THE STRANGE STORY BOOK

Yours Very Truly
A Lang

THE STRANGE STORY BOOK

BY MRS. LANG

EDITED BY ANDREW LANG

WITH PORTRAIT OF ANDREW LANG

AND 12 COLOURED PLATES AND
NUMEROUS OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS BY H. J. FORD

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PREFACE

TO THE CHILDREN

And now the time has come to say good-bye; and good-byes are always so sad that it is much better when we do not know that we have got to say them. It is so long since Beauty and the Beast and Cinderella and Little Red Riding Hood came out to greet you in the 'Blue Fairy Book,' that some of you who wore pigtails or sailor suits in those days have little boys and girls of your own to read the stories to now, and a few may even have little baby grandchildren. Since the first giants and enchanted princes and ill-treated step-daughters made friends with you, a whole new world of wheels and wings and sharp-voiced bells has been thrown open, and children have toy motors and aeroplanes which take up all their thoughts and time. You may see them in the street bending over pictures of the last machine which has won a prize of a thousand pounds, and picturing to themselves the day when *they* shall invent something finer still, that will fly higher and sail faster than any of those which have gone before it.

Now as this is the very last book of all this series that began in the long long ago, perhaps you may like to hear something of the man who thought over every one of the twenty-five, for fear lest a story should creep in which he did not wish his little boys and girls to read. He was born when nobody thought of travelling in anything but a train—a very slow one—or a steamer. It took a great deal of persuasion to induce him later to get into a motor and he had not the slightest desire to go up in an aeroplane—or to possess a telephone. Somebody once told him of a little boy who, after giving a thrilling account at luncheon of how Randolph had taken Edinburgh Castle, had expressed a desire to go out and see the Museum; 'I like old things better than new,' said the child! 'I wish I knew that little boy,' observed the man. 'He would just suit me.' And that was true, for he too loved great deeds of battle and adventure as well as the curious carved and painted fragments guarded in museums which show that the lives described by Homer and the other old poets were not tales made up by them to amuse tired crowds gathered round a hall fire, but were real—real as our lives now, and much more beautiful and splendid. Very proud he was one day when he bought, in a little shop on the way to Kensington Gardens, a small object about an inch high which to his mind exactly answered to the description of the lion-gate of Mycenæ, only that *now* the lions have lost their heads, whereas in the plaster copy from the shop they still had eyes to look at you and mouths to eat you. His friends were all sent for to give their opinion on this wonderful discovery, but no two thought alike about it. One declared it dated from the time of Solomon or of Homer himself, and of course it would have been delightful to believe that! but then somebody else was quite certain it was no more than ten years old, while the rest made different guesses. To this day the question is undecided, and very likely always will be.

All beasts were his friends, just because they *were* beasts, unless they had been very badly brought up. He never could resist a cat, and cats, like beggars, tell each other these things and profit by them. A cat knew quite well that it had only to go on sitting for a few days outside the window where the man was writing, and that if it began to snow or even to rain, the window would be pushed up and the cat would spend the rest of its days stretched

in front of the fire, with a saucer of milk beside it, and fish for every meal.

But life with cats was not all peace, and once a terrible thing happened when Dickon-draw-the-blade was the Puss in Possession. His master was passing through London on the way to take a journey to some beautiful old walled towns in the south of France where the English fought in the Hundred Years War, and he meant to spend a few weeks in the country along the Loire which is bound up with the memory of Joan of Arc. Unluckily, the night after he arrived from Scotland Dickon went out for a walk on the high trellis behind the house, and once there did not know how to get down again. Of course it was quite easy, and there were ropes of Virginia creeper to help, but Dickon lost his presence of mind, and instead of doing anything sensible only stood and shrieked, while his master got ladders and steps and clambered about in the dark and in the cold, till he put Dickon on the ground again. Then Dickon's master went to bed, but woke up so ill that he was obliged to do without the old towns, and go when he was better to a horrid place called Cannes, all dust and tea-parties.

Well, besides being fond of beasts, he loved cricket, and he never could be in a house with a garden for half an hour without trying to make up a cricket team out of the people who were sitting about declaring it was too hot to do anything at all; yet somehow or other, in ten minutes they were running and shouting with the rest. He would even turn a morning call to account in this way. Many years ago, a young lady who wished to introduce a new kind of dancing and thought he might be of use to her, begged a friend to invite them to meet. They did meet, but before a dozen words had been exchanged one was on the lawn and the other in the drawing-room, and there they remained to the end of the visit.

Do you love ghosts? So did he, and often and often he wanted to write you a book of the deadliest, creepiest ghost-stories he could find or invent, but he was afraid: afraid not of the children of course, but of their mothers, who were quite certain that if such a volume were known only to be in print, all kinds of dreadful things would happen to their sons and daughters. Perhaps they might have; nobody can prove that they wouldn't. At any rate, it was best to be on the safe side, so the book was never written.

The books that told of wonderful deeds enthralled him too, and these he read over and over again. He could have stood a close examination of Napoleon's battles and generals, and would have told you the ground occupied by every regiment when the first shot was fired at Waterloo. As for travelling, he longed to see the places where great events had happened, but travelling tired him, and after all, when it came to the point, what was there in the world better than Scotland? As long as he could lie by a burn with a book in his pocket, watching the fish dancing in and out, he did not care so very much even about catching them. And he lay so still that two or three times a little bird came and perched on his rod—once it was a blue and green kingfisher—and he went home brimming with pride at the compliment the bird had paid him. Wherever he stayed, children were his friends, and he would tell them stories and write them plays and go on expeditions with them to ghost-haunted caves or historic castles. He would adapt himself to them and be perfectly satisfied with their company, and there is certainly one story of his own which owes its ending to a little girl, though in the Preface he was careful to speak of her as 'The Lady.'

Everything to do with the ideas and customs of savages interested him, and perhaps if some of you go away by and bye to wild parts of the world, you will make friends with the

people whose stories you may have read in some of the Christmas books. But remember that savages and seers of fairyland are just like yourselves, and they will never tell their secrets to anyone who they feel will laugh at them. This man who loved fairies was paying a visit in Ireland several years ago and the girls in the house informed him that an old peasant in the hills was learned in all the wisdom and spells of the little folk. He perhaps might be persuaded to tell them a little, he did sometimes, but never if his own family were about—'they only mocked at him,' he said. It was a chance not to be missed; arrangements were made to send his daughters out of the way, and the peasant's fairy-tales were so entertaining that it was hours before the party came back.

Well, there does not seem much more to add except to place at the end of these pages a poem which should have gone into the very first Fairy Book, but by some accident was left out. It is only those who know how to shake off the fetters of the outside world, and to sever themselves from its noise and scramble, that can catch the sound of a fairy horn or the rush of fairy feet. The little girl in the poem had many friends in fairyland as well as pets among the wood folk, and she has grown up among the books year by year, sometimes writing stories herself of the birds and beasts she has tamed, and being throughout her life the dearest friend of the man who planned the Christmas books twenty-five years ago.

TO ELSPETH ANGELA CAMPBELL

Too late they come, too late for you,

These old friends that are ever new,

Enchanted in our volume blue.

For you ere now have wandered o'er

A world of tales untold of yore,

And learned the later fairy lore!

Nay, as within her briery brake,

The Sleeping Beauty did awake,

Old tales may rouse them for your sake.

And you once more may voyage through

The forests that of old we knew,

The fairy forests deep in dew,

Where you, resuming childish things,

Shall listen when the Blue Bird sings,

And sit at feasts with fairy kings,

And taste their wine, ere all be done,

And face more welcome shall be none
Among the guests of Oberon.
Ay, of that feast shall tales be told,
The marvels of that world of gold
To children young, when you are old.
When you are old! Ah, dateless when,
For youth shall perish among men,
And Spring herself be ancient then.

A. L.

1889.

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THE DROWNED BUCCANEER

The story of Wolfert Webber was said by Louis Stevenson to be one of the finest treasure-seeking stories in the world; and as Stevenson was a very good judge, I am going to tell it to you.

Wolfert's ancestor, Cobus Webber, was one of the original settlers who came over from Holland and established themselves on the coast of what is now the State of New York. Like most of his countrymen, Cobus was a great gardener, and devoted himself especially to cabbages, and it was agreed on all sides that none so large or so sweet had ever been eaten by anybody.

Webber's house was built after the Dutch pattern, and was large and comfortable. Birds built their nests under the eaves and filled the air with their singing, and a button-wood tree, which was nothing but a sapling when Cobus planted his first cabbage, had become a monster overshadowing half the garden in the days of his descendant Wolfert early in the eighteenth century.

The button-wood tree was not the only thing that had grown during those years. The city known at first as 'New Amsterdam,' and later as 'New York,' had grown also, and surrounded the house of the Webbers. But if the family could no longer look from the windows at the beautiful woods and rivers of the countryside, as their forefathers had done, there was no reason to drive a cart about from one village to another to see who wanted cabbages, for now the housewives came to Wolfert to choose their own, which saved a great deal of trouble.

Yet, though Wolfert sold all the cabbages he could raise, he did not become rich as fast as he wished, and at length he began to wonder if he was becoming rich at all. Food was dearer than when he was a boy, and other people besides himself had taken to cabbage-growing. His daughter was nearly a woman, and would want a portion if she married. Was there no way by which he could make the money that would be so badly needed by and bye?

Thinking of those things, Wolfert walked out one blustering Saturday afternoon in the autumn to a country inn near the sea, much frequented by the Dutchmen who lived within reach. The usual guests were gathered round the hearth, and in a great leather armchair sat Ramm Rapelye, a wealthy and important person, and the first white child born in the State. Wolfert drew up a chair and stared moodily into the fire till he was startled by a remark of the landlord's, which seemed to chime in exactly with his thoughts.

'This will be a rough night for the money-diggers,' said he.

'What! are they at their works again?' asked a one-eyed English captain.

'Ay, indeed,' answered the landlord; 'they have had great luck of late. They say a great pot of gold has been dug up just behind Stuyvesant's orchard. It must have been buried there

in time of war by old Stuyvesant, the governor.'

'Yes,' said Peechy Prauw, another of the group. 'Money has been dug up all over the island from time to time. The lucky man has always dreamt of the treasure three times beforehand, and, what is more wonderful still, nobody has ever found it who does not come from the old Dutch settlers—a sure proof that it was a Dutchman that buried it.'

That evening Wolfert went home feeling as if he was walking on air. The soil of the place must be full of gold, and how strange it was that so little of it should yet be upturned! He was so excited that he never listened to a word his wife said, and went to bed with his mind full of the talk he had heard.

His dreams carried on his last waking thoughts. He was digging in his garden, and every spadeful of mould that he threw up laid bare handfuls of golden coins or sparkling stones. Sometimes he even lighted on bags of money or heavy treasure-chests.

When he woke, his one wish was to know if his dream would be repeated the next two nights, for that, according to Peechy Prauw, was needful before you could expect to discover the treasure.

On the third morning he jumped up almost mad with delight, for he had had the three dreams, and never doubted that he could become rich merely by stretching out his hand. But even so, great caution was necessary, or other people might suspect and rob him of his wealth before he had time to place it in safety. So as soon as he thought his wife and daughter were sound asleep, he got softly out of bed and, taking his spade and a pickaxe, began to dig in the part of the garden furthest from the road. The cabbages he left lying about, not thinking it was worth while for such a rich man to trouble about them.

Of course, his wife and daughter quickly perceived what he was doing, but he would explain nothing, and grew so cross when they ventured to put him a question that they feared he was going out of his mind.

Then the frosts began and the ground for many weeks was too hard to dig. All day long he sat gazing into the fire and dreaming dreams, and his wife saw their savings slowly dwindling.

At last spring came—surely the winter had never before been so long!—and Wolfert went gaily back to his digging; but not so much as a silver penny rewarded his labours. As the months passed by his energy became feverish, and his body thinner and thinner. His friends, one by one, ceased to come to his house, and at length his only visitor was a young man—Dick Waldron by name—whom he had rejected as a husband for his daughter on account of his poverty.

On a Saturday afternoon Wolfert left the house not knowing or caring where he was going, when suddenly he found himself close to the old inn by the sea-shore. It was a year since he had entered it, and several of the usual customers were now present, though in the great armchair once occupied by Ramm Rapelye a stranger was seated. He was an odd and forbidding-looking person, short, bow-legged, and very strong, with a scar across his face;

while his clothes were such a jumble of curious garments that they might have been picked out of dust-heaps at various times. Wolfert did not know what to make of him, and turned to inquire of Peechy Prauw, who took him into a corner of the large hall and explained how the man came there. As to who he was, no one knew; but one night a great shouting had been heard from the water-side, and when the landlord went down with his negro servant he found the stranger seated on a huge oak sea-chest. No ship was in sight, nor boat of any kind. With great difficulty his chest was moved to the inn and put in the small room which he had taken, and there he had remained ever since, paying his bill every night and spending all day at the window, watching with his telescope the ships that went by. And if anyone had been there to notice, they would have seen that it was the little vessels and not the big ones that he examined most attentively.

By and bye, however, there was a change in the stranger's habits. He spent less time in his room and more downstairs with the rest of the company, telling them wonderful stories of the pirates in the Spanish Main. Indeed, so well did he describe the adventures that his listeners were not slow in guessing that he had himself taken a chief part in them.

One evening the talk happened to turn on the famous Captain Kidd, most celebrated of buccaneers. The Englishman was relating, as he often did, all the traditions belonging to this hero, and the stranger who liked no one to speak but himself, could hardly conceal his impatience. At length the Englishman made some allusion to a voyage of Kidd's up the Hudson river in order to bury his plunder in a secret place, and at these words the stranger could contain himself no longer.

'Kidd up the Hudson?' he exclaimed; 'Kidd was *never* up the Hudson.'

WOLFERT FINDS A STRANGER AT THE INN

‘I tell you he *was*,’ cried the other; ‘and they say he buried a quantity of treasure in the little flat called the Devil’s Hammer that runs out into the river.’

‘It is a lie,’ returned the stranger; ‘Kidd was *never* up the Hudson! What the plague do *you* know of him and his haunts?’

‘What do *I* know?’ echoed the Englishman. ‘Why, I was in London at the time of his trouble and saw him hanged.’

‘Then, sir, let me tell you that you saw as pretty a fellow hanged as ever trod shoe-leather, and there was many a landlubber looking on that had better have swung in his stead.’

Here Peechy Prauw struck in, thinking the discussion had gone far enough.

‘The gentleman is quite right,’ said he; ‘Kidd never did bury money up the Hudson, nor in any of these parts. It was Bradish and some of his buccaneers who buried money round here, though no one quite knew where: Long Island, it was said, or Turtle Bay, or in the rocks about Hellgate. I remember an adventure of old Sam, the negro fisherman, when he was a young man, which sounded as if it might have to do with the buccaneers. It was on a dark night many years ago, when Black Sam was returning from fishing in Hellgate—’ but

Peechy got no further, for at this point the stranger broke in:

'Hark'ee, neighbour,' he cried; 'you'd better let the buccaneers and their money alone,' and with that the man rose from his seat and walked up to his room, leaving dead silence behind him. The spell was broken by a peal of thunder, and Peechy was begged to go on with his story, and this was it:—

Fifty years before, Black Sam had a little hut so far down among the rocks of the Sound that it seemed as if every high tide must wash it away. He was a hard-working young man, as active as a cat, and was a labourer at a farm on the island. In the summer evenings, when his work was done, he would hasten down to the shore and remove his light boat and go out to fish, and there was not a corner of the Sound that he did not know, from the Hen and Chickens to the Hog's Back, from the Hog's Back to the Pot, and from the Pot to the Frying Pan.

On this particular evening Sam had tried in turn all these fishing-grounds, and was so eager to fill his basket that he never noticed that the tide was ebbing fast, and that he might be cast by the currents on to some of the sharp rocks. When at length he looked up and saw where he was, he lost no time in steering his skiff to the point of Blackwell's Island. Here he cast anchor, and waited patiently till the tide should flow again and he could get back safely. But as the night drew on, a great storm blew up and the lightning played over the shore. So before it grew too dark, Sam quickly changed his position and found complete shelter under a jutting rock on Manhattan Island, where a tree which had rooted itself in a cleft spread its thick branches over the sea.

'I shan't get wet, anyhow,' thought Sam, who did not like rain, and, making his boat fast, he laid himself flat in the bottom and went to sleep.

When he awoke the storm had passed, and all that remained of it was a pale flash of lightning now and then. By the light of these flashes—for there was no moon—Sam was able to see how far the tide had advanced, and judged it must be near midnight. He was just about to loose the moorings of his skiff, as it was now safe to venture out to sea, when a glimmer on the water made him pause. What could it be? Not lightning certainly, but whatever it was, it was rapidly approaching him, and soon he perceived a boat gliding along in the shadow, with a lantern at the prow. Sam instantly crouched still farther into the shadow, and held his breath as a boat passed by, and pulled up in a small cave just beyond. Then a man jumped on shore, and, taking the lantern, examined all the rocks.

'I've got it!' he exclaimed to the rest. 'Here is the iron ring,' and, returning to the boat, he and the five others proceeded to lift out something very heavy, and staggered with it a little distance, when they paused to take breath. By the light of the lantern which one of them held on high, Sam perceived that five wore red woollen caps, while the man who had found the iron ring had on a three-cornered hat. All were armed with pistols, knives, and cutlasses, and some carried, besides, spades and pickaxes.

Slowly they climbed upwards towards a clump of thick bushes, and Sam silently followed them and scaled a rock which overlooked the path. At a sign from their leader they

stopped, while he bent forward with the lantern, and seemed to be searching for something in the bushes.

‘Bring the spades,’ he said at last, and two men joined him and set to work on a piece of open ground.

‘We must dig deep, so that we shall run no risks,’ remarked one of the men, and Sam shivered, for he made sure that he saw before him a gang of murderers about to bury their victim. In his fright he had started, and the branches of the tree to which he was clinging rustled loudly.

‘What’s that?’ cried the leader. ‘There’s someone watching us,’ and the lantern was held up in the direction of the sound and Sam heard the cock of a pistol. Luckily his black face did not show in the surrounding dark, and the man lowered the lantern.

‘It was only some beast or other,’ he said, ‘and surely you are not going to fire a pistol and alarm the country?’

So the pistol was uncocked and the digging resumed, while the rest of the party bore their burden slowly up the bank. It was not until they were out of sight that Sam ventured to move as much as an eyelid; but great as his fear was, his curiosity was greater still, and instead of creeping back to his boat and returning home, he resolved to remain a little longer.

The sound of spades could now be heard, and as the men would all be busy digging the grave, Sam thought he might venture a little nearer.

Guided by the noise of the strokes he crawled upwards, till only a steep rock divided him from the diggers. As silently as before he raised himself to the top, feeling every ledge with his toes before he put his feet on it, lest he should dislodge a loose stone which might betray him. Then he peered over the edge and saw that the men were immediately below him—and far closer than he had any idea of. Indeed, they were so near that it seemed as if it were safer to keep his head where it was than to withdraw it.

By this time the turf was carefully being replaced over the grave, and dry leaves scattered above it.

‘I defy anybody to find it out!’ cried the leader at last, and Sam, forgetting everything, except his horror of their cruelty, exclaimed:

‘The murderers!’ but he did not know he had spoken aloud till he beheld the eyes of the whole gang fixed upon him.

‘Down with him,’ shouted they; and Sam waited for no more, but the next instant was flying for his life. Now he was crashing through undergrowth, now he was rolling down banks, now he was scaling rocks like a mountain goat; but when at length he came to the ridge at the back, where the river ran into the sea, one of the pirates was close behind him.

The chase appeared to be over; a steep wall of rock lay between Sam and safety, and in fancy he already heard the whiz of a bullet. At this moment he noticed a tough creeper climbing up the rock, and, seizing it with both hands, managed to swing himself up the smooth surface. On the summit he paused for an instant to take breath, and in the light of the dawn he was clearly visible to the pirate below. *This* time the whiz of the bullet was a

reality, and it passed by his ear. In a flash he saw his chance of deceiving his pursuers and, uttering a loud yell, he threw himself on the ground and kicked a large stone lying on the edge into the river.

‘We’ve done for him now I *think,*’ remarked the leader, as his companions came panting up. ‘He’ll tell no tales; but we must go back and collect our booty, so that it shan’t tell tales either,’ and when their footsteps died away Sam clambered down from the rock and made his way to the skiff, which he pushed off into the current, for he did not dare to use the oars till he had gone some distance. In his fright he forgot all about the whirlpools of Pot and Frying Pan, or the dangers of the group of rocks right in the middle of Hellgate, known as the Hen and Chickens. Somehow or other he got safely home, and hid himself snugly for the rest of the day in the farmhouse where he worked.

This was the story told by Peechy Prauw, which had been listened to in dead silence by the men round the fire.

‘Is that all?’ asked one of them when Peechy stopped.

‘All that belongs to the story,’ answered he.

‘And did Sam never find out what they buried?’ inquired Wolfert.

‘Not that I know of,’ replied Peechy; ‘he was kept pretty hard at work after that, and, to tell the truth, I don’t think he had any fancy for another meeting with those gentlemen. Besides, places look so different by daylight that I doubt if he could have found the spot where they had dug the grave. And after all, what is the use of troubling about a dead body, if you cannot hang the murderers?’

‘But *was* it a dead body that was buried?’ said Wolfert.

‘To be sure,’ cried Peechy. ‘Why, it haunts the place to this day!’

‘Haunts!’ repeated some of the men, drawing their chairs nearer together.

‘Ay, haunts,’ said Peechy again. ‘Have none of you heard of Father Redcap that haunts the old farmhouse in the woods near Hellgate?’

‘Yes,’ replied one; ‘I’ve heard some talk of that, but I always took it for an old wives’ tale.’

‘Old wives’ tale or not,’ answered Peechy, ‘it stands not far from that very spot—and a lonely one it is, and nobody has ever been known to live in it. Lights are seen from time to time about the wood at night, and some say an old man in a red cap appears at the windows and that he is the ghost of the man who was buried in the bushes. Once—so my mother told me when I was a child—three soldiers took shelter there, and when daylight came they searched the house through from top to bottom and found old Father Red Cap in the cellar outside on a cider-barrel, with a jug in one hand and a goblet in the other. He offered them a drink, but just as one of the soldiers held out his hand for the goblet, a flash of lightning blinded them all three for several minutes, and when they could see again, Red Cap had vanished, and nothing but the cider-barrel remained.’

‘That’s all nonsense!’ exclaimed the Englishman.

‘Well, I don’t know that I don’t agree with you,’ answered Peechy; ‘but everybody knows

there is something queer about the house. Still, as to that story of Black Sam's, I believe it just as well as if it had happened to myself.'

In the silence that followed this discussion, the roar of the storm might plainly be heard, and the thunder grew louder and louder every moment. It was accompanied by the sound of guns coming up from the sea and by a loud shout, yet it was strange that, though the whole strait was constantly lit up by lightning, not a creature was to be seen.

Suddenly another noise was added to the rest. The window of the room above was thrown up, and the voice of the stranger was heard answering the shout from the sea. After a few words uttered in a language unknown to anyone present, there was a great commotion overhead, as if someone were dragging heavy furniture about. The negro servant was next called upstairs, and soon he appeared holding one handle of the great sea-chest, while the stranger clung to the other.

'What!' cried the landlord, stepping forward in surprise, and raising his lantern. 'Are you going to sea in such a storm?'

'Storm!' repeated the stranger. 'Do you call this sputter of weather a storm? Don't preach about storms to a man whose life has been spent amongst whirlwinds and tornadoes,' and as he spoke, the voice from the water rang out, calling impatiently.

'Put out the light,' it said. 'No one wants lights here,' and the stranger turned instantly and ordered the bystanders who had followed from curiosity, back to the inn.

But although they retired to a little distance, under the shadow of some rocks, they had no intention of going any further. By help of the lightning they soon discovered a boat filled with men, heading up and down under a rocky point close by, and kept in position with great difficulty by a boat-hook, for just there the current was strong. One of the crew reached forward to seize a handle of the stranger's heavy sea-chest and assist the owner to place it on board. But his movement caused the boat to drift into the current, the chest slipped from the gunwale and fell into the sea, dragging the stranger with it, and in that pitch darkness and amidst those huge waves, no aid was possible. One flash, indeed, showed for an instant a pair of outstretched hands; but when the next one came, nothing was to be seen or heard but the roaring waters.

FATHER REDCAP FOUND IN THE CELLAR

The storm passed at midnight, the men were able to return to their homes, casting, as they went along, fearful glances towards the sea. But the events of the evening, and the tales he had listened to, made a deep impression on the mind of Wolfert, and he wondered afresh if he were not the person destined to find the hidden treasure of Black Sam’s adventure. It was no dead body, he felt sure, that the pirates had buried on the island, but gold and, perhaps, jewels; and the next morning he lost no time in going over to the place and making cautious inquiries of the people who lived nearest to it.

‘Oh! yes,’ he was told, ‘he had heard quite right. Black Sam’s story had filtered out somehow, and many were the visits which had been paid to the wood by experienced money-diggers, though never once had they met with success. And more, it had been remarked that for ever after, the diggers had in every case been dogged by ill-luck.’ (This, thought Wolfert to himself, was because they had neglected some of the proper ceremonies necessary to be performed by every hunter after treasure.) ‘Why, the very last man who had dug there,’ went on the speakers, ‘had worked the whole night, in spite of

two handfuls of earth being thrown in for one which he threw out. However, he persevered and managed to uncover an iron chest when, with a roar that might have been heard across the Sound, a crowd of strange figures sprang out of the hole and dealt him such blows that he was fain to betake himself to his boat as fast as his legs could carry him. This story the man told on his death-bed, so no doubt it was true.'

Now every tale of the sort only went to prove to Wolfert that Sam had actually seen the pirates burying the treasure, and he was quite determined to make an effort to obtain it for himself. The first thing to be done was to get Sam to serve as his guide, for many years had passed since his adventure, and the trees and bushes would have grown thickly about the hole.

The negro was getting old by this time, but he perfectly recollected all that had happened, though *his* tale was not quite the same as the one told by Peechy Prauw. But, he was an active man yet, and readily agreed to go with Wolfert for a couple of dollars. As to being afraid of ghosts or pirates, Sam had long forgotten that he had feared either.

This time the two made their expedition mostly on foot, and after walking five or six miles they reached a wood which covered the eastern part of the island. Here they struck into a deep dark lane overgrown with brambles and overshadowed by creepers, showing that it was seldom indeed that anybody went that way. The lane ended at the shore of the Sound, and just there were traces of a gap surrounded by trees that had become tall since the days when Sam last saw them. Near by stood the ruins of a house—hardly more than a heap of stones, which Wolfert guessed to be the one in Peechy Prauw's story.

It was getting late, and there was something in the loneliness and desolation of the place which caused even Wolfert to feel uncomfortable. Not that he was specially brave, but his soul was so possessed with the idea of money-getting—or, rather, money-finding—that he had no thoughts to spare for other matters. He clung to Sam closely, scrambling along the edges of rocks which overhung the sea, till they came to a small cave. Then Sam paused and looked round; next he pointed to a large iron ring fastened to a sort of table-rock.

Wolfert's eyes followed him, and glistened brightly and greedily. This was the ring of Peechy Prauw's tale, and when the negro stooped to examine the rock more carefully, Wolfert fell on his knees beside him and was able to make out just above the ring three little crosses cut in the stone.

Starting from this point, Sam tried to remember the exact path that the pirates had taken, and after losing his way two or three times came to the ridge of rock from which he had overlooked the diggers. On the face of it also were cut three crosses, but if you had not known where to look you would never have found them, for they were nearly filled up with moss. It was plain that the diggers had left this mark for their guidance, but what was not so plain was where they had buried their treasure, for fifty years change many things. Sam fixed first on one spot and then on another—it must have been under that mulberry tree, he declared. Or stay, was it not beside that big white stone, or beneath that small green knoll? At length Wolfert saw that Sam could be certain of nothing, and as he had

brought neither spade nor pickaxe nor lantern with him, decided that he had better content himself with taking notes of the place, and return to dig some other day.

On their way back Wolfert's fancy began to play him strange tricks, as it has a way of doing when people are excited or very tired. He seemed to behold pirates hanging from every tree, and the fall of a nut or the rustling of a leaf caused him to jump and to feel for his companion. As they approached the garden of the ruined house, they saw a figure advancing along a mossy path with a heavy burden on his shoulders. On his head was a red cap, and he passed on slowly until he stopped at the door of what looked to be a burying-vault. Then he turned and shook his fist at them, and as Wolfert saw his face he recognised with horror the drowned buccaneer.

Wolfert did not need to look twice, but rushed away helter-skelter with Sam behind him, running nearly as fast as he had done fifty years before. Every stone they stumbled over they imagined to be the pirate's foot stretched out to trip them up; every bramble that caught them to be his hands grasping at their clothes. They only breathed fully when Wolfert's home was in sight.

It was several days before he recovered from the shock and the run combined, and all that time he behaved in such a strange manner that his wife and daughter were convinced that he was rapidly going mad. He would sit for hours together staring before him, and if a question was put to him, seldom gave a sensible answer. He scarcely ate any food, and if he *did* fall asleep, he talked about money-bags, and flung the blankets right and left, imagining that he was digging the earth out of the hole.

In this extremity the poor woman felt that the matter was beyond her skill, and she hastened to consult a German doctor famous for his learning. But the result was very different from what she had expected. At the doctor's first interview with Wolfert he questioned the patient closely as to all that he had seen and heard of the treasure, and at length told him that if he was ever to find it, it was necessary to proceed with the utmost caution and to observe certain ceremonies.

'You can never dig for money except at night,' ended the doctor, 'and then you must have the help of a divining rod. As I have some experience in these matters, you had better let me join in the search. If you agree to this, you can leave all preparations to me. In three days everything will be ready.'

Wolfert was delighted at this offer. Now, he thought, he was sure of success, and though he neglected his work as much as ever, he was so much brighter and happier than before that his wife congratulated herself on her wisdom in sending him to the doctor.

When the appointed night arrived Wolfert bade his women-kind go to bed and not to feel frightened if he should be out till daylight; and dressed in his wife's long, red cloak, with his wide felt hat tied down by his daughter's handkerchief, he set gaily out on his

adventure.

The doctor was awaiting him, with a thick book studded with clasps under his arm, a basket of dried herbs and drugs in one hand, and the divining rod in the other. It was barely ten o'clock, but the whole village was fast asleep, and nothing was to be heard save the sound of their own footsteps. Yet, now and then it seemed to Wolfert that a third step mingled with theirs, and as he glanced round he fancied he saw a figure moving after them, keeping always in the shadow but stopping when they stopped, and proceeding when they proceeded.

Sam was ready for them and had put the spades and pickaxes in the bottom of his boat, together with a dark lantern. The tide was in their favour running fast up the Sound, so that oars were hardly needed. Very shortly they were passing the little inn where these strange adventures had begun; it was dark and still now, yet Wolfert thought he saw a boat lurking in the very place where he had beheld it on the night of the storm, but the shadow of the rocks lay so far over the water that he could be sure of nothing. Still, in a few minutes he was distinctly aware of the noise of oars, apparently coming from a long way off, and though both his companions were silent, it was evident from the stronger strokes instantly pulled by Sam that he had heard it also. In half an hour the negro shot his skiff into the little cave, and made it fast to the iron ring.

Even with the help of the notes he had taken, it was some time before Wolfert managed to hit on the exact spot where the treasure had been buried. After losing their way twice or thrice they reached the ledge of rock with the crosses on it, and at a sign from Wolfert the doctor produced the divining rod. This was a forked twig, and each of the forks was grasped in his hand, while the stem pointed straight upwards. The doctor held it at a certain distance above the ground, and frequently changed his position, and Wolfert kept the light of the lantern full on the twig, but it never stirred. Their hopes and their patience were nearly exhausted when the rod began slowly to turn, and went on turning until the stem pointed straight to the earth.

'The treasure lies here,' said the doctor.

'Shall I dig?' asked Sam.

'No! no! not yet. And do not speak, whatever you see me do,' and the doctor drew a circle round them and made a fire of dry branches and dead leaves. On this he threw the herbs and drugs he had brought with him, which created a thick smoke, and finished by reading some sentences out of the clasped book. His companions, nearly choked and blinded by the dense vapour, understood nothing of what was going on, and it is quite possible that there was not anything to understand, but the doctor thought that these ceremonies were necessary to the right beginning of any important adventure. At last he shut the book.

'You can dig now,' he said to Sam.

So the negro struck his pickaxe into the soil, which gave signs of not having been disturbed for many a long day. He very soon came to a bed of sand and gravel, and had just thrust his spade into it, when a cry came from Wolfert.

'What is that?' he whispered. 'I fancied I heard a trampling among the dry leaves and a rustling through the bushes.' Sam paused, and for a moment there was no sound to break

the stillness. Then a bat flitted by, and a bird flew above the flames of the fire.

Sam continued to dig, till at length his spade struck upon something that gave out a hollow ring. He struck a second time, and turned to his companions.

‘It is a chest,’ he cried.

‘And full of gold, I’ll warrant,’ exclaimed Wolfert, raising his eyes to the doctor, who stood behind him. But beyond the doctor who was that? By the dying light of the lantern, peering over the rock, was the face of the drowned buccaneer.

With a shriek of terror he let fall the lantern, which fizzled out. His companions looked up, and, seeing what he saw, were seized with a fear as great as his. The negro leaped out of the hole, the doctor dropped his book and basket, and they all fled in different directions, thinking that a legion of hobgoblins were after them. Wolfert made a dash for the water-side and the boat, but, swiftly as he ran, someone behind him ran more swiftly still. He gave himself up for lost, when a hand clutched at his cloak; then suddenly a third person seemed to gain on them, and to attack his pursuer. Pistol shots were fired in the fierceness of the fight, the combatants fell, and rolled on the ground together.

THE FACE OF THE DROWNED BUCCANEER

Wolfert would thankfully have disappeared during the struggle, but a precipice lay at his feet, and in the pitch darkness he knew not where he could turn in safety. So he crouched low under a clump of bushes and waited.

Now the two men were standing again and had each other by the waist, straining and dragging and pulling towards the brink of the precipice. This much Wolfert could guess from the panting sounds that reached him, and at last a gasp of relief smote upon his ears followed instantaneously by a shriek and then a plunge.

One of them had gone, but what about the other? Was he friend or foe? The question was soon answered, for climbing over a group of rocks which rose against the sky was the buccaneer. Yes; he was sure of it.

All his terrors revived at the sight, and he had much ado to keep his teeth from chattering. Yet, even if his legs would carry him, where could he go? A precipice was on one side of him and a murderer on the other. But as the pirate drew a few steps nearer, Wolfert's fears were lashed into frenzy, and he cast himself over the edge of the cliff, his feet casting about for a ledge to rest on. Then his cloak got caught in a thorn tree and he felt himself hanging in the air, half-choking. Luckily the string broke and he dropped down, rolling from bank to bank till he lost consciousness.

It was long before he came to himself. When he did, he was lying at the bottom of a boat, with the morning sun shining upon him.

'Lie still,' said a voice, and with a leap of the heart he knew it to be that of Dick Waldron, his daughter's sweetheart.

Dame Webber, not trusting her husband in the strange condition he had been in for months, had begged the young man to follow him, and though Dick had started too late to overtake the party, he had arrived in time to save Wolfert from his enemy.

The story of the midnight adventure soon spread through the town, and many were the citizens who went out to hunt for the treasure. Nothing, however, was found by any of the seekers; and whether any treasure had been buried there at all, no one could tell, any more than they knew who the strange buccaneer was, and if he had been drowned or not. Only one thing was curious about the whole affair, and that was the presence in the Sound at that very time of a brig looking like a privateer which, after hanging about for several days, was seen standing out to sea the morning after the search of the money-diggers.

Yet, though Wolfert missed one fortune, he found another, for the citizens of Manhattan desired to cut a street right through his garden, and offered to buy the ground for a large sum. So he grew to be a rich man after all, and might be seen any day driving about his native town in a large yellow carriage drawn by two big black Flanders mares.

THE PERPLEXITY OF ZADIG

On the banks of the river Euphrates there once lived a man called Zadig, who spent all his days watching the animals he saw about him and in learning their ways, and in studying the plants that grew near his hut. And the more he knew of them, the more he was struck with the differences he discovered even in the beasts or flowers which he thought when he first saw them were exactly alike.

One morning as he was walking through a little wood there came running towards him an officer of the queen's household, followed by several of her attendants. Zadig noticed that one and all seemed in the greatest anxiety and glanced from side to side with wild eyes as if they had lost something they held to be very precious, and hoped against hope that it might be lurking in some quite impossible place.

On catching sight of Zadig, the first of the band stopped suddenly.

'Young man,' he said, panting for breath, 'have you seen the queen's pet dog?'

'It is a tiny spaniel, is it not?' answered Zadig, 'which limps on the left fore-paw, and has very long ears?'

'Ah then, you have seen it!' exclaimed the steward joyfully, thinking that his search was at an end and his head was safe, for he knew of many men who had lost theirs for less reason.

'No,' replied Zadig, 'I have never seen it. Indeed, I did not so much as know that the queen had a dog.'

At these words the faces of the whole band fell, and with sighs of disappointment they hurried on twice as fast as before, to make up for lost time.

Strange to say, it had happened that the finest horse in the king's stable had broken away from its groom and galloped off no one knew where, over the boundless plains of Babylon. The chief huntsman and all the other officials pursued it with the same eagerness that the officers of the household had displayed in running after the queen's dog and, like them, met with Zadig who was lying on the ground watching the movements of some ants.

'Has the king's favourite horse passed by here?' inquired the great huntsman, drawing rein.

'You mean a wonderful galloper fifteen hands high, shod with very small shoes, and with a tail three feet and a half long? The ornaments of his bit are of gold and he is shod with silver?'

'Yes, yes, that is the runaway,' cried the chief huntsman; 'which way did he go?'

'The horse? But I have not seen him,' answered Zadig, 'and I never even heard of him before.'

Now Zadig had described both the horse and the dog so exactly that both the steward and the chief huntsman did not doubt for a moment that they had been stolen by him.

The chief huntsman said no more, but ordered his men to seize the thief and to bring him before the supreme court, where he was condemned to be flogged and to pass the rest of his life in exile. Scarcely, however, had the sentence been passed than the horse and dog were discovered and brought back to their master and mistress, who welcomed them with transports of delight. But as no one would have respected the judges any longer if they had once admitted that they had been altogether mistaken, they informed Zadig that, although he was to be spared the flogging and would not be banished from the country, he must pay four hundred ounces of gold for having declared he had *not* seen what he plainly *had* seen.

With some difficulty Zadig raised the money, and when he had paid it into court, he asked permission to say a few words of explanation.

‘Moons of justice and mirrors of truth,’ he began. ‘I swear to you by the powers of earth and of air that never have I beheld the dog of the queen nor the horse of the king. And if this august assembly will deign to listen to me for a moment, I will inform them exactly what happened. Before I met with the officers of the queen’s household I had noticed on the sand the marks of an animal’s paws, which I instantly recognised to be those of a small dog; and as the marks were invariably fainter on one side than on the three others, it was easy to guess that the dog limped on one paw. Besides this, the sand on each side of the front paw-marks was ruffled on the surface, showing that the ears were very long and touched the ground.

The King & Queen rejoice when their pets return.

‘As to the horse, I had perceived along the road the traces of shoes, always at equal distances, which proved to me that the animal was a perfect galloper. I then detected on closer examination, that though the road was only seven feet wide, the dust on the trees both on the right hand and on the left had been swept to a height of three and a half feet, and from that I concluded the horse’s tail, which had switched off the dust, must be three and a half feet long. Next, five feet from the ground I noticed that twig and leaves had been torn off the trees, so evidently he was fifteen hands high. As to the ornaments on his bit, he had scraped one of them against a rock on turning a corner too sharply, and some traces of gold remained on it, while the light marks left on the soil showed that his shoes were not of iron but of a less heavy metal, which could only be silver.’

Great was the amazement of the judges and of everybody else at the perception and reasoning of Zadig. At court, no one talked of anything else; and though many of the wise men declared that Zadig should be burnt as a wizard, the king commanded that the four hundred ounces of gold, which he had paid as a fine, should be restored to him. In obedience to this order, the clerk of the court and the ushers came in state to Zadig’s hut, bringing with them the four hundred ounces; but, when they arrived, they told Zadig that

three hundred and ninety-eight of them were due for law expenses, so he was not much better off than before.

Zadig said nothing, but let them keep the money. He had learned how dangerous it is to be wiser than your neighbours, and resolved never again to give any information to anybody, or to say what he had seen.

He had very speedily a chance of putting this determination into practice. A prisoner of state escaped from the great gaol of Babylon, and in his flight happened to pass beneath the window of Zadig's hut. Not long after, the warders, of the gaol discovered which way he had gone, and cross-questioned Zadig closely. Zadig, warned by experience, kept silence; but notwithstanding, it was proved—or at least, they said so—that Zadig had been looking out of the window when the man went by, and for this crime he was sentenced by the judges to pay five hundred ounces of gold.

'Good gracious!' he murmured to himself as, according to the custom of Babylon, he thanked the court for its indulgence. 'What is one to do? It is dangerous to stand at your own window, or to be in a wood which the king's horse and the queen's dog have passed through. How hard it is to live happily in this life!'

THE RETURN OF THE DEAD WIFE

Once upon a time there lived in Alaska a chief of the Tlingit tribe who had one son. When the boy grew to be a man, he saw a girl who seemed to him prettier and cleverer than any other girl of the tribe, and his heart went out to her, and he told his father. Then the chief spoke to the father and the mother of the girl, and they agreed to give her to the young man for a wife. So the two were married, and for a few months all went well with them and they were very happy.

But one day the husband came home from hunting and found his wife sitting crouched over the fire—her eyes dull and her head heavy.

‘You are ill,’ he said, ‘I will go for the shaman,’ but the girl answered:

‘No, not now. I will sleep, and in the morning the pains will have gone from me.’

But in the morning she was dead, and the young man grieved bitterly and would eat nothing, and he lay awake all that night thinking of his wife, and the next night also.

‘Perhaps if I went out into the forest and walked till I was tired, I might sleep and forget my pain,’ thought he. But, after all, he could not bear to leave the house while his dead wife was in it, so he waited till her body was taken away that evening for burial. Then, very early next morning, he put on his leggings and set off into the forest and walked through that day and the following night. Sunrise on the second morning found him in a wide valley covered with thick trees. Before him stretched a plain which had once been full of water, but it was now dried up.

He paused for a moment and looked about him, and as he looked he seemed to hear voices speaking a long way off. But he could see nobody, and walked on again till he beheld a light shining through the branches of the trees and noticed a flat stone on the edge of a lake. Here the road stopped; for it was the death road along which he had come, though he did not know it.

The lake was narrow, and on the other side were houses and people going in and out of them.

‘Come over and fetch me,’ he shouted, but nobody heard him, though he cried till he was hoarse.

‘It is very odd that nobody hears me,’ whispered the youth after he had shouted for some time longer; and at that minute a person standing at the door of one of the houses across the lake cried out:

‘Someone is shouting’; for they could hear him when he whispered, but not when he made a great noise.

‘It is somebody who has come from dreamland,’ continued the voice. ‘Let a canoe go and bring him over.’ So a canoe shot out from the shore, and the young man got into it and was paddled across, and as soon as he stepped out he saw his dead wife.

Joy rushed into his heart at the sight of her; her eyes were red as though she had been

crying; and he held out his hands. As he did so the people in the house said to him:

‘You must have come from far; sit down, and we will give you food,’ and they spread food before him, at which he felt glad, for he was hungry.

‘Don’t eat that,’ whispered his wife, ‘if you do, you will never get back again’; and he listened to her and did not eat it.

Then his wife said again:

‘It is not good for you to stay here. Let us depart at once,’ and they hastened to the edge of the water and got into the canoe, which is called the Ghost’s Canoe, and is the only one on the lake. They were soon across and they landed at the flat stone where the young man had stood when he was shouting, and the name of that stone is the Ghost’s Rock. Down they went along the road that he had come, and on the second night they reached the youth’s house.

THE TLINGIT CHIEF FINDS HIS WIFE IS ILL.

‘Stay here,’ he said, ‘and I will go in and tell my father.’ So he entered and said to his

father:

‘I have brought my wife back.’

‘Well, why don’t you bring her in?’ asked the chief, and he took a fur robe and laid it on top of a mat for her to sit on. After that the young man led his wife into the house, but the people inside could not see her enter, but only her husband; yet when he came quite close, they noticed a deep shadow behind him. The young man bade his wife sit down on the mat they had prepared for her, and a robe of marten skins was placed over her shoulders, and it hung upon her as if she had been a real woman and not a ghost. Then they put food before her, and, as she ate, they beheld her arms, and the spoon moving up and down. But the shadow of her hands they did not see, and it seemed strange to them.

Now from henceforth the young man and his wife always went everywhere together; whether he was hunting or fishing, the shadow always followed him, and he begged to have his bed made where they had first seated themselves, instead of in the room where he had slept before. And this the people in the house did gladly, for joy at having him back.

In the day, if they happened not to be away hunting or fishing, the wife was so quiet that no one would have guessed she was there, but during the night she would play games with her husband and talk to him, so that the others could hear her voice. At her first coming the chief felt silent and awkward, but after a while he grew accustomed to her and would pretend to be angry and called out: ‘You had better get up now, after keeping everyone awake all night with your games,’ and they could hear the shadow laugh in answer, and knew it was the laugh of the dead woman.

Thus things went on for some time, and they might have gone on longer, had not a cousin of the dead girl’s who had wanted to marry her before she married the chief’s son become jealous when he found that her husband had brought her back from across the lake. And he spied upon her, and listened to her when she was talking, hoping for a chance to work her some ill. At last the chance came, as it commonly does, and it was in this wise:

Night after night the jealous man had hidden himself at the head of the bed, and had stolen away unperceived in the morning without having heard anything to help his wicked plans. He was beginning to think he must try something else when one evening the girl suddenly said to her husband that she was tired of being a shadow, and was going to show herself in the body that she used to have, and meant to keep it always. The husband was glad in his soul at her words, and then proposed that they should get up and play a game as usual; and, while they were playing, the man behind the curtains peeped through. As he did so, a noise as of a rattling of bones rang through the house, and when the people came running, they found the husband dead and the shadow gone, for the ghosts of both had sped back to Ghostland.

Tlingit Myths.

YOUNG AMAZON SNELL

When George I. was king, there lived in Worcester a man named Snell, who carried on business as a hosier and dyer. He worked hard, as indeed he had much need to do—having three sons and six daughters to provide for. The boys were sent to some kind of school, but in those days tradesmen did not trouble themselves about educating their girls, and Snell thought it quite enough for them to be able to read and to count upon their fingers. If they wanted more learning they must pick it up for themselves.

Now although Snell himself was a peaceable, stay-at-home man, his father had been a soldier, and had earned fame and a commission as captain-lieutenant, by shooting the Governor of Dunkirk in the reign of King William. Many tales did the Snell children hear in the winter evenings of their grandfather's brave deeds when he fought at Blenheim with the Welsh Fusiliers, and a thrill of excitement never failed to run through them as they listened to the story of the battle of Malplaquet, where the hero received the wound that killed him.

'Twenty-two battles!' they whispered proudly yet with awe-struck voices; 'did ever any man before fight in so many as that?' and, though the eldest boy said less than any, one morning his bed was empty, and by and bye his mother got a message to tell her that Sam had enlisted, and was to sail for Flanders with the army commanded by the Duke of Cumberland.

Poor Sam's career was not a long one. He was shot through the lungs at the battle of Fontenoy, and died in a few hours.

The old grandfather's love of a fight was in all these young Snells, and one by one the boys followed Sam's example, and the girls married soldiers or sailors. Hannah, the youngest, brought up from her babyhood on talk of wars and rumours of wars, thought of nothing else.

'*She* would be a soldier too when she was big enough,' she told her father and mother twenty times a day, and her playfellows were so infected by her zeal, that they allowed themselves to be formed into a company, of which Hannah, needless to say, was the commander-in-chief, and meekly obeyed her orders.

In their free hours, she would drill them as her brothers had drilled her, and now and then when she decided that they knew enough not to disgrace her, she would march them through the streets of Worcester, under the admiring gaze of the shopkeepers standing at their doors.

'Young Amazon Snell's troop are coming this way. See how straight they hold themselves! and look at Hannah at the head of them,' said the women, hurrying out; and though Hannah, like a well-trained soldier, kept her eyes steadily before her, she heard it all and her little back grew stiffer than ever.

So things went on for many years, till at the end of 1740 Mr. and Mrs. Snell both died, and Hannah left Worcester to live with one of her sisters, the wife of James Gray, a carpenter, whose home was at Wapping in the east of London.

Much of Gray's work lay among the ships which drew up alongside the wharf, and sailors were continually in and out of the house in Ship Street. One of these, a Dutchman called Summs, proposed to Hannah, who married him in 1743, when she was not yet twenty.

She was a good-looking, pleasant girl, and no doubt had attracted plenty of attention. But of course she laughed at the idea of her marrying a shopkeeper who had never been outside his own parish. So, like Desdemona and many another girl before and after, she listened entranced to the marvellous stories told her by Summs, and thought herself fortunate indeed to have found such a husband.

She soon changed her opinion. Summs very quickly got tired of her; and after ill-treating her in every kind of way, and even selling her clothes, deserted her, and being ill and miserable and not knowing what to do, she thankfully returned to her sister.

After some months of peace and rest, Hannah grew well and strong, and then she made up her mind to carry out a plan she had formed during her illness, which was to put on a man's dress, and go in search of the sailor who had treated her so ill. At least this was what she said to herself, but no doubt the real motive that guided her was the possibility of at last becoming a soldier or sailor, and seeing the world. It is not quite clear if she confided in her sister, but at any rate she took a suit of her brother-in-law's clothes and his name into the bargain, and it was as 'James Gray' that she enlisted in Coventry in 1745, in a regiment commanded by General Guise.

It was lucky for Hannah that, unlike most girls of her day and position, she had not been pent up at home doing needlework, as after three weeks, she with seventeen other raw recruits was ordered to join her regiment at Carlisle, so as to be ready to act, if necessary, against the Highlanders and Prince Charlie. But these three weeks had taught her much about a soldier's life which her brothers had left untold. She had learnt to talk as the men about her talked, and to drink with them if she was invited, though she always contrived to keep her head clear and her legs steady. As to her husband, of him she could hear nothing at Coventry; perhaps she might be more fortunate in the north.

In spite of a burn on her foot, which she had received after enlisting, Hannah found no difficulty in marching to Carlisle with the other recruits, and when they reached the city at the end of twenty-two days, she was as fresh as any of them. How delighted she was to find that the dream of her childhood was at last realised, and that she could make as good a soldier as the rest. But her spirits were soon dashed by the wickedness of the sergeant, who on Hannah's refusal to help him to carry out an infamous scheme on which he had set his heart, reported her to the commanding officer for neglect of duty. No inquiry as to the truth of this accusation appears to have been made, and the sentence pronounced was extraordinarily heavy, even though it was thought to have been passed on a man. The prisoner was to have her hands tied to the castle gates and to receive six hundred lashes. She actually did receive five hundred, at least, so it was said, and then some officers who were present interfered, and bade them set her free.

It does not seem as if Hannah suffered much from her stripes, but very soon a fresh accident upset all her plans. The arrival of a new recruit was reported, and the youth turned out to be a young carpenter from Wapping, who had spent several days in her brother-in-law's house while she was living there. Hannah made sure that he would

recognise her at once, though as a matter of fact he did nothing of the kind, and to prevent the shame of discovery, she determined to desert the regiment, and try her fortune elsewhere.

To go as far as possible from Carlisle was her one idea, and what town could be better than Portsmouth for the purpose?

But in order to travel such a long way, money was needed, and Hannah had spent all her own and did not know how to get more. She consulted a young woman whom she had helped when in great trouble, and in gratitude, the girl instantly offered enough to enable her friend to get a lift on the road when she was too tired to walk any longer.

'If you get rich, you can pay me back,' she said; 'if not, the debt is still on my side. But, oh, Master Gray, beware, I pray you! for if they catch you, they will shoot you, to a certainty.'

'No fear,' answered Hannah laughing, and very early one morning she stole out.

Taking the road south she crept along under the shade of the hedge, till about a mile from the town she noticed a heap of clothes lying on the ground, flung there by some labourers who were working at the other end of the field.

'It will be many hours yet before they will look for them,' thought she, 'and fair exchange is no robbery,' so stooping low in the ditch she slipped off her regimentals, and hiding them at the very bottom of the pile, put on an old coat and trousers belonging to one of the men. Then full of hope, she started afresh.

Perhaps the commander in Carlisle never heard of the desertion of one of the garrison, or perhaps search for James Gray was made in the wrong direction. However that may be, nobody troubled the fugitive, who weary and footsore, in a month's time entered Portsmouth.

At this point a new chapter begins in Hannah Snell's history. The old desire to see the world was still strong upon her, and, after resting for a little in the house of some kind people, she enlisted afresh in a regiment of marines. A few weeks later, she was ordered to join the 'Swallow,' and to sail with Admiral Boscawen's fleet for the East Indies.

