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*THE WINDS OF MARCH.*

BY HALLIWELL SUTCLIFFE.

BOOK II.—THE WILDERNESS.

CHAPTER V.

THE END OF THE RACE.

THE fugitive had a long start, and pursuit was a tonic. It tickled his whimsical fancy to know that he was leading so big a field, for he was sure of finding cover soon, if this unknown strip of country was like the rest of the wild land. He halted now and then, lulled by security, and smiled at the climbing press below. If he could have paid their claims he would have done it. Meanwhile, as luck had not run that way, it was diverting that he had their money in his pockets. Undoubtedly, one must find a livelihood somehow in these hard times.

With that, he would go forward again, expecting always to reach one of the deep, wooded clefts that abounded in the lower country—thickets where a fox or a man could lie doggo. Little by little dismay crept in. Winter's gales had let no tree live up here, no shrub. Grey boulders peopled it, and limestone scree, and walls that were hot to the touch in October's fierce, windless sun-glare.

Clare might be nimble as a mountain goat, but lacked its stamina. His breath began to fail. There were stinging blisters on his feet. And ever the face of the land was steep; and ever the pursuit's grim uproar sounded.

He came to a bubbling spring that mocked his thirst, because he dared not stay to slake it. When he glanced back, it was to see a scattered company, following devious tracks, but converging on the one goal—himself.

Imagination, true in perspective, took the reins now from fancy. He knew that his strength was pitted, not against one runner, but the best of a lusty hunting-pack. He glanced left and right, in

search of cover. None showed. So he went on again, with feet that seemed heated in a furnace.

If he could find cover—the thought went round and round in his mind till he mistook it for a prayer. The tumult behind grew nearer. Desperation quickened vision, and ahead he saw, not the wooded shelter he had pictured, but a wide stretch of brackens, copper-gold against the brazen sky. It spelt sanctuary.

The brackens were half a mile away, and even that short space appalled him. There was a singing in his ears, a fierce pain at his heart. He was compelled to halt, and a backward glance showed nothing, because a shallow gully hid the up-comers.

He got himself in hand again. Perhaps he had outdistanced them after all. His light optimism began to lift its head again. He had given them a good race for their money, safe in his pockets, and they should be content.

His dream was shattered. Pursuit's rough outcry ran up the hill and over the gully, and soon a great, shock-headed body came into view. Wee Daunt, a strong runner, had his heart in this wild chase. It pleased him to outdistance his fellows, but a grimmer satisfaction spurred him forward. If Clare had seen that he was no horseman, he should learn what he could do on foot.

The fugitive was learning it already, as he crossed the half-mile that seemed endless. The ground was thick with charred stumps of heather burnt last spring. His feet jarred constantly against the stems, but his pursuer seemed unhindered. A glance behind showed Wee Daunt gaining fast—an uncouth, monstrous shape that seemed to have leaped from the bowels of this savage land—a shape that did not tire.

The dwarf's joy in his strength deepened with every stride. The heat of the scorching sun was unfelt. Jar of the rough heather-stumps went unheeded. He meant to run down his quarry, and there were barely twenty yards between them now.

Clare gave himself up for lost. The brackens were near, with their friendly welcome, but he was spent. His feet had lost their bearings. His head swam through red, hazy seas that buffeted and cowed.

Wee Daunt saw only his prey, not the ground under his feet. A boulder met him unawares, and he sprawled headlong into a moment's oblivion of all things.

Adrian Clare, glancing back again, saw Wee Daunt lying where he fell. Pursuit's harsh murmur sounded far behind, but no man

was in sight. He went, with borrowed strength, over the broken ground, and came—at eternity's end, it seemed—to the brackens.

It was well for him that October had brittleed this widespread sanctuary. If it had been lush with summer, the downtrodden fronds would have betrayed his every step; but now he crept in, on hands and knees, and the stiff, red-gold branches closed about him as if he shut a gate. Panic bade him burrow deep into his lair. Then weariness, as of the nether dark, arrived; and, after that had lessened, he longed for the sleep he dared not take.

From the moor outside his lair he heard Daunt's voice, rough with oaths, as he picked himself up after his headlong fall. Then other voices sounded, as one by one the straggling hunt came up.

'He went into the brackens?' asked Rob Blamire sharply.

'He was heading that way when I took a toss,' growled the dwarf.

'We have him safe, then.'

There was something in Rob's hard laugh that chilled Clare to the bone. At big race-meetings, with police near by, he had watched the crowd's way with defaulting bookmakers. He could see nothing of his own pursuers, but their voices, uncannily near, left no doubt as to their handling of him if he were caught. For the first time in many months, he longed for the officers of law and order. Imagination was at work again. In gentler lands they left welshers only half-dead. But up here? Listening to the uproar on the far side of his haven, Clare already saw himself mangled and lifeless. And he loved life for its own sake.

The pursuers grew silent, except for a call now and then that told him they were surrounding him on every side; and the quiet was harder to bear than clamour. Presently he heard a scrunching through the thicket, right and left, and guessed, in a flash of hapless intuition, what they planned. Some were beating his lair. The rest waited on the outskirts to catch him if he bolted.

Clare wriggled this way and that, the bracken-barbs nagging hands and face. He had no plan at all, but moved according to the nearness of approaching feet. If he had known the country bordering his haven, it would have been useless. Direction was lost, here in this queer underworld, with the red-gold fronds above, and about him a moist, pungent heat that sapped his strength.

The whole hiding-place seemed now to be alive with trampling feet, with cries such as men gave when they came with dogs to hunt vermin out. Clare made a last, desperate plunge for safety,

and came suddenly to a place of rocks, dropping sharply to a narrow, tinkling stream. By instinct he clambered down, stayed for a hasty gulp of water that tasted like rare wine, then followed the stream-way till it led him through his bracken-thicket into the open lands beyond.

Keen as the sun-glare was, it was better than the stifled heat behind. A breeze came down the moor. That heartened him, too.

He glanced every way, searching for pursuit. None showed, and he went forward with rising spirits. *His luck was in.* Magical, friendly, the words made a song of themselves, cheering his weariness as he hurried on. In front was a wide stretch of moor, bare and open. At any moment one of the hunt might round this side of the bracken-thicket, and that would be the end. The danger had lessened, but it was with him still.

Following the stream, because it was bound to lead him steadily down to lowland shelter, he crossed the naked country, reached its end, and saw that the burn foamed down again into a ravine deeper even than the cleft he had found among the brackens. Beyond doubt, his luck was in.

He stepped warily down from boulder to boulder, the spray wetting him to the skin. That mattered nothing. He was drenched already by the long-drawn race.

When the gorge opened out into the moor again, a sledge-track showed on his right. It was the way taken by rough farm-sleighs when they gathered brackens, and below him Clare saw a solitary barn, set in the middle of lean pastures. He knew at last how spent he was, now he was sure that he had foiled the hunt.

He reached the barn, and tottered in, and crept into the first cow-stall, empty now the kine were making the most of the warm, out-of-doors October. The ground was hard enough, but it had a velvet feel. So had the sleep that pressed his eyelids down.

About four in the afternoon he woke and lifted himself sharply. He had dreamed that every backsliding of a casual life was chasing him across open moorland, packed with bogs and boulder-strewn ravines. It was astonishing to find himself in a tranquil byre, with the fragrance of old hay stealing from the rafters up above.

He lay awhile in a contented doze, watching the clouds drift across the open doorway. He took himself lazily to task because he had been too spent to think of closing the door behind him; but, after all, it had not mattered. There was little chance that any of the hunting party could have strayed so far; to make safety doubly sure, he would doze on till twilight came. Then he would

go in search of the nearest farm, and wheedle a meal from the occupants.

He was almost asleep again, when the hay-mow overhead, silent till now, found speech. It seemed to snore, and Clare fancied some fever had made him light-headed. All the more need to lie snug here till it left him.

The snoring did not cease. It grew in volume, till it broke into a growl of protest, followed by heavy, fitful breathing. Clare, in his journeys through these uplands, had heard much of lonely barns haunted by tragedies gone by. It had been easy to laugh at such tales until now.

His nerves were all to bits. Fatigue, after his late escapade, was shackling him. So was imagination, busy with pictures of the menace lurking overhead.

The steady snores went on. Clare could not move, though the open door was close at hand. This was a waking nightmare, and it held him fast.

There was quiet for a while, followed by a rustling in the hay; then a step sounded on the ladder, and a heavy boot came into view. Clare drew a breath of relief. At any rate there was a human foot inside the boot, and not the unknown monster of his fancy.

The man's descent, for all that, seemed slow. In his shaken mood Clare had lost all sense of time. He measured it by the speed of his flight when he knew that Timothy had won a horse-race against heavy odds; and seconds passed like minutes.

Step by step the dweller in the loft came down, till a pair of burly shoulders showed, and afterwards a bullet-head, close cropped. Then he came altogether into view. The red sunlight, striking through the doorway, showed each of them the other; and both were silent for a moment packed with old antipathy.

'So you've found me, Jasper?' said Clare, backing away.

'I have, after the devil of a chase. And now we're here, my slippery lad—together, as we used to be when we were partners.'

'Forget all that.'

Jasper laughed with gruff humour. 'You'll never alter. *Forget all that*, say you, with the face of a cherub up aloft. There are times when I admire you, Adrian Clare.'

'We were partners, and I went away with your share of the money. It was a loan I intended to repay.'

'You'll not change, as I said. If all you intended was set against all you've done—but you don't fool me with that sort of chaff.'

The man's redeeming gift of humour had deserted him. He was truculent on the sudden, and Clare knew the mood.

'How did you come here?' he asked nervously.

'In search of you. I read in the papers about the trial at Caisterby.'

'Why should that dog me for ever?' snapped Clare. 'I was miles away from the crime.'

'From *that* crime. You were.'

Clare's face, always a mirror to the inward man, ran the whole gamut of emotion. Dread—a glancing backward for some hiding-place—cudgelling of hard-pressed wits to meet this sharp surprise—all showed plain to Jasper, looking on.

'And from the other, too,' said Clare, half defiant.

Jasper Blount leaned against the cattle-stall. He had caught his man at last, and was in no hurry. 'We'll go over bits of ancient history, starting at the bad day we had at Epsom. They talk as if there'd been only one snowstorm Derby—but the firm of Blount and Clare, bookmakers, was snowed under to a proper tune. I left you to borrow enough to meet our claims; and when I came back—damned if you hadn't panicked, and gone off with the loot.'

'You were long in coming.'

'Money isn't easy to borrow at such times.'

'And the crowd was threatening.'

'Trust you to panic at the wrong minute. You're always up in the air, or down among the dead men. I'd forgiven you a lot already, Adrian, come to think of it—but Epsom finished that.'

'It was long since.'

'The time seems short, now we're together again.'

Clare knew that he was being played with, that Jasper was at once judge and accuser, with strength to enforce a foregone verdict.

'That day at Epsom broke both of us,' went on Blount. 'After that I combined business with the fun of chasing you. It was smaller business, but the fun kept me going up and down among the little race-meetings, where they didn't know us. Then I struck a lucky vein.'

'You weary me,' said Clare, with a yawn that was well acted in spite of his consuming fright.

'That's good news. You've wearied me, time out of mind. As I was saying, they told me you were at Malton Races. I couldn't find you on the field; but I remembered there was an old lady, living outside the town, who'd befriended you over and over again.'

You'd sponged on her since you started what you'd call a man's life.'

'We know that story, Jasper.'

'You've shown signs of forgetting it, so it's as well to brighten up your memory. It had grown to be a sort of madness, this need to find you, and I went to the old lady's house to see if you were anywhere about. The place seemed quiet; so I went to the French windows opening on the garden. The sun shone straight into the room—much as it's shining through the door of this quiet barn, Adrian.'

'Oh, I know!'

'We both know. A grey-haired woman was talking to you for your good, and you answered wildly. Panic had taken you again. You must have money, you said. She asked you to pull up in your wicked way of life, and your voice grew so savage that she backed away. Then she spun round like a top, and crashed her head against the mantel-shelf.'

Hope dawned again in Adrian's face. 'So you knew all along I did not kill her?'

The other nodded curtly. 'You looked up and saw me—and you bolted like a hare. But I caught you, a month later on.'

'And the blackmailing began,' said Clare, with a show of spirit.

'It did. There was no joy to be got out of licking a little chap like you into a jelly. So I began to bleed you where it hurt you most. You'd do almost anything for the jingle of coin, and I tapped your pockets.'

'You did. I'll bear that out, Jasper.'

'When I caught you, a month later, the good game began. The inquest on that good woman brought out evidence that she was subject to attacks of giddiness. The bruise on her forehead was accounted for by a sudden fall against the mantel-shelf. Nothing was stolen. There were no signs of disorder in the room. I read in the papers about all that. I showed you that the whole business would wear a different look if the police knew what I did—if I put them in my place, the day I looked into the room and saw you standing by the body. I told you—you haven't forgotten—that they'd think as I did when I saw you there. You had come to rob, had met resistance from the old lady, and hadn't had pluck to steal even one pound after you'd found you'd murdered her. That's how they'd have looked at it.'

'And you were lying all the time,' said Clare vindictively. 'You knew I hadn't touched the woman.'

'I knew, but didn't mean to share that special piece of knowledge with the police. I had you at call, my lad, and meant you to dance to the tune. Dance? Like a marionette at a fair, you were. I bled you.'

Clare moved backward again, by instinct, from the man's smiling, quiet ferocity. 'The news is stale by this time,' he snapped.

'No. It's evergreen. Whenever you thought you'd got away from me I leaped on your shoulders—till I lost you, Adrian, for four whole weeks. When I found you again you were coming from a country church, with a lass on your arm. She was worth a few weeks' tramp to see, just for her own sake.'

'I loved her. She was going to make a better man of me.'

'Whether you loved her, Will-o'-wisp—or could love any woman—is by the way. You two were in the village inn, ready to take the first stage on your honeymoon; and I whistled you out of doors.'

'And like a fool I came.'

'Like a wise man, I should say—knowing I had you in a halter. I wanted a hundred pounds, you'll remember, and you said that would be easy now you'd married a rich wife. I was the fool that time. I let you go indoors to borrow it—to borrow it, Adrian, from a bride not two hours old.'

Clare winced. Flexible to meet slights of all sorts, he was not proof against this barb. His thoughts ran back to the wedding-day, when Audrey had put her life into his hands. Random hopes of betterment had stirred him, though he had married for the money she brought to the altar of the little country church. Then Jasper Blount had come and wrecked the dream at its birth.

'I had to borrow from her,' he said, with a forlorn touch of dignity, 'to save us both from a blackmailer—the worst sort of carrion-crow that lives.'

'Have your gibe, lad. It breaks no bones. I was saying that I let you go indoors to borrow the hundred pounds. You never came back; and when I followed you, the inn people knew nothing about you or your wife, except that both of you had gone without waiting for the trap you'd ordered.'

'We had gone.'

'So the bride had a business head after all? Young love was well enough, but a hundred pounds was solid money.'

Sardonic, playful almost, in his grim banter, Blount watched the man's resentment kindle. Jasper's only faith in human nature



was in its waywardness ; and here was this weasel on fire in a moment because his wife was accused of money-love.

'I'd have had that for the asking,' said Clare ; ' but it happened my wife had gone.'

'Brides don't, at that early stage. If she'd lived with you for a month, or a week, I could believe your lie ; but two hours gave her no time to know you.'

Something snapped in Adrian. Before Jasper remembered that a weasel could show fight, Clare was at him, tooth and claw ; and by and by, when the bigger man had disentangled himself and held Adrian at arm's length, he laughed prodigiously.

'In the years behind I often tried to rouse the fight in you, and now it's come—because of a woman.'

Clare, wearied out by the hunt he had shared unwillingly, by his futile onslaught, got his wits into a semblance of good order. 'How did you come here ?' he asked, with half-dazed curiosity.

Again Jasper laughed. 'After I read about the trial at Caisterby, I went to the town, and picked up odds and ends of news about you. That's how I first came to these outlandish hills. I heard of you here and there, but could never catch you up.'

Clare felt a curious helplessness. His tireless persecutor wanted money, but even more he needed revenge, for its own bitter-sweet sake.

'I have you now,' said the other, 'and I mean to bleed you to a finish—you and the wife who would not lend you a hundred pounds. She's somewhere in this wind-ridden country, they tell me.'

'How do you know ?' flashed Adrian.

'By the look of your face, when I put the question to you suddenly.'

Clare's spirits sank to their lowest ebb. His wits, the only stock-in-trade he had, were failing him in this conflict with his enemy. And Jasper, quiet, humorous, vindictive, went on with his tale.

'I made my quarters at Caisterby, after the first hunt up here—about had missed you. I knew you'd return. Murderers do.'

The shaft found its mark. 'I was acquitted,' said Clare unsteadily.

'To be sure. Perhaps, after all, I was thinking of the other charge. As if it had happened in this barn, Adrian, I can see the grey-haired woman fall——'

'Be done with what's past,' pleaded Adrian wildly.

'I'm only beginning, my lad, as you'll know by and by. You came back to Caisterby. I saw you going down the High Street, and ran out; but you'd slipped along a by-way. So I came up into this bleak country. They told me Wuthrums Races would be on to-day; and I fancied you'd be there. You could no more keep from a race-meeting than a cat from cream.'

'I was there,' said Adrian, with a rueful air that tickled Jasper's humour all afresh.

'And defaulted? You look as if you'd had a run for other people's money. And I've got you, instead of the crowd; I wonder if you've changed for the better?'

'For worse,' muttered Clare, drawing back again from Jasper's bantering malice.

'Likely. I cursed myself not long since—when I woke in the hay-mow up above, and remembered why I'd overslept.'

'Why?' asked Clare, with restless question.

'I'd made a night of it at a queer upland inn near here. There was an old chap with a fiddle—looked as if he'd been ancient and mossy since they wore skins in these parts. He was playing jiggy tunes; and there didn't seem room to dance, but there was. Where the folk came from I don't know; but they gathered in. And, lordie, how they danced! They made a townsman feel wooden-legged.'

Clare never lost for a moment the knowledge that Jasper was sure of his strangle-hold. His zest in description was part of the man's quizzical joy in life. When the tale was told he would be the gaoler again.

'They could drink as well as they danced—the men, at any rate—and when I got abroad this morning, to take the Wuthrums road, I found myself all to bits. The road wobbled sideways. My head was ticking like a turnip watch—more like a grandfather's clock, I ought to say. *Tick-tack*, went my head, the pendulum inside it. Then the road began to get up and box me. So I thought it time to creep into the barn and sleep it off.'

'Yes?' asked Clare.

Jasper yawned with great content. 'I woke to find that I'd missed the Wuthrums Races—but not you, Adrian. You're at hand, and your wife not far away. Find her, and we'll get a little nearer to quits on that old debt of yours.'

'Stay here,' said Clare eagerly. 'I'll bring the hundred——'

'You will,' Jasper agreed. 'A country walk will put me to rights again—in head and pocket.'

'There's no need for you to come.'

'Maybe not, Adrian. But I'm taking no risks this time.'

Clare's mind worked quickly. He remembered Scroope's tale of a police-net stretched wide across the moor. The tale would be real enough if he played any pranks with this man who smiled at him with such ferocious gentleness.

'As you like,' he said, and stepped out into the brazen sun-glare that flooded all the crinkled land.

## CHAPTER VI.

### A FISHING DAY.

ROGER SCROOPE was in no good mood. For the first time since he remembered anything he had missed Wuthrums Fair—missed it deliberately, because pride would not let him show his nakedness abroad, now he was shorn of Storrieth. People were pitying him nowadays, and he shunned compassion like the plague.

Merrilees and he had a day's work in hand, of a sort that both of them relished. Gayle House, with its clump of out-buildings, had been half neglected for years past. Both were intent on restoring it to its simple, old-time dignity, and now they were busy with an outer wall that showed cracks and furrows, where mosses grew instead of much-needed plaster.

They had been content together—master and man in entire accord—until to-day. And now all went wrong, somehow. Nothing was said; but each knew that the other was out of gear, thinking of Wuthrums.

Nobody understood the magic of these old fairs and their power to draw people to them; but every farmstead of the rolling wastes knew that the spirit of eld leaped out at them, once every year, from Wuthrums. They might decide overnight not to go, because it was butter day, or a sick cow needed cossetting, or they hadn't money for their rent, 'let alone brass to spare for Wuthrums.' They went, all the same.

Many things had changed since the first gathering was held in the dim long ago; but not the Spirit of the Fair. That survived, dauntless and unconquerable, lightening the hearts in men if they took the journey. It had another power, too—to reach over and down to the laggards, mocking them up the slopes.

Scroope had often heard men tell how they were determined to get about their business on this one day of the year—and how they 'tried their best, like,' to resist the lure, and could not. 'Wuthrums,' they explained diffidently, 'came and whispered in their ear, as it might be a body talking.'

And now he—who should have been wiser than his neighbours, because he had travelled farther and had known men and cities—heard that whisper plainly. Why was he failing Wuthrums, for the first time in his life? The place was drawing him, as if he were a simple countryman who would gossip of the day's happenings till the twelve months' end brought round another fair.

'You're thinking of a place in the hills, Merrilees,' he said sharply. 'You'd better get away up to the Fair. Nothing goes right down here.'

'Are you coming, too, sir?'

'Not I. There's a feel in the air that spells Lanty Pool.'

'Very well, if your mind's that way. If you don't need me, happen I'll get into my better clothes and see what's doing up yonder. It's naught but foolishness, but folly's good for the best and the worst of us once every while.'

So Scroope thought, as he took his rod down to the Pool. He would make another forlorn-hope venture for the big trout that had survived the wiles of many a would-be captor.

Lanty Water, when he reached its margin, lay soft and dappled under a breeze that played cat's-cradle with its dark austerity; but the Pool itself was stirred by a freshet that came tumbling down the gorge above. Scroope knew well enough that the lurking giant was not likely to give attention to the most persuasive fly. These ancients of the tribe grew fat on youngsters of their own kindred and other small folk, and a perverted taste had to be humoured.

A spinning-minnow went cunningly across the water. There was no reply. Scroope forgot Wuthrums as he persevered. The joy Storrieth had gone, it was old news—gone out of mind. The joy peculiar to forlorn hopes absorbed him. Below him was a fish, grown mythical by this time, and his wits were matched against the subtlety of a monster—so gossip had it—with fifty years' ripe knowledge in his head.

No answer came, till he wearied of the other's silence, and decided to fish for smaller game. This peat-stained, lively water should yield a few half-pounders, at any rate. Cast after cast

he made, and luck seemed out indeed. And then something chanced that set his pulses tingling. From sheer perversity, or a whim for a change of diet, the hidden giant took his fly. As soon as he struck the hook home, and the long fight began, he knew what it meant.

Scroope was aware of a sudden, tense joy in battle for its own sake. There was no doubt in his mind that he had the monarch at the end of a slender line; but getting him to bank was another matter. Excitement ran so deep that it seemed coolness. The whole outer world was dwarfed by this pool that hid a giant.

To and fro his captive went, rushing and sulking by turns. Endurance, and the spirit to endure, held them both; and always, as the struggle lengthened out, Scroope feared his line must break. It held. A great, dark back showed presently above the Pool, only to disappear again, with a mad scamper out to the farther bank. Men wise in such matters were apt to believe that these monsters were too sluggish to show brisk fight; but the monarch did not bear them out. He was game as a youngster, and old in strategy.

Twice he seemed to be drawn in, listless and spent, and twice he broke swiftly back. He had tricked many an adversary in his time by the simple ruse. Scroope, an angler subtle as his prey, knew it. At the first hint of the break-away, he paid out his line till the reel sang a shrill, small song of its own, merry to hear. And twice the monarch sulked, weary and embittered.

A third time Scroope drew him towards the bank. And now, by instinct, he knew the game fish was near his end. His landing-net was useless for so big a quarry. If he was to succeed where many men had failed—and a lifetime's hope seemed in the making or the marring—he must draw him to the gravel-bed below the rocks. Scroope, like his prey, was tired. He hardly believed that he would land the monarch after all. But he kept his feel of the rod, and it told him that he had the King of the Pool at his bidding.

There was little try now on the line, except from the listless weight that came nearer and nearer to the shallows. A last, dull flicker of courage suggested a break-away again, and Scroope had a great dread that he would lose him at the end of all.

He paid out his line again, then drew it in with dexterous care. The monster's girth could be judged, now he was half out of the water, and Scroope's patience went by the board. Without decent ritual of any sort, he dropped his rod, sprang forward, and got

a stout grip on the tail above the forks. He lugged his captive up the gravel-bed, and stood looking down on his amazing bulk.

A boy's excitement held him. Men wiser than he in rod-craft had angled for this giant—scrupulous, fair-play men who tempted him with spinning-minnow, but with no baser lure. Certain rough fellows of the moorside had tried their luck, too, by watching him swim round the pool on days when the water lay clear and tranquil. They would drop a maggot on the submerged rock a little way out from the bank. The wise old fish of the pool would circle twice or thrice before he took the bait, and after that snap up the following supplies—until they flicked down a maggot with a hook inside him, which he would pass by with lazy scorn.

Scroope remembered all this. And here at his feet was the monarch, fairly won. It would be for ever a great day in his life. Yet, even now, a little cloud got up across his gaiety—some trouble akin to his regret when an ancient tree was felled. This spoil of his had taken so long to grow, and now he was the dead husk of himself.

He threw off the thought. Sentiment and he did not run well in harness these days.

'You fight very well when your heart's in it,' came a voice from near at hand.

Audrey Clare was looking down on him, with something he had not seen till now in any woman's eyes. The joy of capture seemed doubled on the sudden.

'It was luck—sheer luck.'

'You need a little these days. So do I.'

He had saved her from so much, here in the country of her refuge. And he had lost so much, without complaint. She would not allow herself to understand half of what she felt, but turned to the prostrate monarch, shifting her pity to him.

'It was a good fight. I watched it all. Are you a little sorry for the end?'

Scroope shirked the question. 'Do you know what a rogue he was? Every day he lived was St. Bartholomew to him. He massacred the innocents of his own race.'

'He's a noble fish; and one does not speak evil of the dead.'

'But to feed on baby things, an inch or so long—to feed by habit!'

'He can't defend himself.'

'Well, no. That's true.'

'You've had your way. What will you do with him now—eat him in turn?'

'He'll be stuffed by a man in Caisterby who knows how to do it, and housed at Storrith.'

'At Storrith?'

'Gayle, I meant. When I grow too old to fish, or shoot, or do anything but babble from an armchair of what I used to do, they'll think I lie about the fellow's weight. And I shall point with a doddering stick to where he looks down from the wall.'

Audrey's moods nowadays were quick to come and go, like the ever-changing belts of light and shade that swept across the lonely spaces. Her brown eyes grew moist with the senseless pathos of it all.

'Storrith will always be there—deep down, won't it? You gave me that secret just now.'

'Always.' He had grown hard again. 'I loved the place when I had it. I love it now it's gone. Nothing alters that.'

'But you're restoring Gayle. I hear so much about what you are doing to the little house.'

'I care for it—but that's not loving.'

'No,' she said wistfully, 'that's not loving.'

And then she turned away, with quiet farewell, yet could not go, somehow.

'If I reminded you that I owe you many debts?' she asked.

'There are none.'

'But that is not true, surely. There was the time when the mists came up from Lanty Pool, and I was lost.'

'What man wouldn't have given a hand in need?'

'For any woman?'

'Or any child, for that matter,' he answered brusquely.

'So it was not for me? Of course, it was for anybody.'

Again she turned, and again came back. 'There was another time when we were in Tring together. The song of "Annie Laurie" came down into the quiet.'

'A very good song, too, though you loathe it.'

'I watched you go to meet the singer. Then I waited till you came back and said I need not fear intrusion. Was that an errand you'd have taken for any woman?'

'No,' said Scroope unexpectedly. 'I took it for you.'

The west wind was in her face again, not the dry, chill east. They stood regarding each other, in a queer, brooding silence that had fallen on Lanty Water and the Pool, on the heather slopes above—even, it seemed to Audrey, on the breeze that a moment since had fluted through the sedges.

'I was reminding you of the debts I owed,' she said, breaking away from her thoughts. 'Have I the right to pay back a little? It was when you spoke of taking your fish to Storrith—not to Gayle—that I knew your danger.'

'Danger?'

'Yes. I have been through it. The clinging to a dream of things gone by—things that will never return—the glance backward always on old days—they can kill the spirit.'

'Storrith gave me all I've loved,' he said sharply. 'To forget would be pretence.'

'How shall I tell you what I've learned? There's a loyalty, of your kind, that weaves nets about the feet. Everything is measured by what has been—not by what lies ahead.'

Scroope's hardness yielded a little. 'Yes,' he said. 'I've been fighting that. How did you guess?'

Audrey would not let herself understand why already she had grown to know his strength and weakness, and to cherish both.

'I was tangled in that kind of thing myself,' she said, 'and it only led me to graves in churchyards, as if the dead were not alive—alive somewhere else. Of course, I have no right to speak,' she faltered; 'it is only that I know so well what you are going through.'

'Yes, you know. You are right about the graves, maybe—but I can't break away from memories. They tug at a man like ropes of steel.'

Dismayed by his quiet vehemence, she was sure that she had spoken all wrong, and bade him farewell in earnest this time. Scroope watched her climb the bouldered track between the heather and the glen, and the sense of loss was keen as she neared the bend that would hide her.

Sentiment and he were still together, it seemed, and he was turning impatiently for home when Audrey halted suddenly and stood, just on this side of the bend, as if turned to stone.

Once before he had seen her stand like this, when the air of 'Annie Laurie' had come lilting down from the tops. There was no song now; but presently two men stepped into sight. One was Adrian Clare, sleek and persuasive. The other was of stronger build, with the look of a night's carousal about him.

