his rents, somebody said.”

Miss Pratt grunted. She used to vent her dislike and suspicions of Mr Higgins in a grunt whenever his name was mentioned.

“ Well, I shan't see you for some days. Godfrey Merton has asked me to go and stay with him and his sister ; and I think it will do me good. Besides,” added she, “ these winter evenings—and these murderers at large in the country—I don't quite like living with only Peggy to call to in case of need.”

Miss Pratt went to stay with her cousin, Mr Merton. He was an active magistrate, and enjoyed his reputation as such. One day he came in, having just received his letters.

“ Bad account of the morals of your little town here, Jessy ! ” said he, touching one of his letters. “ You've

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either a murderer among you, or some friend of a murderer. Here's a poor old lady at Bath had her throat cut last Sunday week ; and I've a letter from the Home Office, asking to lend them 'my very efficient aid,' as they are pleased to call it, towards finding out the culprit. It seems he must have been thirsty, and of a comfortable jolly turn ; for before going to his horrid work he tapped a barrel of ginger wine the old lady had set by to work ; and he wrapped the spigot round with a piece of a letter taken out of his pocket, as may be supposed ; and this piece of a letter was found afterwards ; there are only these letters on the outside, '*-ns, Esq., -arford, -egworth,*' which some one has ingeniously made out to mean Barford, near Kegworth. On the other side there is some allusion to a racehorse, I conjecture, though the name is singular enough ; 'Church-and-King-and-down-with-the-Rump.' "

Miss Pratt caught at this name immediately ; it had hurt her feelings as a dissenter only a few months ago, and she remembered it well.

"Mr Nat Hearn has—or had (as I am speaking in the witness-box, as it were, I must take care of my tenses), a horse with that ridiculous name."

"Mr Nat Hearn," repeated Mr Merton, making a note of the intelligence ; then he recurred to his letter from the Home Office again.

"There is also a piece of a small key, broken in the futile attempt to open a desk—well, well. Nothing more of consequence. The letter is what we must rely upon."

"Mr Davis said that Mr Higgins told him——" Miss Pratt began.

"Higgins!" exclaimed Mr Merton, "*ns.* Is it Higgins, the blustering fellow that ran away with Nat Hearn's sister?"

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“ Yes ! ” said Miss Pratt. “ But though he has never been a favourite of mine——”

“ *ns*,” repeated Mr Merton. “ It is too horrible to think of ; a member of the hunt—kind old Squire Hearn’s son-in-law ! Who else have you in Barford with names that end in *ns* ? ”

“ There’s Jackson, and Higginson, and Blenkinsop, and Davis, and Jones. Cousin ! One thing strikes me—how did Mr Higgins know all about it to tell Mr Davis on Tuesday what had happened on Sunday afternoon ? ”

There is no need to add much more. Those curious in lives of the highwaymen may find the name of Higgins as conspicuous among those annals as that of Claude Duval. Kate Hearn’s husband collected his rents on the highway, like many another ‘ gentleman ’ of the day ; but, having been unlucky in one or two of his adventures, and hearing exaggerated accounts of the hoarded wealth of the old lady at Bath, he was led on from robbery to murder, and was hung for his crime at Derby, in 1775.

He had not been an unkind husband ; and his poor wife took lodgings in Derby to be near him in his last moments—his awful last moments. Her old father went with her everywhere but into her husband’s cell ; and wrung her heart by constantly accusing himself of having promoted her marriage with a man of whom he knew so little. He abdicated his squireship in favour of his son Nathaniel. Nat was prosperous, and the helpless silly father could be of no use to him ; but to his widowed daughter the foolish fond old man was all in all ; her knight, her protector, her companion—her most faithful loving companion. Only he ever declined assuming the office of her counsellor—shaking his head sadly, and saying :

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“ Ah! Kate, Kate! if I had had more wisdom to have advised thee better, thou need'st not have been an exile here in Brussels, shrinking from the sight of every English person as if they knew thy story.”

I saw the White House not a month ago; it was to let, perhaps for the twentieth time since Mr Higgins occupied it; but still the tradition goes in Barford that once upon a time a highwayman lived there, and amassed untold treasures; and that the ill-gotten wealth yet remains walled up in some unknown concealed chamber; but in what part of the house no one knows.

Will any of you become tenants, and try to find out this mysterious closet? I can furnish the exact address to any applicant who wishes for it.

From "Lizzie Leigh and Other Tales"

THE ITALIAN PRISONER

CHARLES DICKENS

THE rising of the Italian people from under their unutterable wrongs, and the tardy burst of day upon them after the long long night of oppression that has darkened their beautiful country, have naturally caused my mind to dwell often of late on my own small wanderings in Italy. Connected with them, is a curious little drama, in which the character I myself sustained was so very subordinate that I may relate its story without any fear of being suspected of self-display. It is strictly a true story.

I am newly arrived one summer evening, in a certain small town on the Mediterranean. I have had my dinner at the inn, and I and the mosquitoes are coming out into the streets together. It is far from Naples ; but a bright brown plump little woman-servant at the inn, is a Neapolitan, and is so vivaciously expert in pantomimic action, that in the single moment of answering my request to have a pair of shoes cleaned which I have left up-stairs, she plies imaginary brushes, and goes completely through the motions of polishing the shoes up, and laying them at my feet. I smile at the brisk little woman in perfect satisfaction with her briskness ; and the brisk little woman, amiably pleased with me because I am pleased with her, claps her hands and laughs delightfully. We are in the inn yard. As the little woman's bright eyes sparkle on the cigarette I am smoking, I make bold to offer her one ; she accepts it none the less merrily, because I touch a most

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charming little dimple in her fat cheek, with its light paper end. Glancing up at the many green lattices to assure herself that the mistress is not looking on, the little woman then puts her two little dimple arms a-kimbo, and stands on tiptoe to light her cigarette at mine. "And now, dear little sir," says she, puffing out smoke in a most innocent and cherubic manner, "keep quite straight on, take the first to the right, and probably you will see him standing at his door."

I have a commission to "him," and I have been inquiring about him. I have carried the commission about Italy several months. Before I left England, there came to me one night a certain generous and gentle English nobleman (he is dead in these days when I relate the story, and exiles have lost their best British friend), with this request: "Whenever you come to such a town, will you seek out one Giovanni Carlavero, who keeps a little wine-shop there, mention my name to him suddenly, and observe how it affects him?" I accepted the trust, and am on my way to discharge it.

The sirocco has been blowing all day, and it is a hot unwholesome evening with no cool sea-breeze. Mosquitoes and fire-flies are lively enough, but most other creatures are faint. The coquettish airs of pretty young women in the tiniest and wickedest of dolls' straw hats, who lean out at opened lattice blinds, are almost the only airs stirring. Very ugly and haggard old women with distaffs, and with a grey tow upon them that looks as if they were spinning out their own hair (I suppose they were once pretty, too, but it is very difficult to believe so), sit on the footway leaning against house walls. Everybody who has come for water to the fountain, stays there, and seems incapable of any such energetic idea as going home. Vespers are over, though not so long but that I can smell the heavy resinous

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incense as I pass the church. No man seems to be at work, save the coppersmith. In an Italian town he is always at work, and always thumping in the deadliest manner.

I keep straight on, and come in due time to the first on the right : a narrow dull street, where I see a well-favoured man of good stature and military bearing, in a great cloak, standing at a door. Drawing nearer to this threshold, I see it is the threshold of a small wine-shop : and I can just make out, in the dim light, the inscription that it is kept by Giovanni Carlavero.

I touch my hat to the figure in the cloak, and pass in, and draw a stool to a little table. The lamp (just such another as they dig out of Pompeii) is lighted, but the place is empty. The figure in the cloak has followed me in, and stands before me.

“ The master ? ”

“ At your service, sir.”

“ Please to give me a glass of the wine of the country.”

He turns to a little counter, to get it. As his striking face is pale, and his action is evidently that of an enfeebled man, I remark that I fear he has been ill. It is not much, he courteously and gravely answers, though bad while it lasts : the fever.

As he sets the wine on the little table, to his manifest surprise I lay my hand on the back of his, look him in the face, and say in a low voice : “ I am an Englishman, and you are acquainted with a friend of mine. Do you recollect—— ? ” and I mentioned the name of my generous countryman.

Instantly, he utters a loud cry, bursts into tears, and falls on his knees at my feet, clasping my legs in both his arms and bowing his head to the ground.

Some years ago, this man at my feet, whose overfraught heart is heaving as if it would burst from his

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breast, and whose tears are wet upon the dress I wear, was a galley-slave in the North of Italy. He was a political offender, having been concerned in the then last rising, and was sentenced to imprisonment for life. That he would have died in his chains, is certain, but for the circumstance that the Englishman happened to visit his prison.