It was Hannah's first sea-voyage, but, in spite of the roughness of the life on board ship in those days, she was happy enough. England was behind her; that was the chief thing, and who could tell what wonderful adventures lay in front? So her spirits rose, and she was so good-natured and obliging as well as so clever, that the crew one and all declared they had found a treasure. There was nothing 'James Gray' could not and would not do—wash their shirts, cook their food, mend their holes, laugh at their stories. And, as she looked a great deal younger in her men's clothes than she had done in her woman's dress, no one took her for anything but a boy, and all willingly helped to teach her the duties which would fall to her, both now and in case of war.

She kept watch for four hours in turn with the rest, and soon began to see in the dark with all the keenness of a sailor. Next she was taught how to load and unload a pistol, which pleased her very much, and was given her place on the quarter-deck, where she was at once to take up her station during an engagement. Most likely she was forced from time to time to attend drill, but this we are not told.

The ‘Swallow’ was not half through the Bay of Biscay when a great storm arose which blew the fleet apart, and did great damage to the vessel. Both her topmasts were lost, and it is a wonder that, in this crippled condition, the ship was able to make her way to Lisbon, where the crew remained on shore till the ship was refitted, and she could join the rest of the fleet, which then set sail down the Atlantic towards the coast of India.

Except for more bad weather and a scarcity of provisions on board the ‘Swallow,’ nothing worthy of note occurred, till they had rounded the Cape of Good Hope and passed Madagascar.

Some fruitless attacks on a group of islands belonging to the French gave Hannah her first experience of war, and her comrades were anxious as to how ‘the boy’ would behave under fire. But they speedily saw that there was no danger that any cowardice of his would bring discredit on the regiment, and that ‘James Gray’ was as good a fighter as he was a cook. Perhaps ‘James Gray,’ if the truth be told, was rather relieved himself when the bugle sounded a retreat, for no one knows what may happen to him in the excitement of a first battle; or whether in the strangeness and newness of it all, he may not lose his head and run away, and be covered with shame for ever.

None of this, however, befell Hannah, and when six weeks after, they were on Indian soil, and sat down to besiege the French settlement of Pondicherry, the Worcestershire girl was given more than one chance of distinguishing herself.

Pondicherry was a very strong place and the walls which were not washed by the sea were thoroughly fortified and defended by guns, while the magazines contained ample supplies both of food and powder. Further, it was guarded by the fort of Areacopong commanding a river, and with a battery of twelve guns ready to pour forth fire on the British army. Hannah was speedily told off with some others to bring up certain stores, which had been landed by the fleet, and, after some heavy skirmishing, they succeeded in their object. Her company was then ordered to cross the river so as to be able to march, when necessary, upon Pondicherry itself, and this they did under the fire of the guns of Areacopong, with the water rising to their breasts.

At length the fort was captured and great was the rejoicing in the British lines, for the surrender of Areacopong meant the removal of the chief barrier towards taking the capital of French India.

For seven nights Hannah had to be on picket duty, and was later sent to the trenches, where she constantly was obliged to dig with the water up to her waist, for the autumn rains had now begun.

But her heart and soul were bound up in the profession she had chosen, and everything else was forgotten, even her desire to revenge herself on her husband. Not a soldier in the army fought better than she, and in one of the battles under the walls of Pondicherry, she is said to have received eleven shots in her legs alone! She was carried into hospital, and when the doctors had time to attend to her, she showed them the bullet wounds down her shins, but made no mention of a ball which had entered her side, for she was resolved not to submit to any examination. This wound gave her more pain than all the rest put together, and after two days she made up her mind that in order to avoid being discovered for a woman she must extract it herself, with the help of a native who was acting as nurse.

Setting her teeth to prevent herself shrieking with the agony the slightest touch caused her, Hannah felt about till she found the exact spot where the ball was lodged, and then pressed the place until the bullet was near enough to the surface for her to pull it out with her finger and thumb. The pain of it all was such that she sank back almost fainting, but with a violent effort she roused herself, and stretching out her hand for the lint and the ointment placed within her reach by the nurse, she dressed the wound. Three months later she was as well as ever, and able to do the work of a sailor on board a ship which, at that time, was anchored in the harbour.

As soon as the fleet returned from Madras, Hannah was ordered to the ‘Eltham,’ but at Bombay she fell into disgrace with the first lieutenant, was put into irons for five days, spent four hours at the foretop-masthead, and received twelve lashes. She was likewise accused of stealing a shirt, but, as this was proved to be false, the charge only roused the anger of the crew, and they took the first opportunity to revenge themselves on the lieutenant who had sentenced her.

It was in November 1749 that the fleet sailed for home, and the ‘Eltham’ was directed to steer a straight course for Lisbon, having to take on board a large sum of money, destined for some London merchants. One day when she was ashore with her mates, they turned into a public-house to have dinner. Here they happened to meet an English sailor, with whom many of the party were well acquainted. Learning that he had been lately engaged on a Dutch vessel, Hannah inquired carelessly whether he had ever come across one Jemmy Summs.

‘Summs?’ answered the man. ‘I should think I had. I heard of him only the other day at Genoa, in prison for killing an Italian gentleman. I asked to be allowed to see him, and as he was condemned to death, they gave me leave to do so. He told me the story of his life, and how, while he was in London, he married a young woman called Hannah Snell, and then deserted her. More than six years have passed since that time, and he does not know what became of her. But he begged me, if ever I was near Wapping again, to seek her out and entreat her to forgive him. As soon as he had finished, the gaoler entered and bade us say farewell.

‘That was the last we saw of him, but before I left I heard that he had been sewn up in a bag filled with stones, and thrown into the sea, which is their way of hanging.’

Hannah had listened in silence, and would gladly have quitted the place, to think over the sailor’s story quietly. But she never forgot the part she was playing, and roused herself to tell the sailor that when she returned to England she would make it her business to search for the widow, and to help her if she seemed in need. Then she got up and called for the bill, and followed by her companions, rowed back to the ship.

It was on June 1, 1750, that Hannah Snell landed in Portsmouth, and in the course of a few days made her way to Wapping. The rough life she had led, and even her uniform, had changed her so little that her sister recognised her at once, and flung her arms round the stranger’s neck, much to the surprise of the neighbours. But Hannah, in spite of her sister’s entreaties, refused to put on the dress of a woman till she had received £15 of pay due to her, and two suits; and when this was done, she invited those of the ship’s crew who were then in London to drink with her at a public-house, and there revealed to them her secret.

THE SAILORS DRINK THE HEALTH OF AMAZON SNELL

It was, however, to no purpose that she talked. These men, by whose side she had fought and drunk for so long, would believe nothing, and thought it was just ‘one of Jemmy’s stories.’ At length she was forced to send for her sister and brother-in-law, who swore that her tale was true, and then the sailors broke out into a chorus of praise of her courage, her cleverness, and her kindness, all the time that they had known her. One, indeed, made her an offer on the spot; but Hannah had had enough of matrimony, and was not minded to tie herself to another husband.

It was not long before the wondrous story of Hannah Snell reached the ears of the Duke of Cumberland, son of George II., and Commander-in-Chief of the British Army. A petition was drawn up, setting forth her military career, and requesting the grant of a pension in consideration of her services. This petition an accident enabled her to deliver in person to the Duke as he was leaving his house in Pall Mall, and by the advice of his equerry, Colonel Napier, the pension of a shilling a day for life—£18 5*s.*—was bestowed on her.

It does not sound much to us, but money went a great deal further in those times.

But her fame as a female soldier was worth much more to Hannah than the scars she had won in His Majesty’s service. The manager of the theatre at the New Wells, Goodman’s

Fields, saw clearly that the opportunity was too good to be lost, and that advertisement of ‘the celebrated Mrs. Hannah Snell, who had gained twelve wounds fighting the French in India,’ would earn a large fortune for him, and a small fortune for her.

So here we bid her good-bye, and listen to her for the last time—her petticoats discarded for ever—singing to the fashionable audience of Goodman’s Fields the songs with which she had delighted for many months the crew of the ‘Eltham.’

THE GOOD SIR JAMES

My Sir James is not the leal friend of Robert Bruce nor is he the Douglas who fell at Otterburn and was buried ‘by the bracken bush that grows on yonder lilye lee.’ My Sir James is alive and well to-day, and is one of the Quiqui people who live in the wood beyond the avenue at the end of our garden. There were two of these little squirrels, Sir James and Lady Quiqui, and both sometimes came on to the lawn and grubbed up crocus bulbs and committed other sins readily forgiven to people of such beauty. They lived a peaceful and happy life till one wild November night, when poor Lady Quiqui fell or was blown off a tree. I went out next morning, and close to the garden gate I found her little body on the ground still alive, but unable to move. I brought her to the house, but no care could save her and she died within a few hours. Sir James was now an inconsolable widower. I think he felt lonely, for after his wife’s death his appearances about the house became more and more frequent.

The days were short and cold, and every morning the ground was white with frost. Hungry birds flocked to the drawing-room window-sill for a breakfast of bread-crumbs. One day Sir James came when they were feasting. He was angry:

‘The feast is for me,’ he said, and with skilful, energetic hands he put sparrows, chaffinches, and robins to flight and then breakfasted with an excellent appetite.

Rows of sad little birds perched on the fence, and sat and watched greedy Sir James from afar, but none dared come near the window till he had gone. This happened nearly every day.

Once a great big herring-gull came and I think the little birds hoped that their wrongs would now be avenged. Again and again the gull swooped down and attempted to snatch some choice morsel, but again and again the good Sir James tiny and brave, drove away his gigantic foe. It then circled round uttering shrieks of rage and despair, and finally departed, leaving Sir James triumphant.

One morning, a few days after the discomfiture of the herring-gull, Sir James had another adventure. He had been sitting quietly on the window-sill enjoying his cake and nuts. All of a sudden his mood changed and he became very restless and angrily excited. He ran backwards and forwards at a great pace for some moments, then he gave a spring forward and downward towards the narrow garden-path. I looked out and, to my horror, saw no Sir James, but the terrifying sight of ‘Dolly,’ the gardener’s cat, galloping away at full speed. Dolly was at once pursued and captured. We almost wept with relief when we found that our worst fears were not realised and that the good Sir James was not in Dolly’s mouth. Indeed, we blamed the cat far too hastily, and I now think that Sir James was possibly not the victim, but the aggressor, and that he had merely been driving the innocent Dolly away from the vicinity of his breakfast. All we know for certain is that he very soon ran back to this breakfast and finished it with much enjoyment, and that his return brought peace and comfort to our agitated and anxious minds.

Sir James was sometimes unpunctual, and on those days the birds thoroughly enjoyed themelves. By the time the little Quiqui-man arrived, not a crumb was to be found off

which he could dine. The birds twittered with delight.

One day I bought a little cream-can with a lid, and filled it with his favourite dainties. I then put it out on the window-sill, fastening the handle firmly to a nail.

‘Fancy expecting a wild animal to eat out of a thing like that,’ someone remarked, scornfully; ‘he will think it is a trap and never go near it.’

I waited anxiously. About twelve o’clock a startled flight of small birds announced the arrival of Sir James. Although there were still some crumbs lying about, he went straight to the cream-can and shook it vigorously with eager hands and teeth. It took him nearly five minutes to get it open, but he persevered and succeeded. I then had the satisfaction of seeing him dive into the tin, head first, about half a dozen times, each time reappearing with cake or a nut.

From that day the little cream-can was kept well supplied with nuts and cake. As time passed, Sir James grew more and more particular about his food. He soon scorned crocus bulbs and even bread-crumbs, insisting on a diet of shortbread cake and nuts. He always selected the biggest nut or piece of cake to carry home. It was surprising what he could do. He was one day seen dragging off about a third of a coconut that I had hung up for the tits, and he managed to get this heavy burden over the high fence that bounds our garden.

Another time we put uncracked nuts in the can instead of the usually carefully prepared ones. Sir James examined them, dropped them, and then with angry hands drummed upon the window-panes. Our guilty consciences told us what was wrong, so we gently opened the window. Sir James disappeared for a few moments, but long before we had finished cracking the nuts he was back and watching us. We have never since dared offer him uncracked nuts.

Winter passed, and ‘in the spring a young man’s fancy turns to thoughts of love.’ Sir James was very lonely and he longed for the companionship of his own kind. He took to wandering. Sometimes days went by without our seeing him, and our hearts were anxious when the little cream-can remained with closed lid and contents untouched. Then on one occasion I met the Quiqui-man nearly a mile from home. I knew him at once and he knew me, for he came half-way down a tree to greet me, waving his little brown hands with ten very black nails. When I saw the good Sir James so far from home, I feared for him. I thought of the perils from hawks and prowling cats that he was daily incurring. Something must be done and at once. Negotiations produced the arrival a few days later of Jemima Golightly, a fine handsome squirrel, who came by herself all the way from Eastbourne to these West Highland shores. Miss Golightly was instantly put in a cage, and next morning the wedding breakfast was prepared and put in the cream-can. The cage was placed on a table by the open window in the drawing-room. How anxiously I watched for the coming of Sir James! At last he appeared. Just as he was making for his cream-can, his quick eye detected Miss Golightly. In a moment he was on the top of the cage tugging away at the handle, while Miss Golightly inside rushed round and round, banging herself about so that I thought the cage would get knocked over. Sir James, finding his efforts with tooth and nail were unsuccessful, bestowed a further inspection on the cage. He soon discovered the door which opened easily to his skilful touch. Miss Golightly sprang out with a graceful bound—poor little captive, set free by as gallant a knight as ever sat at Arthur’s table.

The two squirrels stood quite still for a moment. Then Sir James led the way through the open window, closely followed by Miss Golightly. I rushed to the library. From there I could see the two little forms making for the beech avenue. I was delighted. My joy, however, received a decided check when Sir James reappeared alone, half an hour afterwards. He went at once to the cream-can and in solitary splendour ate nearly all the wedding breakfast. Had he already deserted the little English bride he had so bravely rescued? Sir James resumed his daily visits to the cream-can, but he never said anything about the bride. To be sure, he always took away a tribute when he went home, but as he was in the habit of doing this, we could not feel certain that it was intended for anybody but himself.

It was about a fortnight later that a servant came to my room and said, ‘Sir James is at the window.’ I went at once to the drawing-room and, to my surprise, saw, not Sir James, but the little bride. She was redder in colour than Sir James, and had much bigger hands. I was enchanted, and still more so when a few minutes later the good Sir James himself arrived on the scene, and it was certainly charming to see the two little squirrels side by side on the window-sill. Both the Quiqui people have often come since then, but Lady Quiqui has never to this day learned the secret of the cream-can. Sir James himself always performs the opening ceremony, and he then retires and allows his lady to dine. When he thinks that she has had enough he comes back and she goes away home, and he feasts on what is left.

Sir James seems content with this arrangement and never fails to give Lady Quiqui first choice of all the good things. This is the more touching as he is rather a greedy little man. Greedy, generous, and brave; and all of us, who know him, realise the fascination of the good Sir James.

E. A. C.

RIP VAN WINKLE

West of the river Hudson, and at the foot of the Catskill Mountains, lies one of the oldest European villages in the United States of America. It was built by some of the earliest Dutch settlers, who were so anxious to have everything nice and tidy as it would have been at home, that they brought a large supply of bricks and weathercocks from Holland to make it, and you would never have guessed from the look of the houses that you were in the New World.

In course of time the snows of winter and the heats of summer began to leave their mark on the surface of the bricks, and the cottages that were not well cared for showed signs of wear and tear. In one of the shabbiest of them there dwelt while New York was still a British Colony a descendant of one of the old fighters, called Rip van Winkle. Rip was one of those delightful people who are never too busy to listen to your troubles or to sympathise with your grievances, and if you were short-handed in the hay-field or had no one to grind the corn, you might always count on him. But if men and women loved him, children adored him. He made the best toys, flew kites when there really seemed no breeze to lift them from the ground, and bowled over a larger number of ninepins than the cleverest of them all. As he passed through the fields or the village street, the children ran out of the houses and gathered about him, till you might have thought that the days of the Pied Piper of Hamelin had come back. And if a child was ill or a snowstorm heavier than usual was raging, there would be a knock at the door, and Rip's cheerful pink face would enter, with tales of ghosts and witches and Indians, which, like all the very nicest things, were a joy and a terror in one.

Yet, for some reason which few persons and certainly none of the children could understand, Rip's wife did not seem to appreciate him as highly as his friends did. When he came home in the evening and was burning to tell her how he had spent all day sitting on a wet rock above a splendid pool in the river, and how very cleverly he had caught all sorts of big fish, she would point to some logs which needed splitting for the kitchen fire. When he began to relate how the gale of last night had blown down Farmer Gilpin's stone wall, and that it had taken both of them all the morning and afternoon to set it up again, she would ask him how it was he had never perceived the gap in his own fence. And if she inquired why the plums in the orchard had not been gathered, but had fallen rotting to the ground, she did not seem content with his answer that good-wife Barker had run out of thread, and could not go on with her spinning till he fetched her a supply.

'Everyone's business but your own,' she replied bitterly, to which Rip, though he never got cross, would murmur with a downcast face that his farm was the worst bit of land in the country and would grow nothing but weeds. And that of course he could not have guessed that the cow which was feeding at the other end of the field would have spied the hole in the hedge, and have eaten all the cabbages in the garden; and if ever he planted any seed, the rain was sure to wash it out of the ground before it had time to take root.

Now it must be admitted that Mrs. van Winkle had some grounds for complaint, for though she did nothing but grumble, she worked hard to feed the children, not thinking it necessary however to mend their clothes. They were the oddest sights in the cast-off

garments of their father and mother, or of anyone who took pity on their ragged condition; and the oddest of all was young Rip, whose coat tails if not held well up or pinned across him in front, trailed on the ground behind him like a lady’s train.

Still the children were, in spite of the drawbacks, as happy as kings. They did not want to be made clean and tidy, and they were so used to hearing their mother scolding—scolding all the day long—that they would have quite missed the sound of her tongue if it had ever stopped.

But there was no danger of *that*.

Except Rip, the only person who minded Mrs. van Winkle’s ill-temper was Rip’s inseparable companion, his dog Wolf. As soon as he entered the house, his tail instead of being carried proudly in the air, fell between his legs; and far from jumping about and putting his muddy paws on your knees as a happy dog always does, he would sneak into the darkest corner, and try to escape notice.

As the years went by, things grew worse and not better. Rip spent less and less time at home and was generally to be found sitting on a bench in front of the inn telling some of his old stories or discussing with other idle men the actions of the Government of which none of them knew anything, and which generally were over and done with weeks before. These gatherings were presided over by Nicholas Vedder the landlord, who said little but smoked his pipe and looked wise.

For a while Rip was left in peace and enjoyed himself; then one day his wife broke in upon the peaceable company and scolded them for their idleness till they all fled in different directions. After that Rip went there no more, but whistled to Wolf, and, taking down his gun, went up into the mountains.

On a fine autumn morning, the two friends went off as usual, and climbed to one of the highest peaks of the Catskills. At length, quite exhausted, Rip threw himself down a on green knoll almost on top of a cliff, and watched the sun sinking slowly in the West. The Hudson river, bounded with woods, could be seen on one side of him; a deep stony glen was on the other; and all about him the stillness seemed in itself to bring rest and peace. But the lengthening shadows gave him warning that he must retrace his steps at once, unless he wished to be barred out of his house, and heavily he rose to his feet and whistled to Wolf, when he heard a voice crying ‘Rip van Winkle!’

He looked round with a start, but as he saw nothing but a crow flying home to bed, he thought his ears must have deceived him. He turned again to the path, when a second time the cry sounded, ‘Rip van Winkle! Rip van Winkle!’ and at the same instant Wolf gave a howl, and his hair stood up as if something terrible was in the neighbourhood. Rip followed the direction of the dog’s eyes, which were fixed with an expression of fear on the glen; and Rip, with a sinking of heart that he could not explain, beheld a shadowy

figure toiling towards them through the rocks, weighed down by something heavy which it carried on its back.

‘Poor old fellow! he can hardly get along. I had better go and help him,’ thought Rip, and set off down the path; but when he came near to the stranger he stopped in surprise, for never had he beheld anyone so odd.

The man was old and short and square, with a shock of thick bushy hair, and a long greyish beard. He was dressed after the Dutch fashion of a hundred years back, in a jacket belted round the waist, and several pairs of breeches, each a little longer than the other. On his shoulder was a keg of liquor, nearly as big as himself.

‘Let me take that for a bit,’ said Rip, and though the dwarf did not understand his words, there was no mistaking the meaning of Rip’s outstretched hands. So, carrying the keg by turns they clambered upwards apparently along the bed of a mountain stream, while thunder rolled about them. Now of course, thunder in mountains is common enough, but what was uncommon about *this* thunder was, that instead of coming from *above* them, it seemed to issue from a narrow cleft of the rock in front of them, where the path ended.

When they reached the ravine, the dwarf led the way through the cleft and signed to his companion to follow, for they could not walk abreast. Once through the cleft, Rip found himself in a round, hollow place enclosed by precipices overhung by trees, so that it would be completely concealed from anyone walking on the mountain. The branches and the leaves were so thick that even the bright rays of the setting sun could hardly pierce through them.

At the entrance to the hollow Rip paused again, for before him was a group of little men playing ninepins. Like his guide they wore jerkins and breeches, and knives were stuck in their belts. They were all very ugly, with long beards and large noses, and one who appeared the leader had a high-crowned hat with a feather and high-heeled shoes with roses on them—very unfit, thought Rip, for climbing about those rough paths.

RIP FINDS THE DWARFS PLAYING NINEPINS

As Rip and his companion came out from the cleft, the little men suddenly stopped their game, which they had played in dead silence and without seeming in the least to enjoy it. They turned and looked at the stranger, and Rip felt his blood run cold and his knees knock together. *Why* he could not have told, except that their faces had a queer, fixed expression such as he had never seen on the face of any living being. But no time was allowed him to indulge in these thoughts, for his companion signed to him to fill some big flagons which stood on one side, from the keg they had carried.

When the players had emptied the flagons, they went back to their game, seeming as melancholy as before.

After a while Rip began to grow a little less frightened, and he even ventured, when no one was observing him, to take a good draught out of the keg himself. As soon as he had done so, his eyes and head became very heavy, and he fell down where he stood, sunk in a deep sleep.

It was bright and sunny when Rip woke, lying curled up comfortably on the green knoll from which he had first beheld the old man climbing up the path. The birds were twittering in the bushes and hopping round him, and high up over the tops of the mountains an eagle was soaring.

‘Have I really slept here all night?’ he said to himself. ‘Oh, dear, how angry my wife will be!’ Then he sat up, and there rushed into his mind the cleft in the rocks and the little men playing ninepins. ‘It was the flagon which was my undoing,’ said he.

Scrambling to his feet, he looked about for his gun, but in place of the well-kept weapon, with its shining barrel (the only thing on which Rip ever bestowed any care), he saw an old, rusty firelock, with the wooden stock eaten by worms and falling away.

‘Why they have been playing tricks on me and changed my gun!’ he exclaimed, ‘though they *did* look so solemn; but what has become of Wolf? Gone after a squirrel, I suppose,’ and he whistled loudly to call him back.

But whistle as Rip might, for the first time he heard no bark in answer.

‘Oh, well! he will come home when he is tired. I’ll go back to that curious place, and tell them I must have my own gun.’ But as Rip moved to climb the path he felt his legs stiff, and was obliged to go slowly.

‘These mountain roads don’t agree with me,’ he thought. ‘I mustn’t be caught in this way a second time,’ and with great difficulty he made his way to the gully. But since he saw it last, the face of the glen had altered completely. Instead of the dried-up watercourse through which he and the dwarf had painfully clambered, a torrent was now dashing itself from rock to rock, so that Rip was obliged to take a round-about path through the mass of shrubs and creepers that clothed the sides of the ravine. Pushing and fighting, he at length reached the spot where the cleft led to the hollow in the rocks. But what a change from the evening before! The opening had entirely vanished, and a high waterfall leapt from above into a round basin. ‘Surely this was the place? Yes! I am certain of it!’ cried the bewildered Rip, and again he tried to call to Wolf, but his voice died away in his throat.

‘Well, I can’t starve among the mountains, whatever happens,’ he said, with a show of briskness which would not have deceived anybody, if anybody but himself had been there to see; and taking up the old rusty gun, he began to go down the mountain.

As he drew near the village he met several people and was surprised to find they were all strangers to him. ‘Where can they all have come from, and who can they be?’ he said. ‘I didn’t think there could be three people for miles round unknown to me. What queer dresses they have on, too! Can they be a crew of foreigners shipwrecked in the Sound, who have strayed up here? If they *are*, they have been pretty quick about it. And really,’ he thought as he glanced back over his shoulder and noticed them staring at him, ‘they seem to find me as odd as I find them! And why do they all stroke their chins as they look at me? Is anything the matter with *my* chin?’ and as he put his hand up to feel it, he discovered that he had grown a beard a foot long.

By this time he had entered the village street and a group of children gathered at his heels. At that his eyes brightened and his face lost something of its half-puzzled, half-frightened expression. Here, at least, was something to which he was accustomed, but instead of the smiles and shouts of joy which formerly greeted him, these children hooted rudely, and pointed to his beard.

Then indeed Rip's heart began to fail within him. What was the matter that in one night everything had changed so, and nothing seemed as it was only yesterday? And now he came to think of it, after a single night the village appeared much bigger, and the fields that were green when he went up the mountain, were full of houses to-day. Even the very dogs did not know him, and perhaps that was worst of all.

'I am bewitched,' thought Rip. 'It can't all be that flagon.'

He turned to go to his own house, but the very road to it was altered, and he lost his way more than once. At last he struck into a path which he recognised, and he stopped for a moment expecting to hear his wife's voice scolding somebody. But all was still, and as he drew nearer he saw that the roof had fallen in, and the glass of the windows was broken. A half-starved dog was prowling round, and with a throb of joy Rip whistled and called to him, 'Wolf, Wolf! Come here, good dog!' but the dog snarled and showed his teeth before trotting away.

Was it Wolf, or not? Rip never knew.

Inside, the house was as desolate as without, and very unlike to what Rip had been accustomed to see it. Though he felt it was useless, he shouted the names of his wife and children; then a thrill of fear passed over him, and not daring to look behind him, he hurried back to the street.

'I must go and have a drink,' he said. 'Of course, I had no breakfast and that has made my head get queer. A little food will set me to rights.'

So he hastened on to the village inn, and, being busy with his thoughts, walked with his eyes on the ground till his feet unconsciously halted at the old place. Then he glanced up, but only to receive another shock. The ancient structure with its latticed panes and gabled roof was gone, and instead he beheld a long sort of wooden shed, untidy and dirty, the windows more holes than glass, and stuffed with old hats or even petticoats to keep out the air. Over the door was painted a sign bearing the words 'Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle.' In the room of the great tree in front, where he and his friends had smoked so many pipes, was a pole crowned with a sort of red nightcap from which a flag fluttered. An odd kind of flag it was too, for when the wind blew it out, you saw, not the familiar criss-cross lines of the Union Jack, but stars and stripes which had never appeared on any English banner as far as Rip knew! And when his eyes fell upon the sign where a very pink-faced King George in a red coat was wont to gaze at his loyal subjects, he too had vanished and given place to a gentleman in blue and buff, holding a sword instead of a sceptre, while underneath was painted in large letters

General Washington.

From the inn Rip turned to the crowd that stood about it, and even here the strange alteration that pervaded everything and everybody was visible. There was none of the former air of calm and leisure characteristic of the friends who had sat with him round the tree yesterday—or was it a hundred years ago? This crowd was noisy and bustling and inclined to quarrel: full of plans and inventions to judge by the talk, and eager to discuss and find fault with the contents of a handbill, which one of their number was handing about. Rip did not understand much of what they were saying, but he caught such phrases as ‘Members of Congress,’ ‘Bunker’s Hill,’ ‘liberty,’ and other expressions as meaningless to him as if they were uttered in a foreign tongue.

It was some time before he noticed that to the villagers on their side he himself was an object of great interest and curiosity. They pressed round him and made remarks to each other about his strange dress and the rust on his gun, while the little man with the handbills pushed his way up to him and inquired ‘how he had voted?’ which Rip, who had not the least idea what he meant, answered merely with a stare. Another who desired to know ‘whether he was Federal or Democrat’ fared no better; but a third questioner, who asked why he had come to the election with a gun on his shoulder and a mob at his heels, and if he intended to head a riot, at last gave Rip back his power of speech.

‘Alas! gentlemen,’ he cried; ‘I am a poor, quiet man, a native of this village and a loyal subject of King George.’

The tumult that broke forth at this reply nearly deafened him. ‘A spy! a spy!’ shouted the people, ‘away with him! to the gallows with him!’ and it might have gone hardly with Rip had not a man in a cocked hat interfered and called them to order. The man next demanded of Rip what he wanted and why he was there, to which Rip humbly made answer that he had come in search of some of his neighbours who had been used to meet him at the tavern.

‘Well, give us their names?’ said the man in the cocked hat.

‘Nicholas Vedder, the innkeeper,’ answered Rip.

There was a moment’s silence; then an old man, in a thin piping voice, spoke.

‘Nicholas Vedder? Why, he’s dead and gone these eighteen years; and even his wooden tombstone in the churchyard has got rotten.’

‘And Brom Dutcher?’

‘Oh, he enlisted as a soldier in the beginning of the war. Some say he was killed at the storming of Stony Point; others, that he was drowned in a squall off Antony’s Nose. Anyway, he never came back here.’

‘And van Bummel, the schoolmaster?’

‘He went off to the wars too, and became a general, and is now a member of Congress.’

Rip asked no further questions: his home and his friends were gone, and he seemed to be alone in the world. At length a cry of despair broke from him.

‘Does nobody know Rip van Winkle?’

‘Rip van Winkle?’ answered two or three. ‘Oh, to be sure! There’s Rip van Winkle leaning against that tree.’

Rip looked where they pointed, and grew more bewildered and despairing than ever. For what he saw was himself; himself as he had been yesterday when he went up the mountain; himself in the rags that he had worn with such a light heart.

‘And what is *your* name?’ asked the man in the cocked hat, watching his face.

‘God knows,’ cried Rip; ‘I don’t know who I am. I’m not myself. I’m somebody else—that’s me yonder—at least I can’t tell; he seems to have got into my shoes. I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain and they changed my gun, and now everything is changed and I’m changed, and I don’t know what is my name or who I am.’

When he had ceased, the bystanders looked at each other and tapping their foreheads, whispered something about taking away the gun so that he might not do himself a mischief. They were still talking when a pleasant-faced woman pushed through the crowd to get a peep of the stranger with the long beard. His looks frightened the child she was carrying, and it began to cry. ‘Hush, Rip! hush!’ she said; ‘the old man won’t hurt you.’

As he heard her words Rip started and turned towards her eagerly.

‘What is your name?’ he asked.

‘Judith Gardener.’

‘And who was your father?’

‘Ah, poor man, he was Rip van Winkle; but he went away from home more than twenty years agone. He took his dog and his gun with him, and the dog was found lying in front of the door early next morning. But as for father, whether he shot himself by accident or was carried away by the Indians, we never knew. I was only a little girl then.’

‘And your mother?’

‘Oh, she died only a short time since. She flew into such a passion with a pedlar who she thought had cheated her, that she broke a blood vessel.’

But though Rip had inquired after his wife, all affection for her had long died away, and he did not take this news much to heart. He flung his arms round his daughter and cried.

‘I am your father. Don’t you know me? Young Rip van Winkle once, now old Rip van Winkle. Does *nobody* know poor Rip van Winkle?’

The crowd heard, amazed, and in silence. Then suddenly an old woman went up to him, and peered closely into his face.

‘Why, ‘tis Rip van Winkle, for sure!’ said she. ‘Welcome home, neighbour! Where have you been these twenty long years?’

Rip’s story was soon told, but the people who listened to it had as much difficulty in

believing that you could sleep for twenty years and think it was one night, as Rip himself. ‘Mad!’ was the only interpretation they put upon the tale, though they did not say so openly.

In the midst of the general perplexity an old man was seen coming along the road, and someone called out:

‘Here is Peter Vanderdonk! Let us ask him if he ever knew of such doings?’

‘Ay, let us! He is the oldest dweller in the village, and we will abide by his words,’ the rest answered in chorus, and they watched intently till Peter came up.

‘Why! ‘tis Rip van Winkle back again!’ he exclaimed, just as the old woman had done. ‘Right glad I am to see him, too.’

Who can tell the joy of poor Rip at this hearty greeting? So he was no ghost after all, as he had almost begun to think, but a flesh and blood man, with friends like other people. He could hardly speak for happiness, but he grasped Peter’s hand tightly, and then the man with the cocked hat asked Peter if he had ever heard any strange stories of the Catskill Mountains.

‘Ay, that have I, many a time,’ replied Peter. ‘My grandfather—he was mighty taken up with all such things—told me that the great Hendrik Hudson who first came over from Europe and gave his name to the river, held a feast up there once in every twenty years, with the crew of his ship the “Half Moon”; and my old father had actually beheld them playing at ninepins in the hollow of the mountains. And though I never saw anything myself,’ finished Peter, ‘I heard the sound of their balls one summer afternoon, and anybody who did not know, would have thought it was thunder.’

After this the crowd broke up and went about its own concerns, and Rip returned with his daughter to her own house. Her husband was one of the children he had played with long ago, and he was now a thriving farmer. Rip’s son, whom he had seen leaning against the tree, was supposed to be employed on the farm, but he was no more fond of attending to his own work than his father before him.

Little by little Rip slipped back into his former life, and gathered about him those of his old friends that were still left. But now, as in the days of long ago, it was the children whom he loved best, and when they grew tired of romping together, he would sit down on some green knoll while they climbed about him, and tell them the tale, of which they never grew weary, of his night on the Catskills.

None of you who read this story are old enough to remember the wonderful American actor Jefferson, who played Rip van Winkle till he grew at last to feel he was more Rip van Winkle than Jefferson. But those who *did* see him act it will never forget it, nor his burst of despair when he came home, to be repudiated and denied by everyone.

THE WONDERFUL BASKET

There was once a time when young women of the Tlingit tribe were not allowed to eat between their meals, but in spite of this rule which they knew very well, two girls belonging to one of the noblest families one day being very hungry took some food. Of course, they did not tell anybody, but their mother, who looked after the food-box found it out and was very angry.

‘What do you mean by behaving like that?’ she asked her eldest daughter, shaking her violently while she spoke. ‘It is not right that a big girl like you should do such things. I am ashamed of you! As you are so fond of eating, you had better go and marry Mountain Dweller. You will get plenty of food from him.’ But though the mother did not scold her other daughter who was still quite little, the child did not like her sister to be slapped and scratched. The sister did not like it either; so that night the two girls crept softly out of the house and ran away to the forest.

The mother was surprised next morning when she found no signs of her daughters, but she thought they were cross or lazy, and had stayed in bed in order that they might not have to do any work. She waited a little, expecting to see them every moment, and as they did not come she called out, ‘Why don’t you get up? it is very late.’ There was no answer, so she went to their room to discover what was the matter. Then she perceived that they had never been to bed at all, and felt sorry that her cross words the day before had driven them away.

The first thing she did was to go to the houses of some neighbours, and ask if they knew anything of her daughters, and if they had been playing any games with the children. But no one had seen them; and for seven days the mother wandered from one place to another, but she could never find any trace of them.

All this time the two girls were walking about the woods not knowing where they went, and looking vainly for fruit or berries, as they were very hungry. At last the path they were following led upwards, and they found themselves among the mountains. A faint sound as of somebody chopping wood a long distance off reached their ears, and the elder sister said to herself, ‘I wonder if that is the man that mother was talking of.’ By and bye the sound grew clearer and clearer, and on turning a corner they came upon the woodcutter, with his face painted red, standing over a fallen tree. As the girls approached he looked up and said:

‘What are you two doing here?’

‘Mother was unkind to us,’ answered the elder, ‘so we came away.’

‘What had you done to vex her?’ asked the man.

‘We had eaten some food between our meals, and she said, “If you are so fond of eating, you had better go and marry Mountain Dweller.”’

‘Well, come into my house,’ said Mountain Dweller, for it was he who was chopping the wood, and they went with him and he took them all over it, and very fine it was. Last of all he led them into a store-house full of dried meat, salmon, and deer, and halibut. They gazed at it hungrily, though they did not say anything, but Mountain Dweller saw their eyes and gave them food which they gladly ate; and they slept there all that night, as they did not know where else to go.

Next morning they got up very early and found Mountain Dweller making ready to hunt, drawing on his leggings and choosing his weapons.

‘We will be married to-morrow,’ said he, ‘but to-day I have a long way to walk, and I shall not be back till nightfall. And before I go, I want to warn you not to peep behind the large curtain of skins hanging over that door. A very bad woman lives on the other side, and she does not like anyone to see her.’

HOW THE GIRLS FOUND MOUNTAIN-DWELLER

‘No; of course we won’t,’ answered they, and Mountain Dweller set out.

So the girls stayed in the house all day, and wondered what their friends were doing in the village, and if they were still seeking them. ‘I expect,’ said the elder, ‘they think we have been eaten by wolves, and are mourning for us. And mother will have cut off her hair, and painted her face black.’

‘Yes; she is sure to have done that,’ answered the little girl; and so she had.

The days went by in much the same way, except that the big girl was now married to Mountain Dweller. Every morning he went out to hunt, so the two sisters had plenty to eat, and if they wanted any food between meals, they took it. They were quite happy until one unlucky morning when it was snowing so fast they could not leave the house, and at last they grew weary, and longed for something new.

‘Who can the woman be that lives behind the curtain?’ said the elder sister at last. ‘I daresay she is not so very bad after all, and perhaps she can teach us some fresh games. I have noticed that there is a little hole in the curtain; I will peep through that, and if she looks kind and good-natured, I will go in.’

‘Yes; that is a good plan,’ answered the child, and they both went on tiptoe to the curtain.

The hole was very small, and it was hardly possible that anyone on the other side of the curtain should have seen them looking through. Yet the moment that the wife had fixed her eye on it, the woman threw up her hands and screamed, and both sisters fell down dead; and that is how Mountain Dweller found them when he returned from the hunt.

He guessed at once what had happened, and his anger was so great that the first thing he did was to run behind the curtain and kill the bad woman who lived there. Then he took some eagle-down and spread it over the girls’ bodies, and walked round them many times, shaking his rattle all the while. At length slight shivers passed through their limbs; the colour came back into their faces, and there they stood on their feet, as well as ever they were.

When they had been in the mountain for many, many months, Mountain Dweller said one day to his wife:

‘Would you not like to see your father and mother once more?’

‘Oh, yes, yes!’ cried both the girls at once.

‘Well, you shall,’ said he; ‘but first I must go to hunt and prepare a gift for them. So make me a little basket, just big enough to put your finger in.’

‘That won’t take long,’ laughed she, and on his return in the evening the basket was ready. But this basket was not like other baskets, for when the husband shook it, it grew large enough to hold all kinds of meat and bags of tallow, and when he shook it again, it shrunk —and the meat also.

At dawn the next day the girls started and carried the basket to their father’s house. It was evening before they arrived, and the first person who saw them approaching was their little brother, who ran in, crying, ‘Mother, my sisters are there.’

‘Nonsense!’ she answered angrily. ‘Why do you say such things? They have been dead this many a long day.’

‘They *are* my sisters,’ shouted he. ‘Do you suppose I don’t know them?’

‘Well, let me see the hair from their marten-skin robes,’ she replied, still unbelieving, for she remembered that her daughters had marten-skin robes, such as only the chief families were allowed to wear. Then the boy went and spoke to his sisters, and pulled little pieces of the fur out. As soon as she saw the fur, the mother believed, and she and her husband and their kinsfolk went forth to meet the lost girls, weeping for joy at having found them again.

The next day the big girl said to her mother, ‘There is a little basket in the woods, filled with meat. Let it be fetched.’ So several people went to fetch it, but returned, saying it was so large that all of them put together could not bring it in.

‘I will go and see about it,’ answered the girl, and she made it small so that she could easily carry it, but as soon as she laid it down in the house, it became as large as ever. She knelt on the floor and unpacked the basket, and the house could hardly contain all that was in it; and the village people came and feasted likewise. Only the mother ate so much that she grew very ill, and never got any better.

To this day luck befalls every man who hears Mountain Dweller chopping the wood.

THE ESCAPE OF THE GALLEY-SLAVES

In the year 1563 the ‘Three Half Moons,’ with thirty men on board, set sail from Portsmouth for the south of Spain, intending to sell their goods to merchants in the town of Seville, situated on the river Guadalquivir. The wind was behind them and they had a prosperous voyage till they neared the Straits of Gibraltar, when eight Turkish ships suddenly hove in sight, and surrounded the ‘Three Half Moons.’

Of course, no vessel ever entered the Mediterranean, which in those days was alive with pirates, without being fully armed, and every man was a fighter. So when the captain of the ‘Three Half Moons’ beheld the flag with the crescent flying at the masthead of each galley, he ordered the trumpets and drums to be beaten, and served out swords and ammunition to the crew. This done, John Fox the gunner moved his cannon into position and sent a shower of bullets at the Turks.

The enemy however either had better artillery or were in greater practice than the English men, for they loaded at least three times as quickly, coming up as they did so to closed quarters, so that the crew were forced to take to their bows. Their aim was deadly and soon many of the Turks had fallen upon their decks, but again their more rapid firing told, and soon there were signs that the ‘Three Half Moons’ was filling with water from the holes pierced in her side. Then the Turks left their own galleys and tried to board her before she sank. Bows and cannon were alike useless now, so the English seized their pikes and swords, and fought hand to hand till they were overborne by the number of the enemy. At length they could resist no longer; their weapons were taken from them, and those who were left alive were sent, as prisoners of war usually were, to work at the oars of the galley. This was a fate dreaded by all from nearly the beginnings of history. The unfortunate slaves were generally chained together on benches in a stifling, dark place, where they could hardly breathe; their food was scanty and often bad, and if from exhaustion any man showed symptoms of flagging, an overseer was at hand to flog him into greater vigour. Should the ship sink, as often happened, the heavy chains deprived the unhappy slaves of any chance of escaping death.

It was the custom of the Turks to lay up their galleys during the winter in a harbour near the town of Alexandria, and to throw all their prisoners and galley-slaves into gaol, with irons on their legs. The crew of the ‘Three Half Moons’ were thrust into dungeons like the rest, but before very long the captain and the owner of the ship, who had sailed with them, were ransomed by their friends.

Thankful though they were to be free again, they suffered terrible pain at leaving their companions to so many and great miseries, and they could only falter out a few broken words about doing their best to collect money at home to deliver them also. The prisoners sighed and did not answer: they knew too well the worth of promises such as these.

Their daily allowance of food in the prison was no greater than it had been on the galleys,

and they were all more than half starved. Yet their plight would have been even worse than it was, had not John Fox the gunner possessed unusual skill as a barber, which somehow became known, and the officials about the gaol and harbour would send for him to shave them and cut their hair. With the money thus earned, he bought good food for his mates and himself. After a while, he and certain of his companions were allowed by the keeper to go out for the day and make what they could, a regular part of their earnings being paid to the gaoler. As they were obliged to report themselves at night and always kept the irons on their legs, there was not much fear of their running away.

In the winter of 1577, when the crew of the ‘Three Half Moons’ had reached the fourteenth year of their captivity, the galleys were dismantled of their masts and sails, and laid up in harbour till the spring. The captains and sailors, having nothing more to do, returned to their own homes; and the prisoners, amounting in all to two hundred and sixty-eight Christians belonging to sixteen different nations, were marched back to the prison.

Not far from the harbour was an eating-house kept by one Unticaro, a Spaniard, who since he had been thirty years a captive without once attempting to escape was permitted certain privileges. With him, John Fox had long ago made friends, and it was of this man he now asked advice as to his best plan of running away, because Fox had determined that, even if he died for it, he would stay there no longer. Unticaro had lacked the courage to move on his own account, but fired by Fox, readily agreed to risk his own life also. Six of the other prisoners whom they could trust were let into the secret, and they swore they would stand or fall together.

The first thing to be done was, of course, to get rid of their chains, so Fox distributed files among them, with orders to have their irons off their legs by eight o’clock the next night. They had by this time been imprisoned for so many years, and the gaoler had got so accustomed to seeing them about, that so long as they were all there when he locked up, he did not trouble himself further.

On the evening of the following day, January 1, 1578, the six captives accompanied by John Fox met at Unticaro’s eating-house, pretending to be in high spirits so that nobody who dropped in should guess that anything serious was on hand. When eight o’clock struck, Fox sent Unticaro to the master of the harbour, with a message professing to come from one of the city officials, a friend of the gaolers. Unticaro seems to have persuaded the gaoler to go with him, and the two set out, injunctions being given to the warders not to bar the gate till his return, as he should not be absent long. No sooner had they departed, than the other men began to search Unticaro’s house for the various weapons which he had hidden there. These all proved to be old, and there was only one sword among them which Fox took, and, grasping the hilt, he concealed himself round the corner of the house and awaited the gaoler.

The man was not long in coming, and when he saw the house in total darkness he instantly suspected that something was the matter. Stepping back from the door in order to make sure that he might not be taken by surprise, he perceived Fox standing in the shadow, and cried ‘O Fox, what have I deserved of thee that thou shouldst seek my death?’

‘Thou villain!’ answered Fox, ‘thou hast sucked many a Christian’s blood, and now thou shalt know what thou hast deserved at my hands,’ and he lifted his sword and struck the keeper such a blow that he fell stark dead to the ground.

Leaving the body, the men went down to the place where the six warders were waiting.

‘Who goes there?’ asked one, and Fox replied:

‘All friends,’ which, says the chronicler, ‘when they were in, proved contrary,’ for the prisoners fell upon the gaolers and soon dispatched them all. Then Fox barred the gate and dragged a gun against it, for he had work to do inside.

In the gaoler’s lodge, which appears to have been empty, they found the prison keys and a number of weapons much better than those they had brought with them. There was also a chest containing money which they would certainly need, if they managed to escape from the town. John Fox, however, declined to touch any of it, but Unticaro and two others were not so scrupulous, and stuffed as many golden ducats into their clothes as they could contrive to stow away. After this was done Fox bade them follow him into the prison, unlocking the doors with the gaoler’s keys, and slaying the warders in charge. The prisoners, thus set free, were put by him to different tasks, the greater number being ordered to seize a galley lying at the prison end of the harbour, while the others carried down to it the mast and the sails and oars which had been stored up in the prison. Although most of the warders had been killed, eight of them had taken refuge in the roof of the prison, and in order to come at them the conspirators had to place ladders against the walls. The fighting was hot, and Fox received three shots in his clothes, while Unticaro and the two men who had taken the ducats were killed outright, which Fox considered a judgment upon them, for taking what did not belong to them.

All seemed going well, when a wounded Turk fell outside the prison wall, and ‘made such a lowing’ or bellowing, that he was heard by the people who lived in one or two scattered houses about. They instantly gave the alarm, and the prisoners fighting for their freedom felt as if the way of escape was barred to them. For at each end of the harbour was a fortress, while the city of Alexandria lay behind. Yet, such good use had the men made of the start they had had in getting ready the galley that before another ship could put to sea they were all on board, and had passed in safety the guns of the two forts, gaining the open water.

Once fairly away, they looked back to be sure that none of the Turkish vessels were likely to catch them up. The shores of the harbour were black with people, ‘in companies like unto swarms of bees, bustling themselves to dress up the galleys.’ But this was not so easy, as the whole of the fittings were locked up in the town. So the Christians breathed again, and, falling on their knees, gave thanks for their deliverance.

But the danger was by no means over, the wind was constantly shifting, and they did not know how to shape their course; and worse than that, the few provisions, which in their haste they had been able to bring, were soon exhausted. In twenty-eight days, eight persons died of starvation, just before they made the port of Gallipoli in the island of Candia. Here they were welcomed by the abbot and the monks, who bade them stay till they were strong again, and thankful the fugitives were for their rest. After a while they took ship, and reached the harbour of Taranto in south Italy without further adventure, and

there by order of Fox the galley was sold and the price divided equally among the men. Together they marched to Naples where they parted, every man going to his own country, Fox himself journeying to Rome. The Pope granted him a private interview, and bestowed a large sum of money on him, while the King of Spain pensioned him on twenty pence a day, which in those times meant a great deal more than it does now. The Ministers of Queen Elizabeth were not behind the rest, and, when Fox returned to England in 1579, 'extended to him their liberality to maintain him in his age, to the great encouragement of all Christians.'

THE BEAVER AND THE PORCUPINE

Once upon a time there lived in the North West of America a beaver and a porcupine, who were great friends; and, as often happens, they loved each other all the better because they were so different. To begin with, the porcupine as no doubt you know is stuck over like a pin-cushion with long prickly quills, while the beaver is smooth-haired. Then the beaver had his house in the middle of a great lake, and the porcupine much preferred to dwell on land among the mountains, and if the beaver had not been able to swim, the two would never have met at all.

Now the beaver was often to be seen at the door of the porcupine's house, and was continually urging him to return the visit; but so far the porcupine had always refused.

'How can I?' he would ask. 'You know quite well that in a moment I should have swallowed so much water that my body would sink to the bottom, and I should never come up again. No, no! it is impossible—totally impossible—sorry as I am to give up the pleasure of seeing all the wonderful things you have told me of.' And try as he might, the beaver never could get another answer.

But one day he thought of a very clever plan, and he lost no time in putting it into practice. He had noticed from his house that the porcupine was sitting on the shore, enjoying the sun, so he instantly set off to swim to him.

'You are coming to see my house this minute,' said he.

'To see your house?' repeated the porcupine in amazement; 'but how am I to do that? I have told you a hundred times I should be drowned before I had gone ten yards.'

'Oh, no, you wouldn't!' replied the beaver, 'for I am going to carry you. Be quick and get on my back, and hold fast round my neck.'

'But I shall die! I know I shall!'

'I tell you, you *won't* die. I will take care of that! Oh, don't be such a coward!' And at length, very slowly, the porcupine climbed up and seated himself.

'Hold tight round my neck,' said the beaver again; 'I am just going to start.' But he need not have troubled to give that advice, for the porcupine's grasp nearly choked him. Still, so long as the beaver kept on the surface, the porcupine really had nothing to complain of; but when he dived as he did once or twice, the water got into the rider's eyes and nose and down his throat, and almost suffocated him.

No words could tell how thankful he was to reach the beaver's house, but he could not think how he should ever have the courage to make that dreadful journey a second time.

'You seem tired; you must have something to eat,' said the beaver as the porcupine lay down feebly on his side. The porcupine was very glad to hear that, for he was certainly

hungry; but great was his disappointment when the beaver took out of a hole a bundle of sticks and placed them before his guest.

‘They are quite young twigs—you will find them very good,’ said he, and the poor porcupine did not know how to refuse, and ate them silently and without making more faces than he could help, for he did not like them at all.

Next morning, when the porcupine awoke, the beaver was standing by him.

‘Let us have a game, friend,’ he cried; ‘I know ever so many!’

‘What sort of game is it?’ asked the porcupine, and the beaver answered: ‘You shall get on my back, and put your nose well down on the nape of my neck, and four times will I dive to the bottom of the lake, and four times will I come up!’

This did not sound a very good game to the porcupine, and he would have preferred something quite different, but he did not like to be rude or ill-natured, so he agreed to play it. But when it came to the point, the game proved even worse than he thought, for before the beaver started he splashed about with his tail, and filled the porcupine’s eyes and nose with water; and not content with that he stayed below at each dive so very long that, when they rose to the surface for the fourth time, the porcupine was nearly dead.

‘I will take you home now,’ said the beaver; ‘I have enjoyed my game so much.’

No sooner had the porcupine touched dry land than he went up to join his tribe, and bade them come to a feast in his house. As soon as they were all assembled he told them of the terrible sufferings he had gone through at the hands of the beaver, whom he had always looked on as a friend, though he could do so no more.

‘He really almost killed me,’ he said mournfully; and his guests replied smilingly, ‘Well, invite *him* to come and play with *you*.’

The porcupine was well pleased with their words, and next day sent a message to the beaver, begging for the honour of a visit as early as possible. The beaver lost no time in setting out, and the porcupine who was keeping watch soon saw him coming up the valley.

‘Come in! come in!’ cried he, and gave the fire a switch with his tail, so that some sparks flew right into the eyes of the guest. ‘Do you feel inclined for some food?’ inquired the porcupine; ‘you have had a long walk and I am sure you must be hungry.’

‘Thank you, I should like some,’ replied the beaver; but he did not fancy the bark and pine needles that the porcupine placed before him. However, the porcupine did not seem to notice his guest’s unwillingness, and only said:

‘Eat a little faster, my friend, for I am longing to have a game with you’; so the beaver was forced to swallow some of the bark, which he did not like any better than the porcupine had liked the twigs.

‘What game is it, and where do you play?’ he asked when he had finished.

‘Do you see that tree on the slope over there? That is my play-ground. But, perhaps, as it

is getting late and you may be tired, it would be as well to put it off till to-morrow. I will show you where you are to sleep.’ And as they walked along, the porcupine said something to the sky and the clouds vanished, and in the morning the ground was covered with ice.

The following day he told the beaver he had prepared another feast for him, but as it was just like the last, the beaver would rather have been without it.

‘I have finished now,’ he observed as soon as he could, and the porcupine answered:

‘Very well; now we will go out to play.’

So the two went down towards the slope and came to a frozen stream which had to be crossed. The porcupine easily got over with his long claws, but the beaver’s feet were smooth, and had nothing to hold on with, thus he slid from one side to the other and was very uncomfortable.