Scroope, already half screened by a rowan that found foothold in the rocks, drew closer into hiding. He had a distaste for surprising any secret Audrey chose to keep from him; but the odds of two to one against a woman were too heavy, and he must be at



hand in case of need. A shiver of disgust ran through him as he heard Adrian's voice. More even than the man himself, it reminded him of the Court House at Caisterby, and his own unwilling testimony for the defence.

'I'm glad to find you, Audrey,' said Clare, with uneasy suavity. 'This is an importunate friend of mine who insists on meeting you.'

'A creditor, to be exact,' growled Jasper Blount ruthlessly—'one who could hang your husband any day—and would rather like to be in at the death. I'd prefer it, in fact; but I want money, and business should come in front of pleasure.'

With a curious pride in her, Scroope saw Audrey straighten herself to the rough challenge.

'I heard your voice before you came in sight,' she said sharply. 'It brought back my wedding-day, when I waited in the inn for— for my husband, and heard him talk to you outside. You spoke of some crime he had committed. I might have forgiven him even that, in time, but never his cringing to you. You asked for a hundred pounds.'

'You've a good memory,' said Adrian's quondam partner. 'A hundred it was—and now it's two. We've come back here— Adrian and I—in search of two hundred pounds.'

'I heard my husband,' went on Audrey, as if he had not spoken—'only married to me for two hours—say that his wife was rich, and that you must wait until he went indoors to get the money.'

'You heard right. And the pair of you bolted like rabbits. I've got you both in a tether now.'

Scroope felt a lightness of heart, quick, out of reason, vehement. Then he waited, listening to Audrey's tempered courage.

'You have one of us at your mercy. That is plain enough. Of your own accord, Adrian, you would never have brought this person into Tring.'

Blount's temper, brittle enough, threatened to break loose; but he conquered it. 'As I was saying, business is business, and I've a plain offer to make. Adrian here keeps thinking what the feel of a rope is like—round the neck, you understand—and his nerves are in a shocking state. Two hundred pounds will cure that malady—and will save you from being a widow of a rather ghastly kind.'

'No,' said Audrey. 'You would come again—and, after that, again, till I had nothing left for bribes. It is not as if my husband had done murder. You only say he has.'

Scroope, watching it all, had grown aware that Blount's whole unsavoury person was familiar to him. He could not fix the pieces of the riddle into place just yet. Meanwhile, it stirred his pulses to see Audrey here, vibrant and cool of voice.

'What I only say,' snarled Blount, 'would be enough when the case was tried.'

'My—my husband'—again the ironic halting on the name—'is capable of many things. He could steal with great success, I think—women's love, or money from defenceless people—perhaps, even, in extremity, he would rob a hen-roost for the next day's meal; but he would not kill.'

Adrian fired on the sudden. Her lash had whipped some hidden spirit in him. 'It's all a lie, Audrey. We'll face it out together.'

Scroope had fitted the riddle's pieces into place at last, and strolled quietly up the road, as if he came by chance. It seemed to him that Audrey had done enough in the unequal battle.

Adrian Clare drew back as he saw him approach, remembering Caisterby; but Jasper was truculent.

'You're interrupting serious business, sir,' he blustered, when Scroope showed no sign of passing on, but stood regarding him with curious intentness.

'Not interrupting—taking a hand in it. You remember the Town Moor at Doncaster? Last year it was, and you still owe me fifty. I backed that game outsider, Pretty Poll. The crowd made rather a mess of you, so I heard.'

Jasper, truculent still, measured Scroope's height and limber strength. Even without the handicap of last night's debauch, he fancied he might be no match for this stranger who had refreshed his memory of Doncaster Races.

'If I couldn't pay, I couldn't.'

'That's true. So is your urgent need to quit the Dale. I gave the same warning to your friend not long ago.'

'What can your precious Dale do?'

'You'll learn, if you stay—or if you ever set foot in it again. We police ourselves for the most part.'

Jasper had no doubt that his adversary was telling the simple truth. The interloper, whoever he might be, spoke crisply of a countryside that obviously he knew by heart. Blount recalled, too, the spirit Clare's wife had shown. She did not seem to be promising material for the blackmailer's art. Yet he was loth to

be jockeyed out of the money, and stood eyeing Scroope with gloomy spite.

It was Adrian who broke the silence.

'You live here?' he asked, growing fiery on the sudden.

'Yes,' said Scroope—'at Gayle, half a mile away.'

'And my wife is your nearest neighbour? A fool could see your game. I shall stay to protect her.'

Scroope glanced once at Audrey, and saw her recoil, as if Adrian had struck her.

'From yourself?' he asked.

'She's mine, I say. Nothing alters that, and I'll not be driven from my own. The last time we met, you sent me over your cursed hills with talk of the police. That was a dodge, too, to get me away from my wife.'

'May be not,' put in Blount, with gruff banter. 'Now we've drawn blank here, the police may be nearer than you fancy.'

Adrian's fire dwindled. His bluster, fast growing incoherent, was sobered. He had not found the means of stopping Blount's tongue, as he had hoped, and panic began to take hold of him again.

Blount himself, as he reviewed the situation, knew that nothing was to be gained by staying on. Already, with the dexterity bred of his vagrant life, he was acclimatising himself to the change from a prospect of two hundred pounds to beggary.

'Who are you, to order a couple of travellers about, as if you owned the public roads?' he demanded.

'I gave no orders,' Scroope explained patiently. 'I simply warned you what would happen if you were found in the Dale after the sporting twelve hours' start I give you.'

And now again, a thin wind piped in Adrian's heart. He recalled in vivid detail his flight from Wuthrums and the merciless pursuit. Yet, knowing he must go, he tarried, glancing at Audrey with a wistful, keen regret that astonished Scroope. It was unbelievable; but, then, most true things were. This rogue of the shifting moods had one fixed thing in life—love of his wife.

In a flash Scroope knew it, and hardened himself against an odd relenting, a half pity, that had no right of way nowadays. Sentiment and he had parted company long ago.

Audrey, too, had caught the glance. Scroope, watching jealously, saw that she, too, half relented—saw her take a step towards Clare, and withdraw. The flicker of some old, false romance had

had its moment, and was gone for ever. That he knew with a quick lightening of the heart.

Humour, and the born actor's adaptability, rallied to the aid of Jasper Blount. Sure that there was nothing to be got by lingering further, he linked his arm in Adrian's and swaggered with him up the road, Clare glancing backward, an unwilling captive.

'Welshers, both, my lad,' laughed Jasper, 'in a country bleak as hell. We're well rid of it.'

Audrey stood in the roadway, watching them out of sight. Shaken, now that the stress was ended, she shivered as with cold. Scroope put a hand on her shoulder, to steady her; and with the touch came knowledge. His senseless, headlong joy when he listened from the shelter of the rowan to the tale of Audrey's honeymoon, grew bright and reasonable. She had been Adrian's wife, in name only, for an hour or two of a cruel day.

The same spell was on them both, till Audrey freed herself with a little sob, and went, as if the sunlight died, down the rock-stairway of the glen. Adversity, keener of instinct than ease, had begun to teach them both a truth that tangled present and future alike.

Scroope stayed on awhile, facing the knowledge. Nothing seemed to be of consequence, except that moment of enlightenment when he touched Audrey on the shoulder. Jess, who had tempted him into sharing all he had with her, was no more than a filmy shape of some receding dream. Here in Tring was the one woman he would lose or gain.

He turned homeward at last, and would have forgotten the big trout altogether if he had not seen it lying on the shingle as he passed. He met no man on the way, but somebody saw him go to Gayle with the spoil; for, late that evening, Merrilees came home and said news had passed all up and down the fair at Wuthrums that the master had landed a giant from the Pool.

'With a back like a whale's,' protested Merrilees.

'Not just as big, but worth stuffing. I want you to take him to Caisterby to-morrow.'

'In the morning?' asked the other, with alarm.

'I think not,' said Scroope, after a quiet glance at him. 'We'll say the afternoon. Wuthrums takes a little getting over, and always did.'

*(To be continued.)*

ARTHUR BENSON'S NOTEBOOKS.

THE fine volume of extracts from Arthur Benson's Diary, just edited by Mr. Percy Lubbock, reveals a mind wider and more various than most people ever suspected. He fancied himself that it was the best of his work, and though like the rest he regarded it with complete detachment, I remember years ago that he said of the innumerable buried volumes in a rare moment of self-praise, 'The gold of that land is good : there is bdellium and the onyx stone.' In most of what he wrote he showed to the world another character, not his own, full of 'moist vows,' faint and solemn in discourse. Those who knew him and saw him had no doubt at all that he was the best company in the world, and the most rewarding of friends as well (so long indeed as the game of friendship was played strictly by his own rules), but they were put to it to show proof of their claim. The long line of published work was vivid enough when it dealt with a thing seen, or a figure intimately known : how vivid it could then be is familiar to readers of this journal. A sketch of Rye, and an exquisite study of Henry James' character and conversation, were typical of several that he contributed ; he was never in a happier vein. But when the subject was not in the foreground, when it lay buried in the dark of the past or the mists of obscurity, then he lacked the arts by which it could be brought to light and life. It was the same with his letters. Behind what he wrote for publication, whether it was actually published or not, came a great mass of correspondence, poured out to friends known and unknown in all parts of the world ; it amused him to compute and prove that no human being, since the beginning of time, had ever held personal communication with the world on so huge a scale. Several hundred of his letters came to one correspondent, who kept the rules it may be better than most ; to read them again is to be filled with interest and enjoyment and a third part of poignant regret. But these, it must be admitted, no more than his books can really corroborate his friends' estimate of what he was. The facility that produced them was fatal. They were poured out and piled up : a large part of the day was invariably spent in the deliberate writing of letters ; and when that was not enough, a couple more were dashed off while he waited for a guest to arrive, half a dozen others in a train,

and a last one—perhaps a sketch with a few lines of message, a mere 'signal' as he called it—in the middle of a meeting. The act of writing, it would really seem, had lost its difficulties and hesitations altogether: the veils that separate thought and expression had almost lifted. I do not recollect that he kept an engagement book except in full term at Cambridge, but he would address a postcard to himself to remind him of an appointment, casting it into the tray with the rest, and when it turned up in the next day's post, like a dummy card in a pack, it did not anyhow need to be answered, and that was a unique case. At one time he tried the method of dictating, and looked on his fluency as a test of health; he would never admit, though his own handwriting was free and sensitive, that a letter in typescript was in any way a degraded thing by comparison. But it gave him what he could never bear and was always at pains to avoid, the task of revising and correcting, and he dropped it in the end with his usual promptitude. It simply did not save him time.

His conversation was another thing altogether; and if there could be anything ponderable about the spoken word, anything that could be seized and stored and measured, this would surely support the claim we have imagined as made on his behalf. Talk was an art, he held very firmly, or perhaps a game with intricate rules and certainly few skilled players, but his own talk had no flavour of the dreary monologue, or the heavy duel, of Victorian convention. Rather it was a trained faculty, drawing from all the arts; first studied, he used to say, in his own case at Addington, when the Archbishop moved from Lambeth and the leaders of Church and State were gathered together. There, in those safe years, the scene was laid, with twenty or thirty assembled, little known to one another perhaps, but 'immensely announceable' as they arrived; all degrees of clergy from all parts, dim with benignity or blazing with friendly fire; figures moving in the great soft rooms, and pausing in the warm galleries; well-marked faces caught in prayer or slumber. To sort and mix and smooth, to reach a point of skill where *something* could always be said to the right hand or the left without fear or febleness, this was the standard that had to be set; but more was needed still. 'Talk, but no conversation, there was nothing discussed': the warning of Dr. Johnson was well observed, and discussion was the rule, though here again new dangers rose on the horizon, with special menace for the layman. Years after he could summon up without

a pause the names and faces and foibles of the whole hierarchy of clergy of those early days, and the recollection formed a unique part, though only a part, of the good things he had to give.

Books and letters and talk, however, are all alike in this, that they were given to the world to enjoy, they floated on the surface. The remarkable new volume of the Diary gives some idea of the vast submerged mass that never appeared at all. In mere bulk and continuity it is surely an extraordinary achievement, especially when we consider the crowded life, the work, and the writing that took as much time again as the work, to which it was merely an addition. Here one may note again the strange and beautiful coincidence which gives the original record a resting-place close to the famous volumes of Samuel Pepys, and wonder whether the future generation which witnesses its release may not almost regard it as 'equalled with them in renown.'

Besides all that has been mentioned, he kept yet another regular record, in some ways better suited to his gifts than any, to which we shall come in a moment. Writing of one kind or another filled so large a part of the day that the apparatus of it claimed a full share of attention too. Close at hand as he sat were racks of paper, blue and white, envelopes ready stamped and addressed to his publisher, great sheets dating from Haddenham that were for nobler uses, and scribbling-blocks on which books and articles would be written, often in pencil. He was a specialist in note-paper, and a sure sign of confidence was to be given a sheaf of it designed like his own. The pens that he used deserve a word to themselves. Short, shiny, slippery objects, like old stubs of lawyers' sealing-wax, messy in hand and evil to grasp, it was a wonder that anything could be made of them at all, as they lay there, a dozen of them or so, in a tray. To borrow one for making a note or witnessing a signature was to embark on a hateful strife with the world of matter. They would leak and soak and ooze : they tapered to a wiry, unsteady point, of which the mere memory sets the teeth ; and yet they were the source of his fine script, boiling and tumbling, but so controlled that he could inset a quotation like the change of a printed type. The volumes of Diary that we have been considering were mainly written with these queer little stubs ; and they even served for the intricate sketches with which he diversified those pages, or his letters, or the agenda-papers of meetings. Devices for saving a second of time pleased him more than most : he was especially taken with a narrow, slanting orifice cut in the top of his desk, by which

letters and papers could be slipped into a locked drawer without opening it. Little adjuncts of the writing-table gave him unmixed delight; he could tie wonderful parcels, wedging and jamming and breathing hard; he could clip and paste and fold with great speed and precision. Here then is the genesis of the record we have just mentioned; two volumes, sturdily bound, lay always in easy reach, into which he would insert day by day a cutting from the Press, or a scrap from an illustrated paper, or simply a pointed quotation. 'Subjects' and 'Extracts' were their appropriate labels, and he would quarry in them to find an apt illustration for a lecture, or a Parthian shot for a correspondent. In their crowded jumble and their flickering sequence they make a vivid cinematic record: they escape the extension of a continuous theme; and there passes reflected in them much of what their author truly enjoyed and approved, with more, perhaps, of what he did not.

For when we search for his real views we must remember what not to expect. Dogma in any form he distrusted and opposed whenever he found it: social or educational or literary tyranny in particular, and theological dogma not least. Open questions like the existence of a First Cause, doubtful relics of Eastern mythology like the idea of individual survival, those who held there could be certainty either way, whether they championed them or whether they challenged them, met alike with an altogether surprising force and tenacity of resistance. His brilliant facility in parody or analogy, his vantage memory, his searching ridicule, were the weapons in a fight which never relaxed, for there were always new tyrants to be slain. It was a curiously strong and consistent warfare against the assumption by anyone of *certainty*, but fortunately it was tempered by an almost religious consideration for others.

'Some silent laws our hearts shall make  
Which they may long obey.'

was a favourite thought from Wordsworth; the 'silent law' and the 'silent rebellion' are frequent phrases in the notebooks—in his case the law of consideration restraining the rebellion against tyranny. Forthcoming Miss A. and winning Lady B., both so sure of their ground, how could they know as they left him, conscious of their *victorious charm*, that the diarist had felt only the sensation of having 'fallen from a great height,' bruised and battered from head to foot? Heavy Mrs. C., with her strong views on the purpose of life, did she guess, as he shaded his eyes for a moment of an all too



short visit, that the face underneath was drawn and sculptured, a mere mask of boredom? So of Dr. D., with his dreary Easter messages, he would quote with the change of one word:

'On all that's *worst* he firmly lights  
As birds on sprays.'

And he would throw upwards a suffering glance, and show with his fine, firm hands what the observant eye had often noted, the precise way in which a bird does test and grasp the twig where it chooses to perch.

This trend of malice was not really characteristic: nor did it appear at all periods of his life, nor even for the whole of them. More often it was replaced by friendly parody which could only please the subject of it, such as the song written to be softly chanted by his 'icily fastidious' friend, with its rich refrain:

'Come, I say, let us leave the rest,  
I must be home for tea;  
Not too much of whatever is best,  
That is enough for me.'

He had worked hard in his youth at poetry: four volumes and more stand to his credit; and he used to say that it had sharpened his vocabulary for prose. A few pieces have a high beauty of their own: a sonnet called 'War' and another 'On the Hill,' with perhaps his dream-poem 'The Phoenix'; but what his study had really done for him was not so much to enrich his own store of words as to heighten his appreciation of the words of others. 'One of the most beautiful things ever written' was a discrimination rarely made: but he would say it of William Cory's poem 'Nec cithara carentem,' of Belloc's 'Hannaker Mill,' and of several passages, not the best known, of Rossetti and Tennyson. From the 'Idylls' I find an extract marked with a double line in his book:

'Yea one, a bard: of whom my father said  
Full many a noble war-song had he sung,  
Ev'n in the presence of an enemy's fleet,  
Between the steep cliff and the coming wave;  
And many a mystic lay of life and death  
Had chanted on the smoky mountain tops,  
When round him bent the spirits of the hills  
With all their dewy hair blown back like flame.'

He thought it a fine example of the craft of poetry, and would make it a starting-point for discussion and theory.

Though his interest in literature was wide and active and astonishingly youthful, it stopped short at certain points rather unexpectedly. There is not a single word of allusion in either notebook to any Greek or Latin author; not that this is a surprise in itself, but only as coming from a successful schoolmaster who was proud of his claim that almost alone of his colleagues he read classics 'for pleasure' in the holidays. Since then he had travelled a long way in taste: he distrusted the public school curriculum root and branch; he had come to think that the whole field of classical literature could safely be passed by the ordinary man without a glance. In the nineteenth century he was entirely at ease himself, with Carlyle and Ruskin and the rest. 'If you want to know how a poet should *feel*, read Keats' letters; if you want to know how he should *live*, take the Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth.' As time went on and his day became choked and overgrown with claims of one sort or another, the amount that he actually read grew less and less. A little expanding bracket on his table was crammed with new books which he ordered if a review or even a title caught his fancy, and here he would dip and skim, but not penetrate very deep. Memoirs, travels, even romantic science, he would turn the pages of at the end of an afternoon walk or ride; by the time that tea appeared he had stored away just what he needed for his purpose, to enrich a conversation or to enliven a lecture: the last theory, let us say, about the buried cities of Ceylon, or the droll ways of an African pigmy. But first and last he loved the personal record: there never was, there never could be such a thing as a dull biography new or old. He deplored with Edward FitzGerald that more biographies of uninteresting people had not been given to us, and he would point to two vast Victorian volumes on his shelf as the life of the most undistinguished being in the world, a friendly figure of utter inconsequence, a dim man who had done nothing, been nowhere at all, seen nobody whatever. They were treasured volumes, the rich chronicle of this happy existence. They were his frequent bedside companions.

When the criterion was thus simply the charm and significance of the surface, his judgment was good. Mr. Ireland's 'Joseph Pulitzer' has since become a well-known book; but the rare original edition under another title, with its remarkable illustrations, was always a favourite of Arthur Benson's. The exotic setting, the commanding central figure, the grotesque insufficiency of his circle, the good things said by the way, must surely still commend his

discovery of this extraordinary work. But nevertheless he moved most happily in the literature of fifty years or so back, and I find some amusing notes for lectures in the volume of 'Subjects'; one about Swinburne may be set down, as a man always 'on fire with inspiration, that sometimes bursts into the purest flame of poetry, but more often into smoke and stench.' If his literary taste was Victorian, the same was no doubt true of his deeper hopes and feelings. Of these it is enough to say that they are well expressed by the last letter in Carlyle's Life of John Sterling, which he spoke of always with deep feeling, and which is a typical specimen of one class of 'Extracts.'

It is not only the exalted moods, however, that deserve attention and record, but equally the swarming trifles which break on eye and ear in ordinary life. In observing these he never wearied—the whole of life was not long enough to exhaust them or do them justice; and in describing them he was highly skilful, especially perhaps if there was about them a faint flavour of the *macabre*, but this was not essential or even usual. The notebooks are full of the record of things seen; a few selections may be allowed, given just as they stand, without an attempt at arrangement. The audience of a lecture or the congregation of a church gave him plentiful material.

'Then we got to the door, and just as we went in the unscrupulous old man said "Pitch the voice high, they're nearly all deaf," which made me laugh so much that I forgot to bow. But the audience: old men with shining sightless faces, or brisk button-like eyes, aged men *already* asleep before I began, dripping limply over the seats like guttering candles: shrivelled and bedizened women, men in the background like God the Father in Blake's Job, women who rose hurriedly and went unsteadily out, stout women with sad wistful smiles, women who woke from sleep with odd chuckles and cries . . . not a single point was taken or heeded, a clergyman *fell* from one of the back seats, and was seen no more, till at the end he was observed in an attitude of prayer . . . it was like one of my best dreams.'

'I love a Cathedral service, the music, the quaint pomp, the arches, the absurd people who attend it, a mixture of meekness and insatiable inquisitiveness. The doctrine preached is a gentlemanly ethic, not very persuasive. The whole thing is beautiful, I have no doubt of that, though not either a popular or a pagan kind of beauty, but a refined and harmless thing, hard to produce, not very useful

or impressive, but as queer and strange as the giraffe or the babiroussa.'

'The vicar's proceedings amused me vastly. He celebrated at a fearful pace, hardly a word audible; his voice rising and falling like the lowing of a great cow in the distance, but every now and then taking a shrill nasal tone, like the high snarl which a blue-bottle makes if you catch it in your fingers in the corner of a window-pane. It was not a service but a rite, a magical rite. Before the congregation came up he and his deacon applied the paten and chalice to their eyes, as if they were taking the level of the west window with a pocket theodolite; all a game, but on the whole well played.'

'The old Dean was always fierce and *leonine*, but this time I found him rather moth-eaten and dog-eared, like a lion's skin in a billiard-room. The party with him were pious, even muzzy with piety: such womanly, whispering persons, so ready for tea and talk, so fond of their hats and coats . . .'

So too the windows and monuments of churches had an unflinching fascination for him. With his enviable gift of rapid sketching he could draw them to the life, but he could also reproduce them in the written word:

'The monuments were in the worst eighteenth-century style; two bishops sculptured on a tomb, like two commercial travellers in a double-bedded room: one fallen asleep reading the Bible, and drowsily keeping the place with one finger; the other a recumbent, crumpled figure like a man fallen down when skating. In the west window two saints peering from their vestments like Berkshire sheep from their wool, one writing in a large loose volume apparently containing specimens of wall-paper.'

From these it is a small distance to the everyday scene in London or Cambridge, a glimpse of figures at a club or a dinner-party:

'Odd groups collected about me; a small wild man, like a Spanish mule-driver: raw-boned women, all teeth and glasses: old men with no hinges to their ankles, smiling as they walked: my old pupil S. with the nose not only of the Indian but of the Semite: a clergyman whose head rolled on his shoulders for emphasis as he spoke: an aged don who sat as if in a heavy dream, or praying to be supported through a great trial: at the end a man woke slowly from sleep, staring, chuckling and winking, and coughed suddenly with a hideous besprinkling roar. Then a man appeared who must have been a German (sketch appended), his

hair spouting from his face, gruff, voluble, intelligent and intensely sentimental. He cleared the table of its viands. He said that his admiration of my works was not to be measured by words. On going out he saluted me repeatedly, and wrung out his moustache with both hands. Officers all over the place, many dining at High Table. I wonder how they would like to have 17,000 dons billeted at Aldershot ?'

To these may be added some scattered aphorisms on literature and the like :

'Wordsworth is a quarry of splendid things ; I always think his lines

" And many love me ; but by none  
Am I enough beloved "

profoundly human. Who was ever enough beloved ? That is the strength of religion, that it gives people the sense of being enough beloved.'

'The æsthetic problem. Perhaps St. Paul points to the true method : " neither likeness nor unlikeness, but a new creature. "'

'Vulgarity is a curious thing. It doesn't mean that one has no reverence, but that one reverences the wrong things and the vote of the majority most of all. It is a passionate belief in the merits of average.'

'Sentimentality. George IV at Waterloo weeping over the exact spot where Lord Anglesey's leg was buried.'

'Confucius would never talk on four subjects : ghosts, sport, politics, theology. When he was old he told one of his disciples that it had been a great grief to him never to have seen a phoenix, a bird so constantly mentioned in literature, and always to be found in countries " where right principles prevail. " This makes me think that he had a sense of humour.'

'Henry James in the Athenæum to-day very royal, speaking of Mrs. Oliphant, ". . . the poor soul had a simply feminine conception of literature : such slipshod, imperfect, halting, faltering, peeping, down at heel work, buffeting along like a ragged creature in a high wind, just struggling to the goal, and falling in a quivering mass of faintness and fatuity. " But the sacred duty remains of praise and encouragement in public.'

'Some people's idea of good conversation is when talk flows freely all the time, but neither party can remember a word that was said afterwards.'

'Boys only show gravity when *you* talk to them of serious faults, or when *they* talk to you about athletics.'

'Some people never live their life at all, only stay with it or lunch with it.'

'You can mould the character through the intelligence, but not the intelligence through the character.'

'The doctrine of Omnipotence means that humanity is waging a sham fight against the powers of evil.'

In among these various reflections a few scraps of poetry find a place, but in later years it was only rarely that he found a lyric still running in his head. Perhaps this is a suitable place to preserve an interesting fragment, a stanza that he wrote in waking life to round off the fantastic dream-poem 'The Phoenix,' by which he is represented in the 'Oxford Book of Verse'; it was omitted later on the advice of a friend who felt it to be incongruous, a discerning criticism which pleased him very much indeed :

'So I who came to gather fame,  
The source, the sacrifice revealed  
Where mind aspired, what heart desired,  
I smile and quit the unequal field.'

Another dream-poem, in a lighter vein, came to him by the same mysterious paths; it delighted him deeply in his dream, the notebook records; he felt very modern indeed, no longer a prim Victorian! The title was 'Differences':

'Some plunge into Ocean,  
And some only float:  
Some weep from emotion,  
And some only quote:  
Some kneel before Beauty,  
And some clasp her waist:—  
Not a question of Duty,  
But only of Taste.'

With these may be set an unscrupulous extempore attack on the loyal inhabitants of a Gloucestershire village, whose indifference to his inquiries on a bicycling expedition in 1915 had caused him a gust of vexation:

'Ye gentlemen of Uley  
Who sit at home at ease,  
And finish luncheon duly  
With Double Gloucester cheese,

Then leave the well-spread table,  
 Take pipe, and fill, and light,  
 And saunter to the stable . . .  
 For such as you we *fight*.'

Here I will quote one only of many parodies, the 'vile art' for which he had so ready a gift. The exegetical style of Dr. Maclear has always been a hunting-ground for the less reverently minded, but few knew it so well as to see that it drew its inspiration from Sir Walter Scott, or to compose so satisfying an echo as the following :

'Writhing with chagrin, and no less inconvenienced by physical indisposition, the injudicious prophet wavered. "Even," he exclaimed, "as the flame that burneth a man"—fiercer indeed than the incandescent rays of the Oriental sun, then blazing on tower and tree alike,—"so is the wrath of the ungodly." Deeply moved, a tear trembled in the paralysed monarch's eye. But the seer was obdurate. He indignantly waved away all proffered refreshment. Ere nightfall, staff in hand, he was retracing, alone and dejected, the path along which he had hurried, so short a time before, in overweening confidence. He resisted no longer ; with the ensuing dawn he had resumed his highly mysterious avocations on the desolate heights of Tophim.'

And lastly I may add a curious lyric, perhaps the last that he wrote, with a 'distant spacing of rhymes, like a little chime.'

'I cannot believe it true  
 Whatever the wise may say,  
 What sorrow can teach the heart  
 The courage that joy denies.  
 The shadow I hasten through  
 Lies cold on the sunlit way ;  
 O shadow, how small a part  
 You claim of the cloudless skies.  
 I did not withhold my best,  
 But grief could not bear it away ;  
 I smile in the face of grief,  
 I call to remembrance my song ;  
 Grief calls me to stay, to rest,  
 But I have no time to stay.  
 My joy has been all too brief,  
 My grief has been all too long.'

I have not tried to bring these excerpts into connexion with one another. It would have been impossible. The volumes from

which they are taken are simply scrap-books of sketches and press-cuttings and a thousand discontinuous thoughts and complaints and speculations of which his racing pencil took an instantaneous picture. At the end of it the original difficulty recurs, of trying to convey to others what he was and where the secret lay. The truth is that humour and sympathy and brilliance, raised to a high enough power, are nothing less than an enchantment; we can no more give an account of them afterwards than we can carry with us out of a dream the gold and silver that we held so securely in our hand. If the conjuncture of so rare a power with so rich a field for its work is not likely to come again, it is even less likely to be forgotten by those who knew it and who miss it now.

GEOFFREY MADAN.



### THE CHINESE BED.

BY VENNETTE HERRON.

COVERED over with dogs, she lay on the Chinese bed. Fox-terriers with sly, sweet faces, somewhat like those of startled deer—dwarf *Pintschers*, rat-sized and shivering, with bulging, brown eyes and out-standing, pointed ears—a toy Japanese poodle, with its features lost in a tangle of white hair.

Around three sides of her, just on a level with her propped-up head, a grill of cut-out emblems, gold against red—the bat and the peach, long life and happiness—interlaced coins for wealth—books in a scroll for wisdom—embracing children—all the felicities. High above, supported by slender, festooned posts, a flat, double roof—fantastically latticed on the inside, solid on the out, with a layer of peach-coloured silk between. Surrounding this a deep, down-dropping fringe of exotically carved wood—fabulous figures, falling tassels, heavily rich, with extravagant detail, like a valance of old Venetian lace—from beneath which flowed a *klamboe* of peach-tinted gauze, gold-embroidered.