It was one of the vile old prisons of Italy, and a part of it was below the waters of the harbour. The place of his confinement was an arched under-ground and under-water gallery, with a grill-gate at the entrance, through which it received such light and air as it got. Its condition was insufferably foul, and a stranger could hardly breathe in it, or see in it with the aid of a torch. At the upper end of this dungeon, and consequently in the worst position, as being the farthest removed from light and air, the Englishman first beheld him, sitting on an iron bedstead to which he was chained by a heavy chain. His countenance impressed the Englishman as having nothing in common with the faces of the malefactors with whom he was associated, and he talked with him, and learnt how he came to be there.

When the Englishman emerged from the dreadful den into the light of day, he asked his conductor, the governor of the jail, why Giovanni Carlavero was put into the worst place ?

"Because he is particularly recommended," was the stringent answer.

"Recommended, that is to say, for death ?"

"Excuse me ; particularly recommended," was again the answer.

"He has a bad tumour in his neck, no doubt occasioned by the hardship of his miserable life. If he continues to be neglected, and he remains where he is, it will kill him."

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“Excuse me, I can do nothing. He is particularly recommended.”

The Englishman was staying in that town, and he went to his home there; but the figure of this man chained to the bedstead made it no home, and destroyed his rest and peace. He was an Englishman of an extraordinarily tender heart, and he could not bear the picture. He went back to the prison grate; went back again and again, and talked to the man and cheered him. He used the utmost influence to get the man unchained from the bedstead, were it only for ever so short a time in the day, and permitted to come to the grate. It took a long time, but the Englishman's station, personal character, and steadiness of purpose, wore out opposition so far, and that grace was at last accorded. Through the bars, when he could thus get light upon the tumour, the Englishman lanced it, and it did well, and healed. His strong interest in the prisoner had greatly increased by this time, and he formed the desperate resolution that he would exert his utmost self-devotion and use his utmost efforts, to get Carlavero pardoned.

If the prisoner had been a brigand and a murderer, if he had committed every non-political crime in the Newgate Calendar and out of it, nothing would have been easier than for a man of any court or priestly influence to obtain his release. As it was, nothing could have been more difficult. Italian authorities, and English authorities who had interest with them, alike assured the Englishman that his object was hopeless. He met with nothing but evasion, refusal, and ridicule. His political prisoner became a joke in the place. It was especially observable that English Circumlocution, and English Society on its travels, were as humorous on the subject as Circumlocution and

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Society may be on any subject without loss of caste. But, the Englishman possessed (and proved it well in his life) a courage very uncommon among us : he had not the least fear of being considered a bore, in a good humane cause. So he went on persistently trying, and trying, and trying, to get Giovanni Carlavero out. That prisoner had been rigorously re-chained, after the tumour operation; and it was not likely that his miserable life could last very long.

One day, when all the town knew about the Englishman and his political prisoner, there came to the Englishman a certain sprightly Italian Advocate of whom he had some knowledge ; and he made this strange proposal. " Give me a hundred pounds to obtain Carlavero's release. I think I can get him a pardon, with that money. But I cannot tell you what I am going to do with the money, nor must you ever ask me the question if I succeed, nor must you ever ask me for an account of the money if I fail." The Englishman decided to hazard the hundred pounds. He did so, and heard not another word of the matter. For half a year and more, the Advocate made no sign, and never once " took on " in any way, to have the subject on his mind. The Englishman was then obliged to change his residence to another and more famous town in the North of Italy. He parted from the poor prisoner with a sorrowful heart, as from a doomed man for whom there was no release but Death.

The Englishman lived in his new place of abode another half-year and more, and had no tidings of the wretched prisoner. At length, one day, he received from the Advocate a cool concise mysterious note, to this effect. " If you still wish to bestow that benefit upon the man in whom you were once interested, send me fifty pounds more, and I think it can be ensured."

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Now, the Englishman had long settled in his mind that the Advocate was a heartless sharper, who had preyed upon his credulity and his interest in an unfortunate sufferer. So, he sat down and wrote a dry answer, giving the Advocate to understand that he was wiser now than he had been formerly, and that no more money was extractable from his pocket.

He lived outside the city gates, some mile or two from the post-office, and was accustomed to walk into the city with his letters and post them himself. On a lovely spring day, when the sky was exquisitely blue, and the sea Divinely beautiful, he took his usual walk, carrying this letter to the Advocate in his pocket. As he went along, his gentle heart was much moved by the loveliness of the prospect, and by the thought of the slowly dying prisoner chained to the bedstead, for whom the universe had no delights. As he drew nearer and nearer to the city where he was to post the letter, he became very uneasy in his mind. He debated with himself, was it remotely possible, after all, that this sum of fifty pounds could restore the fellow-creature whom he pitied so much, and for whom he had striven so hard, to liberty? He was not a conventionally rich Englishman—very far from that—but, he had a spare fifty pounds at the banker's. He resolved to risk it. Without doubt, GOD has recompensed him for the resolution.

He went to the banker's, and got a bill for the amount, and enclosed it in a letter to the Advocate that I wish I could have seen. He simply told the Advocate that he was quite a poor man, and that he was sensible it might be a great weakness in him to part with so much money on the faith of so vague a communication; but, that there it was, and that he prayed the Advocate to make a good use of it. If he did otherwise no good

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could ever come of it, and it would lie heavy on his soul one day.

Within a week, the Englishman was sitting at his breakfast, when he heard some suppressed sounds of agitation on the staircase, and Giovanni Carlavero leaped into the room and fell upon his breast, a free man !

Conscious of having wronged the Advocate in his own thoughts, the Englishman wrote him an earnest and grateful letter, avowing the fact, and entreating him to confide by what means and through what agency he had succeeded so well. The Advocate returned for answer through the post, " There are many things, as you know, in this Italy of ours, that are safest and best not even spoken of—far less written of. We may meet some day, and then I may tell you what you want to know ; not here, and now." But, the two never did meet again. The Advocate was dead when the Englishman gave me my trust ; and how the man had been set free, remained as great a mystery to the Englishman, and to the man himself, as it was to me.

But, I knew this :—here was the man, this sultry night, on his knees at my feet, because I was the Englishman's friend ; here were his tears upon my dress ; here were his sobs choking his utterance ; here were his kisses on my hands, because they had touched the hands that had worked out his release. He had no need to tell me it would be happiness to him to die for his benefactor ; I doubt if I ever saw real, sterling, fervent gratitude of soul, before or since.

He was much watched and suspected, he said, and had had enough to do to keep himself out of trouble. This, and his not having prospered in his worldly affairs, had led to his having failed in his usual communications to the Englishman for—as I now remember the period—

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some two or three years. But, his prospects were brighter, and his wife who had been very ill had recovered, and his fever had left him, and he had bought a little vineyard, and would I carry to his benefactor the first of its wine? Ay, that I would (I told him with enthusiasm), and not a drop of it should be spilled or lost!

He had cautiously closed the door before speaking of himself, and had talked with such excess of emotion, and in a provincial Italian so difficult to understand, that I had more than once been obliged to stop him, and beg him to have compassion on me and be slower and calmer. By degrees he became so, and tranquilly walked back with me to the hotel. There, I sat down before I went to bed and wrote a faithful account of him to the Englishman: which I concluded by saying that I would bring the wine home, against any difficulties, every drop.

Early next morning, when I came out at the hotel door to pursue my journey, I found my friend waiting with one of those immense bottles in which the Italian peasants store their wine—a bottle holding some half-dozen gallons—bound round with basketwork for greater safety on the journey. I see him now, in the bright sunlight, tears of gratitude in his eyes, proudly inviting my attention to this corpulent bottle. (At the street corner hard by, two high-flavoured able-bodied monks—pretending to talk together, but keeping their four evil eyes upon us.)

How the bottle had been got there, did not appear; but the difficulty of getting it into the ramshackle vetturino carriage in which I was departing, was so great, and it took up so much room when it was got in, that I elected to sit outside. The last I saw of Giovanni Carlavero was his running through the town by

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the side of the jingling wheels, clasping my hand as I stretched it down from the box, charging me with a thousand last loving and dutiful messages to his dear patron, and finally looking in at the bottle as it reposed inside, with an admiration of its honourable way of travelling that was beyond measure delightful.

And now, what disquiet of mind this dearly-beloved and highly-treasured Bottle began to cost me, no man knows. It was my precious charge through a long tour, and, for hundreds of miles, I never had it off my mind by day or by night. Over bad roads—and they were many—I clung to it with affectionate desperation. Up mountains, I looked in at it and saw it helplessly tilting over on its back, with terror. At innumerable inn doors when the weather was bad, I was obliged to be put into my vehicle before the Bottle could be got in, and was obliged to have the Bottle lifted out before human aid could come near me. The Imp of the same name, except that his associations were all evil and these associations were all good, would have been a less troublesome travelling companion. I might have served Mr Cruikshank as a subject for a new illustration of the miseries of the Bottle. The National Temperance Society might have made a powerful Tract of me.