‘Come along,’ said the porcupine, ‘it is all right’; but the beaver could not ‘come along,’ and at last the porcupine had to go back and take him by the hand and lead him over.

‘Now you will be able to walk,’ remarked the porcupine, and they went on to the place where the tree was standing.

‘Here we are!’ said the porcupine, stopping beneath it.

‘But what is the game?’ asked the beaver.

‘Oh, you have to climb this tree.’

‘But I have never climbed a tree in my life,’ replied the beaver anxiously. ‘How do you begin?’

‘I will go first, and you have only to watch me and see how I do it,’ answered the porcupine, and he climbed and climbed till he reached the very top of the tree. Then he let go the branch he was on, and dropped straight to the ground.

‘There, it is not very difficult,’ he said to the beaver; ‘but as you are not used to climbing I will take you up on my back, and you can come down by yourself. Be sure you cling tight round my neck.’ And the beaver did—very tight indeed.

It took them some time to reach the top of the tree and then the porcupine put the beaver on to a branch. But the beaver was not much more comfortable than when he was crossing the ice, for his smooth hands could not dig into the bark like the porcupine’s claws.

‘Hold fast to the tree, and I will go down first,’ said the porcupine, and as he spoke he let the branch go, and fell down to the earth. Then he got up, and ran about at the foot of the tree, watching the beaver who was still on his branch, too frightened to move.

‘Oh, don’t be afraid! Look at me! I am alive as you see,’ so at last the beaver let go as the porcupine bade him. But he did not know the proper way to fall as the porcupine did, and his head struck on a rock, and the blow killed him.

Then the porcupine went home.

[*Tsimshian Texts, by Franz Boas.*]

AN OLD-WORLD GHOST

Children are often inclined to think that the nations who ruled the world long, long ago, were quite unlike ourselves, and always busy with very serious things, such as the passing of laws or fighting. It is quite a surprise sometimes to learn that they really shared our feelings on a whole quantity of subjects, and even, as this story will show, were quite as much afraid of ghosts or haunted houses as anybody in these days could be. It is told by a famous Roman citizen called Pliny, who was born near Lake Como in the reign of the Emperor Nero.

There was, he says, at that time a large and comfortable house in a good part of the town of Athens which, to the astonishment of everybody, stood empty for many years. It seemed odd that so fine a building should remain so long unoccupied, and at length one man more curious than the rest asked his host when at a small dinner party if he could explain the reason. The tale he heard from the Athenian noble was a marvellous one, and the guest shuddered as he listened, for though he was bold enough in the field of battle, he trembled in the presence of that which he did not understand.

Once the house had been filled with a gay family; music had floated through the garden, children had played at knuckle bones in the hall, and young men had thrown discs in the courts. But gradually sounds of laughter grew more rare and the dwellers in the house fell ill of mysterious maladies, till at last the few that were left departed for another place, hoping amidst new surroundings to shake off the gloom which possessed them. For a while none dared ask why the home of their fathers had been thus forsaken; but little by little whispers of the truth got abroad, and it was noticed that men turned down another street sooner than pass the empty mansion.

A little girl was the first to hear the noise and sat up straight in her bed with wide-open eyes peering into the darkness, too frightened even to call to her slave, as a sound like the clanking of chains struck upon her ear. It seemed to come from very far off; but soon, to the child’s wild terror, it drew closer and closer, till she expected every moment to feel the touch of the cold iron on her cheek. Then, to her immense relief, it became fainter, and went farther and farther away, by and bye dying out altogether.

Such was the tale the little girl told to her mother in the morning, and very shortly there was not a person in the house who had not been roused by the mysterious noise. For a time this was all that happened, and though it was bad enough, perhaps it might have been borne; but there was worse to come. One night the form of an old man appeared, so thin you could almost see his bones, his hair standing up like bristles, and a white beard flowing to his waist. On his wrists and ankles were iron chains, which shook as he moved. Henceforward there was no sleep for any of the household; their days were passed in dread of the nights, and one by one they fell a prey to their terrors. At length there came a time when the living skeletons could endure it no longer and fled, leaving the ghost behind them. Such was the tale told to the guest, but the end was yet to come.

Years passed by, and the survivors began gradually to recover their health and spirits, and

wondered if things had really been so bad as they had thought, and if some stranger, ignorant of the story, might not be persuaded to take the house if the rent was made low enough. So a notice was put up in a public place, offering the mansion for sale or hire, and one of the first to read it happened to be Athenodorus the philosopher, who had arrived on a visit to Athens. He knew nothing of the evil reputation which belonged to the house, but the low price asked aroused his suspicions, and he at once inquired why so fine a dwelling should be offered for so little. With some difficulty he managed to piece together the true story, and when he heard it, instantly took the house, resolved to find out if possible the secret of the ghost.

ATHENODORUS CONFRONTS THE SPECTRE.

As it grew dark, he bade his slave carry a couch for him to the front part of the mansion, and place a lamp and writing materials on a table near it. He afterwards dismissed the slaves to their own quarters, and turned his whole attention to the book he happened to be writing, so that he might not from idleness fancy he saw or heard all sorts of things which were not there. For a little while he worked amidst dead silence; then a faint sound as of the clanking of chains smote on his ears, always coming nearer and nearer, and growing

louder and louder. But Athenodorus, as became a philosopher, was master of himself, even at this moment. He gave no sign of having heard anything out of the common, and his sharp-pointed instrument never faltered for an instant in drawing the words on the waxen tablet. In a few seconds the noise reached the door; next, it was within the door and coming down the room. At last Athenodorus *did* lift his head and beheld the figure he had been told of standing close to him, and signalling with his finger. In reply the philosopher waved his hand, begging the ghost to wait until he had finished the sentence he was writing, and this he succeeded in doing in spite of the fact that the figure incessantly rattled the chains close to his ears. Athenodorus, however, would not hurry himself, and wrote on deliberately. Then he laid down his stylus and looked round. The ghost was again beckoning to him, so he took up the lamp and motioned the figure to go before him. With a slow step, as of one who carries a heavy weight on his feet, the old man walked through the house as far as the courtyard, where he vanished quite suddenly; nor could the philosopher discover the smallest trace of him, though he searched every corner carefully by the aid of his lamp. As it was now night and too late to examine further, Athenodorus made a little heap of leaves and grass to mark the spot where the figure disappeared, and returned to his couch where he slept peacefully till dawn.

When he awoke next morning he at once visited a magistrate of the city and, after telling his story, begged that some men might be sent to dig up that part of the courtyard. The magistrate gave the order without delay, and, accompanied by Athenodorus, the slaves set about their task. A few feet from the surface the pickaxes struck upon iron and the philosopher drew nearer, for he felt that the secret of the haunting was about to be disclosed. And so it was, for there lay a heap of bones with chains fastened to them.

How they came there, how long they had been there, whose bones they were, none could tell; but they were collected in a box and buried by order of the magistrate, at the expense of the public. This seemed to satisfy the unquiet spirit, for the house was henceforward left in peace, and as Athenodorus had no further interest in the matter its owners were free to return and dwell there, which they gladly did.

[From *Pliny's Letters*.]

THE GENTLEMAN HIGHWAYMAN

Few people can have crowded more occupations into a life of twenty-six years than James Maclean.

His father, a Scot by birth, had settled in the Irish county of Monaghan, where the position of minister to a body of dissenters had been offered him. From the first moment of his coming amongst them Mr. Maclean was much liked by his congregation, who carried all their troubles to him, sure that if he could not help them, he would at least give them advice and sympathy, and there was not one of them who did not drink his health with his whole heart when the minister married the daughter of a gentleman in the neighbourhood.

More than twenty years passed away quietly and happily. The Macleans had two sons, and the elder one early showed a wish to follow his father's profession, and, at an age when most young men are still at the University, received a 'call' to a Protestant congregation at the Hague.

James, the younger, was educated for a merchant, and as soon as he was eighteen was to go into a counting-house and learn his business. Unfortunately, just before he reached the date fixed, his father died, leaving the youth his own master—for as no mention is made of his mother, it is probable she was dead also. Without consulting anyone, James threw up the post which old Maclean had taken so much pains to get for him, and withdrawing the money left him by the will, from the bank, spent it all in a few months on racing and betting.

Of course he was not allowed to make himself a beggar in this silly way without an effort to save him on the part of his mother's friends. But from a child he had always thought he knew better than anyone else, and quarrelled with those who took a different view. Naturally, when the money had all disappeared without anything to show for it, he chose to forget how rude he had been, and expected his relations to support him in idleness, which they absolutely refused to do. At length, not knowing which way to turn, he was glad enough to become the valet of a certain Mr. Howard, who was on his way to England. When he liked, the young Irishman could make himself as pleasant as most of his countrymen, and Mr. Howard took a great fancy to him, and treated him with much kindness. But from first to last James never knew when he was well off, and after a while he returned to his old ways, and frequently stayed out all night, drinking and gambling. In vain did Mr. Howard warn him that unless he gave up these habits he would certainly be dismissed. The young man paid no heed to his words, and in the end his master's patience was exhausted, and one day James found himself on board the Irish boat, without a character and nothing but his quarter's wages in his pockets.

Now James Maclean was one of those people who are totally without a sense of shame, and if once a person cannot be made ashamed of what he has done, and always imagines himself to be the victim of bad luck or of somebody else, his case is hopeless. On this

occasion he was quite convinced that it was the duty of his relations to supply him with an income, or at least with a home, and when as before refusals met him on all sides, he applied not for the first or even the second time, to his brother at the Hague for help. We do not know what excuse he made for his request, but we may be quite certain it was not the true one; still whether his brother believed him or not, he sent him a small sum, probably at the cost of great self-denial, for the salaries of ministers were not high. This money, as was to be expected, went the way of the rest, and again James found himself penniless and reduced to look for a place as a servant.

Hearing that a Colonel in the British army who had served abroad with some of his Scotch uncles was in need of a butler, young Maclean went to see him, and was lucky enough to obtain the situation, though he knew as little of a butler's work as he did of a printer's. He was, however, quick at picking up anything that he chose and contrived to keep this place for a year or two, till the Colonel discovered that his butler had been carrying out a system of robbery ever since he had been in his house. After a few words from his master, James was once more cast on the world, and had some idea of enlisting in the Irish brigade then serving under the French flag, and this would have been the best thing that could have happened to him. But as, on inquiry, he learned that unless he became a Roman Catholic he would be refused a commission, he changed his mind and resolved to remain where he was.

'Well, I suppose there is nothing for it but a humble letter to the Colonel,' thought James one day, when he heard from a man whom he met at a tavern that his late master was on his way to England. So calling for paper and a pen, he composed a letter to such good purpose and so full of lies, that the kindhearted Colonel really believed he had repented, and offered to take him back, desiring at the same time that James should take his baggage by sea to London, and allowing him a shilling a day for his food.

It was with mingled feelings of contempt and relief that the young reprobate read his master's reply. 'What a fool he is!' he said to himself, adding after a moment 'Well, after all, it is lucky for me!'

But the Colonel, good-natured though he was, knew too much about master James to give credit to his stories, and declined a request, made soon after their arrival in London, to purchase a commission for his late butler, with a view to enabling him to marry an heiress. Yet when he discovered that Maclean had really enlisted in Lord Albemarle's regiment of horse-guards, he consented to give him the ten pounds necessary for the purpose, which, to keep it the more safely, was placed in the hands of one of the officers. Whether Maclean ever succeeded in handling the money seems doubtful, for as soon as his papers were made out and he was ordered to join the army in Flanders, he suddenly disappeared, and the troopship sailed without him.

There must have been something very attractive about this rogue, for whatever desperate plight he was in he always contrived to fall on his feet; and when he thought it safe to emerge from the place where he was in hiding while there was a hue and cry raised after the deserter, it was in the character of a man anxious to start for the West Indies—if someone would only lend him fifty pounds!

Someone *did* lend it to him, and it was instantly spent on fine clothes which captured the heart of Miss Macglegno, the daughter of a horse-dealer, with five hundred pounds to her dowry.

This time, Maclean did not dare to throw about the money as he had previously done, but with his father-in-law's eye upon him, he opened a grocer's shop in Welbeck Street, hoping that the fashionable people who had come to live in the big new houses in Cavendish Square might give him their custom. But his wife speedily saw that if the business was to prosper she must look after it herself, as her husband could be depended on for nothing. Therefore she set to work, and for three years all went well, and the neighbours said to each other that it was fortunate she was such a stirring woman, as though Master Maclean was a harmless sort of man he was apt to be lazy.

At the end of this period Mrs. Maclean died, after a short illness, and her two little girls went to live with their grandmother. Left alone, James neglected the shop more and more, and at length it grew plain to himself, as well as to everybody else, that if any money was to be saved at all, the goods must be sold for what they would fetch. And once sold, it is easy to guess how quickly the gold melted in James's pocket.

It was not till he had come to his last shilling—or at any rate his last pound—that Maclean began to ask himself 'What next?' After these years of comfort and plenty—and idleness—it would be hard to become a servant again, yet he could not see any other means of keeping himself from starving.

He was slowly getting accustomed to the idea of seeking for a servant's place, when one day he met in the streets an apothecary named Plunket, whom he had known in Monaghan.

'How now?' asked Plunket. 'Is anything the matter? You look as if you were on the road to be hung at Tyburn.'

'The matter is that to-morrow I shall not have a penny in the world,' answered Maclean, gloomily.

'Oh, things are never so bad as they seem,' said Plunket. 'Cheer up. Perhaps I can find a way to supply you with *more* pennies. It only wants a little pluck and spirit! If *we* haven't got any money, there are plenty of other people who have.'

Maclean was silent. He understood at once what Plunket meant, and that he was being offered a partnership in a scheme of highway robbery. He had, as we know, stolen small sums before, but that felt to him a very different thing from stopping travellers along the road, and demanding 'their money or their life.' However, he soon shook off his scruples,

and was ready to take his part in any scheme that Plunket should arrange.

‘You are in luck just now,’ said his tempter, who all this time had been watching his face and read the thoughts that were passing through his mind. ‘I heard only this morning of a farmer who has sold a dozen fat oxen at the Smithfield Market, and will be riding home this evening with the money in his saddle-bags. If he had any sense he would have started early and ridden in company, but I know my gentleman well, and dare swear he will not leave the tavern outside the market till dusk is falling. So if we lie in wait for him on Hounslow Heath, he cannot escape us.’

It was autumn, and dark at seven o’clock, when the farmer, not as sober as he might have been, came jogging along. He was more than half-way across, and was already thinking how best to spend the sixty pounds his beasts had brought him, when out of a hollow by the roadside sprang two men with masks and pistols, which were pointed straight at his horse’s head.

‘Your money or your life,’ said one of them, while the other stood silent; and with trembling fingers the farmer unloaded his saddle-bags, and delivered up his watch. As soon as Plunket saw there was no more to be got out of him, he gave the horse a smart cut on his flanks, and the animal bounded away.

All this while Maclean had not uttered a word, nor had he laid a finger on the victim. He had in reality trembled with fear quite as much as the farmer, and it was not till they were safe in Plunket’s garret off Soho Square that he breathed freely.

‘Sixty pounds, do you say? Not bad for one night’s work,’ cried Plunket. ‘Well, friend James, I will give you ten pounds for your share, which I call handsome, seeing you did not even cock your pistol! But perhaps it is all one could expect for the first time, only on the next occasion you must do better. And you might just as well, you know, as if the officers of the peace catch you they will hang you to a certainty, never stopping to ask questions as to your share in the matter.’

Maclean nodded. He saw the truth of this, and besides, the excitement of the adventure began to stir his blood, and he was soon counting the days till he heard from Plunket again. On this occasion a travelling carriage was to be stopped on the St. Albans road, and it was settled that Maclean should present his pistol to the coachman’s head, while Plunket secured the booty. But when it came to the point, James’s face was so white, and the fingers which held the pistol so shaky, that Plunket saw they had better change parts, and indeed, as the gentleman inside offered no resistance whatever, and meekly yielded up everything of value he had about him, Maclean succeeded in doing all that was required of him by his partner.

‘Much good *you* are!’ said Plunket, when they had plunged into the neighbouring wood. ‘If I had not been there that coachman would have stunned you with the butt end of his whip. You are the lion who was born without claws or teeth! A cat would have been as useful.’

‘Yes, I know,’ answered Maclean hurriedly, feeling very much ashamed of himself. ‘I can’t think what was the matter with me—I suppose I’m not quite accustomed to it yet.’ And that very evening, to prove to Plunket—and himself—that he was not such a coward as he seemed, he attacked a gentleman in Hyde Park and robbed him of a gold watch and chain

and a small sum of money.

After this Maclean shook off his timidity, and became known to his brother highwaymen as one of the most daring and successful 'gentlemen of the road,'—for so the people called them. Only on one occasion did he run any risk of being caught, and then he took refuge on board a vessel that was sailing for Holland, and sought out his brother at the Hague.

'It is so long since we have seen each other, I could not but come,' he said to the minister, who, suspecting nothing, was delighted to welcome him, and insisted on hearing the story of James's life since they had last parted. For a whole evening the good man listened to a moving tale, not one word of which was true, except that which related to James's marriage and the starting of the grocer's shop. The minister praised and pitied, and told it all to his friends, rich and prosperous citizens who were proud to invite the fine gentleman from London to their parties. And if at the end of the evening some purses and watches were missing, well! they might have been robbed on their way hither, or have forgotten them at home. At any rate, nobody dreamed for one moment of suspecting their minister's guest.

But in spite of all the precautions which, notwithstanding his recklessness, Maclean thought well to take—in spite of his silence respecting his own affairs, and his frequent changes of lodgings so that no one might connect him with one particular neighbourhood, he at last put the rope round his own neck by an act of gross carelessness.

On the morning of June 26, 1750, James robbed Lord Eglinton in his travelling carriage, and a little later in the same day attacked the Salisbury coach, in company with Plunket. They escaped as usual, Maclean carrying with him a bag containing several suits of fine clothes, trimmed with beautiful lace, belonging to one of the passengers named Higden. Maclean's first care was to strip off the lace, and to send a message to a dealer that he had some clothes to sell, if the man would call to see them at his address. At the time, the dealer chanced to be busy and could not come, and by the following morning, when he made his way to Maclean's rooms, an advertisement was out describing the garments so exactly that the man instantly recognised them, and gave information to the magistrate.

That night the 'gentleman highwayman' was arrested on a warrant, and carried to the prison of Newgate, and Plunket, who had been uneasy since the dealer's visit, and was on the watch, hurried to the coast in disguise and hid on board a smuggler's boat, bound for France. Maclean remained to take his trial, and after first confessing and then denying his confession, was convicted of robbery on the King's highway, and was hanged at the gallows erected at Tyburn, where the corner of Connaught Square and the Edgware Road now stand. He was at the period of his execution only twenty-six, yet he had contrived to do more mean and base deeds than most rogues of sixty.

MACLEAN AND PLUNKET STOP LORD EGLINTON’S CARRIAGE

THE VISION OF THE POPE

It was the evening of October 7, 1571, when the Christian fleet, under the command of Don John of Austria, had defeated the Turks at the battle of Lepanto—one of the 'Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World.' Far away from the narrow Greek seas, where the victory had been gained, the Pope, Pius V, was in his palace of the Vatican in Rome, discussing business with his treasurer, Busotti of Bibiana. Pope Pius suffered from a painful complaint which made him very restless, and he always preferred to stand or walk about, rather than to sit. He was therefore pacing the room, putting questions or listening to statements as he did so, when suddenly he broke off in the middle of a sentence and stood still with his neck stretched out in the attitude of a person whose ears are strained to catch some sound, at the same time signing to Busotti to keep silent. After a moment's pause he approached the window and threw it open, always in the same listening attitude, while Busotti, half frightened, sat watching. Then in an instant a look of rapture passed over the face of Pius, and lifting his head he raised his clasped hands to Heaven as if in thanksgiving. At this sight Busotti understood that something strange was happening which he could not see, and he remained awed and still for three minutes, as he afterwards swore. When the three minutes were ended the Pope aroused himself from his ecstasy, and with a countenance shining with joy, spoke to Busotti:

'This is not the hour for business. Let us give thanks to God for our great victory over the Turks,' and he retired into his oratory.

Left at liberty the treasurer hastened to give an account of these strange events to various bishops and cardinals, who desired that it should instantly be taken down in writing, the time and place of the scene being carefully noted. They ordered further, that when sealed, the document should be deposited for safety in the house of a lawyer. This, it will be remembered, was on October 7, but the first news of the battle was not received in Rome till the 26th, when a messenger arrived from the Doge of Venice, Mocenigo, followed three or four days later by one from Don John himself. Then calculations were made of the difference of time between the longitude of Rome and that of the islands off the Greek coast where the battle was fought, with the result that it was proved that the vision of the Pope had occurred at the precise moment in which Don John had sprung, sword in hand, from his place in the centre of his galley to beat back the Turks who were swarming over the bulwarks.

The repelling of the attack had turned the scale in the fortunes of the day, and the power of the Turks over Christendom was broken for ever.

GROWING-UP-LIKE-ONE-WHO-HAS-A-GRANDMOTHER

That was the name of a little Indian boy living on the North-West coast of America, and a very odd name it is, as well as a very long one. To be sure, in his own language it could all be put into seventeen letters, while in English it takes thirty-four, as you will find if you count them, and that *does* make a difference.

However, though we should have preferred a name that was shorter and prettier, there is something satisfactory about this one, for a little boy who has a grandmother is likely to be well fed and petted, and made to feel himself a person of importance, and that is pleasant to everybody. But it also means in general that he has lost his father and mother, which had happened to this particular little boy. They had died a long while before, and now there only remained his grandmother and his mother's brother, who was chief of the village.

One evening the chief was sitting on the beach gazing up at the sky. And while he gazed, fire came right down like a shooting star, and struck the point of a branch which grew on a tree behind his house. As it touched the branch it became solid and hung there, shining like copper. When the chief saw this he arose and walked to the house and said to the people inside:

'There is a great piece of copper hanging from that tree. Bid the young men go and knock it down and whichever hits it shall marry my daughter.'

Quite a crowd of youths gathered at the back of the chief's house early next morning, and many of the old men came likewise to watch the sport. All day the young Indians threw stones till their hands became sore and their arms ached, but never once did the lump of copper move. At last for very weariness they had to rest, and eat some food. After that they felt better and went on throwing stones till darkness fell, but still no one had hit the copper.

As soon as the stars peeped out the poor little boy who had been looking on also ran down to the beach, as his uncle had done, and laid himself upon a rock. By and bye a man approached him and said:

'What are the village people talking about? They make a great noise!'

'A lump of copper is hanging on the tree and they were trying to knock it down, but nobody succeeded,' answered the boy; and as he spoke, the man stooped and picked up four pebbles.

'It is you who shall knock it down,' said he. 'First you must throw the white stone, then the black stone, then the blue stone, and last of all the red stone. But be careful not to show them to anybody.'

'I will be careful,' replied the boy.

On the following morning all the people returned to the place behind the house, and the poor little boy went with them.

'I am going to throw, too,' said he, and the young men tried to push him aside, asking scornfully how one so small could hope to succeed when they had failed. But the old men would not allow them to have their way, and said:

'Let him throw, too; the chief has given leave to everybody, and he can but fail as you have done. He shall throw first.' So the poor little boy stepped forward, and taking out the white stone swung it round his head so that it whistled four times before he let it go. It flew very near the copper, nearer than any of the young men's stones had flown, and the black and the blue almost grazed it. The young men looking on grew uncomfortable and ceased mocking, and as the poor little boy drew out the red stone, they held their breath. Swiftly it shot through the air and struck the copper with a great clang, so that it fell down to the earth. The old men nodded their heads wisely, but the young men quickly picked up the copper and carried it into the chief's house, each man crying out that it was he who had hit the copper and had gained the chief's daughter. But as they could not *all* have hit it, the chief knew that they were a pack of liars and only bade them wait a while, and he would see. As for the poor little boy, he did not want to marry the girl or anyone else, so he did not mind what the young men said.

Nothing more was heard that day of the winner of the prize, but at night a white bear came to the back of the house, and growled loudly.

'Whoever kills that white bear shall marry my daughter,' said the chief, and not a youth slept all through the village, wondering how best to kill the white bear, and between them they made so many plans that it seemed as if the white bear could never escape. In the evening, the poor little boy went down to the beach again, and sat upon a rock looking out to sea, till at last he beheld a man approaching him, but it was not the same man whom he had seen before.

'What are the people talking about in the village?' asked the man, just as the other had done, and the poor little boy answered:

'Last night a white bear appeared behind the house. Whoever kills it shall marry the chief's daughter.'

The man nodded his head and thought for a moment; then he said:

'Ask the chief for a bow and arrow: you shall shoot it.' So the poor little boy got up and left the beach, and returned to the village.

When it grew dark, all the young men met in the house of the chief, and the poor little boy stole in after them. The chief took from a shelf a tall quiver containing a quantity of bows and arrows, and he held them to the fire in order to make them supple. Then he gave a bow and two arrows to each man, but to the poor little boy, his own nephew, he gave nothing.

'Give me a bow and arrows also,' said the poor little boy, when he saw that the chief did

not notice him, and the young men broke out into scoffs and jeers as they had done before; and as before, the old men answered:

‘Give a bow and arrows to the poor little boy.’ And the chief listened and gave them to him.

All that night the young men sat up, listening, listening; but it was only before daybreak that they heard the white bear’s growl. At the first sound they ran out, and the poor little boy ran out with them, and he ran more swiftly than they and shot his arrow. And the arrow passed right through the neck of the bear, so that when the poor little boy pulled it out it was covered with blood.

By this time the young men had come up and found the bear dead, so they dipped their arrows in the blood, and picking up the bear, carried it into the house of the chief, the poor little boy coming behind them.

‘It was I who shot the bear; we are bringing him to you,’ shouted one quicker to speak than the rest; but the chief was a wise man, and only answered:

‘Let every man give me his bow and arrows, that I may examine them, and see who has killed the white bear.’

Now the young men did not like that saying, but they were forced to obey.

‘Give me your bow and arrows also,’ he said to the poor little boy, and the poor little boy handed them to him, and the chief knew by the marks that it was he who shot the white bear. And the young men saw by his eyes that he knew it, but they all kept silence: the chief because he was ashamed that a boy had done these two things where grown men had failed; the young men, because they were ashamed that they had lied and had been found to be lying.

So ashamed was the chief that he did not wish his people to look upon his face, therefore he bade his slave go down to the village and tell them to depart to some other place before morning. The people heard what the slave said and obeyed, and by sunrise they were all in their canoes—all, that is, except the chief’s daughter, and the poor little boy and his grandmother. Now the grandmother had some pieces of dried salmon which she ate; but the chief’s daughter would not eat, and the poor little boy would not eat either. The princess slept in a room at the back of the house and the poor little boy lay in the front, near the fire. All night long he lay there and thought of their poverty, and wondered if he could do anything to help them to grow richer. ‘At any rate,’ he said to himself, ‘I shall never become a chief by lying in bed,’ and as soon as some streaks of light were to be seen under the door, he dressed himself and left the house, running down to the bank of the great river which flowed by the town. There was a trail by the side of the river, and the poor little boy walked along the trail till he came to the shore of a lake; then he stopped and shouted. And as he shouted a wave seemed to rise on the top of the water, and out of it came the great frog who had charge of the lake, and drew near to the place where the poor little boy was standing. Terrible it was to look upon, with its long copper claws which

moved always, its copper mouth and its shiny copper eyes. He was so frightened that his legs felt turned to stone; but when the frog put out its claws to fasten them in his shoulders, fear gave him wings, and he ran so fast that the frog could not reach him, and returned to the lake. On and on ran the poor little boy, till at last he found himself outside the woods where his grandmother and the chief's daughter were waiting for him. Then he sat still and rested; but he was very hungry, for all this time he had had nothing to eat, and the grandmother and the chief's daughter had had nothing to eat either.

How the Boy shot the White Bear.

'We shall die if I cannot find some food,' said the poor little boy to himself, and he went out again to search the empty houses in the village, lest by chance the people might have left some dried salmon or a halibut behind them. He found neither salmon nor halibut, but he picked up in one place a stone axe, and in another a handle, and in a third a hammer. The axe and the handle he fastened together, and after sharpening the blade of the axe he began to cut down a tree. The tree was large, and the poor little boy was small, and had not much strength, so that dusk was approaching before the tree fell. The next thing he did was to split the tree and make a wide crack, which he kept open by wedging two short sticks across it. When this was done he placed the tree on the trail which led to the lake, and ran home again.

Early in the morning he crept safely out, and went to the shore of the lake and shouted four times, looking up as he shouted at the sky. Again there arose a wave on the water, and out of it came the frog, with the copper eyes and mouth and claws. It hopped swiftly towards him, but now the poor little boy did not mind, and waited till it could almost touch him. Then he turned and fled along the trail where the tree lay. Easily he slipped between the two sticks, and was safe on the other side, but the great frog stuck fast, and the more it struggled to be free the tighter it was held.

As soon as the poor little boy saw that the frog was firmly pinned between the bars, he took up his stone hammer which he had left beside the tree and dealt two sharp blows to the sticks that wedged open the crack. The sticks flew out and the crack closed with a snap, killing the frog as it did so. For awhile the poor little boy sat beside the tree quietly, but when he was sure the great frog must be quite dead, he put back the sticks to wedge open the crack and drew out the frog.

'I must turn it on its back to skin it,' said he, and after a long time he managed to do this: But he did not take off the claws on the skin, which he spread on the ground to dry. After the skin was dried he put his arms and legs into it, and laced it firmly across his chest.

'Now I must practise,' he said, and he jumped into the lake just as a frog would do, right down to the bottom. Then he walked along, till a trout in passing swished him with its tail, and quickly he turned and caught it in his hands. Holding the trout carefully, he swam up to the surface, and when he was on shore again he unlaced the skin and hung it on the branch of a tree, where no one was likely to see it.

After that he went home and found his grandmother and the princess still sleeping, so he laid the trout on the beach in front of the house and curled himself up on his mat.

By and bye the princess awoke, and the first thing she heard was the sound of a raven crying on the beach. So she quickly got out of bed and went to the place where the poor little boy was lying, and said to him:

'Go down to the beach, and see why the raven is crying.'

The poor little boy said nothing, but did her bidding, and in a few minutes he came back holding out the trout to the princess.

'The raven brought this,' he said to her. But it was the trout which he himself had caught in the bottom of the lake; and he and his grandmother ate of it, but the princess would not eat. And every morning this same thing happened, but the princess would eat nothing, not even when the raven—for it was he, she thought—brought them a salmon.

At last a night came when the princess could not sleep, and hearing a movement she rose softly and peeped through her curtain of skins. The poor little boy was getting ready to go out, and as she watched him she saw that he was a poor little boy no longer, but a tall youth. After a long, long time he crept in again and lay down, but the princess did not sleep; and when daylight broke and the raven called, she went to the beach herself, and beheld a large salmon on the sand. She took up the salmon, and carried it into the house, and stood before the poor little boy.

'I know the truth now,' she said. 'It was you and not the raven who found the trout,' and the poor little boy answered:

'Yes; it was I. My uncle deserted us all, and I had to get food. The frog lived in the lake, and when I called it, it came, and I set a trap for it and killed it; and by the help of its skin I dived into the lake likewise, and now I am great, for you have taken notice of me.'

'You shall marry me,' said the princess, and he married her, for he had ceased to be a poor little boy, and was grown to be a man. And whenever he went out to hunt or to fish, luck was with him, and he killed all that he sent his spear after, even whales and porpoises.

Time passed and they had two children, and still his hunting prospered and he grew rich. But one day he suddenly felt very tired and he told his wife, who feared greatly that some evil should befall him.

‘Oh, cease hunting, I pray you!’ said she. ‘Surely you are rich enough’; but he would not listen, and hunted as much as ever.

Now most of the people who had left the town at the chief’s bidding were dead, and the chief never doubted but that his daughter and the poor little boy and the old grandmother were dead also. But at length some of those who survived, wished to behold their homes once more, and they set out in four canoes to the old place. As they drew near, they saw many storehouses all full of spoils from the sea, and four whales laid up outside. Greatly were they amazed, but they got out of their canoes and went up to speak to the young man who stood there, and he spread food before them, and gave them gifts when in the evening they said farewell. They hastened to tell their chief all that they had seen and heard, and he was glad, and bade his people move back to the town and live in their old houses. So the next day the canoes put to sea again, and the poor little boy opened his storehouses and feasted the people, and they chose him for their chief.

‘It grows harder every day to take off the frog blanket,’ he said to his wife, and at his words she cried and would not take comfort. For now her husband could not rest contented at home, but hunted elks and bought slaves and was richer than any other chief had ever been before him. At length he told his uncle he wished to give a pot-latch or a great banquet, and he invited to it the Indians who dwelt many miles away. When they were all gathered together he called the people into the house, for in the centre of it he had placed his slaves and elk-skins and the other goods that he possessed.

‘You shall distribute them,’ he said to his uncle, and his uncle bade him put on his head the great copper he had knocked down from the tree, and the skin of the white bear which he had killed when he was still a poor little boy. Thus with the copper on his head and the bear-skin on his shoulders he walked to the pile of elk-skins in the middle of the house and sang, for this was part of the ceremony of giving him a name to show that he was grown up. And after the song was ended the chief said:

‘Now I will call you by your name,’ and the name that he gave him was Growing-up-like-one-who-has-a-grandmother, because his grandmother had always been so kind to him. After that the poor little boy took off the great copper and the bear-skin, and gave gifts to his guests, and they departed.

The chief and his wife were left alone and he put on his frog blanket, for he was going to catch seals for the people to eat. But his face was sad and he said to his wife:

‘I shall return safely this time, but when next I put on that blanket I may not be able to take it off, and if I can’t, perhaps I may never come home again. But I shall not forget you, and you will always find the seals and halibut and the salmon, which I shall catch for you, in front of the house.’

He did not leave them quite as soon as he expected. For several days his wife who was always watching for him, saw him walk up the beach; then one day she watched in vain, for though salmon and whales were there, the poor little boy was not. Each morning she took her two children down to the shore and they stood looking over the waves crying bitterly as the tide went out, because they knew he could not come till it was high again.

Food in plenty they had, and enough for the people of the town also, but the poor little boy never came home any more, for he had grown to be a frog, and was obliged to live in the sea.

[*From the Bureau of American Ethnology: Tsimshian Texts by Franz Boas.*]

THE HANDLESS BRIGADE

Have you ever thought what it would be like to have no arms, and be obliged to use your toes for everything? If not, try it on a wet day, and see how much you can manage to do. Yet, there are plenty of true stories of people born without hands, who have contrived by practice to teach their toes not only to supply the place of *ordinary* fingers, but of very clever fingers, which is quite another matter! I myself once saw a young man in a Belgian gallery busily engaged in copying a picture, and as he had no arms he painted with his toes, seated on a high stool, to place him on the level he wanted. It was near the hour of closing when I happened to notice him, and after a few minutes during which I had watched him spellbound, he got down from his stool, kicked off one shoe, disclosing a stocking neatly cut across the toes, leaving them free. He then shut up his paint box, and picking up his brushes one by one dabbled them in a glass of water that stood near, and wiped them on a cloth, after which he put them carefully in their case, lying on a table.

At the sight of this, I forgot my manners and uttered a cry of amazement, which I think rather pleased the painter, for everyone likes to feel that he can do something better than his fellows. At all events he knew I did not mean to be rude, for he went to his box on the floor, opened it, took up the top card printed with his name, Charles le Félu, from a packet, and presented it to me. Then he put on his hat which was hanging on a peg, bowed and walked away, the sleeves of his coat being so fastened that he looked like a man with his hands in his pockets.

I kept that card till I was married, and obliged to throw away many of my treasures.

James Caulfield, about the beginning of the last century, collected many stories of handless people—who were ‘handless’ in a very different sense from what *we* mean, when we use the word. He tells us of a German called Valerius, who was born when Charles II. was on the throne of England, and like my friend the painter, had no arms. This would have seemed a terrible calamity if it had come alone, but before he was out of his boyhood both his parents died, and left him penniless. Happily for Valerius, his mother had been a sensible woman, and insisted that her son should learn to make his toes as useful as fingers. Perched on his high stool, he did his copies like another child, and in later life, when he became famous, often wrote lines round his portraits. But much better than writing copies, he loved to beat a drum. Now beating a drum does not sound nearly so difficult as writing copies, and perhaps he was allowed to do it as a treat when he had said his lessons without a mistake, but with practice he was able to play cards and throw dice as well as any of his friends. He certainly always shaved himself when he grew to be a man, but it is rather hard to believe that in fencing he used his rapier, which he held between his big toe and the next, ‘with as much skill as his adversary,’ standing on his left leg the while.

The admiration of his playfellows at his cleverness filled him with pride, and Valerius was

always trying fresh feats to show off to his audience.

When it became necessary for him to earn his own living, he was able to support himself in comfort, travelling from one country to another, and always drawing crowds who came to see this Eighth Wonder of the world—for so they thought him. In his leisure hours he practised some of his old tricks, or learnt new ones, and in 1698 he came to England where he stayed for seven years. Many are the tales told of him during this time. Sometimes he would raise a chair with his toes, and put it in a different place; sometimes with the help of his teeth he would build towers made of dice, or he would lie on his back and, taking a glass of water in his toes, would carry it to his mouth. He could fire a pistol with his toes when seated on a stool, and using both feet he could discharge a musket. This must have been the hardest thing of any, for the musket of those times was a clumsy, heavy weapon, and it was not easy to keep your balance when it went off.

Then we have all of us heard of the famous Miss Biffin, who lived at the time when James Caulfield wrote his book. She went to the big fairs round London, and had a little booth all to herself. There, on payment of a small sum, visitors were admitted to see her sewing with a needle held by her toes, and sewing much more neatly than many of those who came to look at her would have been capable of doing with their fingers. And if they paid a little extra she would draw them, roughly, anything they wanted; or cut them out houses or dogs, or even likenesses of themselves on paper.

Miss Biffin, it is pleasant to think, thoroughly enjoyed her life, and, far from feeling that she was to be pitied because she had no hands, was quite convinced that she was much superior to anybody with two.

Perhaps the most wonderful of all the ‘Handless Brigade’ was a man called William Kingston, who was living in a village near Bristol in 1788. In that year a Mr. Walton happened to be staying in Bristol and was taken to see this marvel, of whom he writes an account to his friend John Wesley.

On the entrance of the two gentlemen into his house Kingston did not lose a moment in giving them their money’s worth. He was having breakfast, and after inviting them to sit down, took up his cup between his big toe and the next, and drank off his tea without spilling a drop. After waiting till he had buttered his toast and eaten as much as he wanted, Mr. Walton then ‘put half a sheet of paper upon the floor, with a pen and an ink-horn. Kingston threw off his shoes as he sat, took the ink-horn in the toes of his left foot, and held the pen in those of his right. He then wrote three lines as well as most ordinary writers, and as swiftly. He writes out,’ continues Walton, ‘his bills and other accounts. He then showed how he shaves with a razor in his toes, and how he combs his own hair. He can dress and undress himself, except buttoning his clothes,’ which really does not sound half as difficult as many of his other performances. ‘He feeds himself and can bring both his meat and his broth to his mouth, by holding the fork or spoon in his toes. He cleans his own shoes; can clean the knives, light the fire, and do almost every domestic business as well as any other man. He can make his hen-coops. He is a farmer by occupation; he can milk his cows with his toes, and cut his own hay, bind it up in bundles, and carry it about

the field for his cattle. Last winter he had eight heifers constantly to fodder. The last summer he made all his own hay-ricks. He can do all the business of the hay-field (except mowing) as fast and as well with only his feet, as others can with rakes and forks; he goes to the field and catches his horse; he saddles and bridles him with his feet and toes. If he has a sheep among his flock that ails anything, he can separate it from the rest, drive it into a corner, and catch it when nobody else can; he then examines it, and applies a remedy to it. He is so strong in his teeth that he can lift ten pecks of beans with them; he can throw a great sledge-hammer with his feet as other men can with their hands. In a word, he can do nearly as much without, as other men can with, their hands.'

'He began the world with a hen and chicken; with the profit of these he purchased an ewe. The sale of these procured him a ragged colt and then a better; after this he raised a few sheep, and now occupies a small farm.'

It would be interesting to know how many of these astonishing feats Mr. Walton actually saw Kingston perform. But at any rate we put down his letter with the impression that to be born *with* fingers is a distinct disadvantage.

THE SON OF THE WOLF CHIEF

Once upon a time a town near the North Pacific Ocean suffered greatly from famine and many of the Indians who lived there died of hunger. It was terrible to see them sitting before their doors, too weak and listless to move, and waiting silently and hopelessly for death to come. But there was one boy who behaved quite differently from the rest of the tribe. For some reason or other *he* seemed quite strong on his legs, and all day long he would go into the fields or the woods, with his bow and arrows slung to his back, hoping to bring back a supper for himself and his mother.

One morning when he was out as usual, he found a little animal that looked like a dog. It was such a round, funny little thing that he could not bear to kill it, so he put it under his warm blanket, and carried it home, and as it was very dirty from rolling about in the mud and snow, his mother washed it for him. When it was quite clean, the boy fetched some red paint which his uncle who had died of famine had used for smearing over their faces, and put it on the dog's head and legs so that he might always be able to trace it when they were hunting together.

The boy got up early next morning and took his dog into the woods and the hills. The little beast was very quick and sharp, and it was not long before the two got quite a number of grouse and birds of all sorts; and as soon as they had enough for that day and the next, they returned to the wigwam and invited their neighbours to supper with them.

A short time after, the boy was out on the hills wondering where the dog had gone, for, in spite of the red paint, he was to be seen nowhere. At length he stood still and put his ear to the ground and listened with all his might, and that means a great deal, for Indian ears are much cleverer at hearing than European ones. Then he heard a whine which sounded as if it came from a long way off, so he jumped up at once and walked and walked till he reached a small hollow, where he found that the dog had killed one of the mountain sheep.

'Can it really *be* a dog?' said the boy to himself. 'I don't know; I wish I did. But at any rate, it deserves to be treated like one,' and when the sheep was cooked, the dog—if it was a dog—was given all the fat part.

After this, never a day passed without the boy and the dog bringing home meat, and thanks to them the people began to grow fat again. But if the dog killed many sheep at once, the boy was always careful to give it first the best for itself.

Some weeks later the husband of the boy's sister came to him and said:

'Lend me your dog, it will help me greatly.' So the boy went and brought the dog from the little house he had made for it, and painted its head and its feet, and carried it to his brother-in-law.

'Give it the first thing that is killed as I always do,' observed the boy, but the man answered nothing, only put the dog in his blanket.

Now the brother-in-law was greedy and selfish and wanted to keep everything for himself; so after the dog had killed a whole flock of sheep in the fields, the man threw it a bit of the inside which nobody else would touch, exclaiming rudely:

'Here, take that! It is quite good enough for you.'

But the dog would not touch it either, and ran away to the mountains, yelping loudly.

The man had to bring back all the sheep himself, and it was evening before he reached the village. The first person he saw was the boy who was waiting about for him.

'Where is the dog?' asked he, and the man answered:

'It ran away from me.'

On hearing this the boy put no more questions, but he called his sister and said to her:

'Tell me the truth. What did your husband do to the dog? I did not want to let it go, because I guessed what would happen.'

And the wife answered:

'He threw the inside of a sheep to it, and that is why it ran off.'

When the boy heard this, he felt very sad, and turned to go into the mountains in search of the dog. After walking some time he found the marks of its paws, and smears of red paint on the grass. But all this time the boy never knew that the dog was really the son of the Wolf Chief and had been sent by his father to help him, and he did not guess that from the day that he painted red paint round its face and on its feet a wolf can be told far off by the red on its paws and round its mouth.

The marks led a long, long way, and at length they brought him to a lake, with a town on the opposite side of it, where people seemed to be playing some game, as the noise that they made reached all the way across.

'I must try if I can get over there,' he said, and as he spoke, he noticed a column of smoke coming right up from the ground under his feet, and a door flew open.

'Enter!' cried a voice, so he entered, and discovered that the voice belonged to an old woman, who was called 'Woman-always-wondering.'

'Grandchild, why are you here?' she asked, and he answered:

'I found a young dog who helped me to get food for the people, but it is lost and I am seeking it.'

'Its people live right across there,' replied the woman. 'It is the Wolf Chief's son, and that is his father's town where the noise comes from.'

'How can I get over the lake?' he said to himself, but the old woman guessed what he was thinking and replied:

'My little canoe is just below here.'

'It might turn over with me,' he thought, and again she answered him:

'Take it down to the shore and shake it before you get in, and it will soon become large.

Then stretch yourself in the bottom, and, instead of paddling, wish with all your might to reach the town.'

The boy did as he was told, and by and bye he arrived on the other side of the lake. He shook the canoe a second time, and it shrunk into a mere toy-boat which he put in his pocket, and after that he went and watched some boys who were playing with a thing that was like a rainbow.

'Where is the chief's house?' he asked when he was tired of looking at their game.

'At the other end of the village,' they said, and he walked on till he reached a place where a large fire was burning, with people sitting round it. The chief was there too, and the boy saw his little wolf playing about near his father.

'There is a man here,' exclaimed the Wolf Chief. 'Vanish all of you!' and the wolf-people vanished instantly, all but the little wolf, who ran up to the boy and smelt him and knew him at once. As soon as the Wolf Chief beheld that, he said:

'I am your friend; fear nothing. I sent my son to help you because you were starving, and I am glad you have come in quest of him.' But after a pause, he added:

'Still, I do not think I will let him go back with you; but I will aid you in some other way,' and the boy did not guess that the reason the chief was so pleased to see him was because he had painted the little wolf. Yet, as he glanced at the little beast again, he observed with surprise that it did not look like a wolf any longer, but like a human being.

'Take out the fish-hawk's quill that is hanging on the wall, and if you should meet a bear point the quill straight at it, and it will fly out of your hand. I will also give you this,' and he opened a box and lifted out a second quill stuck in a blanket. 'If you lay this side on a sick person, it will cure him; and if you lay the other side on your enemy, it will kill him. Thus you can grow rich by healing sick people.'

So the boy and the Wolf Chief made friends, and they talked together a long time, and the boy put many questions about things he had seen in the town, which puzzled him.

'What was the toy the children were playing with?' he asked at last.

'That toy belongs to me,' answered the chief. 'If it appears to you in the evening it means bad weather, and if it appears in the morning it means fine weather. Then we know that we can go out on the lake. It is a good toy.'

'But,' continued he, 'you must depart now, and, before you leave eat this, for you have a long journey to make and you will need strength for it;' and he dropped something into the boy's mouth.

And the boy did not guess that he had been absent for two years, and thought it was only two nights.

Then he journeyed back to his own town, not a boy any more, but a man. Near the first house he met a bear and he held the quill straight towards it. Away it flew and hit the bear

right in the heart; so there was good meat for hungry people. Further on, he passed a flock of sheep, and the quill slew them all and he drew it out from the heart of the last one. He cooked part of a sheep for himself and hid the rest where he knew he could find them. After that he entered the town.

It seemed strangely quiet. What had become of all his friends and of the children whom he had left behind him when he left to seek for his dog? He opened the door of a hut and peeped in: three or four bodies were stretched on the floor, their bones showing through their skin, dead of starvation; for after the boy had gone to the mountains there was no one to bring them food. He opened another door, and another and another; everywhere it was the same story. Then he remembered the gift of the Wolf Chief, and he drew the quill out of his blanket and laid one side of it against their bodies, so that they all came to life again, and once more the town was full of noise and gaiety.

‘Now come and hunt with me,’ he said; but he did not show them his quill lest he should lose it as he had lost the dog. And when they beheld a flock of mountain sheep grazing, he let fly the quill so quickly that nobody saw it go, neither did they see him pull out the quill and hide it in his blanket. After that they made a fire and all sat down to dine, and those who were not his friends gave him payment for the meat.

For the rest of his life the man journeyed from place to place, curing the sick and receiving payment from their kinsfolk. But those who had been dead for many years took a long while to get well, and their eyes were always set deep back in their heads, and had a look as if they had seen something.

[*Tlingit Myths*.]

BLIND JACK OF KNARESBOROUGH

This is the story of a blind man who did more, without any eyes at all, than many people can do with two. For numbers of children need really to be *taught* to use their eyes, or they will never see things that are right under their noses; or else they will only see exactly what they are looking for, and nothing besides.

Blind Jack's proper name was John Metcalfe, and he was born in the town of Knaresborough in Yorkshire, in 1717. His parents seem to have been comfortably off—small farmers perhaps, as we are told that Jack learned to ride on his father's horses; and at four years old he was sent to school, exactly as a child of working people would be now. The boy was very quick and had a good memory and his teachers were proud of him, and prophesied that he would be a great scholar, and who knew if some day he might not be Lord Chancellor, or even Archbishop of Canterbury? The Metcalfes quite agreed that nothing was more likely; but a sudden end was put to these dreams when one morning Jack woke with a rash all over his face and chest, and the doctor declared he had got small-pox.

Now in those times, before babies were vaccinated, small-pox was a most terrible disease and very few lived through it without being marked in one way or another. Jack was very ill, but he does not appear to have been pitted like some of the other children who suffered from it, and only his mother observed that when the crisis was over and the boy was getting better every day, and beginning to chatter again, he did not, as was usual with him, make remarks on the things he saw around him or out of the window. Then a dreadful fear shot through her heart. Could it be that he was blind? With great difficulty she controlled her voice and answered the child's questions, but with every hour she understood more clearly that what she dreaded had indeed come to pass. By and bye Jack himself wondered why the curtains always seemed to be drawn in his room and asked his mother to pull them back. She invariably had some good excuse for his remaining in the dark, and little by little the truth dawned on him also. We cannot guess at the poor boy's horror at his fate, nor at his struggles to behave like a man, but as he grew gradually accustomed to his darkness and became stronger, he made up his mind, as other blind people have done, that if he was so unlucky as to have lost his eyes, he would learn to get on just as well without them.

The bare idea of all he would do was exciting. As Jack sat by the fire in the kitchen or lay curled up in the window-seat listening to the horses which went by, he began to make his plans for the future. How fortunate it was that he was able to ride already!—why, most of the boys at school, who were not blind at all, had never been across a horse's back, far less galloped at full speed up and down the street as Jack had loved to do! So he, blind though he was, could do something which they could not, and had the start of them! Now that he could walk about the room without falling down from weakness he must lose no more

time, but try and learn the positions of the chairs and tables and count exactly how many steps there were on the staircase, so that he might soon run up and down them as fast as he did before. The next thing was to trust himself in the street, and find his way about. He was rather shy at first, and felt a little bewildered, but he would not go home till he had gone as far as the baker's shop—up and down, up and down, several times over.

'Well, I can go *there* all right, if mother sends me,' he said to himself, and walked home in triumph to tell his parents.

Having once made a beginning, Jack never let a day pass without learning to do something fresh, till by the time he was nine he could carry messages to any part of Knaresborough as well as another boy. He had a good many friends of his own age, and with them he would go on expeditions into the woods near the town, and even climb trees after birds' eggs. Very quickly the boys discovered that Jack was a better climber than any of them. He was so light, and then he could tell by his sense of touch if a branch was rotten, or whether he might trust himself upon it, and it was not long before it was Jack who was always sent to the top of the tree while the rest remained at the bottom. His mother suffered agonies of fear at first during these hours that the boy was away, but she knew it was no use trying to hinder him, and after a while she ceased to trouble, as Jack never came to harm, and she had too much to do in looking after the younger children to worry about him. It was impossible to keep Jack in the house; if he was not in a tree, he was on the back of a horse or exercising a couple of young hounds that his father had given him; but when, about thirteen, he showed a liking for music, she had him properly taught, in the hope of inducing him to stay at home in the winter evenings.

It was in the summer after this that Blind Jack made friends with some bad boys, whose chief delight consisted of robbing cherry orchards; not so much, if the truth be told, for the sake of the cherries, as for the pleasure of doing what they ought not. One hot night Jack stole quietly to the window of the room which he shared with his little brothers, and swinging himself down through the branches of a tree as lightly as a cat, was over the garden wall in a moment and in the street. Once there he ran quickly to the porch of the parish church, reaching it as the clock struck twelve, and just as the rest of the band, who were waiting for him there, had almost given him up. They set off silently to the orchard and soon had gathered a large basket of ripe cherries, which had been intended by the farmer's wife for the Knaresborough market next day. Enchanted with their booty, the young thieves hurried back in order to eat the cherries comfortably and warmly inside the church. They were in the highest spirits and felt that after their success they were capable of capturing a fort or holding an army at bay. So seizing the big iron ring on the church door which lifted the latch, one of the leaders exclaimed loudly:

'A tankard of ale here!' as if he was entering a tavern. Of course he meant nothing, but from within a voice answered:

'You are at the wrong house.' This so startled the boys that they were struck dumb, hardly believing their ears, till Metcalfe whispered softly:

'Didn't you hear something speak in the church?' This put their own fears into words, and, as one boy, they all turned and fled. When they had put a long distance between themselves and the churchyard they stopped, feeling quite brave again, and began to

discuss the matter and what the voice could have been; but as none of their guesses satisfied them, they determined to go back and try to find out for themselves.