The bed was enormous, square—a veritable temple of repose; she might have stood straight and walked about in it, had she desired. Inside, at the back, was a shelf, upholding books, a mirror inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and a vase of antique *blanc de chine*, ivory-patinaed, filled with yellow lilies. Below this, little lacquered drawers for secreting treasures; and below these last, in a corner, a tiny bracket—she could not have said what for, yet sometimes her hand groped towards it instinctively. Beneath the lofty structure was a low, carven *banc*, made to be slipped in and out, like a draw-bridge, for clambering entrance and egress. The whole was lacquered red—not vermilion—dark wine, lined with black, all the carvings leafed with gold. For counterpane black satin, needle-worked with giant roses, clustered round a pictured platform whereon seven of the *Pa Sien*, the glorious immortals, awaited and observed the eighth and last, black-faced, one-legged Le Tee-Kwae, who came riding to join them on a bright green tiger.

The rest of the room, although luxurious, scarcely matched the  
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bed—but then, except in a literal and unimportant sense, the rest of the room did not exist.

'*Apa nonja ada baik sedikit?*—Is my lady a little better?'

A slim, *sarong*-bound *baboe*, with sleek, *klappar*-oiled hair, approached softly on padding, bare feet.

'*Tida, Emeh—kasih djalen itoe qui-passe*: I'm so hot!' Wearily she rolled her head. She was very ill—dying probably—in a robe of Chinese *filet* and *crêpe de chine*, hue of the *klamboe* as a matter of course.

The little maid picked up a fan of peacock plumes, in a shaft of ivory, and waved it gently to and fro.

'Wow-wow!' sharply the fox-terriers.

'Yap-yap-yap!' sharper the dwarf *Pintschers*.

'Yip-yip!' sharpest the poodle.

All bristling above their prostrate, quiescent mistress, as a brown boy entered with a pail of ice—relaxing quietly into crouched attitudes of waiting as he left the room.

With a weak hand she drew the poodle toward her, brushed back the matted hair from its ruby eyes and black-button snout, peered for a second into the anxious, little face; then her hand fell and her eyes closed. She was very ill—but the pain was passing—just as the doctor had said that it would—growing less and less.

Jade and joss and wind-rocked lanterns! Ee-ee-ee, toot-boom, wha-a-ang! Ee-ee-ee, toot-boom, wha-a-ang! She had heard it before—at the Chinese *stamboel*, off the *Aloen-aloen*. Would they play like that—and fight with swords in her grave to drive out the devils?

Chong—chong—chong! Words which clicked like nails driven into a coffin.

\* They were making the bed—many of them—in a sort of open booth, in a narrow, crooked street. The corners of the roof turned up. Oblong strips of coloured paper swung above them—strange characters—bits of glass and tassels—scarlet and emerald. Chong—chang—chong! They hammered and sawed, but drove no nails; all that they did belonged to the past as well as the present.

Delicately they cut and chiselled—with patience unending. Dipped their brushes in pools of red—waited—waited! Dipped their brushes in black and gold—waited again! Pressed the precious leaf with long-nailed, yellow fingers—waited—speaking—ching—chang—chong! Paused to eat sometimes—white rice out of turquoise bowls, with porcelain spoons. Paused to smoke—tiny,

long-stemmed pipes; then spoke and worked again—dreaming perhaps of brides they would buy with proceeds of their toil. Chong—chong—chong! They were making the bed for the mandarin.

A little child stood watching them—doll-banged, with silver anklets, and a red cord in its hair—while beneath the up-curved roof they worked—made the bed for the mandarin.

Was she that young child, looking on? Her hand reached toward the bracket wonderingly.

'*Apa nonja maoe apa-apa?*' The little maid was quick to notice—loving her mistress.

The dogs stretched and yawned; pink mouths opened, flecked with black—red mouths in small, black faces. The tiny tongue of the poodle curled like a lovely shell.

'*Tida, Emeh*—no; there is nothing that I want.' She was not old, and she was not young. There were those who said that she had been beautiful. Her servants wept at her passing.

Her dulled eyes drooped, fell shut again.

The bed was in the palace of the mandarin. Opposite it an altar—fringed embroideries falling from a shelf, laden with offerings—many for the bad god at one end, few for the good god at the other; being good, he would not harm one anyway. Almost in the centre of the floor, incongruously, a great green porcelain Dog of Fo, its lip curled back like a crest of sea-foam, its tail up-curving, arrow-tipped, rigid. Silver-tessellated chimes swung from the sides of the bed—and charms. The walls were hung with silk, sewn with brass-bound bits of mirror—black velvet letters pasted on to banners of crimson satin.

On the bed reclined the mandarin, with his new-bought bride. Fat he was—yellow and greasy; his little slant eyes leered out through slits of fat. In one hand he held a long-stemmed pipe, in the other a large round fan. On the little corner bracket burned a tiny silver lamp.

Half sitting, the girl-bride watched her lord, hot loathing in her almond eyes. Beneath his chin were chuckling rolls of yellow fat—his neck was fat—his belly like that of Han Chung-le—also his fan; though more like to wake to death than life, thought his bow-mouthed bride. Smug he was—and satisfied. The sickening, sweet smoke clogged her brain. In a moment he would lay aside the pipe—and then! His queue was very long, hanging below a tight skull-cap of night-black silk. Outside—where the wisteria swayed beneath the moon—where the iris-banked river whispered

to the shore—waited one who lacked gold to buy her—waited with his *sampan* to carry her far—to carry her far, had she the courage.

The flame in the silver lamp burned flickering and blue. The bride took off her veil—lemon-coloured, striped with rose and fringed with gold. Lightly she threw it round the fat neck of the mandarin. The gauze tickled pleasantly; out of the billows of greasy fat he grinned at her—finding her sweetly unafraid. He laid the pipe beside the lamp. His eyes were filmed with ripened longing, as he stretched a hand to grasp her.

Greatly daring, she seized his queue—twisting it, together with the veil, about his throat. She was playing with him, the little devil! He gurgled contentedly.

Then suddenly—somehow—the veil was covering his face—smothering him—stopping his breathing! This was too much! The mandarin's hands flung up to claw at the silk. The queue drew tighter—tighter—tighter—in the clutch of strong, young fingers. The fat-waves heaved and tossed—silks were scattered this way and that. Storm raged in the great, red bed. Yet the only sound was a sobbing choke, like that of a pig, fresh stuck.

And finally there was no sound at all. The mandarin lay still—in a welter of ragged, citron gauze. The silver lamp flared, sputtered, went out, as the bride stole softly past the green Dog of Fo—out, beneath the lowering, dragon-bitten moon, to the waiting *sampan* by the iris-banked shore.

Jade and joss and wind-swung lanterns! Was she that bride?

'Wow-wow-wow!' sharply the fox-terriers.

'Yap-yap-yap!' sharper the dwarf *Pintschers*.

'Yip-yip!' sharpest the toy poodle.

Bristling all, above their mistress.

It was the doctor who entered now. 'Have you given the *obat*—just as I told you, 'boe?'

'Ja, toean.'

'There is no change—she asks for nothing?'

'No, toean; she does not suffer any more.'

The doctor turned and went out. Muffled, men's voices spoke on and on in some distant room. Glasses clinked outside the door. A bee sailed in, buzzing hazily—until the *baboe* struck it down with the bending peacock plumes. The dogs slept. They should be black-tongued Chows, thought she—drowsily. Sport of the poppy, she rocked in the Chinese bed, sound of the sea in her ears.

It was long now since the mandarin had died—years, and years,

and years—perhaps a century. The bed had passed from hand to hand, since it had been stolen from the dead man's palace. Deep in the hold of a junk it lay—taken apart, its carvings flat, scraping together, rough straw between—bales of pilfered silks on either side. In a Chinese junk, with a high-carved prow—pirate ship of dreams, sailing over the pea-green China Sea.

Yellow men jabbering—stink of fish—twilight and the tinkle of *samisens*. On the deck, ten girls, pretty and painted—huddled together, nibbling bird-seed bonbons, playing guitars—purchase of a rich Arab in Sumatra. One there was who sat apart—remembering. Remembering a tall, white man, with straight, blue eyes, who had come to the house where she was kept in Shanghai—one who had promised to come again—yet had not come—now could never come. Idly the silent girl sat by the rail, twisting and turning, with amber fingers, a scrap of silk, shred of a curtain from the Chinese bed, which had caught on a spar as they carried it aboard. To preserve a dream—a remembrance! She tore a paper blossom from her hair, and dropped it into the pea-green water—then suddenly, swiftly, followed the flower.

Twilight on the China Sea—and tinkle of *samisens*! Was she that girl?

'Yip!' the poodle.

'Yap-yap!' the *Pintschers*.

'Wow-wow-wow!' again the fox-terriers, as a heavy Dutch woman waddled into the room—panting, perspiring, speaking backward, over her shoulder, to a man who followed close behind. 'Better to-day, *Mijnheer*, I hope?'

The man, the husband, shook his head. Stolid he was, and ill at ease—uncomfortable, as *Mijnheer*, the master of the house, usually is in the presence of awkward detail, such as sickness. Why couldn't things run smoothly, as usual? His *Kantoor* was being neglected, his routine upset—and, to add to all of this, the doctor insisted that his wife might die.

*Pfui*—how difficult was life! And how expensive! Doctors—nurses—extras of all kinds; it would take a year of economy to make it up! But at least no one could say that he had stunted her in any way! She'd always been different from the rest of her family. Her sisters, for instance—good *mevrouws*—*Hausfrauen*! It would never have occurred to them that they must have *filet* and silk in which to die—and they had been scandalised by the purchase of the Chinese bed. But she who lay upon it had been so young—

so pleading and pretty—only a little while ago! His eyes grew softer; it would make things easier to remember how well he had indulged her fancies.

'You ought to take out those dogs, *Mijnheer*! Who ever heard of—' The Dutchwoman's voice broke grimly in upon his reverie.

'But she wants them'—the man pulled himself together and spoke with finality—'and there's little enough that she wants now! Besides, they'd bite anyone who tried to move them.'

'But it's ridiculous!'

'Maybe—but the doctor says she must be kept quiet, or the pain will come back, and she wouldn't rest like that without them—she's used to 'em, you see; they're always with her. Come, we'd better not talk in here any more!'

They spoke in hushed, strangely subdued tones—as though she were already far away—yet still might hear.

She did not move—did not open her eyes—lived on—that vivid, weird half-life, apart from the world and yet of it—in the scented, shut-in shadow of the canopied, Chinese bed.

The bed had sunk—gone down, down. It was in a *kampong* now—a dirty Malay *kampong* just outside Palembang. How had it come there? Vaguely she knew. From the house of a rich Chinese planter, owner of countless *paddi* fields, to the brothel of an Arab—from the brothel of the Arab to a half-breed creditor—from another to another, and another—forever falling—lower and lower.

In a *kampong*! Filth and bamboo and earthen floor—and a red hibiscus beside the gate. Calico curtains on the big bed now—smeared with the touch of unwashed fingers—all the carvings caked with soil. Yet the gold untarnished beneath the cloak—the lacquer undimmed under the sodden dust! Made by hands alone—with yellow dreams cut in—saturated with poppy passions—drifting, drowsing, in blanketed, inscrutable, self-sufficient beauty—drifting, drowsing—like the age-old kingdom from which it had come—bearing its share of doom.

As though it were not already high enough of itself, the Chinese bed now stood on a little dais—a small platform of rough-hewn boards, reached by two steps, at the back of the one-roomed hut. There was no other furniture in the place—only a couple of mats on the floor—a cluttered stack of cheap, used dishes on a box in a corner—and a green glass lamp, hung on chains from the ceiling.

The lamp smoked, as the tiny floating wick sailed like a miniature ship across the swinging sea of oil. Outside was starless night, fetid and feverish. Inside, all the doors and windows were closed, and the air was stifling—unbreathable to nostrils unaccustomed.

Uncovered, on the bed, lay a man and a woman—both sleeping fitfully. The man was a Malay—ugly as a monkey, unclean, perspiring, naked to the waist, his nether-limbs loosely wrapped in a crudely batiked *sarong*. In a heap on the shelf inside the bed lay tunic and trousers, boots and leggings—the uniform of a native soldier of the Dutch army. The woman beside him was a Malay too—with straggling, vermin-ridden hair and a mouth stained with *sirih*. Unspeakably unlovely, both of them—and yet—and yet—

Something like a sliver slipped, ghost-like, through the crack at the edge of the door, slid up and down until it caught and raised the wooden bolt—when the door broke soundlessly back to let in a second woman, who, without noise, reclosed the opening behind her—quickly, like a hunted thing that has run to its lair. She too was native—copper-skinned, broken-toothed—scarcely more prepossessing than the woman on the bed. Not one of the three creatures now within that smoke-grimed room was good to look upon. And yet—and yet—in them was the essence of all romance—for all three were young, and the blood of all ran hot. In the hand of the intruder was an unsheathed, bone-handled, new sharpened *kris*, and in her hair, flaunting, mocking, was a single red hibiscus flower. To herself she was not ugly—nor had she been to the man whom now she sought.

Softly she stole across the floor—softly, softly up the two board steps, and stood for an instant looking down upon the two who lay sleeping there—fitfully sleeping, side by side. Then her hand shot up and descended, in one swift, jagged stroke—like a lightning-line across the sky—like the flight of a swallow winging home. Hilt-deep the *kris* plunged through the throat of the slumbering girl—for girl she was, in spite of her appearance—pinning her fast to the Chinese bed—now drenched with red—not vermilion—dark wine—shade of the lacquer with which they had painted it long ago—those chattering, slant-eyed, yellow men, who had made the bed for the mandarin—those men who had painted it first with the colour of Eastern blood.

One gurgling shriek from the slain slattern before she died—

nothing more. The man started up as the woman drew forth the *kris* from the wound, sending warm spatters against his bare arm.

'*Apa—what—Toean Allah—you!*'

'Yes—I!' answered the woman in their own tongue—which sounded like the speech of animals, but which, nevertheless, conveyed love and laughter, hatred and revenge, just like all the other tongues of the world. 'Will you come back to me now—or shall I do to you what I have done to her?' and she raised the dripping *kris* once more above her head.

Squalid and sordid that stifling room—scum of the earth those three; and yet—the blood of the girl on the bed was red—the green glass lamp cast a strange green hue—the woman on the dais-steps held her *kris* aloft like a *Wayang* of old, one hand outstretched by her side—she had killed for love, for love she would die—on the floor lay a crushed red flower.

Fear and admiration struggled together in the man's eyes. 'I will come with you! We must go quickly—far away from here! How did you know where I was? Does anyone else know?' and he reached up to the shelf for the tell-tale clothes by which he might be traced, were they left behind.

'I followed you—I don't think anyone else knows! Hurry!' said the woman who had come to claim her own.

Quietly they went out together, leaving the hut deserted—empty—except for the bedraggled husk which lay on the blood-washed Chinese bed.

Filth and bamboo and earthen floor—and a red hibiscus beside the gate. Was she that one who had come alone, determined and desperate, through the night—determined to claim her own?

Life at the flood—romance! Hot deed to hold what had been found—whether a dream or reality. She had glimpsed the like! Yet she had never killed anyone—had never even loved, in fact—and no one—no one had ever loved her—at least had not loved like that. And no one whom—ah, well!

Once she had seen a toreador in Spain—blazing-eyed, arrogant, slender, with sash tight bound about his supple waist, outlining the hollows of his hips. She had never so much as spoken to him, and certainly he had not loved her. Yet he must have loved someone. Had she been duly proud, that one?

Once she had seen a Bedouin, standing upon a hill of sand, his horse beside him, his white *burnous* draped over his folded arms, his dark eyes, like those of an eagle, piercing the space before him.



He had not even seen her—yet someone there must have been able to wake the darker glow of desire in those eagle eyes. Did she know how blest she was—that awakener of dark desire ?

Once she had seen an Englishman, blue-orbed and fair—clad in white flannels, shirt open at the throat, a tennis racket in his hand—implement of sport merely, yet about his lithe young form that same glamour of dash and daring—that suggestion of a sword—that something of eternal youth which lives only in the slim and shapely—that something which alone can make the dreams of a woman centre in giving rather than receiving. The Englishman had not loved her—yet he must have loved someone. Did that someone ever know how another woman thirsted for that which came to her so lightly ?

'*Minta ayer sadja. Emeh!*'

The *baboe* gave a glass of ice-cooled mineral water. She drank, and dozed again ; while through the casement window crept the odour of sun-hot, bruised marigolds.

It was Ahmed Abdullah who brought the bed to Java—Ahmed the Arab merchant. Portly and pompous, petticoated, red-fezed and stiff-jacketed, he stalked at the head of his little caravan of coolies, all bearing precious bundles—gold-woven *kains*, stolen from deserted huts, or bought for a song in the *kampongs* of Sumatra—old things, store of older times now passed away—small things mostly, carpets, bits of silver ; but in the centre a splash of red and gold—long, carven planks, swinging from two bamboo poles, resting on the welted shoulders of four jogging carriers.

Towards them, through the dust-choked street of a stucco-villaed, glaring, new Java town, rolled a great grey automobile. In it a woman, still young and pretty, and clad in a sleek-lined Paris gown. Beside her a man, stout, stolid, middle-aged with a ruddy, good-humoured, practical face.

'*B'renti!*' cried the woman to the chauffeur ; and again, 'Stop!' to the coolies in the road. '*Apa itoe?*' and she pointed to the slabbed red carvings, now resting in the muck of the thoroughfare.

A little crowd gathered around, as Ahmed Abdullah explained—squatting by the step of the grey automobile—flashing his teeth, waving his hands. The pushers of perambulating restaurants paused in their tracks—vendors of birds set down their stacked cages—red and green wings fluttered, scarlet and primrose beaks opened to chirp and twitter, while a white cockatoo shrieked with anger at the brass-burning sun above. Chinese sellers of fruits,

under umbrella-big hats, their bobbing baskets filled with *ramboetan* and *mangis*, deposited their burdens and sank, haunch against heel, into the wayside grass. *Sado* and *deleman* drivers brought their only too willing ponies to a crawling walk—a flock of small black goats browsed neglected, while their naked little herd scuffed his toes and looked on. If the town was new, the native population, which thronged the streets and spread its booths, huts, and *passars*, like a broad fringe, around the small core of raw, white European shops and villas, was as old as the ages. Dressed as their fathers—and their grandfathers and great-grandfathers—had dressed before them, following their thoughts and ways, time meant nothing to them, but a bargain much—scenting which, they spat, squatted, and waited.

‘I want it!’ said the woman.

‘Absurd!’ said the man.

‘But I want it awfully!’ said the woman.

‘What for?’ said the man.

‘To sleep in, of course.’

‘It’s filthy, my dear—God only knows where it’s been!’

‘I don’t care—I’ll have it sterilised. Please!’

The man sighed. ‘How much?’ to the Arab.

‘Ah, *toean*, this is a very exceptional bed; it has come from the palace of a mandarin at least—perhaps of an emperor. Observe the craftsmanship! *Bagoes-ja*? And I see, also, that you are a *toean besar*—a great lord—who would not wish a poor man to lose; wherefore I must ask you—’

Something like two hours it took; but eventually the bed was bought—was brought by the coolies into the compound of the big, deep-verandahed, green-and-white house, on the outskirts of the town, where the woman lived—was scrubbed by the swarm of chattering, monkey-like Malays who obeyed her commands, received her *roepias*, and thrrove on rice and sugar pilfered from her pantries—was set up in her chamber—was hung with appropriate embroideries, purchased from Chinese vendors who dealt in the loot of riot, revolution, and other thieves’ chances—was slept in, at last—by a white-skinned woman in chiffon and lace—that big, red-lacquered bed, which had been built so long ago for the mandarin.

And the woman who bought the bed—or at least caused it to be bought—and who slept in it—had slept in it ever since it had belonged to her—was she herself? She was *that* woman certainly—she knew that no one would deny it—yet herself felt scarce more

certain than she had done of other things. Was everything, after all, without beginning and without end—life? Did she remember—did she imagine—did she live at all—or did she only dream? It would be—interesting to dream again! She would have reached her hand to the corner bracket, but lacked the strength.

'Wow-wow-wow!' the fox-terriers.

'Yap-yap!' the dwarf *Pintschers*.

'Yip!' the poodle.

All standing on guard, as through the doorway came her husband once more—fidgiting—feeling a necessity for action, yet not knowing what to do—his ruddy, good-humoured face all puckered and perturbed.

'She has not waked?'

The *baboe* shook her head.

Dazedly, through slitted lids, she looked at her husband, standing there. He could not see it, but in her look was all the hard animosity of unsatisfied desire.

The man sighed, and left the room.

She raised her arms slightly toward the foot of the bed. 'I shall never see him again!' she murmured, in a voice like a whisper of wind—or like the whisper of the sea at sunset on a lonely tropic shore.

Startled—for her mistress had not spoken before for many hours—the little *baboe* let fall the peacock fan.

Quite still she lay in the Chinese bed—still at midday as those others had lain at night; and the dogs dropped their noses into their paws and whined—the fox-terriers with sly, sweet faces—the dwarf *Pintschers* with eager ears—the toy poodle with ruby eyes—all whimpered and whined above the still form in the great, red-lacquered Chinese bed.

OMAR KHAYYAM AT MORGINS.

*Morgins for many years has replaced Grindelwald as the headquarters of the Bear Skating Club, which devotes itself to figure skating in the English style.*

AWAKE ! for Morgins from the bowl of Night  
Pours for the waking World the wine of Light ;  
    Drink, as the mountains drink it and the snows,  
And with their ether let your souls be bright.

Some for the magic of the ice, and some  
For the large splendour of the mountains come ;  
    ‘ Oh ! cut a dash and let decorum go,’  
Shriek some to Mrs. Grundy ; ‘ make things hum !’

They say the spider and the gadfly hold  
The halls where Grindel feasted Bears of old,  
    And Inter, the gay National, stars the ice,  
Waves the loose leg and spins in loops untold.

But here, as there, the snowy fields invite,  
Young blood goes hot-foot to the alluring height,  
    Armed with a thousand gadgets : yet who knows  
What cadence ends the song of his delight ?

Man, changeful man, has one unchanging care :  
His ready hand here props the tottering fair,  
    There sorts from out inverted ecstasies  
The tangled limbs of luckless Ski-in-air.

A book of curses, elegant and new,  
A lump of wax, a broken flask, and you  
    Beside him hurtling down a frozen slope—  
Ah ! paradox, should happiness ensue !

The mountain-runner's high philosophy  
 Scorns the cramped outlook of the rink-bound eye ;  
 ' The living wine,' he cries, ' for us outpoured,  
 Who drinks not, is a fellow pinched and dry.

' I often wonder what the skaters find  
 One half so dear as all they leave behind ;  
 They spill the wine of Life and drink the lees,  
 And turn like squirrels in a cage confined.'

Nay, but the strength still free to roam at will  
 In these scant bounds exhales a boundless skill,  
 And pulses inly touched by Time's slow hand  
 Their gentler destinies with joy fulfil.

Vainly the Wise to square the circle try,  
 Putting gross fingers in the infinite  $\pi$  ;  
 Skaters with more than geometric skill  
 Here keep the perfect square while circling by.

The sages talk about it and about,  
 And start from dogma where they end with doubt ;  
 So toilers at the gyrotory art  
 Attain at last the point whence they set out.

Myself when old did eagerly frequent  
 Teacher and taught, with harsh experiment  
 Unlearning ancient practice ; but I learnt  
 Humility, a Way most excellent.

Virtue I learnt—uprightness ever pays—  
 Turns without twist and honour without bays ;  
 And like the British workman, learned to ' strike,'  
 Source of all power, end of unsteady ways.

I learnt Reality :—how Time and Place  
Merge in the Relativity of Pace ;  
Error's correction through the constant eye,  
And Judgment waiting for each lapse from grace.

The Moving Circle wheels, and having wheeled  
Moves on, nor all your fudgings in the field  
Shall cancel aught of what the Judge hath writ,  
Nor conscious Hope blot out one fault revealed.

Ambition's prize, the wine-cup large and deep,  
Fills day with toil and robs the night of sleep ;  
But know, the contest over, 'tis a prize  
Though all may sip from, only one may keep.

. . . . .

The Ice has its Republic ; there you see  
Liberty—schooled, and brisk Equality—  
Bowling to worth, and chief, the open heart,  
Fraternity, with generous help and free.

Expert and tyro, where the curlers roar,  
Meet even justice on its level floor ;  
Skill and unskill reap each its own reward,  
Winning or losing, learn—nor ask for more.

True notes in music from just number flow ;  
True shots in curling speed nor swift nor slow ;  
Perfection poised between the less and more  
The Soul of Art, the Art of Living show.

Sea-dogs of old, the Spaniard at the gate,  
Played out their game—a game of bowls with Fate ;  
Shrewd players bide their time, for hurried cast  
And senseless power on Victory never wait.

They knew how strength deceives, how bias draws ;  
 Nor raised nor dashed by Luck, they kept the Laws,  
 And trained to prudent hazard in a game,  
 Staked their lives, smiling, in a greater cause.

Change but their outward habit—that alone :—  
 Give ice for turf, for bowls the sliding stone,  
 And they are with us, playing at our game,  
 Living our life ; our spirit is their own.

. . . . .

Time ripens all ; here old friends, year by year,  
 Meet in unageing friendships, still keep dear,  
 Heart-deep in memory, one too early lost,  
 Wise teacher, genial sportsman, friend sincere.<sup>1</sup>

I sent my thought through the immeasurable  
 Some message past our mortal bar to spell :  
 There was no answer from the void but this,  
 Dumb echo of the silent hope—' All's well.'

Life, like a figure that we skate unseen,  
 Obeys the Caller ; what his will has been  
 The Pattern shows when the last call, ' Dismiss !'  
 Scatters the moving players from the scene.

LEONARD HUXLEY.

<sup>1</sup> A. R. F. H. *ob.* 1926.

## LABOUR COLLEGES.

BY W. F. WATSON.

FOLLOWING the refusal of the Bournemouth Trades Union Congress to impose a levy on affiliated unions for the purpose of financing Easton Lodge—the gift of the Countess of Warwick to the Labour movement—as an additional seat of learning for Labour, the Margate Labour Party Conference rejected a proposal pledging the Conference to support the National Council of Labour Colleges in every possible way, and urging the constituent organisations to get into touch with the N.C.L.C. movement and to arrange educational classes and lectures in conjunction with that body. Such surprising decisions raise the whole question of Labour Colleges, their history, aims and objects, uses and influences, and the types of men they produce.

It is an interesting subject : but then the question of education was ever a fascinating one, especially to those denied the advantages of what is usually termed—often wrongly—‘ a proper education.’ It would indeed be very difficult to define a ‘ proper education ’; after all, it is largely a matter of degree, depending upon one’s interpretation of education. Not always is he most learned who has passed through public school and university, and it is a grave mistake to regard all men as uneducated because they have not enjoyed those facilities.

The pages of history contain many stories of the efforts of philanthropists, institutes, religious bodies, and committees to establish evening classes, schools, discussion circles, etc., where working people could acquire knowledge apart from and in addition to that gained at the elementary day schools. It was a stern fight. On the one hand there was the prejudice of people who considered it a mistake to teach the common people anything at all, and on the other hand the suspicion and disinclination to learn on the part of the workpeople themselves had to be overcome. The great strides in education made in recent years are, however, undoubtedly due to the untiring, unselfish work of those pioneers of education. All these educational agencies were essentially non-partisan in character, and few, if any, could be termed ‘ colleges ’ in the strict sense of the word.



Curiously enough, the first Labour College with a pronounced political bias owes its existence to the largess of a wealthy American and his wife. In 1899, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Vrooman, both of whom had Labour sympathies, paid a visit to this country for the purpose of studying British labour conditions and the Trade Union and Labour movement. Pursuance of their investigations brought them into close contact with the then leaders of the Labour movement, and, evincing enthusiastic admiration for the movement, they decided to mark their appreciation by establishing, at considerable personal cost, a Labour Educational Institute in Oxford, to be called Ruskin Hall. Certain impulsive actions of Mr. Vrooman, however—the details of which need not concern us at the moment—gave rise to a considerable amount of discussion in the Labour movement, with the result that progress was temporarily checked. Everything being satisfactorily explained, Ruskin Hall became Ruskin College, and its development proceeded apace.

What possessed Mr. Vrooman to found a Labour College just at that particular period? Was it merely coincidence or was it the work of inscrutable fate? Or are we to flatter the American philanthropist and the British Labour leaders by crediting them with exceptional long-sightedness? Whatever forces were at work—apparent or invisible—to cause Mr. Vrooman to decide upon founding a Labour College, no institution ever made its appearance at a more opportune time. For some years past the Trade Unions had been making rapid progress, vastly increasing in membership, and the tendency was towards centralisation, which demanded an ever-increasing number of full-time officials. In 1892, Mr. James Keir Hardie and fourteen other working men were returned to the House of Commons, and trade unionists were being elected to local administrative bodies.

Coming as most of them did from the workshop, mill, mine, or railway, these men showed no marked ability, either in administrative or legislative work. Not having had the requisite training in these matters, they were invariably left at the post by those who had. Obviously, then, if Labour was to become an influential factor in political life, if the tendency of Trade Unions was towards centralisation, entailing more and more officials, the leaders would need to learn more about local and parliamentary government, and how to handle big organisations efficiently. By endowing Ruskin Hall, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Vrooman provided the very thing needed, namely, an institution for training suitable men for responsible positions.