The suspicions that attached to this innocent Bottle, greatly aggravated my difficulties. It was like the apple-pie in the child's book. Parma pouted at it, Modena mocked it, Tuscany tackled it, Naples nibbled it, Rome refused it, Austria accused it, Soldiers suspected it, Jesuits jobbed it. I composed a neat Oration, developing my inoffensive intentions in connexion with this Bottle, and delivered it in an infinity of guard-houses, at a multitude of town gates, and on every drawbridge, angle, and rampart, of a complete system of fortifications. Fifty times a day, I got down to

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harangue an infuriated soldiery about the Bottle. Through the filthy degradation of the abject and vile Roman States, I had as much difficulty in working my way with the Bottle, as if it had bottled up a complete system of heretical theology. In the Neapolitan country, where everybody was a spy, a soldier, a priest, or a lazzarone, the shameless beggars of all four denominations incessantly pounced on the Bottle and made it a pretext for extorting money from me. Quires—quires do I say? Reams—of forms illegibly printed on whity-brown paper were filled up about the Bottle, and it was the subject of more stamping and sanding than I had ever seen before. In consequence of which haze of sand, perhaps, it was always irregular, and always latent with dismal penalties of going back or not going forward, which were only to be abated by the silver crossing of a base hand, poked shirtless out of a ragged uniform sleeve. Under all discouragements, however, I stuck to my Bottle, and held firm to my resolution that every drop of its contents should reach the Bottle's destination.

The latter refinement cost me a separate heap of troubles on its own separate account. What corkscrews did I see the military power bring out against that Bottle; what gimlets, spikes, divining rods, gauges, and unknown tests and instruments! At some places, they persisted in declaring that the wine must not be passed, without being opened and tasted; I, pleading to the contrary, used then to argue the question seated on the Bottle lest they should open it in spite of me. In the southern parts of Italy more violent shrieking, face-making, and gesticulating, greater vehemence of speech and countenance and action, went on about that Bottle, than would attend fifty murders in a northern latitude. It raised im-

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portant functionaries out of their beds, in the dead of night. I have known half-a-dozen military lanterns to disperse themselves at all points of a great sleeping Piazza, each lantern summoning some official creature to get up, put on his cocked-hat instantly, and come and stop the Bottle. It was characteristic that while this innocent Bottle had such immense difficulty in getting from little town to town, Signor Mazzini and the fiery cross were traversing Italy from end to end.

Still, I stuck to my Bottle, like any fine old English gentleman all of the olden time. The more the Bottle was interfered with, the stauncher I became (if possible) in my first determination that my countryman should have it delivered to him intact, as the man whom he had so nobly restored to life and liberty had delivered it to me. If ever I had been obstinate in my days—and I may have been, say, once or twice—I was obstinate about the Bottle. But, I made it a rule always to keep a pocket full of small coins at its service, and never to be out of temper in its cause. Thus, I and the Bottle made our way. Once we had a breakdown; rather a bad breakdown, on a steep high place with the sea below us, on a tempestuous evening when it blew great guns. We were driving four wild horses abreast, Southern fashion, and there was some little difficulty in stopping them. I was outside, and not thrown off; but no words can describe my feelings when I saw the Bottle—travelling inside, as usual—burst the door open, and roll obesely out into the road. A blessed Bottle with a charmed existence, he took no hurt, and we repaired damage, and went on triumphant.

A thousand representations were made to me that the Bottle must be left at this place, or that, and called for again. I never yielded to one of them, and never parted from the Bottle on any pretence, consideration

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threat, or entreaty. I had no faith in any official receipt for the Bottle, and nothing would induce me to accept one. These unmanageable politics at last brought me and the Bottle, still triumphant, to Genoa. There, I took a tender and reluctant leave of him for a few weeks, and consigned him to a trusty English Captain, to be conveyed to the Port of London by sea.

While the Bottle was on its voyage to England, I read the Shipping Intelligence as anxiously as if I had been an underwriter. There was some stormy weather after I myself had got to England by way of Switzerland and France, and my mind greatly misgave me that the Bottle might be wrecked. At last to my great joy, I received notice of his safe arrival, and immediately went down to Saint Katharine's Docks, and found him in a state of honourable captivity in the Custom House.

The wine was mere vinegar when I set it down before the generous Englishman—probably it had been something like vinegar when I took it from Giovanni Carlavero—but not a drop of it was spilled or gone. And the Englishman told me, with much emotion in his face and voice, that he had never tasted wine that seemed to him so sweet and sound. And long afterwards, the Bottle graced his table. And the last time I saw him in this world that misses him, he took me aside in a crowd, to say, with his amiable smile: "We were talking of you only to-day at dinner, and I wished you had been there, for I had some Claret up in Carlavero's Bottle."

From "The Uncommercial Traveller"

EXERCISES

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THE STORY OF ALEXANDER SELKIRK

(a) *Language and Style*

1. This essay was written two hundred years ago, and contains a few old-fashioned or quaint expressions like "familiar to men of curiosity" and "till it grew disagreeable to his stomach." Find any other examples of such quaintness, giving in each case a simple modern equivalent. Is it true to say that language, like clothes, has changing fashions?

2. Make a note on the construction of the sentences beginning:

- (a) His portion were . . . (p. 16).
- (b) The precautions which . . . (p. 17).
- (c) These he had . . . (pp. 17-18).
- (d) When the ship . . . (pp. 18-19).

Are there any other sentences in the essay that strike you as being faulty in construction?

3. What is there strange about the use of the words *sensual* and *aspirations* (p. 17) in this essay? How does a word come to change its meaning? Give any examples you know.

(b) *Subject-matter*

4. Explain clearly how (a) *Robinson Crusoe*, (b) *Gulliver's Travels*, and (c) *Rip van Winkle* remind you of this story of Alexander Selkirk.

5. Who wrote a poem about Alexander Selkirk? Read the poem, and compare it with this essay.

6. On p. 16 there is a list of Alexander Selkirk's possessions on the desert island. In what particulars would your list of necessities for such a predicament differ from the one recorded here?

(c) *Original Work*

7. This essay was written for a periodical of the eighteenth century. Rewrite it for a penny morning newspaper of to-day, as a column headed "Interview with a marooned man."

NARRATIVE ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

8. Write an imaginary conversation between Alexander Selkirk and Robinson Crusoe or Gulliver or Rip van Winkle.

9. Imagine that Alexander Selkirk had written a journal or diary during his stay on the desert island. Write a typical week's entries in such a journal.

10. Write a short scene for a play called *Alexander Selkirk*, in which Alexander Selkirk is found by sailors after his long sojourn on the island. (Compare the finding of the marooned man in the dramatized version of *Treasure Island*.)

(d) Discussion

11. The last paragraph of this essay is echoed in Pope's little poem beginning :

Happy the man whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound

(*Golden Treasury*, Book III.) Discuss this idea.

12. Make full notes for your speech in a debate on the motion "That he who loves solitude must be either a beast or a god."

A FAMOUS FIVES-PLAYER

(a) Language and Style

1. The passage from "This Cavanagh was sure to do . . ." (p. 20) to ". . . could even affect to do" (p. 21) is a good example of Hazlitt's best style. What would you consider to be its main characteristics?

2. Hazlitt always loved to quote verse in his essays. There is an example on p. 20. Suggest three other suitable quotations from literature and assign them to their places in the essay.

3. Compare the style of this passage with that of the sketch by Hazlitt printed on p. 80.

4. Comment as simply and clearly as possible on the following :

(a) For Cavanagh is dead, and hath not left his peer behind him.

(b) Cobbeett and Junius together would have made a Cavanagh.

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- (c) I played all the while with my clenched fist.
- (d) Politicians wonder to see the balance of Europe suspended in Lord Castlereagh's face.
- (e) "Who enters here, forgets himself, his country, and his friends."

(b) Subject-matter

5. Would you imagine from the reading of this essay that Hazlitt himself was familiar with the game of fives?

6. Is Hazlitt's description of Cavanagh realistic? Quote passages which lend colour and vividness to the portrait.

7. What do you know of (a) *The Quarterly*, (b) *The Edinburgh Review*? In what way are Scott, Wordsworth, Byron, Keats, and Shelley associated with these two periodicals?

8. "Lumbering like Mr Wordsworth's epic poetry." Is this a just criticism of Wordsworth? In what type of poetry did Wordsworth excel?

(c) Original Work

9. Do you know of any other passages of literature (in prose or verse) dealing with sport or games? Make for yourself a little anthology of such passages, adding any notes of criticism you think necessary.