As soon as they were again in the churchyard path, they saw bright lights in the church and at once fancied it was on fire. This idea was delightful to them, as they foresaw all kinds of fun in helping to put it out. But before they even had time to open the west door in the porch, they heard once more the latch being lifted from the inside. All their old terror returned, and they rushed home as fast as they could, the sexton's son even jumping into his mother's bed for protection.

The laugh against him was loudest of all next day, when it was discovered that the supposed fire was only some candles lit by the sexton himself, who was in the church with the grave-digger, opening a vault for a funeral which was to take place early in the morning; and the voice which had so frightened the boys was that of the grave-digger. For some time the young thieves were jeered at by the whole town, and grew to hate the very sight of a cherry, so the adventure had one good result, for they let the orchards alone.

Metcalfe now had to amuse himself in some other way, and as many of his friends used to meet every evening in order to bathe in the pools of the river Nidd, he would not be left behind, and persuaded one of them to teach him to swim and dive. Of course, all those things would have been impossible if he had been the least nervous or frightened, but Blind Jack did not know what fear was of any earthly thing. At least he had thought at the time that the voice and the lights in the church were ghostly, and *anybody* might be afraid of ghostly manifestations. But with the air and the shouts of other boys about him, he was as brave as a lion, and soon could swim farther and dive deeper than any of them.

The Nidd is one of those rivers which easily rise and fall, and it is full of 'holes,' as they are called, where the water swirls and eddies, and whatever is swept over them by the current always stops for a moment and then slowly sinks. In some strange way which was never explained by him, Jack contrived to reach these holes without being drawn into the eddies, and it quickly became a regular trade with him to rescue with the aid of a hooked stick anything which had sunk in the pool. In this way he drew up several pieces of valuable wood, a quantity of wool swept into the river by a sudden flood, and even the body of a drowned man.

Jack was now about fifteen and was famous throughout Knaresborough, which had grown quite proud of him. He had continued to practise his violin, and everybody declared that never were country-dances danced with such spirit as when Jack was the fiddler. So very speedily he got an engagement as one of a band of four musicians to appear at the Assembly Rooms once a fortnight, where a ball was given, and was invited besides to many other places round about. In this very year too, 1732, he was offered the post of fiddler at Harrogate, for the old man who had held it for seventy years, and was now a hundred, could no longer play briskly enough to please the young people. Jack's only assistant was a boy younger than himself, whom he took about everywhere. Perhaps they both rode pillion—that is, one behind the other; for Jack had saved up his earnings and bought a horse, of which he was very fond. On its back he was to be seen at Ripon or

Boroughbridge or many other towns, and when people were tired of giving balls, Metcalfe would run his horse at the small races, of which there are so many in Yorkshire. Here he met with some of the gentlemen who lived in the neighbourhood, and as they all admired the cleverness and courage with which he had triumphed over his blindness, and found him besides an amusing companion, they made friends with him and sometimes invited him to stay in their houses and hunt with them. To Mr. Barlow, of Middleton near York, he once paid a visit of six months, and while there became acquainted with a celebrated musician called Hebdin, who begged him to come and see him, so that they might practise together. Jack accepted the kind offer gladly, and when no hunting was to be had he went to York, and would play for hours in the old house near the walls.

Blind Jack plays his Fiddle at the Assembly Balls.

He had been there one day at the end of his visit to Mr. Barlow, trying over a new piece of music before going home to his parents at Knaresborough, which was a long ride even for him. By this time he could find his way through all the principal streets, and as he was passing the George Inn, the landlord ran out and told him that a gentleman was dining there who wanted to reach Harrogate that night, but that as he was a stranger he must have a guide.

‘You can be as good a guide as anybody,’ added the man, ‘if you are going that way.’

‘Yes, I can,’ answered Metcalfe; ‘but you mustn’t tell him I am blind, or he won’t believe it.’

‘Oh! I’ll take care,’ replied the landlord. ‘Wait here! he will be out in a minute,’ and the stranger was only too thankful to start at once, for it was getting late. He insisted, however, that Jack should be given a cup of wine before they set forth, as the landlord had made some excuse for his refusal to enter the inn.

The gentleman and his guide were passing the corner of Ousegate, when Jack was startled at hearing a shout of ‘There goes Squire Barlow’s Blind Huntsman,’ but he perceived from the manner in which his companion continued the conversation that if the words had reached his ears, they had no meaning for him. They rode steadily on for some distance, Metcalfe carefully placing himself a little in front, so that the gentleman should only see part of his face when he turned to answer his questions. Once or twice he had some fears as to whether he was taking the right road or not, but by long practice he had so sharpened his other senses that the slightest sign was sufficient for him. He could tell by the feeling of the wind or the echo of the horses’ hoofs if they were in the open country, or if a wall ran along one side of the road, and he could detect at once the presence of water. All through that long ride he only made one mistake and that his companion never guessed. He bent down to open the gate, but as it was seven months since he had passed that way he approached it at the wrong side, which he perceived instantly when his hand touched the hinges. However, he did not lose his presence of mind, and quickly backed his horse, exclaiming as he did so:

‘Confound thee! thou always goest to the gate heel instead of the head.’

‘He *does* seem a little awkward,’ observed the gentleman. ‘Let me try: mine is rather good at a gate,’ and as he spoke he rode forward and swung it open.

It was now quite dark, and though of course that made no difference to Metcalfe, his companion had much ado to see his way. However, he followed his guide carefully and at length they found themselves in the streets of Knaresborough.

‘Let us stop and have a bottle of wine,’ said the stranger, for he was tired from being so many hours in the saddle; but Jack told him that the horses were too hot to think of halting, and they pressed on. By and bye as they were passing under an oil lamp hung by a chain across the road, a boy cried out:

‘That’s Blind Jack!’

‘Not he,’ answered another; ‘that fellow is much too dark.’ Jack chuckled to himself as he listened to them, but never turned his head.

Over the bridge they went and into the forest.

‘What is that light I see?’ asked the gentleman when they had gone a little distance. His guide guessed that it must be a will-o’-the-wisp from some swampy ground that lay there, but was careful not to betray himself by saying so lest he should be mistaken.

‘Do you not see two lights?’ he inquired by way of making some answer; ‘one on the right and the other on the left.’

‘No; I can only distinguish one—one on the right,’ replied the stranger.

‘Then that is Harrogate,’ said Jack. ‘We shall soon be there now,’ and in a quarter of an hour they drew rein in the courtyard of the Granby inn. Early hours were kept in those days and the ostler had gone to bed, so Jack, who knew the place well, stabled the horses himself after rubbing them down. He then went into the inn where his companion was seated by the fire, with a pewter pot of hot spiced wine beside him.

‘You must be as cold and tired as I am,’ observed the gentleman; ‘it is your turn to have a drink.’ To his surprise, Metcalfe, who happened to be thinking of something else, stretched out his hand at first very wide of the mark, a fact which did not escape the stranger’s eye, though Jack at once recollected himself, and, noting from what direction the voice proceeded, picked up the tankard, took a good draught and left the room.

‘My guide must have drunk a good deal, landlord, since we arrived,’ then said the gentleman.

‘And what makes you think so, sir?’ asked the landlord.

‘Well, his eyes look so odd, and he fumbled about so after the tankard.’

‘Yes, sir? Why, don’t you know he is blind?’

‘Blind!’ echoed the stranger; ‘impossible!’

‘Yes, sir, as blind as a bat.’

‘Blind!’ repeated the gentleman again. ‘Call him back. I should like to speak to him,’ and as Jack entered he exclaimed:

‘My friend, is it really true that you are blind?’

‘It is indeed, sir. I lost my sight when I was six years old.’

‘Had I known that, I would not have ventured with you for a hundred pounds.’

‘And I, sir, would not have lost my way for a thousand,’ answered Jack with a laugh, as he pocketed the two guineas held out to him.

Metcalfe, as we know, was fond of races, like a true Yorkshire-man, and he often ran his horse for private bets. On one occasion he laid a wager with some other young men that he would win what would now be called a point-to-point race—that is, posts were set up at different places for the distance of a mile, and the competitors were bound to pass each of them. The whole course was three miles, and they were obliged to go round it three times. Every man was to ride his own horse, and as it seemed almost impossible that even Blind Jack should be able to stick to the course, the odds were heavy against him.

On the morning of the race Jack might have been seen by anyone who had got up early enough, going round to the four inns that Knaresborough contained, and coming away from each with a big dinner-bell in his hand, and numbers of little ones in a bag. These he distributed among his friends, and ordered them to stand out at every post, and at a certain

number of yards in between. As the bells were to be rung in turn, he had a perfect chain of sound to guide him the entire distance. With the help of this, he felt he had no reason to fear any rivals, and, as his horse was both fast and steady, he easily won the race.

When the cheers of the crowd had somewhat died down, a gentleman named Skelton came up to Metcalfe and offered to make a bet with him that he would not gallop a certain horse of his for a hundred and fifty yards, and pull him up within two hundred. The horse chosen was noted for having a very hard mouth, and to be ready to bolt at every opportunity.

Metcalfe never refused a wager and accepted this one eagerly, but stipulated that he should be allowed to select his own ground.

‘Very well,’ answered Skelton; ‘but remember there must be no hedges or walls. Do you agree to that?’

‘I agree,’ said Metcalfe; ‘see that the stakes are deposited, and I will let you know later where the wager shall come off.’

The day was fixed for the following Saturday, and the night before, Skelton received a message bidding him to be at the old Spa not far from Harrogate at eleven o’clock. He arrived punctually, but found Metcalfe and his horse there before him. Now Blind Jack knew what Skelton did not, that about a hundred and fifty yards from the old Spa there was a very large bog, in which three weeks earlier a traveller had got stuck in the dark, and would inevitably have been sucked down had not Jack heard his cries and managed to rescue him. The few minutes before the appearance of Skelton had been used by the cunning youth to place a friend near the entrance of the bog, with orders to stand with his back to the wind and sing a song at the top of his voice. This was to be Blind Jack’s guide to the direction he wanted.

‘I am quite ready, you see,’ he cried, as Skelton rode up. ‘Give the word and I will start.’

‘Go!’ said Skelton, and away the horse bounded at the top of his speed straight into the bog, which held him like a vice. Cautiously Metcalfe dismounted and picked his way as well as he was able till he was on firm ground again, when he demanded the money he had won, which was at once handed over to him. He then went back to extricate his horse, but this was no easy matter, for, in his flounderings to get free, the poor beast had only sunk deeper and deeper. However, by the help of two or three men who had been watching the wager, this was at last accomplished, and Jack rode smilingly home, both man and horse covered with dirt up to their necks.

Jack grew up a great deal more quickly than most boys, and by the time he was twenty had fallen very much in love with a girl called Dorothy Benson, who lived at Harrogate. For a long while they only met secretly, as both well knew that the elder Bensons would never allow their daughter to marry a man who was not only poor and blind, but earned his living by fiddling at balls all over the country.

Matters were in this state when Jack, who had not been to Harrogate for seven months, suddenly heard that he had a rival. This was a prosperous shoemaker called Dickinson,

much favoured by Dolly’s parents, and they seemed to have pressed her so hard to accept the man that she consented to have the banns published in church. This news woke up Metcalfe, who, thinking he had won Dolly’s heart, was taking things rather easily, and he at once resolved that Miss Benson should be the wife of no one but himself, and after much consideration he laid his plans.

Now Dickinson, in order to celebrate his marriage, had arranged to give a dinner to two hundred of his workpeople, and this took place on a Saturday in his native parish of Kirkby-Overblow. The wedding was fixed for Monday, and for some reason it was to be at Knaresborough, though the breakfast was to be held at Harrogate.

On the Sunday Blind Jack came to Harrogate and was riding past the hotel of the Royal Oak, when he was startled at the sound of a voice close to him saying:

‘One wants to speak with you.’ He pulled up his horse in surprise, but instantly recognised the voice to be that of a maid of the Bensons. She turned towards the stables, telling him to follow, and there was Mistress Dolly herself, anxious and excited, as he guessed by the tremor of her tone as she said:

‘I knew you would come, so I sent for you.’

‘Well, lass,’ he answered, pretending not to care, though his heart was beating fast; ‘thou’s going to have a merry day to-morrow; am I to be the fiddler?’

‘Thou never shalt fiddle at my wedding,’ replied she.

‘Why—what have I done?’ asked Metcalfe, bent on teasing her; but she only answered darkly that matters might not end as some folks thought they would, and she might wish things done another way. But, though her words might not have seemed very plain to another person, Metcalfe understood.

‘What! Wouldst thou rather have me? Canst thou bear starving?’

‘Yes,’ said she; ‘with thee I can.’

So that was settled, and nothing remained but to arrange when and how Dolly could escape from the house.

‘Thou must put a light in thy window when everyone is asleep to-night,’ said Jack.

‘A light!’ cried Dolly; ‘but what good is that to thee?’

‘Ay, a light; and as for the “good,” leave that to me,’ answered Jack, who had already thought of a friend to help him. ‘And now farewell, lest they should seek for thee.’

That evening he went to a trusty man, who was ostler at the inn of the World’s End, and told him his story.

‘Canst thou borrow thy master’s mare for the night?’ asked Jack anxiously. ‘She is used to carry double, and my horse is not.’

‘Ay, if she is in her stable before morning,’ replied the ostler; and then Jack begged him to be at Raffle’s shop at ten o’clock, and to whistle when he got there by way of a signal.

Ten o’clock found them both at the appointed place, but they had to wait some time before the ostler announced that the promised light was in the window. Leaving both horses tied

up a little way off—for Metcalfe had brought his own—they stole up to the Bensons' house and gave a faint tap at the door. Dolly was expecting Jack and came out, shutting the door after her.

'Not so fast,' said he; 'hast thou not brought any gowns? It would be well, as thou mayst not see thy mother for some time; and where is thy new pillion and cloth that thy father gavest thee?'

'Oh dear!' she replied, 'I had forgotten all that. I have nineteen or twenty gowns, and sure, I cannot bring them all. The pillion is in the other part of the house, but we must have it. As the door is shut, I will wake my sister, but she can keep a silent tongue.' She then threw some gravel at her sister's window, which, like her own, looked out on to the street, and in another moment the door was opened by Mistress Anne.

'I want my new tabby gown and the pillion,' whispered Dolly; and her sister, who knew more about the whole affair than Dolly had any idea of, showed no surprise at her request or at the sight of the two men standing in the shadow.

'The pillion? But it is in the room where Dickinson is lying,' she answered in some dismay.

'Oh, never mind, I will get it!' said Dolly, and, going upstairs, softly entered the room, which was lit by moonlight, and took up the pillion and cloth, which had been placed on a chair.

'Who is that?' asked Dickinson, awakened by her entrance.

'It is only me,' said the girl; 'I've come to fetch the pillion, so that I may brush it and have it ready for to-morrow.'

'That's well thought on,' replied the bridegroom; and, turning on his pillow, he fell asleep again.

Metcalfe smiled as he heard the latch lifted, and took the pillion from her. The ostler put it on his master's mare, then jumping into the saddle, swung Dolly up behind him. Metcalfe mounted his own horse, and they rode away twelve miles to the house of a clergyman whom he had often met on the hunting field. The good man took some time to wake, but at length he came down, and, when he found out what was required of him, hurried into his gown and bands without asking questions, and in a few minutes Dorothy Benson had become Mistress John Metcalfe. This time it was Jack who mounted the landlord's mare, and leaving Dolly at the house of a much-astonished friend five miles from Harrogate, himself placed the borrowed animal in its stall at the World's End. He was only just in time, for the landlord had taken a fancy to start early for Knaresborough, and it would have gone hard with the ostler had the mare not been in its place.

Then Jack went to the Queen's Head, and played his fiddle as he often did, while the guests were breakfasting.

By this time Dolly's elopement had been discovered, but nobody suspected Jack of being concerned in it till a young man, who had been one of the girl's suitors and had noticed more than her family had done, told her brother that he had better go and question Blind Jack. The culprit, when asked, at once told the whole story and declared that he had only

stolen Dolly away from her home because he knew that her parents would never consent to their marriage.

And in this he was right, for they both vowed that if they ever met him they would kill him; and it was not till Dolly had some children to show them, that she was taken into favour again.

BLIND JACK AGAIN

Would you like to hear some more of Blind Jack? This story tells how he joined the army of the Duke of Cumberland, which was sent to fight Prince Charlie and the Highlanders in 1745.

There was great excitement in York when the news came that the Scotch were marching south, and measures were taken to raise 4,000 men for the defence of the country. £90,000 was very soon subscribed in the county, and this large sum was intended to clothe and pay volunteers during the time their services were needed. The gentlemen of Yorkshire held a meeting in the castle to discuss the matter, and Blind Jack's old friend, Thornton, was present. When the meeting was over he rode back to Knaresborough and sent for Metcalfe, whom he asked to help him enlist some soldiers, and further begged him to join the company himself, which Jack, always on the look out for a fresh adventure, was delighted to do. He lost no time in going round to the men he knew in his native town, and was ready to promise anything that he thought was likely to gain him what he wanted. He even assured these carpenters and blacksmiths and ostlers and ploughmen that they would find themselves colonels of regiments, or holding some well-paid post under the king, as soon as the war—or *bustle* as he termed it—was over.

Out of the hundred and forty men who agreed to enlist on receiving five shillings a head from Captain Thornton, sixty-four were chosen and clad in uniforms of blue cloth, with buff facings and waistcoats, made by Leeds tailors. These tailors were not at all anxious to hurry, and declined to work on Sunday, upon which the captain sent an indignant message to ask whether, if their houses caught fire on a Sunday, they would not try to put the flames out? The tailors were more easily convinced than they would have been at present, and, on receiving the message, instantly crossed their legs and took up their needles, and in a very few days the new soldiers were strutting about in their fine clothes or attending drill, while waiting for the swords and muskets which were coming down from the arsenal in the Tower of London. Then the captain invited them all to stay at Thorneville, and every other day a fat ox was killed for their dinners.

At last they were ready, and off they marched to Boroughbridge, where General Wade's army was halting on its way to the north. Very smart the recruits looked, and none was smarter than Blind Jack, who stood six feet two inches in his stockings. In the evenings he always went to the captain's quarters, and played 'Britons, strike home,' and other popular tunes, on his fiddle. The captain's friends, who came over to see what was going on, pressed him to play one thing after another, and, when they took their leave, pulled out their purses and offered the musician a guinea or two. But Jack always refused the money, as he knew that Thornton would not like him to take it.

From Boroughbridge they marched to Newcastle to join General Pulteney. Winter had now set in, and snow often fell heavily, and during a heavy storm the troops started on their march westwards to Hexham. They had a terrible day's journey to their first stopping-place seven miles away, and it sometimes took three or four hours to accomplish one single mile. Although the ground was frozen hard, all sorts of obstacles had to be overcome, and ditches filled up, so that the artillery and baggage-waggons might pass

over. When at last a halt was sounded, after fifteen hours' march, the frost was so intense that no tent-pegs could be driven into the earth, and the men were forced to be on the ground without any cover.

After various marches backwards and forwards along the northern line, Thornton's company, now attached to General Hawley's, reached Edinburgh and proceeded to Falkirk, where the Highland army was encamped three miles away. It was very cold and the wind blew the rain straight in the faces of the English, and also wetted their powder, so that their guns were quite useless. The general, observing this, ordered the troops to fall back on Linlithgow, which afforded more shelter, and as soon as the town was reached many of the tired men entered the houses to get their wet clothes dried, or borrow fresh ones, little thinking that the Highlanders were close upon them. A large number of English prisoners were taken in the sudden surprise of the attack, and among them twenty of Thornton's men. The captain himself was just leaving the house in which he had taken refuge, when he heard the bagpipes close to him. Quickly and noiselessly he rushed upstairs, and opening the first door he saw, stood behind it. It was a poor chance of escape, but the only one that offered itself. Luck, however, attended him, for a man merely put his head into the room and exclaimed, 'None of the rascals are here,' and went off to search the rest of the house in the same manner.

As soon as the Highlanders had disappeared down the street, the mistress of the house, who had seen the captain's hurried flight up the staircase, went to him and begged him to hide in a closet at one end of the room, which he gladly did. She next dragged a sort of kitchen dresser in front of the cupboard and piled plates and dishes on it, so that no one would have guessed there was any door behind. Fortunately the closet door did not touch the floor by a couple of inches, so that the woman was able to thrust in food underneath. In his dripping wet clothes and in this cupboard about five feet square, the captain remained for nearly a week, in a room which was constantly full of Highlanders, among them being Prince Charlie's secretary, Murray of Broughton.

All this time Blind Jack was busy searching for his master. He had been present at the battle of Falkirk with the rest of the company, and when the order for retreat was given he found his way to a widow's house a little way from the town, where the captain had left two of his horses. There they were, safe in the stable, and Metcalfe hastily saddled them both. He was leading out the first when some Highlanders came up.

'We must have that beast,' said they.

'You will have nothing of the sort,' answered Metcalfe.

'Shoot him,' said one of the men, and as Metcalfe heard them cock their muskets he exclaimed quickly:

'Why do you want him?'

'For the Prince,' they replied; and Jack, understanding that he must give way, answered:

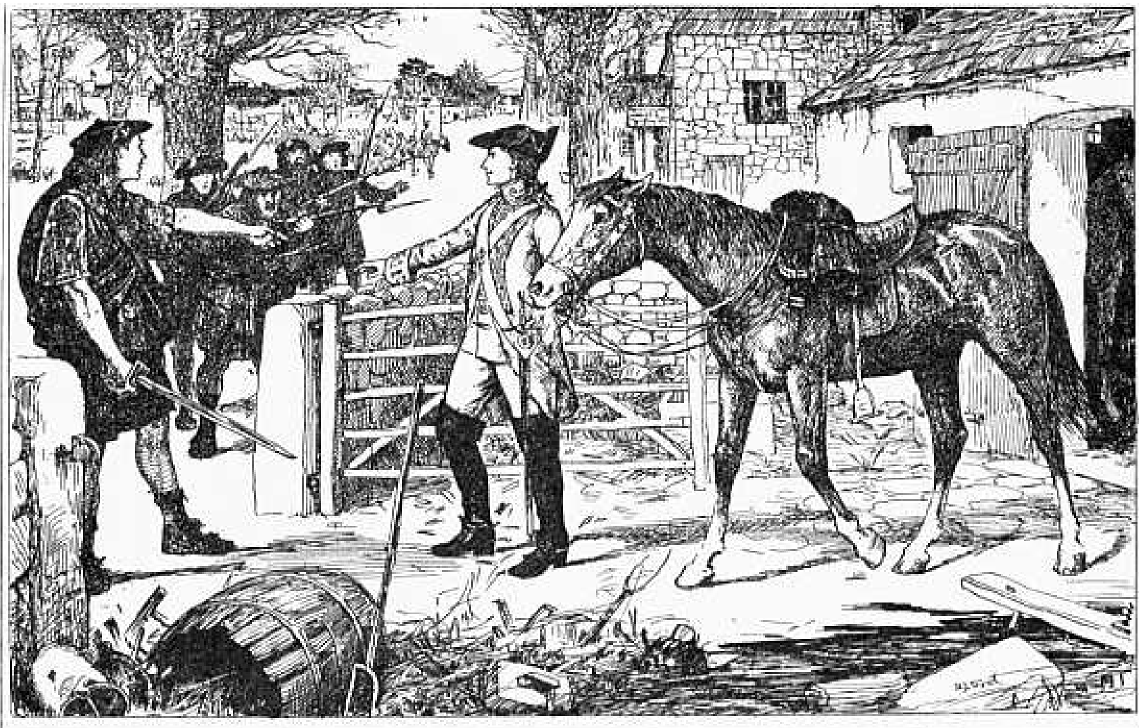
'If it is for the Prince, you must have him of course,' and waited till the sound of their footsteps died away. He then led out the other horse, which they had not noticed, and was about to jump on his back when Thornton's coachman, who had also been seeking his master, came up. They both mounted the horse and rode to join the army, with which

Metcalfe marched on to Linlithgow and afterwards to Edinburgh.

Thornton’s company were one and all very anxious about their captain and could not imagine what had become of him. They knew the names of the men who had been taken prisoners and of those who were killed in battle, but Thornton had disappeared as completely as if the earth had swallowed him up. The matter reached the ears of the superior officers in Edinburgh, and, hearing that Metcalfe was one of the troop, sent for him to give them what information he could, and also because they were curious to see this blind volunteer. But Jack could tell them nothing new; only that, if the captain was alive, he would find him.

Now he happened to have met in Edinburgh a Knaresborough man who had joined Prince Charlie, and this fellow might, Jack thought, be of great help to him in his search. So he sought the man out, and told him that he was tired of serving with the English and felt sure they would be badly beaten, and he would like a place as musician to Prince Charlie. The Knaresborough man at once fell into the trap and replied that an Irish spy was going to join the Prince at Falkirk immediately, and Metcalfe might go with him and ask for an interview.

The first difficulty was with the English sentries in Edinburgh, who refused to let them pass; but Jack overcame this by demanding to be taken before the officer on guard, to whom he explained the real object of his journey.



THE HIGHLANDERS DEMAND THE CAPTAIN'S HORSE FOR THE PRINCE.

THE HIGHLANDERS DEMAND THE CAPTAIN’S HORSE FOR THE PRINCE.

‘Give it up, give it up! my good fellow,’ said the captain; ‘it is certain death to a man with two eyes, and you have none, though you manage to do so well without them.’ But Metcalfe would not listen, so he and the Irishman were allowed to proceed, and after various adventures arrived safely in Falkirk.

All this time, as we have said, Thornton had been caged up in the cupboard in his wet clothes, till he was almost too stiff to stoop to pick up his food when the woman thrust it

under his door. He caught a bad cold besides, and more than once could not restrain his cough, even when he knew the soldiers were in the room. They heard it of course, but as the partitions were very thin, they took for granted it was next door, for the dresser completely hid all trace of an opening.

But by Monday night he felt he could not stay in the closet any longer, and when the woman brought him his provisions for the next day he told her that he would not die there like a rat in a hole, but would come out whatever it cost him.

‘Remain there till to-morrow night,’ she said, ‘and I will contrive some way of escape for you,’ and so the poor captain was forced to pass another twenty-four hours in his most uncomfortable prison. Then, when the soldiers had all gone off to their night duty, the landlady brought a carpenter whom she could trust to take away the dresser. Oh! how thankful the captain was to stretch himself again, and to put on a Highland dress and a black wig which the woman brought him. He had only ten guineas with him, and eight of them he thankfully gave to the landlady while the other two he bestowed on the carpenter. As he was bid, he slung over his shoulder a bag of tools, and hid himself downstairs till it grew light and people were setting out to work, when he and the carpenter started together just four hours before Metcalfe entered Falkirk. On the way to Edinburgh they had a terrible fright, and narrowly escaped falling into the hands of a large body of Highlanders, but at length they reached a house belonging to a friend of the carpenter’s, who lent Thornton a horse, which carried him in safety to Edinburgh.

Metcalfe meanwhile had fared rather badly. His dress, consisting of a plaid waistcoat which he had borrowed, and a blue coat faced with buff, the uniform of his company, had attracted the attention of the Highlanders. He told them that he had been fiddling for the English officers, who had given him the coat (which belonged, he said, to a man killed in the battle) as payment. The men would have been satisfied had not a person chanced to pass who had often seen Jack at Harrogate, and said:

‘You had better not let him go without a search; I don’t like the look of him.’ Accordingly Metcalfe was removed to the guard-room and his clothes examined all over to see if they concealed any letters. The guard even split in two a pack of cards which Metcalfe had in his pocket, imagining that he might have contrived to slip a piece of thin paper between the thick edges of the cardboard then used. The cards, however, had not been employed for this purpose, and after three days’ confinement in a loft Metcalfe was tried by court-martial and acquitted, and given besides permission to go to the Prince. By this time, however, he had somehow discovered that Thornton had escaped from Falkirk, so he was only anxious to return to the British army as fast as he could. The Irish spy was equally desirous of taking letters to Edinburgh to some of the friends of Prince Charlie, who were to be found there, but did not know how to pass the English sentries, a difficulty easily solved by Blind Jack, who assured him that he would tell them he was going to Captain Thornton.

Not far from the English outposts the two travellers met with an officer who knew Metcalfe, and informed him to his great delight that the captain was in Edinburgh, so when the sentries were passed he bade farewell to the Irishman after promising to meet him the next night, and went straight to the captain.

‘You have given me a great deal of trouble,’ was Metcalfe’s greeting. ‘Really, people might manage to come home from market without being fetched.’

‘Well, so I did,’ answered Thornton with a laugh. ‘But what is to be done now, as I have neither clothes nor cash?’

‘Oh, I can get you both!’ replied Metcalfe; ‘some friends I have here have often heard me speak of you, and they will trust you for payment.’ And he was as good as his word, and quickly borrowed thirty pounds, which provided the captain with all the clothes he wanted.

In January 1746 the Duke of Cumberland, Commander-in-Chief of the English army, arrived in Edinburgh, and as Thornton was a great friend of his, the Duke heard all his adventures and the share Blind Jack had taken in them. He then sent for Metcalfe, and being much interested in his story often watched him on the march, and noticed, to his surprise, that, by listening to the drum, Jack was able to keep step with the rest.

The British forces proceeded northwards as far as Aberdeen, where the Duke suddenly determined to give a ball to the ladies and begged that Thornton would allow Metcalfe to play the country dances, as the wind instruments of the German musicians were unsuitable. It must have been rather a strange ball, as up to the last moment it was quite uncertain whether they might not have to fight instead of dance, and the invitations were only sent out at five o’clock for the company to assemble at six. Twenty-five couples were present and kept Metcalfe hard at work till two the next morning; the Duke, then about twenty-five, dancing away with the rest.

The English then turned westwards and defeated the Highlanders at Culloden, near Inverness, after which all British prisoners were set free, and the volunteers returned home.

Captain Thornton and Metcalfe rode back together as far as Knaresborough, where they parted company. Blind Jack’s wife had suffered a great deal of anxiety during the eight months of his absence, for she knew that his love of adventure would thrust him into all kinds of unnecessary dangers. But here he was, none the worse for the hardships he had gone through, and in the best of spirits, but, to Dolly’s great relief, quite ready to stay at home for a bit.

According to his own account—and again we ask ourselves how much we may believe of Metcalfe’s amazing story—there was no end to the different trades he carried on successfully for the rest of his life. He soon grew restless and went to Aberdeen to buy a large supply of stockings, which he sold at a profit among his Yorkshire friends; for a while he became a horse dealer, feeling the animals all over before he made an offer to purchase, so that he knew exactly what condition they were in, and their good and bad points. He next turned smuggler, getting a great deal of excitement out of cheating the Government, and finally took to building bridges and making roads. In 1751 he started a coach between York and Knaresborough, which he drove himself. It ran twice a week in the summer and once in the winter; and as soon as he grew tired of this employment, for he detested being obliged to do things at stated times, he managed with his usual luck to get the business taken off his hands.

We bid farewell to him in 1795 when he was seventy-eight, but still strong and active and

able to walk ten miles in three and a half hours. His friendship with Colonel Thornton was as fast as ever, and he remained a welcome guest in several of the big houses round York and Knaresborough. And if perhaps he was not *quite* so wonderful a person as he thought, and saw some of his deeds through a magnifying glass, there is no doubt that he was a very uncommon man, worthy of all admiration for not allowing his life to be spoilt by his blindness.

THE STORY OF DJUN

Once upon a time a famine broke out among the tribe of the Tlingits, and one of their girls, who was an orphan and had to look after herself, would have fared very badly had she not now and then been given some food by her father's sister. But this did not happen often, for everybody was almost starving, and it was seldom that they had any food for themselves, still less for anyone else.

Now the girl, whose name was Djun, heard some of the women planning to go to the forest and dig roots, and though she wished very much to accompany them, they would not take her.

'You will bring us bad luck,' they said, and struck her fingers when, in despair at being left behind, she grasped the side of the canoe. But though the girl was obliged to loosen her hold from pain, she was so hungry that she would not be beaten off, and at last her father's sister, who was one of the party, persuaded the others to let her go with them. So she jumped in and paddled away to the forest.

All that day the women hunted for roots till they had collected a large pile, and had even caught some salmon in the river as well, and as evening drew on they prepared to encamp for the night, and built a fire to warm them and to cook some of the roots. But the girl, who had wandered away by herself as soon as they had landed, did not return, and the women were angry, and said that if she did not choose to come back, she might stay in the forest for ever. And the next morning, when they started for home, they threw water on the fire so that Djun might not be able to cook her food, if she had any to cook. However, the girl's aunt managed to steal a burning coal which lay on the fire, and, unseen by the rest, threw it into a deserted brush-house where they had slept, and put a piece of dried salmon with it. Just as she had done this she caught sight of the girl hiding behind the brush-house, and went to speak to her; for the other women were too busy packing the food into the boat to notice what she was doing.

'Are you not coming with us?' she asked, and Djun answered:

'No; as they don't want to take me, I had better stay here.'

'Well, I have put a live coal in that brush-house for you and a piece of salmon,' said her aunt, 'so you will have something to eat for a day or two.'

The girl did not leave her hiding-place till the boat was out of sight, and then she made a big fire from the burning coal, and cooked her roots and her salmon; but though they smelt very good, and she was hungry, she did not somehow feel as if she could eat. So she soon got up and went farther into the forest and dug some more roots.

'I shall be almost starving by the evening,' thought she, 'and I will eat them then;' but when evening came she had no more appetite than in the morning, so she curled herself up in a corner and fell asleep, for she was very tired.

She was awakened early next day by a rushing of wings, and, looking out of the door, found a flock of birds sweeping by. But there was nothing very uncommon in that, and she lay down again and slept for several hours longer. Then she got up and walked some distance till she reached a flat plain, where the best roots grew, but the flock of birds had found them out also, and were feeding upon them.

When they saw her they flew away, and she went to a spot covered with dead grass, for she expected that would be a good place to dig in. To her surprise, under the dead grass lay several big canoes filled with oil, dried halibut and dried salmon.

‘How lucky I am!’ she said to herself; ‘it was well indeed that I did not return with the others,’ and she broke off a piece of salmon and tried to eat it, but she could not.

‘What is the matter with me?’ she wondered. ‘I wish my aunt were here,’ and she felt rather frightened. And the next day she grew more frightened still, for she found out that the birds were spirits, and it was they who were preventing her from eating food, so that she might become a great shaman or medicine-man. After a little while her eyes were opened, and she understood many things she had never guessed at, and the spirit-birds she had seen took possession of her, and others came from the woods and the sea, and sang to her.

At first she went two or three times every day to visit the buried canoes and to dig for roots, but she quickly gave that up, for she had nothing with which to sharpen the sticks she used instead of spades; and besides, what was the use of digging for roots if you could not eat them? Meanwhile, in the village the girl’s aunt mourned for her, as she felt sure Djun must by this time be dead of hunger.

‘I am very lonely: I wish some of my old friends would come to see me,’ thought Djun when she had been living by herself for several months, and the next morning a canoe appeared in sight, and in it were seated some people whom she knew. Then Djun was happy indeed, and she bade them follow her to the brush-house, and gave them food out of the canoes; for two or three days they stayed, digging for roots and for anything else they could get, and at the end of the time Djun said to them:

‘It is well that you should go again, but be careful not to take with you any of the food that I have given you. Tell my friends that I am alive, and beg my aunt to come and visit me.’

So the people of the canoe returned to the village, and told such tales of the food they had received from Djun that all the townsfolk hastened to get into their canoes and paddled straight off to the place where she was living. When they drew near enough to see the brush-house, they beheld it surrounded by thousands of birds that seemed to stretch right upwards from the earth to the sky. They also heard the shaman’s voice and the sound of singing, but as soon as they approached closer to the brush-house, the birds flew away.

After that the shaman went out to meet them, and she asked:

‘Where is my aunt? I want her;’ and when her aunt came Djun gave her everything that was stored in one of her buried canoes, and then she said:

‘I should like two of the women to stay with me and help me with my singing,’ and one after another the chief women of the tribe, with their faces newly painted, rose up in the canoes; but she would have none of them, and chose two girls who were orphans like herself, and had been treated very badly by their kinsfolk.

‘The rest can come ashore,’ she said, ‘and camp out here,’ but she took the orphans and her aunt into the brush-house.

Now these high-born women had brought their slaves with them, and Djun took the slaves in exchange for food, and put necklaces and paint and feathers and fine robes upon the orphans. And the whole of the village people stayed with her a long while, and when they got into the canoes again they were fat and strong with all that Djun had given them.

For some time Djun lived quite happily in the brush-house now that she had some companions; then a longing took hold of her to go back to her own village, so she worked magic in order to make the chief of the town fall ill, and the people, who had learnt that she had become a shaman, sent a canoe to fetch her and offered her much payment if she would cure him.

The family of Djun the shaman was one of the noblest in the tribe, but misfortune had overtaken them. One by one they had all died, and when the girl came back to the village nothing remained but the posts of her uncle’s house, while grass had sprouted inside the walls. She beheld these things from the canoe and felt very sad, but she bade the slaves cease paddling, as she wished to land. Then she drew out an eagle’s tail, and, holding it up, blew upon it and waved it backwards and forwards. After she had done this four times, the posts and the grass disappeared, and in their place stood a fine house—finer and larger than the one the chief had lived in.

DJUN’S MAGIC IN THE HOUSE OF THE CHIEF.

‘Bring in whatever the canoe contains,’ she said; and when everything was ready she went into the house, and the two orphan girls went with her.

‘The chief’s daughter is ill as well as her father,’ so Djun heard after she had been back in the village for a few days, and she waited in the house, expecting to be summoned to work a cure. But though they had sent for her while she was living far from them, now that she was amongst them again she looked so like the girl they had known from a child that the people could not believe she could be a *real* shaman, and called in others. However, in spite of the care of these medicine men, both the chief and his daughter became worse and worse, and in despair, their kinsfolk suddenly bethought themselves of Djun. The girl was not in the house at the time that the messenger arrived, but one of the orphans met him, and asked:

‘How much will they pay the shaman if she cures them?’

‘Two slaves,’ was the answer.

‘That is not enough,’ said the child; ‘go back and tell them so.’

And the messenger went back and came again.

'How much will they pay the shaman?' asked the child as she opened the door to him.

'Two slaves and much goods,' answered he.

'That is well; she will come,' said the child, and the messenger returned with her answer.

'We will go together,' Djun said to the orphans, and the three set off at once to the house of the chief. Inside, there was a crowd of people, except for an empty space round the fire where lay the chief and his daughter. The shaman sat down between them and worked all the spells she knew, but they grew no better. Then she rose and walked through the people in the room, and when she had looked at each one she said to the chief:

'The witch that is killing you two is not here.'

As soon as the people heard that, they left the house and brought in those of the villagers who had not come before, for there was not room for a very great number. For the second time Djun went among them and examined them, and then she repeated:

'The witch is not yet here.' But the spirits, which showed her what others could not see, opened her eyes, and after a moment she spoke again.

'The road of the witch is very clear now; it runs straight to this house.' After that she waited in silence, and the people were silent also. At last they heard a bird whistling in the woods at the back, and the shaman said:

'She is coming now; open the door and let her in,' and they flung the door wide, and there flew in a wild canary.

'Go and sit between the two sick persons,' said Djun, and the canary fluttered towards them, making such a noise with her wings that they were frightened and shrank away from her. And the shaman desired a man to tie the bird's wings to her side so that she might be still. Next a rolling sound such as thunder makes a long way off filled the air.

'Here come her children,' cried the shaman. 'Stop all the holes so that they may not enter, for they are very angry.' But though the holes were stopped, there were cracks in the boards, and the birds flew in through the cracks till the house became full of them, and the noise was deafening. They flew round and round among the people, and whosoever they touched received a cut or a bruise. Suddenly—no one knew how—they all vanished, and not a bird was left in the room save the one which was tied.

Hours had passed since the shaman first came to the house, and it was now morning. The canary never ceased making a noise all that time, and at last the shaman said:

'She wants to go to the place where she has put the food and the locks of hair with which she is bewitching the chief and his daughter. Untie her wings and let her do as she will, but

be careful to follow her.’ So they untied her wings, and the canary flew out of the house followed by four men, and she hopped ahead of them the way she had come through the woods.

At length she stopped and began scratching at the roots of some bushes till she laid bare a skull. On the top of the skull some leaves, hair, food, and scraps of clothes were carefully arranged in a pattern. She picked up as many of them as she could carry in her beak and flew with them down to the sea, letting the wind scatter them in different directions. This she did till all had disappeared and the skull likewise, and then she returned to the house with the four men following her, and they found the chief and his daughter quite cured, for as soon as the skull and the other things had touched the sea, they recovered by magic.

‘Do you hear the noise she is making?’ asked the shaman, when the bird had begun to chatter as noisily as before. ‘She wants to go away from here, but not to her home, because the other birds will be ashamed of her. The place she wishes to go to is a town called Close-along-the-beach. Therefore, let a canoe be got ready at once to take her there.’ So the canoe was got ready, and the bird flew into it, and they pushed off from the shore, and paddled till the bird suddenly broke out into the strange speech, which no one could understand but the shaman.

‘This must be the place,’ they said, and paddled in towards the beach, and the canary flew out of the boat and went very fast down to the shore followed by a man who wished to see where she was going, and she stopped at a tree whose roots stuck out above the ground. For this was the bird-town of Close-along-the-beach.

That is how the ancient Indians first heard of witchcraft.

[*Tlingit Myths and Texts*.]

WHAT BECAME OF OWEN PARFITT?

In the early part of the eighteenth century a family named Parfitt were living in a small town in the West of England called Shepton Mallet. We are not told how many children they had, but some probably died young, for the only two we hear about are the eldest daughter Mary and her brother Owen, about fifteen years younger.

Owen was apprenticed by his father to a tailor as soon as he had reached the proper age, and learnt his trade thoroughly. But he hated sitting still sewing all day long, and one morning his stool waited for him in vain, and some hours later a message was brought that he had enlisted under the king's banner. Little was known of him for many years: occasionally a report was carried by some pedlar or old soldier that Owen was serving in this country or in that, but after a while even these rumours ceased, and at length people forgot that such a person as Owen Parfitt had ever existed. His parents were dead; only his sister was left to remember him.

Then suddenly he appeared amongst them, bent and crippled with wounds and rheumatism, and unrecognisable by anyone but Mary. Together they set up house, and Owen again got out the board and the big scissors and the chalk and the wax which his sister had carefully kept, and announced to the town of Shepton Mallet that he was going to become a tailor once more. However, the cottage which the brother and sister had taken proved inconvenient in many ways, and after a time they moved to another, near the high road, with the main street lying at the end of the garden. Here he used to sit in the evening when his work was done, and talk with some of his old friends who would lean over the gate and tell him all the news.

As time went on, Owen's rheumatism grew worse and worse, till at length he was too crippled to move without help, and by and bye he became unable to stir hand or foot. Mary had grown very old also, for her eightieth birthday had long been past, and though no cottage in Shepton Mallet was cleaner than hers, she was very feeble, and Owen looked forward with terror to the day when she would certainly break down. But Mary was not the woman to give in while there was any strength left in her, and when she found that she could not get her brother outside the door by herself, she engaged a girl called Susannah Snook, living about fifty yards away, to come and assist her. Between them they carried him along the passage to a chair placed, if the weather was fine, outside the house door, and there they left him, warmly wrapped up, while his bed was made and his room put tidy.

It was in the afternoon of a June day in 1768 that Owen Parfitt, dressed in the night things which he always wore, with an old greatcoat over his shoulders, took up his usual position in the little garden. No one seems actually to have seen him or spoken with him, but then it was haymaking season, and the fields round the Parfitts' cottage were filled with people, while it is only reasonable to suppose that the turnpike road opposite had many carts and

horsemen passing up and down. Be this as it may, there was the old man taking his airing, ‘plain for all folks to see,’ when Susannah, having made him comfortable, turned and went back to Mary. After the bed had been made and the room put to rights, the girl went home, but she must either have quitted the cottage by a *back* door, or else the helpless old man must still have been sitting where she left him. In any case, in about half an hour the news reached her that Owen had disappeared, and his sister was almost distracted.

Susannah flew back to the cottage as fast as her feet would take her, and found Mary weeping bitterly. The girl at once tried to find out what had happened, but the old woman was so upset that this was not very easy. Bit by bit, however, Susannah discovered that after she had returned home, Mary had gone upstairs for a short time, and on coming down again was struck by the silence.

‘Owen, are you there?’ she cried, but there was no answer. ‘Owen!’ she repeated in a louder voice, but still there was nothing. Then she went to the door and found the chair just as she and Susannah had left it, but with no trace of her brother save the greatcoat which was lying on the back.

‘Did you hear no noise?’ asked the girl, after listening to her story.

‘No; nothing at all. I just came down because I had finished what I had to do upstairs!’ And Susannah added, on telling her tale, ‘the chair, when I looked, was exactly as we had placed it.’

The alarm once given, the neighbours lost no time in making a thorough search of both town and country for some distance round, even of the most unlikely spots. Ponds and wells were dragged, ditches examined, outhouses explored; though *why* anyone should wish to hide a harmless old cripple in any of these places, nobody stopped to ask, still less how it could have been done in broad daylight. But in spite of the thorough nature of the hunt, which did not cease even during a sharp thunderstorm, and went on all that night and the next day, neither then nor later was any trace ever found of Owen Parfitt.

As far as we know, nothing further was done about the matter for nearly fifty years, when some gentlemen happened to hear the story and were interested in it. They sought out all the old people in the town who had known the Parfitts and questioned them as to what had happened. Of course, the worst of this kind of evidence is that no kind of notes had been taken down at the time, and also that the love of astonishing their hearers by wonderful details which never occurred is a great temptation to many. On the whole, however, the witnesses in the inquiry into Owen Parfitt’s disappearance seem to have been more truthful than usual. Susannah Snook, the last person living to see the old man, told her tale as it has been already set down, and her account was closely borne out by that given by another old woman as far as her own knowledge went. Then followed some men, whose clothes had been made by Parfitt as long as he had been able to work, and who had helped in the search for him. One of these declared that Owen was ‘neither a very good nor a very bad man, but was said sometimes to have a very violent temper.’ Yet, even if this was correct, it does not throw much light on the mystery.

The general opinion of the neighbours at the time of the vanishing of Parfitt was that he was carried off by demons, and indeed the whole affair was so strange and without reason that their view was hardly to be wondered at. The discovery of part of some human bones under a wall near Parfitt's cottage gave a new turn to their thoughts, but this happened many years after the disappearance of Owen, and were held, when examined in 1814, to be the bones of a girl supposed to have been murdered. One witness only contradicted Susannah's evidence, and that was Jehoshaphat Stone, who swore Mary Parfitt had assured him that she had come downstairs hastily after hearing a noise, to find her brother gone and the chair displaced. But this fact he did not know of his own knowledge, and Susannah, when asked about the displacing of the chair, declared for the second time that the chair was exactly as she had left it, and that Mary had expressly said she had heard no noise.

One more question remained to be put, and that was if the old man had any money about him which might have led to his kidnapping or murder, though this seems very unlikely. One witness said he had a small pension amounting to about seven pounds a year, but an old woman who was related to the Parfitts 'was quite sure he had nothing of the sort,' and even if he had contrived to save a little during the years when he could still work at his trade, it must soon have gone in the days of his helplessness. At any rate, he would hardly have had it upon him when he was dressed in his night things, without any sort of pocket to put it in.

'But *was* he a *totally* helpless cripple?' inquired Dr. Butler, the future Bishop of Lichfield, to whom the evidence was sent by the gentlemen who had collected it. 'Be very careful, gentlemen, to discover whether he *walked* to his chair on the day of his disappearance, or whether he was capable of walking so much as a few yards; for there seems to have been a rumour that a person of his description was seen wandering that evening near Frome ten or twelve miles distant.'

In accordance with Dr. Butler's wish, a close examination was made into this matter, but none of the witnesses had ever seen Parfitt on his feet or attempting to use them for many years before he vanished. But supposing, as has been sometimes known, that a sort of miracle had been wrought and his powers of walking had come suddenly back, how could he have got from Shepton Mallet to Frome in broad daylight, past cottages and along roads where everyone knew him, without being recognised by a single person on the way?

'I give it up,' as they say about riddles; and Dr. Butler 'gave it up,' too.

BLACKSKIN

In an Indian town on the North Pacific Ocean there lived a chief, whose ambition it was to be stronger than other men and be able to kill the sea-lions down the coast. On the coldest mornings in winter he might be seen running down very early to bathe and the village people followed him into the water. After he had swum and dived till he was quite warm, he would come out and rush up a hill, and, catching hold of a big branch on a particular tree, would try to pull it off from the trunk! Next he would seize another tree and endeavour to twist it in his hands like a rope. This he did to prove to himself that he was daily growing stronger.

Now this chief had a nephew named Blackskin, who besides appearing weak and delicate, was never seen to bathe and seemed terribly frightened when the boys pushed him into the water. Of course, they could not know, when they saw Blackskin sleeping while everyone else was enjoying himself in the sea, that he was merely pretending, and that as soon as *they* were asleep, he rose and went down to the shore by himself and stayed in the sea treading water for so many hours, that he had to float so as to rest his feet. Indeed, he would often remain in till he was chilled to the bone, and then he damped the ashes of his fire in order to make them steam, and put his sleeping-mat on top. The villagers, who only beheld him in bed, thought him a dirty fellow; but in reality he was cleaner than any of them, and was never known to lie or to steal. If they laughed at him for his laziness or his cowardice, he took no notice, though he was strong enough to have picked them up with one hand, and thrown them over the cliffs; and when, as often happened, they begged him, for a joke, to bring them in a large log for their fire, he was careful to make a great fuss and to raise it very slowly, as if it was very hard to lift.

‘A lazy fellow like that does not deserve any food,’ said they, and so poor Blackskin seldom had enough to eat.

Things went on like this for some time, and Blackskin bathed constantly unknown to anyone till one night when he heard a whistle.

‘Someone has seen me,’ he thought to himself, ‘well, if so, I may as well come out,’ and he walked up the beach in the direction of the sound till he reached a short man dressed in a bear-skin. To his surprise, the man caught hold of him, picked him up, and flung him down on the sand.

‘I am Strength,’ said he, ‘and I am going to help you. But tell no one that you have seen me, for as yet you are not strong enough to do that which you wish to do.’

These words made Blackskin very happy, but he was quieter than ever, and the boys and villagers counted him a poor-spirited creature, and did not mind what tricks they played on him, even though he *did* belong to the family of the chief. They ordered him about just as if he had been a captive taken in war, and he bore it quite meekly, and when the little boys wrestled with him he always let them win the match.

‘Fancy a great, big man being thrown by a child!’ cried those who looked.

Yet, in spite of all this, Blackskin was contented, for after a few more weeks of bathing, he felt there was nothing that he could not do quite easily. Then one night he heard the whistle again, and on the shore stood the same man, who signed to him to come out of the water.

‘Wrestle with me,’ said the man, and as soon as they had seized each other, he added:

‘Now you have strength at last and do not need to go into the sea. Do you see that tree? Try and pull out that big branch.’ Blackskin ran over to the tree, and pulled out the branch with ease, and even put it back again, which was harder.

‘Very good,’ said the man, ‘Next, twist that other tree right down to its roots,’ and Blackskin did that also, and afterwards untwisted it so that it seemed just as before.

I AM STRENGTH SAID HE, & I AM GOING TO HELP YOU.

He had hardly got to bed, when the people began to run down to the sea, for it was their bathing hour. And the boys, as they passed, came in and pulled Blackskin's hair, and cried:

'Come and bathe with us,' but as usual he answered nothing. After they all returned from bathing, the chief went up to the tree and pulled out the branch, while the people shouted for joy that at last he was strong enough to do what he had sought to do for so long.

And Blackskin lay in bed and listened. Next, the chief found he was able to twist the other tree, and they shouted again, and the chief felt very proud and thought himself a great man. By and bye they came again to Blackskin and laid hold of his feet to drag him from his bed, laughing and saying as they did so:

'Your chief has pulled out that branch and twisted that tree. Why couldn't you?'

'To-morrow we will hunt the sea-lions,' said the young men to each other. And one of them added:

'I wonder which part of the canoe that great strong Blackskin will sleep in.'

'Why, in the bow, of course,' answered a boy, 'then he can land first and tear the sea-lions in two before any of us,' and they all laughed again. But Blackskin, though he heard, took no notice, as was his custom.

All that day the people visited the tree to look at the branch which the chief had pulled out, and in choosing the strongest men among them who had bathed with him in the sea, to hunt the sea-lions. The store of meat they had in the town was nearly exhausted, and it was time they collected more; but the island on which the animals lived was very slippery, and it was not easy for the men to climb over the rocks.

That night Blackskin took one more bath and then he went to his uncle's wife, who never made fun of him like the rest, and said:

'Will you give me a clean shirt and something for my hair?'

'Have you been bidden to the hunt?' asked the wife, and Blackskin made reply:

'No; I have not been bidden, but I am going.' So she got ready some food and tied it up in a small package for him, and gave him the clean shirt and what he wanted for his hair.

He was the last to reach the canoe, and the men who were seated in it cried when they beheld him:

'Don't let him come! Don't let him come!' But Blackskin was determined to get in, and seized the canoe as they were pushing it off. In vain they struck his fingers to force him to let go; and to their amazement he easily dragged back the canoe, till it was near enough for him to jump in. Finding they could not keep him out, the men began to speak rudely to him, till the chief stopped them.