The first Managing Council of Ruskin Hall included such well-known educationists as Professor Caird (Master of Balliol College), Mr. F. York Powell (Professor of Modern History, Oxford), and the Rev. J. Bruce Wallace. Labour was represented by Mr. James Keir Hardie, M.P., Mr. Alexander Wilkie, J.P. (General Secretary of the Shipwrights' Union and member of the Parliamentary Committee, Trade Union Congress), Mr. C. W. Bowerman (General Secretary of the London Society of Compositors and member of the Parliamentary Committee, T.U.C.), Mr. James Macdonald (Secretary, London Trades Council), Mr. George Nicol Barnes (General Secretary, Amalgamated Society of Engineers), and Mr. Charles Hobson. The Faculty included Mr. H. B. Lees-Smith, Mr. Bertram Wilson, Mr. H. F. Hall, M.A., and Mr. W. H. Dixon, B.A. Mr. Dennis Hird was the first Warden.

Progress was very slow during the first year, but by the end of the second year the unions had overcome their suspicion and prejudice, and many organisations, including the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (since merged into the Amalgamated Engineering Union), the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, and the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (since merged into the National Union of Railwaymen), became affiliated.

In an interesting booklet issued from Oxford during the first years of the College's existence, the Council stated, 'We endeavour to create in each student a feeling of responsibility. We teach him not to regard the education he receives as a means of personal advancement, but as a sacred trust which he holds for the good of others. He learns in order that he may raise, not rise out of, the class to which he belongs. We hope that those who wish to fulfil the responsibilities with which they have been entrusted will help us in making practical our ideal of a citizen's education.'

This sounds very brave and altruistic, but there is no doubt about the sincerity of the Council and of the founders of the College. Their idea was to give selected men of more than average ability the advantage of a year's tuition, after which they were expected to return to the workshop to use their acquired knowledge in teaching other workers who were unable to go to Ruskin College. I shall show later, however, that the average student regards the education he receives as a means both of personal advancement and of rising out of the class in which he was born.

The members of the Council were certainly not anxious to make a profit out of the College. "For twelve shillings and six-

pence per week we board, lodge, and teach each student. We offer him a life of the fewest possible restrictions. We ask him no questions about his political or religious views. Perhaps for the first time he finds himself amid surroundings where there is the least external coercion. He is a responsible student.'

Courses of lectures were delivered and classes held on the following subjects: Sociology, Logic, English Grammar and Analysis, English Constitutional History, the Art of Writing English, Speaking and Public Work, Political Economy, the Principles of Politics and Political Ideals. There were also classes in English Literature, French, German, Arithmetic, Algebra, and Book-keeping. Quite a comprehensive and business-like curriculum. Under Political Economy and Ideals, works of the well-known economists—Adam Smith, Ricardo, John Stuart Mill, Jevons, Marshall—were used as text-books, but Ruskin College always steadfastly refused to include Marxian economics in the curriculum.

The advent of a workers' college in such a cultured city of learning created no little sensation in Oxford. The residence in the town of working men from every sphere of industry, with their fustian garb, unconventional ways and late hours, and general freedom of movement such as is not always enjoyed by the students of the older universities, caused the latter to regard the Ruskin students as men outside the pale of social law who were devising ways and means of overthrowing the State. Those enthusiasts who wore red ties (and red ties were popular amongst Labour supporters in those days) were looked upon as nothing less than anarchists. But these prejudices quickly died down when it was found that the working-class collegians were by no means revolutionary.

Extension lectures and correspondence classes were established, and before the College was two years old no less than 1800 students were enrolled, some hailing from such distant places as South Africa, India, Australia, Norway, Denmark, and New Zealand.

For some years, Ruskin College pursued the even tenor of its way. Promising young members of Trade Unions were selected, and, if upon examination found to be suitable by desire and adaptability for acquiring knowledge, they were sent into residence at Oxford for one year, their respective unions paying the requisite fees and a moderate allowance for personal expenses. Students who showed marked ability—Mr. Robert Young, M.P. (Newton), was one—were invited to stay another year. Since the students were necessarily prevented from earning wages, only those trade

unionists without responsibilities could afford to go to College; hence the panel of students was circumscribed. Amongst the first ninety students were a bricklayer, clerk, carpenter, compositor, docker, engineer, farmer, fruit-grower, gardener, labourer, miner, navvy, paper-seller, plumber, reporter, soldier, sailor, shop-assistant, teacher, and telegraphist.

After a time the more advanced students manifested a desire for Marxian Economics and Philosophy, and the Managing Council was petitioned to include the subject in the curriculum. The Council emphatically refused the request, so in 1908 a band of students formed a Marxian class within the College, with Mr. Noah Ablett of the South Wales Miners' Federation as the teacher. Immediately the Managing Council became aware of its existence, they requested the Warden, Mr. Dennis Hird, M.A., to take disciplinary measures with the recalcitrant students and to disband the Marxian class. Mr. Hird was further cautioned against giving a Marxian interpretation to the subject of Sociology, a subject he always took. Mr. Hird, himself a keen Marxist, declined to interfere, in consequence of which, in April 1909, he was called upon to tender his resignation for failing to maintain discipline amongst the students.

A students' strike immediately ensued, and when Mr. Hird eventually left the College many of them followed him. These men formed themselves into a committee and commenced an intensive propaganda for the formation of a new college, purely independent and definitely Marxian in its teachings. Funds were raised amongst sympathisers, and in the autumn of 1909 a big house was rented at 13 Penywern Road, Earl's Court, London, and the Central Labour College (now the London Labour College) was established, with Mr. Dennis Hird as Principal. Ruskin College, however, continued to exist, and, although its influence is impaired, it is still in being.

From the first, acute friction existed between the two institutions, and still does for that matter. Ruskin College claims to be quite impartial. The students are taught economics from no particular class or political standpoint. They are simply taught and encouraged to place their own interpretation upon the teachings of the various economists, but the teachings of Karl Marx are barred. Not so the Labour College, which declares that it is candid but not impartial. Marx predominates in the curriculum, and all subjects—Sociology, Industrial History, Biology, Industrial Geography, everything—are

taught with a pronounced working-class, revolutionary bias. It is worthy of note that, with the exception of Mr. Dennis Hird, all the first teachers at Penywern Road were workmen ex-students of Ruskin College, the Assistant Principal being Mr. W. W. Craik, formerly a railway servant.

The growth of revolutionary thought in the coalfields, on the railways, and in the workshops is due to the influence and ramifications of the Labour College, under whose ægis numerous local classes are organised. Mr. A. J. Cook, Secretary of the Miners' Federation, was one of the first students, and is still prominent in its councils. Several of the miners' executive, especially those from South Wales and Scotland, were, or still are, students of the College. For some years the Labour College had a hand-to-mouth existence, and the fare at Penywern Road was extremely frugal. Students came into residence entirely at their own expense, and most of them were in a penurious condition. These enthusiasts conducted an intensive campaign in the Trade Union branches, with the result that the executives of the National Union of Railwaymen and of the Miners' Federation were induced to recognise the College officially, and make themselves responsible financially. This placed the College on a sound financial position, and from then it began to prosper. The progress during the past few years, especially since the Armistice, has been truly phenomenal. The National Council of Labour Colleges, which was formed a year or two ago, includes many prominent Trade Union leaders, and embraces no less than one hundred and thirty-six Labour Colleges and thousands of corresponding students. Although the N.C.L.C. refuses to recognise Ruskin College or the Workers' Educational Association as *bona fide* Labour institutions, they are officially regarded as such, and have their spheres of influence in all parts of the country. There is scarcely a village, hamlet, suburb, or metropolitan district without a Labour educational class of some sort; the number of resident students is on the increase, whilst the corresponding students are legion.

Such is the story of the rise and development of Labour Colleges: what type of men do they produce? In the course of long Trade Union activities the writer has rubbed shoulders with scores of Labour collegians, and has yet to meet one who is at all likeable. They are so vain, so egregious, so superior, so supercilious. Whilst at College the student gains a smattering of the different economists—Adam Smith, Ricardo, Malthus, Mill, Jevons, Marshall, and, in the

case of N.C.L.C. students, Marx—and he usually leaves with an exaggerated belief in his own importance, an overpowering desire to impress his fellows with his learning, and an intense hatred of the workshop, born of the belief that he is now fitted to lead. Generally speaking, the rank and file have a healthy dislike for the college-trained leader. The average workman appreciates the cultured mannerisms of a thoroughly educated man, but he has an innate contempt for the member of his own class who, having gained a little knowledge at the expense of his fellow trade unionists, attempts to ape learned men, and persistently talks down to his audience. The overbearing manner of some Ruskin students is little short of nauseating.

The product of the Labour Colleges is neither worker nor employer. He is a class unto himself—an official class. In spite of the altruistic hope of the founders of Ruskin College that students would not regard the learning they receive as a means to personal advancement, or as a ladder to climb out of the class to which they belong, the average young trade unionist who takes up a course of tuition with Ruskin or the Labour Colleges does so with the fixed intention of eventually joining this official class and of advancing his position. He visualises a less arduous and far more remunerative position outside the workshop. Instead of returning to industrial life to utilise his training in teaching his less fortunate fellows, he commences to seek an official position in the Trade Union or Labour movement. If unable to secure election as an official of the former, he endeavours to secure a berth as organiser or propagandist in one of the numerous Labour or Socialist political bodies.

It should be remembered that one of the primary objects of both Ruskin College and the National Council of Labour Colleges is to train men to enable them to become responsible leaders and administrators in the Labour movement against the time when Labour assumes the government of the country. Yet many students have sought and secured well-paid positions in other political parties, and with large industrial undertakings. Working men detest men who are seeking soft jobs and care not where they get them. Indeed, some ex-students have not troubled even to seek a position in the Labour movement; upon finishing their period of training they have accepted a berth either in the Government or in some big firm. In other instances they have secured an official position, held it for a short time, and then resigned to take up a better-paid job in any sphere except that for which they were specifically trained.

One Ruskin College man, after a year's stay at Oxford, did return to the workshop. Within a few months he secured election as a paid official in an important union. He held the job for exactly a year, and then deserted the union for a position in a Government department. When the department was disbanded after the Armistice the whilom Labour collegian became manager in a large business undertaking. The last time the writer heard of him, he was an employer of labour. Another became works manager for a well-known engineering undertaking, and boasted of his prowess in doubling the output during his first year, which is rather strange conduct, to say the least, for a man who was trained at the expense of the Labour movement to combat the activities of the employers. Many other instances could be cited of young trade unionists who, after a course of tuition at one of the Labour Colleges, have become organisers for the employers instead of for the Trade Unions. One was frank enough to tell the writer that he had no intention of working at the tools again. If the movement could not find him a lucrative job, he would secure one from the employers. It is this tendency, nay, determination, to get a soft job somewhere, anyhow, which is so hateful to the rank and file.

There is an old adage which says 'Put a beggar on horseback and he will ride to the devil,' in which there is more than an element of truth. Anyone familiar with industrial life knows that when a man rises from the ranks to an authoritative position he is far more tyrannical than one trained from birth to rule. A foreman or manager who was previously an ordinary workman is invariably worse to work under than a public-school man. Clothed in a little authority, he develops into the most tyrannical of tyrants. The same philosophy applies to education. Invest an ordinary worker with a little knowledge slightly above that accorded to other workers and he develops into a profound and overbearing snob, too superior to work, too 'learned' to continue to associate with his fellow-workers. He cultivates friendship with employers and titled people. No sensible person objects to workpeople, when opportunities present themselves, associating with employers and wealthy people—indeed, much could be said in favour of such actions, inasmuch as they tend to improve the relationship of one with the other and create a better understanding between them—but the man in the workshop, not always understanding these matters, distrusts a man who, after being trained at the expense of the Unions in order to champion the cause of the people against

prevailing conditions, is extensively reported as having attended a ball given by Lady Blank, or played golf with the Duke of Southshire.

At the Bournemouth Trade Union Congress, Mr. Jack Jones, M.P. for Silvertown, said the rank and file do not want colleges for their leaders. In saying that he echoed the opinion of the average member of a union. The man who, without training and by sheer merit, rises to the position of leadership is far more popular with trade unionists.

Easton Lodge by all accounts—the writer has not yet been fortunate enough to visit the place—is very beautiful. The scheme placed before the Bournemouth Conference was an attractive one, no doubt, but it is not calculated to produce a better type of man than either Ruskin or the Labour Colleges. Indeed, the beautiful surroundings of Easton Lodge would tend to take the man who stayed there for a period further and further away from the members who sent him there. He would develop a psychology far above the position of an ordinary worker ; he would cease to be a working man.

That education is essential is a truism. That it is necessary for Labour to train men to take their part in national and local affairs is also a self-evident truth, but until the Labour movement discovers men and women who cannot be spoilt by going to college, people who are determined to use their acquired learning for its intended purpose, Labour Colleges will continue to produce egregious snobs searching for sinecures in any sphere of activity.

In the absence of born altruists, and human nature being what it is, that time appears to be in the very remote future.



## BY BELSBY WOOD.

BY CATHERINE STORR FOSTER.

## IV. 'YON CHESTNUT 'OSS.'

'Noo, I can tongue yer a queerer tale than that there, what they calls *sequel* tiv it. Some folks, such as my wife and sike like, dizn't believe a wod on it, says as it must have been spirits me and Mr. Straker supped yon night, but *I* knaws as it wasn't; it was water from Mr. Straker' back yard pump, and desperat cawd water it was an' all. Noo, I nivver felt really comfortable inside o' me aboot way as I comed by poor awd Foxy' Brush, and allus kept oot o' sight o' Fost Whip when fox'oonds was aboot; and what was more, yon Chestnut 'Oss he'd done me oot of a real good run wi' em, so I thinks as I'd get even wi' awd beggar.

'Well, we had a nasty spell o' real frosty weather i' January, ditches and ponds all iced ovver, lads floondering aboot on frozen slaps o' water, and awd women sqwarking oot and skelling ovver sideways on when they slipped oot to buy a few groceries at shop, and there wasn't noa hunting fixtures i' newspaper, nowt i' way of an announcement but "Fost oppen day at kennels," spoiling all bit o' sport we gets. I allus *has* maintained that if we're boond to have frost it should come i' summer-time, not fair i' middle o' hunting season.

'Noo, Mr. Straker he hadn't been so very well: summat as he'd eaten at Christmas hadn't agreed with him; so his daughter gets him ovver persuaded to pay her a visit upo' Wolds. I should say as it was aboot middle o' January when thaw sets in as sudden as frost had comed; but latter it stopped a bit longer i' Wold country, so Mr. Straker says as he'll see it oot there, and he stops on wi' his daughter, and her husband says as awd gentleman's noa encumbrance to him nor noabody, and if he was it wadn't mek a deal o' matter. Well, when thaw gets well set in I lights on *Yorkshire Post* i' blacksmith' shop, and, Bon! I sees as fox'oonds is advertised to meet at Belsby Wood come next Thursda'—it was twenty-third o' January *I* says, for I see'd it i' paper, but my wife says as I's gotten date wrong, and water was spirits, and all such idle talk as she hears tell on i' village.

'Well, it comes ovver me if Mr. Straker had gotten wom again, as I'd beg loan o' yon Chestnut 'Oss of his; so I fetches my old saddle into kitchen to tek chill off on it—it was hung up outside o' hen house.

'Noo, it just happened my wife was oot o' road for once when

she wasn't wanted, so I leans it up agen kitchen fender wi' flaps well flanged oot on either side, for it smelled strange and fusty, when my wife she comes peering oot o' pantry (she wasn't as oot o' road as I thowt she was).

"Whativver's yon for?" she says, and she stumbles ovver braid of her sket as is allus tangling roond her feet, and says as it's girths she's upsetten hersen ovver, and she won't have saddle cluttering i' *her* road, she says; so I 'ugs it into back kitchen and ties up stuffing as is brussen oot wi' a bit o' band as she keeps handy for tying up a boiled pudding wi' . . . and strange heavy puddings she meks an 'all, either keeping steam in, or letting on it oot, or skelling pan ovver, or bonning bottom on it oot, or summat o' sort—it's wonderful what can happen tiv a boiled pudding by *her* accoonts on 'em.

'Well, it so happens when Thursda' comes roond she teks off to station wi' a friend as she's allus quarrelling wi' to buy summat at a draper' sale, cheap dishcloths and coarse aprons and sike like.

'Noo, nowt could have sarved me better than to get her oot o' road, and she gans off iv a great big fluster wi' this here woman. I hears 'em argufying aboot price o' dishcloths afore they gets tonned corner, so I knaws they'll have gotten real nasty wi' each other by time they reaches station; but that meks noa matter to onnybody but theirsens. So I claps door to, looks at clock, gets a sup o' hot water as she's left ovver from washing pots up, shaves mysen tiv a real nicety, then I blacks my boots, and I was just started to oil my hair i' front o' glass when she comes skelping in at door. "I's forgotten my poss," she says, and she clicks it off oven top and gans off doon gardin wi'oot another wod, wi' her awd braid hurrying after her (it's a wonder if it doesn't trip her up one o' these days); but onnyhoo, off she goas, and braid catches i' gate, and she has to get it lowsened, and this here friend shooting oot tiv her from blacksmith' corner as how she'll miss train. Well, as soon as I's fairly shut on her for second time, I thinks as how I'll step up to Mr. Straker' place and see if awd gentleman's gotten wom; and I couldn't light o' my walking-stick nowheres, so I teks awd brussen oot saddle wi' me, for a bit o' company like, for it's a strange lonesome road up to Mr. Straker' spot, fozz bushes on either side, and more ruts than road, gipsies and roadsters and sike like camping oot, mebbe. My wod! cart road *was* iv i' state, and water rushing doon sludge holes and ditches like bairns oot o' school. Noa, Mr. Straker hadn't comed back, house was all shutten up, blinds drawn doon, and noabody aboot. I expects house-

keeper and young sarvant gel was off after these cheap dishcloths. "Hooivver, I'll just *look* into stable i' *case* they're there," I says to mysen; "mebbe there's an awd hen as lays i' manger, and they may be soching for an egg to boil." Noa, *they* wasn't there. *But Chestnut was!* and a'most wi'oot thinking I 'utches my awd saddle on tiv his back, then I slips into saddle-house and fetches oot stirrups and awd snaffle bridle, and when I's once getten 'em all i' place, it hardlins seems worth while tekking 'em off again, so I waits till saddle's nicely warmed tiv 'Oss' back, then off I sets on him to Belsby Wood. My wod! there was noa manner o' doot as 'Oss could goa, nobbut he'd getten a mind tiv it! Well, they finds a fox afore fox'oods is well into covert—I hears Fost Whip sing oot "Gone Away!" a'most afore Field wished one another compliments o' season, or had getten a bite o' sandwich or owt o' that. I sure I couldn't tell yer who was oot that day—there was a strange throng on 'em, and carriage company up and doon high road—but they was all behind me. Goa? I should say Mr. Straker' Chestnut 'Oss *could* goa! Big drains and lartle uns, and slap ovver five-barred gates: nowt comed amiss tiv him; why, him and me was racing train for one piece. By gum! it *was* a run! There was a great gale o' wind blowing iv oor faces, and sea-gulls and plover screaming ovver floods i' carrlands, water splashing aroond us, and great clods o' earth flying back as we raced ovver grass fields. I lost my hat, and my handkercher, and once, when I looked back to see if hoods was following me (me and Chestnut had getten right i' front on 'em by that time), I could hardlins see 'em for clouds o' stuffing oot o' my awd saddle as was blowing back i' their faces—band was all rotten wi' puddings boiling ovver; but stuffing or noa stuffing I stuck to what was left o' saddle, though me and it very near parted company when yon Chestnut 'Oss louped main drain from bank to bank and caught up wi' train again. Hooivver, at last we comes to Humber bank, and he stops short wi' sike a bang, it's a wonder he didn't land me upo' Lincolnshire side. Fox he wasn't nowheres to be seen: he must have tekken to water; fox'oods was finely put oot when they comed to bank and couldn't see nowt on him. They was aboot played oot was dogs, but 'Oss he hadn't tonned a hair, though he'd given *me* a run as wad last for monny a hunting season. I didn't stop to see what had become o' rest o' field: I teks off womwards, and it was a'most dark when I shuts Mr. Straker' stable door on 'Oss; and I was sat iv oor own kitchen, reading *Good Words* by lamplight, when my wife comes blondering in at door all loadened up wi' these cheap

dishcloths and bargains she'd bought, and braid of her sket was gone—I lay somebody had tramped it off on her unbeknownst. Howivver, I teks noa noatice on her, and says nowt to nobody aboot run as I's had, and *she* proffers noa remark, and it all seems to be ovvered and done wi' . . . but noo comes queerest part o' tale I's telling on yer. Well, next day, my wife she teks it intiv her head as she'll boil a suet pudding for oor dinners wi' a bit o' cheap suet she's gotten for less than she owt to have given for it, and I hears her scratting aboot among buckets i' back kitchen, scraping clothes horse across brick floor, and rattling among saucepans, and, "It's a strange queer thing wherivver yon bit o' band's gotten to," she says. "Why, I sure it *is*," I says, but I doesn't say as it's ligged i' thawed frost and blather not airf a mile from Humber bank. Well, following week I hears tell as how Mr. Straker has gotten wom at last from Wolds, so a bit afore dark I gans up yon long cart road (more than a mile long it was), for I has it i' my mind to tell him tale of how I'd borrowed loan o' yon Chestnut 'Oss wi'oot a "By your leave" to nobody; and I lights on awd gentleman scraping his boots at back door—pump stood close agen it—and I oots wi' all story o' run, even to date on it, and how 'Oss and me bested train and rest o' field, and left fox'oonds fields away, and mebbe fox an' all, for we nivver see'd nowt no more on him after fost goa off. I tells it all as I's telling you, and awd Mr. Straker looks at me as if I was mekken game on him; then he tons a sickly green colour and dithers all ovver his body, from his troosers upwards; then he begs for a drink o' water, for his throat had gotten a strange parched feeling as if it was rasped wi' emery paper; then he leans up agen door-post, and when he proffers to speak his wods comes cracking oot like an awd fox barking oot by Belsby Wood of a starlit night, and he gives a great shiver doonwards from his beard tiv his boots, and he says, "That's a strange queer tale," he says. "Did yer say as 'Oss louped main drain agen Humber bank?" "Ay," I says, "he did an' all, and he comed along them flooded carrlands like greased lightning; why, me and him we skimmed ovver gates and fences and drains as if we was made of air." "Made of air?" he says, and I sure even his nose took on yon sickly green colour and started to tremble on his face. "Made of air?" he says again. "You nivver spoke a truer word one on yer may have been, but it wasn't *you*, David Dibnah. Reach me another sup o' water," he says. So I reaches him a good-sized mugful from pump, and he stares at me ovver top o' brim wi' his beard bristling all roond it and his eyes airf oot o' his head.

"Well, if it wasn't me, it was 'Oss," I says. Then he gives mug back into my hands wi' his own all a-clattering and shakking, and he says, "Yon Chestnut 'Oss o' mine he died of influenzy a totmith afore fox'oonds met by Belsby Wood—he died upo' tenth o' January," he says.

"Then it was *my* ton to look queer, and Mr. Straker he reaches me a sup o' water, and I steps inside o' door and props mysen agen sink, and yon run wi' fox'oonds comes back to my mind. Then I sees as Mr. Straker looks as if he'd be gannin off iv a faint, and we keeps reaching oorsens sups o' water from pump till we must have consumed best part of airf a gallon; and then Mr. Straker he says to me, "Thoo'd best be off wom wi' yer afore dark falls," he says, "i 'case there's summat queer aboot." So I wishes him good-night, and steps off doormat into yard, and he bangs door behind me, and I hears him breathing and snuffling as he clicks lock wi' door-key, and I shuffles oot wi' legs as walked as if they'd been drinking. Dark was falling middling fast, and, just as I was crossing courtyard, stable door bust oppen wi' a great loud creak, and I claps my hands to my ears, and ducks my head into darkness, and teks off doon cart road between fozz-bushes like as if Awd Gentleman hissen was after me. I won't say as I heard 'osse's hoofs galloping doon lane—but I knaws when I banged intiv oor own kitchen I shut door so rapid I shut my coat-tails intiv it an' all, and a great gust o' wind blows doon chimner, straight into my wife's face as she teks it oot of oven . . . she's allus been a strange body for being airf on her i' oven at critical times—she's afraid o' bonning owt she's getten in it. "Whativver's matter wi' yer, Dave? Is wild 'osses after yer?" she says.

"'Osses!" I says—"we doan't want more than *one* on 'em—*one's* plenty and sufficient for *me*!" I says.

"It's a queer tale, but wind up on it is queerest of all, and I wadn't gan thruff Mr. Straker's courtyard of a hunting day for owt yer could give me. My wife she says as Mr. Straker had gotten date wrong: she says frost air upo' Wolds had frozen his brain. But I knaws different to that, and when she keeps twittering on aboot yon bit o' pudding band she's mislaid. I says to mysen, "Come a nice warm day i' spring o' year, I'll tek off to Humber bank i' soch on it, to prove as me and Mr. Straker spoke truth." But if she lights on it behind sink, or finds she's tied up her Sunday back hair wi' it, why, then, I shan't knaw *what* to think. It's a rum un either way.'

‘LITTLE ENGLAND BEYOND WALES.’

I HAVE more than a notion that there is no county in England or Wales towards which the general public has a blanker mind than Pembrokeshire—and this is saying a good deal! Yet it is one of the most interesting in Britain. Ethnologically it is unique. There is nothing else like it.<sup>1</sup> As regards scenery, the county has some seventy or eighty miles of mostly rugged and imposing sea-coast hardly, if at all, inferior to that of Cornwall, along which thousands of tourists and artists tumble over one another every season in pursuit of bed and board; while between its spacious and diversified interior and that of the rather ‘bony’ and much mine-scarred south-western peninsula there seems to me no comparison. Pembrokeshire has no pretensions to rival the mountain glories of the other Welsh counties, though it has a mountainous district towards its northern bounds of sufficient height and area to emphasize its varied character. Indeed, it is just the physical difference of this remote south-western, wind-swept, sea-girt region of Wales from the rest of the Principality which, with its many other peculiar characteristics, helps to give the county such special interest.

Oddly enough, Pembrokeshire is much the shape of Wales itself in miniature. Its northern portion is for the most part hilly and sometimes rugged, achieving in the Precelly hills the approximate height of Dartmoor, to give a popular example. Its southern and larger half is in the main undulating and of spacious outlook. After running through the whole mountainous breadth of Wales it is like coming out into England again, with differences that would perhaps escape the casual traveller. The hunting man, for instance, would wake up and rub his eyes and might fancy he had got back into the Blackmore Vale or Cheshire—or, if of wider knowledge, would see, rather, a good Irish county, say Kilkenny or Westmeath, with fine rolling pastures and the nice rideable bank-and-ditch fences that his soul no doubt loves. It is in fact what it looks, a good hunting country; but then only Pembrokeshire squires and farmers know that and ride over it. It is a good farming country too, this ‘Little England beyond Wales,’ though of smallish holdings mostly, their whitewashed homesteads and cottages prinked out

<sup>1</sup> See end of article.

with colour, blue, pink or saffron, everywhere dimpling the wide, sweeping, and rather sparsely timbered landscape. There is undoubtedly a slight flavour of Ireland about it, but a good Ireland of neat habit, of peaceful and industrious ways. Here and there amid all these rural amenities an intruding waste of bog or heath catches the eye, and on a closer acquaintance with the country you will catch many a whiff of peat smoke in passing a cottage or threading a village street.

In this land of paradox, too, you will find English-looking churches with lofty Perpendicular towers crowning the green ridges—a sight practically unknown in normal Welsh landscape. Here and there again, as if in protest against these smooth English-like scenes, some great wall of naked rock—a hundred or so feet high—springs up suddenly and traverses the plain. Surrounded here and there with a semblance of rude towers and turrets, they look as if some giants of old had started to fortify the country and left their unfinished work to the assaults of time and the Atlantic blasts. You may see this, indeed, on a lesser scale on the still smoother agricultural plains of Anglesey. Then there are the noble shells of the great feudal castles which, on iron sea-coast or green inland ridge, strike such a distinguished note in the Pembrokeshire scene—Manorbier, Carew, Llawhadden, Pembroke, Haverfordwest, Newport, and others of less size and note. Long and narrow arms of the sea run winding inland from Milford Haven between sloping, meadowy banks to catch at their head the little trout streams that come rippling down from their mountain sources in the north of the county. Always, too, the same high hills of the Welsherie make an inspiring background to the wide, smooth sweeps of English Pembrokeshire.

And this southern Pembrokeshire, this 'Little England'—what is it? I have said that this county ethnologically has no counterpart in the British Islands. The colonists in northern Ireland are by comparison of yesterday, nor even so do they remain unmixed. Cast your eye over a map of Wales. You will find that the Cymric place-names which so thickly plaster all the rest of the Principality suddenly cease on the south-west Carmarthenshire coast, which was formerly part of Pembrokeshire. All is now English, and swarming with 'tons, the first colonists' mark of possession, as so often recorded in Ulster—Williamston, Jordanston, Leveston, Hodgeston, Boshoston, Robeston, Johnston, Wiston—all through the county, scores of them. The 'tons alone would fill half a page

of the CORNHILL. The rest, too, are virtually all Saxon, of which Ludchurch, Redberth, Rosehill, Warren, Lydstep are mere types selected at random from a list that would fill the rest of the page. These place-names will be found crowding the southern and larger half of the county. And of the people that gave them and are still occupying the country—what of them? They are all English, though Welshmen of course may dwell among them as Welshmen dwell in Shropshire. They have been here for about eight centuries, and talk English with less Welsh intonation than the Saxons of Shropshire and Hereford. But to explain them, a little ancient history is, I fear, inevitable.