10. Write, as if for a modern daily newspaper, an appreciation of any living sportsman.

11. Imagine and write a conversation between Cavanagh and Jack Hobbs or Middle Lengen.

(d) Discussion

12. Prepare notes for a paper or lecture to be called "Professionalism in Sport."

13. Discuss the statement: "When a person dies who does any one thing better than any one else in the world, which so many others are trying to do well, it leaves a gap in society."

NARRATIVE ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

LEGEND OF THE MOOR'S LEGACY

(a) *Language and Style*

1. Make a note on the construction or the expression of the sentences beginning

- (a) Just within the fortress . . . (p. 26).
- (b) The wells made by the Moors . . . (p. 26).
- (c) So saying, he trudged manfully . . . (p. 29).
- (d) Certain it is, he was a sort . . . (p. 32).
- (e) In fact, she thought they should . . . (p. 43).
- (f) There was now no remedy . . . (p. 47).

2. Washington Irving has a great power of drawing quick, vivid sketches of his characters. Write a note to illustrate this, and quote (a) his picture of the barber, (b) one of his pictures of Peregil, and (c) his picture of Peregil's wife.

3. Give an appreciation of Irving's power of telling a story, mentioning as an illustration the barber's story to the Alcalde.

(b) *Subject-matter*

4. In what details does this story remind you of (a) the story of Aladdin and his Lamp, (b) the story of Rip van Winkle? Is it true to say that Peregil and his wife are, in essence, the same characters as Rip and Dame van Winkle?

5. There is real humour in this essay. When is it (a) satirical, (b) pathetic? Quote definite passages.

6. Write a short note on the significance of the donkey in the story.

7. What essential differences are there between a story of this kind and a story like *Treasure Island*?

(c) *Original Work*

8. "Yet it is not he who sings loudest and jokes most that has the lightest heart." Illustrate this truth by a consideration of some of the clowns and jesters in literature.

9. Write a narrative essay on "Buried Treasure in Modern England."

10. Write an article for a modern magazine describing the discovery of the "Alcalde and his adjuncts," spell-bound, under the Tower of the Seven Floors.

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(d) Discussion

11. Make notes for a speech in a debate on the motion "That a good deed is always worth while."

NURSE'S STORIES

(a) Language and Style

1. For what different purposes does Dickens use parenthesis in this essay? Illustrate, by quoting six sentences, his effective use of the word *and*.

2. Make some comment on the style and effect of the sentences beginning

(a) Round hundreds of such objects . . . (p. 50).

(b) And whenever he winked his eyes . . . (p. 52).

(c) Then, he kept his eye upon it . . . (p. 54).

(d) There was another narrative . . . (p. 58).

3. Write in indirect speech the conversation between Chips and the Admiral recorded on p. 56. Explain why the indirect speech spoils the effect of the passage.

4. How does Dickens manage to give you the impression that this is a story told by some one to a listener? In what way does it remind you of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*?

(b) Subject-matter

5. What do you know of the tales and places which Dickens mentions at the beginning of this essay? Write a note of your own about each reference. Has Dickens himself spelt 'Brobingnag' correctly? Why has Dickens called the town of his childhood associations 'Dullborough'?

6. What do you know about the humour of Dickens? Would you call this a humorous essay? Do you consider it successful as a ludicrous imitation of a fairy-tale?

7. "And Chips the father had sold himself to the Devil for an iron pot and a bushel of tenpenny nails and half a ton of copper and a rat that could speak." Of what famous medieval legend is this a humorous imitation? Who put the legend into an English play?

(c) Original Work

8. Do you consider 'Chips' a good name for the shipwright?

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Suggest three others of your own. Mention twenty funny or suggestive names invented by Dickens in his novels (*e.g.*, Pickwick, Sarah Gamp).

9. Tell a tale like this (as if you were the nurse) in which an evil dwarf appears to a watchman in the street while he is sitting by his fire at night with the little red lights burning round him.

10. Why is the devil's rime on p. 53 called an "alarming tautology"? Try to make a funny rime of your own in the same way, using in turn the following lines:

- (a) And I'll have Jack.
- (b) And I'll have you.
- (c) And I'll have Caesar.

11. Recast this essay in dramatic form, giving full descriptive stage directions.

(d) *Discussion*

12. Motion: "That the making of true fairy-tales belongs to a primitive people."

THE ADVENTURES OF A SHILLING

(a) *Language and Style*

1. What epithet would you use to describe the *style* of this essay? How does it compare with the style of Goldsmith's essays (pp. 96-116)?

2. What is meant by 'satire'? Quote any sentences from this essay which seem to you to be satirical.

3. Write in simple, clear language the meaning of the sentences beginning:

- (a) I sometimes fetched in . . . (p. 61).
- (b) The young fellow, who I found . . . (p. 62).
- (c) When I came again into the world . . . (pp. 62-63).
- (d) What has happened to me . . . (p. 63).

Explain the references carefully.

(b) *Subject-matter*

4. This essay was written early in the eighteenth century. What passages recall (a) the Commonwealth, (b) the Great Fire

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of London? Was Addison a Royalist or a Parliamentarian in his sympathies?

5. "This is not only the autobiography of a shilling; it is also an example of delicate character-sketching." Explain and illustrate this statement.

6. Write a short study of social conditions under the Stuarts, basing your work on the various historical references in this essay.

7. "A miserable old fellow, who clapped me in an iron chest." What famous novel deals with the life of a miser? Show your acquaintance with it, and give your opinion of it.

(c) Original Work

8. "A foolish saying 'That while she kept a Queen Elizabeth's shilling about her, she should never be without money.'" Make a collection of half a dozen such foolish and superstitious sayings that have survived to our own times. Try to give some explanation of their origin.

9. Steele, who wrote the first essay printed in this book, collaborated with Addison in writing papers for *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. Imagine and write the first paragraph of a paper by Steele in which he refers to this essay of Addison's.

10. Write an essay, modelled on this one, on each of the following subjects:

(a) The Adventures of a Shilling during the Great War.

(b) The Adventures of a Cricket-ball.

(c) The Autobiography of one of your School Text-books.

11. What do you know of the beginnings of the periodical or newspaper in England? What part did Addison and Steele play in these beginnings? What do you know of *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* to-day?

(d) Discussion

12. Prepare a speech for a debate on the motion indicated in the opening paragraph of this essay.

NARRATIVE ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

THE ARGONAUTS

(a) *Language and Style*

1. Write sentences or (if possible) one connected paragraph containing the following words which are used in this essay: dubiety; baleful; rhapsodized; portend; sward; gusto; bucolically; compliments; bravado.

2. What is an idiom? The following three idioms occur in the paragraph at the bottom of p. 68: "a landing-place *giving on to a lane*"; "having *caught sight of*"; "a moss-grown water-gate *hard by*." Find and quote any other idioms in this essay, and give three idioms from any foreign modern language you happen to be learning.

(b) *Subject-matter*

3. Try to explain and illustrate the following idea. that the humour and charm of this passage are the result of a skilful mingling of the children's make-believe with the truth of ancient and beautiful legend.

4. Are the boys in this story quite natural? Why is Farmer Larkin brought into the tale? Who is the "other she-creature"?

5. Explain simply and carefully:

(a) . . . despite the precedent of Atalanta, who was one of the original crew (p. 68).

(b) without let or hindrance (p. 68).

(c) . . . and, morally considered, it was not exactly a Pilgrim's Progress (p. 67).

(d) That was just like a bit out of *Westward Ho!* (p. 72).

6. "Time tryeth trothe." What does this mean? What is its significance in the story? How do you interpret Medea's broken little speech on p. 71, when she hides her face in her fingers?

7. Find out all you can about the heroes who were "admitted into our freemasonry" (p. 66). What other heroes of Greece and Rome would you admit?

(c) *Original Work*

8. What three famous writers have told the story of the Argonauts? How do their stories differ in form and style? Which of them do you like best?

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9. Who was Medea in the real legend? Who is she in this essay? Look up 'Proserpina' in a classical dictionary, and explain what is meant by the beautiful passage, ". . . ; and as she flitted away . . . the frank caressing air" (pp. 70-71). What was the real meaning of (a) the legend of the Golden Fleece, (b) the legend of Proserpina?

10. Write an essay on "Sun-dials," mentioning at least three famous sun-dial inscriptions or mottoes like the one quoted here. (Read Charles Lamb's essay on "The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple.")

11. Treat one of the following stories as Mr Grahame has treated the Argonauts:

- (a) Theseus and the Minotaur.
- (b) Orpheus and Eurydice.
- (c) Pandora.

(d) *Discussion*

12. Discuss the relative merits of Greek and Northern legend (see paragraph 1, p. 65).

ON CATCHING THE TRAIN

(a) *Language and Style*

1. Illustrate "Alpha of the Plough's" use of (a) simile, (b) metaphor, (c) climax. Can you find a metaphor here that would positively 'date' this essay?