'Let him alone,' he said; 'he can bale out the water if it should come in;' so Blackskin sat in the seat of the man that bales, wondering within himself if his uncle had suspected anything when he had pulled back the canoe with the men in it. But as the chief said

nothing, Blackskin supposed he had been thinking of something else at the time.

When they were close to the island, the chief waited till the canoe was lifted by a wave, and then he leaped on shore. He seized one sea-lion and killed it, and managed to seat himself on the back of another; but the sea-lion gave a sudden spring and threw the chief high into the air, and he fell down heavily striking his head against a rock, so that he died at once.

Blackskin had seen it all, and was sorry. He opened his bundle of clothes and put on his shirt and his hair ornament, while the rest stood round watching.

‘I am the man who pulled out that branch and twisted that tree,’ he said, ‘and now, bring the canoe closer in!’ As he spoke he walked the length of it upon the seats, which broke under him, so that those who were sitting on them were thrown to the bottom. Very frightened they all were when they heard the crash, lest he should revenge himself on them for the way they had treated him. But he did not even look at them, only jumped ashore as his uncle had done, and climbed straight up the tall cliff, hitting some sea-lions on the head as he passed. When he reached the big one which had killed his uncle, he slew that also, and carried them all to the shore, piling them up in the canoe.

HOW THE CHIEF’S DEATH WAS AVENGED.

There was enough meat to last them many months, and Blackskin was still piling, when suddenly the men in the canoe pushed off, and paddled home again, and this was because of their dread of Blackskin. They made the canoe fast and told the people of the town that it was Blackskin who pulled out the branch and twisted the tree, and that for very fear they had left him on the island of the sea-lions.

'Why did you do that?' asked the people. 'Trouble may come of it.'

So Blackskin found himself alone on the island, and as there was nothing to make a fire with, he rolled himself, head and all in his blanket, and went to sleep. After a time he was wakened by a noise which sounded like the beating of sticks, and someone called out:

'I have come after you.' He sat up and looked round, but only saw a black duck swimming towards him.

'I have seen you already,' said he, and the black duck answered:

'I was bidden to fetch you. Get on my back and be sure to keep your eyes tight shut till I tell you to open them.' And Blackskin kept his eyes tight shut till the duck called out:

'Now you may open them,' and he opened them and found that he was in a fine house, though he did not guess it was the house of the sea-lions.

Of course, the people of the town knew nothing of the black duck, and they mourned for the chief and for Blackskin, who had been left to perish on the island, and the chief's wife mourned most of all.

'Why did you do it?' she asked many times, and the townspeople repeated,'Why did you do it? A strong man like that is scarce.'

Then the chief's wife begged some of the young men to cross to the island and bring back her husband's body; and this they did at last, but they could not find Blackskin's.

'Where can he be?' they said. 'Can the tide have taken him, or a wild beast have eaten him? We must consult the wise man.'

And the wise man told them that Blackskin was not dead, but would come back again some day; and this troubled them more than ever.

All this time Blackskin was quite happy in the house of the sea-lions. He had grown so used to them that they seemed to him quite like human beings, though when he thought about it, he knew of course they were not. One day he heard a young sea-lion crying with pain, and his people could not tell what was the matter. Then Blackskin came and examined him, and declared that he had a barbed spear-point sticking in his side.

'This wise medicine man has found out why he cries,' said one; and Blackskin answered:

'I am not a medicine man, but all the same I can take out that spear-head!' And after it was

out, he washed the place with warm water.

The young sea-lion was very grateful, and as he belonged to a powerful tribe they wished to reward Blackskin for his kindness, and said to him:

'Anything that belongs to us, you may have if you will.'

'Give me, then,' answered Blackskin, 'that box that hangs overhead.' Now the box was a magic box which could bring the wind out of whichever quarter you wanted it, and this was what happened. The sea-lions pushed the box up and down the surface of the sea, and whistled, and called to the wind as you would call to a dog, saying:

'Come to this box! Come to this box!'

They were sad at parting with it, and would have wished him to ask for anything else, but they would not break their word and showed Blackskin how to get into it, and bade him on no account to take it near whatever was unclean.

Then they said farewell to each other, and Blackskin packed himself carefully into the box (which was rather small for a tall man), and in a minute he was blown far out to sea.

'West wind! West wind! Come to this box,' he cried, and the west wind came, and blew and blew, till it blew him to the shore, not far from his own town. And when he saw where he was, he got out and shook himself and stretched his arms and legs, and hid the box away in the branches of a tree. After that he walked home.

The first person he saw was his uncle's wife, who welcomed him gladly, for next to the chief she loved Blackskin better than anybody. He then sent a messenger to beg all the townspeople to assemble together, and they obeyed; but those who had been cruel to him came unwillingly, for they feared his wrath always, and hoped he had disappeared for ever. And when they lifted their glance and beheld him strong and tall and able to force men to do his will, even though they liked it little, they trembled more than before for the doom he might pronounce on them. As for Blackskin, his eyes shone with an angry light; but he said to himself:

'It is my own fault. If I had not let them do as they like, they would never have dared to treat me in that way. It is not just to punish them: I will forgive them.' But before he had time to tell them so, the men who had left him on the island had run away in terror, and hid themselves in the woods; thus they were not present at the assembling of the people, nor heard of the welcome given him by many. Then Blackskin looked round him, and spoke these words, and some who listened to him hung their heads with shame:

'You know of yourselves what cruelty you showed me, and you do well to be ashamed of it; and those who are cruel to people because they think they are weaker than themselves will always have reason to feel shame. Remember this, and do not make fun of poor people any more, as you did in the days when my uncle was chief.'

This is what Blackskin said.

[*Tlingit Myths and Texts*, *recorded by John R. Swanton.*]

THE PETS OF AURORE DUPIN

During the years in which Napoleon and his armies were fighting in Spain, in Germany, and in Russia, a little girl might be seen running wild in the province of Berry, which is almost in the very centre of France. In those days if you had asked her name she would have answered that it was ‘Aurore Dupin’; but by and bye she took another, which by her books she made famous—nearly as famous, indeed, in its own way as that of her great ancestor, the general Count Maurice de Saxe.

But it is not the celebrated writer who called herself ‘George Sand’ with whom we have to do now, but the child Aurore Dupin, and her friends the birds and beasts, dwellers like herself in the bare and desolate plains that surrounded her grandmother’s château of Nohant. Maurice Dupin, father of Aurore, was a soldier like his grandfather, Maurice de Saxe; but her mother was the daughter of a bird-seller, who, curiously enough, lived in the ‘Street of the Birds’ (Quai des Oiseaux) in Paris. To this fact Aurore always declared that she owed her powers of fascination over the chaffinches, robins, or starlings that would sit on her shoulders or perch on her hands as she walked with her mother in the garden. And far from being frightened at the presence of a grown-up person, the birds often seemed to prefer Madame Maurice Dupin to Aurore herself.

Aurore became very learned about birds and their ways, considering them far cleverer than men or animals, and endowed with finer qualities than either. Warblers she held superior to any other small bird, and says that at fifteen days a warbler is as old in the feathered world as a child of ten is in that which speaks instead of chirping. When she was a little girl at Nohant, she brought up by hand two baby warblers of different sorts and different nests.

The one with a yellow breast she named Jonquil; while the other, who had a grey waistcoat, was called Agatha. Jonquil was as much as a fortnight older than Agatha, and when under the care of Aurore she was a slim, gentle young creature, inclined to be thin, and with scarcely enough feathers to cover her skin, and not yet able to fly with certainty from one branch to another, or even to feed herself. This Aurore knew was her own fault, because if Jonquil had remained at home she would have learned these things far earlier, for bird-mothers are much better teachers than *our* mothers, and insist that their children shall find out how to get on by themselves.

Agatha was a most tiresome child. She would never be quiet for a moment, but was always hopping about, crying out and tormenting Jonquil, who was beginning to wonder at all she saw around her, and would sit thinking with one claw drawn up under her wing, her eyes half shut, and her head sunk between her shoulders. But Agatha, who never thought at all, did not see why anybody else should do so either, and would peck at Jonquil’s legs and wings in order to attract attention, unless Aurore happened to be in the room and glance at her. Then Agatha would dance up and down the branch uttering plaintive cries, till some bread or biscuit was given to her. For Agatha was always hungry, or always greedy; you did not quite know which.

One morning Aurore was absorbed in writing a story, and her two little friends were

seated on a green branch some distance away. It was rather cold, and Agatha, whose feathers still only half covered her, was cuddling for warmth against Jonquil. They had actually been quiet for half an hour—a very rare occurrence—but at length they made up their minds it must be time for dinner, and if Aurore did not know it, she must be told.

So Jonquil hopped on to the back of a chair and from that to the table, and finally planted her claws upon the writing paper, making a great mess of the words; while Agatha, who was afraid to leave the branch by herself, flapped her wings and opened her beak, screaming with hunger.

Aurore was just in the middle of the great scene in her story, where the hero and heroine had found out the wicked uncle, and fond though she was of Jonquil, she felt for the first time very much provoked by her behaviour. She pointed out to her that by now she really was old enough to feed herself, and that close by was an excellent pasty in a pretty saucer, only she was too lazy to eat it, and expected her mistress to put it in her mouth. Jonquil was not accustomed to be scolded, and did not like it, and to show her displeasure hopped sulkily back to her branch. Agatha, however, had no mind to go without her dinner, and, turning to Jonquil, insisted that she should return at once and help her to that delicious dish. And she was so eloquent in her pleading that Jonquil seemed really moved, though she hesitated as to whether she should do as Agatha desired, or if she should keep her dignity and remain on her branch.

Of course, Aurore pretended to see nothing of all this, although in reality she was watching eagerly under her eyelids how it would end.

Suddenly there was a flutter in the air, and Jonquil stood on the edge of the saucer. She opened her mouth and chirped, expecting the food to fly into her beak; but as it did nothing of the sort, she stooped down and pecked it. To the surprise of her mistress, instead of swallowing the morsel herself, she flew back to the branch and gave it to Agatha.

From that day Jonquil took as much care of Agatha as if she had been her own child. She saw that her feathers were kept in order, taught her very soon to feed herself, and steadied her in her first nights from the branch. Agatha proved quicker and cleverer than her mistress expected, and in a month's time she and Jonquil had made a home for themselves amongst the big trees in the garden, from which they would often fly down to see their old friends at dinner in the garden, and to share their dessert.

All through her life Aurore and the birds around were close friends; others besides Jonquil and Agatha would come when she called them, not because they knew their names, but because they recognised the sound of her voice. In later years she had a splendid hawk whom everyone else was afraid of, but his mistress would trust him to perch on her baby's cot, and snap gently at any flies which settled on the child's face without waking him. Unluckily this charming gentleman was not always nice to people whom he did not like, and at last he was obliged to be placed in a strong cage, from which he easily escaped the next day after breaking the bars.

Maurice Dupin, the father of Aurore, was aide-de-camp to General Murat, afterwards King of Naples and Napoleon's brother-in-law. In April 1808, long before the time of Jonquil and Agatha, when the general was ordered to Madrid, the Dupins followed him, and they all lived for a time in a splendid palace belonging to the hated Spanish minister, known as the 'Prince of Peace,' who like his master the king, was now a captive in France. Here Aurore was very happy. The rooms were large, the passages long, and you never knew *what* kind of delightful beast you might not meet with in one or the other. Perhaps, on the whole, it was *most* likely that you would come across a rabbit, as there were so many of them that they came and went without the slightest attention from anyone. A beautiful white bunny, with eyes as red as rubies, at once bade Aurore welcome. He had established himself in the corner of her bedroom behind the looking-glass, and would come out from there to play games on the polished floor. When they were both tired, the little girl—Aurore was then about four—would throw herself into a chair, and the white rabbit would jump into her lap, and lie quietly there for hours, while Aurore made up all kinds of interesting stories to amuse him.

Besides the white rabbit, Aurore greatly admired General Murat (especially when he wore his uniform) and was quite convinced he was a fairy prince. Her mother made her a uniform too, not like the general's, of course, but an exact copy of her father's. It consisted of a white cashmere vest with sleeves fastened by gold buttons, over which was a loose pelisse, trimmed with black fur, while the breeches were of yellow cashmere embroidered with gold. The boots of red morocco had spurs attached; at her side hung a sabre and round her waist was a sash of crimson silk cords. In this guise Aurore was presented by Murat to his friends, but though she was intensely proud of her uniform, the little aide-de-camp found the fur and the gold very hot and heavy, and was always thankful to change it for the black silk dress and black mantilla worn by Spanish children. One does not know in which costume she must have looked most strange.

Murat, who was a good-natured man, grew very fond of the child, and one evening when he returned from hunting he went up to the rooms in the palace occupied by the Dupins bearing in his arms a tiny fawn. Aurore was sound asleep, for it was nearly midnight, but, followed by her father and mother, the general entered the room and laid the fawn beside her on the pillow. The child half-opened her eyes, and seeing the little head close to her face, put her arm round its neck and dozed off again. The next morning when she woke up, she found Murat standing by her bed, for M. Dupin had told him what a pretty picture the two made, and he wished to see it. The poor little creature—probably not more than a few days old—had been chased by dogs the previous evening, and though it had escaped unhurt, which was a marvel, was absolutely worn out, and had settled itself comfortably to sleep like a kitten. It lay curled up on Aurore's chest, with its head on the pillow and her arms still remained round its neck. At the sound of voices she awoke, and rubbed her cheek against the nose of her bedfellow, who, feeling warm and comfortable and sure of a friend, licked her hands gratefully. But the little thing pined for its mother, and though Aurore did her very best to replace her, it was too late, and early one morning Madame Dupin found the fawn quite dead under the pile of coverings Aurore had spread over it. She dared not tell the child what had happened, so she said it had run away in the night,

and was now quite happy with its family in the woods. All of which Aurore believed.

After a few months spent in Spain, the Dupins returned to Nohant at the end of August, exhausted by the hardships they had undergone and their terrible journey. For a few days they had peace and rest; then the little blind baby died, and, at his mother's express wish, was buried by his father secretly under a pear-tree in the garden of Nohant. Nine days later Maurice Dupin mounted a hard-mouthed horse named Leopardo, and rode off to dine with some friends in the country. On his return Leopardo stumbled in the darkness over a heap of stones on one side of the road, and threw his master.

Besides the white Rabbit Aurore greatly admired General Murat.

'Weber! Come quickly! I am dying,' Maurice called to his groom, and it was true. His back was broken; and though help was speedily got and he was taken to an inn near by, there was no hope from the first, and he spoke no more. For the second time in her life, his mother put her feet on the ground, and *walked* to meet him as they carried him back to Nohant. The other occasion was when she awaited him on the road at Passy, after his release from prison.

The blow was a dreadful one, but the elder Madame Dupin was a woman of strong and

silent courage, and tried to take up her life as usual. She wished to adopt Aurore entirely, and leave Madame Maurice to take care of another daughter named Caroline, whom she had had by a former husband. But Madame Maurice could not bear to part from her younger child, and as Caroline was at this time in a convent there was no need to decide the matter at present. In this manner two or three years slipped past, and Aurore grew strong and healthy in the open air, playing with any children who came in her way, or, better still, with any animals she could get hold of.

Among her particular friends at Nohant was a donkey—the best donkey in the world. Of course, he might have been obstinate and fond of kicking in his youth, like some other donkeys; but now he was old, very old indeed, and was a model of good behaviour.

His walk was slow and stately, and, owing to the respect due to his age and his long service in the house of Madame Dupin, no one either scolded or corrected him. Every day Aurore and Ursule, the little girl who was her companion, were placed in panniers on his back, and made what seemed to them long journeys through the world. On their return home he was unharnessed, and left to wander where he wished, for nobody ever dreamed of interfering with him. He might have been met in the village, in the fields, or in the garden, but always conducting himself as an elderly gentleman should. Now and then the fancy took him to walk in at Madame Dupin's front door, from which he would enter the dining-room or even the lady's private apartments. One day she found him installed in her dressing-room, sniffing curiously at a box of oris powder. As the doors were only fastened by a latch after the old custom, he could easily open them, and could find his way all over the ground floor, which he generally explored in search of Madame Dupin, for he knew quite well she would be sure to have something nice for him in her pocket. As to being laughed at for his odd habits, he was quite indifferent to *that*, and listened to the jokes made about him with the air of a philosopher.

One hot night in summer he could not sleep, and a wandering fit seized him. He passed through a door which had been left open, mounted six or eight steps, crossed the hall and the kitchen and arrived at Madame Dupin's bedroom. He tried as usual to lift the latch, but as a bolt had been put on the inside, he could not get in. He then began to scratch with his hoofs, but Madame Dupin only thought that it was a thief, cutting through the door, and rang for her maid violently. The maid, fearing that her mistress had been taken ill, did not wait even to obtain a light, but ran along the passage as fast as she could, falling right over the donkey. The maid set up piercing cries; the donkey uttered loud hee-haws, and Madame Dupin jumped hastily out of bed to see what in the world *could* be happening. It took a good deal to move her stately composure, but on that occasion she really did allow herself to smile, if only the maid and the donkey had not been too frightened to notice it. But when Aurore heard the story next morning, she laughed more than she had ever done in her life.

So good-bye to her for the present. When we next hear of her, she will be busy with lessons.

THE TRIALS OF M. DESCHARTRES

For many years Aurore Dupin spent her life between Berry and Paris, travelling in a coach drawn by six strong horses, till lack of money obliged them to sell the big and heavy 'Berlin,' and go in a sort of gig which could only hold two people, with a child between them. Of course, the journey took some days, and Aurore, sitting between her mother and her nurse, was thinking all the way of the forests they would have to pass through, and how, on their way to Paris, she had overheard her grandmother telling her maid that she remembered well when the Forest of Orleans was the haunt of robbers, who stopped the passers-by and stripped them of everything that was valuable. If the thieves were caught, they were hung on the trees along the road, to prevent others from following in their footsteps, though, to judge from the numbers of the bodies seen by Madame Dupin, the warning had no effect whatever.

Aurore was thought to be asleep when Madame Dupin told this gloomy tale, but it made a deep impression on her mind, and she never quite forgot it, even amongst the wonders of Paris. So when they started for Nohant she trembled at the sight of every wood, and only breathed freely when they came out safely on the other side. What a comfort it was to arrive safely at the town of Châteauroux, and know that you were only nine miles from home!

They had dinner with an old friend, who insisted on showing them every fruit and flower in his garden, so that it was getting dusk when they climbed into the only sort of carriage to be hired in the place, a kind of springless cart drawn by a horse whose bones could be counted. The coachman was a boy of twelve or thirteen, new to that part of the world and with no idea at all how to make his way in the dark, through a lonely trackless waste, scattered over with pools of water and long heather. For miles round there was only one cottage and that belonged to a gardener.

For five hours the cart rocked and floundered as the horse found itself knee-deep in gorse or picking its way through a marsh, and every instant Aurore—and her mother also—expected a robber to spring up out of the darkness and seize them. They need not have been afraid; it was not worth any robber's while to waste his time in that barren district; but there was a great risk of their being upset. This did at length happen, and about midnight they suddenly found themselves in a deep sandy hole out of which their horse was unable to drag them. The boy soon understood this, and, unharnessing the beast, jumped on his back and, wishing them gaily good-night, disappeared in the darkness, quite unmoved by the prayers of Madame Maurice Dupin, the threats of Rose, or the sobs of Aurore.

For a new terror had taken hold of the child. A strange hoarse noise had burst out all round them, unlike anything she had ever heard.

'It is all right; it is only the frogs croaking,' said Rose; but Aurore knew much better. How absurd to talk of frogs when everyone could guess the voices were those of gnomes or ill-natured water-sprites, irritated at having their solitude disturbed, and Aurore sobbed on, and clung to her mother.

It was only when Rose flung stones into the water that the croaking stopped, and Aurore was persuaded to go to sleep in the cart. Her mother had decided that she must make the best of it, as they could not get on till morning, and was talking cheerfully to Rose, when about two o'clock they suddenly beheld a light moving jerkily about, some distance off. Rose declared it was the moon rising, Mme. Maurice that it was a meteor, but it soon became plain that it was coming in their direction. The boy was not so faithless as he seemed. He had ridden in search of the gardener's cottage of which he had heard, and the good man, who was used to these accidents, had brought his sons, his horses, and a long torch dipped in oil to the help of the travellers. By their aid, the cart was soon out of the hole and two stout farm-horses harnessed to it, and as it was too late to proceed to Nohant, the hungry and tired travellers were taken back to the cottage, and given a good supper and warm beds, in which they slept till morning, in spite of the noise made by cocks and children.

The next day at twelve they reached Nohant.

It is never possible to forget that Aurore's childhood was streaked through and through with Napoleon, though she does not write down her recollections till three kings had succeeded him on the throne of France. Still, he more or less pervades her book just as he pervaded the hearts of the people, and when she was fifteen one of his generals wanted to marry her. Which? How much we should like to know! But that she does not tell us. Her grandmother, old Madame Dupin, did not share the almost universal enthusiasm for the Emperor—she had lived her long life mostly under the Bourbons, had nearly lost her head under the Terror, and had been a pupil of the philosophers who were in fashion during the last days of the old *régime*. She had inspired her son with some of her feelings towards Napoleon; yet, though Maurice might and did condemn many of the Emperor's acts, he could not, as he says himself, help loving him. 'There is something in him,' he writes to his wife, 'apart from his genius, which moves me in spite of myself when his eye catches mine,' and it is this involuntary fascination, his daughter tells us, which would have prevented him not only from betraying Napoleon, but from rallying to the Bourbons. Even his mother, Royalist as she was, knew this.

'Ah!' she would exclaim in after years; 'if my poor Maurice had been alive he would certainly have found death at Waterloo or beneath the walls of Paris, or if he had escaped there, he would have blown out his brains at seeing the Cossacks marching through the gates.'

But in the springtime of 1811, none of the dark days so near at hand were throwing their shadows over France. 'His Majesty the King of Rome' was only a few weeks old, and the sound of the hundred-and-one guns which had greeted his birth were still ringing in the ears of Aurore, who had heard them in Paris. No doubt she often talked to her friend Ursule and her half-brother Hippolyte, both then at Nohant, of the excitement of the people in the streets of Paris when she walked through them with her mother, for Aurore was a child who noticed things and also remembered them; but soon the life of the country absorbed her, and besides, there were her lessons to do. Old Madame Dupin taught her

music, which they both loved, and from M. Deschartres—who had lived at Nohant for years and years and was a little of everything—she learnt grammar, and, much against her will, Latin too, as Deschartres thought it would be of use to her in understanding and speaking French. He was perfectly right, but even as a middle-aged woman Aurore protests that the time spent in such studies was wasted, for at the end of years children knew nothing about them.

What would she have said if she had known of the seven or eight extraordinarily difficult and different languages which the little Austrian Archdukes learnt to speak and write correctly while they were still children? Luckily Aurore loved books, though she preferred to choose them for herself, and she knew a good many curious things which she would never have learned from any tutor.

Poor M. Deschartres did not have an easy time with his three pupils Aurore, Hippolyte, and Ursule. He was rather a dandy and was very particular about his shoes, and walked always with stiff knees and toes turned out. One day Hippolyte took it into his naughty head to prepare a 'booby trap' for his tutor, of a kind very popular with the village children. He dug, right in the middle of Deschartres' favourite walk, a hole filled with fine liquid mud and concealed by sticks crossed on the top, and covered with earth scattered over with dead leaves, collected by Aurore and Ursule. They were old hands at this game, and many a time had the gardener or the peasants fallen victims to it, but this was the first occasion on which they had been bold enough to try it on M. Deschartres. Walking a little in front, in his accustomed manner, his head up, his hands behind him, he proceeded down the path, the children following with dancing eyes. Suddenly plop, a splash, and a stagger! and M. Deschartres was seen pulling himself up on the other side, but without his beautiful shoes, which had stuck in the mud. Hippolyte pressed forward, his face expressing surprise and horror at such a misfortune, and the tutor, easily taken in, turned angrily upon the little girls, who ran away shrieking with laughter. They knew they would get nothing worse than a scolding, whatever they did, whereas a beating, and a bad one, would be the certain fate of Hippolyte.

Deschartres, as has been said, performed the duties of a steward of the estate, as well as those of tutor to the children, and on one occasion he left Nohant quite early in the morning to superintend the sale of some cattle at a neighbouring fair. Hippolyte always did his lessons in the room of the great man, and it occurred to him that it would be fun to play at being the great man himself. So without more ado he pulled out of the wardrobe a hunting-coat, which reached to his heels, took a hunting-cap from a peg, and marched up and down with his toes turned out and his hands behind his back, in exact imitation of M. Deschartres, the little girls watching it all from a corner. He next approached the blackboard, and began to draw some figures with a piece of chalk, stopped in the middle, stammered and grew angry, abusing his pupil for being a doll and a blockhead. When he was satisfied that he could really imitate the voice and manner of his master, he went to the window and found fault with the gardener's way of pruning trees, threatening in loud tones to inform Madame of his stupidity. The gardener, standing a little distance off, fell into the trap and defended himself sulkily, but what was his surprise when he lifted his eyes and beheld the true Deschartres standing a few paces from him, but out of sight of his copy at the window? The tutor may possibly have been amused at the imitation, but he was not the man to allow his dignity to be tampered with. He noiselessly mounted the

staircase to his room, to find Hippolyte with his back turned, saying, in a loud voice, to an invisible pupil at the table:

‘What is the good of expecting you to work? You write like a cat and spell like a porter. Perhaps this will wake you up a little’—and here there was the sound of a smack—‘you lazy little dog.’

And for the spectators the scene was at this moment doubled, and while the false Deschartres was boxing the ears of an imaginary Hippolyte, the real Hippolyte was having his ears boxed by the true Deschartres.

There is no doubt, Aurore tells us in after years, that Hippolyte was really very ill-treated by his tutor, and lacked the courage to stand up to him, or even to complain to his grandmother. On the other hand, it is not to be denied that the boy displayed the most amazing ingenuity in showing up the absurdities of Deschartres. Often, during lesson hours, Deschartres would be obliged hurriedly to leave his pupils to attend to something which had gone wrong in the house or the farm. Then Hippolyte would instantly seize his master’s flageolet and play it with all the airs and graces assumed by Deschartres. Ursule on her side, who worked steadily as long as her tutor was present, grew perfectly wild when they were left to themselves. She climbed over the furniture, played ball with Deschartres’ slippers, flung about his clothes, and mixed together all the little bags of seeds that he had put aside for experiments in the garden. In this sport she was joined by Aurore, and together they shuffled the pages of manuscripts which he had received from learned men of the Society of Agriculture. It is strange that, with all his experience of his pupils, Deschartres never suspected that they were the authors of these misfortunes, and, still more, that he did not lock up his treasures. But as Aurore makes no mention of discovery or whippings, we must suppose they did not receive the punishments they richly deserved.

As the winter drew near, old Madame Dupin began to consider the question of their move to Paris, and what was to be done with the children. At length she decided that Hippolyte must be sent to school there, and that he should make the journey on horseback in company with M. Deschartres. As we know, Hippolyte loved to run wild, and was not anxious to lose his freedom and be shut up in a French school (which was much stricter than an English one), but all possible future pains were forgotten in the fact that if he rode he *must* have a pair of high boots—for long the object of his dearest ambition. *How* he pined for them may be guessed from the fact that he had tried when at Nohant to make some for himself. He had found an old pair of his tutor’s, which he fancied might form the upper part, while he expected to get the foot-soles out of a large piece of leather—probably once the apron of a ‘chaise’—that he picked up in the stables. For four days and nights the boy worked, cutting, measuring and sewing, till he succeeded in producing a pair of shapeless objects, worthy of an Esquimaux, which split the first day he wore them.

‘Never,’ writes his sister thirty years after, ‘never did I see anybody so entirely happy as Hippolyte when the shoemaker brought him home *real* riding-boots with heels clamped with iron, and tiny holes to receive the spurs. The prospect of the journey to Paris—the first he had ever taken—the joy of performing it on horseback, the idea of getting rid of Deschartres, all were as nothing in the light of those boots. Even now,’ she continues, ‘he will tell you himself that his whole life did not contain a joy to compare with the joy of that moment. “Talk of a first love!” he would cry; “*my* first love was a pair of boots.”’

We may be quite sure Hippolyte did not allow his friends to forget the treasure which had come into his possession. To Aurore, in particular, he showed them so often, displaying their special excellences and calling on her to admire them, that at last they haunted her dreams. The evening before their departure he drew them proudly on, and never took them off till he reached Paris! But even so, he could not sleep. Not that he was afraid of his spurs tearing the sheets, but of the sheets dimming the brilliance of his boots. By midnight he was so distracted at this terrible prospect that he got out of bed and went into Aurore’s room to examine them by the light of her fire. Aurore’s maid, who slept next door, tried to make him go away, as she said they would all have to be up early next morning and would be very tired before they finished their journey. But she need not have troubled herself; Hippolyte did not pay the slightest attention to her, but merely woke up Aurore to ask her opinion about the boots, and then sat down before the fire, not wishing even to sleep, as that would be to lose some minutes of exquisite joy. At length, however, fatigue got the better of him, and in the morning when the maid came to wake Aurore, she found Hippolyte stretched on the floor in front of the hearth, unconscious of everybody and everything—even of his boots.

AURORE AT PLAY

When Aurore Dupin went to Paris she found herself in the Rue Thiroux, where Madame Dupin had taken a suite of rooms, or, as the French say, an ‘appartement.’ For this ‘appartement’ the old lady paid a high rent—more than she could afford, indeed; but she clung to the ancient custom of a flat with a large drawing-room, where the friends of the host and hostess could meet once or twice a year. During the rest of the time it was kept shut, and all but rich and fashionable people lived in their bedrooms. As Madame Dupin never gave parties at all, she might have done without the *salon* and housed herself for half the price, but that she would have thought beneath her dignity, and would have starved first.

Though Ursule was left behind at Nohant, Aurore had other playfellows, with one of whom, Pauline de Pontcarré, she did lessons. Pauline was a very pretty little girl, much less heedless than Aurore, and less in the habit of losing her gloves and dropping her handkerchief. Madame Dupin was always praising her for being so well brought up, and wishing that Aurore had such nice manners; but instead of this making Pauline hated by her new friend, Aurore admired her beauty and was quite fond of her. Three times a week they had lessons together at Madame Dupin’s in music, writing, and dancing. The dancing-master came direct from the opera, and was one of the best in Paris; the writing-master was also a person of high reputation, but unluckily he was of opinion that a graceful attitude at a desk was of more importance than a clear hand, and Aurore soon became very impatient with his teaching.

On the other three days Madame de Pontcarré (who, unlike Madame Dupin, loved walking) came to fetch Aurore to her own house, where Pauline was awaiting them.

It was Madame de Pontcarré herself who taught them geography and history by a method invented by the Abbé Gaultier that was much in fashion at that period. It sounds as if it must have been like those used in the kindergartens to-day, for everything was a sort of game, and played with balls and counters. But best of all the hours spent at Madame de Pontcarré‘s were those when Aurore sat and listened to her friend singing and playing, or learned from her some of the principles of musical composition. This was even a greater joy than the romps with Pauline’s cousins in a big garden in the Rue de la Victoire belonging to Madame de Pontcarré‘s mother, where there was plenty of room for blindman’s buff, or for the game known in Scotland as ‘tig.’ In this game—*barres* was the French name—the children were formed into two camps, the object being to take as many prisoners as possible. Sometimes they all dined together and afterwards the dining-room was cleared out, and they played games in which their mothers or even the servants joined. How horrified old Madame Dupin would have been at the noise they made! She would not have thought them at all ‘well brought up.’

Aurore gives a very funny account of the way in which Hippolyte danced, for he lived at home and only went to school for certain classes. It was all very well for him and Aurore to laugh secretly when M. Gogault, the dancing-master, entered the room ‘like a zephyr cutting a caper’; but it was M. Gogault’s turn to smile when Hippolyte, who was more heavy and awkward than it was possible to imagine, nearly brought down the house when

he did his steps, and shook the walls in his attempts to *chasser*. If he was told to hold his head up and not to poke, he took his chin in his hand, and kept it there all the time he was dancing. And all this he did with the utmost seriousness, and with no idea of being troublesome. But at school he only got into mischief, and when the whole Dupin family returned to Nohant in the spring, it was thought best for Hippolyte to go with them.

It was there during the next few months that, in the intervals of play and laughter, Aurore first paid attention to the conversation of her elders as to the result of the Russian campaign and the future of France. Nowadays it seems to us almost impossible to believe that for a whole fortnight no news was received of the French Army of 300,000 men, and still more that Napoleon, ‘the man who filled the universe with his name and Europe with his presence,’ should have disappeared like a pilgrim lost in the snow. At Nohant no one spoke of anything else, till one night this child of eight, who had silently brooded over the words of her elders, had a curious dream, so clear that it was almost a vision. She felt herself hovering in the air above endless white plains, with the wandering columns of the vanished army straggling they knew not where, and guided them towards France. When she awoke she was as tired and hungry as if she had taken a long flight, and her eyes were still dazzled by the snow.

In the summer of 1813—the year of the victories of Lutzen, Bautzen, and Dresden—prisoners of war were sent to all parts of the country, many of them not even under a guard. The first prisoner that the children noticed was an officer sitting on the steps of a little pavilion at the end of their garden. His shoes were dropping to pieces though his coat and shirt were of the finest material, and in his hand he held the miniature of a woman suspended from his neck by a black ribbon, which he was examining sadly. They both felt awed—they did not know why—and were afraid to speak to him. But in a moment his servant came up, and the two went away silently together. After that, such numbers passed by that the peasants paid no attention to them, and even Aurore and Hippolyte speedily grew accustomed to the sight. One morning, in spite of the stifling heat, they were again playing near the pavilion, when one of these poor wretches passed and flung himself wearily on the steps. He was a German with a simple good-natured face, and the children went up and spoke to him, but he only shook his head and answered in French, ‘me not understand.’ Then Aurore made signs to ask if he was thirsty, and in reply the man pointed to some stagnant water in the ditch. They contrived to convey to him by violent head-shakings that it was not good to drink, and, further, that he must wait a minute and they would get him something. As fast as they could, they ran to the house and brought back a bottle of wine and some bread, which he swallowed. When he had finished, and felt better, he held out his hand repeatedly and they thought he wanted money. Not having any themselves, Aurore was going to ask her grandmother for some, but the German, guessing her intention, stopped her, and made signs that he only desired to shake hands. His eyes were full of tears, and he was evidently trying hard to say something. At last he got it out: ‘Children very good.’

Filled with pity they ran back to tell Madame Dupin, who, remembering how her own son had been taken prisoner by the Croats, gave orders that every day a certain number of

bottles of wine and loaves of bread should be placed in the pavilion for the use of these unfortunate Germans. Every instant of freedom that Hippolyte and Aurore could get was spent in that pavilion, handing slices of bread and cups of wine to the weary creatures sitting on the steps, who were so gentle and grateful for the unexpected help. Sometimes, when three or four arrived together, they would sing to their little hosts some of their national songs before they left. Their talent for singing and dancing gained them friends all through the country, and now and then gained them wives also.

The troubled years from 1814 to 1817 passed away and Aurore remained at Nohant with her grandmother, who was constantly growing more and more helpless from a stroke of paralysis. Aurore was left very much to herself, but studied music under the organist of the neighbouring village, learnt history and geography, and read Homer and Tasso in translations. But her real life was the one she created for herself, presided over by a mystic personage to whom she gave the name of Corambé. In her mind, he represented all that was kind and pitiful, and in the thickness of a wood in the corner of the garden she made him a temple. That is to say, she decorated the trees which stood about a round green space, with coloured pebbles, fresh moss, or anything else she could find. A sort of altar was next put together at the foot of a large maple from whose boughs hung wreaths of pink and white shells, while trails of ivy reaching from one tree to another formed an arcade. Empty birds’ nests, chaplets of flowers and moss were soon added, and when the temple was done it seemed so lovely to the child that often she could hardly sleep at night for thinking of it.

Aurore sets free the captive Birds at the Altar of Corambé.

It is needless to say all would have been spoilt for Aurore had the ‘grown-ups’ guessed at the existence of her precious temple or of Corambé. She took the greatest care to pick up her shells and the fallen birds’ nests as if she really hardly knew what she was doing, and was thinking of something else all the time. Never did she enter the wood except when alone, and then from a direction different from that which she had taken before.

When the temple was ready, it was necessary to know what the sacrifice was to be. Nothing dead should be offered to Corambé. Of that she was certain. Then if no dead sacrifice was to be laid before him, why should he not become the champion and deliverer of living objects in danger of death? So Liset, a boy older than herself and her faithful follower, was ordered to catch birds and butterflies and even insects in the fields, and carry them to her, unhurt. What she was going to do with them, he neither knew nor cared, for Aurore had kept her secret well. Great would have been his surprise had he known that daily these captive swallows, redbreasts, chaffinches, or dragon-flies were borne tenderly to the altar of Corambé, and there set free. If one happened to perch for an instant on a branch above her head before disappearing into the blue, a thrill of ecstasy ran through the

priestess.

But one day Liset, who had been sent to look for her, caught sight of her white frock as she was entering the wood. And with his words:

'Oh, ma'mselle, what a pretty little altar!' the spell of her story was broken, and it is a spell that can never be cast twice.

Aurore, however, did not always have dryads and cherubs and wonder-working spirits for company; Hippolyte would not have allowed anything of the sort, for he liked Aurore to be with him, whatever he was doing. They had many friends too, both boys and girls, with whom they climbed trees, played games, and even kept sheep, which means that they did not keep them at all, but let them trample down the young wheat in the fields or eat it, if they preferred, while they themselves were dancing. If they were thirsty, they milked the cows and the goats; if they were hungry they ate wild apples or made a fire and cooked potatoes. Aurore's particular favourites were two girls called Marie and Solange, daughters of a small farmer, and whenever she could get away she ran up to the farm, and helped them seek for eggs, pick fruit, or nurse the sickly little lambs. And apart from the pleasure the others took in all this, Aurore found one of her own, for the orchard became transformed by her fancy into a fairy wood, with little creatures having sharp ears and merry eyes peeping from behind the trees. Then her dreams would be roughly dispersed by Hippolyte's voice, summoning her to the most delightful of all the games they ever played, which was to jump from some high place into the mountain of sheaves piled up in the barn.

'I should like to do it now, if I dared,' says Aurore thirty years after.

At length it occurred to Madame Dupin that Aurore was thirteen, and needed better teaching than M. Deschartres could give her, and, still worse, that the child was running wild, that her complexion was getting ruined, and that if she was ever to wear the thin elegant slippers worn by other young ladies, she must grow accustomed to them before the *sabots*, or wooden shoes worn by the peasants, had spoilt her for everything else. She wanted, in fact, proper training, so her grandmother was going to take her to Paris at once, and to place her in a convent.

'And shall I see my mother?' cried Aurore.

'Yes; certainly you will see her,' replied Madame Dupin; 'and after that you will see neither of us, but will give all your time to your education.'

Aurore did not mind. She had not the slightest idea of the life she would lead in the convent, but it would at any rate be something new. So, 'without fear, or regret, or repugnance,' as she herself tells us, she entered the 'Couvent des Anglaises,' where both Madame Dupin and her own mother had been imprisoned during the Revolution. This, of

course, gave the convent a special interest for Aurore.

The Couvent des Anglaises was the only remaining one of three or four British religious houses which had been founded in Paris during the time of Cromwell, and as a school, ranked with the convents of the Sacré-Cœur and of l'Abbaye-aux-Bois. Queen Henrietta Maria used often to come and pray in the chapel, and this fact rendered the Couvent des Anglaises peculiarly dear to English royalists. All the nuns were either English, Scotch, or Irish, and nearly all the girls—at least, when Aurore went there—were subjects of King George also. As it was strictly forbidden during certain hours of the day to speak a word of French, Aurore had every possible chance of learning English. She learnt, too, something about English habits, for the nuns drank tea three times a day, and invited the best behaved of the girls to share it with them. All was as English as it could be made. In the chapel were the tombs bearing English texts and epitaphs, of holy exiles who had died abroad. On the walls of the Superior's private rooms hung the portraits of English princes and bishops long dead, among whom Mary Queen of Scots—counted as a saint by the nuns—held the central place. In fact, the moment the threshold was crossed, you seemed to have crossed the Channel also. The Mother Superior at the date of Aurore's entrance was a certain Madame Canning, a clever woman with a large experience of the world.

Like many children brought up at home, Aurore had read a great deal in her own way, but was very ignorant of other subjects familiar to girls younger than herself, who had been educated at school. This she was well aware of, so it was no surprise to her, though a disappointment to her grandmother, when she was confided by the Superior to the pupils of the second class, whose ages varied from six to thirteen or fourteen. Aurore was never shy and did not in the least mind being stared at by thirty or forty pairs of eyes, and at once set out to explore the garden and examine everything in company with one of the older girls, in whose charge she had been put. When they had visited every corner, they were called to play at 'bars,' and as Aurore could run like a hare, she soon gained the respect of her schoolfellows.

The three years passed by Aurore in the Couvent des Anglaises were, she tells us, happy ones for her, though almost without exception her schoolfellows were pining, or thought they were, for their homes and their mothers. But after the free life and country air of Nohant the confinement and lack of change tried her, and for a while she grew weak and languid. Twice in every month the girls were allowed to spend the day with their friends, and on New Year's Day they might sleep at home. Of course, in the summer there were regular holidays, but Madame Dupin decided that Aurore had better stay at school and learn all she could, so by that means she might finish the regular course earlier than usual, and save money. It was then the custom of all schools both in England and France to keep the girls under strict watch, and never permit them to be one moment alone. The garden was very large, and Aurore at least would have been perfectly content to remain in it, had not such elaborate precautions been taken to prevent the girls even seeing through the door when it was opened, into the dull street outside. These precautions enraged the others, and only made them eager for glimpses of a passing cab or a horse and cart, though on their days of freedom they would walk through the most brilliant parts of Paris with their parents, and never trouble to turn their heads. But Aurore was only amused at what irritated them, and felt, for her part, that

> Stone walls do not a prison make,
>
> Nor iron bars a cage.

It was foolish, she thought, to make so much fuss about nothing; but after all, what did it matter?

Now both the big and little classes had divided themselves into three camps: the ‘good’ girls, who would probably one day become nuns; the ‘demons,’ or rebels, who were always inventing some new kind of mischief; and the ‘idiots,’ who were afraid to take sides. These profoundly despised by the rest, would shake with laughter over the pranks of the ‘demons,’ but put on a solemn face at the appearance of one of the mistresses, and hastened to cry at the approach of danger: ‘It was not I!’ ‘It was not I!’ unless they went further and exclaimed, ‘It was Dupin,’ or ‘it was G.’ ‘Dupin’ was Aurore, and ‘G.’ a wild Irish girl of eleven, tall and strong and truthful and clever, but utterly unruly, and the terror of the ‘idiots’ of the younger class.

As soon as Mary G. discovered that Aurore did not mind being teased or being thumped on the shoulder by a hand which might have felled an ox, she felt that she had found a friend who would join in her maddest tricks. Aurore’s education in this respect was not long in beginning. The very next day as the mistress was handing round books and slates to the class, Mary quietly walked out, followed in two or three minutes by Aurore. Both girls went to the empty cloister, and began to talk:

‘I am glad you came,’ said Mary. ‘The others are always making excuses for getting away, and declaring their noses are bleeding or they want to practise, or some stupid old story like that. I never tell lies; it is so cowardly. If they ask me where I have been, I don’t answer. If they punish me—well, let them! I just do as I like.’

‘That would just suit me.’

‘You are a demon then!’

‘I should like to be.’

‘As much as I am?’

‘Neither more nor less.’

‘Accepted,’ answered Mary, giving Aurore a shake of the hand. ‘Now we will go back and behave quite properly to Mother Alippe. She is a good old thing. We will reserve ourselves for Mother D. Ah, you don’t know her yet! Every evening outside the class-room. Do you understand?’

‘No. What do you mean by “outside the class-room”?’

‘Well, the games after supper under the superintendence of Mother D. are dreadfully dull. So when we come out of the dining-room we will slip away, and not come back till it is time for prayers. Sometimes Mother D. does not miss us, but generally she is enchanted that we should run away, because then she can have the pleasure of punishing us when we come in. The punishment is to wear your nightcap all the next day, even in chapel. In this kind of weather it is very pleasant and good for the health, and though the nuns you meet cry ‘Shame! shame!’ that hurts nobody. If in the course of a fortnight you have worn many

nightcaps, the Superior threatens not to allow you to go out on the next holiday, but she either forgets or forgives you at the request of your parents. When you have worn the nightcap so long that it seems to have grown on your head, you are locked up for a day. But after all, it is better to give up amusing yourself for a single day than to bore yourself perpetually of your own freewill.'

Aurore quite agreed with Mary's reasoning, and found the time very long till supper. The whole school had meals together, and then came the hour of play before prayers and bed. The older ones went to their large and beautiful study, but the rest had only quite a little room where there was no space to play, so that they were thankful when the evening was over. In leaving the refectory there was always a certain confusion, and it was easy for both big and little demons to slip away down the ill-lighted passages to the dark side of the cloisters.

Here Aurore, with Irish Mary for her guide, found a number of girls assembled, each with something in her hand. One held a stick, another a pair of tongs, a third a poker. What could they be going to do? 'Dupin' asked herself. Something exciting, of course; but she never guessed that it would be her favourite game of 'pretending.' For all these strange weapons were intended for the deliverance of a prisoner who was hidden in a dungeon somewhere under the convent.

Certainly it would have been impossible to have invented a better place in which to hide any number of prisoners than the immense cellars and vaults and dark holes of all sorts, that ran underneath. The building itself was more like a village than a house, and, since its foundation, had been constantly added to and altered, so that it was full of irregularities and steps up and down and roofs at different heights, and passages which once led to something but were now blocked up. On one side of the garden, whose magnificent chestnut trees were the pride of the nuns, stood small houses in which lived noble ladies retired from the world, but free from vows. There was besides a very large vegetable garden for the use of the convent, which at this time contained about a hundred and thirty people. It was possible, if you stood on tiptoe, to snatch a glimpse through the grating of melons or grapes or feathery pinks, but the door was not easy to climb, and only two or three of the bolder girls had ever managed to penetrate into the enclosure and taste these forbidden joys.

The legend of the concealed prisoner had been handed on from generation to generation of school girls, as well as the terrors which were half a joy, that thrilled through them as they crept along the narrow passages, ending no one knew where—perhaps in the Catacombs, perhaps in the baths of Julian, perhaps outside Paris itself! Who could tell? Could life have any feeling more exciting in store than the sensation that at any moment your feet might meet the empty air, and that you might fall into one of those terrible pits common in castles of the Middle Ages, known by the evil name of *oubliettes* or holes of forgetfulness? And many of these dangers were not at all imaginary, whatever the 'prisoner' might be.

It was the knowledge of the heavy punishments that would fall on their heads in case of

discovery that made it a point of honour with the demons to risk everything in order to explore this underground world. Very few, however, gained an entrance to these vaults during their school lives, and only then after years of patience and perseverance. The memory of these heroines was kept green, and their names whispered reverently 'to encourage the rest.'

In Aurore's day the question had come up again—the burning question of how to get into the underground world. Not by the main door which led to it, that was clear; for close by were the kitchens, where nuns passed continually! But if the main door was barred, there must be a hundred other doors or walled-up staircases, by which you could get there; and if these failed, there was always the roof.

Now, the very last thought that would occur to most people, if they want to penetrate into an underground passage, is to go first on to the roof; but then they are not school girls, and have forgotten all about these things, if, indeed, they ever knew them. To Aurore and her friends it was a matter of everyday knowledge that 'the longest way round is the shortest way home.' Had not Aurore sat breathless for days together over Mrs. Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*, and her companions lain awake trembling at the recollections of Scotch or Irish ancestral ghosts?

Why, even in the convent, where the great dormitories were filled with girls and the terrors of loneliness were unknown, did they not shudder sometimes in the dark in the certainty that they caught the echo of the sighs, the groans, the clanking of chains of the victim?

As to whether it was always the same victim who had to be rescued, or whether in every generation a fresh victim was somehow mysteriously supplied, nobody inquired and nobody minded.

On the never-to-be-forgotten evening of Aurore's initiation into the company of the demons, she was conducted by the rest of the band into the oldest and most irregular part of the convent. At length they found themselves standing on a gangway with a wooden railing, ending in a little room, from which there was no outlet. By the light of their single taper they beheld a staircase below them, also with a wooden railing, and protected at the top by a strong oaken door. In order to get on to the staircase it was necessary to drop from one balustrade to the other—and the more experienced of the explorers strongly suspected that both of them were worm-eaten—while the staircase hung over black depths which no eye could penetrate.

It was an adventure which required a good deal of courage, but not one of the girls flinched. Isabelle, one of the oldest of the demons, claimed her right to go first, and accomplished her dangerous feat with the resolution of a heroine. Mary followed with the calm of a gymnastic professor, the remainder as best they could, but somehow or other they all managed to arrive safely on the staircase. At the foot was another little hall or room, without door or window or issue of any kind; but this, for some strange reason, caused the girls more joy than regret.

'Certainly,' they said, 'nobody would make a staircase which went nowhere! There must

be *some* way out and we have got to find it.'

So the little taper was divided into several parts and each girl began a careful examination of the walls, pressing the plaster, which they hoped might conceal a ring or a button that, if touched, would reveal an opening. What would have happened if a sudden blast had blown out their candles, they never thought, for they had no means of lighting them again; and, of course, none of the Sisters had the slightest idea where they might be. Happily this did not occur, and though the surface of the walls was perfectly smooth, Isabelle declared that when she tapped the part under the staircase it sounded hollow.

This discovery threw the whole party into a state of wild excitement.

'We have found it at last!' they cried; 'this staircase leads down to the cell where living victims have been buried.' They jostled each other so as to place their ears against the wall, but strange to say, in spite of their fervent wish, they were compelled to confess that they heard nothing. All, that is except Isabelle, who persisted in declaring that they must every one of them be deaf, as the sounds of groans and clanking chains were quite plain.

'Then we must break down the wall,' said Mary, 'and the sooner we begin the better.'

In an instant the wall was attacked by the collection of arms the girls had brought with them. Tongs, pokers, shovels were all brought into play, but luckily without making any impression on the stones, which otherwise might have come rattling about their heads. Besides, the demons dared not make *too* much noise, for they were afraid of being heard, as they did not know exactly in which part of the convent they might happen to be.

Only a few pieces of plaster had fallen when the warning bell for prayers clanged through the building. How they contrived the upward climb from one balustrade to another, they never knew, and that they were able to do it at all was almost a miracle. Down they dashed along the passages, brushing the plaster from their dresses as they ran, and arrived breathless as the two classes were forming to enter the chapel.

During the whole winter they worked at the wall, but, persevering though they were, the obstacles encountered were so many that at length they decided it was sheer folly to waste more time on it, and they had better try to force an entrance by some other way.

There was a little room—one of many under the roof—which contained one of the thirty pianos of the convent, and there Aurore was accustomed to practise for an hour daily. From its window could be seen a whole world of roofs, penthouses, sheds, and buildings of all sorts, covered with mossy tiles, and most tempting to the adventurous. It seemed quite reasonable that somewhere amongst the buildings should exist a staircase leading to the underground passages, and one fine, starlight night the demons met in the little music-room, and in a few minutes they had all scrambled from the window on to the roof six feet below them. From there they climbed over gables, jumped from one incline to another, and behaved in fact as if they were cats, taking care to hide behind a chimney or crouch in a gutter whenever they caught sight of a nun in the garden or courtyard beneath them.

They had managed to get a long way downwards when prayer-time drew near, and they

knew they must begin their return journey. As the Latin proverb tells you, it is easy enough to go *down*, but what about getting back again? And to make matters worse, the demons had not the slightest idea where they were. Still, they contrived to retrace some of their footsteps and at last recognised to their joy the window of Sidonie Macdonald, daughter of the general. But to reach this window it was necessary to spring upwards a considerable distance, and the chances of hitting exactly the right spot were very few. Aurore, at any rate, almost lost her life in the attempt. She jumped in too great a hurry, and very nearly fell thirty feet through a skylight into a gallery where the little class were playing. As it was, her heel struck against the glass, and several panes went crashing in their midst. Clinging to the window-sill, with her knees scratched and bleeding, Aurore heard the voice of Sister Thérèse below accusing Whisky, Mother Alippe's big black cat, of fighting with his neighbours on the roof and breaking all the windows in the convent. Mother Alippe warmly denied that her cat ever quarrelled with anyone, and in spite of her wounds and her danger, Aurore burst into fits of laughter at the hot dispute, in which she was joined by Fanelly stretched in the gutter, and Mary lying in a 'spread-eagle' on the tiles, feeling about for her comb. They heard the nuns mounting the stairs, and discovery seemed inevitable.

Nothing of the sort, however, occurred. The overhanging gables preserved them from being seen, and as soon as they felt they were safe, the young demons began to mew loudly, so that Sister Thérèse proved triumphantly that she was right, and that the mischief *had* been caused by Whisky and his friends!

This being happily settled, the girls climbed at their leisure into the window where Sidonie was quietly practising her scales, undisturbed by the noise in the cat-world. She was a gentle, nervous child, who had no sympathy with a passion for roofs, and when a procession of demons entered her room she hid her face in her hands and screamed loudly. But before the nuns could hurry to the spot, the girls had dispersed in all directions, and, up to the end, the blame of the broken window was laid upon Whisky.

