



Literary Adventures
Volume 2

Edited by Jason Hendrickson

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Printed in the United States of America

First Printing, 2018

INTRODUCTION

Dear Reader,

As I sit here compiling these stories into this second volume, I reflect on the appreciation that I have for reading. As a young boy, my mother was always reading books, mostly romance novels but she was reading and she inspired my brothers and I to follow her in those footsteps. I will say though, I don't necessarily read text very much anymore, except the stories that I do for the podcast.

In case you haven't read the website, I work about 100 km (60 miles) away from home. This provides me with a 2 hour round trip going to and from work. It is an excellent way to pass the time in the car when it's just me by myself. As I mentioned in my first volume, my son and I enjoy listening to books together. It's our night time wind down time. If you haven't, check your local library to see if they have access to any audiobook apps or providers. I do know that they have a small section at my library where I can get some books on CD if I wanted to do that, and I have.

As always, I hope that you have enjoyed the podcast and have been doing some reading. If there are any stories that you would like me to do, you can always reach out to me via the major social medias or the website.

Sincerely, Jason Hendrickson

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Taming the Bicycle.....	1
The Tale of Peter Rabbit.....	11
Why the Sea is Salt.....	16
The Dragon of the North.....	22
The Star Spangled Banner.....	37
O, Canada.....	39
America, the Beautiful.....	41
Boyhood at Port Huron, MI.....	43
When Mr. Moose Lost His Horns.....	64
Three Men of Gotham.....	70
Other Wise Men of Gotham.....	73
Pocahontas.....	77
Buster Bear's Big Cousins.....	79
Why Buster Bear Appears to Have No Tail.....	84
Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography.....	89
The Red-Headed League.....	102
The Steadfast Tin Solider.....	128
Frankenstein.....	133
The Ghost of Washington.....	148
The Legend of Sleepy Hollow.....	164
Acknowledgements.....	175
Bibliography.....	176

TAMING THE BICYCLE

Mark Twain

(Written about 1893; not before published)

In the early eighties Mark Twain learned to ride one of the old high-wheel bicycles of that period. He wrote an account of his experience, but did not offer it for publication. The form of bicycle he rode long ago became antiquated, but in the humor of his pleasantry is a quality which does not grow old.

A. B. P. I

I thought the matter over, and concluded I could do it. So I went down and bought a barrel of Pond's Extract and a bicycle. The Expert came home with me to instruct me. We chose the back yard, for the sake of privacy, and went to work.

Mine was not a full-grown bicycle, but only a colt—a fifty-inch, with the pedals shortened up to forty-eight—and skittish, like any other colt. The Expert explained the thing's points briefly, then he got on its back and rode around a little, to show me how easy it was to do. He said that the dismounting was perhaps the hardest thing to learn, and so we would leave that to the last. But he was in error there. He found, to his surprise and joy, that all that he needed to do was to get me on to the machine and stand out of the way; I could get off, myself. Although I was wholly inexperienced, I dismounted in the best time on record. He was on that side, shoving up the machine; we all came down with a crash, he at the bottom, I next, and the machine on top.

We examined the machine, but it was not in the least injured. This was hardly believable. Yet the Expert assured me that it was true; in fact, the examination proved it. I was partly to realize, then, how admirably these things are constructed. We applied some Pond's Extract, and resumed. The Expert got on the *other* side to shove up this time, but I dismounted on that side; so the result was as before.

The machine was not hurt. We oiled ourselves up again, and resumed. This time the Expert took up a sheltered position behind, but somehow or other we landed on him again.

He was full of surprised admiration; said it was abnormal. She was all right, not a scratch on her, not a timber started anywhere. I said it was wonderful, while we were greasing up, but he said that when I came to know these steel spider-webs I would realize that nothing but dynamite could cripple them. Then he limped out to position, and we resumed once more. This time the Expert took up the position of short-stop, and got a man to shove up behind. We got up a handsome speed, and presently traversed a brick, and I went out over the top of the tiller and landed, head down, on the instructor's back, and saw the machine fluttering in the air between me and the sun. It was well it came down on us, for that broke the fall, and it was not injured.