2. "Alpha of the Plough" is a great journalist and writer of to-day. In what way does he make this essay appeal to the general or casual reader? What is the difference between true journalism and 'journalese'?

3. You will notice that most of the sentences in this essay are short. Why is this? What effect does it give to the style?

(b) *Subject-matter*

4. Is it true to say that "Catching the Train" is not really the subject, but merely suggests the essay? Make a note on the construction of an essay of this kind.

5. There is a number of references to literature in this essay. Quote, explain, and annotate the references.

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6. Read essays by the following writers : Mr E. V. Lucas (E. V. L.) in *Punch* (see also p. 84 of this book) ; " The Londoner " in the *Evening News* ; Mr F. W. Thomas in the *Star* ; Mr A. G. Gardiner in many journals. You will find essays of some other modern writers, like Mr A. A. Milne, Mr Robert Lynd, and Mr G. K. Chesterton in *Essays of To-day*. Write sincerely your opinion of the essays you read, making some comparison. Which one of the writers is " Alpha of the Plough " ?

(c) *Original Work*

7. Develop in an essay of your own " Alpha of the Plough's " remarks on pen-names, introducing into your essay the most famous pen-names in English literature (e.g., " George Eliot ").

8. Subjects for an essay to be written for a daily newspaper or weekly periodical :

- (a) On Making Footpaths.
- (b) On Travelling by Motor-bus.
- (c) On Blinds and Shutters
- (d) On England, now that April's there.
- (e) On Going to Selfridge's before Christmas.
- (f) " The Showing-up of Saunders " (see p. 78).

10. " A bag containing my clothes and the notes of a most illuminating lecture." Imagine and write down the notes (on any subject you like) as " Alpha of the Plough " might have written them.

(d) *Discussion*

10. Write an argumentative essay on the truth of the dictum, " Any peg will do to hang your hat on."

THE LETTER-BELL

(a) *Language and Style*

1. Make a paraphrase of the first paragraph of this essay (" . . . reflection will be found in it," p. 80). What is the exact function of this paragraph ?

2. " The mark of a good writer is his choice of the *right* word." Exemplify this statement from this essay. Try to get

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good synonyms for the following half-dozen words : trifling ; vibrates ; visionary ; licence ; fraught ; irrevocable.

(b) *Subject-matter*

3. What was the Letter-bell ? There are some customs that science and the passing of time have killed. Write a note on some of them.

4. Choose two short passages from this essay for learning by heart. Give under each passage, in detail, your reasons for its selection.

5. Who has written (a) a famous poem called *The Bells*, (b) concerning stage-coaches ? Give some appreciation of the writers and their writings on these subjects. (N.B. Make some reference to the essay on p. 185.)

6. "The road from Wem to Shrewsbury." Read Mr A. E. Housman's *A Shropshire Lad*. Which poems in that sequence remind you of Hazlitt's memory expressed in this essay (p. 81) ?

(c) *Original Work*

7. Write two sketches :

(a) The Journey of a Letter To-day.

(b) London a Century Ago.

8. "Startling me with the recollection of a letter I had to send to the friends I had lately left." Imagine and write such a letter as if it came from Hazlitt a hundred years ago.

9. Write a humorous article called "The Musings of a Postman."

(d) *Discussion*

10. Write notes for a speech on the subject "That the former days were better than these."

11. Write a letter to a daily newspaper setting forth the arguments for a reinstatement of the penny post.

CONJURER AND CONFEDERATE

(a) *Language and Style*

1. Rewrite the first paragraph of this essay on exactly the same lines as the original ; but give other examples of

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man's ambitions, and substitute your own 'pet idea' for Mr Lucas's.

2. Mr Lucas has a number of quaint and humorous turns of expression, like "I had never been so near magic before." Give some other examples from this essay.

(b) *Subject-matter*

3. Does this essay strike you as being at all (a) humorous, (b) pathetic? Give some explanation with your answer. Which part do you prefer—*conjurer* or *confederate*?

4. "Then the trick begins" (p. 88). Tell in your own words simply and clearly, what the rabbit would not tell.

5. Write the "elderly literary friend's" musings on the conjurer's performance.

(c) *Original Work*

6. Write an imaginary letter from a child in the audience to the conjurer's confederate.

7. "And in the summer months what does he do?" Make the conjurer himself answer this question.

8. Write an imaginative essay on these lines, having as its two characters an organ-grinder and a monkey.

9. Mr Lucas wished to be able to do three tricks. Make a list of three tricks you would like to learn from a conjurer.

(d) *Discussion*

10. "It is very human to want things both ways." Write a little discourse upon this epigrammatic statement.

REJOICINGS UPON THE NEW YEAR'S COMING OF AGE

(a) *Language and Style*

1. 'Whimsical' is an epithet often applied to Lamb. Give examples from this essay of (a) his whimsicality of style, (b) his whimsicality of thought.

2. Explain: (a) "how the old Domine would behave himself in his cups"; (b) "the confounding of all sober horoscopy";

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(c) " a Maypole siding a marrow-bone " ; (d) " his new sack-cloth bib and tucker " ; (e) " such a *boutefeu* and firebrand " ; (f) " mumchance at the side-board."

(b) Subject-matter

3. What can you say about the aptness of Lamb's references to the following days : Easter Day, Valentine's Day, Candlemas, Ember Days, Rogation Day, Doomsday, the Eve of St Christopher ?

4. Appreciate, in a short note, the humour of the paragraph on p. 93 beginning " Ash Wednesday, being now called upon for a song . . . "

5. " An occasional intoxication which hurt no one but himself . . . and a shower of bad puns—behold the faults of Elia ! " This is a pronouncement of Mr A. Birrell on Lamb. How does this essay throw some light on it ?

6. Lamb's touch is sometimes gentle and serious even in an essay of this kind ; thus, " The *Vigils* were requested to come with their lanterns, to light the gentlefolks home at night." Give four other examples from this essay.

7. Lamb said he hated the dullness of Sunday. Is there any hint in this essay of his preference for certain days ?

(c) Original Work

8. Read Lamb's essay (in *The Essays of Elia*) called " All Fools' Day " ; and write an essay yourself called either " Guy Fawkes' Day " or " Twelfth Night."

9. " Cards of invitation had been issued." Write a letter of invitation from the New Year to (a) Christmas Day, (b) Ash Wednesday.

10. Write an essay with the same title as this one, but introducing days that belong to your school and home life, as your Birthday, Half-term Day, Speech Day, Breaking-up Day, Sports Day.

11. Imagine and write down what Lamb might have had to say on " Saints' Days."

(d) Discussion

12. Motion : " That the keeping of anniversaries is a foolish custom."

NARRATIVE ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

THE CHARACTER OF THE MAN IN BLACK THE HISTORY OF THE MAN IN BLACK THE CHARACTER OF AN IMPORTANT TRIFLER THE CHINESE PHILOSOPHER VISITS BEAU TIBBS

(a) *Language and Style*

1. What do you mean by a *participle phrase*? Give examples of Goldsmith's loose and incorrect use of it. Does this 'carelessness' constitute a defect in his work? (See Question 25.)

2. Study the use of the following words in these four essays: affects; prodigy; parsimony; harangue; episodes; panegyric; solicitations; indolence; precarious; ovation; frugality; indigent; pensive; affected; countenances (verb, p. 111); levity; bugbear; memorandums; assiduity; vivacity; mandarin; coquette; emaciated; odious. Give synonyms for them; and make a list of words that might be confused with them in spelling and meaning.

3. Goldsmith is particularly fond of the balanced or *antithetical* sentence. State the nature of such a sentence, and give six good examples from the essays.

4. Quote half a dozen good metaphors from the essays; and make six metaphors of your own that could be substituted for them.

5. Comment on and exemplify Goldsmith's use of direct speech in the relation of his incidents.

(b) *Subject-matter*

6. Appreciate, with full and apt quotation, the exquisite irony of Goldsmith, particularly in the second essay.

7. In what way do these essays remind you of *The Vicar of Wakefield* (a) in style, (b) in characterization?

8. What do you know of Goldsmith's own life and character? To what extent is the Man in Black a picture of Goldsmith himself?

9. Does the Man in Black remind you at all of Mr Micawber? Compare Dickens's picture of the debtors' prison with Goldsmith's.

10. What seems to you the most richly humorous incident

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of the Man in Black's history? What is there particularly humorous about its conclusion?

11. Goldsmith writes these essays in the character of a Chinese philosopher. How would you deduce that from the four essays printed here?

12. What *humour* and what *pathos* is there in the description of the Philosopher's visit to Beau Tibbs?

13. Goldsmith has fixed upon and emphasized one characteristic of each of the people in these essays. Explain and illustrate this.

14. What is the *refrain* that runs through (a) the history of the Man in Black, (b) the conversation of Beau Tibbs? Is it introduced with good effect?