HOW AURORE LEARNT TO RIDE

When Aurore was old enough to leave the convent she went back to Nohant to live with her grandmother, who was failing fast and died the following year. Aurore was sixteen now, and things looked very different from what they did three years earlier. The trees were not so tall nor the garden so big as she remembered them; that was disappointing, no doubt. But on the other hand, what joy to do your hair as you liked without being told that no nice girl ever let her temples be seen; to wear a pink cotton frock instead of one of yellow serge, and to have as many cakes and sweet things as you wanted! Of course it had been terrible to part from your friends at the convent, but then at Nohant there were all those of long ago—and the dogs almost better than any friend! Then, too, it was delightful to be so changed that even M. Deschartres did not know you, and to be called ‘Mademoiselle’ by him and everyone else. At least it was delightful just at first, but soon it began to be tiresome to find the girls with whom you had climbed trees and played blind man’s buff treating you very much as they treated your grandmother. No; decidedly there were *some* drawbacks to being ‘grown up’!

For a few days Aurore ran about the country nearly as much as she had done in former years, but after a while she made plans for study, and drew up a time-table. History, drawing, music, English and Italian, had each its hour; but somehow when that hour struck there was always something else to be done, and Aurore’s books were still unopened when, at the end of a month, Madame de Pontcarré and Pauline arrived on a visit.

Pauline was just the same as she had always been; ‘growing up’ had worked no transformation in *her*. She was pretty, pleasant, gentle as ever, and quite as indifferent to everybody. Indeed, she was still exactly the opposite of her mother, who had played with Aurore’s father when she was a child, and in consequence was a great favourite with Madame Dupin. And now that Madame de Pontcarré was there, there was no more dreaming for Aurore. Instead, they all three took walks twice a day and studied music together. When they came in the evenings, they would sing airs from Gluck’s beautiful old operas ‘Armida’ and ‘Iphigenia’ to Madame Dupin, whose criticisms and judgment were as good as of old. They even acted a play or, rather, a proverb to amuse the old lady, who was nevertheless a little shocked to see her granddaughter dressed as a boy. After that the Pontcarrés went away, and perhaps it was as well, for Madame Dupin was getting jealous of Aurore being so much with them.

Aurore would have been very dull without her friends had not Hippolyte, now a hussar, come back to spend his leave at Nohant. He was such a splendid person, rolling his *r*‘s, making fun of everybody, riding horses which no one else would go near, that at first Aurore was quite afraid of him. But this soon wore off, and they were speedily on the old footing, taking long walks across country, and going off into fits of laughter at the silliest jokes.

‘Now I am going to teach you to ride,’ he said one day. ‘Of course, I might give you the book of instructions that I am obliged to read to the poor young soldiers in the barracks, who don’t understand a word; but it all comes to this—you either fall off or you don’t. And as one must be prepared for a fall, we will pick out a place for your lesson where you can’t hurt yourself much.’ So saying he led the way to a field of soft grass, mounted on General Pépé, and holding Colette by the bridle.

Pépé was a grandson of the horse which had killed Maurice Dupin, and Colette (who was occasionally known as Mademoiselle Deschartres) had been trained—or supposed to be—by the tutor; she had only lately been brought into the stable, and had never yet felt a human being on her back. Of course it was nothing short of madness on the part of Hippolyte to dream of mounting his sister upon her, but the mare seemed very gentle, and after taking her two or three times round the field he declared she was all right, and swung Aurore into the saddle. Then, without giving either mare or rider time to think what was happening, he struck Colette a smart cut with his whip, and off she started on a wild gallop, shying and leaping and bounding out of pure gaiety of heart.

‘Sit up straight,’ shouted Hippolyte. ‘Hold on to her mane if you like, but don’t drop the bridle, and stick on. To fall or not to fall—that is the whole thing.’

Aurore heard and obeyed with all her might. Five or six times she was jerked upwards out of the saddle, but she always returned to it again, and at the end of an hour—breathless, untidy, and intoxicated with delight—she guided Colette to the stable, feeling that she was capable of managing all the horses of the French Army. As to Colette, who was as new to the business as her mistress, she also had experienced a fresh joy, and from that day till her death she was Aurore’s faithful companion.

‘Lean, big and ugly when standing,’ writes Aurore, ‘when moving she became beautiful by force of grace and suppleness. I have ridden many splendid horses admirably trained, but for cleverness and intelligence I have never found the equal of Colette. I have had falls, of course, but they were always the result of my own carelessness, for she never shied nor made a false step. She would suffer nobody else to mount her, but from the first moment she and I understood each other absolutely. At the end of a week we jumped hedges and ditches and swam rivers, for I was suddenly transformed into something bolder than a hussar, and more robust than a peasant.’

Curiously enough, Madame Dupin, so little given to exercise herself, was not in the least nervous as to Aurore’s adventures, while Madame Maurice never beheld her on a horse’s back without hiding her face in her hands and declaring she would die like her father. One day Aurore heard some visitors inquiring why Madame Dupin allowed her granddaughter to do such wild things, and the old lady in reply quoted with rather a sad smile the well-known story of the sailor and the citizen.

‘What, sir! Do you tell me that your father and your grandfather both died at sea, and yet you are a sailor? In your place, I would never have set foot in a boat!’

‘And your parents, sir? How did they die?’

‘In their beds, I am thankful to say!’

‘Then, in your place, I would never set foot in a bed.’

After Hippolyte's leave was over, and he had rejoined his regiment, Aurore was obliged to ride with M. Deschartres, which was not nearly so amusing; still, it was a great deal better than not riding at all. And as the months went on, the poor girl grew more and more dependent on the hours that she and Colette spent together, for it was quite plain that Madame Dupin's life was fast drawing to a close. She lost her memory, and though she was never really awake, she was never really asleep either. Her maid Julie, Aurore, or M. Deschartres were with her always, and as Aurore did not find the four hours of sleep which fell to her share enough to carry her through the day, she tried the plan of going to bed every other night only, and watching her grandmother on alternate ones. Very soon she got used to this mode of life, although sometimes even the nights spent in bed were broken. Her grandmother would insist on Aurore coming to assure her that it was *really* two o'clock, as Julie had told her, for she did not believe it; or whether the cat was in the room, as she was sure she heard it. The girl's presence always soothed her, and the old lady would murmur a few tender words and send her back to bed. If this only happened once in the night it did not so much matter; but when Madame Dupin had a restless fit, Aurore would be summoned two or three times over. Then she gave up the idea of sleep, and passed the night with a book by the side of her grandmother.

It was a sad and lonely existence for a girl not seventeen, and Aurore soon fell into melancholy ways, and had strange fancies. The companions she might have sought seemed years younger than herself at this time, and she was out of tune for their gaiety. In these days she had grown to have more sympathy with Deschartres than she could have believed possible, and she was very grateful for his devotion to her grandmother. So it came to pass that when one of the other maids could be spared to help Julie, Aurore and her old tutor might be met riding on the commons or fields that surrounded Nohant.

They were returning one afternoon after paying a visit to a sick man and took a road which ran along the banks of the river Indre. Suddenly Deschartres stopped.

'We must cross here,' he said. 'But be careful. The ford is very dangerous, for if you go the least bit too much to the right, you will find yourself in twenty feet of water. I will go first, and you must follow me exactly.'

'I think I would rather not try it,' answered Aurore, seized with a fit of nervousness. 'You cross by yourself, and I will take the bridge below the mill.'

This was so unlike the Aurore he knew that Deschartres turned in his saddle and stared at her in surprise.

'Why, when did you begin to be a coward!' asked he. 'We have been over worse places twenty times, and you never dreamed of being frightened! Come along! If we are not home by five we shall keep your grandmother waiting for her dinner.'

Feeling much ashamed of herself, Aurore said no more and guided Colette into the water. But in the very middle of the ford a sudden giddiness attacked her: her eyes grew dim, and there was a rushing sound in her ears. Pulling the right rein she turned Colette into the deep water, against which Deschartres had warned her.

If Colette had plunged or struggled, nothing could have saved either of them, but happily

she was a beast who took things quietly, and at once began to swim towards the opposite bank. Deschartres, seeing the girl's danger, screamed loudly, and his agitation brought back Aurore's presence of mind.

'Stay where you are! I am all right,' she cried, as he was about to put his horse into the river for her rescue, which was the more courageous of him, as he was a bad rider and his steed was ill-trained. He would certainly be drowned, she knew, and in spite of her words she was not very certain that she would not be drowned also, as it is not easy to sit on a swimming horse. The rider is uplifted by the water, and at the same time the animal is pressed down by his weight. Luckily Aurore was very light, and Colette was both brave and strong, and everything went well till they reached the opposite bank, which was very steep. Here Deschartres in an agony of terror, was awaiting her.

'Catch hold of that branch of willow and draw yourself up,' he cried, and she managed to do as he told her. But when she saw the frantic efforts of Colette to obtain a footing, she forgot all about her own danger and thought only of her friend's. She was about to drop back again into the water, which would not have helped Colette and would have caused her own death, when Deschartres seized her arm; and at the same moment Colette remembered the ford and swam back to it.

Once they were all safe on land again, Deschartres' fright showed itself in the abuse which he heaped upon his pupil, but Aurore understood the reason of his anger, and threw her arms round his neck and kissed him.

When her grandmother died, as she did during that year, and Aurore went to live with some relations, Colette went with her. They remained together till Colette died of old age, friends to the last.

AURORE RESCUED BY DESCHARTRES FROM A WATERY GRAVE.

LAND-OTTER THE INDIAN

On the North-West part of America, and especially near the sea, a great many tribes of Indians are still living, each with its peculiar customs and interesting stories handed down from one generation to another. The story which I am going to tell you now is a tale of the Tlingit tribe and is about 'Land-otter,' as the Indians called him, whose parents lived on the coast of Alaska.

That year the crop of maize had failed all through the country, and the people took their boats and went out to catch halibut, so that they might not die of starvation. Among them was a certain man and his wife who made a little house for themselves just out of reach of the high tides, and fished harder than any of the rest; but the halibut seemed as scarce as the maize, and the one or two fish that they caught in a week hardly kept them alive. Then the wife used to go to the beach at low water and look for crabs or shrimps among the pools in the rocks, but even so they grew thinner and thinner.

One night the husband came home with only one small halibut in his big fishing-basket. They were both very hungry and could have eaten ten times as many, but there was no good thinking of that, and the woman put part of the halibut in the pot which stood on the fire, and hung the rest of it outside in a shed.

'At least, there shall be something for breakfast to-morrow,' said she.

But when to-morrow came a strange noise was heard in the shed where the fish was lying, as if someone was throwing things about.

'What *is* that?' asked the wife. 'Go and see who has got into the shed.' So the man went, and beheld, to his surprise, two large devil-fish on the floor.

'How *did* they come up from the beach?' thought he. 'But however they managed it, they will be very useful,' and he hurried back to his wife and said to her:

'We are in luck! There are two devil-fish in the shed; Whoever brought them, it was very kind of him, and now we have such good bait we will go out in the morning and catch some halibut.' His face as he spoke was filled with joy, but the woman's grew pale and she sat down rather quickly.

'Do you know who brought them here?' she said at last? 'It was our son; it is a year to-day since he was drowned, and he knows how poor we are, so he has taken pity on us. I will listen at night, and if I hear anyone whistle I will call him; for I know it is he.'

At dawn they got up and baited their lines with the devil-fish, and this time they caught two halibut. As soon as it grew dark and they could see no longer, they rowed back and pulled up their boat, and the woman went inside and threw one of the halibut into the pot. At that moment she heard a whistle behind the house, and her heart beat wildly.

'Come in, my son,' she said. 'We have longed for you these many months. Fear nothing;

no one is here except your father and I.' But nobody entered; only the whistle was repeated. Then the man rose and flung open the door and cried:

'Come in, come in, my son! You have guessed how poor we are and have sought to help us,' and though neither the man nor his wife saw the son enter, they felt he was somehow sitting opposite at the fire, with his hands over his face.

'Is it you, my son?' they both asked at once, for they could not see. Again he whistled in answer, and the three sat in silence till midnight when the young man made some sounds as if he would speak.

'Is that you, my son?' asked the father again, and the son replied:

THE DEAD SON HELPS HIS PARENTS

'Yes,' and made a sign, pointing outside the door, where more devil-fish were lying.

'In the morning we will go out,' he said in a strange voice, as if speaking was difficult to him, and his mother gave him a pillow and some blankets and he slept by the fire.

It was still dark when he took his father by the feet and shook him, saying ‘Get up, it is time to fish,’ so they fetched the line and dragged the canoe to the water’s edge. When they were seated the son took a paddle, and he pulled so hard that they had reached the feeding grounds of the halibut in only a few minutes. After that he baited the hooks and fastened the end of the line to the seat.

‘Put the blanket over you,’ he said, turning to his father, ‘and be careful not to watch me.’ But the father *did* watch him through a hole in the blanket, and this is what he saw.

The son got up very gently so that the boat should not move, and, plunging into the sea, put the largest halibut he could find on the hooks. When no more were to be had, he returned into the canoe and shook it; his father perceiving this, stretched out his arms drowsily and inquired if they had had any luck.

‘Pull in the lines and see,’ answered the son, and as they pulled, one big halibut after another met their eyes. The canoe was soon full, and they paddled home again.

On the way back the young man who was standing at the bow with a spear in his hand threw it at a seal, which he dragged on board the boat, and killed it with a blow from his fist. But as soon as they touched the shore he looked at the sky and exclaimed that if he did not make haste the raven might cry before he could reach a shelter, and ran off up to the woods.

It took the father and mother all day to take out the halibut and cut them in pieces and salt them, so that they should always have something to eat. Darkness came on before they had finished, and in the evening their son was with them again. Then the father took some of the raw halibut and set it before him, first cutting it into small mouthfuls. He knew that drowned men did not like cooked food, and also that they did not like being watched. So he signed to his wife to say nothing when the son turned his back, and began to eat very fast, for he was hungry.

In this manner things went on for a whole week, and then his parents begged him not to go back to the woods to sleep, but to stay with them, which he did gladly. And every day before it was light, he woke his father and they went off to fish together, and each time the canoe came back full, so that at length they had great stores of food laid up in the outhouse.

At first, as we know, he was only a voice; then he would not let them see his face, but little by little his body grew plain to them and his features distinct, and they noticed that his hair had grown long and reached his waist. At first, too, he could only whistle, but now he could talk freely, and always was ready to help either his father or his mother, and she used to go with them in the boat whenever she had time, for she loved the fishing. Very soon, no longer fearing starvation, they packed up their store of food and placed it in the canoe and pushed off, for they were going back to Silka where they lived with their tribe. And as they drew near the landing-place, the woman beheld the shadow of her son’s hands

paddling, and wondered to herself, for his hands she could not see.

‘What is the matter with my son?’ she asked her husband at last. ‘I can only see his shadow,’ and she rose to find out if he was asleep or had fallen into the water. But he was not in the boat, neither was there any trace of him. Only the blanket, which had been across his knees, remained in the bottom.

So they rowed on to Silka.

[From *Tlingit Myths and Texts*, recorded by JOHN R. SWANTON, Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology. Bulletin 39.]

THE DISINHERITING OF A SON

Near a large town in England there lived in the last century a gentleman with his son and daughter. His wife died when her children were quite young, leaving a large fortune behind her, and in a few years her husband married again. Now, though the new lady of the manor had seemed gentle and amiable as long as she was a girl, she soon grew jealous of her stepson and his sister, and treated them very harshly and unkindly. She thought that anything was good enough for them, but that the moment she wished for anything she was to have it—quite forgetting that the money which bought her horses and diamonds belonged of right to the children. When she began to have babies of her own, matters grew worse, and as soon as her husband’s eldest son declared that he wished to leave England and pass some years in foreign countries, the stepmother broke into a furious rage, and declared that he must stop at home, for there was no money to waste on him.

The young man saw that no help was to be expected from his father, who was always afraid of his wife’s temper, so he said no more, but wrote at once to his own mother’s brother to beg his assistance. This was at once given, and thus it came about that very soon Alexander started off to see the world.

In the beginning, the allowance which his father had agreed to make him was paid regularly, and as regularly the son wrote home to tell where he was and what he was doing. Then gradually the payments were delayed, for the stepmother had always some good reason why the money could not be forthcoming at that particular date, and at length they ceased altogether. And when the payments ceased, the letters ceased also.

For four years things remained in this state, but the stepmother was not idle. She intended in one way or another to work upon her husband till she had forced him to do as she wished, and this was to leave the estate to her own son, ‘as it was quite certain,’ she went on, ‘that Alexander must be dead, or by this time they would have heard something about him.’

At first her husband would not listen to her, and many and frequent were their quarrels; but, as we know, ‘the dropping of water wears away a stone,’ and in the end he showed signs of giving way. His wife noticed it, and redoubled her efforts. ‘If Alexander were alive,’ she declared, ‘it was unpardonable of him to have treated his father in such a manner, and that fact alone would make him worthy of disinheritance; and if he were dead, then, of course, her boy was the proper heir to the estate.’

Still, in spite of all her arguments, she could not entirely bend her husband to her will; and the utmost she could get from him was a promise that if he did not hear from his son in four years he would agree to her plan.

For the moment the wife felt that no more could be gained, but soon she began her grumblings afresh, and worried him so perpetually that at last he consented to reduce the time of waiting from four years to one. This was not done very easily, and many angry words passed between them, till one day the wife burst out in a passion that she hoped his son’s ghost would appear to him and tell his father that he was dead, and that justice ought to be done to his other children.

‘And I,’ cried the father, ‘only wish his ghost would appear before the year is up, and tell us that he is alive.’

It happened not long after that they were sitting one summer evening in the parlour, disputing over the same subject—for nowadays they never talked about anything else—when suddenly the wife became silent and started up.

‘Did you see that hand at the window?’ she cried. ‘There must be thieves in the garden!’

‘Thieves!’ he exclaimed, and rushed to the door, but he quickly returned, saying:

‘You have made a mistake; there is nobody in the garden.’

‘But there *must* be,’ she answered.

‘It was a ghost, then,’ he replied, ‘for no one could have got over the walls without my seeing him.’

‘I am certain,’ persisted the wife, ‘that I saw a man put up his hand to the window, and if it *was* a ghost, it was the ghost of your son, who came to tell you that he is dead.’

‘If it *was* my son,’ said the husband, ‘he is come to tell us he is alive, I warrant you, and to ask how you can be so wicked as to wish to disinherit him. Alexander! Alexander!’ he cried, looking towards the window. ‘If you are alive, show yourself, and don’t let me be vexed daily with tales of your death.’

As he spoke, the window flew open, and Alexander looked in. He stared angrily at his stepmother, who shrieked and fainted; and uttering the word ‘Here’ in a clear voice, the young man vanished.

Immediately her husband rushed outside and tried the doors leading from the garden into the stables and some fields, but found them all barred. Then he inquired of some men if anyone had passed, but they had seen no one.

After that he returned to the parlour, and seated himself in his chair, waiting till his wife had recovered herself.

‘What was it?’ she asked as soon as she could speak.

‘Alexander, without a doubt,’ answered he, and she fainted a second time, and was in bed for several days afterwards.

The husband hoped that the fright his wife had undergone would have put an end to her schemes, but as time went on she forgot her scare, and began to tease as of old. This so enraged the poor man that he threatened to summon Alexander again, to which the furious woman retorted by calling him a magician. Finally the quarrel was ended by the resolve to refer the dispute to some friends and to beg them to judge between them. The friends, when they had listened to what had passed, laughed at the wife, and said that all they

could make of it was that her husband had cried out his son's name, and that someone had answered 'Here.' In their opinion, that was all there was in the affair, and they advised the two to be reconciled to each other as soon as possible.

Of course, if the husband had possessed any sense he would have turned his wife's fright to good account, but he was very weak and terribly afraid of her. He agreed after much arguing to sign the deed she wanted in the presence of two witnesses, saying as he delivered it to her:

'You have worried me into this by your horrible temper, but I have signed it against justice and my conscience, and depend upon it, I shall never perform it, as I am satisfied in my mind that my son is alive.'

When four months had passed, and the year was up, the woman told her husband that the time was come to perform his promise about the estate, and to have the new deeds executed to settle it upon her son. Therefore she had invited the two friends who had helped them before, to dine with them the next night, and they would see that everything was done properly.

The following evening they were all seated round a table, which was covered with papers. The new deeds handing over the estate to the second wife's son on the death of his father were read out and signed, and the wife took up the old deeds which had appointed Alexander heir to his own mother's property, and tore off the seal. At that instant an icy, whistling wind rushed through the room, as if someone had entered from the hall and passed out by the garden door, which was shut.

Nothing was seen, but they all shivered. The wife turned pale, but, recovering herself, asked her husband what tricks he was playing now, to which he answered angrily that he knew no more about it than anybody else.

'When did you last hear from your son?' asked one of the gentlemen present.

'Five years ago,' replied the father.

'And have you not written to him about this business?' continued the gentleman.

'No; for I did not know where to write to.'

'Sir,' said his friend earnestly, 'I never saw a ghost in my life, nor believed in them; and even now I have seen nothing. But that *something* passed through the room just now was quite clear. I heard it distinctly.'

'And I *felt* the wind it made as it passed by me,' remarked another witness.

'Pray, sir,' said the first, addressing himself to the father; 'have *you* seen anything at any time, or heard voices or noises, or dreamed anything about this matter?'

'Many times I have dreamed that my son was alive, and that I had spoken with him, and once that I had asked him why he had not written to me for so long, seeing that I had it in my power to disinherit him.'

'And what answer did he make to that?'

'I never dreamt on so long as to have his answer.'

‘And what do you think yourself? Do you believe he is dead?’

‘No; I do not. I believe he is alive, and that if I disinherit him I shall commit a sin.’

‘Truly,’ said the second witness; ‘it begins to shock me. I will meddle with it no further.’ But at these words the wife, who had recovered her courage, exclaimed:

‘What is the use of talking like that? Everything is settled. Why else are we here? *I* am not frightened, if *you* are,’ and again she took up one of the old deeds, in order to tear off the seal.

Then the window flew open and the shadow of a body was seen standing outside, with its face looking straight at her face.

‘Here,’ said a voice, and the spectre vanished.

In spite of her boasted courage, the wife shrieked and fell in hysterics, and the two witnesses took up the deeds.

‘We will have no more to do with this business,’ cried they, and, taking up the new deeds which they had signed, they tore off their names, and by so doing these deeds became of no value, and the elder son was still heir to the property.

Four or five months later the young man arrived from India, where he had gone from Portugal soon after leaving home. The two gentlemen who had been concerned in the matter of the deeds, as well as his father, put many questions to him as to whether he on *his* side had seen visions or heard voices which warned him of the plots going on against him. But Alexander denied having received warning of any sort, ‘unless,’ he added, ‘you can so call a dream I once had—which was indeed what sent me home—that my father had written me a very angry letter, threatening me, if I stayed away any longer, to deprive me of my inheritance. But why do you want to know?’

‘HERE,’ SAID A VOICE

THE SIEGE OF RHODES

When you are reading the history of the sixteenth century, you will notice that in Europe nearly the whole of that period was occupied by two struggles: the struggle of the Reformed religion against the Catholic Church, and that of the Christian world with the Sultans of Turkey.

When the century began, the Turks had been lords of Constantinople for fifty years, and were for a while busy with establishing themselves firmly in the capital of the Emperors of the East. Then, as in the days of Mahomet’s successors nine hundred years before, they proceeded to look about for fresh worlds to conquer, when the Crescent should trample underfoot the Cross. In 1521, Solyman, accompanied by a vast host, marched northwards to Hungary, and after a two months’ siege captured the town of Belgrade. This expedition was undertaken by the Sultan in obedience to the wishes of his father, who died before he could march there himself; but what the young man really longed to possess was the beautiful Island of Rhodes lying at a short distance from the coast of Asia Minor.

His councillors shook their heads when he told them of his plan. The city of Rhodes was the stronghold of the Brotherhood of St. John of Jerusalem and the Knights had seen to its fortifications. It *might* be taken, of course; still the loss of life was sure to be tremendous and the Sultan possessed other islands as lovely and fertile as Rhodes. No doubt he did; but it was Rhodes he wanted, so Solyman turned from his old councillors and listened to the advice of his brother-in-law, Mustafa Pasha.

The first step was to discover something about the town and its defences: how many men could be mustered on the walls, and what means the Knights had of providing against a long siege. For this purpose he despatched a Jewish physician greatly trusted by his father, to the island, with orders to pretend himself ready to become a Christian so as to find favour with the Grand Master of the Knights of St. John, and to lose no opportunity of making friends with the people by trying to cure their sick. These instructions were faithfully carried out by the Jew, who sent word to the Sultan that an important part of one of the city walls was being rebuilt, and that if an army could be landed before the work could be completed, the men would easily be able to enter the breach.

Now the Jew, of course, was fulfilling the task given him, and was risking his own neck in the accomplishment of it. But what can be said of the treachery of one of the Knights themselves who out of jealousy had bidden Solyman to besiege the town? This man, Sir Andrew de Merall, was a Portuguese and so highly thought of among his fellows that he had been named Chancellor of the Order. He expected, however, to be the next Grand Master, and when, on the death of Fabrice of Cacetto, Sir Philip de Villiers was chosen in his place, de Merall’s rage at being passed over was such that he could not control himself. The Knights did not pay much heed to his words; it was natural, they thought, that he should be disappointed, but he would soon calm down again. And so de Merall did, to all outward appearance, and no one guessed how black were his thoughts.

A pretext for his treason was soon found: it was easy for him to send over a Turkish prisoner to Constantinople, on the plea of the man raising money for his ransom, and

instructing the Turk beforehand exactly what he was to tell the Sultan as to the condition of the city.

‘He will never find a better time,’ said the traitor, ‘seeing that the wall is now partly down and there is mischief among some Italian Knights. As to help from without, the Christian princes are busy warring each upon the other, and, if this should last, the town will be his without fail,’ which thing came to pass.

The Sultan took the counsel given him, and assembled a great fleet in all haste to bear his army through the Ægean Sea. In order to keep everything as secret as possible, he forbade his subjects to enter Rhodes on any pretence whatever. But the return of the Turkish spy and his friendship with de Merall was noted by all, and the Grand Master’s own men reported that a large army was being assembled in Turkey. Yet, in spite of these rumours, Sir Philip de Villiers did not disquiet himself. No Turkish host had ever captured Rhodes, and when the wall was repaired the defences would be stronger than before. And it was far more likely that the fleet was intended for the Adriatic, and meant either to attack Venice herself or some of her dependencies on the opposite coast. Still, in order not to be caught unawares, the Grand Master heightened the walls and deepened the trenches beyond them while he filled the storehouses with food, and the magazines with powder.

His precautions were received with scorn by the larger number of his Knights and most of the citizens. ‘Why, the town was already provisioned for a year or more,’ they said, ‘and no siege would last as long as that.’ But the day came when they lamented that the granaries had not been twice the size, and the magazines three times bigger, for a month before the surrender of the town food was hardly to be had, and ammunition had almost failed them.

Though no help was to be expected from the great nations of Christendom, and the Governor of Candia or Crete forbade his men to serve under the Grand Master of the Knights in Rhodes, Sir Philip de Villiers contrived by his energy to get in a large quantity of wine from the island. Besides this, he was greatly cheered by the kindness of a private gentleman from Venice, who not only brought over a ship laden with 700 butts of wine for their use, instead of selling his cargo at Constantinople as he had meant to do, but stayed and fought for them himself, and put all he had at their disposal. Night and day the Grand Master worked; he seemed to be everywhere at once, and to think of everything. Now he was in the powder magazine watching the officers serving out ammunition to the soldiers; now he was on the walls testing the strength of the repairs; now he was in the fields examining the corn and deciding what was ripe enough to be cut and brought in. When this was done he gathered into the city the people of the neighbouring villages.

Hardly was this accomplished when news arrived that the Turks were near at hand. Then the Grand Master ordered a muster of all the men capable of bearing arms, and began with the Knights, the flower of many races; and a splendid sight they were, in their scarlet tunics with a large white cross on the breast. To each he appointed his place, with his special duties, and next proceeded to the citizens and the strangers, giving them separate colours and mottoes, and forming them into companies. But at the most the defenders did

not number more than 6,000, and who could tell how many the Turks might be?

On June 18, 1522, the Turkish fleet was sighted, and for the next fortnight it moved from place to place in the neighbourhood of Rhodes, till it finally cast anchor about six miles from the town and remained there till the end of the siege. Four hundred ships, large and small, were said to be assembled, and for a fortnight some of the galleys went to and from the mainland, returning with fresh supplies and more soldiers. Meanwhile the Grand Master left his palace and took up his abode near the part of the walls where he expected the fight to be fiercest. He had need of vigilance; for more to be dreaded than the enemy without were the traitors within, though as yet none suspected de Merall of treason. But many of the women slaves serving in the houses of the rich were Turks, who sought to help their countrymen. This was to be done by setting fire to their masters' houses at the moment of the first assault, in order to tempt the soldiers to leave their posts at the defences, to put out the flames. Luckily the plot was betrayed and the leader executed before any harm was done. The Turkish male slaves, on the contrary, were faithful throughout, and as they numbered 1,500 were of great importance, working hard in the trenches. The walls were divided into different portions, called sometimes after the kingdoms and sometimes after provinces of countries. There was the 'gate of Italy,' the 'gate of Almaine' or Germany, the 'gate of Auvergne,' the 'gate of Provence,' the 'Walls of England and Spain'; and it was at these two walls that the first assault was directed. The Turks shot huge stones from their guns, and their engines cast them upwards into the air, so that they fell down with tremendous force into the street, but strangely enough they did little damage to anyone. Soon there arrived in Rhodes, from Candia, Captain Gabriel Martinengo and two other captains, all skilled in war, while the following day the young Sultan himself joined his fleet.

His presence inspired the army with fresh energy. The soldiers now began to take aim with harquebuses and 'hand-guns', and to erect mounds nearer the town as cover for their marksmen. They worked under a heavy fire from the besieged, and though many of them were slain, the hill they made grew steadily higher till at length it overtopped the wall of Spain and the gate of Auvergne by ten or twelve feet. The Christians, in their turn, rebuilt the walls with boards and trenches for cover, but not before numbers who could ill be spared had fallen victims to the fire of the Turks.

In spite of the hosts encamped before them, the courage of the defenders never failed, and for a time it seemed as if their strength would never fail either. Vainly did the besiegers build screens or 'mantelets' of wood or stones, behind which their soldiers could shoot in safety; a well-directed fire beat on them with such persistence that at length they got weary of constantly repairing, and moved their mantelets away to some other place. But though the Knights had won the day here, the number of the Turks was beginning to tell, as it was bound to do in the long run. It did not matter to them how many were killed, there were always plenty more to take their places, and at the end of a month the wall of England was cast down, and a breach was made in the wall of Spain. Gabriel Martinengo did his utmost to make use of these disasters and his guns fired through the breaches into the trenches, while he stationed men with harquebuses on the roofs of the houses. To this the enemy answered by throwing hollow stones into the town filled with that terrible Greek fire which it was said could only be put out by burying it under earth. Some of the wooden buildings caught, but on the whole, not much harm was done.

So passed August, and September brought a new terror to the besieged. The Turks were undermining the town, and countermines had to be prepared. The mine under the wall of England, however, was so well laid with gunpowder that when it exploded all the town felt the shock, and part of the wall fell into the trench, whereat the Turks leaped into the breach waving their banners and poured forth an incessant fire from their hand-guns. For three hours the battle raged; then the victory remained with the Grand Master, and the enemy retired, leaving a thousand dead upon the ground.

Again and again the assault was renewed upon one or other of the walls and gates. The fire of the besieged was so fierce that, brave as they were, the Turks often recoiled before it and had literally to be driven forward by their officers. Their loss was always much greater than that of the Christians, as must invariably happen in a siege; but, on the other hand, some of the best and most useful of the Christian Knights were killed by the enemy.

Throughout September the mining continued, and explosions were frequent. Sixty thousand Turks were now in the trenches all well armed, and it was easy for them to attack the walls in various places at once. On the 24th the famous Turkish band of Janizaries, led by their chief, fought their way into the bulwark of Spain, and planted their standards on the top. It seemed as if the capture of the town was inevitable, but the Grand Master on hearing of the peril hastened from his post at the gate of England, and put himself at the head of the combatants at the bulwark of Spain. The struggle lasted for hours, but at length the Turks gave way, and so many of them lay dead that you could not see the ground for the corpses.

From his tent Solyman had watched it all, and ‘was very sore displeased, and half in despair.’ He laid the whole blame of defeat on Mustafa Pasha, his brother-in-law, because, he declared, without his advice the siege would never have been undertaken. The Sultan even wished in his anger to put the unfortunate man to death, but was dissuaded from his purpose by the other pashas, on the ground that ‘it would comfort their enemies and give them courage.’ So Mustafa’s life was spared, and ‘that he might do something to please the Turk, as well for his honour as for to save his person, he was marvellously diligent to make mines at the bulwark of England.’

Discovering the Traitor.

Had it not been for the traitors in the town who sent letters to the Sultan showing that it was impossible for the defenders to hold out much longer the siege would now have been raised. After three months of almost hand-to-hand warfare, in spite of mines that threw down the houses and breaches that had been made in the walls, the Turks did not seem any nearer their end. Even the Janizaries declared they would fight no more, and from the walls the Christians noted bodies of stragglers making their way towards the Turkish fleet.

Then one night an Albanian captive stole out to the enemy’s camp, bearing letters from de Merall and the other betrayers of their land and their religion, and the next morning the fire of the enemy was hotter than ever.

Early in October three successive assaults were made on the bulwark of England, but were beaten back at the cost of many lives, the Turkish soldiers vowing at last that no one, not the Sultan himself, should induce them to make another attack on a place so obstinately defended. Indeed, a mutiny nearly broke out among the troops. Some of all this was

perceived by the Christians, and their hearts beat with joy. By command of the Grand Master a body of men went outside the walls while the guns above played upon the enemy, and cleared away the earth from the ditch beyond, bringing it back into the town where they flung it down inside the wall. And this, though they did not guess it, proved later one of the causes of their undoing. So busy were they, that they did not perceive that the Turks, having covered their trenches with boards, worked hard at boring a passage which came out on the other side of the wall under the barbican—a sort of small fortification—by which means they were able to gain the foot of the wall.

Therefore now, on October 17, the fighting began on the inside. In vain the Christians tried by every means to drive the Turks from the barbican; they could never be dislodged. Then Sir Gabriel Martinengo ordered, as a last resource, that the wall should be broken down so that these might be reached face to face, but when this was done the Christians were no nearer success. Three days after, the Turks fastened strong ropes, weighted with anchors, to the walls which had already been undermined; but the artillery, placed on the bulwark of Auvergne, cut the ropes and sent away the besiegers.

By this time all the slaves in the Christian army and many of the soldiers had fallen, and there was hardly anyone left to do the repairs or to carry the wounded to the Hospital within the city. It was evident to everyone that the end was not far off, and it was then, when things could scarcely be worse, that the sorest blow of all was dealt to the courage of the Grand Master. Hitherto the treachery of Sir Andrew de Merall had been totally unsuspected by him, but one day a servant of the Portuguese Knight was caught in the act of firing a cross-bow into the Turkish camp, with a letter tied to the shaft. Taken before the Grand Master the man confessed that it was not the first occasion by many that, at the command of his master, he had in like manner sent the enemy information of the condition of the town, warning them not to leave, as men, powder, and provisions were rapidly failing.

But cut to the heart though he was, the Grand Master had no leisure as yet to attend to de Merall; he ordered the servant to be locked up securely, and went back to the walls, which he scarcely ever left. The bulwark of England was now in the hands of the Turks, who were arranging a fierce assault on the wall of Spain. The last great battle took place on November 29, and for the last time the Christians were victorious.

A few days after this a native of Genoa—probably a prisoner—came out of the Turkish camp to the gate of Auvergne and demanded to speak with someone in authority. When his request was granted, he inquired why the town, which could hold out no longer, was not surrendered, while there was yet time to get good terms from the Sultan. Thrice he made attempts to prevail on the Knights to listen to his proposals, but they would not, preferring rather to die at their posts. The townspeople, however, thought otherwise, and whispered together secretly at first, and then openly, that they would fain save their own lives and that of their children, seeing there was no further hope of driving away the enemy. And these murmurings soon came to the ears of the council, who laid them before the Grand Master.

While the assembled lords were talking over this weighty matter, some of the citizens knocked at the door of the chamber and, being admitted, ‘meekly besought the said reverend lord the Grand Master to consider the piteous and sorrowful state the town was in’, and to pray that if he would not surrender it, at least to send away their wives and children, or otherwise they would become slaves or be slain. ‘And the conclusion was, that if the said lord would not purvey, they would purvey for it themselves. That is, they would see to the placing in safety of their wives and children.’

The Grand Master heard them with a gloomy face, and dismissed them, saying, they should know shortly what was in the minds of the council to do. He then inquired of the Knight who had charge of the gunpowder how much there was left, and received for answer ‘not more than was needed to withstand two assaults.’ At that the Grand Master turned to Sir Gabriel Martinengo, who was Captain of the soldiers, and asked if the town might hold out or not, or if there were any means to save it.

‘Scarcely are there folk enough to move a piece of artillery from one place to another,’ answered he, ‘and it is impossible without folk to set up the repairs which every day are broken and crushed by the great, furious, and continual shot of the enemy.’

Very unwillingly the Grand Master was convinced that his cause was hopeless and that, as it was the wish of the people and of many of the lords also, a treaty must be made with the Sultan. ‘He took it most heavily and was more sorrowful than any of the others,’ writes the old chronicler, ‘for the business belonged very near to him.’

So a ‘sign’ was set upon the tower of the abbey outside the walls, and the two Turks who came from the camp in answer bore with them a letter from Solyman to the Grand Master, offering, in case of surrender, to let all the Knights and the people leave the town with their ‘goods and jewels without fear of harm or displeasure of his folks. But that if the Grand Master would not accept the treaty none of the city should think to escape, but they all, unto the cats, should pass by the edge of the sword.’

The die had been cast by the council, yet even so the Grand Master could not bear to deliver up his trust, and seems to have sought to delay matters. Therefore he sent two of his Knights into the Turkish camp to beg an audience of the Sultan and to ascertain without a doubt that faith would be kept with the Christians.

The ambassadors were received courteously by two high Turkish officials, and a truce of three days was agreed upon, during which ‘the enemies came to our repairs and spake with our folk, and drank with one another,’ as enemies should after the battle is over. When the Christian Knights saw the Sultan, he repeated his terms, and informed them that at the end of the truce he must have an answer. He then dismissed them, giving each a garment of velvet and cloth of gold as a present.

Thus all was arranged for the yielding up of the city, when a most unexpected thing happened. Some of the very citizens who had been most urgent for the surrender now appeared before the Grand Master and the council, and declared that as *they* had not been consulted they would not consent to ceding the town, and they might as well die while

defending it, for they were sure to be put to death anyhow.

In fact, they behaved more like a set of pettish children than like men, whose lives were at stake.

However much these words of the citizens may have chimed in with his secret wishes, the Grand Master’s reason told him that he had no right to take advantage of their folly, and all he would agree to was to send two fresh ambassadors to the Turkish camp, begging the Sultan once more to repeat his conditions and give them renewed guarantees.

Not unnaturally Solyman declined to be played with like this, and his only answer was to order an attack to be sounded at once. Refreshed by the three days’ truce the Turks fought harder than ever, and hour by hour pressed nearer into the town. Then the Grand Master summoned the citizens who had prevented the surrender, and said that as they were willing to die he was well content to die with them, and that a proclamation would be made throughout the town that every man should be at his post at the gates day and night, and that, if he left, instant death would be the penalty.

For a day or two the Rhodians were most zealous at the walls—especially after one had been hanged for desertion—but soon their hearts failed; they slunk away, and as it was not possible to hang everybody the Knights were left to defend the walls themselves. At length the Grand Master sent to inquire of the citizens why they had broken their word and abandoned their duty, to which they made answer that ‘when they had gainsaid the surrender of the town, they had been wrongly informed of many things. But that now the Grand Master might do whatever seemed good to him, only they prayed him to grant them the favour of sending two among them as ambassadors to the Great Turk.’

This time the negotiations took longer than before, and after rejecting the excellent terms Solyman had offered them in the first instance, the Christians were not in a position to demand anything more than their lives. The Sultan, however, was generous, and though his soldiers cannot be said to have kept completely to the conditions of the treaty, they confined themselves to pillaging the town, and offered violence to nobody.

Thus ended on Christmas Day 1522 the famous Siege of Rhodes, after it had lasted six months.

THE PRINCESS OF BABYLON

Belus, King of Babylon, thought himself the greatest man in all the earth, for his subjects were continually telling him so and he had no difficulty in believing them. It was very absurd, of course, but there is this to be said in his excuse, that though his ancestors had built Babylon thirty thousand years before, it owed its chief beauties to him. Belus it was who constructed the vast palace with its famous 'hanging gardens,' and planted with fruit-trees the park stretching from the Euphrates to the Tigris, everything being kept fresh and cool in that burning heat by means of canals and fountains which scattered their waters around.

But though Babylon contained much that was beautiful, the palace itself held the most beautiful and precious thing of all, the king's only child, the Princess Formosante; and her father was prouder of her than of his whole empire put together. Still, with all his delight in his daughter's presence, he knew his duty, and that now she was eighteen it was needful to find her a suitable husband. Yet, who was worthy of such a prize? One by one Belus passed the kings of the earth in judgment before him, and could not answer this question. Then he remembered that the oracle which had been consulted at Formosante's birth had declared that only he who could bend the iron bow of Nimrod, the mighty hunter, should win the hand of the princess.

Well, since that was the decision of the oracle—which, of course, must be obeyed—matters became in one way a little easier. But, could Belus be mistaken? Had not the oracle said something else? Oh, yes! he recollected now that the arm which could draw the bow must overcome also the largest and fiercest lion ever seen in Babylon, and be the best, the cleverest, and the most splendid of men, and possess the rarest object in the whole universe.

And as one by one Belus recalled these conditions he sighed aloud, for where should he look for a son-in-law like that?

King Belus need not have been so anxious as regards suitors for the princess, for as an old song says:

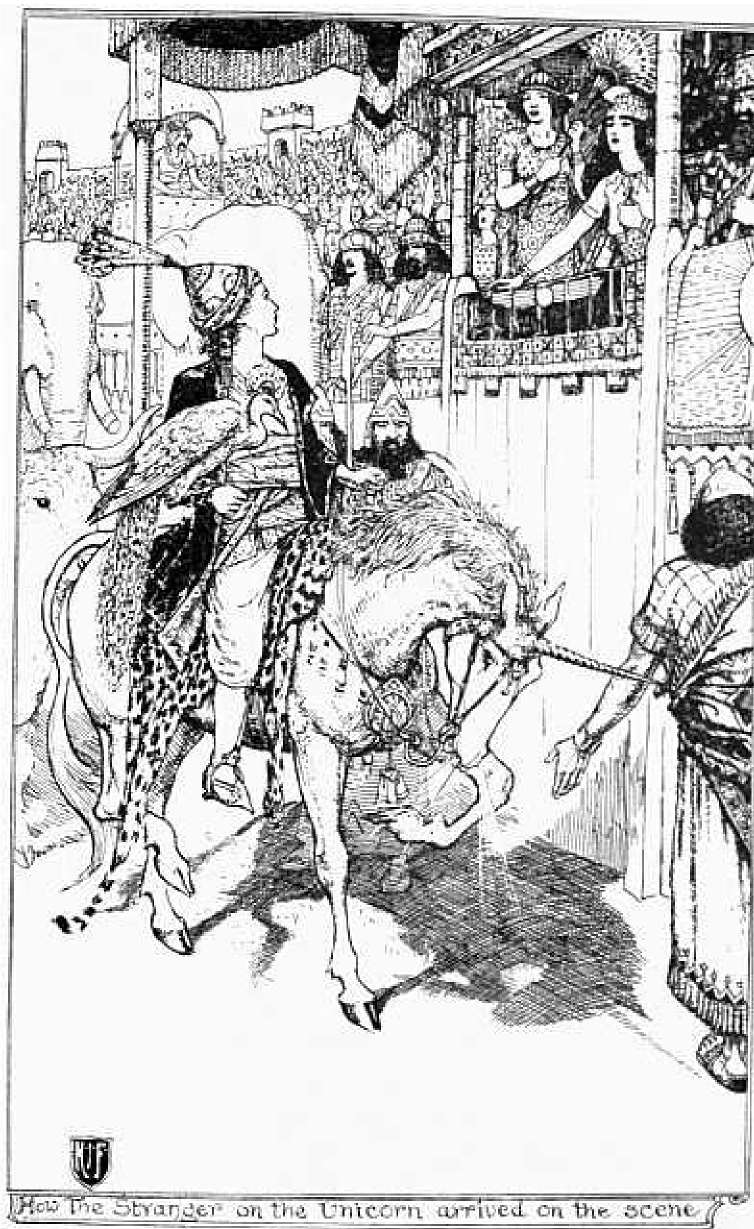
'Where maidens are fair, many lovers will come,'

and Formosante was very fair indeed. The fame of her beauty had spread far and wide, and soon the Court of Babylon received notice that the Pharaoh of Egypt, the Shah of India, and the Khan of Scythia—such were the names these nations gave to their rulers—were on their way to Babylon to ask the hand of Formosante.

Preparations for the great event had to be made instantly, and that very day the place was marked out in the park for the erection of a marble amphitheatre capable of holding five hundred thousand persons. Opposite the amphitheatre was a high throne for King Belus and his daughter, and on each side, but a step lower, were those for the princes and nobles

who might wish to see the contest. The seats for the three foreign kings were set a little apart.

The first to arrive was the King of Egypt, mounted on the bull Apis and followed by a train of eight thousand attendants; and scarcely had Belus bidden him welcome than the sound of trumpets announced the approach of the King of India, lying upon cushions in a gorgeous litter drawn by twelve elephants, and attended by a still more numerous company. The last to appear was the King of Scythia, riding a tiger as tall as the biggest horse from Persia. He had with him only a few picked warriors, magnificent men armed with bows and arrows; but the king himself was more imposing than any of his soldiers, and the Babylonians, as they looked at him, said to themselves: ‘Ah! there is no doubt who will win the princess.’



How The Stranger on the Unicorn arrived on the scene.

When they were all assembled, the three monarchs fell on their faces before the king and his daughter, and then offered the gifts they had brought with them. The present of the Pharaoh consisted of two of the finest crocodiles that could be caught in the Nile, two hippopotamuses, two rats, and two mummies, all of which caused the princess to shudder at their ugliness. In his hands he held the Book of Hermes, which his magicians assured

him was the rarest treasure on earth.

The Shah of India brought a hundred elephants and a document written by the hand of Xaca himself; while the Khan of Scythia, who could neither read nor write, signed to his warriors to bring forward a hundred horses covered with skins of black fox fur.

As soon as the offerings had been made, Formosante bowed modestly, but did not raise her eyes or speak, for that was never expected of a princess.

‘Ah, why have I not three daughters!’ exclaimed King Belus, as he conducted his guests to their thrones; ‘then I could have made six people happy! Now here is the golden basin holding the lots which you must draw. The one who draws the longest, first pulls the bow.’

It was the Pharaoh who was the lucky man, and the master of the ceremonies stepped forward with the long golden case, bearing the bow of Nimrod. The Pharaoh was about to take it from him, when there suddenly appeared at the barrier which had been erected in front of the royal seats a young man mounted on a unicorn, with a bird upon his wrist, accompanied by a single attendant also riding on a unicorn. His face was fair and his hair shone like the sun, and altogether he was so different from the dwellers in Babylon that the five hundred thousand spectators in the amphitheatre rose to their feet in order to stare at him better; and suddenly they shouted with one voice: ‘He is the only man on earth handsome enough for the princess.’

Formosante heard and glanced up at him; then looked hastily down. The kings heard too, and grew pale.

At this moment the ushers approached the stranger and inquired if he was a king. The young man replied that he did not have that honour, but that he had travelled far to see whether the suitors who were to present themselves were worthy of Formosante, whose renown had reached even his distant country. By the King of Babylon’s orders, places were found for him and his attendant in the front row of the amphitheatre: his bird perched on his shoulder, and the two unicorns crouched at his feet.

Now all was ready: the master of the ceremonies, who had during this time been holding the case, took the bow from it to the sound of trumpets, and presented it to the King of Egypt. The Pharaoh, who had not the slightest doubt that the prize would fall to him, laid it for a moment on the head of the sacred bull Apis and stepped into the middle of the arena. The bow, though made of iron, *looked* flexible, and he fitted an arrow to the string with a light heart. But try as he would, he could not bend it; again and again he put forth all his strength, making such dreadful faces the while that shouts of laughter rang through the amphitheatre, and even the well-brought-up Formosante could not resist a smile.

Deeply hurt at his master’s failure, the Grand Almoner of Egypt hastened to his side.

‘Let not your Majesty,’ he said, ‘struggle further for this empty honour, which is after all only a matter of muscles and sinews. In the other tests you are sure to be victor. You will conquer the lion, for have you not the sabre of the god Osiris? The Princess of Babylon is to be the prize of the king who has given proofs of the greatest intelligence; and numerous are the riddles which you have guessed. Her husband must be the most virtuous of princes. Well, were you not the favourite pupil of the Egyptian priesthood? And do you not possess the two rarest objects in the world, the bull Apis and the book of Hermes? No; you are

quite safe. There is no one to dispute with you the hand of the Princess Formosante.'

'You are right,' answered the king, and seated himself on his throne.

The bow was next delivered to the King of India, who spent fifteen days in vainly trying to draw it, and when he failed as hopelessly as the King of Egypt had done before him, consoled himself with thinking that the King of Scythia would fare no better than they.

But he was wrong. The King of Scythia had passed his whole life in shooting with bows and arrows, whereas the other two kings had only begun to practise when they heard of the conditions to be fulfilled by the husband of Formosante. When therefore the Scythian monarch grasped the bow, there was an eager rustle amongst the five hundred thousand in the amphitheatre. They leaned forward with straining eyes, and held their breath like one man, as they perceived a slight movement of the bow. The king's heart beat high as he felt it quiver under his hands, but, pull as hard as he might, he could not bend it further. A sigh of disappointment swept through the audience, partly for him and partly for the princess.

'At this rate she will never be married,' they groaned.

Then the young stranger left his seat and went up to the King of Scythia.

'Do not be surprised,' he said, 'if your Majesty has not been entirely successful. These bows are made in my country, and there is a certain knack in drawing them. You have won a greater triumph in bending it even a little than I should have done in drawing it altogether.'

As he spoke he picked up an arrow and, fitting it into the string of the bow, drew, without any apparent effort, the cord to his ear, and the arrow flew out of sight beyond the barrier.

At this spectacle a shout broke from half a million throats. The walls of Babylon rang with cries of joy, and the women murmured:

'What a comfort that such a handsome young man should have so much strength!' and waited with great interest to see what would happen next.

Well, this happened which nobody expected at all. The young man took from the folds of his turban an ivory tablet, on which he wrote some lines addressed to the princess, with a golden needle, telling her how jealous the rest of the world would be of the man who carried off the prize for which so many were striving.

To us who read them, they do not seem perhaps to fulfil the second of the conditions imposed, but the oracle knew that to the person whose eyes fell on them for the first time, they would appear to contain all the wit and wisdom of the world. So when the princess glanced at the tablet held out to her at the end of the bow, she felt that nothing more beautiful had ever been written, and the three kings looking on were rooted to the ground in astonishment and disgust.

Meanwhile King Belus, having consulted his magicians, declared that although neither of the three kings could bend the bow, his daughter must nevertheless be married, and that they would now go on to the next test, which was the slaying of the lion. The Pharaoh, who had been educated in all the learning of his country, replied that it really was too ridiculous to expect a king to expose himself to the fury of wild beasts in order to obtain a bride, and that though no one had a greater admiration for the princess Formosante than

he, yet if he were slain by the lion, he would not be able to marry her any the more. This was quite true, and the King of India entirely agreed with him. Indeed, they went so far as to say that King Belus was making a jest of them, and that it would be necessary to bring large armies from their respective kingdoms in order to punish him. When between them they had dethroned him, they could then draw lots for Formosante.

Thus grumbling, they each sent off a messenger ordering a levy of three hundred thousand men to be raised without delay.

The King of Scythia, however, gave utterance to no complaints, but descended into the arena, a curved sword in his hand. Not that he was desperately in love with the beautiful Formosante; it was a passion for glory and for no woman which had brought him to Babylon, and when he saw that his two rivals had no intention of fighting the lion, he was filled with delight. He was not afraid of any lion that trod the earth; of course, he might not be able to kill it, and it might even kill him, but after all, a man could only die once.

The lion, when he rushed out from his cage, looked capable of swallowing all three kings at one mouthful, so large and fierce was he. But the King of Scythia stood firm and plunged his sword at the beast’s throat. Unluckily the point of it hit against his teeth and broke into splinters, and the lion, with a roar which shook the amphitheatre to its foundation, buried his claws deep in the thighs of his enemy. Another minute and all would have been over, had not the young stranger leapt to the king’s side, and, seizing a sword from the belt of an attendant, cut off the lion’s head at a single blow. He next produced a little box of ointment, which he begged the king to rub into his wounds.