Five days later I got out and was carried down to the hospital, and found the Expert doing pretty fairly. In a few more days I was quite sound. I attribute this to my prudence in always dismounting on something soft. Some recommend a feather bed, but I think an Expert is better.

The Expert got out at last, brought four assistants with him. It was a good idea. These four held the graceful cobweb

upright while I climbed into the saddle; then they formed in column and marched on either side of me while the Expert pushed behind; all hands assisted at the dismount.

The bicycle had what is called the “wabbles,” and had them very badly. In order to keep my position, a good many things were required of me, and in every instance the thing required was against nature. Against nature, but not against the laws of nature. That is to say, that whatever the needed thing might be, my nature, habit, and breeding moved me to attempt it in one way, while some immutable and unsuspected law of physics required that it be done in just the other way. I perceived by this how radically and grotesquely wrong had been the life-long education of my body and members. They were steeped in ignorance; they knew nothing—nothing which it could profit them to know. For instance, if I found myself falling to the right, I put the tiller hard down the other way, by a quite natural impulse, and so violated a law, and kept on going down. The law required the opposite thing—the big wheel must be turned in the direction in which you are falling. It is hard to believe this, when you are told it. And not merely hard to believe it, but impossible; it is opposed to all your notions. And it is just as hard to do it, after you do come to believe it. Believing it, and knowing by the most convincing proof that it is true, does not help it: you can't any more DO it than you could before; you can neither force nor persuade yourself to do it at first. The intellect has to come to the front, now. It has to teach the limbs to discard their old education and adopt the new.

The steps of one's progress are distinctly marked. At the end of each lesson he knows he has acquired something, and he also knows what that something is, and likewise that it will stay with him. It is not like studying German, where

you mull along, in a groping, uncertain way, for thirty years; and at last, just as you think you've got it, they spring the subjunctive on you, and there you are. No—and I see now, plainly enough, that the great pity about the German language is, that you can't fall off it and hurt yourself. There is nothing like that feature to make you attend strictly to business. But I also see, by what I have learned of bicycling, that the right and only sure way to learn German is by the bicycling method. That is to say, take a grip on one villainy of it at a time, and learn it—not ease up and shirk to the next, leaving that one half learned.

When you have reached the point in bicycling where you can balance the machine tolerably fairly and propel it and steer it, then comes your next task—how to mount it. You do it in this way: you hop along behind it on your right foot, resting the other on the mounting-peg, and grasping the tiller with your hands. At the word, you rise on the peg, stiffen your left leg, hang your other one around in the air in a general in indefinite way, lean your stomach against the rear of the saddle, and then fall off, maybe on one side, maybe on the other; but you fall off. You get up and do it again; and once more; and then several times.

By this time you have learned to keep your balance; and also to steer without wrenching the tiller out by the roots (I say tiller because it IS a tiller; “handle-bar” is a lamely descriptive phrase). So you steer along, straight ahead, a little while, then you rise forward, with a steady strain, bringing your right leg, and then your body, into the saddle, catch your breath, fetch a violent hitch this way and then that, and down you go again.

But you have ceased to mind the going down by this time; you are getting to light on one foot or the other with considerable certainty. Six more attempts and six more falls

make you perfect. You land in the saddle comfortably, next time, and stay there—that is, if you can be content to let your legs dangle, and leave the pedals alone a while; but if you grab at once for the pedals, you are gone again. You soon learn to wait a little and perfect your balance before reaching for the pedals; then the mounting-art is acquired, is complete, and a little practice will make it simple and easy to you, though spectators ought to keep off a rod or two to one side, along at first, if you have nothing against them.

And now you come to the voluntary dismount; you learned the other kind first of all. It is quite easy to tell one how to do the voluntary dismount; the words are few, the requirement simple, and apparently undifficult; let your left pedal go down till your left leg is nearly straight, turn your wheel to the left, and get off as you would from a horse. It certainly does sound exceedingly easy; but it isn't. I don't know why it isn't but it isn't. Try as you may, you don't get down as you would from a horse, you get down as you would from a house afire. You make a spectacle of yourself every time.