15. From these four essays what do you imagine to be Goldsmith's attitude to the aristocracy?

(c) *Original Work* ²

16. "Poverty naturally begets dependence, and I was admitted as flatterer to a great man." What do you understand by this? How does Swift treat of the same subject in *Gulliver's Travels*?

17. Goldsmith loved to refer to imaginary non-existent stories in order to arouse the curiosity of his readers. There are three such references at the bottom of p. 100. Imagine for yourself and tell the stories.

18. Try to write a 'Goldsmithian' essay on each of the following subjects:

(a) Beggars.

(b) The Character of the Schoolmaster (read "The Deserted Village").

(c) The Man in Black's Picture of Goldsmith himself.

19. Write two imaginary letters, one from Goldsmith to the Man in Black and one from the Man in Black to Goldsmith, on the subject of "Alms-giving."

20. "The Spectator of London become the Citizen of the World." What is meant by this statement on p. 11 of the Introduction?

21. "One of the public walks near the City." Describe the scene in a public walk near the City to-day. How would the

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scene in any English town of the eighteenth century differ from that of to-day?

22. Describe an imaginary scene in which Beau Tibbs entertains the Man in Black.

23. "In a few minutes we discussed all the usual topics preliminary to private conversation." Imagine and write down the beginning of the conversation between the Chinese Philosopher and Beau Tibbs.

(d) Discussion

24. Discuss Goldsmith's idea of friendship. Refer to the ideal of friendship expressed (a) by Shakespeare, (b) by Coleridge (in "Christabel"), (c) in the Bible, (d) by Rupert Brooke.

25. Discuss the relationship of Grammar and Style.

A VERY CURIOUS ACCOUNT OF THE ISLAND OF ST KILDA

(a) Language and Style

1. Mr Hutchinson is rather fond of Latin compounds like *circumjacent* (p. 119) and *complex-fractured* (p. 125). Find a dozen others in the essay and try to substitute for them pure English words or phrases.

2. Appreciate Mr Hutchinson's skill in dramatic narrative. How does he sustain the reader's interest in the story told by Bob?

3. Give a clear explanation of the meaning of and references in the following:

- (a) For of the Flegg that arrived at Strome Ferry but Flegg - x (an unknown but large quantity) remained.
- (b) Each tourist carried a long crook-hand'ed stick, to show he was a Scotchman, but dropped his *h*'s, which he had left behind in London.
- (c) "Did you ever read a poem of Bret Harte's—'The Heathen Chinees'? . . . It strikes me that Bret Harte studied Ah Sin from Mr Flegg."
- (d) We strolled along the not too uneven tenor of our way.
- (e) He used to stride over the moor with his 'firearm' held perpendicularly, with both hands in front of him, recalling to mind the Lare in *Struwelpeter* who had stolen the huntsman's gun.

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(b) *Subject-matter*

4. Which do you consider (a) the three best, (b) the three feeblest, passages of humorous conversation in this essay? Give reasons for your appreciation and criticism.

5. Why is the Professor nearly always a comic figure in literature and drama? In what way is he usually made comic?

6. Where is St Kilda? (a) Make a sketch-map of the places mentioned; (b) interpret the Scottish terms used in this essay.

7. What is the meaning of the term *dénouement*? Show how this essay illustrates it.

8. Is there any characterization in this essay? Who is the most clearly defined character?

9. Of what humorous character in fiction does the last passage quoted in Question 3 remind you?

(c) *Original Work*

10. There are some hints for a walking tour on p. 120. Add to them some detailed hints concerning arrangements (e.g., dress) and route for such a tour of your own.

11. Imagine that Bob's article had really been published in *Truth*. Write an imaginary letter of Mr Flegg to the Editor on the subject.

12. Dramatize this essay in a couple of scenes, giving full stage directions.

(d) *Discussion*

13. Mr Hutchinson is a naturalist, a famous golfer, and a keen lover of country sports. On this fact base an argumentative essay on the subject, "A Man always Reveals himself in his Works."

THE SECOND OF NOVEMBER, 1902

(a) *Language and Style*

1. Add examples of your own choosing to the following, which illustrate Mr Belloc's picturesqueness of word and image:

(a) The sad, uncertain beginnings of a little winter day.

NARRATIVE ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

(b) By another fire we will sing yet louder songs, and mix them with the noise of the sea.

(c) Across the great wave tops and rolls of the hills.

(d) I . . . felt the full culmination of all the twenty tides which had thus run together to make a skerry in my soul.

2. Choose a dozen words from this essay which you would like to add to your descriptive vocabulary.

3. What is the difference in literary effect between a *Saxon* and a *Latin* vocabulary? Which type predominates in this essay?

(b) Subject-matter

4. The Four Men who made this memorable journey were Myself (*i.e.*, Mr Belloc), Grizzlebeard, a Poet, and a Sailor. Do you think the three companions of Myself were real? How do you interpret Grizzlebeard? What element would (a) the Poet, (b) the Sailor, supply in the companionship?

5. How would you describe the *atmosphere* which Mr Belloc has succeeded in getting into this essay? What is the secret of it?

6. Contrast with this essay the next one, called "The Grave of Winter." In what respects does Mr Thomas's account of his journey differ from Mr Belloc's account of his? Can you find another account of a real journey in English literature, and make some comparisons?

7. "Youth was gone out apart; it was loved and regretted and therefore no longer possessed." What beautiful passage in this essay is a kind of little sermon on this text? Learn the passage by heart.

(c) Original Work

8. Mr Belloc is a great lover of Sussex. Do you know of any other 'Sussex' literature? Is there any reason why Sussex should be loved by writers more than the other counties? What other parts of England have been celebrated in literature? And by whom?

9. At the bottom of p. 139 there is a list of beautiful Sussex names. Make a list (on the same lines and in the same form) of the beautiful place-names in your own county. Quote from literature any passages of beautiful names, arranging them in

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a little anthology. (N.B. Do not forget the example in the next essay, "The Grave of Winter," and the list of towns on p. 208.)

10. " ' He does not die ! ' . . . From that phrase there ran the fugue." What does this mean? What is the theme of the poem? Which do you consider to be the four most beautiful lines in it? Compare it with Mr Belloc's own "The South Country" and with Mr Kipling's "Sussex" (in *Poems of To-day*, First Series).

11. Give the names of three companions you would like to take with you on a journey, and give an account of your last farewell.

(d) Discussion

12. Discuss the idea that a poem must be made spontaneously and written down without modification of thought or alteration of word or phrase.

THE GRAVE OF WINTER

(a) Language and Style

1. From (a) the discourse on waterproofs (p. 144), (b) the description of the old men in the inn (p. 147), and (c) such a passage as "The primrose roots hard by me had each sufficient flowers to make a child's handful," illustrate Mr Thomas's simplicity of thought and language.

2. Collect and appreciate the similes and metaphors of this essay.

3. Appreciate the *effectiveness* of the following passages :

(a) We like hassocks to kneel on, and on those hassocks we pray for a waterproof.

(b) The old men thought of the stag hounds, which were to meet that day. . . . Just above Bagborough there, seven red stags had been seen, not so long ago.

(c) In the mossy bank behind it [*i.e.*, the statue] the first wood-sorrel flower drooped its white face among primroses and green moschatel knobs.

(d) The end of the rain was sung away . . . by a chain of larks' songs that must have reached all over England.

NARRATIVE ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

(b) *Subject-matter*

4. This essay and the previous one describe the endings of two journeys. Make some comparisons of your own. How does the weather influence the description in each essay?

5. Mr Thomas had a fine intimacy with the plants and flowers of Nature. Make a list of all the plants and flowers he mentions in this essay, with their epithets or short descriptions.

6. In what passages of this essay does Mr Thomas reveal his sense of humour? Would you prefer Mr Thomas to Mr Belloc as a companion?

7. "Bluebells brought from far off on an Easter Monday." Mr Thomas afterward wrote a little poem of the flowers that were gathered at Eastertide in England, for men who would not come again. What do you know of other poems written by soldiers during the War? What was their chief theme?

(c) *Original Work*

8. Imagine and write down an advertisement written by Mr Thomas for a firm of waterproof manufacturers.

9. Make a suggestion for an inscription to be put upon the big stone statue. Write a note on the statues and carved figures on the hills of England.

10. From Mr Thomas's short eulogy of rain, on p. 146, make for yourself either (a) a descriptive sketch called "In Praise of Rain," or (b) a short poem called "Rain." Do you know of any such poem in English?

11. Write a short essay on "Riding a Bicycle in April."

(d) *Discussion*

12. Motion: "That man has never succeeded in protecting himself against weather."

BOYS AND WASPS'-NESTS

(a) *Language and Style*

1. Comment on the following:

(a) The infinitives in the sentence beginning "The way in which the boy . . ." (p. 152).