‘It was only an accident,’ he said, ‘that prevented you from vanquishing the lion, and your courage is still as untarnished as if he lay dead at your feet.’

These words pleased the king even more than the ointment which was to cure his hurts; and full of gratitude he returned to his tent.

Left alone in the arena, the stranger turned to his attendant, and bade him wash the lion’s head in the stream that ran below the amphitheatre, and, when that was done, to take out the teeth of the beast, and put in their place diamonds of the same size, which he produced from his sash. As soon as all was ready the young man said to the bird which had remained perched on his shoulder: ‘Fair bird, I wish you to carry the head of this lion, and lay it at the feet of Formosante.’

So the bird carried the lion’s head, bowing himself low before her as he placed it on the ground, and the diamonds in the mouth shone so brightly that the whole court was dazzled with their brilliance. Indeed, the bird itself was hardly less wonderful, with his beak of coral and his claws of silver mixed with purple. No peacock possessed so splendid a tail, and though his size was that of an eagle, his eyes were gentle as well as piercing. The ladies crowded round him to pat his head and stroke his golden feathers, but though he

was polite to them all, he would not be tempted away from the princess. Everyone agreed that they had never beheld anything like the grace with which he received the biscuits and pistachio nuts offered him by Formosante, or the elegant gestures with which he conveyed them to his beak.

Meanwhile Belus had been considering attentively the diamonds in the lion's mouth and had made up his mind about the young stranger.

'It is plain,' he said, 'that he is the son either of the King of China, or of that part of the world known as Europe, or of Africa, which is, I am told, on the borders of Egypt. At any rate, let a magnificent feast be prepared for him.' At the same time, he ordered his equerry to ask the unknown, with all possible respect, who he was.

The stranger was about to answer, when there suddenly arrived on the scene a third unicorn ridden by a man very plainly dressed. He quickly dismounted and, addressing the victor, told him that Ocmar, his father, had only a short time to live and that they must start at once if his son wished to see him alive.

'Let us go then,' replied the young stranger; then turning to the king he added: 'Deign, sire, to permit the princess to accept the bird which I am leaving behind me. They are both of them unique.' He bowed to the king and to the spectators, and went down the marble steps to where his unicorn was waiting, but not before the equerry had obtained the information desired by Belus, and learned that the dying Ocmar was an old shepherd much respected in the neighbourhood of his home.

Nothing could equal the surprise of Belus and his daughter on hearing this news. In fact, the king refused to believe it, and desired the equerry to ride after the stranger at once, and find out more about him. But the unicorns went like the wind, and no traces could be seen of them, even from the platform of the highest towers.

Although the equerry had taken care that his words should be overheard by nobody but the king and the princess, yet somehow the news that the man who had fulfilled all the oracle's conditions was only a shepherd's son, speedily leaked out. For a long while no one talked of anything else, as is the way of courts—and other places—and it was generally held that it was a bad joke of the attendant's, who ought to have known better. One of the ladies-in-waiting went so far as to explain that the word 'shepherd' might actually mean a king, because kings were set to guard their flocks; but she found no one to agree with her. As to Formosante, she never said anything at all, but sat silently stroking her bird.

King Belus did not know what to do, and as always happened on these occasions he summoned his council, though he never paid any attention to what they said, or would have said, had they not known it to be useless. He talked to them for some time and at length decided that he would at once go and consult the oracle as to his best course, and return to tell them the result.

When he entered the council chamber after a very short absence, he looked puzzled and

crestfallen.

‘The oracle declares that my daughter will never be married till she has travelled all over the world,’ said he. ‘But how can a princess of Babylon, who never has stepped beyond the bounds of the park, “travel over the world”? It is absurd! indeed, if it were not sacrilege to utter such things of an oracle, I should say it was impertinent. Really, the oracle has not a spark of common-sense!’ and the council was of opinion that it certainly had not.

Although there was no triumphant bridegroom to grace the feast commanded by King Belus, it was held, as arranged, in the great hall where the turning roof, painted with stars, caused you to feel as if you were dining under the sky. Everything was on a scale of splendour never before seen in Babylon during the thirty thousand years of its existence; but perhaps the feast could hardly be considered a success, for the guests neither spoke nor ate, so absorbed were they in watching the incomparable manner in which the bird flew about from one to another, bearing the choicest dishes in his beak. At least, the only people who did speak were the King of Scythia and the Princess Aldée, the cousin of Formosante and scarcely less beautiful than she. To him, Aldée confided that it was she who, by law, should have been Queen of Babylon, but that on the death of her grandfather his younger son had usurped her father’s rights.

‘However,’ she ended, in answer to a question put by the King of Scythia; ‘I prefer Scythia with you to Babylon’s crown without you.’

There never was any mistaking what Aldée meant.

‘But I will avenge your father,’ cried the king. ‘In two days from now you shall fly with me back to Scythia, and when I return it will be at the head of three hundred thousand men.’ And so it was settled.

Everyone was glad to go to bed early after the fatigues of the day, and all slept soundly, except Formosante. She had carried the bird with her, and placed him on an orange-tree which stood on a silver tub in her room, and bidden him good-night. But tired as she was she could not close her eyes, for the scenes she had witnessed in the arena passed one by one before her. At length she could bear it no longer:

‘He will never come back! Never!’ she cried, sobbing.

‘Yes, he will, Princess,’ answered the bird from the orange-tree. ‘Who, that has once seen you, could live without seeing you again?’

Formosante was so astonished to hear the bird speak—and in the very best Chaldæan—that she ceased weeping and drew the curtains.

‘Are you a magician or one of the gods in the shape of a bird?’ asked she. ‘Oh! if you are

more than man, send him back to me!’

‘I am only the bird I seem,’ answered the voice; ‘but I was born in the days when birds and beasts of all sorts talked familiarly with men. I held my peace before the court because I feared they would take me for a magician.’

‘But how old are you?’ she inquired in amazement.

‘Twenty-seven thousand nine hundred years and six months,’ replied the bird. ‘Exactly the same age as the change that takes place in the heavens known as the “precession of the equinoxes,” but there are many creatures now existing on the earth far older than I. It is about twenty-two thousand years since I learned Chaldæan. I have always had a taste for it. But in this part of the world the other animals gave up speaking when men formed the habit of eating them.’

THE PRINCESS OF BABYLON AND THE PHOENIX

‘I never knew they did speak,’ replied the Princess, deeply interested in spite of her woes.

‘Not know that they spoke? Why, the earliest fables all begin with the words “Once upon a time when beasts talked,” but that is long ago! Of course, many women still talk to their dogs, but the dogs determined not to answer them; they were so angry at being forced by whips to go and hunt their brothers.

‘There are besides many stories which allude to conversations with horses, and their drivers still speak to them, as you know, but so very rudely that the horses which once loved men, now hate the whole race.’

Formosante nodded her head; she had sometimes been shocked at the language of the Babylonian charioteers.

‘The land where dwells my master,’ continued the bird, ‘is perhaps the only one in the world where animals are treated with proper respect, and where, therefore, they consent to live happily with man.’

‘And where is that?’ asked the Princess eagerly.

‘It is in the country of the Gangarids beyond the Ganges that Amazan my master was born. He is no king—indeed I hardly think he would condescend to be one—and, like his countrymen, he is a shepherd. But you must not suppose him to be one of the shepherds such as those you know, whose sheep are usually far better dressed than themselves. The shepherds of the Gangarids own immense flocks, for it is considered one of the blackest crimes to kill a sheep—and their wool, as fine as silk, is sought after all over the East. The soil is so rich that corn and fruits grow for the asking, while diamonds can be chipped from every rock. They have no army and need none, for a hundred unicorns can put to flight the largest host that ever was assembled.

‘And now, Princess, if you are to travel as the oracle desires, will you not give me the happiness of guiding you thither?’

‘Oh … really, I …,’ answered the Princess.

The sun was already rising when the king entered his daughter’s room, and after receiving the respectful greetings of the bird sat down on her bed. He did not seem quite at his ease, but at length he informed her that as, greatly to his sorrow, the oracle had decreed that she was to go on a journey before her marriage, he had arranged for her to make a pilgrimage to Araby the Blest in company with numerous attendants.

To the princess, who had never been beyond either the Euphrates or the Tigris, the thought of a journey was enchanting. She could not sit still, and wandered out into the gardens with her bird upon her shoulder. The bird, for his part, was scarcely less happy than she, and flew from tree to tree in an ecstasy of delight.

Unluckily, the King of Egypt was strolling about the gardens likewise, shooting with bow and arrows at everything within his reach. He was the worst marksman on the banks of the Nile, and though he never by any chance hit what he aimed at, he was none the less dangerous for that, as he usually hit something else. In this way a stray shot pierced the heart of the flying bird, who fell, all bloody, into the arms of the princess.

‘Burn my body,’ whispered the bird, ‘and see that you bear my ashes to Araby the Blest. To the east of the town of Aden spread them out in the sun, on a bed of cinnamon and cloves.’

So saying he breathed his last sigh, leaving Formosante fainting from grief.

On seeing his daughter’s condition, King Belus was filled with anger against the King of Egypt, and, not knowing if the death of the bird might not be a bad omen, hurried as usual to consult the oracle. For answer, the voice to which he looked for guidance, declared:

‘Mixture of everything; living death; loss and gain; infidelity and constancy; disasters and happiness.’ Neither he nor his council could make any sense of it, but he was satisfied with having done his duty.

Formosante, meanwhile, had burned the body of the bird, as he had desired, and put his

ashes in a golden vase from which she never parted. Her next step was to order the strange beasts brought by the King of Egypt to be put to death, and the mummies thrown into the river, and if she could have thrown their master after them she would have received some consolation! When the Egyptian monarch heard how she had treated his offering he was deeply offended, and retired to Egypt to collect an army of three hundred thousand men, with which to return and avenge the insult. The King of India promised to do likewise, and the King of Scythia (who had ridden off early that morning with Princess Aldée) might be expected back about the same time with another army of equal size, to regain his wife's lost inheritance.

Thus when the King of Babylon awoke the following morning, he found the palace quite empty. This he would not have minded for he was tired of feasting, but his fury was great at the news that the Princess Aldée had vanished also. Without losing a moment he called together his council and consulted his oracle, but he only could extract the following words, which have since become famous throughout the world:

'If you don't marry your daughters, they will marry themselves.'

Now when the Egyptian king quitted the court of Babylon he left some spies behind him, with orders to let him know the road taken by the princess to reach Araby the Blest. Therefore, when after three days' travelling she stopped at a rest-house for a little repose, she beheld, to her dismay, the King of Egypt following her. And worse than that: in a few minutes he had placed guards before every door, so that it was useless for her to attempt to escape him. For small though her experience of the world might be, Formosante was well aware that the Pharaoh's vanity had been deeply wounded by his failure in the matter of the bow, and she knew she could expect no mercy.

Therefore, on receiving the king's message that he craved an interview with her, the princess saw that her only chance lay in cunning, and, as soon as he began to speak to her, she knew she had guessed rightly. He addressed her very roughly, and told her that she was in his power; that he intended to marry her that evening after supper, and that it was useless for her to object as he had now got the upper hand.

Formosante pretended to be quite overcome by his kindness, and assured him that in secret he had been the lover she had always preferred, although she was afraid to say so. And she added, with her head hanging modestly down, that she would sup with him that evening with all the pleasure in life, and hoped he would deign to invite his Grand Almoner also, as he had appeared to her in Babylon to be a man full of wisdom and learning. Further, that she had with her some of the rare and precious wine of Shiraz which, she trusted, she might be permitted to bring for his Majesty's use.

So well did she act that the Pharaoh was completely deceived, and when the hour for supper arrived, he sat down to the table with his wounded vanity soothed and his good temper restored.

Anyone acquainted with the ways of princesses will not need to be told that Formosante not only drugged the wine set aside for the king and the almoner, but also the bottles which her maid distributed amongst the guards. The powder had been given her long ago by a magician in Babylon, with directions how to use it. ‘If,’ he said, ‘you wish it to take effect at once, put in two pinches. If in an hour, one; if the next morning, a quarter of a pinch. Remember what I tell you; some day your life may depend on it.’

For reasons of her own, Formosante thought it better to get through part of the supper before the king and his guest became unconscious. The Pharaoh was just then well pleased with himself and everyone else, and after paying her compliments on her beauty which grew more ardent as time wore on, begged permission to give her a kiss.

FORMOSANTE’S DRUG WORKS

‘Certainly, your Majesty,’ answered the princess, though it was the last thing she desired. But as she bent her forehead towards him, the drug did its work; the king fell back heavily on his chair, the almoner sank sideways to the ground, and a blackbird, which unnoticed by all had been perched in a corner, flew out through the window.

Then the princess rose calmly from her seat, summoned her maid, and mounting two horses which were saddled in readiness, they rode straight to Araby the Blest.

As soon as she and her maid Irla beheld the town of Aden lying before them, they got down and prepared, as the bird had bidden them, his funeral pyre of cinnamon and cloves. But what was the surprise of the princess when, on scattering the ashes on the little pyre, a flame suddenly broke forth! In the midst of the fire lay an egg, and out of the egg came her bird, more brilliant and beautiful than ever!

‘Take me to the country of the Gangarids,’ she gasped when she was able to speak, ‘and let us find Amazan.’

Fortunately for the princess the bird was able to satisfy her.

‘Two of my best friends among the griffins,’ he said, ‘live not far from here. A pigeon shall start at once with a message, and they can be with us by night.’ And so they were; and the princess and Irla did not lose a moment in mounting a small car which was attached to them, and in setting out for the land of the Gangarids.

‘I wish to speak to Amazan,’ cried the phœnix, as soon as the griffins halted before his house. And it was as well that the bird was there, for between joy and hope and fatigue the princess’s heart was fluttering to such a degree that she could have said nothing.

‘Amazan!’ replied the man whose crook betokened him to be a shepherd also; ‘he went away three hours ago——.’

‘Ah, that is what I feared!’ exclaimed the phœnix, while the princess sank back upon her cushions nearly fainting with disappointment. ‘Those three hours you passed in the rest-house, may have cost you the happiness of your life. But I will try if anything can be done to repair the mischief. We must see his mother at once,’ he added, and Formosante, with hope springing anew within her, followed him into a large room where the air was filled with song, which proceeded from the throats not only of a thousand different birds, but of shepherds and shepherdesses.

The voices seemed to chime in with the melancholy of the princess, who rose, trembling, as the mother of Amazan entered.

‘Ah, give him back to me!’ she cried; ‘for his sake I have quitted the most brilliant court in the world, and have braved all kinds of dangers. I have escaped the snares of the King of Egypt—and now I find he has fled from me.’

‘Princess,’ answered the lady, ‘did you not happen to notice while you were at supper with the King of Egypt a blackbird flying about the room?’

‘Ah, now you say so, I *do* recollect one!’ rejoined the princess; ‘and I remember that when the king bent forward to give me a kiss, the bird disappeared through the window with a cry of anguish.’

‘You are right, alas!’ replied the lady, ‘and from that moment all our troubles can be dated. That blackbird had been sent by my son to bring him news of your health, as he meant as soon as the burial ceremonies for his father had been completed to return and throw himself at your feet. For when a Gangarid is in love, he *is* in love. But as soon as he was told how gay you seemed, above all, as soon as he heard of you ready to accept the kiss of the monarch who had killed the phœnix, despair filled his soul, and that in the very moment in which he had learned that he was your cousin and that therefore the King of

Babylon might be induced to listen to his suit.’

‘My cousin! But how?’

‘Never mind that now. He *is* your cousin! But I feared he would never survive the news of the kiss which you had given to the King of Egypt.’

‘Oh, my aunt, if you could only understand!’ cried the princess, wringing her hands. ‘I dared not excite the king’s suspicions or I should never have escaped! I swear it by the ashes and the soul of the phœnix which were then in my pocket! Tell her, Bird of Wisdom, that what I say is true.’

‘It is! It is!’ exclaimed the phœnix eagerly. ‘But now what we have to do is to go in search of Amazan. I will despatch unicorns in all directions, and I hope before many hours to be able to tell you where he is.’

The phœnix was as good as his word. At length one of the unicorns learned that Amazan was in China. Without losing a moment they set out, and arrived, travelling through the air, in the short space of eight days, but only to find that they had again missed him by a few hours. The emperor would gladly have kept Formosante to show her the wonders of his country, but as soon as he heard her story and how all this misery had its root in a kiss given out of pure fidelity, he saw that the one thing he could do for the princess was to discover for her the road which Amazan had taken.

From that day began a series of journeys such as no Babylonish princess had ever gone through during the thirty thousand years of the monarchy. There was not a kingdom either in Asia or in Europe that Formosante did not visit, and in spite of the fact that she had no room in her mind for any thought except the finding of Amazan (who had invariably left but a few hours before), she was forced to pick up some new ideas on the way. Strange things she saw which her father, King Belus, would never have believed to exist: a country in which the young king had made an agreement with his subjects that the farmer and the noble might sit side by side and make their own laws; another kingdom in which one man had power to prevent any law from being passed by the rest of the assembly; a third in which the will of one queen had changed the face of the world as if by magic, though, perhaps, if the princess had returned for a second visit, she might not have felt so certain that the changes would last. Once it was only a thick fog off an island called Albion which prevented her vessel from meeting the one containing Amazan, but at length they both found themselves in a province bordering on the Mediterranean, where Formosante, driven to despair by a rumour that Amazan was faithless to her, was looking out for a ship that might take her to Babylon.

As usual, she trusted to the phœnix to make all her arrangements, and the people in whose house she was living having overheard the bird speaking to her, at once imagined she was a witch and locked her and her maid Irla in their rooms. They would have seized the phœnix also, but at the sound of the key being turned he quickly flew out of the window and started in search of Amazan. After these long months of wandering the bird and its master met on the road which runs from north to south, and at first their joy was such that

even the princess was forgotten. But not for long.

‘And Formosante, where is she?’

‘A prisoner, alas! on suspicion of being a witch, and you know what that means,’ answered the phœnix, with tears in his eyes.

Amazan *did* know, and for an instant was frozen with horror as the vision flashed across his mind of Formosante tied to a stake and the flames gathering round her. Then he aroused himself, and gave the phœnix some orders. In two hours help came, and Amazan was kneeling at the feet of the princess.

So, united at last, we will leave them.

THE ADVENTURES OF FIRE-DRILL'S SON

Here is another story of the Tlingit Indians, and in these stories you will often find the Raven playing the part of friend and helper, just as the Fox does in Japan, and Brer Rabbit in 'Uncle Remus.' The Raven is always kinder than anybody else, besides being cleverer, and those who take his advice can never go wrong.

One day the Raven was flying about, and he saw a girl sitting with her baby in the woods, and he stopped to talk to her.

'That is a fine little boy of yours,' he said, cocking his head on one side.

'Yes, he is,' replied the girl; 'but I wish he was old enough to get food for us. It is so many years to wait.'

'That is easily cured,' said the Raven. 'You have only to bathe him every day in the cold spring at the back of these rocks, and you have no idea how quickly he will grow up.' So the girl bathed him every morning in the pool and let the water from the rock pour over him, and it was surprising how soon he was able to help her in work of all kinds as well as to shoot with his bow and arrows.

'Why are we all alone with grandmother?' he inquired at last, for he was fond of asking questions. 'Did you never have friends like other people, and have those houses over there always stood empty?' Then they told him that once a large tribe had lived at that place, but they had gradually gone away to hunt or to fish and had never come back. Only the woman and the girl and the baby remained behind.

After this the boy was quiet for a time, and for a while he was content to stay at home, only going out in the mornings to bring back a bird from the forest for their dinner. But at length he said to his mother: 'If I could only paddle in the lake, I could catch you fish and water-fowl; but all the canoes here are old and broken.'

'Yes; you must not go out in them. You will get drowned,' answered she, and the boy went sadly to his mat to sleep.

As he slept, his father, whose name was Fire-drill, appeared to him and spoke:

'Take one of those old canoes into the woods and cover it with bushes. It does not matter how worn-out it seems to be; do as I tell you.' Then the boy got up and did as his father bade him, and went home again.

Early next day he ran quickly to the place where the canoe was hidden, but found that the old one full of holes had vanished, and a new one, packed with everything he could need, was in its place. While he was admiring it, his father stood before him, and pulled the root of a burnt tree out of the ground, which he turned into a little dog. It was called Gant or 'Burnt,' and could smell things miles away, and, though it was so small, it was as strong as a bear. After that, Fire-drill gave his son a fresh bow and arrows and a great club.

Then the boy remembered what his grandmother had said, and he carried the canoe and his father’s presents to the wigwam.

‘I am going away,’ he told his mother, ‘and may be absent two days or much longer. Take care of this fire-stick, or else if the fire goes out, how will you make it again? Hang it in a safe place high on the ceiling, and if I am killed, it will fall. So you will know. And now farewell.’ Thus speaking he climbed into the canoe and pushed off.

As he went he saw from afar another canoe coming to meet him, with a man paddling it.

‘That is the man who killed all my mother’s friends,’ thought he, and he told it to his dog, his club, his bow and his arrows, for they had the gift of magic and could understand his language.

The Girl bathed him every morning in the Pool.

By this time the man had drawn near, and the boy saw that he had only one eye, which was placed in the middle of his face, and that he was more than commonly tall.

‘Is it you, my nephew?’ asked he, and the boy answered:

‘Yes; it is I.’

‘Where did you come from?’

‘From my uncle’s village.’

Then the man read what the boy had in his mind and said:

‘It was not I who killed your uncles and your mother’s friends; it was the East Wind and the North Wind.’

But the boy did not trust the man’s words, and knew that in his heart he wished him evil. And while he was thinking this the big man said to him:

‘Let us exchange arrows.’

‘Not so,’ replied the boy. ‘My arrows are better than yours.’ And his words were true, for they were all different, and pointed with different things. The point of one was a porcupine quill, and of another bark, but the best of all was called Heart-stopper, because the moment it touched a man’s body his heart ceased to beat.

‘My arrows are pointed with sea-urchins; behold how they move,’ said the man; but again it was not true what he told the boy, for the points were made of weed.

‘My arrows are not like that,’ answered the boy. ‘They are only good for shooting birds;’ but though he did not trust the man, he never guessed that his desire was to get Heart-stopper. They talked for some time longer, and at length the boy lost patience and cried out:

‘You call yourself my uncle, yet you made away with my mother’s friends. Now know that you will never make away with me like that.’

His words angered the one-eyed man, and, quick as lightning, they both held their arrows in their hands; but the boy was the quickest, and with the help of the dog, soon killed his enemy. Then he burned the body, and paddled on still further, never thinking that his mother at home was wondering why he did not come back.

At last he heard a voice calling to him. ‘That is another bad man,’ said he; but he paddled to the place where the sound came from, and found a cliff rising straight out of the water. In the middle of the cliff was an opening with a circle of red paint round it, and devil-clubs fastened to a ring which was driven into the rock.

‘Come in! Come in!’ cried the voice, and the boy entered and saw a woman there with a knife in each hand. He guessed who she was, and said to her:

‘I have seen your husband;’ but she took no heed of his words, and begged him again to enter and she would give him some food before he went on his way.

‘I do not like that sort of food,’ he answered as soon as he had seen it; and she exclaimed, ‘Well! if you want to quarrel let us fight till one of us is killed.’

‘Willingly!’ replied the boy, and he heard her go to the rock at the entrance and sharpen the knives in her hands. When she had finished she threw one of them at him, but he jumped aside and it stuck in the stool where he had been sitting. Then he seized the knife and threw it at her, and it stuck in her heart and she died. He let her lie where she fell, and lifting his eyes he noticed with dismay that the hole at the end of the cave was quickly growing smaller and smaller. Hastily he snatched up some ermine skins that lay on the ground and tied two or three in his hair, and shrank himself till he managed to get into one of them, and squeezed through the entrance just before it closed entirely. Once out of the cave he shot some deer and brought them down in his canoe to his mother and his grandmother, who had spent their time in grieving over him and wondering if they would ever see him again.

‘I am all right,’ he said to them when he got home; ‘and I have slain the people who put your friends to death.’

But in spite of his words, he did not know yet for certain whether the man and woman he had killed had been the murderers of his uncles also, and that he was determined to find out. So he soon went back into the forest and began hunting again. From afar he saw smoke rising up, and he walked towards it till he came to a house. At the door was Old Mole-woman, and very old she was, but her face looked kind and honest and the boy felt he might have faith in her.

‘What is it you want, grandson?’ said she, politely, and the boy answered:

‘I am seeking for the slayer of my uncles.’

‘It is not easy to get at them,’ she replied. ‘It was the hawks that did it, and first you have to find their nests which are very high up, and next you must wait till the old birds go away, and only the young ones are left.’

Thus spoke Old Mole-woman, and the boy thanked her and set off to find the nests.

It took him a long time, but at length he discovered them; then he hid himself and waited till the parent birds flew off and the young ones were alone. After that, the boy came out of his hiding-place and climbed up the tree and said to the little birds:

‘What do you live on?’ and the little birds led him to a place that was full of human skulls, and answered, ‘That is what we live on.’

‘How long will your father and mother be away?’ asked the boy.

‘Till daybreak; but you will not be able to see them, because they come in clouds. My mother flies over the mountain in a yellow cloud, and my father in a black cloud.’

‘Well, I am going now,’ said the boy, ‘and take care that you do not tell them that I have been here, or I will kill you.’

‘Oh, no, no! We will be sure not to tell,’ cried the little birds, fluttering their wings in a fright.

Just as it was getting light the boy saw the yellow cloud coming, and by and bye he made out the mother-bird carrying a dead body in her beak. He aimed an arrow at her and she fell dead at the foot of the tree, and the body fell with her. Soon after, he saw the black cloud coming fast, and when it reached the nest the father flew out of it and said to the little ones:

'Where is your mother?'

'Our mother dropped the body she was carrying and fell down after it,' answered they, and as they spoke the boy hit him with an arrow, and he fell to the ground also.

Then the boy cried up to the little birds: 'You must never kill people any more, or live on human flesh. I will go and get food for you until you are strong enough to look after yourselves,' and he went out hunting, and he and his dog killed some pigs and brought them to the little birds. And when the little birds grew to be big birds, they killed the pigs for themselves by letting stones fall on their heads, and never more did they eat anything else. After that the boy went back to Old Mole-woman.

'I have killed the birds,' said he, 'and because you have helped me, I have brought you some food which will last you a long time. Now I must hurry home to my mother and grandmother.'

Very glad they were to see him again, and for some time he stayed with them and collected grease for candles and provisions of all sorts, enough to last for many, many years. When this was done he said to his mother: 'Mother, I am going to leave you for ever, for I was not meant to be with you always, and I have finished that which I set myself to do. If what is hanging overhead should fall, you will know that I am dead. But as long as it remains where it is, do not trouble about me.'

With that he went out.

As he walked along the path, the son of Fire-drill beheld someone in front striding very fast; and the boy chased him till he came first to the Mink people and then to the Marten people. Both of them begged him to stay with them and help them, but he would not, and hurried on after the figure he had seen ahead of him, whose name was Dry-cloud. But when Fire-drill's son came to the Wolf people they begged him so hard to stop that at last he agreed to do so for a while; besides he was very tired, and wanted to rest.

The Wolf Chief thought much of the boy, and they had great talk together. One day a large company of the Wolf tribe was present, and they spoke of the beasts which could run the fastest.

'The swiftest of all is the mountain goat,' said one; 'and it can jump from rock to rock, and none can come up with it. To-morrow,' he added, turning to the boy, 'we are going to hunt them, and if you are there with us you will see if there is any animal that can outrun a mountain goat.'

'I will be there,' answered the boy.

So they started in the morning and hastened to the place, and each tried to be the first to kill one of the goats. But Fire-drill's son's dog got there before any of them, and killed many goats and the rest galloped away out of reach. Then the Wolves went up and carried the dead goats back to their people, and much ashamed they were that the dog had slain them all and they, the noted hunters, had got nothing.

'Men will speak ill of us if they know of this day's work,' said the Wolves, whispering together. 'How can we get the better of this son of Fire-drill?'

Now one, cleverer than the rest, thought of a plan, and he bade the others cut a quantity of the long stringy creepers that grow on the mountains, and make them into hoops. These hoops they were to roll down the sides of the mountains, and jump backwards and forwards through them, when they were at full speed. It was a good game for their purpose, because anyone who touched the side of the hoops would be cut in two, because of the sharp edges.

But the dog guessed this, and said to the boy: 'Friend, do not go near those people who are playing. You know nothing of the game, and those things may kill you.'

'No; I will not play with them, but let us watch them,' answered the boy, and they watched them for some time, till the boy said to the dog:

'You take one of those rings and throw it up in the air as high as you can.' And the dog took it in his mouth, and stood on his hind legs and threw it upwards with all his might, and he threw it so high that it never came down again but stayed up round the moon, where you may still see it any night that there is going to be a change in the weather.

And as soon as he heard this that the dog had done, the Wolf Chief called the rest of the Wolves, and bade them treat the son of Fire-drill as a friend, 'for,' said he, 'he is a wonderful fellow.'

A little while after, Fire-drill's son and the wolf went away together. When they had gone a short distance, the wolf raised his head and looked about him.

'Some strange creature walks about here,' he exclaimed suddenly. 'Take my advice and do not try to follow him or he will have your life.'

And though he did not say so, the boy felt it was Dry-cloud that the wolf meant.

'Don't be afraid for me,' he answered; 'I only play with him. Well I know that it is impossible to kill him, but it is also impossible for him to kill me; but follow him I must, for this my father bade me.'

So they set off after Dry-cloud, and curious to say, the swift-footed wolf was forced to run with all his might, while the boy did not seem to himself to be walking faster than usual. Indeed, so rapid was their pace that if in crossing a stream the wolf got his tail wet, he was too tired to shake it himself, and he cried till the boy shook it for him. In this manner they travelled till they came to a house where an old woman lived, and this was the end of their journey for that time, as Dry-cloud lived near by also and they could watch him in peace.

And while they were there Fire-drill’s son saw a girl whom he thought he would like for his squaw, and he married her and they had a baby. But when the baby was born the father shook his head and said to his wife:

‘This is going to be a very bad boy.’

And the fire-stick is still hanging on his mother’s ceiling.

[*Tlingit story.*]

THE STRANGE STORY OF ELIZABETH CANNING

Are you fond of puzzles? I am. And here is a mystery which all sorts of people have been seeking to explain for a hundred and fifty years, and nobody, not even the lawyers who have studied it, can make up their minds. So now it is your turn to try.

In the year 1752 Elizabeth Canning was a girl of seventeen, the eldest of a family of five children. Her mother was a widow and very poor, so she was glad when Elizabeth or Betty, as her friends called her, was old enough to go out to service. Betty was a steady, hard-working young woman, and the neighbours who had known her from a baby were all ready to help her and to get her a suitable place.

Her first master was a respectable man who kept a tavern, and in his house she lived for eighteen months. But she did not serve the customers, or come into the rooms where they drank. She then left to go as servant to a carpenter and his wife named Lyon, in Aldermanbury in the City of London, not very far from her own home. The Lyons were also old acquaintances of Mrs. Canning, and had known Elizabeth since she was two. Now she was grown up; a rather short, pleasant-looking girl with a fresh complexion marked with small-pox, but not pretty.

Elizabeth had been with the Lyons for three months, and had pleased them so well that they promised her a holiday on New Year’s Day 1753, to go to see her uncle and aunt, living behind the London Docks. So on New Year’s Day, the girl got up earlier than usual, in order to get her work over as soon as possible. When everything was done, she went up to her attic and took her best clothes out of a chest. She was a long time dressing, but when she stepped out into the street, she felt herself as smart as any maid in London in her purple gown, black petticoat, white apron, a muslin handkerchief folded across her chest, blue stockings, and neat leather shoes. On her head she wore a small, flat, white chip hat bound with green.

On her way to the Docks she stopped at her mother’s, and said that as she had in her pocket thirteen shillings given her that morning by her mistress—probably they were her wages—she would ask her aunt Mrs. Colley to come out with her and buy a cloak. Mrs. Canning made her put the half-guinea in a box, as so small a thing might easily get lost, and then, after presenting each of the children with a penny a piece, except a naughty little brother who had ‘huffed her,’ she gaily bade them all good-bye and went her way, arriving at her uncle’s house about twelve o’clock. Here she had dinner, tea, and supper at seven when her uncle returned from work—for Colley, poor man, had no holiday—and at last, without the cloak which for some reason was never bought, Elizabeth started back to Aldermanbury, the Colleys walking with her as far as Houndsditch. There they said good-night to her soon after nine, and returned home.

As far as we can tell, the Lyons must have expected her back quite early in the evening, for when nine o’clock struck from the church tower close by, the carpenter grew uneasy, and went round to Mrs. Canning to see if Betty was there. No; her mother had not seen her since the morning, but was sure she would be in directly, and Mr. Lyon would most likely find her at home when he got back. But at ten he paid the good woman another visit,

saying he could not imagine what had kept the girl; and at last Mrs. Canning, ‘frightened out of her wits’ as she herself says, sent three of the children out into the fields to look for Elizabeth, and the apprentice went down to the Docks to inquire if she was still at her uncle’s. It was now midnight, and the Colleys were so fast asleep that the apprentice had some difficulty in rousing them to listen to his errand.

‘Betty here?’ they asked. ‘Why, we left her in Houndsditch hours ago.’

But they do not seem to have felt any alarm till the following morning when the young man knocked again, and informed them that they could gain no news of the missing girl.

Inquiries were made and advertisements were placed in the paper; all in vain. To be sure, a ‘gentlewoman in an oil-shop’ in Bishopsgate declared that she had heard a ‘young voice scream out of a coach’ on the night of January 1; but as she ‘did not know whether it was a man’s or a woman’s voice,’ her information was not of much use. However, vague though it was, Mrs. Canning caught at it eagerly and put it into the advertisement. As to what had become of her daughter, she guessed something different every day. Perhaps she had been kidnapped, or she might have been murdered, or have had an attack of illness.

Some years before, part of the ceiling of a garret had fallen on Elizabeth’s head and hurt her, so that if anything frightened her she was apt to lose her sense of what was going on for a while. Naturally when the girl was lost her mother remembered this and dreaded lest she should have fallen down in some strange place unconscious. Every idea that could come into a person’s mind—every accident likely or unlikely that had ever befallen anybody—was, we may feel certain, discussed in the month of January 1753 by Mrs. Canning and her neighbours.

She had almost given up hope, and was even in the act of praying to see her daughter’s ghost, when Elizabeth at last came. But *what* an Elizabeth! The apprentice, when he hastened to the door on hearing the latch lifted, did not recognise the girl, and thought it was a woman who had called to ask her way. Then the truth suddenly dawned on him and he cried out, ‘Betty has come home’; but as she entered, nearly bent double and walking sideways holding her hands before her, her mother took her to be indeed the ghost she had prayed for, and, shrieking ‘Feel her! Feel her!’ sank down in a fit.

It was the apprentice and not Mrs. Canning who attended to Elizabeth and placed her in the chimney-corner, where she sat exhausted and to all appearance nearly dead. Her mother’s first act on recovering from her fit was to send, not for the doctor but for the neighbours, and so many flocked to see the lost girl, that in two minutes the room was full, and the apprentice had to stand at the door to keep fresh people out. Of course it was long before anyone thought of putting Elizabeth to bed, and giving her something to eat or drink; instead they plied her with questions as to where she had been and what she had been doing, and how she had got in that dreadful condition. To these she replied, telling the same tale which she repeated to Alderman Chitty upon oath two days later.

On the following morning an apothecary was summoned, and attended her for a week till a doctor was called in, and he for some days thought very badly of her chance of living.

But weak and ill as she might be, two days after her return home she ‘was brought’ before Alderman Chitty to tell her story. And this was what she said:

After her uncle and aunt had left her in Houndsditch, she was passing along the wall which surrounded the lunatic asylum of Bedlam, into Moorfields, when she was suddenly attacked by two men who took all her money from her pocket, and then stripped off her gown and hat. She struggled and tried to scream, but a handkerchief was quickly thrust into her mouth, and she was told that if she made any noise they would kill her. To show that they spoke the truth, one of them did indeed give a blow on the head, and then they took her under the arms and dragged her along Bishopsgate till she lost her senses, as she was apt to do when frightened. She knew no more till she found herself in a strange place which she had since learned was a house at Enfield Wash, about eleven miles from Aldermanbury. By this time it was about four in the morning of January 2.

In the kitchen in which she recovered consciousness were several people, among them an old woman who asked her if she would stay with her instead of returning home. To this Elizabeth replied No; she would not, as she wanted to go back to her mother at once. The old woman looked very angry at her answer, and pushed her upstairs into a room, where she cut her stay-laces, and took the stays themselves away. She then told her there was bread and water for her if she was hungry, but that was all she would get; adding that the girl had better be quiet, for if she attempted to scream out, she herself would come in and cut her throat.

Having said this, the old woman went away locking the door behind her, and that was the last the girl saw of any human creature for four weeks, except the eye of a person who peeped through the keyhole.

Left alone, Elizabeth looked about for the food which was provided for her, and found there were some pieces of bread about as much as a ‘quartern loaf’—and three-quarters of a gallon of water or a little more, in a pitcher. She had besides a penny mince-pie that she had bought while she was at her uncle’s the day before, and intended as a present for her little brother; for, as she said to her mother, the boy had ‘huffed her,’ and she had not given him a penny like his sisters, so the mince-pie was to make up.

At this point Chitty seems to have stopped her, and asked her to describe the room in which she was imprisoned and to tell him what it contained. There was but little furniture of any sort in it, she answered. An old stool or two, an old chair and an old picture over the chimney. The room itself had two windows, facing north and east, one of which was entirely boarded up; but the other, though there were some boards on it, was mostly glass. It was through the window at the end of the room that she escaped about half-past three on the afternoon of Monday January 29, dropping on to the roof of a shed built against the house, and so to the ground.

She knew, it appears, that the road which ran past the house was the one leading from London into Hertfordshire, because she recognised the coachman who had carried parcels for her mistress many a time. Thus, when she escaped, tearing her ear as she did so on a nail outside the window, she had no difficulty in starting in the right direction for London, though after a short distance she became confused, and had to ask the way of several people. She ended by saying that she arrived at home about ten o’clock very weak and faint, and that her mother gave her some wine, which however she was unable to swallow.

Now in those times both lawyers and judges were apt to be very careless, and according to

our ideas, very dishonest, and Chitty seems to have been no better than the rest. He took, he says, a few notes of the interview with Elizabeth for his own memorandum, but ‘not thinking it would have been the subject of so much inquiry later, did not take it so distinct as he could wish.’ Even this paper which he did show was not what he had written down at the time when the girl was telling her story, but something that he had pieced together from her own account and that of various other people who had been present at her mother’s two nights before, and had gone with her to the Alderman. So that no court of law in these days would have thought that Alderman Chitty’s account given more than a year later, of what Elizabeth told him, was to be trusted. In the end, however, Chitty, who declares he had examined her for an hour and asked her ‘many questions not set down’ in his paper, granted a warrant for the arrest of one Mother Wells at Enfield Wash, for assaulting and robbing her. Elizabeth herself expressly says she ‘could tell nothing of the woman’s name,’ though ‘she believed she should know her;’ but one of Mrs. Canning’s visitors on the night of the girl’s arrival, who was acquainted with Enfield, was certain that the house described could only be that in which Mother Wells lived, and on his information Chitty allowed the warrant for her arrest to be made out.

This man, Robert Scarrat, seems to have put to Elizabeth a great many questions which never occurred to the Alderman. He asked her, for instance, to describe the woman who had cut off her stays, and she replied that she was ‘tall, black and swarthy, and that two girls, one fair and one dark, were with her.’ This answer surprised him; it was not what he expected. Mother Wells was not a tall, swarthy woman, and he said at once that it could not have been Mother Wells at all, as the description was not in the least like her.

On Thursday February 1, Elizabeth was put into a coach and drove with her mother and two other women to Mother Wells’ house in Enfield Wash, where they were met by the girl’s two masters and several friends. The object of the visit was to prove if the description given by her of the room, in which she was confined, was correct, and if she could pick out from a number of persons the woman who had cut off her stays and locked her up. As to how far the room, as seen by Elizabeth’s friends, at all resembled what she had told them, it is impossible to be certain. It assuredly was very different from the place which Alderman Chitty swore she had described, containing a quantity of hay, old saddles, and other things that the girl had apparently not noticed, even though she had been there a month; while there was no old picture above the mantelpiece—nothing, indeed, but cobwebs—and there was no grate, though she had sworn she had taken out of it the bedgown or jacket she had come home in. Besides,—and this was more serious—there was not a sign of the pent-house on which, she said, she had jumped after tearing away the boards at the north window; and one of the witnesses declared that you had only to push open the *east* window to get out of it with perfect ease, and that he himself had leaned out and shaken hands with his wife, who was standing on the ground which rose on that side of the house. But then the witnesses were not at all agreed among themselves what Elizabeth had *really* said, so again we are unable to make up our minds what to believe.

After she had seen the room, she was taken into the parlour where eight or ten people were sitting, and it is curious that now everyone tells the same tale. On one side of the fireplace sat Mother Wells, and on the other Mary Squires.

Mary Squires was a gipsy, tall and swarthy, very ill made and extraordinarily ugly, and

altogether a person whom it would be impossible to forget. At the time of Elizabeth's entrance she was sitting crouched up, with a white handkerchief on her head such as women often wore, and over it a hat, while a short pipe was in her hand. Several more persons were on the same side of the room, in a sort of circle round the fire.

Elizabeth glanced towards them. Her eyes rested first on Mother Wells and then looked past her.

'That is the woman who cut off my stays,' she said, pointing to the gipsy. At these words Mary Squires rose and came up to the girl, throwing aside her hat and handkerchief as she did so.

'Me rob you?' she cried. 'I hope you will not swear my life away, for I never saw you. Pray, madam, look at this face; if you have once seen it you must remember it, for God Almighty I think never made such another.'

'I know you very well,' answered Elizabeth; 'I know you too well, to my sorrow.'

'Pray, madam, when do you say I robbed you?'

'It was on the first day of this New Year,' replied Elizabeth.

'The first day of the New Year?' cried the gipsy. 'Lord bless me! I was an hundred and twenty miles away from this place then, at Abbotsbury in Dorsetshire, and there are a hundred people I can bring to prove it.'

But no one at that time paid any attention to her words, or thought of allowing her to prove her innocence. Elizabeth, with two girls found in Mother Wells' house, were examined before Henry Fielding, the novelist, author of 'Tom Jones,' then a magistrate of London, who showed, according to his own account, gross unfairness in dealing with the matter, and by him the case was sent for trial at the Old Bailey.

Elizabeth repeated the story she had told from the first, with the result that the gipsy was condemned to be hanged, and Mother Wells to be branded on the hand and to go to prison for six months. Luckily, however, for them, the president of the court that tried them was the Lord Mayor Sir Crispe Gascoigne, a man who had more sense of justice and fair play than many of his fellows. He did not feel sure of the truth of Elizabeth's tale, and never rested till both the old women were set at liberty.

This made the mob very angry. They were entirely on Elizabeth's side, and more than once attacked the Lord Mayor's coach. Other people were just as strong on behalf of the gipsy, and things even went so far that often the members of the same family declined to speak to each other.

Then came Elizabeth's turn. In April 1754 she was arrested on a charge of perjury or false swearing, and sent to stand her trial at the Old Bailey. Now was Mary Squires' opportunity for calling the 'hundred people' to prove that she, with her son George and daughter Lucy, was down at Abbotsbury in Dorsetshire, on January 1, 1753, at the moment that she was supposed to be cutting off the stays of Elizabeth Canning at Enfield Wash! And if she did not quite fulfil her promise, she actually *did* summon thirty-six witnesses who swore to her movements day by day from December 29, 1752, when all three Squires stopped at an inn at South Parret in Dorsetshire, to January 23, 1753, when Mary begged for a lodging at

Page Green. Now Page Green was within two or three miles of Enfield Wash, where the gipsy admitted she had stayed at Mother Wells' house for ten days before Elizabeth Canning had charged her with robbery. Her denial of the accusation was further borne out by a man and his wife, who appear in the reports as 'Fortune and Judith Natus' (he was quite plainly called 'Fortunatus' after the young man with the fairy purse), both of whom declared upon oath that they had occupied the room in which Elizabeth stated she had been confined, for ten or eleven weeks at that very time, and that it was used as a hayloft.

Mary Squires had called thirty-six witnesses to 'prove an *alibi*'—in other words, to prove that she had been present somewhere else; but Elizabeth's lawyers produced twenty-six, stating that they had seen her about Enfield during the month when Elizabeth was lost. This was enough to confuse anybody, and many of the witnesses on both sides were exceedingly stupid. To make matters worse and more puzzling, not long before a law had been passed to alter the numbering of the days of the year. For instance, May 5 would suddenly be reckoned the 16th, a fact it was almost impossible to make uneducated people understand. Indeed, it is not easy always to remember it oneself, but it all helps to render the truth of Elizabeth's tale more difficult to get at, for you never could be sure whether, when the witnesses said they had seen the gipsy at Christmas or New Year's Day, they meant *Old* Christmas or *New* Christmas, *old* New Year's Day or *new* New Year's Day. Yet certain facts there are in the story which nobody attempts to contradict. It is undisputed that a young woman, weak and with very few clothes on, was met by four or five persons on the night of January 29, 1753, on the road near Enfield Wash, inquiring her way to London, or that on the very same night Elizabeth Canning arrived at home in Aldermanbury, in such a state that next morning an apothecary was sent for. Nor does anyone, as we have said, deny that she picked out the gipsy from a number of people, as the person who assaulted her. All this is in favour of her tale. Yet we must ask ourselves what possible motive Mary Squires could have had in keeping a girl shut up in a loft for four weeks, apparently with a view of starving her to death? Elizabeth was a total stranger to her; she was very poor, so there was no hope of getting a large ransom for her; and if she had died and her kidnapping had been traced to Mary Squires, the gipsy would have speedily ended her days on the gallows.

On the other hand, if Mary Squires did not know Elizabeth Canning, Elizabeth equally did not know Mary Squires, and we cannot imagine what reason Elizabeth could have had in accusing her falsely. Only one thing stands out clear from the report of the trial, and that is, that Elizabeth was absent during the whole of January 1753, and that she very nearly died of starvation.

'Guilty of perjury, but not wilful and corrupt,' was the verdict of the jury, which the judge told them was nonsense. They then declared her guilty, and Elizabeth was condemned to be transported to one of his Majesty's American colonies for seven years.

We soon hear of her as a servant in the house of the Principal of Yale University, a much better place than any she had at home. At the end of the seven years she came back to England, where she seems to have been received as something of a heroine, and took possession of £500 which had been left her by an old lady living in Newington Green. She then sailed for America once more, and married a well-to-do farmer called Treat, and passed the rest of her life with her husband and children in the State of Connecticut.

Up to her death, which occurred in 1773, she always maintained the truth of her tale.

Was it true?

The lawyers who were against Elizabeth said, at her trial, that as soon as she was found guilty, the secret of where she had been would be revealed.

It never was revealed. Now several persons must have known where Elizabeth was; all the world heard her story, yet nobody told where she had been. If the persons who knew had not detained and ill-used the girl, there was nothing to prevent them from speaking.

Yet to the end we shall ask, why *did* Mary Squires keep her at Enfield Wash—if she *did* keep her?

MRS. VEAL'S GHOST

Now you are going to hear a ghost story published, but he says, not written, by Daniel Defoe the author of 'Robinson Crusoe.' If you read it carefully, you will find how very curious it is.

Miss Veal, or as she was then called according to custom, Mrs. Veal, was an unmarried lady of about thirty living with her only brother in Dover. She was a delicate woman, and frequently had fits, during which she would often stop in the middle of a sentence, and begin to talk nonsense. These fits probably arose from not having had enough food or warm clothes in her childhood, for her father was not only a poor man but also a selfish one, and was too full of his own affairs to look after his children. One comfort, however, she had, in a little girl of her own age, named Lodowick, who often used to bring her neighbour half of her own dinner, and gave her a thick wadded tippet to wear over her bare shoulders.

Years passed away and the girls grew to women, meeting as frequently as of old and reading together the pious books of the day, 'Drelincourt upon Death' being perhaps their favourite. Then gradually a change took place. Old Veal died; the son was given a place in the Customs, and his sister went to keep house for him. She was well-to-do now, and had no longer any need of a friend to provide her with food and clothes, and little by little she became busy with her new life, and forgot the many occasions on which she had exclaimed gratefully to her playfellow, 'You are not only the best, but the only friend I have in the world, and nothing shall ever loosen our friendship.' Now she visited in the houses of people who were richer and grander than herself and sought out her old companion more and more seldom, so that at length when this story begins, two years and a half had passed by without their having seen each other.

Meanwhile, though Mrs. Veal, in spite of a few love affairs, had remained a spinster, her friend had married a Mr. Bargrave, and a very bad match he proved, for the way in which he ill-used his wife soon became known to everyone. They left Dover about a year after Mrs. Bargrave's last visit to Mrs. Veal, and several months later they settled in Canterbury.

It was noon, on September 8, 1705, and Mrs. Bargrave was sitting alone in an armchair in her parlour, thinking over all the misery her husband had caused her and trying hard to feel patient and forgiving towards him. 'I have been provided for hitherto,' she said to herself, 'and doubt not that I shall be so still, and I am well satisfied that my sorrows shall end when it is most fit for me.' She then took up her sewing, which had dropped on her lap, but had hardly put in three stitches when a knocking at the door made her pause. The clock struck twelve as she rose to open it, and to her profound astonishment admitted Mrs. Veal, who had on a riding dress of silk.

'Madam,' exclaimed Mrs. Bargrave, 'I am surprised to see you, for you have been a stranger this long while, but right glad I am to welcome you here.' As she spoke, she

leaned forward to kiss her, but Mrs. Veal drew back, and passing her hand across her eyes, she answered:

‘I am not very well;’ adding after a moment, ‘I have to take a long journey, and wished first to see you.’

‘But,’ answered Mrs. Bargrave, ‘how do you come to be travelling alone? I know that your brother looks after you well.’

‘Oh, I gave my brother the slip,’ replied Mrs. Veal, ‘because I had so great a desire to see you before I set forth.’

‘Well, let us go into the next room,’ said Mrs. Bargrave, leading the way to a small room opening into the other. Mrs. Veal sat down in the very chair in which Mrs. Bargrave had been seated when she heard the knocking at the door. Then Mrs. Veal leaned forward and spoke:

‘My dear friend, I am come to renew our old friendship, and to beg you to pardon me for my breach of it. If you can forgive me, you are one of the best of women.’

‘Oh! don’t mention such a thing,’ cried Mrs. Bargrave. ‘I never had an unkind thought about it, and can most easily forgive it.’

‘What opinion can you have had of me?’ continued Mrs. Veal.

‘I supposed you were like the rest of the world,’ answered Mrs. Bargrave, ‘and that prosperity had made you forget yourself and me.’

After that they had a long talk over the old days, and recalled the books they had read together, and what comfort they had received from Drelincourt’s Book of Death, and from two Dutch books that had been translated, besides some by Dr. Sherlock on the same subject. At Mrs. Veal’s request, Mrs. Bargrave brought Drelincourt’s discourses down from upstairs, and handed it to her friend, who spoke so earnestly of the consolations to be found in it that Mrs. Bargrave was deeply touched. But when Mrs. Veal assured her that ‘in a short time her afflictions would leave her,’ Mrs. Bargrave broke down and wept bitterly.

‘Are you going away and leaving your brother without anyone to look after him?’ asked Mrs. Bargrave as soon as she could speak.

‘Oh no! my sister and her husband had just come down from town to see me, so it will be all right,’ answered Mrs. Veal.

‘But why did you arrange to leave just as they arrived?’ again inquired Mrs. Bargrave. ‘Surely they will be vexed?’

‘It could not be helped,’ replied Mrs. Veal shortly, and said no more on the subject.

After this, the conversation, which continued for nearly two hours, was chiefly carried on by Mrs. Veal, whose language might have been envied by the most learned doctors of the day. But during the course of it Mrs. Bargrave was startled to notice Mrs. Veal draw her hand several times across her eyes (as she had done on her entrance), and at length she put the question, ‘Mrs. Bargrave, don’t you think I look much the worse for my fits?’

‘No,’ answered Mrs. Bargrave, ‘I think you look as well as ever I saw you.’

‘I want you to write a letter for me to my brother,’ then said Mrs. Veal, ‘and tell him to whom he is to give my rings, and that he is to take two gold pieces out of a purse that is in my cabinet, and send them to my cousin Watson.’ Cousin Watson was the wife of a Captain Watson who lived in Canterbury. As there seemed no reason that Mrs. Veal should not write the letter herself, the request appeared rather odd to Mrs. Bargrave, especially as then and afterwards it was the custom for people to leave rings to their friends in their wills. These rings contained little skulls in white enamel, and the initials in gold of the dead.

Mrs. Bargrave wondered if her friend was indeed about to suffer from one of her attacks. So she hastily placed herself in a chair close by her, that she might be ready to catch Mrs. Veal if she should fall, and, to divert her visitor’s thoughts, took hold of her sleeve, and began to admire the pattern.

‘The silk has been cleaned,’ replied Mrs. Veal, ‘and newly made up,’ and then she dropped the subject and went back to her letter.

‘Why not write it yourself?’ asked Mrs. Bargrave. ‘Your brother may think it an impertinence in me.’