II

During the eight days I took a daily lesson of an hour and a half. At the end of this twelve working-hours' apprenticeship I was graduated—in the rough. I was pronounced competent to paddle my own bicycle without outside help. It seems incredible, this celerity of acquirement. It takes considerably longer than that to learn horseback-riding in the rough.

Now it is true that I could have learned without a teacher, but it would have been risky for me, because of my natural clumsiness. The self-taught man seldom knows anything

accurately, and he does not know a tenth as much as he could have known if he had worked under teachers; and, besides, he brags, and is the means of fooling other thoughtless people into going and doing as he himself has done. There are those who imagine that the unlucky accidents of life—life's “experiences”—are in some way useful to us. I wish I could find out how. I never knew one of them to happen twice. They always change off and swap around and catch you on your inexperienced side. If personal experience can be worth anything as an education, it wouldn't seem likely that you could trip Methuselah; and yet if that old person could come back here it is more than likely that one of the first things he would do would be to take hold of one of these electric wires and tie himself all up in a knot. Now the surer thing and the wiser thing would be for him to ask somebody whether it was a good thing to take hold of. But that would not suit him; he would be one of the self-taught kind that go by experience; he would want to examine for himself. And he would find, for his instruction, that the coiled patriarch shuns the electric wire; and it would be useful to him, too, and would leave his education in quite a complete and rounded-out condition, till he should come again, some day, and go to bouncing a dynamite-can around to find out what was in it.

But we wander from the point. However, get a teacher; it saves much time and Pond's Extract.

Before taking final leave of me, my instructor inquired concerning my physical strength, and I was able to inform him that I hadn't any. He said that that was a defect which would make up-hill wheeling pretty difficult for me at first; but he also said the bicycle would soon remove it. The contrast between his muscles and mine was quite marked. He wanted to test mine, so I offered my biceps—which was

my best. It almost made him smile. He said, "It is pulpy, and soft, and yielding, and rounded; it evades pressure, and glides from under the fingers; in the dark a body might think it was an oyster in a rag." Perhaps this made me look grieved, for he added, briskly: "Oh, that's all right, you needn't worry about that; in a little while you can't tell it from a petrified kidney. Just go right along with your practice; you're all right."

Then he left me, and I started out alone to seek adventures. You don't really have to seek them—that is nothing but a phrase—they come to you.

I chose a reposeful Sabbath-day sort of a back street which was about thirty yards wide between the curbstones. I knew it was not wide enough; still, I thought that by keeping strict watch and wasting no space unnecessarily I could crowd through.

Of course I had trouble mounting the machine, entirely on my own responsibility, with no encouraging moral support from the outside, no sympathetic instructor to say, "Good! now you're doing well—good again—don't hurry—there, now, you're all right—brace up, go ahead." In place of this I had some other support. This was a boy, who was perched on a gate-post munching a hunk of maple sugar.

He was full of interest and comment. The first time I failed and went down he said that if he was me he would dress up in pillows, that's what he would do. The next time I went down he advised me to go and learn to ride a tricycle first. The third time I collapsed he said he didn't believe I could stay on a horse-car. But the next time I succeeded, and got clumsily under way in a weaving, tottering, uncertain fashion, and occupying pretty much all of the street. My slow and lumbering gait filled the boy to the chin with

scorn, and he sung out, "My, but don't he rip along!" Then he got down from his post and loafed along the sidewalk, still observing and occasionally commenting. Presently he dropped into my wake and followed along behind. A little girl passed by, balancing a wash-board on her head, and giggled, and seemed about to make a remark, but the boy said, rebukingly, "Let him alone, he's going to a funeral."

I have been familiar with that street for years, and had always supposed it was a dead level; but it was not, as the bicycle now informed me, to my surprise. The bicycle, in the hands of a novice, is as alert and acute as a spirit-level in the detecting of delicate and vanishing shades of difference in these matters. It notices a rise where your untrained eye would not observe that one existed; it notices any decline which water will run down. I was toiling up a slight rise, but was not aware of it. It made me tug and pant and perspire; and still, labor as I might, the machine came almost to a standstill every little while. At such times the boy would say: "That's it! take a rest—there ain't no hurry. They can't hold the funeral without YOU."