(b) The awkwardness in construction of the sentence beginning "In the first place, there was then . . ." (p. 153).

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(c) Inversion in the sentence beginning "In the fact that the impunity . . ." (p. 154).

(d) The incorrect construction of the sentence beginning "Thereby hangs a very moving tale . . ." (p. 155).

2. Make a note on Mr Hutchinson's use of the following words or phrases: "candid dust"; "the perilous mouth of the nest"; "the engine of Death"; "unwitting the explosion"; "the Satanic tail"; "we had to creep out *darkling*"; "the dark nocturnal business"; "microcosm"; "supererogation."

(b) Subject-matter

3. How does Mr Hutchinson reveal his *boyishness* in this essay?

4. Do you think this essay of Mr Hutchinson is better than his account of the island of St Kilda (p. 117)? Make some definite comparisons between the two.

5. In what passages in this essay does Mr Hutchinson show himself as the serious naturalist?

(c) Original Work

6. Mr Hutchinson used to write a weekly article on sport or nature for the *Westminster Gazette*. Imagine and write his article on each of the four following subjects:

(a) The Crime of the Cuckoo.

(b) Dog-violets and Horse-chestnuts.

(c) For the Love of the Game.

(d) The Four-ball Over.

7. Write a boy's own account of the taking of a wasps' nest.

8. "For the inspection of the guests of the house." Write a letter from a nervous girl (one of the guests) describing the incident which follows these words in the narrative.

(d) Discussion

9. Subjects:

(a) That the safeguards provided by the law against the sale of poisons ought to be enforced rather more strictly than they are.

(b) That science has spoiled romance.

NARRATIVE ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

A COUNTRY CRICKET-MATCH THE INCENDIARY

(a) *Language and Style*

1. Suggest three adjectives to describe the style of these two essays. Justify your adjectives by quotation.

2. Illustrate and comment on Miss Mitford's use of (a) French and Latin phrases, (b) italicized words for emphasis, and (c) exclamations.

3. Comment on (a) the accuracy of Miss Mitford's description of the cricket-match, and (b) the faithfulness of her law-court record. Why does the cricket description seem old-fashioned to you?

(b) *Subject-matter*

4. Has Miss Mitford a gift for characterization? Mention the three most clearly defined characters in the two essays.

5. With what era in history are these two essays concerned? Make a note on the characteristics of that period.

6. Of what importance is the love-interest in these two narrative essays?

7. What references does Miss Mitford make to literature? Quote them and explain them.

8. What light does "The Incendiary" throw on the social conditions of the early nineteenth century?

(c) *Original Work*

9. Read the passage in *Pickwick Papers* which describes a country cricket-match, and the chapters in Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley* and Mrs Craik's *John Halifax, Gentleman* which describe incendiarism at the time of the Industrial Revolution. Make some comparison between these narratives.

10. Who wrote *Cranford*? How does it compare with *Our Village*?

11. Read Miss Mitford's selection and criticism of the cricket team (beginning on p. 161). In the same way select and criticize the members of your own school team for cricket or football.

12. Write an essay entitled "The Best Type of Cricket

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To-day." Make use of Miss Mitford's observations in the first paragraph of her essay.

13. Imagine and write down a conversation between Miss Mitford, Mr Hutchinson, and Hazlitt on the subject of "Sport."

14. Recast in dramatic form, with stage directions and settings indicated, the incident recorded on p. 177. In what way does it remind you of Mr Drinkwater's play *Abraham Lincoln*?

15. Give an imaginary answer to the letter on p. 166.

16. Write an essay on "Village Life in Three Eras—Elizabethan, Victorian, Modern."

17. A celebrated artist painted a picture of the scene at a London tube station during a German air-raid. Look at a reproduction of this picture and criticize it in the light of the statement on p. 176.

(d) Discussion

18. Subjects :

(a) That betting is detrimental to true sport.

(b) That science and machinery have ruined the world

THE STAGE COACH

(a) Language and Style

1. Use for yourself the following words as they are used in this sketch : buxom ; pedagogue ; mystery ; inherent , batten- ing ; ragamuffin ; embryo ; *billet-doux* ; cyclops ; asth- matic ; sulphureous ; superannuated ; portico ; transient.

2. How does the style of the sketch suggest the joyous bustle of Christmas Eve ?

(b) Subject-matter

3. Who is the most famous coachman in literature ? How do his qualities compare with those Irving mentions in this sketch (p. 187) ?

4. What is the meaning of the verse printed at the head of the sketch (p. 185) ? Why is it there ? Does it represent the true spirit of the piece ?

5. How does the sketch remind you of *Tom Brown's Schooldays* ?

NARRATIVE ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

6. "Aly steed since the days of Bucephalus." Explain this. What (a) famous steeds, (b) famous swords, do you know of in literature?

(c) Original Work

7. Write an essay in praise of inns, mentioning at least six beautiful (and actual) inn-names.

8. There are many pieces of English literature recounting the romance of travel by stage coach. Mention any others that you know. Do you know of any passage in literature that describes travel by (a) railway train, (b) motor, (c) bicycle, and (d) aeroplane? Try to write a passage of your own on such subjects.

9. Describe the scene at a country railway station on the arrival of the London train.

10. The coach-driver was, according to many writers, always full of fun and laughter, quips and jokes. Does the modern bus-driver resemble him? Why do you not associate the railway engine-driver with sociability and wit?

11. Why has not the *char-à-banc* of to-day the romance of the old stage coach?

(d) Discussion

12. Subjects:

- (a) That the spirit of Christmas is dying out.
- (b) That road travel is coming into its own again.

GIPSIES

(a) Language and Style

1. Explain in simple and clear language:

- (a) His poultry might fare the worse for it (p. 193).
- (b) His hen-roost is sure to pay for it (p. 193).
- (c) . . . crosses their hands with a piece of silver (p. 193).
- (d) Agog for husbands (p. 193).
- (e) A Cassandra of the crew (p. 194).
- (f) He had a widow in his line of life (p. 194).
- (g) . . . whose heart had so unaccountably melted at the sight of him (p. 196).

EXERCISES

2. What do you notice about the use of the colon and of the semi-colon in this essay? With some reference to the other essays of Addison printed in this book, make a note on the clearness and straightforwardness of Addison's style.

(b) Subject-matter

3. What do you understand by "The De Coverley Papers"? Who is Sir Roger de Coverley? Why did Addison invent such a character? How does he compare with the Chinese Philosopher of Goldsmith?

4. What humour is there in Addison's picture of Sir Roger in this essay?

5. "Addison was a smug, self-contented, highly respectable gentleman." Is this statement borne out in the essay?

(c) Original Work

6. What is the derivation of the word *gipsy*? What do you know of the gipsy tribes? How can you usually recognize a true gipsy?

7. What English writer loved and understood the gipsy life and the gipsy language? Read George Borrow's *Lavengro* and *The Romany Rye*, Patrick Chalmers' "Roundabouts and Swings," George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*, Ralph Hodgson's "Time, you old gipsy man," R. L. Stevenson's "I will make you brooches," George Meredith's "Juggling Jerry." Then write a short essay called "The Literature of the Gipsy."

8. Write a short story, or a poem, entitled "The Fortune-teller."

9. Write an imaginary letter in which the lost boy spoken of in the narrative tells, in his prosperous years afterward, of his life with the gipsies.

10. Write an imaginary conversation on gipsies between Sir Roger and (a) Mr Belloc, (b) R. L. Stevenson, and (c) Miss Mitford.

(d) Discussion

11. There is a passage in George Borrow's *The Romany Rye* in which Jasper Petulengro says that the gipsies and the cuckoo are two of the joys of the countryside. Find the passage, and conduct an argument of your own with Jasper on the subject.

NARRATIVE ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

THE EMIGRANT TRAIN

(a) *Language and Style*

1. What is an epithet? Comment on and illustrate Stevenson's apt use of epithets in this essay.

2. Stevenson is fond of whimsical, half-satirical, humorous expressions like the last sentence on p. 198. Give some other examples and appreciate their effect.

(b) *Subject-matter*

3. Make from memory a summary of the various incidents recorded in the essay, arranging them in order.

4. In what ways does Stevenson retain the realism of the incidents he records?

5. Write an appreciation of Stevenson's characterization of (a) the emigrant official, and (b) the newspaper-sellers.

6. For what do you know Stevenson best of all? What do you know of his life? How is this essay a kind of parable of his life?

(c) *Original Work*

7. Dramatize this essay in three scenes, containing as main ideas (a) the finding of a chum, (b) the establishment of the firm of Pennsylvania, Shakespeare, and Dubuque, and (c) the newsboy.