‘No,’ said Mrs. Veal; ‘it may seem an impertinence in you now, but you will discover more reason for it hereafter;’ so to satisfy her, Mrs. Bargrave fetched pen and ink and was about to begin when Mrs. Veal stopped her.

‘Not now,’ she said; ‘wait till I am gone; but you must be sure to do it,’ and began to inquire for Mrs. Bargrave’s little girl, Molly, who was not in the house.

‘If you have a mind to see her, I will fetch her home,’ answered the mother, and hastily ran over to the neighbour’s where the child was. When she returned, Mrs. Veal was standing outside the street door, opposite the market (which was crowded, the day being Saturday and market day), waiting to say good-bye to her.

‘Why are you in such a hurry?’ inquired Mrs. Bargrave.

‘It is time for me to go,’ answered Mrs. Veal, ‘though I may not start on my journey till Monday. Perhaps I may see you at my cousin Watson’s before I depart whither I am hastening.’ Then she once more spoke of the letter Mrs. Bargrave was to write, and bade her farewell, walking through the market-place, till a turning concealed her from view.

It was now nearly two o’clock.

The following day Mrs. Bargrave had a sore throat, and did not go out, but on Monday she sent a messenger to Captain Watson’s to inquire if Mrs. Veal was there. This much astonished the Watsons, who returned an answer that Mrs. Veal had never been to the house, neither was she expected. Mrs. Bargrave felt sure that some mistake had been made, and, ill though she was, put on her hood and walked to the Watsons’ (whom she did not know) to find out the truth of the matter.

Mrs. Watson, who was at home, declared herself unable to understand *why* Mrs. Bargrave

should imagine that Mrs. Veal should be in their house. She had never been in town, Mrs. Watson was persuaded, as if she had, she would certainly have called on them. It was to no purpose that Mrs. Bargrave assured the good lady that Mrs. Veal had spent two hours with her on the previous Saturday; Mrs. Watson simply refused to believe it.

In the midst of the discussion Captain Watson came in and announced that on the previous Friday—September 7, 1705—at noon, Mrs. Veal had died of exhaustion, after one of her fits; and that even at that moment the big painted board with the family coat of arms—called by Captain Watson an 'escutcheon' and by us a 'hatchment'—was being painted in Canterbury. When finished, it would be taken to Dover and hung up in front of the Veals' house. Mrs. Bargrave found the Captain's story impossible to believe, and she went off immediately to the undertaker's shop, where the 'escutcheon' was shown her. Not knowing what to think, she next hastened back to the Watsons, and told the whole tale of Mrs. Veal's visit, describing every particular of her appearance and silk habit, which Mrs. Veal had specially mentioned was scoured. On hearing this, Mrs. Watson cried out excitedly, 'Then you must indeed have seen her, as I helped her myself to make it up, and nobody but she and I knew that it was scoured.'

In this way the Watsons' doubts of the appearance of Mrs. Veal were set at rest, and the story was soon 'blazed' all about the town by the lady, while the Captain took two of his friends to Mrs. Bargrave in order that they might listen to her own account of the strange circumstance, which she gave in exactly the same words as before. Very soon her house was besieged by all sorts of people interested in the story, who saw that Mrs. Bargrave was a straightforward, cheerful person, not at all likely to have invented such a surprising tale.

Amongst those who visited Mrs. Bargrave was the lady whose account was published by Defoe in 1706. Their houses were near together, and they had known each other well for many years. It is she who tells us of various little facts which go far to prove the truth of Mrs. Veal's apparition: how it was discovered that the sister and brother-in-law to whom Mrs. Veal referred really *had* travelled from London to Dover in order to pay their family a visit but only arrived just as Mrs. Veal was dying; how the servant next door, hanging out clothes in the garden, had heard Mrs. Bargrave talking to someone for above an hour at the very time Mrs. Veal was said to be with her; and how immediately after Mrs. Veal had departed, Mrs. Bargrave had hurried in to the lady next door, and told her that an old friend she feared she had lost sight of had been to see her, and related their conversation.

But Mrs. Veal's brother in Dover was very angry when he heard what was being said in Canterbury, and declared he should go and call on Mrs. Bargrave, who seemed to be making a great deal out of nothing. As to the little legacies which Mrs. Bargrave had mentioned in her letter that Mrs. Veal wished him to give to her friends, why, he had asked his sister on her death-bed—for she was conscious for the last four hours of her life—whether there was anything she desired to dispose of, and she had answered no. But, in spite of Mr. Veal's wrath, everyone believed in Mrs. Bargrave's tale, for they believed in Mrs. Bargrave herself. She had nothing to gain by inventing such a story, and was ready to answer all questions put to her in a plain, straightforward way.

‘I asked her,’ said the lady from whom Defoe obtained his account, ‘if she was sure she felt the gown; she answered, “If my senses are to be relied on, I am sure of it.”’

‘I asked her if she had heard a sound when Mrs. Veal clapped her hand upon her knee; she said she did not remember that she did, but added: “She appeared to be as much a substance as I did, who talked with her; and I may be as soon persuaded that your apparition is talking to me now as that I did not really see her, for I was under no manner of fear; I received her as a friend and parted with her as such. I would not,” she concluded “give one farthing to make anyone believe it, for I have no interest in it.”’

From Defoe’s day to this many people have read the tale, and several have held it to be a pure invention of the novelist. But some have taken the trouble to search out the history of the persons mentioned in it, and have found that they at any rate were real, and living in Dover and in Canterbury at the very dates required by the story. In the reign of Charles I. a Bargrave had been Dean of Canterbury, and a Richard Bargrave married a widow in the church of St. Alphege in 1700. There had been also Veals connected with Canterbury, which is curious, and we find that a son of William Veal was baptised in St. Mary’s, Dover, in August 1707. Now, as Mrs. Veal kept her brother’s house when they moved into Dover, he must have married after his sister’s death on September 7, 1705. And if we turn over the Parish Register of that very year, we shall see the burial of a ‘Mrs. Veal’ on September 10.

The Watsons are also to be found in Canterbury, and an ‘old Mr. Breton’ in Dover, who was known to have given Mrs. Veal £10 a year.

Of course it does not follow from this that, because the characters of the tale published by Defoe only ten months after Mrs. Veal’s death were actually alive in the very places where he said we should find them, Mrs. Veal’s ghost did really appear to Mrs. Bargrave. But if not, why drag in all these people to no purpose? They could all have contradicted him, but the only person who did so was Mr. Veal himself, and he alone had a motive in disbelieving the appearance of his sister, as he may not have wished to hand over the rings which she had bequeathed to her friends, or to diminish the contents of the purse of gold he was driven to admit that she possessed.

Once more, it is perfectly certain that Mrs. Bargrave told and stood by her story, for in May 1714 a gentleman went to see her and cross-examine her. Mrs. Bargrave said that she did not know the editor of her story, but that it was quite correct except in three or four small points; for instance, that she and Mrs. Veal had talked about the persecution of Dissenters in the time of Charles II. was omitted in the printed version. The gentleman then made the corrections by his copy of the book, and added a long note in Latin about his visit to Mrs. Bargrave on May 21, 1714.

This copy of the book Mr. Aitken found in the British Museum; so, whether we believe Mrs. Bargrave's story or not, she undoubtedly told it, and it was not invented by Defoe.

The facts were discovered by Mr. G. A. Aitken, who published them in his edition of Defoe's tales. He does not seem to have known that in an old book, Dr. Welby's 'Signs before Death,' there is another version, with curious information about Mistress Veal's broken engagement with Major-General Sibourg, killed in the battle of Mons; and about the kinship of the mother of Mrs. Veal with the family of the Earl of Clarendon, which induced Queen Anne, moved by Archbishop Tillotson, to give Mr. Veal his place in the Customs. We also learn that Mrs. Bargrave's cold on the Sunday was caused by the conduct of her husband, who came home intoxicated, found her excited by her interview with Mrs. Veal, and saying, 'Molly, you are hot, you want to be cooled,' led her into the garden, where she passed the night.

THE CHIEF'S DAUGHTER

Raven's wife had died, and as he felt very lonely he soon determined to marry a second, but it was not very easy to find a girl to suit him, for she was obliged to be of noble birth as the other had been. And to add to the difficulties, a mischief-maker called Tsagwan was also seeking a wife of the same kind, and wherever Raven went Tsagwan flew after him, and told untrue stories about Raven, so that fathers refused to give him their daughters. At last Raven discovered this and went straight to the chief of the town.

'I know what has happened,' said he. 'And you will suffer for it. If I had married your daughter, you would have had a great name in the world, but now your daughter will marry someone whom no one ever heard of, and if they speak of you among men it will be as The-Chief-with-no-name.' When he heard this the chief trembled, for he knew it would be shameful.

So Raven left him and continued his journey till he reached the house of an old man who lived alone.

'Do you know the young daughter of the chief who lives not far from here?' he asked.

'Yes, I know her.'

'Well, why don't you marry her?'

'Oh, it is quite impossible that I should marry her, so I don't see the good of trying.'

'Don't be so faint-hearted,' said Raven, 'I will give you a medicine which will cause her to fall in love with you.'

'But I have no slaves, and she will expect slaves,' said the old man.

'Oh no, she won't,' answered Raven, 'she will take a liking to you and no one will be able to help it. She will marry you, and her father will lose half his property.'

And Raven kept his word and his medicine made the old man look young again, and Raven bestowed feathers on him to put in his hair, and a robe of marten skin to throw over his shoulders. When he was dressed the man looked very handsome and was greatly pleased with himself. But his face fell when Raven said to him:

'Remember you are not going to be like this always; it is only for a day or two.'

Then the man got into his skin canoe and paddled over to where the girl lived, and he did not go to ask her father's consent but sought her out when she was alone, and she fell in love with him although she had refused to listen to many other men besides Raven, and this was Raven's revenge.

'Yes, I will marry you,' she said, 'and I will go with you, even if my father kills me for it.'

So she married him, and after that her father and mother were told of it. But the chief, instead of being unkind to his daughter, gave her rich fur robes; 'for,' said he, 'if she is already married there is no use in my being angry; and besides, her husband is a handsome fellow and is plainly of high birth.' And he and the husband talked together of his

daughter’s suitors and especially of the man who had been cruel to his first wife, but the husband did not know that the chief meant Raven.

The new husband was anxious to get back to his own home, as he was afraid that his fine clothes might drop off him on the way. Therefore he lost no time in saying, ‘My father told me I was to return at once in my canoe; let us hasten, but do not you, my wife, take any furs with you except those you want to keep you warm on the journey, for I have more than enough in my house.’ The wife obeyed him, and only took with her a marten skin and a fox robe.

Now the girl lay in the canoe with her eyes shut, and she lay there for a long while till she thought that they must be near home. Then she sat up and looked out, and caught sight of her husband’s face, which looked quite different from when she had seen it before. For now it was full of wrinkles, and the hair was thin and grey. And at the sight her heart beat so fast it seemed as if it would jump out of her body, and she cried very bitterly, because she was frightened and angry.

As soon as the canoe ran upon the beach she sat upon the rocks weeping while the old man went from house to house throughout the village, begging them to take her in, as she was a high-born girl and he had no place that was fit for her. But they would not, and at last his sister, who was still older than he, came down to the beach and took the girl back to her house, which was dirty and shabby. The girl went, but she was very miserable, and every day the people stopped as they were passing, and mocked at her and her husband.

Curious to say, the chief and his sons had been quite deceived by the fine clothes of the daughter’s husband, and resolved to make him presents suited to his rank. Therefore one day the people of the village beheld a procession of canoes paddling over the sea, one filled with furs, another containing the father and brothers of the girl, and a third, in which sat the slaves with green feathers in their hair, taken from the heads of drakes. The old man saw them likewise, and called to some boys to come and help him clean up the house. But they only answered, ‘Clean up yourself, for you are dirty enough.’

‘Well, at least carry up the strangers’ goods; they are now landing,’ said he, but the boys replied as they had done before, ‘Carry them yourself.’ In the end, it was the strangers who carried them and put them down where they could; and they noticed that the old man’s sister was crying, and the strangers felt sorry for her.

The old man soon found that he would get no help from anybody, for they were all angry with him for having married a chief’s daughter. If he asked them to lend him a basket for his guests to eat off, they told him to use his own; if he begged them to fetch water, they bade him get it himself, and even when he took a very dirty old basket to fill at the stream, as he stooped down the water moved a little further away and then a little further still, as if it also had a spite at him. Indeed, it did this so often that at last he found himself in the

mountains, where it vanished into a house. Once more he followed it and beheld a very old woman sitting inside.

‘What is the matter?’ said she. ‘Is there anything I can do for you?’

‘You can do a great deal for me if you only will,’ answered he. ‘I am very poor and have married a noble wife, whose father and brothers have come to visit me. I have nothing to give them, and my neighbours will not help.’

‘Is that all?’ she said.

‘Yes, all! Is it not enough?’ But the old woman only smoothed his hair with her hand, and in a moment it was thick and black as it had been in his youth, and his rags became handsome garments. Even the very basket changed into a beautiful new one.

‘Go and dip the basket into the spring that is in the corner,’ said she, and when he drew it up it was full of water and of shells.

The man made all the haste he could down the mountain, but nobody recognised him except his wife, and those who had seen him when he went to marry her. He refreshed them all with water and gave them handfuls of the shells, which they prized greatly, in return for the slaves and furs his father-in-law had presented to him, for it is the custom of that tribe that, if a man receives a gift from a father-in-law, he shall pay it back with something of much greater value. And he soon grew so rich that the people made him chief of the town.

Now that happened which was bound to happen. The people who had mocked him when he was poor were ready to bow down to him when he was rich, while he and his wife grew harder and prouder every day. They built themselves a large house where they gave magnificent feasts, but they passed most of their time on the roof of the house, watching all that went on below.

WHAT BEAUTIFUL BIRDS! I SHOULD LIKE TO MARRY ONE OF THEM!

One fine spring evening they were sitting there as usual, when a flock of swans flew across the sky from the south-east. ‘What beautiful birds! I should like to marry one of them!’ exclaimed the wife, as the swans gradually disappeared in the distance. Of course she did not mean anything, any more than when she repeated the same words on seeing the sand-cranes overhead, or the brants which presently came past. But the brants did not know this, and as soon as they heard her they flew down and carried her off on their wings. Her husband ran after them but he never reached them, only now and then she let fall some of the loose clothes that covered her. By and bye—for they found she was heavier than they expected—the brants let the woman fall too. Luckily they were then over the sandy beach so she was not hurt, but she was quite naked and even her hair had been rubbed off. She got up and walked quickly, crying as she went, to some trees which had large leaves, and these she twisted together till she had made a kind of apron. Then she wandered along the beach not knowing where she was going, and thinking sadly of her home and her husband, till she came to a house with an old woman sitting in it. The sight gladdened her heart, and she entered and held out the head of a red snapper which she had picked up on the shore, saying, ‘Let us cook this red snapper head for dinner.’

‘Yes, let us cook it,’ answered the old woman, and after they had eaten it she bade the

chief’s wife go back to the beach and try to find something else. This time the girl brought in a fish called a sculpin, and it was cooked also; but while they were eating it the chief’s wife heard the noise of boys shouting, though she could see no one.

‘Take the tray with the food out to that hole,’ said the old woman, and as the chief’s wife did so she beheld many hands sticking up out of the ground. She placed the tray in the hands, and waited as it disappeared. In a moment it rose to the surface again, with two fine fox skins on it, which she carried back to the old woman.

‘Make yourself some robes out of them,’ said she, and the girl did so.

When she was dressed, the old woman spoke to her again, and said:

‘Your father and mother live in a salmon creek, a little way along the beach. It might be well for you to go and pay them a visit.’ So the girl went, and after a time she saw her father out in a canoe spearing salmon, and her mother was with him. The girl ran quickly down to the water’s edge in order to meet them, but when her father saw her he cried out:

‘Here comes a fox; where are my bow and arrows?’ And his daughter heard him and ran as fast as she could to the woods.

After a while she stopped running, for she knew she was safe, and then she made her way to the old woman.

‘Why are you crying? Did you not see your father?’

‘Yes, and he took me for a fox.’

‘Why, what else do you think you are?’ asked the old woman in surprise. ‘But return at once to your father who will want to kill you; and be sure you let him do it.’

‘Very well, I will do your bidding,’ answered the girl, though the order seemed strange to her.

The next day the girl went down to the beach and saw her father fishing still closer to the shore.

‘Why, here is that big fox again,’ cried he, and she did not move, but waited while he fitted an arrow to his bow and shot her in the heart. Then his wife got out of the canoe and began to skin the fox, and as she did so she found something on its foreleg which made her start.

‘Surely that is my daughter’s bracelet,’ said she. ‘Yet that is not possible!’ And she continued her work. By and by she came to the throat, and there lay a necklace. ‘Surely that is my daughter’s necklace,’ she repeated, and then she called to her husband, saying:

‘I found our daughter’s necklace and bracelet in this skin. Something that we know not of must have turned her into a fox.’ And they both cried, for they remembered how the fox had run to meet them instead of going away.

But Indians are learned in things of which other people are ignorant, and they quickly set to work and laid the fox’s body on a mat, and covered it with bags of eagle’s down which every tribe has ready to use, and over all they placed a mat, weeping as they did so. After that they fasted and cleaned up their houses, and the girl’s relations fasted likewise and cleaned up their houses. For many days they did this, and at length, at midnight, the father and mother felt their house shaking beneath them, and heard a noise coming from the

room where the body lay. Taking a burning stick, the mother hastened to the room, and found her daughter in her own shape, having become a doctor or shaman. Happy indeed were they to behold her thus; but, curious to say, the girl's husband at that moment lost all his wealth and was as poor as ever.

[*Tlingit Myths.*]

THE BOYHOOD OF A PAINTER

If we are to believe the proverb, a ‘Jack of all Trades is master of none,’ and it is mostly true. But here and there even in our own day, we meet with some gifted person who seems to be able to do anything he desires, and during the periods of history when men—and boys—were left more to themselves and allowed to follow their own bent, these geniuses were much less rare than at present.

Now during the last half of the fifteenth century and the first half of the sixteenth there lived in Italy a group of men who were in the highest possible degree Jacks of all Trades, or could have been so if they had chosen. They are known to us principally as painters, but the people amongst whom they lived very soon became aware that more than one of them could arrange you a water supply which would turn your mill wheel if there was no stream handy, or build you a palace if you were a rich citizen and wanted one, or help you to fortify your walls if you were the Lord of Milan or Florence or Ferrara; or fashion you a gold brooch as a present for your wife, if that was what you were seeking. As for making you a statue of yourself on horseback, to adorn the great square of the city over which you ruled—why, it was as easy to do that as to paint your portrait!

Chief among these ‘Universal Geniuses,’ as we should call them, was one Leonardo, son of the Florentine notary or lawyer, Piero da Vinci. He was born in the year 1452 not far from Florence and near the river Arno, and was declared by everyone to be one of the most beautiful children that ever was seen. As soon as he could crawl, he would scramble away (if his mother was busy and not thinking about him) to a place in the garden where there was always a heap of mud after a shower of rain, and sit happily on the ground pinching the mud into some sort of shape, which as he grew older, took more and more the form of something he knew. When his mother missed him and came in search of him, he would utter screams of disgust. Then the only way to quiet him was to play to him on the lute; for throughout his life Leonardo loved music, and at one time even had serious thoughts of being a professional musician.

Ser Piero was very proud of his astonishing little son, and the boy was still very young when his father decided that he must be taught by the best masters that could be found for him. Leonardo was quite willing. Lessons were no trouble to him and he speedily took away the breath of all his teachers by the amazing quickness with which he grasped everything. It did not matter if the subject was arithmetic, or the principles of music, or the study of geometry; it was enough for the boy to hear a thing once for him to understand and remember, and he constantly asked his master such difficult questions and expressed doubts so hard to explain, that the poor man was thankful indeed when school hours were ended.

But whatever lessons he might be doing, Leonardo spent most of his spare time in drawing and in modelling figures in clay, as he had done from his babyhood. His father watched

him for a time in silence, wondering within himself which of the boy's many talents ought to be made the occupation of his life, and at length he decided to take Leonardo to his friend Andrea del Verrocchio, and consult him on the matter. Verrocchio, like his pupil, was a painter, a geometrician, a sculptor, a goldsmith and a musician, but had at last settled down as a sculptor, and only now and then amused himself with other arts. When father and son entered his studio or workshop, Piero gave Leonardo some clay, and bade him model anything he fancied. The boy sat down on the floor, and soon finished a tiny statuette which might have been the work of Verrocchio himself, so true to life was the figure. The sculptor was delighted, and declared that Leonardo must come to him, and that he was very sure the pupil would shortly know as much as the master.

But though he had the gift of genius, Leonardo took as much trouble with his work as if he had just been an ordinary child, with his whole future life depending on his industry. And as some of you are perhaps fond of drawing, you may like to hear how one of the greatest artists in the world set about his pictures. First he took a handful of clay and poked it and pinched it until he had got his figure exactly as he wanted it to be. Then he dipped pieces of soft material in plaster, and arranged them in folds over the naked figure. Often the stuff was too stiff and would not go in the proper lines, but long ago Leonardo had learned that no man could be an artist of any kind unless he was possessed of endless patience, and he would sit for hours over his figure, taking the drapery off and trying it afresh, till at length it assumed exactly the right shape. As soon as he had a model precisely to his mind, he would stretch a bit of very fine cambric or linen, that was old and soft, upon a board, and on this—or sometimes on paper—he would copy his figure in pencil. As he grew older, Verrocchio would teach him how you could raise heavy weights by the help of levers or cranes, how to draw up water from immense depths, or how to tunnel through mountains—for the Italians have always been famous for their skill as engineers. But it was the boy Leonardo, and not the man Verrocchio, who invented the plan of so altering the course of the river Arno that a canal might be cut between the cities of Florence and Pisa. Leonardo did not live to see this done, but two hundred years after his death a pupil of the astronomer Galileo executed it after his scheme, for the Medici ruler of Florence. He was very anxious also to raise the Church of San Giovanni and to rest it on stone 'steps,' as he called them, and showed the Signory or governing citizens of Florence how it could be done. And, says his chronicler, so persuasive was his tongue and so good seemed his reasons that while he was speaking he moved them to belief in his words, although out of his presence they all well knew it was impossible.

Was it? one wonders now.

Many stories, of course, were told of him during these years—for the Florentines were not slow to find out the genius who dwelt among them—and here is one that is very characteristic of the boy. Verrocchio was working on a picture of the baptism of our Lord by St. John, and he entrusted the painting of the Angel standing by to his pupil. When it was finished the master came and looked at it, and remained silently gazing at the figure. He was too true an artist not to feel at once that he and Leonardo had changed places, and that the boy's Angel was worth more than all the rest of the picture. The chronicler tells us

that he was so wounded at this discovery that he never touched paint any more, but though it is always rather hard to find ourselves thrown into the shade, probably Verrocchio’s renunciation of painting lay deeper than mere envy. Why should he do badly what another could do perfectly? The boy’s genius was greater than his: let his master be the first to admit it.

Leonardo’s father, Ser Piero, had gone to his country house to escape the heats of a Florentine summer. He was resting one evening in his garden when a servant appeared, saying that one of his farmers desired to speak with him. Ser Piero gave orders that the man should be brought to him, as he knew him well, and they had often fished together.

‘Well, what now, Francisco?’ he asked, as the farmer came up bowing, and bearing in his hands a wooden shield. The man explained that he had cut down a fig tree near his house, because it was old and bore no fruit, and had himself cut the shield he was carrying out of the wood, and had brought it to his lord, humbly hoping that Ser Piero might have the goodness to get it painted with some design, for he wished to hang it up in his kitchen, as a remembrance of the old tree.

‘Very willingly will I do so,’ answered Ser Piero, and when next he went to Florence he sought out his son and handed him the shield, merely telling him to paint something on it. Leonardo happened to be busy at the moment, but as soon as he had time to examine the piece of wood he found it was rough and ill made, and would need much attention before it would be possible to paint it. The first thing he did was to hold the shield before the fire till the fibres were softened and the crookedness could be straightened out. The surface was then planed and made smooth, and covered with gypsum.

So far he had not thought what the picture should be, but now he began to consider this important matter, and as he pondered a look of mischief danced in his eyes.

‘I know! That will do!’ he said to himself. ‘The person who owns it, whoever he is, shall be as frightened as if he saw the head of Medusa; only, instead of being turned to stone, he will most likely run away!’ And still smiling, Leonardo left the workshop and went to his room, taking the shield in a cloth. Then he went out into the fields and hunted about till he had collected a quantity of strange creatures, hedgehogs, lizards, tadpoles, locusts, snakes and many others, for he knew as much about what is called ‘Natural History’ as he did about everything else, and could tell exactly where these animals could be found.

As soon as he had collected enough he carried them back and locked them safely up in a kind of lumber room, where nobody was allowed to enter but himself. He then sat down and began to place them so as to cause them to form one horrible monster, with eyes and legs everywhere. It was a long time before he could make anything horrid enough to please him; again and again he undid his work, and tried to combine his creatures differently, but at last something so terrible stared him in the face that he almost felt frightened.

‘That is all right, I think,’ he said with a laugh. ‘The monster is ready, but I must find a background fitting for him.’

Taking the shield, he painted on it a black and narrow cavern. At its mouth stood the creature without form; all eyes, all legs, all mouths. Flames poured from it on every side, and a cloud of vapour rose upwards from its many nostrils. After days of hard labour,

during which the animals died and filled the room with a smell from which even a boy might well be expected to shrink, Leonardo visited his father and told him he had finished the shield which he hoped would please him, and that he might have it whenever he liked. Ser Piero was at the time engaged in superintending his harvest, but when he was free he set off to see his son. Leonardo himself answered his knock, and, showing his father into another room, begged him to wait for a few minutes while he put away his work. Then he rushed back to the studio, darkened the window a little, and carefully chose a position for the easel on which the shield was standing.

Leonardo frightens his Father with the Monster painted on his Shield.

'Will you come in now, father?' he said holding open the door, but no sooner was Ser Piero within the room than he turned to fly, so terrible was the object that met his gaze.

'It will do, I see,' remarked Leonardo, catching him by the arm. 'I wanted to make something so dreadful that men would shiver with fear at the sight of it. Take it away, I pray you, and do with it as you will. But stay, I had better wrap it first in a cloth, lest it should frighten people out of their wits as you go along.'

Ser Piero took it, and departed without a word to his son; he really felt quite shaken from the shock he had had, and he determined that so wonderful a painting should never fall

into the hands of a peasant. So he went to a shop where he found a shield the same size as the other, bearing the device of a heart pierced by an arrow, and when next he went into the country he bade the farmer come up to the house to receive it.

‘Oh Excellency! how beautiful! how can I ever thank you for your goodness?’ cried the man in delight when, after his long waiting, the shield was at last delivered to him.

‘I thought you would be pleased,’ answered Ser Piero, smiling to himself as he pictured what would have been the face of the man before him, had he been given Leonardo’s monster. But this he kept for some time and then sold to a merchant for a hundred ducats, who in his turn parted with it to the Duke of Milan for three times the price.

In this way Leonardo da Vinci grew to manhood, gaining friends as he went by his beauty and his talents, and keeping them by his sweetness of temper and his generosity. He loved all animals, especially horses, and could never see a caged bird without trying to buy it, in order to set it free.

The kings and popes of those days were always eager to attract artists to their courts, and vied with each other in trying to outbid rivals, and when he was very young Leonardo received a commission from the King of Portugal to draw a design for some hangings to be copied in silk in Flanders. He painted an immense number of portraits, some to please himself and others ordered by his friends, and decorated, either with painting or sculpture, a great many churches and other buildings. Two of his pictures, at any rate, you may perhaps know from engravings of them—the portrait of Francesco del Giocondo’s wife, bought by Francis the First and lately stolen from the Louvre, and the Last Supper, painted for the Dominican monks in Milan, and now almost ruined by the damp.

Leonardo was forty-one when he was invited to go to Milan by the celebrated Lodovico Sforza, uncle to the reigning duke. Knowing that Lodovico—il Moro, as he was called—had a passion for music, the painter constructed with his own hands a silver instrument, shaped like a horse’s head, to which he sang tunes invented by himself, to words made up as he went along. This delighted Lodovico and also his wife, the young daughter of the Duke of Ferrara, who had been brought up amongst musicians and poets. Those were gay days at Milan, when all did their best to produce some form of beauty and everybody’s ‘best’ was so very good. But dark days were soon to follow, and in a great measure they were the work of Lodovico himself.

The French, on one excuse or another, were trying hard to get a footing in Italy; Louis XII. even laid claim to the Duchy of Milan. Then came his cousin and successor Francis I., whom (in the hope of gaining his favour) Lodovico particularly wished to honour.

‘What can you invent, Messer Leonardo?’ Lodovico asked the painter. ‘I want something no one has ever seen before; the king must be tired of grand shows, and he can get them at home. Of course we shall be obliged to give him a splendid reception for the sake of our own credit, but I should like something besides, which he can remember.’

So Messer Leonardo thought and thought, and the end of his thinking was that when the King of France entered Milan, a lion, life size, advanced to meet him, and touched the king’s breast with his own. By means of a spring the lion’s breast opened and from it fell sheaves of white lilies, the emblem of France.

Then too the other Italian princes wished to employ him and to make use of his varied talents. One of the Borgias sent him round the various cities over which he ruled, to inspect their fortifications, and to see what new engineering works were needed to withstand the constant sieges and the wars of state with state. Naturally the cardinals would not remain behindhand, especially those of the Medici family, Leonardo's own countrymen, and hearing that his kinsman Giuliano had induced the artist to travel to Rome in his train, Leo X. sent for him and after a long talk on many subjects expressed a desire to know if the painter was able to make figures that would fly. The idea delighted Leonardo, and he instantly set about some experiments. After many failures he at length succeeded in producing a kind of paste out of wax, and while it was still half melted he modelled some little horses and dogs and lions, scooping out the wax till only a very thin outer covering was left, all the rest being hollow. Into the figures he managed to blow some air, and as long as the air was in them they flew about to the joy and surprise of everyone, but when it was all exhausted the horses and dogs and lions came tumbling on the floor, one on top of another. Another day, when the talk had turned on feats of strength, somebody inquired whether what he had been told was true, that Leonardo was stronger than any man in Florence.

'Here I am; try me,' answered the painter.

'We will,' they all cried, and sent a servant for a horseshoe, and for an iron ring such as was used for doorknockers.

'Now see if you can bend these,' they said, and Leonardo took them and bent them as easily as Samson broke the ropes of the Philistines.

The last few years of his life Leonardo passed in France, where Francis I. was now king. Many of his pictures were already there, and there were others which Francis desired him to paint. But the artist was tired and ill, and made all sorts of excuses to avoid beginning his work. At last he told the king, who frequently came to visit him, that it was time he left the things of this world and turned his thoughts to the other which he would soon enter. His words were repeated sorrowfully among his friends, and though they fain would have denied their truth, yet they could not. So in May 1519 he died, leaving behind him a memory that will live while painting endures. But he was mourned, not only on account of his many talents and splendid works of all sorts, but for the beauty of his face, which lasted till his death, his merry words that lightened the burden of those who were sad, and his kindness and generosity to all who stood in need of help and comfort.

THE ADVENTURES OF A SPANISH NUN

If you had visited the convent of St. Sebastian in the Spanish town of the same name at the end of the sixteenth century, you would have found there a merry, naughty, clever little girl called Catalina de Erauso, the torment and delight of all the nuns. Catalina had been sent to the convent when she was quite a baby, because her father, like many other gentlemen in the Spain of those days, was too poor to provide for his daughters as well as his sons. And in general the girls were happy enough in the life into which they had been thrust without any will of their own, and were allowed a certain amount of pleasure and could see their relations from time to time.

The Señor de Erauso, Catalina’s father, had fixed on this particular convent out of the many he had for choice, because his sister-in-law was the Mother Superior. Like the rest of the nuns she was very fond of the child who was so ready with her tongue, so clever with her hands, so quick to forgive an injury done her, if only the offender would say she was sorry! Some day, no doubt, Catalina would take her place as abbess, and her aunt felt that under her rule all would go well, for unruly as the child often was, she had the gift of winning love from everybody.

But if she had only known, Catalina had not the smallest intention of spending her days in the convent overlooking the Bay of Biscay. From her father and brothers she heard stories of the wars which had quite lately been raging in France between the Catholics and Huguenots; how a few years earlier several of her own kinsmen had gone down in the great storm which had sunk so many of the ships of the huge Armada, sent to conquer England. Something, too, she picked up of the wonders of the lands beyond the ocean, discovered a hundred years ago by Christopher Columbus. All this and much more, Catalina stored in her head, and, though she said nothing even to her closest friends, soon began to play in her mind at ‘escaping from the convent.’

At first she was only in fun, and enjoyed, as many of us do, making up stories about herself. Then gradually the idea of taking part in the big world beyond the gates became too precious to set aside, and at last it so possessed her, that she only waited for the chance of carrying it out.

This happened when she was fifteen—a tall, strong, handsome girl full of energy and courage, and quick to decide whatever question came before her.

One day the nuns assembled as usual for vespers or evening prayers, and just as they were all going into chapel the Superior discovered that she had left her psalm-book upstairs, locked in her writing-table. Summoning Catalina, she handed her a key, and bade her unlock the drawer in which the book was kept, and bring it to her as fast as possible. The girl ran upstairs, but when she saw lying in the locked drawer, not only the book, but the key of the convent gate, it darted into her mind that now, if ever, was her opportunity to quit the convent. Yet even at that moment, she did not let her excitement get the better of

her. She snatched up some loose money from the drawer and a small work-case that lay on a table and hid it in her dress, and without stopping a moment ran down to the great door of the convent, which she unlocked. She next rejoined her aunt who was waiting for her, and asked if she might go straight to bed, as she had a bad headache.

In this manner she secured to herself a good start, as no one would think about her for hours to come. She passed through the door carefully, locking it after her, and crept cautiously along by the wall till she reached a chestnut wood on the outskirts of the town. Here she flung herself down on a heap of dry leaves and slept till sunrise. This, fortunately for her, was very early, as she had much to do before she continued her journey. Her dress would have told any passer-by that she was a nun, or at least that she had come from a convent, and that was the last thing they must ever guess! Slipping off therefore her white petticoat, Catalina began at once to turn it into trousers such as men then wore, and in three or four hours had finished a pair which, if not exactly fashionable, would pass unnoticed. She next managed to change her long robe into a cloak, and satisfied that she would do well enough, the girl started on a walk to a town not far off, where she had resolved to try and find shelter with an elderly cousin.

It took her two days to arrive at his house, and all that time she had nothing but wild fruits and berries to live on. Of course she did not tell the cousin who she was, but merely asked if he would give hospitality to a traveller for a short time, which the kind old man was glad to do. Here Catalina rested after the fatigues she had undergone, but life in the town house was far more dull than life in the convent, and the girl had not run away for *that*! So in a few days she was again missing, and a handful of dollars also. Not very many, but just enough to take her on her way.

We meet Catalina next in the famous city of Valladolid, where King Philip III. was holding his court. Here she found things much more to her taste, and like what she had pictured. Men were walking through the streets in huge felt hats, with flowing cloaks over their fine clothes. Coaches drawn by mules jolted along and inside she caught a glimpse of ringleted heads and small bodies lost under hooped petticoats. There were soldiers, too, in abundance and bands playing music—the first Catalina had ever heard outside the convent chapel. It so delighted her that she stopped to listen, and at that moment some idle men began to laugh at her clumsy garments, and even threw stones at her. This was more than any Spanish girl could bear, even if she *had* been brought up in a convent. *She* could—and did—throw stones too, with a better aim than theirs, and very soon blood from cut heads was streaming on the roads. But the Spanish police who hurried to the spot on hearing the cries of the wounded men, did not stop to inquire into the rights of the quarrel, and would have straightway flung Catalina into prison, had not a young officer who had been watching the fight from his windows hastened to interfere, and insisted that the stranger should be released.

‘You are a brave boy,’ he said, ‘and if you like to be my page, I will gladly take you into my house.’

Catalina was grateful for the offer and remained there for three months, feeling very proud

of herself in her page’s dress of dark-blue velvet. She would have stayed with the young don for much longer, had she not been frightened out of her wits one night at dusk by the appearance, in the dark little ante-room where she sat, of her own father.

He did not know her, of course; how should he? But all the same, he had come to tell of her escape to Catalina’s master, who was in a sort of way lord of the convent. Waiting in the ante-room, the girl heard all their conversation, and in dread lest she should fall into the hands of the Church and be sent back to St. Sebastian she resolved to run off before there was any risk of her being traced.

Now at that time a fleet was being fitted out for Peru, and was to sail from a seaport in the South. The scraps of talk on the subject which she had overheard in the house of the young don had fired her with the wish to go with the army in search of adventures. At the time there seemed little chance of her doing so, but while crossing the dark streets of Valladolid in her flight, the idea occurred to her that if she could manage to get on board one of the ships, she would be out of reach of capture. It was a long way to travel—almost the whole length of Spain—but by joining first one party and then another, Catalina at last found herself in the port of San Lúcar. All volunteers were welcome, and convent-bred though she was, Catalina soon managed to pick up a good deal of seamanship, while her clever hands and her strength combined made her quickly useful. Even with fair winds it was months before they reached the coast of Peru for which they were bound, and when they were almost there, their troubles began. A frightful storm arose that blew the fleet in all directions, and the vessel in which Catalina was serving was flung on a coral reef. The sea was running high, and the ship had a deep hole in her side, and all on board knew that twenty-four hours at farthest would see her sucked beneath the water.

CATALINA RESCUED BY THE YOUNG OFFICER.

At the prospect of this awful doom the sailors grew frantic, and hastened to lower the long-boat and scramble into it. The captain alone refused to leave the ship, and Catalina refused to leave him. Instead, she hurriedly lashed a few spars together so as to form a raft which, even if it would not support the weight of both, would at least give them something

to cling to while they swam ashore. As she was working at the raft with all her might, a vivid flash of lightning showed an enormous wave breaking over the distant boat and sweeping away the crew, who disappeared for ever.

A fit of despondency had seized on the captain, and it was in vain that the girl tried to put some of her own spirit into him. At length she realised that she had only herself to depend on, and left him alone. As soon as the raft was ready, she went down to his cabin and broke open a box of gold, out of which she took a handful of coins, tying them up in a pillow-case and fastening them securely to the raft, for she dare not put them on her own person lest the weight should sink her when once she found herself in the sea.

The moment Catalina appeared again on deck, she saw that the ship was sinking fast, and that no time was to be lost. She lowered the raft and, calling to the captain to follow her, plunged into the sea. He obeyed her, but did not give the vessel a sufficiently wide berth, and, falling against a jutting spar, was struck senseless and sucked under the vessel. Catalina had managed better. She contrived to get on the raft and was gently washed on shore by the rising tide, though she was too much exhausted by all she had gone through to have been able to swim there for herself.

For a while she lay upon the sand almost unconscious, but the hot sun which appeared suddenly above the horizon warmed her body and dried her clothes, and awoke her usual energy. She soon sat up and looked about her, but the prospect was not cheering; a desolate track stretched away north and south, and she did not know on which side stood the town of Paita whither the fleet had been bound. However, she reflected she would never find it by sitting still, and got up and climbed a rock to enable her to see farther. Great was her joy at beholding that the raft, with the money on it, had stuck in a cleft some way off along the beach, and after she had placed the coins in her own pockets she perceived a barrel of ship's biscuits at a little distance. To be sure, the biscuits were half soaked with sea water, but even so they tasted quite nice to a starving girl.

A walk of three days brought her to Paita, where she bought some fresh clothes and obtained a situation as clerk to a merchant. But she did not keep this very long, as she incurred the jealousy of a young man who owed money to her employer. He picked a violent quarrel with Catalina, who had to fight a duel with him. Without intending to kill him, her sword passed through his body, with the result that she soon found herself in the hands of the police. By a mixture of cunning and good fortune, Catalina managed to escape from the prison in which she was confined, and making her way through the narrow streets to the harbour, she got into a small boat moored there and hoisted a sail. She was afraid to use the oars as she had no means of muffling them. The wind was behind her and she was quickly swept far out to sea,—in what direction she had not the least idea. For hours she saw nothing, and was wondering if she had escaped so many dangers only to die of hunger and thirst, when towards sunset she beheld a ship coming

straight across her path. With her heart in her mouth she waved her handkerchief, though it seemed hardly possible that so small a thing should be visible in that vast expanse of sea. But it was, and the ship lay to, waiting for the boat to be blown up to her, which happened just after the sun had set beneath the horizon, and the short twilight of the tropics was over. Then it occurred to Catalina that if the name of her boat was seen she might be traced as having come from Paita, and be given up for murder. So standing up she rocked it gently from side to side till it was filled with water, then giving it a final kick to make sure it would sink, snatched at the rope which was dangling down the ship's side, and was hauled on board.

The vessel was on her way to Chili and was filled with recruits for the war then raging with the Indians, and Catalina of course at once declared her wish to throw in her lot with them. When at length they arrived at the port for which they were bound, a cavalry officer came to inspect the newly enlisted soldiers before they were landed, and Catalina was startled to hear him addressed by her own name. It was, though he was quite unaware of it, her eldest brother, who had last seen her when she was three years old. Yet, though from first to last he never guessed the truth, he took an immediate fancy to 'Pedro Diaz'—for so Catalina called herself—and, as soon as he heard that Pedro was a native of his own province of Biscaya, greeted him kindly and placed him in his own regiment. But much as she longed to tell him who she was, she dared not do so, for who could tell, if it were once known that she was a woman and had run away from a convent, what the consequences might be?

Years passed away and Catalina—or 'Pedro Diaz'—had distinguished herself on many occasions as a cavalry officer. Then a terrible thing occurred. A lieutenant in her own regiment came to her and begged her to be his 'second' in a duel to be fought at eleven that night under the walls of a monastery. Catalina, though ready enough with her own sword if her hot temper was roused, had no fancy for duelling, and somehow felt more than usually unwilling to be mixed up with this affair. However, the young man begged her so earnestly not to refuse his request that at last she consented. When the moment arrived it was so dark that the two 'principals' were forced to tie white handkerchiefs round their arms, in order to see where to attack; and as they were afraid of arousing the attention of the monks, hardly a word was spoken. The signal was given by the other second, and the duel began—a duel 'to the death.' After a sharp struggle both principals fell to the ground, wounded mortally, and according to the code of honour, which lasted nearly a hundred years longer, it was necessary for the seconds to fight in order to avenge them. To Catalina, who had no quarrel with any one, this custom was hateful, and she tried only to defend herself without touching her adversary. But in the dark her foot slipped and the point of her sword entered his side.

'Villain! You have killed me!' he cried. They were his last words, and the voice that uttered them was the voice of Catalina's brother!

Too much horrified to stir, the poor woman remained glued to the spot, till she found herself suddenly seized by the monks who had been awakened by the clash of weapons

and by de Erauso's dying shriek. The glare of their torches revealed that out of the four men who had met on the ground half an hour earlier only one survived, and that one was too crushed by the dreadful fate which had befallen her to be able to give any explanation. The monks kept her safely in their chapel for a few days, and then, when her mind and body had partly recovered from the shock, they provided her with a horse and a knapsack filled with food, and bade her farewell. But where to go she knew not. After the awful thing that had happened she could never return to her regiment.

After three days' riding she came suddenly upon two soldiers who had deserted from the Spanish army, and were almost starving. As soon as Catalina had shared her food with them and they felt revived, they all agreed that their best plan was to climb over the great mountain chain of the Andes, which runs the whole length of South America, and once on the other side they would be safe and free to go where they would.

They little knew what they were undertaking. Many of the peaks are over 20,000 feet high, and are covered with perpetual snow. There was rarely to be found any material for a fire, and if by any chance they *did* come on a few sticks, they were ignorant of the Indians' secret of kindling a flame. Soon, even the wild berries of the lower regions were left behind; there was nothing for them to eat, and very shortly it became evident that the day of the deserters was done.

By this time they were among masses of rocks which stood out in black groups from the snow, and for an instant hope rose again in their hearts at the sight of a man leaning against a tall pillar of stone, with a gun in his hand. There was something to shoot then in this fearful white solitude! An eagle perhaps, or, better still, a bear; and with a cry of joy to her companions, Catalina hastened on to greet the stranger. At the news, fresh life seemed to pour into their veins and they stumbled after her as fast as their weakness would allow. They were a little surprised that the man never appeared to see or hear them as they approached, but imagined that the snow had deadened the sound of their footsteps. Was he asleep? In that position? It was not likely! Certainly there was something very odd about him, and Catalina, striding on before the two soldiers, touched him on the shoulder. With a clatter the gun fell to the ground beside him, but he himself did not stir. Then the frightful truth burst upon her. The man was frozen to death!

After this there was no more hope for the two deserters. One sank into the snow first, the other staggered a few yards farther, and upon both came the frozen sleep that knows no waking and which, it is said, is painless.

So Catalina was left to pursue her way alone, wondering all the while how soon *her* strength also would fail her, and *her* bones be left to whiten with the rest. There was something more dreadful to her in the solitude and stillness of the mountains than there ever had been in the solitude of the sea, on the lonely coast of Peru. Yet she went on

blindly, almost unconsciously, till she was awakened from her half-paralysed state by the sight of a belt of olive trees lying below her. Where there were trees, there was probably water; possibly, even men! And down she went, stumbling over stones, sliding along the edge of precipices, till she fell, senseless from exhaustion, under their shadow.

It was hours before she came to herself again, and she might have slept on still longer, had not the sound of horses' hoofs aroused her. The wood was thick and the horsemen might have passed without noticing the figure in the tall grass, had not a ray of sunshine suddenly struck on some silver lace of Catalina's uniform. Jumping instantly to the ground, they examined her closely and guessed at the reasons of her plight. Taking out a skin bottle, one poured brandy down her throat—though it was no light matter to force her teeth open—and another rubbed her temples. After she had shown signs of life they placed her on a horse, supporting her in the saddle, for she was still too weak and dazed to sit upright.

It was a long time—or it seemed so to Catalina—before the little company drew up at the door of a large house, and a girl ran out to see how it was that the servants who had been sent by her mother to the nearest town should have returned so soon. The poor wanderer received from both ladies the kindest welcome; and food, a warm bed, and rest soon set her to rights, and of course nobody dreamed that she was anything but the soldier she appeared. For a while Catalina was thankful to remain where she was, basking in the sun and enjoying the company of the Señora and her daughter.

It was the first time since she left Valladolid that she had ever been inside a home.

Yet, grateful as she was for all the kindness shown her, Catalina felt she could not remain for ever a guest of the widowed Señora; and she was glad when the lady proposed that they should all visit a large town lying to the south, for purposes of business. 'And,' Catalina thought to herself, 'it will be easy for me, when I am once there, to invent some excuse for bidding them farewell. I cannot pass my life in a hammock under trees, thankful though I am for the rest which has been given me.' But she did not guess that the 'excuse' she wanted was to be obtained only at the risk of her own neck.

Wandering about the town, she fell in with some Portuguese, and as she was fond of cards she was readily persuaded by them to sit down and gamble. Very soon, her suspicions were roused that they were not playing fair, and she watched them more closely.

'Yes; I was sure of it,' she thought, and grew so angry that she would have liked to challenge the whole twelve on the spot. Luckily, she contrived with great difficulty to restrain herself, and resolved only to fight the man who had won most of her money.

When this person left the gambling saloon, Catalina kept him in sight, but did not attempt to speak to him till she saw him stop before one of the houses in a dark street. Then she quickened her steps, and, tapping him on the shoulder, remarked: 'Señor, you are a robber.'

'It is possible,' answered the Portuguese, turning coolly; 'but I don't care about being told so,' and drew his sword.

Catalina drew hers, and, after a quick sharp fight, dealt him a mortal blow. As he fell, she looked round hastily, fearing that some of his friends might be at hand to avenge him, but

all was silent. Satisfied that nobody was watching her, she tried the door, which opened instantly, and dragged the body into the passage. This done she went back to the Señora's house, and getting into bed slept soundly, only awakening the following morning to find her room filled with police.

Catalina never knew exactly how her fight with the dead man had been discovered, and as she was instantly put in prison to await her trial, perhaps it did not much matter. False witnesses were easily found who trumped up a story of vengeance, and it was useless for Catalina to swear that she had never seen the Portuguese gentleman till that evening, and knew nothing at all about him. The fact that the dead man was a native of the place, while she was a stranger, told heavily against her, and sentence was passed that she should be hanged in the public square in eight days' time.

Wearing her lieutenant's uniform from which she steadily declined to be parted, Catalina walked firmly up the ladder to the gallows on the appointed day. The executioner was new to his work, and bungled the noose which he had to place round Catalina's neck.

'Here, let *me* do it,' she said at last; 'it is plain *you* have never been at sea.' But all the same, the man's clumsiness had saved her, for before he could pull the knot, an order arrived from the Governor of the State to postpone the execution till fresh inquiries could be made. In the end the truth came out, and Catalina was set free, but was advised by the Governor not to remain in that part of the country for the present.

The advice was felt to be good by them all, but as Catalina had no money the good Señora again came to the rescue, and gave her enough to buy a horse and to take her to a large town, where she might find something to do. When at length Catalina reached the city, which bore the name of Paz or 'Peace,' some soldiers who were lounging in the streets stood up, and stared so hard at her beautiful black horse that Catalina began to suspect that something was the matter. The soldiers said nothing whatever to *her*, but one of them, catching sight of a gentleman a few paces off, ran up to him and whispered something. The mayor, for such he was, walked up to Catalina, who inquired if she could be of service to him.

'These men,' said he, 'declare that the horse you are riding was stolen from them.'

Catalina did not answer directly, but, leaping to the ground, flung the loose saddle-cloth over the horse's head. 'I bought it and paid for it in La Plata,' she replied; 'but if, your worship, these men *really* own the horse, they will be able to tell you *which* is its blind eye.'

'The left,' cried one.

'No; the right,' exclaimed the other.

'Well, it must be *one* of the two, mustn't it, your worship?' asked she.

'No, no! we remember now,' they replied, consulting each other by a glance and a sign; 'it is the left, of course.'

HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR THE INTERFERENCE OF THE BISHOP HIMSELF, IT WOULD HAVE GONE HARDLY WITH CATALINA

‘Are you sure?’ she asked again. ‘Yes—quite sure; certain.’

Upon that Catalina whisked off the saddle-cloth, and said gaily to the mayor:

‘Now, your worship, if you will take the trouble to look, you will see that the horse has nothing the matter with either eye!’

Then she bowed and rode away to look for a dinner.

Catalina’s last adventure in South America was a wild ride to the town of Cuzco, carrying on her saddle a lady whose half-mad husband was seeking to murder her. He was following fast behind, and his horse was laden with no double burden, so that in every way he had the advantage. But Catalina was a better rider, and had some start, so, in spite of a wound in her horse’s flank, she won the day and placed the lady in safety in a

convent. The husband, arriving just in time to see his victim escape him, at once unsheathed his sword, and inflicted some severe wounds on Catalina. Indeed, had it not been for the interference of the bishop himself, it would have gone hardly with her.

But when, half fainting from loss of blood, she was carried into the palace and a doctor was summoned, she knew that the moment she had dreaded had come, and that she must now confess that, in spite of all her exploits and all her daring, she was only a woman. Always prompt to make up her mind, she asked for an interview with the bishop, who listened to her tale with amazement and sympathy. By his advice she entered a convent till he could write to Spain and to the Pope, and obtain forgiveness for having thrown off her nun's habit, nearly twenty years before. As soon as could be expected, though not till after many months, the answer came: Catalina was to be sent back to Spain.

It was at the end of November 1624 that the ship entered the harbour of Cadiz, and saw a gilded barge approaching, rowed by men in royal livery. Who could it be intended for? There was no one on board either great or famous! At least so they thought, but it appears they were wrong, for there was *one* person whose adventures had thrilled the hearts of both king and people, and that was Catalina herself. As she left the barge and mounted the steps she beheld the famous Minister Olivarez waiting to receive her, and crowds thronged the streets through which she passed on her way to the palace.

Here she was requested to tell her story to the court, and as some reward for her courage in battle and for her loyalty to the crown, a pension for life was settled upon her. Poor Catalina felt very strange in the stiff uncomfortable dress of a Spanish lady, and far more than her honours and her pension did she value the permission of the Pope (whom she visited at Rome a few months later) to wear on all occasions the uniform of a cavalry officer, together with a sword and spurs.

For ten years Catalina remained in Spain, leading a quiet life, and feeling, if the truth be told, terribly dull. She was forty-three when she heard that an expedition to South America was again being fitted out, and she lost no time in joining the army. Oh, how happy she was to be back in the old life, where, even in the slow voyages of those times, a stirring adventure might befall you at any hour of the day or night! They sailed first to the Gulf of Mexico and stopped in the port of Vera Cruz, where the officers arranged to go on shore and have a grand dinner at the best inn in the place. Catalina was of course to go with them, and jumped into the boat with the rest, laughing and talking in the highest spirits as if twenty years had rolled from her. In a quarter of an hour they reached the inn, but as they gathered round the table, someone inquired: 'Where is Catalina?'

'Catalina? Isn't she here?' was the answer. 'Certainly she was in the boat, for she sat by me!'

'Well, but where has she gone?' Ah! that no one knew—and what is more, no one ever *did* know!

FINIS

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