Stones were a bother to me. Even the smallest ones gave me a panic when I went over them. I could hit any kind of a stone, no matter how small, if I tried to miss it; and of course at first I couldn't help trying to do that. It is but natural. It is part of the burro that is put in us all, for some inscrutable reason.

I was at the end of my course, at last, and it was necessary for me to round to. This is not a pleasant thing, when you undertake it for the first time on your own responsibility, and neither is it likely to succeed. Your confidence oozes away, you fill steadily up with nameless apprehensions, every fiber of you is tense with a watchful strain, you start a cautious and gradual curve, but your squirmy nerves are

all full of electric anxieties, so the curve is quickly demoralized into a jerky and perilous zigzag; then suddenly the nickel-clad horse takes the bit in its mouth and goes slanting for the curbstone, defying all prayers and all your powers to change its mind—your heart stands still, your breath hangs fire, your legs forget to work, straight on you go, and there are but a couple of feet between you and the curb now. And now is the desperate moment, the last chance to save yourself; of course all your instructions fly out of your head, and you whirl your wheel AWAY from the curb instead of TOWARD it, and so you go sprawling on that granite-bound inhospitable shore. That was my luck; that was my experience. I dragged myself out from under the indestructible bicycle and sat down on the curb to examine.

I started on the return trip. It was now that I saw a farmer's wagon poking along down toward me, loaded with cabbages. If I needed anything to perfect the precariousness of my steering, it was just that. The farmer was occupying the middle of the road with his wagon, leaving barely fourteen or fifteen yards of space on either side. I couldn't shout at him—a beginner can't shout; if he opens his mouth he is gone; he must keep all his attention on his business. But in this grisly emergency, the boy came to the rescue, and for once I had to be grateful to him. He kept a sharp lookout on the swiftly varying impulses and inspirations of my bicycle, and shouted to the man accordingly:

“To the left! Turn to the left, or this jackass 'll run over you!” The man started to do it. “No, to the right, to the right! Hold on! THAT won't do!—to the left!—to the right! —to the LEFT—right! left—ri—Stay where you ARE, or you're a goner!”

And just then I caught the off horse in the starboard and

went down in a pile. I said, “Hang it! Couldn't you SEE I was coming?”

“Yes, I see you was coming, but I couldn't tell which WAY you was coming. Nobody could—now, *could* they? You couldn't yourself—now, *could* you? So what could I do?”

There was something in that, and so I had the magnanimity to say so. I said I was no doubt as much to blame as he was.

Within the next five days I achieved so much progress that the boy couldn't keep up with me. He had to go back to his gate-post, and content himself with watching me fall at long range.

There was a row of low stepping-stones across one end of the street, a measured yard apart. Even after I got so I could steer pretty fairly I was so afraid of those stones that I always hit them. They gave me the worst falls I ever got in that street, except those which I got from dogs. I have seen it stated that no expert is quick enough to run over a dog; that a dog is always able to skip out of his way. I think that that may be true: but I think that the reason he couldn't run over the dog was because he was trying to. I did not try to run over any dog. But I ran over every dog that came along. I think it makes a great deal of difference. If you try to run over the dog he knows how to calculate, but if you are trying to miss him he does not know how to calculate, and is liable to jump the wrong way every time. It was always so in my experience. Even when I could not hit a wagon I could hit a dog that came to see me practice. They all liked to see me practice, and they all came, for there was very little going on in our neighborhood to entertain a dog. It took time to learn to miss a dog, but I achieved even that.

I can steer as well as I want to, now, and I will catch that boy out one of these days and run over HIM if he doesn't

reform.

Get a bicycle. You will not regret it, if you live.

THE TALE OF PETER RABBIT

Beatrix Potter

ONCE upon a time there were four little Rabbits, and their names were—
Flopsy, Mopsy, Cotton-tail, and Peter.

They lived with their Mother in a sand-bank, underneath the root of a very big fir tree.

"NOW, my dears," said old Mrs. Rabbit one morning, "you may go into the fields or down the lane, but don't go into Mr. McGregor's garden: your Father had an accident there; he was put in a pie by Mrs. McGregor."

"NOW run along, and don't get into mischief. I am going out."