It was in the days of William Rufus, when with his sanction and licence Norman knights and barons were carving out for themselves those independent palatinates—that turbulent mosaic of Marcher Lordships in south and central Wales which Henry VIII grouped into new counties—that the seeming paradox of modern Pembrokeshire arose. As the Welsh land of Dyfed, speaking broadly, it was the most westerly section of the old kingdom of South Wales. Arnulph de Montgomery now took the southern and best half of it in hand, Martin de Tours the northern and rougher half. But the attractions of this lower country carried Arnulph's activities far beyond that of an ordinary Anglo-Norman filibuster, who was elsewhere content, by force of arms, to be little more than the feudal ruler of Welsh territory and Welshmen for so long as he could thus maintain himself. But here, in south Pembrokeshire, the Welsh inhabitants were driven clean out. Little record is left of their resistance. Whatever the original intention, the country was opened for alien settlement, a procedure without any parallel in Anglo-Welsh relations. There was more in this than the mere lure of the land. An English community down here in the rear of the Welsh would be obviously invaluable in helping to overcome and check their resistance and their constant efforts to recover their independence. Rufus himself came down and took a hand in the strife. The result at any rate was colonisation. What districts the first English settlers came from is obscure—probably Devon and Somerset. The great fact of this period, however, is the introduction of Flemings by Henry I, who seems to have been troubled by a superfluity of those useful people in this country, disbanded mercenaries and others. The happy thought that they would serve to strengthen the new colony and help to fight the Welsh was translated into action. No doubt, too, the



Flemings themselves were well satisfied, while their blend with the Anglo-Saxon of that day must have been a simple process. With a well-established and well-protected English colony, emigration must have steadily flowed in for a long time. So much for the origin of 'Little England' in brief outline. The dispossessed Welsh in the meantime had retired into the northern districts. Arnulph and the King and their successors had apparently left these refugees alone, though in any case the region was in possession of another Lord Marcher. For Martin de Tours had sailed one day into Fishguard harbour with a strong armed force and taken almost undisputed possession of the neighbouring country. He established himself at Newport and, strange to say, soon made himself quite popular with his Welsh vassals. He didn't worry them, but taught them chess and held friendly bouts with their chief men at his castle. The rest of the north belonged to the bishopric of St. David's and became, like the Lordship of Martin de Tours, a refuge for the dispossessed Welsh from the south. In course of time a rigid line, unconcerned with any official demarcation or natural boundaries, followed a waving course across the middle of the county—the English on one side, the Welsh still cherishing their language on the other. The line holds good to-day—there has been no mixing across it from that day to this. If the last two or three decades have seen modifications of the social cleavage, it matters nothing. What are they in eight hundred years? This strange boundary, traced upon a county map in pencil, lies before me. It was drawn some dozen or so years ago by a well-known Pembrokeshire antiquary and historian, my oft-times host in that, to me, always inspiring county. For I had the curiosity once to traverse much of this invisible barrier. The cleavage was the more curious as there had been no fighting and few scraps between the races here, as elsewhere in Wales, since the clean sweep of Arnulph de Montgomery and his immediate successors. The English territory became a county in the direct hands of the Crown under constables or earls. The Welsherie, if not at first technically included, was so overawed by its stronger neighbours that it never seems to have taken a hand in the long subsequent struggles of the Welsh for independence. Its native aristocracy, indeed, soon blended and intermarried with its English neighbours. The line of cleavage became that of the populace only, as one need hardly say it has been in modern times. Of this barrier a single example will perhaps serve better than any further words of mine.

Some years before the war, while staying in Pembrokeshire myself, there was quite a commotion because a Welshman was appointed Relieving Officer in a parish south of the line. He was fully qualified and not unpopular, but he found that he was politely refused at every attempt to get quarters. At last the policeman, as an independent member of society, accommodated him. But then there was his horse, an official necessity. In the matter of provender and stable room he found every stable door shut against him. In the end the poor man had to be removed to some more congenial arena in the Welsherie! Pembrokeshire, again, has not only been richer in its historians than any Welsh county, but it almost goes without saying that in so remote a county, and one for that reason unattractive to industrial magnates, there should be a good store of old families still *in situ*, of both Welsh and English names, though with them, as I have said, such a distinction means nothing. Nor is it surprising that the educated natives generally have more than a common dose of county patriotism—which is most right and reasonable. I have sometimes thought that perhaps I might have been thrown rather exclusively among people with a special turn for such worthy enthusiasms.

But I met a lady the other day whose husband was of a Pembrokeshire family, a fact which occasioned an annual visit to the land of his fathers. To my surprise she had no liking at all for her husband's country. She complained that the excessive county patriotism of its people got on her nerves, that she could not find herself in accord with the fixed opinion that nothing and nobody outside Pembrokeshire could possibly be all that they should be. But then she belonged to a populous home-county where most of the politer class are aliens or of alien origin and whose county patriotism, outside the cricket championship, is apt to be something of a pose or a cult. She had never struck the deep-down convictions of an uncontaminated and remote shire. It was something she didn't understand. But alas! even in Pembrokeshire such stalwarts must surely be declining before a restless generation! Unlike certain counties which—thanks largely to the limited range of most writers—have been for a generation the objects of indiscriminating laudation, the Pembrokeshire patriot owes nothing to the gush of the alien. A popular library has taken the trouble to classify by counties the topography of its enormous list of novels. Pembrokeshire is the only county that has escaped the attention of what the Americans call a 'transient' dealer in local colouring,

or what passes for such in fiction. Yet I remember one summer a report in the Haverfordwest paper that a then popular novelist was lurking in Fishguard getting copy for a book. But the poor man died before he could illuminate the circulating libraries with the 'queer things' of Pembrokeshire.

Pembrokeshire, however, rather shines in serious historians and archaeologists, which is not surprising seeing how rich is the material. But 'An Account of Pembrokeshire,' in the later Elizabethan period by a contemporary writer, George Owen of Henllys and Lord of Kemes, is unique of its kind within my experience. Owen was the virtual successor to the land and honours of the chess-playing Martin de Tours. His MS., edited by the late Henry Owen of Poyston and printed by the Cymmrodorian Society, runs to three fair-sized volumes, in which everything concerning the Pembrokeshire of that day and of the past is vividly and often racily depicted by a resident squire, who was also a highly educated and travelled man. I do not know of any other county work of so early a period so illuminating. Lambarde's well-known and well-written picture of Kent, of about the same date, is nothing like so exhaustive and vivid, while the curious conditions and remote situation of Pembrokeshire give Owen's pages a peculiar interest.

'It was in ancient times,' he writes, 'wholly inhabited by Welshmen, but a greater part was torn from them by the Englishmen, by Earl Strongbowe and diverse others, and the same planted with Englishmen whose posterity enjoy it to this day without receiving the Welsh speech or learning any part thereof, and hold themselves so close to the same as that to this day they wonder at a Welshman coming among them, the one neighbour saying to the other, Look, there goeth a Welshman, and the sheer is near equally divided between the Welsh and English speech.' He tells of just the things one likes to hear of in those early days, besides all the usual details of county history very ably presented by a cultivated and travelled man, a shrewd observer and delightful gossip, a worthy successor to his famous fellow county man, Giraldus of Manorbier, who, like Owen of Henllys, has a place of his own among chroniclers. Owen's account of the great games of *Knappan* is perhaps as diverting as anything in his book. On Church holidays certain parishes contended against each other. 'Great gentlemen,' too, got up private matches one against the other, and brought into the field even larger hosts than those engaged in the standard games. 'They would divide the parishes

hundreds or sheres between them and eche labour to bringe the greatest numb<sup>r</sup> and would therein entreat all his friends and kinsmen in every parishe to bring his parishe wholly with him.

'To these matches would also resort diverse with meet, drink and wine, also merchaunts, mercers and pedlars would provide stalls and booths to shew their wares; some came to playe, some to eat and drink, some to buy and some to sell, some to see and others to be seen (you know what kinds I mean), so great multitudes would resort besides the players.' These contests were apparently confined to Welsh Pembrokeshire and Cardiganshire; the English, apparently, and perhaps it was just as well, took no part in them. The ball was of box-wood, well greased, and just small enough to be gripped in one hand. It was carried and flung as a football is carried or kicked, according to circumstances. 'They contend not for any wager or valuable thing but only for glory or renowne, first for the fame of their country in general, next individually to wyne praise for his activitie and prowess which two consideracions ardently inflameth the minds of the youthful people to strive to the death for glorie or fame which they esteem dearer unto them than worldye wealth.'

There was no limit to numbers. Each leader roused his whole county, and if one side had a numerical advantage the other felt the 'greater glorie' in the strife. Play began about one or two of the clock, and a couple of thousand or so seem to have stripped for the fray, bare to the waist and with naked feet, leaving their clothes, all save their breeches, in great heaps under custodians. If a shirt was retained, says Owen, it was soon torn off its owner's back, and he has even seen 'longe locked gallants trymlly trymed at this game not by polling as the Barber useth, but by fists and instead of warm water tuke warm bludd out of the nose, mouth and face of the younkes.' The goals were miles apart, probably parish churchyards, as in the inter-parish football matches of a little later in Wales and Scotland. 'When a player breaks out of the "main plaie" it is a comfortable sight,' says the historian, 'to see five or six hundred good footmen follow in chase a mile or two as greyhounds after a hare, when you shall see some gain on his precedents, some forced to drop behind those who were once foremost. This greatly delights the beholders and forceth them to follow likewise to see the pleasure of the chase.'

Obviously 'passing,' though a comparatively new thing in modern football, was practised by these ancients. For when the

breath or the legs fail the carrier of the ball, 'he hurls it forward with great violence and perchance it lighteth to some of his fellows who carrieth the same as farre again. In this sorte you shall see two thousand naked<sup>1</sup> people following the Knappan backward and forward, east, weste, north and southe so that a stranger who should casually see such a vast multitude soe ranging naked would think them demented. For in the fury of the chase they respect neither hedge, ditch, pale nor wall, hill, dale, bushes, river or rock. Wherein also they shewe such agility in running, such activitie in leaping, such strength and skill in hurling, such bouldness in assaulting, such stoutness in resisting, such policie in inventinge, such skill in preventinge, as takinge them out of their game, they are not able to perform half the prowess or devices shewed in the same.' One almost sees the modern critic of athleticism in this last! There were 'scouts' outside the main play and 'borderers' outside these watching for opportunities. Then there are the gigantic scrimmages as Owen saw them, 'five or six hundred men naked in a cluster like bees beating one another as fast as the fiste can go.' But these were rather ebullitions of temper and not strictly part of the game, which Owen, who had been a player himself and 'still carried the smarts thereof,' declares had become much rougher since his day, and when it degenerated into a free fight as above described, fully justified the old writer's laconic observation that it was a good preparation for war. He has several 'merrye jests,' too, well worth quoting if there were space.

But he tells us that when in 1588 the Spaniards with their 'not truly termed invincible navy' were on the sea, and an English mariner was sailing along the shore as a great match at Knappan was proceeding in full view, thought civil war had broken out, and when informed it was only a game, replied: 'If this be plaiye I could wish the Spaniards were here to see our plaies in England; certes they would be in bodily fear of our warre.' But the most formidable feature of these entertainments were the horsemen, who were allowed to carry a stout stick and, on overtaking the man with the ball, force his release of it by a crack over the head! Squadrons of these mounted men would charge into the struggling mass of footmen, at 'greate inconvenience' to their 'bare feet'—we should think so! If the ball was 'passed' to a horseman, he was pursued by the cavalry of the other side and bludgeoned in the same manner as a 'footeman.' Finally, says the Lord of Kemes, 'I have been

<sup>1</sup> Naked is not used here in our literal sense.

often times an agent and patient at this unruly exercise and have often felt the smart that I have written, the signes and seals of which I carrye on my head, hands and other parts of my body.'

The author laments the decay of archery and the popularity of tennis and bowls: the former played against church walls in Wales right up to the late eighteenth century. He deploras the decrease in wild deer, but as for 'seeley hares,' these were more numerous than in any country known to him. He speaks of the gentlemen who had rabbit warrens and of certain squires who had imported pheasants from Ireland and first naturalised them in Pembrokeshire. Woodcock were so plentiful that he considers them the bird of the county. The wild cat and the brock, too, were abundant. For hawking, the 'playness of the soyle' afford special facilities, while myself 'I have seen good pastime in hunting the wild bull and wild ox of which there is yet good store in the mountains.' He dilates generally on the sporting habits of his neighbours, on the flavour of the trout, and the pleasure of angling for them; the seasons when the salmon and sewin ran, and how they were caught in the different rivers, while he deals generally with natural history and the distribution of game. These make the lighter side of this inimitable and priceless work. For the rest, it is packed full of more practical matters—of farming and grazing, of land tenure, of social habits, of personal gossip and the past history of the country. For lack of fencing in his day all sheep had to be branded, which led to much dishonesty, while for the same reason so many boys were employed in watching stock in wind, sun, and rain that a regular race of 'tawny moors' grew up. He deploras the lack of woodland and the neglect of fruit-growing and horse-breeding among the gentry. The common people, too, have ceased to weave their own clothes, though wool has doubled in price. It all sounds very modern but for its quaint English and often whimsical humours.

From the earliest Norman days Pembrokeshire, Welsh and English, was an outpost of the Crown—William Rufus himself, as already stated, had assisted at its conquest. Its rulers, whatever their titles, were in effect agents of the Crown; unlike the rest of Wales, the King's writ ran there and with effect. From Pembrokeshire, too, went the first conquerors of Ireland, Norman and Welsh knights, and from them are descended, as George Owen truly makes boast, 'some of the cheefe and principle men of Ireland as the Geraldines, the Earls of Desmond and Kildare, the Fitzmaurices

of Kerry, the Lords Battinglass, Roche and Barry.' It is sometimes said that the descendants of the famous Nesta conquered Ireland—so many of these doughty adventurers were her offspring. Giraldus himself is vastly proud of this abounding and brilliant Norman-Welsh progeny of Gerald de Windsor and Nesta, the daughter of Rhys ap Tudor, Prince of South Wales, to which he himself belonged. Nesta may be noted as the heroine of a romantic episode in Welsh history, and is known as the Welsh Helen, for she was the most beautiful woman of her day and the ward of Henry I, to whom she had borne a son. But subsequently, as the wife of Gerald de Windsor, Constable of Pembroke, she so fired the passion of Owen, the reckless son of Cadwgan, then Prince of Powys and Lord of Cardigan, that after the first sight of her he broke into the castle in the night and carried her off to a secluded hunting lodge near Llangollen. This outrage on the King's representative by a single, heady youth, and the royal vengeance it provoked, set all Wales on fire for years.

And then there is St. David's, rising out of a shallow valley on the lonely fringe of a wild and rock-bound coast, miles away from anywhere, and over a hundred from its nearest ecclesiastical neighbour of Llandaff. There is nothing in the kingdom in the least like the venerable shrine of this the most ancient diocese in Britain. It is enough here that the grand old fabric seems to have been battered by winds and storms into sympathy with its wild surroundings. To distinguish it further, from all other cathedrals, it is overlooked by the still stately skeleton of the magnificent palace built by Bishop Gower in the early fourteenth century, and flanked by the tower and walls of John of Gaunt's college of St. Mary, and always, in wild weather, within hearing of it, the Atlantic rollers are breaking on one of the most rugged coasts in Britain. A long course of cathedrals is apt to leave the ordinary traveller in a condition of mental atrophy, but no one could ever forget St. David's, though comparatively few ever see it. Wales is now an Archbishopric as it was, for all practical purposes, in days remote. Giraldus's efforts to get the pallium restored, with an eye to handling it himself, lends flavour always to his delightful pages. Henry II liked the Archdeacon personally well enough, and laughed at his jokes, but had no intention of making such a potential firebrand even bishop of St. David's, much less restoring the Welsh Primacy to that diocese for his benefit.

The French have twice landed in Pembrokeshire: once in

Owen Glyndwr's struggle against Henry IV, and again in that of Napoleon against Britain four centuries later. On the first occasion a French force of several thousand spent many months there. They besieged Pembroke Castle in vain, also that of Haverfordwest, though they burned the town. In the meantime they had penetrated as far as Worcestershire. In the Middle Ages, contrary to a common superstition as to the inviolate soil of England, this was a not infrequent thing, though I think this Pembrokeshire invasion was the most prolonged and serious of all such overseas enterprises, as they were supported by the rebel Welsh from up the country.

But the Napoleonic raid was unique. The old tale of the Welsh women in their red cloaks marching round and round a distant hill and being mistaken, to their undoing, by the invaders for the British Army, was a familiar nursery tag in my day, and is a strong local tradition. Otherwise, outside Pembrokeshire, which has never forgotten its glorious triumph, I fancy this dramatic episode is a rather overlooked incident in the Napoleonic wars. There was glory, humour, and mystery about the whole affair. I have stood upon the rocky horns of the lonely and shoreless cove, where 1500 Frenchman were landed with the loss of all their guns on February 22, 1807, and wondered, like everybody else, what on earth could have been the object of the French Government. For the frigates that brought them sailed away to be seen no more.

There are only two explanations. Firstly, an absurd delusion in France that the Welsh, like the Irish, were ripe for revolt. Secondly, that more than half the force were convicts, and that the French authorities had conceived the brilliant idea of getting these maintained at the expense of England. Perhaps this last is more of a jest at the expense of the gallant handful of local yeomanry and volunteers who mustered so rapidly at Fishguard in defence of their country. It is a fact that the 1500 Frenchmen under their American general, Tate, after two or three days of negotiations, laid down their arms unconditionally on the shore of Fishguard bay without striking a blow. Also that no British troops could have reached the spot within several days. It appears that an Irish officer of the Pembrokeshire Yeomanry was delegated to the diplomatic part of the business, and that his powers of drawing the long bow with effect were such as fully to persuade the French envoys that 20,000 British troops were within a day's march. The French behaved themselves quite well to the country people during their brief sojourn, and also as prisoners for the subsequent



years. I was once shown a bullet-hole in a grandfather's clock in a farmhouse kitchen as the sole relic of aggressive action on their part.

In conclusion, to return for a moment to the peaceful life as further evidence of what a self-contained little county was Pembrokeshire, there used to be in pre-railroad days a regular winter season in Haverfordwest for the county families as in the much larger towns of Shrewsbury, Exeter, and elsewhere. Balls, assemblies, card parties, and all the usual dissipations of the Georgian era went forward. 'Town' houses were owned or leased, and the county packs of hounds (as at Shrewsbury certainly) were taken to the little capital for a period and hunted from there. Nor in these few notes on Pembrokeshire have I had space to refer to the great abundance of prehistoric remains in the county—dolmens, ogam stones, round-huts, meini-herion, and hill camps. Its peculiar situation makes its exceptional wealth in such things almost a matter of course. Nor will it do to overlook the fact that in the Gower promontory of Glamorganshire the story of Pembrokeshire on a small scale is repeated, and that the southern half or more is entirely English, while the northern portion, as in Pembrokeshire, constitutes the 'Welsherie.' An interesting, old-world, and striking country when I knew it, but now, I am told, vulgarised by constant motor traffic from Swansea.

A. G. BRADLEY.

CHARLES THE PIGEON.

AN EPISODE FROM THE GERMAN OCCUPATION OF LILLE.

BY B. S. TOWNROE.

'I MADE up my mind I would beat the Germans, but to do so I had to keep that pigeon always by me. They had commandeered my mill at Roubaix, to which I had to go every morning, and I always carried the pigeon there wrapped up in a piece of newspaper in my inside pocket. For if I had left it at home, and it had been discovered during one of the sudden raids made at intervals by the German troops, my wife or daughter would have been seized and possibly shot.'

I heard these words spoken a few months ago in a house near Lille—a district where many men are experts in breeding and flying pigeons.

This was my introduction to a pigeon that passed through experiences between 1914 and 1918 that surpass many adventures told in fiction.

A Mr. G. W. Richardson, who left Yorkshire forty years ago when a young man, established a large textile business in Roubaix. During his leisure time he has specialised in the breeding of pigeons, and he was President of the International Congress of Homing Pigeons Federations and Societies in 1912. Judging from conversations with some of his fellow-townsmen, I judge that he largely succeeded in 'making good' in a foreign land because his competitors and others learnt that whatever he said was the truth, and that he never broke his word. The following story of a pigeon entrusted to his charge during the war will show how he kept his word, although his life was constantly in danger thereby.

At the beginning of the war he was in London on business, but obtained a special passport from Sir Edward Grey, in order that he might return without any delay to his wife and family, who were then living at Roubaix. He arrived too late to be able to say good-bye to his three sons, who had departed in order to report for service in the French Army, for they were unfortunately captured by the German troops as they were walking to Armentières, and spent the whole of the war in prison camps in Germany. No one in Lille realised at that time that the Germans were so near, and

when one of his friends, M. Felix Vanoutryve, a partner in the firm of one of the largest velvet and print manufacturers in Europe, asked him to take care of a valuable pigeon while he was away in the army, Mr. Richardson, little knowing the adventures that were to befall him in consequence, promised to do all that he could to care for the bird. This pigeon had been bought from Sir Frank Warner at the Crystal Palace in 1912 for £100, and for the purpose of this story of its exciting life is called 'Charles.' A few days later the flood of the German invasion swept over Lille and Roubaix, and Mr. Richardson, who was determined to stay by his workpeople and remain with his wife and daughter, took the name of one of his foremen, Adolphe Dupont, who had joined up in the Belgian Army. They were somewhat alike in appearance, and Mr. Richardson thought that he would at any rate be allowed his freedom, and more opportunities of assisting the Allies in various ways as a Belgian than as an Englishman.

It was 'verboden' to keep homing pigeons, and those who offended against this regulation were shot. Information, however, continuously passed into France, and the Germans decided to tighten up their regulations so as to leave no possible loophole. They issued a decree that anyone keeping any kind of pigeons would be liable to the death penalty. It must be remembered that at this time the German military authorities were extremely 'jumpy,' for they could not trace the courses of the mysterious leakage of military intelligence, and there was also a steady stream of escaped prisoners and deserters passing across the Belgian frontier into Holland. Under such circumstances, few men would have hesitated and would have wrung Charles' neck without delay. Mr. Richardson told me that he was very much tempted to do this, but he explained 'I have always made it my practice never to break my word, and here I had given my promise, and I meant to stick to it.'

The story of the pigeon's adventures is best told in Mr. Richardson's own words.

'At lunch time I always went back home. One day there was a narrow squeak. I had let the bird out in the sitting-room, where it was walking about for exercise, and I had gone into the garden for a breath of fresh air, when suddenly a German patrol marched up to the front door. They wished to search the house, for at that time a broadsheet known as *L'Oiseau de France*, containing information as to the truth about the war, was being published, and the German Higher Command were determined to find out

where it had been secretly printed. My wife saw the patrol coming, and knowing that my life depended upon the bird not being found, snatched it up off the floor, and rushed out with it into the scullery. It was washing day and the copper was full of dirty clothes waiting to be soaked. Without a moment's hesitation she thrust the bird under the clothes, and when the officer in command of the search party came into the scullery, she was found pouring water into the copper, but, of course, carefully avoiding the spot where the bird was hidden. No search was made under the clothes, and so the bird was not discovered.

' On another occasion the Germans burst into the house in the early hours of the morning when we were all asleep. They hoped by taking the household by surprise to find wireless or other kinds of signalling apparatus. As such night raids were not uncommon the pigeon always slept by my bedside. As soon as I was awakened by the noise of the Germans in the hall below I snatched up Charles and clipped a string over him so that his wings might be held tight. Pigeons, when secured in this way, make no attempt to move. I put the bird under the bedclothes, and my wife hastily wrapped a shawl over her head. While we were doing this the soldiers had entered my daughter's bedroom and were searching in her cupboards and dressing-table, thus giving us a welcome respite. The German officer then entered our bedroom. I was standing at the door, and said to him : " Hush, Madame is ill."

" What's the matter with her ? " he asked.

" We don't know," I replied, " but we think it is typhus ! "

' In a very few seconds he was out of that bedroom, calling the rest of the patrol to leave the house. So Charles and I still lived.

' On another occasion we left the bird in a sack on the landing of the first floor, when we were surprised by the forcible entrance of German soldiers. I rushed upstairs to take the bird and to place it in my pocket as usual, but to my dismay it had succeeded in wriggling out of the sack, which was empty, and was nowhere to be seen. I was called downstairs again by the German sergeant, who told me that he had orders to billet a German officer in our house, and therefore wished to inspect all our bedrooms in order to select the best one. He was extremely severe with me, for by this time someone had given me away, and therefore the authorities were aware that I was not a Belgian but an Englishman, and had inflicted various penalties upon me. I was under constant surveillance and had to report regularly to the Kommandatur. In consequence of

my bad record, the billeting party were determined to make a rigorous search, and as they went round the house, I was in terror for fear they should suddenly come face to face with Charles sitting on a piece of furniture. I tried to keep calm, and explained that there was no room available for an officer except on the second floor. The sergeant was standing at the foot of the stairs leading to the second floor, and he turned round and said to me, "Quite out of the question. No German officer ever sleeps on the second floor."

'When the scidiers marched out of the house, I went upstairs to try and recover Charles, and found him quietly promenading to and fro on the landing of the second floor, where he would have been immediately seen if the sergeant had taken five steps up the stairs.

'About that time I was suddenly arrested and taken to prison. I carried the bird with me, and thanks to the influence of friends, was released that evening. But I was told that I was regarded as being dangerous and was to be sent to a prison camp in Germany. I had also been named as one of the hostages for Roubaix. Accordingly I succeeded in passing Charles over to a friend who lived in Belgium, where the restrictions were far less harsh, as Germany considered Belgium to be part of her own country.

'I was then sent to a German prison with some of my fellow-townsmen in a cattle truck, where I spent three days and three nights. After some time in prison orders came that all the hostages were to be sent back to Roubaix. I had taken care to be very well behaved, and not to attract attention. Fortunately there had been a new commander of the camp appointed, who was unaware that I was an Englishman. He thought that I was simply one of the hostages, and despatched me back home again. On arrival one of my first tasks was to retrieve the pigeon from Belgium. I had to cross the frontier two miles away, which at that time, owing to the number of deserters, was guarded by sentries set every fifty yards. To my joy I found Charles extremely fit and well, so I started back on my return journey with the bird in my pocket. Several times I had to hide in ditches, and then decided to make a run for it. At least a dozen shots were fired at me, but I got through. That night, when I examined my hat, I found a bullet hole through it, and this hat and the pigeon were exhibited at the Crystal Palace in 1921 at the first pigeon show held after the war.

'After that I resumed my work at the mill, taking Charles there daily. One day private information reached me that the Germans

intended to visit the mill next morning in order to search for a special piece of machinery that they badly needed for one of their factories. Accordingly I arranged with a faithful foreman, who was in my confidence, for him to take the pigeon away to his own cottage for the morning. Unfortunately a search party came to his house before breakfast on that day, and he rushed back to the mill carrying the pigeon under his coat, for his wife was terrified for his life, and they were both most anxious to get Charles off their premises. He had, however, no opportunity of letting me know that on his arrival he had placed it in a basket down in one of the cellars. As I did not know this, I made a mistake that was almost fatal when I invited the German officer in command of the party searching for machinery to come down with me to the cellars where scrapped parts of my spinning and weaving machines were stored. As we walked down the steps into this basement I suddenly noticed the head of the pigeon protruding out of the basket, and although the place was gloomy, I saw that the officer had noticed Charles too.

‘Although I thought that now the game was up, and that probably I should be shot on that very afternoon, I pretended to be quite unconscious of the pigeon, and said :

“Ah, I see they have taken the special piece of machinery away from here, but I have a similar piece upstairs in one of my offices, if you will kindly come up with me.”

‘He followed me mildly, and in my office I pointed out to him a large piece of Gobelin tapestry hanging up on the panelling in my private office, and depicting old Heidelberg. Several times in the past I had found that this always interested German officers whom I wanted to keep occupied. This particular man was very excited when he saw it.

“Ah! Those were my lodgings,” he pointed out, “and that is my uncle’s house. This is indeed a beautiful piece of work. How much would it cost? Could I have it sent to Germany?”

‘I replied that this was only a sample piece, but that I could probably obtain for him a similar design after the war.

I then asked him: “Will you not do me the honour of joining in a bottle of champagne? It is the very last one that I have left. Also may I give you a cigar?”

‘The contents of my cellar I had carefully buried in the first few weeks of the war, but I found that it often facilitated matters with the enemy in occupation to keep a bottle of champagne in the

bottom drawer of my writing desk. But it was always the "last bottle," and I never found a German officer unprepared to drink the contents.

'This particular officer immediately accepted my invitation. It was then nearly midday, and he must have breakfasted about 6 A.M. It was therefore only to be expected that as I filled and refilled his glass, in time he became a little "fuzzy." After finishing the bottle, he went away, still smoking a strong cigar, and made no remark whatever about the pigeon. Being acquainted with German mentality, however, I took all precautions for his return. I therefore told my foreman to go to my garden and bring back a small bantam hen. This was placed in the basket, and Charles was removed and concealed in one of his usual hiding places. After lunch the officer returned at his leisure, accompanied by two soldiers with fixed bayonets and a gendarme. At that time the Germans had established a court for the trial of accused persons, and it was necessary for the gendarme to see the pigeon in order that he might give evidence against me. When the officer told me the purpose of his visit I pretended to be extremely surprised, and assured them that I could not understand what had happened. I then led the whole party down the steps into the cellar. The gendarme pounced on the basket as soon as he entered, looked at the bird, and then pointed out to the officer that it was only a bantam hen. The officer was still recovering from the effects of the champagne, and looking at the foreman, he said in a puzzled way :

"That's not the same bird."

"Oh, yes it is," answered my foreman defiantly.

"But why do you put a hen in a cellar?"

The foreman laughed and explained, "Because it wants to sit, and I thought it would cool off here."