8. Describe *either* a railway journey by night in England, *or* an ocean voyage.

9. Imagine and write a letter that Stevenson might have sent afterward to the newsboy who had been kind to him.

(d) *Discussion*

10. Subject: "That pathos must be relieved by dignity of treatment."

GOING DOWN WITH VICTORY

(a) *Language and Style*

1. Compare de Quincey's use of parenthesis with Dickens's in "Nurse's Stories." By what tricks of style does de Quincey give this account an air of excitement?

2. Give examples from this essay of the use of (a) the participle phrase, and (b) the nominative absolute construction.

EXERCISES

Explain, by the aid of the examples, the difference between these two constructions.

3. How does de Quincey's account of the coach differ from Washington Irving's in (a) language, and (b) style ?

(b) *Subject-matter*

4. Explain the first paragraph of this essay in an historical note.

5. What could you say about the type of patriotism revealed in this essay ?

6. How would you describe de Quincey's attitude to war ? In which part of the essay does he best reveal it ? What is your opinion of it ?

7. What is the purpose of the contrast of the two carriages that met the coach ? Is it an effective contrast ?

(c) *Original Work*

8. "The great ancestral names of cities known to history through a thousand years" (p. 208). Give a similar list of English and Scottish towns or villages : and base upon it an essay called "The Beauty of English Place-names."

9. De Quincey in this essay refers to the effect of war on social caste. How did the Great European War, 1914-18, illustrate this ? Find and quote the passage in Shakespeare's *Henry V* that describes the levelling effect of war ; and write down the one of Rupert Brooke's "1914" sonnets which illustrates the same truth.

10. Write your own memory of the heralding of victory on November 11th, 1918.

11. Imagine and write down a conversation between the lady in the first carriage and the lady in the second on the subject of the victory.

12. "A *Courier* evening paper." Imagine the *Courier's* account of the glorious victory.

(d) *Discussion*

13. Discuss the idea that the Great European War gave the world an insight into war's pain and tragedy which has quite eliminated such jingoism as de Quincey shows in this essay.

14. Dispute de Quincey's use of the word *divinity* on p. 213.

NARRATIVE ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

THE VISION OF MIRZA FROZEN VOICES

(a) *Language and Style*

N.B. Questions on Addison's general style are given in the exercises on "The Adventures of a Shilling" (p. 270) and "Gipsies" (p. 288).

1. How does Addison often introduce the account or story which is the subject of his essay? In this respect compare these two essays with "The Adventures of a Shilling."

2. In what respects do these two essays particularly illustrate Addison's clearness of diction and style?

(b) *Subject-matter*

3. Has Addison put any real Eastern romance into the vision of Mirza? Compare it with any of the visions of the Old Testament prophets.

4. Interpret the parable of Mirza's vision in plain, straightforward English. Is Addison trying to teach a lesson in the essay?

5. Read anything you can from *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*. "The reputation of their veracity was not yet established in the world." Is Addison speaking in jest or in earnest? What other famous books of travel are there in English? Comment on them briefly.

6. What satire is there in the first sentence of "Frozen Voices"? Refer to Shakespeare's treatment of the same idea in *The Tempest*. What do we mean to-day by a 'traveller's tale'?

7. Illustrate from these two essays and from "The Adventures of a Shilling" (a) Addison's sense of descriptive and realistic detail, (b) his sense of apt reference, and (c) his sense of humour.

8. "Ulysses in Homer . . . the Red-Cross Knight in Spenser . . . the author of *Hudibras*." Annotate these three references at the beginning of "Frozen Voices."

9. What great passages of English literature deal with the vanity and shortness of human life? Make a short anthology for yourself.

EXERCISES

(c) *Original Work*

10. Write an essay called "The Eastern Idea of Life and Death."

11. Let Mirza have another vision—of life on another planet, where the inhabitants are immortal. Recount it.

12. Imagine and recount a voyage of Sir John Mandeville to a country where men could see only in the dark.

13. The idea of "Frozen Voices" would make a good plot for a farcical play. Sketch out an idea for such a play.

14. Imagine that (a) the boatswain (p. 223) recounts the story of this voyage on his return home, and (b) the sailors tell "the beauties in Wapping" (p. 224) the adventure. Write down the accounts.

15. In what way is science realizing the idea of 'frozen' voices to-day? Write the answer to this question as a contribution to a weekly magazine.

(d) *Discussion*

16. Motions :

(a) That philosophy is best taught by parable.

(b) That the tongue is mightier than the sword.

THE FIRST KNIGHTS OF THE AIR

(a) *Language and Style*

1. This is an extract from a modern newspaper. How does it differ from the other extracts in this book which belong to journalism and the journal?

2. Comment for yourself on the phrasing and vocabulary of this essay. Are there any traces of 'journalese'? Would the essay be more effective in simpler English?

(b) *Subject-matter*

3. Appreciate in a note the way in which the author has emphasized the contrast of new and old in this essay.

4. "These two modest and yet proud young men." Who were they? Give your own account of their adventure. When did it take place?

NARRATIVE ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

5. Do you think the prophecies of the *Daily Telegraph* in this article regarding air-travel were justified ?

(c) *Original Work*

6. Write two essays :

(a) The Annihilation of Time and Space.

(b) The Spirit of Adventure in English Exploration.

7. Imagine and write down the comments of a man who reads this article fifty years from now.

8. Write a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* on the subject of this article.

9. Write a leading article for a newspaper, called " The First Message from Australia by Wireless."

(d) *Discussion*

10. " And now the timid and the sceptical may declare that these two knights of the air have merely proved that what was thought impossible is possible, and that there, for all practical purposes, the matter rests." Discuss this.

THE SQUIRE'S STORY

(a) *Language and Style*

1. Mrs Gaskell emphasizes the reality of her story by familiar ' asides ' like " and ' quite the gentleman,' said the landlord of the George Inn " in the first paragraph. Give other examples and discuss their effectiveness.

2. How does Mrs Gaskell manage to give us the idea that she herself is an inhabitant of Barford ?

3. Appreciate the naturalness of the conversation in the story.

(b) *Subject-matter*

4. Explain carefully the following references : " Mr Bickerstaff's ward " (p. 230) ; " poor deceased Reynard " (p. 233) ; " gone to Gretna Green " (p. 230) ; " this female Mordecai " (p. 238) ; " the Dogberries and Verges of those days " (p. 241) ; " Claude Duval " (p. 248).

EXERCISES

5. How does Mrs Gaskell cast an air of mystery about Mr Higgins? Is she successful? Does she keep your interest to the end?

6. In what way does Mrs Gaskell's little town differ from Miss Mitford's village? Which is the greater humorist—Miss Mitford or Mrs Gaskell?

7. Write a note on Mrs Gaskell's power of characterization. Compare her in this respect with (a) Jane Austen, (b) Charlotte Brontë, and (c) Dickens.

8. What part do (a) Miss Pratt, (b) Mr Dudgeon, and (c) Mr Davis play in the narrative? Are they necessary to the tale?

(c) *Original Work*

9. Let the following characters tell the tale in their own way: Sir Harry Manley; Isaac Wormeley; Nathaniel Hearn.

10. Imagine that the article Mr Davis was reading in *The Gentleman's Magazine* was on fox-hunting. Write his reply to the magazine.

11. (a) Write an essay called "The Highwayman in Literature," and (b) recount another adventure of Higgins.

12. Write this account as it might have been written by Dickens.

(d) *Discussion*

13. Oppose the argument that women writers are lacking in a sense of humour. Refer, if possible, to some modern writers.

THE ITALIAN PRISONER

(a) *Language and Style*

1. Comment on Dickens's use of the present tense in narrative. What is its effect?

2. Dickens has great power of picturesque imagery like "haggard old women with distaffs . . . as if they were spinning out their own hair" (p. 251). Find other examples from this sketch.

3. Is there anything in the style and vocabulary that gives the sketch an Italian atmosphere?

NARRATIVE ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

(b) *Subject-matter*

4. Make notes on the references to (a) vespers (p. 251); (b) Pompeii (p. 252); (c) the Newgate Calendar (p. 254); (d) English Circumlocution, and English Society on its travels (p. 254); (e) Signor Mazzini (p. 261); and (f) Mr Cruikshank (p. 259).

5. What do you notice about the construction of this sketch? Does the ending satisfy you? Is the story serious?

6. Appreciate and illustrate Dickens's sense of climax in description and narrative.

7. Write a note on Dickens's references to religion.

(c) *Original Work*

8. Write the tale (a) as Carlavero himself might have told it, and (b) as Mrs Gaskell would tell it.

9. On the sentence beginning "Parma pointed at it . . ." (p. 259) base a humorous essay or story called "In Italy with a Bottle."

10. "A letter to the Advocate that I wish I could have seen" (p. 256). Imagine and write the letter.

(d) *Discussion*

11. Subject: "Dickens's pictures of character are nearly always caricatures."