The officer raised his head angrily, and then assuming that he had made a mistake in the semi-darkness, walked out of the cellar and then out of the mill, followed by his soldiers. So Charles and I were saved again.

'There are many other instances that I could tell of the way we escaped, but to cut a long story short, when after the Armistice M. Vanoutryve returned, I handed him back his hundred-pound pigeon. He thanked me somewhat casually considering the way I had risked my life for the bird through day and night for three and a half years; but he returned three hours later after he had heard from his family something of the dangers to which I had been

exposed in trying to carry out my promise, and, grasping me by the hand, said, " You damned fool ! "

Last year, while staying with Mr. Richardson, I naturally asked to see Charles. He took me to the magnificent mansion belonging to M. Vanoutryve where the Kaiser was billeted when he paid a visit to this part of the Front. In the park there is a pigeon-house built for the hundreds of pigeons belonging to M. Vanoutryve, who showed me the identical pigeon, which now lives a life of luxury. It is evidently a hardy bird, for already it has survived beyond the allotted span of life of pigeons, and if it does not succumb during the present moulting season, it is to be shown at the next Pigeon Show at the Crystal Palace. After its death the French Government have arranged for Charles to be stuffed and to be preserved in the War Museum at Paris.

### POPPIES.

' *Securos latices et longa oblivia potant.*'—VIRGIL.

FLOWER of Oblivion and Persephone,  
That growest on the bank of Lethe stream,  
Where flock the souls of dead folk in a dream  
To drink the water that from care sets free,  
Why for Remembrance have we chosen thee,  
Blossom beloved of hollow ghosts, who *seem*  
Rather than *are*, where fields Elysian gleam  
With asphodel and pale anemone ?

Red are the poppies that in Flanders blow,  
But redder was the blood wherefrom they grow.  
Then, let Remembrance be for those who fell ;  
But let all hazard of such hideous hell  
As that whereinto Youth and Hope were hurled  
Perish, a thing forgotten, from the world !

J. H. HALLARD.



*ACHMET OF ANATOLIA.*

BY WILLIAM RANSTED BERRY.

ACHMET was a fat, middle-aged Turkish peasant of exceeding mildness. He was also indolent beyond belief. The combination made him irresistible to friends and foes alike. They borrowed his piastres and never repaid him; filched his grain and the honey from his beehives; made him the scapegoat in the endless quarrels between the villagers and the Vilayet authorities.

Achmet never complained and never resisted; not even when a local brigand, a ferocious Circassian, descended one night from the mountains and burned his house over his head and carried off such of Achmet's possessions as suited him, including his scanty livestock and his young and pretty wife.

To most men, however mild in disposition, this would have been the straw to break the camel's back, but Achmet declared quite simply that doubtless his misfortunes were the will of Allah, and betook himself to live in an empty Lydian tomb-chamber hollowed out of a neighbouring hillside.

The change suited him admirably. His new home was warm in winter and cool in summer without any help from him; there was no rent and no tax to pay; and even in the rainiest of rainy seasons the roof, which consisted of about three hundred feet of solid hill, never leaked.

Achmet became milder and lazier than ever before. Happier too—with one reservation. He regretted his wife. Often he wondered hazily what had become of her; whether she sometimes brewed for Kara Nouri, her ravisher, that ambrosial coffee which was her peculiar gift; whether the chubby dimples which used to play so bewitchingly under his caressing hand still frolicked in her cheeks, or were they banished now by sorrow and by cruelty?

Sitting cross-legged of an evening on the ground at the entrance, like a burrow, of his new home Achmet would regretfully meditate upon these things while he slowly stroked his chestnut beard and puffed at his narghile. But it never occurred to him to bestir himself to rescue his wife or to lodge a complaint with the authorities.

One day there appeared in the valley a party of Giaours, infidel

Englishmen, who pitched their tents near the village and announced that they required labourers to assist them in opening the ancient tombs hidden within the surrounding hills. They offered an unheard-of wage, being mad like all foreigners. The villagers came forward to a man, all except Achmet, and the work was begun on the hillside opposite the one where was Achmet's tomb.

Though he had shied at the idea of handling a pick or a shovel, Achmet displayed great interest in the proceedings. That is to say, instead of dozing all day in the shade at the entrance of his tomb, he now sat there wide-awake watching the progress of the digging on the other side of the little valley. Every now and then he would be seized with a strange impulse to cross over for a nearer view, but he did not give way to it. The sun was too hot, and the path was too steep, he regretfully reflected; besides, he was pretty certain that the Mountain would eventually come to Mahomet. He knew very little about these mad English, but he did know that as a race they were thorough. Presently they would extend their activities to his side of the valley, and then he would be able to observe everything at close range with a minimum of exercise. Allah guide the infidels!

And Allah was kind it seems. The excavators did begin to take soundings on Achmet's hillside. Achmet was immensely pleased. So pleased was he, indeed, that he even exerted himself to the extent of inviting the Giaours to inspect his tomb and, more astonishing still, actually walked some twenty-five paces in a lateral direction across the face of the hillside to point out a spot where he declared there was a hidden tomb.

Now Achmet knew as much about the whereabouts of unrifed tombs as he did about the lost books of Livy—which was nothing at all. But he wanted to give pleasure, if he could, to these infidels who were giving pleasure to him. If it pleased them to dig holes in the ground he felt it was his duty to encourage them to set about it without delay. Besides, if there proved to be a tomb there—which Allah grant!—great would be his glory and adequate, he hoped, his reward; if there was no tomb—which Allah forbid!—well, was there a man anywhere in the world who was infallible?

All of which goes to show that Achmet was after all no fool.

Nor was this the limit of his cunning. There was yet another reason why he suggested digging at the spot he indicated. During the inspection of the tomb he lived in by the Giaours, one of them had pointed out that the roof showed signs of caving in. Achmet

said nothing, but a pained expression which appeared on his face would have betrayed to anyone more familiar with him the fact that his brain was indulging in the unaccustomed exercise of rapid thinking. If the roof of his home threatened to collapse, it must be a dangerous place to live in ; if it was dangerous, he would have to leave it ; if he left it, where could he go ? Why, into another tomb, of course ! But there were no other empty tombs within easy reach. On the other hand, these infidels asked nothing better than to find a tomb. Very well then, let them find one for him as near as possible to the one he now occupied. When they had found it, and cleared it, and left it all shipshape, he would move in—and the distance would be just twenty-five paces !

No, Achmet was no fool ; he was almost clever.

And the astonishing proof of his cleverness, in his own eyes at least, was the fact that a tomb was discovered at the exact spot he had pointed out. More than that, it proved to be a rich tomb, richer than any the Giaours had found before. Achmet's eyes goggled in his head when he saw the jewellery and the golden ornaments the Giaours garnered from the couches where the dead had lain. Of course the intrinsic value of those semi-precious stones and that thin beaten gold which made such a show was small, but Achmet was not aware of that.

The sight miraculously inspired him to do a little digging on his own account. If such treasure could be found in one tomb, he asked himself, why not in another ? Suppose he was to dig into the earthen couches and into the earthen floor of the tomb he lived in ; might he not find rich objects which the tomb-robbers of long ago had overlooked ? Objects so rich, perhaps, that he might acquire wealth over night, so to speak, without having to work for it ; wealth enough—the thought blinded him with its brilliance—to buy back his wife from Kara Nouri !

So dazzled was he by these ideas that he clean forgot to consider the physical labour his scheme would entail. Had he remembered, he never would have plucked up his courage to ask for the loan of a pick.

'What do you want it for ?' asked the Giaour whom he approached.

'To dig for gold in my tomb,' answered Achmet quite simply.

The Giaour threw back his head and laughed loud and long.

Allah have mercy on him, thought Achmet, for he is surely mad.

The news ran from mouth to mouth among the villagers who

ceased their work to lean upon their implements and rock with mirth. Achmet wanted to dig! Achmet thought there was gold in a tomb which had been opened and ransacked centuries ago! The very tomb they had all played in as children; the tomb where shepherds and every sort of person had been sheltering in bad weather time out of mind!

The hillside and all the little valley echoed with their Homeric laughter.

'No, Achmet,' said the Giaour, still chuckling, 'there is no gold there. You would only waste your time.' Then he added more soberly, 'And take my word for it, that tomb you live in is unsafe. Above all, don't dig in it, if you value that lazy life of yours. The jar of a pick would be quite enough to bring down the roof. You wouldn't care much about gold or anything else with the weight of this hill on top of you.'

Achmet turned sadly away. Gone was his dream of riches; vanished the opportunity to regain the delight of his bosom, the solace of his endless idle hours, her whom he had used to call his Little Pomegranate.

Slowly and with frequent pauses he picked his way over the uneven ground to his tomb where he squatted down disconsolately in the entrance. He felt tired, burned out by the flame of a rare enthusiasm. He closed his eyes to rest them from the yellow glare of the afternoon sun. Presently his chin dropped on his chest, and a snore, rhythmic and not unmusical, indicated that he slept.

He was awakened by a push from a rude hand that sent him sprawling. Achmet opened his eyes but remained prone upon the ground. Everything was black; he could see nothing. Merciful Allah! It had happened then, he thought. The roof of his tomb had fallen in and here he was, buried alive, in the bowels of the hill! But why was he not smashed flatter than a pancake? Why wasn't he dead?—Perhaps he was! The horror of that last thought brought him staggering to his feet. He looked wildly around him.

It was night. Down in the valley he could see the twinkling lights of the village and the pale glow from the tents of the Giaours. Thanks be to Allah, the Compassionate!

But what had awakened him so roughly? He turned and found at his elbow the sinister form of Kara Nouri.

'Ma'shallah!' exclaimed Kara Nouri contemptuously. 'Are you a man or a dormouse, O Mountain of Fat? Three times I

called to you to be answered only by your snores shaking the ground. May you one day sleep on the lid of Jehennem !'

Achmet calmly resumed his squatting posture. Yawning cavernously he rolled himself a cigarette and lit it with flint and steel.

'Robber! Ravisher!' he said conversationally, speaking mildly, in a voice utterly detached.

'What!' ejaculated Kara Nouri, stooping down in astonishment to peer into the tranquil face turned up to his.

'Robber! Ravisher!' Achmet repeated without emotion, yawning a second time and even more largely.

'By the Prophet!' cried Kara Nouri with a great laugh, 'it is Achmet, the outraged husband! What! Would you beard me then, Ground-shaker?'

Kara Nouri snapped his fingers under Achmet's nose, giving him at the same time, as he leaned forward, an excellent view of the hilts of knives and butts of pistols peeping out above the broad leather girdle at his waist.

Achmet held his peace. He did so, not because the array of lethal instruments, suggested rather than actually seen in the darkness, had intimidated him—he was too indolent and too much of a predestinarian to feel concern for himself—but because he was groping in the murky fog of his mind to account for the new emotion which was gripping him. Never before in all his life had he felt resentment against any man or any thing, yet now, suddenly, the presence of this brigand, this wife-snatcher, filled him with a fierce anger which he could feel rising within him like a strong tide. Was it because his vision of wealth had recalled to him so poignantly the charms of the Little Pomegranate, that pearl of Anatolia torn from him by the same hand now snapping its fingers under his nose? He had a sharp impulse to bite that hand.

'Robber! Ravisher!' chanted Achmet, a suspicion of feeling in his voice. 'Give me back my wife.'

Kara Nouri cast his eyes upward as though he called upon the stars as witnesses.

'Hear him!' he exclaimed mockingly. 'How he bleats! Like an old wether for her little lamb. Yes, you shall have back your wife, old doddard—when she has borne me a dozen lusty young brigands to strengthen my right arm in my old age. Ho-ho! You shall have her then—addle-pate!'

Kara Nouri spurned Achmet with his foot and spat scornfully.

Achmet contemplated the lights in the valley below him. The tents of the Giaours gave him an inspiration.

'I will buy her back from you,' he quietly remarked.

'You? Buy her back?' jeered Kara Nouri. 'Since when have you possessed anything but a hair from last year's dead camel?'

'Those infidels down there have found much gold,' answered Achmet irrelevantly, nodding towards the tents.

Kara Nouri stared at him with narrowed eyes. He glanced down at the tents, then back again at Achmet. A puzzled frown sat on his face when he abruptly squatted down beside Achmet and tapped him familiarly on the knee.

'The news reached me in the mountains,' he said ingratiatingly. 'That is why I am here. But they are too many and too well armed. Besides, the gold is no great treasure; flimsy gold-leaf, a few beads——?'

He looked hard at his companion as he spoke the last words.

Achmet clicked his tongue against the roof of his mouth and tossed back his head.

'I said "much gold,"' he declared decidedly. 'I saw it all. Coins—images—heavy necklaces—rings—bangles heavier than quoits—solid bars as thick as a child's arm——'

Achmet had not yet reached the limit of his soaring fancy when Kara Nouri cut him short.

'Ma'shallah! You saw all that? Now by my head, if you are lying to me——'

He drew one of his knives a little way from its wooden scabbard, and thrust it back with an expressive slam.

'Lie? Why should I lie?' Achmet replied indifferently, as though the matter did not greatly interest him. 'The gold was there for all the world to see. I even handled it. Some of the bars were heavier than I could lift, and so smooth and yellow! Just like fresh butter!'

The breath whistled through Kara Nouri's set teeth. His eyes glistened white in the starlight as he gripped Achmet's elbow with fingers that threatened to pierce the flesh.

'And that—all that gold lies in those tents—now?' he demanded in a harsh whisper.

'Yes,' answered Achmet, whispering too.

Kara Nouri flung aside Achmet's arm angrily.

'Then what was all your talk of buying—you, who have only seen the gold and handled it?'

Achmet passed his tongue over his dry lips. The moment had arrived to put his inspiration to the test.

'I know where there is more gold. More than the Giaours have round. Yellower gold; heavier gold.'

His statement was followed by complete silence. Achmet raised his head and detachedly considered the crescent moon floating on the dark horizon.

'You—you know that? In Allah's name, where?'

The words fairly shattered the stillness as Kara Nouri expelled them with all the force of his pent breath.

'More than enough to pay for my wife, and my goats, and my burned house,' continued Achmet musingly.

With an oath Kara Nouri sprang to his feet. The faint light from the stars glimmered on the long knife he snatched from his belt.

'Now tell me where,' he exploded hoarsely, 'or——'

Stooping quickly he pressed the point of the knife against Achmet's throat.

Achmet remained passive, his eyes fixed upon the moon.

'Was I born only yesterday?' he asked disdainfully.

'What does it matter?' exclaimed Kara Nouri. 'You can die to-night.'

'To-night, or to-morrow, or the day after, if Allah will,' said Achmet laconically. 'Who am I to grumble? Kill me if you like, and let the earth keep its gold.'

'The earth? The gold lies buried then! By Allah, tell me where! Is it here, on this hillside?'

Kara Nouri's voice trembled with emotion. The knife shook in his hand, pricking the skin of Achmet's throat.

With a peevish sigh Achmet closed his eyes and yawned.

'How can I talk with this skewer in my Adam's-apple?' he murmured testily. 'Allah rot its temper for you.'

Kara Nouri hesitated, then sheathed his knife with a baffled grunt.

'Speak, then, in Allah's name!' he muttered, adding in his beard: "before I cut out your tongue.'

'Robber! Ravisher! Tongue-cutter!' commented Achmet, tenderly rubbing his throat. 'Give me back my wife. Then will I speak.'

Kara Nouri pushed back his fez and thoughtfully scratched his shaven crown.

'Haidi! By my head I swear,' he said presently, 'I will give her back to you. Now, where is the gold?'

A scornful smile curled Achmet's lips.

'Oh, subtle mind! Oh, wily serpent!' he mocked. 'Why are you not the Grand Vizier?—Swear for a year, and still I would not speak. But give me a token, something which your men in the mountains will recognise and obey—and you shall have the gold.'

Kara Nouri appeared to think deeply. Then he fumbled in the folds of his broad girdle.

'I will write a letter telling them to deliver your wife to you,' he said, heaving a gusty sigh of resignation.

'Alas! As you know well, I cannot read,' rejoined Achmet sadly.

'What does that matter? Among my lieutenants to whom you will give the letter are some who can.'

'Truly?' asked Achmet admiringly. 'Are there those up there near the snows who can read what you write down here in the valley?' Then he added, speaking ostensibly to the moon: 'Are they magicians then, to read what Kara Nouri has written when all Turkey knows that Kara Nouri cannot write?'

For a long time there was no sound on the hillside but the chirp of crickets.

'What do you want then?' demanded Kara Nouri at last, when it became obvious that by no other means could he distract Achmet from his rapt contemplation of the moon.

'Give me the famous amulet you carry on a silver chain around your neck.'

'What! The charm that averts death! The charm that has protected me a thousand times! Never! I should be giving you my life.'

'Who knows?' replied Achmet dryly. 'But I will give you gold, much gold; gold enough for a Sultan, an Emir. And what is a paltry amulet? Is it more powerful than Allah, the All-knowing? He has appointed the hour of my death and yours, Kara Nouri. Can your amulet contend with him?'

Kara Nouri tugged at his beard with both hands as though he meant to tear it out by the roots.

'May you burn when your hour comes!' he bitterly exclaimed. 'Will nothing else content you for a token?'

'Nothing else. What else is there so well known to your men? To see it would be for them to see you—and obey me.'



Kara Nouri sprang to his feet.

'No! I will not give it you!' he blustered. 'But in two days time I will bring you your wife. I will bring her here—at night. Will you speak then?'

'Yes. And I will show you an empty hole in the ground, for you will be too late. Already the Giaours have smelt out the spot. To-morrow they intend to dig there. I heard them planning it.'

'Now Allah destroy them utterly!' shouted Kara Nouri thickly.

'Here!' With a furious wrench he snapped the light silver chain and threw the amulet at Achmet's feet. 'Take it! And now show me——'

Panting and swallowing, he towered like an ominous and inarticulate shadow above the squat figure sitting cross-legged on the ground.

Achmet leisurely stretched out one hand and picked up the amulet. Carelessly he dropped it into his wooden tobacco box which he hid away among the many folds of the voluminous sash he wore at his waist.

'You are a wise man, Kara Nouri,' he said affably, 'and perhaps a fortunate.'

Kara Nouri shuffled his feet with impatience.

Achmet continued with unruffled calmness: 'Do you know the tomb where the Giaours found their gold, just a few paces from here?'

'Yes! Yes!' panted Kara Nouri feverishly. 'Is it there I shall find——?'

'No! Son of a line of donkeys!' Achmet interrupted irascibly. 'That tomb is now as empty as your head. But it is there the villagers have left their tools. Go! Go fetch a pick and a shovel!'

For the first time he spoke with some animation.

Kara Nouri hesitated an instant, then he bounded away into the darkness.

Achmet sat as motionless as an image until he returned bearing two picks and two shovels.

'Four hands are quicker than two,' gasped Kara Nouri. 'We can both dig.'

Achmet clicked with his tongue.

'The gold is now yours. Why should I dig? Besides, I am afraid of jinn.'

'What jinn?' demanded Kara Nouri.

'The jinn in this tomb behind me where I live.'

'Afraid of ghosts!' exclaimed Kara Nouri contemptuously.

Then his eyes widened in an incredulous stare at Achmet. 'Is it in there the gold? In an empty tomb!—Liar!'

He raised one of the picks and rushed at the still figure calmly regarding him from the ground. Achmet snatched out his tobacco box and held it up to Kara Nouri with a faint smile upon his face.

'If you think I lie, take back your amulet.'

The pick hung above Achmet's head like a sword of Damocles—by a hair. But it did not fall. Kara Nouri lowered it to the ground with an angry thud.

'How wise you are, Kara Nouri,' tittered Achmet, 'and soon to be so fortunate. But there remains one thing more to do. At the back of this tomb you will find my mattress and my few poor rugs. Go! Bring them here to me.'

'Allah curse you and your few poor rugs!' shouted Kara Nouri with frantic vehemence. 'What is this child's play? Show me where to dig, or this pick shall look for treasure in your brain!'

'Ah! I see you want your amulet,' remarked Achmet proffering once again his tobacco box.

With a snarl like a wild animal's Kara Nouri buried the pick up to the haft in the soft ground close beside Achmet and plunged into the tomb. He emerged again almost immediately with an armful of rugs and bedding which he threw down at Achmet's feet.

'Now!' he growled with dangerous composure. 'Your life is ended if you do not speak.'

'Yes, now I shall speak!' exclaimed Achmet with sudden vigour. 'Go, Kara Nouri! Go into this tomb and dig—dig hard—with mighty blows—dig for solid bars of gold—and necklaces—deep under the ground where you found my mattress lying!'

At his last words Kara Nouri wrenched the pick out of the ground and rushed into the tomb with a demoniac yell.

Achmet slowly produced his tobacco box and with steady fingers began to roll a cigarette. Inside the tomb he could hear a succession of rapid and heavy thuds as the pick was plied with delirious energy.

Achmet smiled. Presently he took the amulet from his box and closely examined it as best he could in the darkness.

'My Little Pomegranate!' he murmured gently.

Suddenly the head of Kara Nouri appeared at the tomb entrance.

'Light! Bring light! I cannot see!' he gasped out, and vanished as suddenly as he had appeared.

Achmet sat stock still, his head inclined on one side, listening. The sound of furious digging redoubled within the tomb.

Achmet rolled another cigarette.

Hardly had he given it the finishing touches when a hollow rumble, enormous and terrifying, as if the hill itself was groaning in its ageless sleep, issued from the mouth of the tomb, followed by a gust of stale warm air and much fine dust. The ground shook as from an earthquake. A dreadful silence ensued.

Achmet poised his cigarette on one knee and listened intently. For many seconds he heard no sound. Then a cricket or two, bolder than the rest, took heart and chirped. Down in the valley among some poplars near a stream a nightingale resumed her song.

That was all he could hear.

Achmet lit his cigarette and smoked it to the end. Then he got to his feet with actions resembling a mired bullock's and yawned and stretched himself. Slowly he gathered up the thin mattress and the rugs at his feet. When he had them piled on his shoulder he suddenly struck his forehead a resounding blow with the palm of one hand.

'Dolt! Donkey!' he muttered to himself. 'It is twenty-five paces—long ones—to my new home and the Pomegranate's, yet I never thought to send him there with this camel load!'

He turned and crossly contemplated the black oblong which was the entrance to his old tomb. Presently he shook his head waggishly and grinned.

'Robber! Ravisher!' he called out good-humouredly. 'Do you still need a light?'

But the tomb, in traditional fashion, was silent.

*FOR ENGLAND'S SAKE AND THE CHILDREN'S.*

BY EDITH SELLERS.

ENGLISH tourists, who visit Copenhagen in summer, must sometimes be tempted to think that the Danes, as a nation, are falling behind in the race. For in working-class districts, the very districts where, in other capitals, children most do congregate, there is hardly a child to be seen. In London the whole time the County Council Schools' holidays last, East End streets are thronged with boys and girls, who use them as their playgrounds, driving their elders to their wits' end the while by the fiendish noises they make. In Copenhagen, however, it is quite otherwise. There the Municipal Schools' holidays are the quietest time in the whole summer, so far as mean streets are concerned : there is something almost uncanny indeed, in the stillness that prevails in the meanest of all the mean streets. For, no sooner are the class-room doors closed than the great fitting begins ; and the only place that is thronged with children is the State Railway Station.

On that day adult passengers must fend for themselves, must transport their baggage as best they can ; for not even a porter has a thought in his head beyond packing the holiday children into their right trains. And that is no easy matter ; for there are thousands of them ; and, were even one to go astray, there would be consternation among railway officials and a general hanging of heads. For those children are honorary passengers, the guests of the State Railway. There is no buying of tickets for them : each one has a free pass which will take him—or her—to his destination, no matter how far off it may be ; and will bring him home again in six weeks' time, or in two weeks, if he be one of the luckless minority who must return at the end of two weeks.

Copenhagen is the only capital in Europe where the great majority of the children of the poor spend six whole weeks, every summer, either in the country or at the seaside ; the only capital where practically every poor school child spends two weeks at least in the country, and within hail of the sea. There is no picking and choosing among them, so long as they are really poor ; no insisting that they must be little models of good behaviour, talents or virtues, to ensure for them a country holiday. The most

unruly and dull-witted of little street urchins is just as secure of his visit as the pattern child who carries off all the prizes. The only test applied is whether, in the opinion of his teacher or the school doctor, he is, or is not, in need of fresh air; and even that test is no longer applied when the more delicate and necessitous of the children have been provided for. Then all that is required is that the would-be holiday-maker shall be free from infectious disease, especially from tuberculosis, and shall not be abnormal. It is only for the normal children, the children who attend the Municipal Schools, that these wholesale holidays are provided. Special Welfare Committees watch over the afflicted and abnormal children, and see to it that they too have country holidays.

Now, the mere fact of all those little Copenhageners spending their summer holidays, or part of them, in the country is a piece of supreme good luck, not only for them, but also for their country; for sturdy boys and girls are a precious national asset, and country air makes for health and strength. Moreover, not only do they spend their holidays in the country, but they spend them there under almost ideal conditions. Wherever they go, they go not as mere lodgers, where they must be paid for week by week; not as boarders in institutions where there is a bell for this and a bell for that; but as guests, sure of a warm welcome as well as of good fare. Until within comparatively recent days they were all housed, summer after summer, in little homesteads or cottages, where peasant farmers or fisher-folk entertained them gladly, refusing stoutly the while to accept one penny towards the expense their guests entailed. Even now the overwhelming majority of them are still housed there every summer, and gratis.

Of the 20,611 children who, in 1925, were taken to and from their holiday homes by the State Railway—a considerable number more were taken by other means—14,992 spent the whole six weeks as the guests of farmers or fishermen; while the remaining 5,619 were installed in Holiday Camps, where their school teachers took it in turns to play the host, or hostess, to them, and see that they all had a good time.

The Danes are a very kindly race; none the less it is to their fervent patriotism, even more than their kindness, that Copenhagen owes its children's holiday system, a system of which every Dane has good reason to be proud. In the nineteenth century the Danes, as a nation, were sorely tried; disaster after disaster befell them. First came the burning of their fleet, a terrible blow, as

they had always regarded it as their one sure defence, and had pinned to it all their hopes. Then came Forty-Eight, with all its tumultuous strife, and much of their land was laid waste ; and before they had recovered from that misfortune, another befell them, the cruellest of all. The loss of Schleswig-Holstein was for them a heart-breaking matter ; for they looked on it as proof that they were a doomed race. Germany would seize all Denmark as she had seized Schleswig-Holstein, they were sure ; and there was not one among them who would not rather that their country should be swallowed up by the sea than fall under German rule.

Those days in the sixties were terrible days for the Danes, days in which they might, perhaps, have 'gone under,' had not some half-dozen staunch patriots seized the fiery cross and gone forth, as the veriest Crusaders, to rouse them from the fatal apathy into which they were falling. Mourning and lamenting while their country was in danger was unworthy of Danes, they told them, and they called upon them to rise up and save her. In Copenhagen, in other towns too, men of all classes flocked around the preachers, clamouring to learn what they could do to save her. 'Go among the peasants, rouse them, make them understand that Denmark has need of them. They are the many, they alone can save her, help them to save her, to save us all from being left without a Fatherland.'

That was the burden of what those men, young men for the most part, University students and their kind, were told to do ; and straightway they set to work to do it. And a terribly hard task it was ; for the peasants were at the end of their strength. Their *poverty and hopeless misery had told on them mentally and morally*, as well as physically ; had benumbed them, robbed them of all *initiative*. *Many of their farms were hardly worth cultivating*, so sorely had they neglected them. To make matters worse they had *forgotten, or perhaps had never known, how to farm skilfully*.

The missionaries soon realised that if the peasants were ever again to be prosperous, and prosperous they must be if Denmark were ever to be strong, they must be taught new methods of farming ; taught how to farm profitably, how to combine with their neighbours in buying what they must buy, selling what they had to sell. And, townsmen though they were, they determined to teach them, and actually did teach them, at the cost of their own careers though ; for they had, of course, to learn as well as to teach. Before very long, rural districts were alive with lecturers and teachers, who went from farm to farm, working on the land, side by side with its owners,

as they taught, stirring them up the while to take thought for their country as well as themselves. As time passed, in almost every village a Meeting House was opened, a sort of club, where men and women could meet together when their day's work was done, and talk things over. There, once a week, a debate was held, a concert, perhaps a dance, or a lecture was given by one of the missionaries on some glorious episode in Danish history.

The result was a great revival among the country folk, a revival of the old Viking spirit, Viking energy, enterprise, eagerness to learn ; and, above all, of the old Viking patriotism. Danish peasants rank to-day with the most skilful farmers in Europe, rank, too, as the most enlightened and patriotic ; and that they owe, in a very great measure, to those young townsmen, who gave up the best years of their lives to going about among them, not only teaching them how to farm, but fostering their patriotism, inspiring them with high ideals, winning their friendship the while, and with it their fervent gratitude. And their gratitude was lasting as well as fervent. Of that, those thousands of poor children who troop into the country every summer are a proof. For when, after years of toiling and moiling, the peasant farmers became prosperous, their first thought was what they could do to repay the townfolk for all they had done for them. And after much weighing of pros and cons they decided, in the early eighties, that each one of them who could, should invite a poor Copenhagen child to spend his or her summer holidays with them as their guest. They applied for help to the school teachers and school authorities, and it was given to them gladly. A Committee was formed in Copenhagen to arrange for the sending of the children ; and the State Railway joined in the work by undertaking to convey them gratis wherever they were sent.

*From the first the experiment was a great success. When the pioneer children returned home, they were found to have gained immeasurably in vigour all round : not only were they taller and stronger than when they went, but they were more active, more eager to be helpful and more handy. At school they did their work more intelligently, threw themselves into it with greater energy. They had glowing accounts to give of the delightful time they had had in their rustic cottages, of the good food, the milk, butter, and fruit, and, above all, of the wonderful kindness with which they had been treated there. And their hosts and hostesses, with but few exceptions, sent equally glowing accounts of their little guests'*

good behaviour, of the cheery fashion in which they had adapted themselves to country life and taken their places as members of the family. What was still more significant, many a peasant's wife begged that the same child she had had should be sent to her the following summer ; while some of the parents of the town children begged that the children of the peasants, with whom their own children had spent the summer holidays, should spend the Christmas holidays with them in Copenhagen, as their guests. And the invitation was in many cases accepted gladly.

While the sending of the town children into the country met with general approval, the sending of country children into the town was at first dubbed a dangerous experiment. Before long, however, there was proof, as even the veriest Jeremiah was forced to confess, that the little rustics, far from being injured by their sojourn in Copenhagen, benefited by it every whit as much as the little Copenhageners had benefited by their sojourn in the country. With the rustics the benefit was mental rather than physical, it is true ; still it was none the less real for that. Many of those who, when they arrived in Copenhagen, were dull and slow, with heads as empty as the heads of the cattle they sometimes tended, were quite alert and intelligent when they returned home. The mere fact of walking about in streets, seeing fresh faces, looking into shop windows, going to shows, perhaps even to a theatre, had brightened their wits, put new ideas into their heads, just as wandering about in green fields had put new ideas into the heads of the town children. And the behaviour of the country children was in all ways just as good as the behaviour of the town children had been. The result was year after year more and more children were invited to spend their holidays in Copenhagen, or in the country, as the case might be ; always many more, though, to go into the country than into the town. Still, even in 1925, which was a bad year owing to the great lock-out, 622 country children spent their Christmas holiday as guests in Copenhagen.

Denmark is a small country, we must not forget. Even now its population is only some 3,419,000, and in 1888 Copenhagen was little more than a village compared with London. Yet, in the summer of that year, no fewer than 8000 Copenhagen school children spent their whole six weeks' holiday as the guests of the peasant farmers and fisher-folk. And the number increased steadily up to 1916, when it amounted to 25,000. Then a falling away began, owing partly to the general unrest caused by the War, but



still more to the fact that the use of machinery and electricity was becoming general, even among peasant farmers; and that made some of them think twice, through fear of accidents, before inviting children to stay with them. Still the great majority still continue to welcome their little guests, summer after summer.

Of the many thousands of children who were sent into the country in 1925, nearly 75 per cent. were sent direct to farm-houses or fishermen's cottages, and stayed there for six weeks; while the remaining 25 per cent. stayed for two weeks or more in the Holiday Camps.

These Camps are an interesting feature of the Copenhagen holiday system, as well as a striking proof of the fervent patriotism of the Copenhagen school teachers, of their self-sacrificing devotion to their pupils. Not only did they plan these Camps to the minutest detail, organise them, raise the money wherewith to work them; but they actually did, and still do, much of the work, giving up one-third of their holidays every summer to the doing of it. For, as time passed, they realised that the peasants' hospitality, lavish though it were, would have to be supplemented, as otherwise many poor children would be left in town the whole year round, to their great detriment, to the detriment also of their country. And as no one else seemed inclined to supplement it, they decided in 1903 to try what they themselves could do towards the supplementing. They banded themselves together, and, having collected the necessary funds, they set to work with so much vigour to acquire and organise Holiday Camps, that, within a year, not only had they Camps, but their Camps were packed with holiday-making children. Since then they have year by year opened new Camps, for their venture was met with general sympathy. The Copenhagen Corporation voted them money; so did the Trades Unions; while the newspapers not only subscribed generously to their funds, but they published stirring appeals to their readers to go and do likewise. And as it was then, so is it now, only more so. In 1925 the Corporation voted them 25,000 kroners, and without a single rate-payer raising a murmur. The Trades Unions gave them 5000 kroners; while the newspapers have combined and now defray the cost of maintaining twelve Camps. Several little towns, Haslev for one, have each adopted a Camp, and defray all the expense it entails; and two or three provincial newspapers have followed their example. The Teachers Union is now the tenant or owner of so many Camps that it can, and does, entertain some 6000 children in

the course of the summer. It can entertain them rarely for more than a fortnight each, it is true; still, even a fortnight in the country, every summer, makes all the difference in life to a little street arab and his sister.

All the Camps are in the country, scattered about in different districts; and they are almost all within walking distance of the sea, so that the children can bathe. They vary in size considerably. In some there is space for only 20 visitors; in others, for 50, 60, 70, or even more. They vary in other ways too. Some of them are really camps, canvas tents; others are picturesque old farm-houses, village meeting houses, schools, or even barns. For almost any building will serve as a camp, providing it is watertight and has large windows that can be opened. Beyond providing beds, the organisers have no need to trouble about furniture, as the nearest military department may always be trusted to lend them all other actual necessaries, tables, kitchen utensils, etc.

Life in a Holiday Camp is always of the simplest, and is spent, so far as possible, in the open air, roughing it too. The day begins at 7 A.M., when the children get up, wash, dress, make their beds, and set their rooms in order. That done, they all assemble around the flagstaff, which is a marked feature of every Camp, and there they join in singing the national hymn while the national flag, the Danebrog, is solemnly run up. Breakfast follows, and at that, as at all the meals, the food is excellent alike in quality and quantity. Then, until it is time for bathing, the children are left to their own devices, to run about and learn, with a little help, how to use their fingers and their eyes, and make themselves generally useful.

After dinner, which is at midday, they rest or play quietly until 2 P.M., when they have tea, or rather milk and white bread. From 2 until 6.30 is the great time of the day, the time given up to pleasure hunting; and the teacher in charge takes good care that the hunt shall always be successful. At 6.30 there is supper; and later in the evening the whole company assembles around the flagstaff, singing while the Danebrog is lowered.

Attached to every Camp there is a teacher who acts as general manager, and is personally responsible to the inspector, who visits it from time to time, for the comfort and well-being of his—or her—guests. There are also teachers who act as caretakers, and one who does the cooking, unless a local cook can be found. If the Camp is large, there is always a paid cook, and at least one servant. All the teachers in turn spend a fortnight in one of the Camps, doing some

sort of work, striving the while to make their guests happy. They arrange pleasures of all sorts for them—walking tours, sports, picnics, concerts, etc. ; and the peasants and fisher folk around are always on the alert to give them a helping hand, by inviting the children to tea, or taking them for a sail or a drive. Any woman, who lives within walking distance of a Camp, would be looked on askance by her neighbours, were she not to do something for the holiday children before they returned home.

Although a Camp is essentially a pleasure resort, strict discipline is maintained there, and with it law and order. The rules in force are few, but they must be obeyed ; the children are allowed as much liberty as is compatible with their safety, but no more. They are treated with infinite kindness and consideration, as welcome guests in fact, and in return they are required to demean themselves as guests. Woe betide the youngster who sets rules at defiance, quarrels with his comrades, or has recourse to fists as weapons wherewith to redress grievances. If, after due warning, he persists in his evil ways—that does happen sometimes, once in a blue moon, perhaps—he soon finds himself on his way back to Copenhagen.

What the country holidays of the Copenhagen school children actually cost it is impossible to say, as the State Railway sends in no bill for their travelling expenses ; the peasants no bill for their board and lodging. And it is with the peasants, we must not forget, that nearly 75 per cent. of them stay ; and as they are with them as guests, they cost nothing at all, it seems. For, as the peasants' wives say : ' Their lodging is always there ; and as for their bit of food, why, one never misses it ! ' Practically it is only the children who go to the Camps for a fortnight of their holidays who entail any expense ; and that expense varies from camp to camp and year to year. In 1925, the full cost per head of the 47 children, in one camp, was just under 1s. 7d. a day. In a report issued by the Health Organisation of the League of Nations, 66,831 kroners, i.e. roughly £3038, is given as the total cost of entertaining 1757 children, who, in 1922, were boarded and lodged in forty different camps. In that sum the expenses of three walking parties are included, also of the 90 teachers who took care of the children, and the 55 servants who helped with the work.

No money was ever better spent, more profitably, than that spent on those Camps ; no money ever yielded a richer return. To the poor children of Copenhagen their summer holidays are a

source not only of boundless delight, but of much that is even more precious. Boys and girls alike are the better for them, the better mentally, physically, and morally. Those holidays give them the chance of learning what they would otherwise never learn; they secure for them, in fact, a sort of rough-and-ready education that renders them of more use in the world, and therefore of greater value. Nor is it they alone who benefit by their annual sojourn in the country; their fellows benefit also. For while there they draw together townsfolk and country folk, stir up kindly feelings between them that lead to life-long friendships sometimes, and even to closer ties. Many a Copenhagen young man, when in search of a wife, returns to the village where, as a boy, he has spent his holidays. Quite a fair number, indeed, return there much sooner, as soon as their schooldays are ended; some because they would rather work on the land than in a factory or shop, but many more because, while holiday-making, they have acquired a genuine and very wholesome love of the country. And in this our day, when in most lands the drift is from country to town, that love is in itself a valuable national asset. So is the physical strength of the average Copenhagen boy and girl, their vigour, practical common sense, and handiness, all of which, and much besides, they owe, in a great measure, to the weeks they spend every summer in wholesome surroundings, when at a critical and susceptible age.

I have come across many children of the poorer sort in my time, not only in Copenhagen and London, but in Berlin, Vienna, Berne, Stockholm and elsewhere. I have questioned them in their schools, talked with some of them in their homes, compared notes concerning them with their teachers. For I made it my business for some years, to try to find out, in a somewhat casual fashion, it is true, where the children of the poor are best prepared in their young days to turn their lives to good account for their fellows as well as themselves.

In several of the capitals I visited I found excellent schools, schools in which the children were well taught and given the chance of cultivating any special talent they had. Again and again I was amazed at the brilliancy of some of the scholars, at the real cleverness with which they replied to the questions I asked them. The children of Copenhagen would certainly be worsted, were it ever to come to a battle of wits between them and the children of certain Balkan States that I know. None the less, it was not in the Balkans, not even in Berlin or Berne, much as I saw there to

admire, that I found what I was seeking, but in Copenhagen. When I came to the end of my quest, I had not a doubt in my mind but that the average working-class boy and girl of Copenhagen, that is the overwhelming majority of the boys and girls there, start life, when they leave school, with a better chance than the average boy and girl of any other capital in Europe, of developing into self-respecting, self-supporting men and women, well able to make the best of things and fight the great fight successfully, enjoying themselves the while, and rendering good service to their country. So far as I can judge, they are better fitted for their work, physically and mentally, than the boys and girls of their class elsewhere; better able to turn their hands to jobs of all sorts and adapt themselves to their surroundings. They face life more cheerfully, too, are less prone to meet trouble half-way, a fact that explains, perhaps, why the average life is longer in Denmark than anywhere else excepting New Zealand. Nor is that all. Danish boys and girls are certainly more inclined than others of their sort to regard their country as something for which they must take thought. And they are as they are, Danish experts in such matters maintain, not so much because of what they are taught at school, excellent as their schools undoubtedly are, as because of what they pick up for themselves in those weeks they spend in the country every summer, roughing it more or less, learning how to be useful, and having their corners knocked off.

Now it is always well to see ourselves as others see us, and this is as Ernst Toller, the well-known dramatist, sees us, or rather sees the most important section of us, our school-going children:

'I went and stood outside a school,' he wrote, some little time ago, after a visit to London; 'and I saw the children coming out. I sought and sought for a child, but I sought in vain. All the little children were old men and women. They were little only in stature: in their eyes was all the knowledge of life. It was very sad, very depressing.'

There are in London, it is true, districts where the school children are 'little old men and women,' where they are quite uncannily old, indeed, uncannily cute too. Such districts are, however, the few, not the many. Still, in the average poor district, and it is the average that counts, the children are undoubtedly older for their years, although physically less developed, than in the average poor district in Copenhagen. The average working-class child in London is, in fact, when he leaves school, physically

inferior to the average child of his age and class in Copenhagen. Nor is that all. He is less well prepared for his work in life. He has never been taught the very things that go to make a handy man, a useful citizen; never been taught that he owes anything at all to his country. In Denmark even the children of the reddest of the Reds are taught at school, and still more while holiday making, to look on their country as something sacred; on the Danebrog as something to which reverence must be shown. In London there are schools where the scholars would as soon think of plunging into the Thames in mid winter as of doffing their caps before the Union Jack.

Now for the country's sake, as well as the children's, that is a state of things that ought surely to be changed with all possible speed. England has no use for 'little old men and women,' of the C3 sort, while of sturdy, handy boys and girls she can never have too many. And the great majority of our little East Enders might be turned into sturdy, handy boys and girls, perhaps even into staunch patriots, in time, if only they were caught early enough, and enough trouble was taken. Of that Denmark is a proof. I very much doubt whether the little Copenhageners were one whit stronger or better before they were the peasants' guests, than our little Londoners are to-day. It is their annual sojourn in the country that has brought about the change in them. Our children would soon be as sturdy as they are, could they spend six weeks in the country every summer under fair conditions. Why, could they spend there even two weeks, there would soon be a great change in them. And two weeks they certainly might spend there if only enough trouble were taken; even though six weeks may, perhaps, be past praying for.

We have, it is true, no peasant farmers to take in our little town children as guests; but we have thousands of wealthy folk who have large country houses that stand empty, excepting for caretakers, for the greater part of the year. Many thousands more who live each one in a fine house, in some health resort, all alone excepting for servants. I know a seaside town where there are whole streets in which a child is never to be seen. Now, if every one who is childless, fairly well off, and lives in the country, or at the seaside, would invite an East End school child to spend a fortnight every summer as his—or her—guest, and would see to it that the child was dealt with wisely as well as kindly, thousands of boys and girls who are now C3 would be given the chance of

becoming CI, and without anyone being the poorer. The entertainers would be the richer, indeed, as they would have the satisfaction of knowing that they were doing something patriotic as well as kindly. None the less, even to hope that there would ever be as many would-be entertainers as there are already would-be guests, would smack of heedlessness. If every poor child in London is ever to be quite secure of a fortnight's holiday in the country every summer, we must assuredly have Holiday Camps.

The Danes do not regard the Holiday Camp system as an ideal system, but only as the nearest approach to an ideal system possible in this our day. The best of all arrangements, they maintain, is the one their peasant farmers founded, nearly forty years ago. It is only because there are more poor children in Copenhagen than there are peasants in the country, able and willing to take them in, whether paid for or not, that Holiday Camps were opened. Still, although in Denmark the Camp system ranks only as second best, it is certainly better, infinitely better, than the holiday system in force in any other land I know, or have ever heard of. And Camps we might have here, if only English young men and women, of the leisured class, would do what those Danish school teachers did, already twenty-three years ago; if only they would plan, organise, and work them, for the sake of the 'uninvited' children, those who, as things are, are left to live, day in day out, the whole year round, in dark, narrow streets.

Every Camp would mean, no doubt, much hard work, and with it much trouble, anxiety and worry, a certain amount of expense too. Still, the work would be well worth doing; the money spent would be well spent. For, when once we had Camps enough, we should soon have fewer of those 'little old men and women,' who, in foreign eyes, seem so 'very sad and depressing.' We should have, too, and many more vigorous, handy boys and girls, able to make the best of life and do good work for their country, as well as themselves.

*A GIRL'S FRIENDSHIP WITH JOHN RUSKIN.*<sup>1</sup>

BY THE LATE JESSIE LEETE.

EDITED BY LEONARD HUXLEY.

CHAPTER VI.

I HAD now been a week under Kate's roof, and the day came when I was to see the Master in his own beloved home. That Monday morning was clouded by a note from Mrs. Severn telling me that owing to pressure of visitors at Brantwood she would be obliged to cut down my promised week to five days, and that I should return to the cottage on Thursday night. This was a very bitter pill, not swallowed without tears, but it had to be swallowed.

The carriage was to fetch me at five o'clock. The day was very wet and stormy, so I attired myself in the navy serge costume in which I had travelled. But when Kate came to my room to offer her services in packing, she exclaimed in dismay at my choice.

'Oh, ma'am, are you not going to wear that beautiful peacock-blue afternoon dress?'

'Why, Kate, I am sure this is much more suitable for such a day! And I shall go straight to my room and change it before the Professor sees me.'

'Oh, no, ma'am, you won't be able to do that. The Professor will come out to welcome you, and he will take you straight into his study. And I know he would *so* like that dress.'

So at the last minute I had to allow her to unpack the dress she so much admired, to satisfy her affectionate zeal.

Her prophecy proved quite correct. In spite of a heavy down-pour, Mr. Ruskin came out bare-headed to help me from the carriage.

He led me by the hand into the drawing-room, but said directly, 'No!—this is a dreary, nasty room. Come into my study.'

He led me into that most delightful of all rooms, put me into the most comfortable chair beside the fire, sat down himself and looked at me for a minute without speaking.

Then he gently lifted his hand, and said in his slow, sweet voice, 'What a lovely gown you have on, Jessie! What an exquisite shade of blue!'

<sup>1</sup> Copyright in the United States of America, by Leonard Huxley, 1927.



So Kate's choice of my attire proved correct, and I felt grateful to her. I told him that I had put off my mourning for a brother-in-law because I felt sure he would not like it.

'I object to mourning on principle,' he answered. 'The very essence of it is that you mean to put it off some day to show that you are consoled. Whereas a really noble grief is never put away, but abides with you for life. At my father's death I wanted to put the servants into dark blue instead of black, but I had to give way to my mother's wishes and bear the horrid black.'

Once during this first fire-side talk, he caught me looking earnestly at his face.

'Well, Jessie?' he asked with an interrogative smile.

I tried to get out of answering, but he insisted on knowing my thoughts.

'I was only wondering why none of the photographs I have seen are the least bit like you,' I blurted out at last.

This pleased him greatly.

'I am so glad you think so, for I have always hoped they were not really like me, but people will say they are very good! And it is very humiliating! They always seem to me just caricatures of my face!' And he added plaintively, 'The sun seems to have a spite against me—and I'm sure I don't know why! I have always spoken very respectfully of him!'

I wish it were possible to convey any adequate idea of the exquisite voice which lent an unforgettable charm to even the lightest speech—so musical that its memory rings in my ears to-day, 'forty years on.'

Here I will give from my journal a little description of Brantwood as it was in those days.

'It is a long, low, white house, facing the lake, and sheltered at the back by steep wooded hills. There is a narrow strip of sloping garden, and a little road between the house and the water's edge. It stands some little height above the lake, and behind it rises abruptly the rocky hill covered with trees and shrubs which gives the house its name—"Brant" being Cumberland for "steep." In the wood there are many paths and flights of steps, and a little stream which comes tumbling down from the moor above. Over this stream the Master has built with his own hands an arched stone bridge, built without mortar, of which he is frankly proud. He showed it to me during our first walk in the wood. "The only help I had in building it was a little assistance from Baxter in

lifting some stones too heavy for my unaided strength. And it will last for generations!" It was really a very pretty little bridge, planted with ferns and woodland plants in the crevices.

'Near the house is a small level plot of grass which is sacred to the Master, and never invaded by gardening hands. Here he walks up and down in the sunshine when he wishes to be undisturbed, "and to think out something particularly nice!"

'Above this little wood there is a wide stretch of moorland whose bracken and heather offer a feast of rich colour to the eye as one issues from the sombre woodland.

'The wild strawberry grows freely in the wood and is a great favourite with the Master. He called my attention to one plant which had thrown its runners right across the path. "So confiding of it. I do hope no one will be so cruel as to tread on it!"

'In the square entrance-hall of the house there hung some large and very fine cartoons by Burne-Jones. The drawing-room gave me a great shock of surprise. We were then at the height of the "æsthetic" craze—the "greenery-gallery, Grosvenor Gallery" days, and I had pictured to myself an ultra-"artistic" room, all sage green, peacock blue, and old gold, with Morris papers and hangings, and so forth. In place of which I found a typical Early Victorian room—old-fashioned, but not antique—in fact, just such a room as might have been found in the house of any wealthy couple of the upper middle class, fifty years before. And that was exactly what it was, for nothing had been altered since the days of the elder Ruskins. Had they returned to life, they would have felt absolutely at home in that drawing-room at Brantwood.

'The chief additions they would have noticed were the wonderful Turners adorning the walls. These were all water-colours, and were protected from injury by sunshine by light wooden frames across which was stretched dark-blue glazed calico. All the drawings were framed to the same size, so that any frame would fit any picture. These coverings were removed at sundown, and in the Master's little bedroom, where many of the most exquisite hung, many candles were lighted when the room was prepared for the night, so that he might enjoy his treasures while dressing and undressing. Visitors were at full liberty to uncover any of the drawing-room pictures if they wished to examine them, but the covers must be replaced immediately you had finished looking at any of them, under penalties too dreadful to be faced!

'The study was the room which faithfully reflected the tastes

and character of the Master. It was a perfectly delightful apartment, but without a shadow of straining after effect. A long, low room, made by throwing two rooms together—books everywhere, the walls lined with library shelves, stands for portfolios, pictures and drawings on every side, cabinets full of minerals, tiers of drawers filled with sketches and engravings, a few comfortable chairs, and last though by no means least a small octagonal table by the fireplace.

'I should think no famous author ever did his literary work with so little paraphernalia as did Mr. Ruskin. This small table served not only as his writing desk, but also served for the frugal meals which he took alone in the study when not inclined for society. His breakfast was always laid on it and also his afternoon tea. There was not much to be removed in order to "lay the cloth," for a large sheet of blotting-paper laid flat on the table and a pile of foolscap were, with a small inkstand, all that was needed when writing. There was not so much as a penwiper to be seen. One day I said that I should make him one. He replied with comic solemnity, "Jessie—there is no penwiper to equal the left-hand coat-tail"!

'It was a genuine work-room, with a pleasant amount of tidy untidiness—books on chairs waiting to find their homes on the shelves, pictures leaning against the walls waiting till he should make up his mind where to hang them, and parcels of mineral specimens waiting to be disposed of in the cabinets.

'Three large windows down one side, with deep window-seats, gave perfect views over the lake and the hills.'

It was in this charming study that most of the hours of my stay at Brantwood were passed.

The first evening when bidding us good-night, the Master asked me whether I liked to rise early and at what hour I generally came down. When I answered that in summer I came down about seven, Mrs. Severn exclaimed in dismay:

'Oh, my dear lady, don't do anything so awful in this house, I pray you! You wouldn't find a place fit to sit down in before half-past nine at the earliest!'

'Yes, Joanie,' said the Professor, 'she would! My study is always ready long before that. Would half-past six be too early for you to be called? No? And do you like coffee? Yes? Then I shall send you a cup of coffee at that time, and you will find a good fire in my study whenever you are ready to come down.'

And with a parting glance at one or two of the Turners, Mr. Ruskin left us. Mrs. Severn was quite dismayed at this arrangement.

'But this is contrary to all rules and regulations!' she exclaimed as soon as the door was closed. The study has always been sacred to the Master alone in the early morning! Nobody is ever allowed to be with him then.' But here Mr. Severn interfered on my behalf. 'Miss L. is the Professor's visitor, not yours, Joan! She shall do just what he wants.'

So on my giving a solemn promise that I would neither talk myself nor let the Master do so, Mrs. Severn gave way gracefully.

I was down first next morning and found a housemaid busy arranging the bright fire.

'I have to be very careful, ma'am,' she explained, 'for the Master likes the room warm but the fire only just large enough to make it so. He says that getting the coal is such hard, dangerous work we must never waste a bit. Nothing makes him so vexed as to see a fire larger than is really needed.'

In a few minutes the Master came in, and after the morning greetings said 'Now you will have to amuse yourself till breakfast-time, Jessie, for I must be busy. Here are two things for you to look at—an illuminated thirteenth-century Missal, and "Woodstock."'

We sat down by the fire, on either side of his little table. After examining the lovely Missal for some time, I took up the 'Woodstock' and to my surprise and delight I found it was Scott's original MS. The writing was beautifully clear and the corrections and interpolations very few. The Master broke silence for a minute to call my attention to a particular page—each page was dated.

'When he wrote that page Scott believed himself a wealthy man. When he wrote the following page next day, he knew himself to be a ruined man. Can you find a trace of it in that clear, careful writing?'

And there was none. No more corrections than before—not a tremor in the script.

Each morning of my brief visit I was privileged in the same manner. Sometimes Mr. Ruskin would pass over to me the sheet of foolscap he had just finished writing and tell me to see if any correction were needed. Sometimes he would give me some proof-reading to do, telling me to pay particular attention to the punctuation, as 'stops always bothered him so.'

At twelve o'clock he put away his writing and went out for a walk if it were fine, and if not to chop up firewood for the house.

The two young girls, 'Rosie,' 'Peggie,' and I were allowed to accompany him then, and also in his afternoon walk or boating on the lake.

More than one afternoon he took us all three to tea at the Waterhead Hotel, the recently widowed proprietress of which was an old friend of his. 'I like her to have a nice big bill to send me at the quarter's end,' he explained one day. So we feasted gaily on buttered toast, raspberry jam and real home-made cakes. None of the hotel visitors got a taste of the raspberry jam; the whole season's making was religiously put away for 'the Professor' and the visitors he brought.

I cannot remember now how the subject was brought up, but I recall an interesting conversation at one of the Waterhead teas. I think it was mainly addressed to 'Rosie,' and it was about marriage.

'Remember this: there comes a time in every married life when one partner or the other is tempted to believe that some other person would have been a more congenial mate. There is only one course to pursue if two, or perhaps three, lives are not to be wrecked. You must resolutely turn your thoughts away from the idea. You must deliberately, and with the whole might of your soul, resolve to think only of the good points and the virtues of the mate you have chosen, and of the weak points in the character of the one you are tempted to prefer. It may be a hard struggle for a time, but in the end you will win your way to safe anchorage again. Never forget this, any of you.'

In one of our walks he stopped to gaze lovingly at a violet nestling in a bed of moss by the roadside.

'How marvellously one's capacity for assimilating beauty varies! There are days when a roadside violet holds more delight in its beauty than the soul can contain—and there are other days when the whole majesty of the Alps will not suffice to fill the craving for beauty in the human heart.'

One day he mentioned something which Turner had said to him once. 'Peggy' opened her eyes in astonishment. 'Did you know Turner?' she asked.

'I knew Turner, Peggy my dear, as well as a young, foolish, conceited man *could* know an old, wise, and modest man.'

Sometimes the Master dined with the family and sometimes alone in his study. This was when he thought there would be too much noise and talking for him. But after dinner he always joined his guests and the Severns in the drawing-room for an hour or two.

If he felt so inclined he would offer to read to us. And then we had a treat indeed! I have never heard reading to approach his in beauty. The voice, naturally one of rare charm, was modulated and inflected in harmony with his subject with the skill of a great artist. I had the great good fortune to hear him on several evenings. He read us several chapters from Scott's 'Monastery' for one thing, and I well remember how vainly he struggled with the letter R in the verses beginning 'Merrily swim we the moon shines bright.' No effort could prevent its becoming 'mewwily,' but it only added a piquancy to the charm of that lovely voice.

Another night he read us the whole of the story of 'Hansli,' which he had translated for 'Fors.' There were several interpolations of his own, and when we came to one of these Mrs. Severn, sitting on the hearthrug against her husband's knee, would whisper in a stage aside—'Arthur! Arthur! are you listening? This is a bit of Ruskin's own! and I do so love Ruskin, don't you?' The Master would shake his head at her with a loving smile. 'Joanie! Joanie! will you *never* grow up?'—but he had to stop reading until he had finished laughing, every time.

So the five happy days flew by and the sad Thursday came when my room was needed for another guest, and I must return to Kate's little house. But the Master softened the parting by promising to come to tea with me the next day and by telling me I should often be summoned to Brantwood for a few hours with him.

Alas! the next day brought a disappointment, for a number of people called on him and detained him so late that he was unable to fulfil his promise of coming to tea with me.

The following day I had tea at the Waterhead Hotel with the Severn children and their pretty, nice young governess. They were all staying in the hotel because their rooms in the Lodge at Brantwood were needed for visitors.

One day the young barrister, Mr. W., and the other 'boy,' Dr. D., came to tea with me at Kate's and we had a gay time. Mr. W. takes far more liberties with the Master than anyone else would dare to do. I remember the latter complaining to me one day that 'Aleck' had made him put three whole sheets in the fire that morning.

Mr. W. told me one day how he first gained the Master's affection, and it was a very delightful tale as he told it.

'I'm almost the only person who dares to contradict the Professor, or to find fault with him, and that is the real reason of

his fondness for me. I always tell him *exactly* what I think without fear or favour. That was how I first won his notice. One day he was showing some Oxford men—myself among them—a drawing he had just made of an angel. They all went into raptures over it. When it came to me I only said 'What made you draw one wing so much better than the other?' It was the first thing that struck me, so I said it. And the Professor was delighted. 'Because I was tired and lazy and impatient. I did the first wing as well as I possibly could and then did the other anyhow because I was in a hurry to finish it. But you are the first person who has noticed it or at least spoken of it.'

Early in the following week Mr. and Mrs. Severn left home to pay a visit to friends. And twice at least during that week I had the great pleasure of dining at Brantwood with the little party there assembled. A carriage was sent to fetch me and take me back at night. It was a long and hilly drive, but had it been four times as long the evenings would have more than repaid it. We were quite a small party—Rosie (the Sylphide of the letters) and I were the only ladies. Three of the Master's old Oxford pupils and present favourites, Mr. W., Dr. D., and Mr. C. were the others. I went in to dinner on the Master's arm each time; he took the head of the table and was the most genial and delightful host imaginable. He had not dined with us during my five days in the previous week, so I had not till then seen him act in that capacity.

I remember that on the first night the Master turned to his personal attendant, Baxter, and said, smiling at me:

'Now, Baxter, this is a festive occasion you know. It is the first time this lady has dined with me, so I think you must give us a little champagne in her honour.'

He sipped one glass of the champagne with much apparent enjoyment, but put his hand peremptorily over his glass when Baxter attempted to refill it.

When the carriage was announced for me at eleven o'clock, Mr. Ruskin said, as he bade me good-night, 'And if I send the carriage again for you to-morrow night, Jessie, do you think you would come again?'

At the next night's dinner the talk turned on the new æsthetic school and the Master said:

'I can't quite make out what is meant by the term. If they mean that they are all followers of Burne-Jones, and mean to be led and taught by him, then they are on the right road and may get and do much good. But if they mean that they are each going

to set up for Burne-Jones's themselves—and try and rival and outdo him—then it is all a pernicious blunder.'

Mr. C., who is an intimate friend of Burne-Jones, here remarked to Mr. Ruskin that that great artist felt a little sore at the Master's failing to speak more openly and publicly as to the high honour he held him in.

'But, my dear boy,' exclaimed the Master, 'Burne-Jones is much too far above me to want any aid from my words! I'm a mere dictionary maker while he is a Heaven-sent poet! I haven't a spark of imagination in me, while he is nothing else. I can never see one iota beyond what is actually before my eyes. Whatever I can see, a telescope or a field-glass could see. Nothing I ever wrote or painted would equal a square foot of one of Burne-Jones's pictures.'

'Well, all I know is that he told me not a fortnight ago that he owed everything he was, or could do, to you.'

'Oh! that's nonsense! I may have taught him a little years ago perhaps, but he has been beyond and above me for ages now, and I am only too thankful to get a chance of learning from him whenever I can. The only quarrel I have with Burne-Jones is that he likes girls with green and grey faces, and I like them with pink and white faces. And old gentlemen's faces, too, ought to be red, like a rosy-cheeked apple—not paper or tallow coloured, like this!'—smiling at Rosie and me, as he touched his own pale cheek.

We enjoyed more reading aloud on these evenings. Over some bits from Hood's *Life* the Master laughed till he cried and his reading made us do the same.

These delightful evenings marked the zenith of my happiness in those memorable three weeks at Coniston. They were not to be my last, however. The dear Master had already issued a royally gracious 'Command' to return there at Christmas—'for the whole of the Christmas holidays, remember, Jessie.'

But both Mr. Severn and Mr. W. had most kindly given me gentle warnings that all those who came into intimate relations with the 'Professor,' since his sad illnesses, must prepare themselves for sudden inexplicable fluctuations in his favour towards them, and for startling rebuffs at times, and they had begged me not to take these things too much to heart when my turn should come.

The sequel proved the wisdom and kindness of their advice. The next letter from him, received at Kate's only two or three days after these perfect evenings, came on me like a clap of thunder out



of a clear blue sky, and nearly broke my heart in spite of their friendly warnings. Of course the fact that the main accusation it contained was wholly without foundation, ought to have told me that the overtaxed brain was once more on the point of breaking down, and had I known him better I should have realised this and been less overcome with grief and shame.

I have hesitated long before transcribing this letter, but without it much that follows would be meaningless. So I have decided to give it, heavy as is the blow to my pride, and that after forty years!

The 'Ulric' mentioned in it was a German story of Swiss peasant life which he had asked me to translate for 'Fors.'

BRANTWOOD,  
Monday.

DEAR JESSIE,—I send you the paper and the Frederic, and I hope you will have had some pleasure in the hills to-day. I was surprised to see, when you were here, how little you had really understood that I wanted you to come to SEE the hills and Brantwood and me—but not at all to talk! You had not, I found, the least idea how much as a rule I dislike talking—how necessary it is for me that my friends should be able to amuse themselves without me. Think—for instance—in going over the lake yesterday—when my proper state would have been merely to watch the thunder-clouds and the wide waters—and let my thoughts go where they chose—what a sudden crash into the brain it is to be asked such a question as 'whether I would tell children how much I believed the Bible!'

I tell you this that you may not think me unkind in not allowing you to come whenever you like. I never do that with *anybody*—and I'm sadly afraid that in general those who want most of me see least, because I find the sense of responsibility too heavy.—You must be content to learn from my books, not from me.

But I *shall* be more accessible, much, at Christmas—for the summer is always—rightly—a time of rest for me—and it is more liable also to casual interruption.

Ever affectly yours,

J. RUSKIN.

Now, I had never asked him such a question about the Bible, either on the lake or anywhere else. Of that I was perfectly certain. The nearest approach to it was as follows:

On the preceding day I had been fetched early to lunch at Brantwood, and I remembered that as I sat quietly talking with the Master before lunch, the conversation turned on the Bible, and

I told him that the father of my two pupils had requested me not to enter with them on the question of Bible Inspiration. 'Let them read and study the Bible as they do any other book, without prejudice. I wish their minds left free from any bias on the matter, so that when they are of an age to use their own judgment, they may do so untrammelled by any inculcated dogmas.'

Very likely I may have asked Mr. Ruskin how far he agreed with this attitude, but if I did so it was in a quiet Sunday morning talk by the study fire, not in the middle of the lake!

He rowed me about for some time that afternoon in his own particular boat, the *Lily of Brantwood*, and the talk turned mainly on the difference in colour between the Highland lochs and streams with their cairngorm hues, and the colder grey slate colour of the Cumberland waters.

And as to my resenting not being allowed to go to Brantwood except when summoned—well, I should just as soon have thought of resenting not being allowed to present myself at Buckingham Palace 'whenever I liked.'

But I did not dare to attempt any denial or justification. I just wrote the humblest and most contrite letter of apology that I could compass, begging him to forgive my thoughtless chattering on the ground of the wild excitement and joy into which the wonderful visit had thrown me. I told him I knew I had not been myself all the time, but had felt as if I were living in Fairyland. Next day brought the reply, and the old signature told me that my apology had been accepted.

So I worked away diligently at the translation from the German with all my might. I sent him the first chapter when ready and his next note gave further proof of forgiveness.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON,  
Aug. 23rd, '81.

MY DEAR JESSIE,—I knew quite well that you were not yourself—and allowed for *that*; only I wanted you, even out of yourself, to feel more distinctly the reasons which prevented *me* from being all that I could have been to you. I could easily have put you into heart and comfort by taking up anything with you seriously that interested us both,—but the late summer is just the time of all the year when I am most languid,—and wholly dependent on open air and play. When you come at Christmas I shall *D.V.* be actively busy with the hoarfrost and icicles, and you will share the interest and be at ease.

You shall come before it comes to good-bye—and then I'll come to say good-bye.

Meantime think only of your Carlyle and Ulric.  
Ever your loving

J. R.

BRANTWOOD,  
Aug. 24th, 1881.

MY DEAR JESSIE,—The Ulric seems excellently done—and the quantity—marvellous—you will find, to do it as well as you *can* do it—it must be slower!

If I order the carriage for you at Kate's at  $\frac{1}{2}$ -past six, can you come and dine to-day, and hear some reading in the evening, and the carriage shall be put up here and take you home at  $\frac{1}{2}$ -past ten?

Ever affectly yours

J. R.

The time of my departure from Coniston was now close at hand, for although Mr. Ruskin, in spite of my chatterbox propensities, most kindly pressed me to remain at Kate's as long as possible, I had to be in London by a fixed date to attend the marriage of my only brother. I was to leave early on the Monday morning, and the Master had promised to come to tea with me on the last afternoon. He was, however, unavoidably detained, but a tiny note reached me about tea-time.

Aug. 28th, 1881,  
BRANTWOOD,  
Sunday.

DEAR JESSIE,—I'm so very sorry I couldn't come—but I can't do the twentieth part of the things I want to—Don't have tea for me—but if its fair I'll try to come after tea this afternoon—just for a little chat—I won't say good-bye—I'm sure we can talk by letter just as well as words,

ever affectly yours

J. R.

About six o'clock I saw him come up the garden path accompanied by 'Sylphide,' whom he promptly sent to the kitchen to chat with Kate. He came into my little parlour and sat down by the fire—for the evenings were chilly though it was August. He sat in the same low rocking chair as on his memorable first visit, and leaned back looking very tired.

And then for nearly an hour he talked as only he could talk—mainly about myself, my prospects, the conditions and conduct of

my life, and all so kindly, tenderly, and sympathetically that the very words seem graven on my heart. I am thankful that I wrote down much of what he said in my journal that night, for I would not willingly forget any of it. Very strongly he impressed on me that the chief part of all true happiness for all noble people lay in their power of *giving* sympathy, not in any sympathy they ever received themselves.

'For myself,' he went on, 'you know my life now, and you know that for me all possibility of personal joy is over for ever. And yet I am able to find the truest and deepest happiness in seeing those around me happy. Just before I started to come here this afternoon I went to the Lodge to see Joan presiding over the nursery tea-table. It is the baby's birthday, and Joanie and all of them looked so happy and peaceful and merry together that my heart was filled with the most exquisite pleasure in looking at them, and in knowing that to some extent they owed their happiness to me. Try to look at life in the same way. If you are denied great joys of your own, make joys for yourself by adding to the happiness of others. And then—you are still young—it is not likely that your life will always be what it is now. All sorts of possibilities lie before you. Have faith in the future. But make the present happy while waiting. I myself will do all in my power to give you happiness. I hope you will often be here with us again. And I shall send you whatever I write, and if you want books at any time, you have only to write and tell me, and I will either lend or give them to you. Are there any you want now? Have you Wordsworth?'

I showed him a miniature copy in two volumes which I had brought with me. He examined it, and said it would do very nicely for me. As he gave it back, he took my hand and held it for a minute in a kind fatherly way, while he talked on about books. Seeing how near I was to tears at the parting, he smiled. 'What ever girls can find to like in a cross old man like me I can never understand!' Then he added more seriously, 'It certainly has been one of the greatest happinesses of my life that so many good women have found in me something to like, and I hope I am as thankful for it as I ought to be.'

Trying to cheer me he spoke several times about the promised Christmas visit, and how quickly the time would pass before I saw them all again. Almost his last words were—'Remember, Jessie, you are promised to me for the whole of the Christmas holidays! Don't go making any other arrangements!'

I tried to stammer out poor thanks for all his goodness to me, but he hurried off in the midst of my blundering attempt. At the door of the room he turned round to say, rather sadly :

'I wish I could have given you more pleasure, my dear, but I am a poor old dry stick now! Good-bye!'

And he closed the door gently and went to seek Sylphide in the kitchen. A minute later I saw him walk down the path with her and all was over.

Soon afterwards Kate Raven came into the room—to find me broken down in a storm of weeping which I could no longer repress.

'Oh, ma'am, what is the matter?' she exclaimed.

'I have said good-bye to the Master,' I gasped out between sobs, 'and I shall never see him again!'

'Oh, don't say that, ma'am! He's just been telling me that you will be with us again for Christmas!'

'No, Kate. He thinks so, but I know that I have heard him talk for the last time. Something tells me so, and I know that the warning is a true one.'

Nothing she could urge could shake the woeful premonition—a true one, as events proved.

Next morning I left for London, carrying back into the workaday prosaic world a wealth of lovely memories and also a firm conviction that so precious an experience could never be repeated. It was too great a happiness for any one mortal to expect from Fate a second time.

## CHAPTER VII.

THREE days later I received the following letter :

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON,  
(Sept. 1, 1881.)

MY DEAR LITTLE JESSIE,—I feel every word you say about my kindness as in reality a reproach—for indeed I was very unkind to you—only I thought myself really treating you with more honour by showing you exactly what I was, and how you could—and how you could not help me—than if I had set myself to make you as happy as I could. You will not find that *any* sylph can make me forget you and I trust that your next visit will be every way pleasanter to you. Meantime I shall have little work to give you, because I am bound to take as little as I can for myself,—but I am sure of your power and will—and shall send you many a proof when they are coming again here.

We all send you true and loving remembrances. Joan has a charming baby present to thank you for, but lets me do it to-day, for she is going to the sea with the children and has more to do than she's able for. Forgive the shortness of mine—it is not coldness—and believe me ever

gratefully and affectly yours

J. RUSKIN.

Alas! the brain excitement of which I had had a warning during my Brantwood visit, returned in the course of the autumn, and for some long time after this letters were few and far between and not always pleasant to receive when they did come. I wrote seldom and very cautiously, but even so did not always escape sharp rebuke.

But I can honestly say that never for a single hour did the writer cease to be to me the honoured Master, who had wrecked his own health in the lifelong struggle to warn and uplift his countrymen—often in the face of bitter opposition and cruel ridicule. I treasured every word of kindness and strove to forget the rest, well knowing how foreign to his own sweet nature was such passing irritability.

BRANTWOOD,  
Nov. 9th, 1881.

MY DEAR JESSIE,—You know you were in a bad way before when I called you gushing—you must take care next that I don't call you fussing, which is much worse. I am entirely busy—very cross with everything and nearly everybody—(not to say—soul,) whether of friends or neighbours, and always utterly jaded and wretched by the time my postbag is finished for the day, though I write now only what is absolutely essential.

You have 'forfeited' no kindness—but this is a quite general fact concerning me that as long as people are content to like my books, I am very happy with them,—but if they insist on liking me too—they nearly always repent it!

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

As Christmas drew near, and it was obvious that there was no likelihood of my promised Brantwood visit being possible, I wrote to tell Mr. Ruskin that I had a pressing invitation to spend the holidays with some devoted adherents of his economic teaching, living with their brother in a Yorkshire farmhouse. I had never seen these young ladies, but we had been mutual friends and they

A GIRL'S FRIENDSHIP WITH JOHN RUSKIN. 247

had opened a correspondence with me some time previously. I wrote to tell him where he had met my new friends, and had a speedy reply. Also I said that I should accept their invitation.

BRANTWOOD,  
22nd November, '81.

MY DEAR JESSIE,—I have been so ill these last two months in various ways that I am not fit for anything now—and mean, this Christmas, only and altogether to rest—in common prudence lest the brain excitement should come on again in spring. But I should like you to go to those Yorkshire girls—I can't think who they can be, and I want sadly that the people who believe what I say should know and help each other, now—as they must one day—I find my life in some ways a hindrance to my usefulness! but don't mean to throw it away yet if I can hold on a little.

Ever your affectionate  
J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD,  
(Nov. 25th, 1881.)

MY DEAR LITTLE JESSIE,—I'm very glad to hear of those girls again—I begged a drawing of roses from one, which I much value—and I was greatly interested in the other—only I *did* think she must lead her sister an awful life of it!

I should most delightedly send you a Christmas present of all expenses needful for your visit to them.

Ever your affectionate  
J. R.

BRANTWOOD,  
8th Dec., '81.

MY DEAR LITTLE JESSIE,—Yes,—for a Lord's speech that is very good—and up to his best lights—and all the chat in your last letter was extremely interesting, and here's your little Christmas present, and I hope it will help you variously to enjoy yourself, and I am ever

Your affectionate and grateful,  
J. RUSKIN.

Mr. Ruskin must have been at this time sufficiently recovered to attempt lecturing again, for, seeing in the papers that he was to deliver a lecture in London, I, not being able to obtain a seat, all tickets being allotted, wrote asking him to give me an order of admission. I promised not to make any attempt to speak to him, but said I should be satisfied if I could only see him again.

The 'Scotch clergyman' story was told me by the late George

Murray, sometime Keeper of Botany at the British Museum of Natural History. He stoutly averred that he heard the prayer himself in a remote Highland church. But—well, George Murray liked a good story and told many.

It was a terribly wet season in the Highlands and the harvest was in great peril. So, in the 'lang prayer' the minister pleaded fervently for a cessation of the rain which was even then descending in torrents. Joy! The rain suddenly ceased and a gleam of sunshine burst forth. So the petition was changed into an equally fervent thanksgiving for this speedy answer to prayer. Alas! before the prayer concluded, again the heavens opened and the floods descended. It was too much for the poor minister, and he burst forth angrily:

'Ay! Rain on, Lord! and spile a' the puir bodies' craps!  
An' muckle glory may Ye hae o' Yer handiwork!'

No address.

Postmark: London, S.E. Feb. 24, 1882.

MY DEAR JESSIE,—That last was a deeply interesting letter of yours, about the Scotch clergyman's prayer. How often have I not felt the same!

The last two pages, about wanting 'only to see' your master were rather a waste of *my* eyes—I wish that you girls had just enough sense to be happy that I'm still alive—and not to tease me when I don't want you,

Ever your affect.

J. R.

I cannot remember that I ventured to show any 'pique' at this rather crushing snub—except perhaps by not replying with the usual promptness, for there is a considerable gap between its date and that of the next letter. Unfortunately the stories alluded to at its beginning have quite escaped my memory, but they all, no doubt, bore on some economic question.

No address.

8th May, '82.

MY DEAR! JESSIE,—I was heartily glad of your letter and all its stories—I go a little with the old woman of Dartmouth! but your farming-economy—and St. Elizabeth are all precious to me.

Only that Economy teaching is really too monstrous—after the publicity of debate these wretches—Fawcett, etc.—have had, and have avoided—as skulkingly as common pickpockets.

I was also glad to see your writing again—because you were



quite unjustifiably piqued at my last letter. There is a wide difference between gathering useful information for me—and wanting seats to 'see' me when I've not the least wish to be seen.

The various worry of London in that kind threw me at last into another fit of delirium which lasted a month—and left me as weak as a stalk of grass. I've had a month of quiet since, and am coming fairly into working power again, but with redoubled and retrebled sense of the need for caution in my own special lines of earnest thought—and of surrender of half my hopes of usefulness in other directions—Glad enough to be still able to do anything,

and ever affectionately yours

J. RUSKIN.

A daily paper printed a report that Brantwood was about to be sold and I wrote to ask whether this were true. 'Mr. M.' was the father of my two girl pupils, and he took a mischievous delight in constantly teasing me about what he called 'Ruskin's non-sensical rubbish.' He was himself a financier and capitalist, and the economical doctrines advanced in 'Fors' and elsewhere afforded him great amusement.

(LONDON, S.E.)

7th June, '82.

MY DEAR JESSIE,—I am very glad to hear of the renewed correspondence with Miss C.—(but mind not to spell it 'dance' another time) and you certainly need not disturb yourself about Brantwood which—instead of being sold—is being enlarged (the house)—and planted (the grounds) as no one ever thought to see them. I send you my last pamphlet about St. George's work, giving account of the agricultural proceedings upon my moor, and I do not suppose Mr. M.'s teasing you will do you the least harm—but all the advice I can give you is—not to be teased.

I had a pleasant chat at lunch to-day with the two sons of the dealer who sold me that picture—and bought it again—for five times the sum, and over. The Paris dealer who bid against them was one of the party—and invited me to make a tour of private collections with him. The English dealer, Mr. W—, is very proud of having beaten him.

I have nothing very cheerful to tell you of my health—except that I can still do a little bit of work every day, not worse people say, than I used to do. But I have little joy in it—the bits come to so small a sum at the year's end, and a smaller, every year.

By the way if Mr. M. has any real wish to know what usury is,

I send you a *Pall Mall Gazette* with an article by Frederic Harrison on the Missionary functions of Ironclads in Egypt—instructive enough.

Ever affly yours

J. R.

There were so many deeply interesting and valuable pages relating to Sir Walter Scott and his works scattered throughout Mr. Ruskin's writings that, being myself a devoted admirer of Scott, I conceived the idea of assembling them all in one volume, and wrote to ask whether such a plan would meet with his approval.

I had better here complete the story of this attempt. I steadily searched, in my holidays, in the Reading Room of the British Museum, through every line of his published and collected writings, a mass of material, which I annotated and arranged to the best of my ability. Unfortunately, ill-health prevented the Master from ever using the result of my long and diligent labour, and what ultimately became of the huge pile of MS. I sent to Brantwood, I never ascertained.

This explanation will make clear various allusions in letters which follow.

(LONDON, S.E.)

1st July, '82.

MY DEAR JESSIE,—I think that's a quite lovely plan about Scott, and I shall be so very glad if you will do it—*without losing fine weather in holiday time*. There is no hurry, but I shall be most thankful to have it in prospect and will print it at once when finished.

I am getting on very well just now—but in a rather grim and gritty humour about all things which makes Amiens work roll heavily on the axle.

Ever gratefully and affectly yours

J. RUSKIN.

(LONDON S.E.)

12th July, '82.

DEAR JESSIE,—By all means do the book with added foot-notes as you propose, collected exactly as you like.—It will be a most important and delightful help to me.

I'm keeping fairly well and I think gaining strength—but hampered a little by London calls on me; and much more hindered by the evil-minded winds and sky.

Ever affectly yrs.

J. RUSKIN.

(LONDON, S.E.)  
(Aug. 2, 1882.)

DEAR JESSIE,—I'll answer all your questions—but can't to-day—only that you may always alter any words you want to, into any others you like—I was thinking of you on Saturday and again yesterday as I went down and up (into Wiltshire) past Reading.

Ever your affect.

J. R.

Garth—attached field, *I believe*.

(LONDON)  
5th Aug., '82.

DEAR JESSIE,—Indeed you need not think of it as a promise—but a necessity, that no sylph should make me forget you—or your affectionate zeal for me—and your *need* of me in your isolation,—But I hope my sylphs don't make me forget *anybody* but myself!

You are quite right about colons and commas, and may defy Mr. W—— and the lawyers—and grammarians too—if you like.

Nearly two new numbers are ready, of Amiens: but I can't finish them properly in London,—I shall get the one most forward out very soon after I am in French air *D.V.*

Yes, I saw, though not in *Pallmall*—that new piece of discipline with intense pleasure and thankfulness.<sup>1</sup>

Ever your affect.

J. R.

The following came to me just a year after my visit to Brantwood.

DEAR JESSIE,—You don't give me Mr. Lovejoy's address—so you must take charge of enclosed letter for him.

Is it really a year? How dreadful! I was only 62 then—and now I'm 63.

Ever your loving

J. R.

Mr. Lovejoy was a widely known Reading bookseller and librarian—an intimate friend of Miss Mitford's (author of 'Our Village'). He was quite a 'character' and one of his eccentricities took the form of refusing all payment for the loan from his circulating library of any book by Mr. Ruskin, of whom he was a devoted

<sup>1</sup> A man who had caused grave scandal by betraying a young girl, accepted the penance laid upon him by his vicar, and made open confession of his sin to the evening congregation of his parish church, at the same time promising solemnly to make all the reparaton possible.

disciple. He said their value was so great that no money payment would be adequate. So they were always lent without charge to any reader who applied for them. There were no cheap editions of Ruskin in those days, and many of the volumes were first editions, whose money value no one knew better than Mr. Lovejoy. But no matter—they were lent 'for love' just the same. I ventured to suggest to the Master that a few lines of acknowledgment from him would give his old disciple intense pleasure, and he immediately wrote him a charming letter which I had the pleasure of delivering. And the dear old man's joy and pride in its possession were delightful to witness.

During the course of this summer, against my better judgment, I was over-persuaded into accepting an offer of marriage from a man of my own age for whom I felt the highest respect and esteem, but not the same strong affection which he undoubtedly entertained for me. He, however, urged so strongly that love would certainly follow the intimacy of an open engagement, that I weakly yielded, but with the proviso that no blame should attach to me if, after some months of probation, I should withdraw from the engagement.

In writing to tell Mr. Ruskin of this arrangement I confessed that I was not 'in love' with my suitor, but was attracted by the prospect of a happy home with a good man who loved me sincerely and strongly, and whom I knew to be of high principles and sterling worth.

Three plans for our future life were laid before me, and the choice was to be left to me—either for him to continue his present employment of farming land in Yorkshire, or for him to take up a partnership in a cutlery firm in Sheffield, or for us to try our fortune in Australia or New Zealand. I asked the Master's advice in the matter, and here is his reply.

LUCCA,  
13th Oct., '82.

MY DEAR JESSIE,—I don't understand why you should have felt so guilty!—do *you*? I certainly never advised you to determine to be an old maid—and—so long as you didn't marry a bishop or a banker—what had you to fear in telling me about it.

I certainly anticipate great reforms in the matter of Dress, but I have not the least objection to the Sheffield—or any other—Yorkshire accent—and still less to the soupçon of brogue: and am on the whole only inclined to demur to the notion of 'polishing him up considerably'—the expression sounds to me more Sheffieldian than the subject of it. I am very glad, personally, that you

marry into this family, for which I have great regard and respect: and I am quite sure it is good for you to be married.—As for not caring enough for your husband, it's all nonsense. All women care a great deal too much for their husbands—unless they hate them! they always think there's nobody else in the world like them. But men, as a rule, take a much more modest and rational view of their wives.

I should think of the three alternatives of means proposed, the cutlery was clearly the right one, but I don't see why you shouldn't get your husband to realise my vision in 'Fors' of the Holy Tapster. I think that part of the old book commends itself to me, more when I'm travelling, than any other.

I'm just going to send a case of flasks of Italian wine to Brantwood (—*nominally* because the flasks are so picturesque!).

Anyhow don't go colonizing—I expect lots of work from you when you're 'settled' in Sheffield.—It's quite a providential call to you, I think! I'm here just now on Sheffield business, you know,—not that I'm doing any—but anyhow I came to do it.—Write again as soon as you are minded to—Hotel de l'Univers here will be safe for a week after you get this.

With *sincere congratulations* to you both, I am, my dear Jessie,  
Ever your affectionate

JOHN RUSKIN.

The few months' probation for which I had stipulated proved to us both that the engagement was a mistake, and just before Christmas it was broken off by mutual consent. The news did not displease the Master, as his next letter shows.

(LONDON, S.E.)

20th—no—Shortest day, '82.

MY DEAR JESSIE,—I could not answer till to-day, and I am a little shy of answering now, for I am not quite as sympathetic in the whole matter as you would like me to be, and on the whole am better pleased at its close than its opening. I did not think your letters were at all indicative of a mind prepared for marriage—nor—as far as I knew the G.'s, did I think the match suitable for you. My impression is that you may be much more useful and tranquilly happy, single, than in a marriage which left you much to wish for in your husband's ways or gifts. And you would probably at first bore him extremely with Fors Clavigera—and in the end—throw it out of the window—which I should feel sorry for.

I write however to-day only to wish you a quietly re-establish-

ing and comforting Christmas, and to say that I am always your affectionate and grateful

JOHN RUSKIN.

A pleasant little note greeted me on New Year's morning. Evidently he had confused the name 'Jessie' with 'Jennie' as will be seen.

(LONDON.)  
31st Dec., '82.

MY DEAR JESSIE,—A good New Year to you—with pleasant forgetting—wise remembering—cheerful onlooking and gay on-going.

It is quite true that there is probability of return to Oxford to finish some of my broken work there, but what lectures I give will be very dull and practical—not at all for young ladies' hearing!

Jessie is short, or rather 'loving' for Janet—useful also in more clearly separating Janet from Jean. I think in Lockhart's life the two names occur indifferently.

I am obliged to economise every word in writing in this dark weather and must say good-bye,

Ever your affect.

JOHN RUSKIN.

(To be continued.)

## LITERARY ACROSTICS.

THE Editor of THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE offers prizes to the value of at least £3 to the most successful solvers of this series of four Literary Acrostics. There will also be consolation prizes, two or more in number: the winners of these will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. And, further, every month a similar prize of books will be awarded to the sender of the correct solution that is opened first.

## DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 48.

*(The Fourth of the Series.)*

' A land of settled government,  
A land of just and old renown,  
Where Freedom slowly broadens down  
From —— to ——.'

1. ' Vain —— and glory of this world, I hate ye.'
2. ' I, unhappy I, have let mine eye soar with the eagle against  
so bright a sun, that I am quite blind.'
3. ' She lent the mountains softness, and the rocks  
Smiled like her gaze when it was shining on them.'
4. ' Methinks already, from this —— flame,  
I see a city of more precious mould.'
5. ' All sacred rules, imagined or revealed,  
Can have no form or potency apart  
From the percipient and —— mind.'
6. ' The lively —— drinks thy purest rays,  
Collected light, compact.'
7. ' With powdered gold upon her ruddy hair ;  
There was no woman anywhere so fair.'

8. 'Wherever was honour I found you,  
And with you, my sons, am content.'
9. 'She broke forth into a gallant little —— that devoured the  
miles. It was not a remarkable speed, when all was said.'

## RULES.

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed on p. xii of 'Book Notes' in the preliminary pages of this issue.
4. At the foot of his answer every solver must write his pseudonym (consisting of one word), and nothing else. His name and address should be written at the back.
5. Solvers must on no account write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable to send them at all.
6. Solvers who write a second letter to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.
7. Answers to Acrostic No. 48 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50A Albemarle Street, London, W. 1, and must arrive not later than February 19.

## ANSWER TO NO. 47.

1. W	ishe	D
2. A	dventur	E
3. S	ucces	S
4. T	uli	P
5. I	sabell	A
6. N	em	I
7. G	ardene	R

PROEM: *Wither, Faire Virtue, Mistress of Philarete.*

## LIGHTS:

1. Ben Jonson, *Cynthia's Revels*, v. 3.
2. Shakespeare, *King John*, v. 5.
3. Addison, *Cato*, i. 2.
4. Hood, *Flowers*.
5. Keats, *Isabella*; or, *The Pot of Basil*.
6. Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, iv. 173.
7. Tennyson, *Lady Clara Vere de Vere*.

Acrostic No. 46 ('Venice Eldest'): Correct answers were received from 182 solvers, answers with one or two lights wrong came from 12 competitors, and there were three that infringed the rules. The third, fourth, and fifth lights were found by everybody.

The monthly prize is won by 'Twain,' whose answer was the first correct one opened. Miss Tyack, 33 Apsley Road, Clifton, Bristol, will choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue.

## NOTICE TO COMPETITORS.

In the March number there will begin a series of six Literary Crossword Puzzles, each dealing with one well-known author. Acrostic No. 49 will appear in September.



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