THEN old Mrs. Rabbit took a basket and her umbrella, to the baker's. She bought a loaf of brown bread and five currant buns.

FLOPSY, Mopsy, and Cottontail, who were good little bunnies, went down the lane to gather blackberries;

BUT Peter, who was very naughty, ran straight away to Mr. McGregor's garden and squeezed under the gate!

FIRST he ate some lettuces and some French beans; and then he ate some radishes;

AND then, feeling rather sick, he went to look for some parsley.

BUT round the end of a cucumber frame, whom should he meet but Mr. McGregor!

MR. MCGREGOR was on his hands and knees planting out young cabbages, but he jumped up and ran after Peter, waving a rake and calling out, "Stop thief!"

PETER was most dreadfully frightened; he rushed all over the garden, for he had forgotten the way back to the gate. He lost one of his shoes among the cabbages, and the other shoe amongst the potatoes.

AFTER losing them, he ran on four legs and went faster, so that I think he might have got away altogether if he had not unfortunately run into a gooseberry net, and got caught by the large buttons on his jacket. It was a blue jacket with brass buttons, quite new.

PETER gave himself up for lost, and shed big tears; but his sobs were overheard by some friendly sparrows, who flew

to him in great excitement, and implored him to exert himself.

MR. MCGREGOR came up with a sieve, which he intended to pop upon the top of Peter; but Peter wriggled out just in time, leaving his jacket behind him.

AND rushed into the toolshed, and jumped into a can. It would have been a beautiful thing to hide in, if it had not had so much water in it.

MR. MCGREGOR was quite sure that Peter was somewhere in the toolshed, perhaps hidden underneath a flower-pot. He began to turn them over carefully, looking under each. Presently Peter sneezed—"Kertyschoo!" Mr. McGregor was after him in no time,

AND tried to put his foot upon Peter, who jumped out of a window, upsetting three plants. The window was too small for Mr. McGregor, and he was tired of running after Peter. He went back to his work.

PETER sat down to rest; he was out of breath and trembling with fright, and he had not the least idea which way to go. Also he was very damp with sitting in that can. After a time he began to wander about, going lippity—lippity—not very fast, and looking all around.

HE found a door in a wall; but it was locked, and there was

no room for a fat little rabbit to squeeze underneath. An old mouse was running in and out over the stone doorstep, carrying peas and beans to her family in the wood. Peter asked her the way to the gate, but she had such a large pea in her mouth that she could not answer. She only shook her head at him. Peter began to cry.

THEN he tried to find his way straight across the garden, but he became more and more puzzled. Presently, he came to a pond where Mr. McGregor filled his water-cans. A white cat was staring at some gold-fish; she sat very, very still, but now and then the tip of her tail twitched as if it were alive. Peter thought it best to go away without speaking to her; he had heard about cats from his cousin, little Benjamin Bunny.

HE went back towards the tool-shed, but suddenly, quite close to him, he heard the noise of a hoe—scr-r-ritch, scratch, scratch, scritch. Peter scuttered underneath the bushes. But presently, as nothing happened, he came out, and climbed upon a wheelbarrow, and peeped over. The first thing he saw was Mr. McGregor hoeing onions. His back was turned towards Peter, and beyond him was the gate!

PETER got down very quietly off the wheelbarrow, and started running as fast as he could go, along a straight walk behind some black-currant bushes. Mr. McGregor caught sight of him at the corner, but Peter did not care. He slipped underneath the gate, and was safe at last in the wood outside the garden.

MR. MCGREGOR hung up the little jacket and the shoes for a scare-crow to frighten the blackbirds.

PETER never stopped running or looked behind him till he got home to the big fir-tree. He was so tired that he flopped down upon the nice soft sand on the floor of the rabbit-hole, and shut his eyes. His mother was busy cooking; she wondered what he had done with his clothes. It was the second little jacket and pair of shoes that Peter had lost in a fortnight!

I AM sorry to say that Peter was not very well during the evening. His mother put him to bed, and made some camomile tea; and she gave a dose of it to Peter! "One table-spoonful to be taken at bed-time."

BUT Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cotton-tail had bread and milk and blackberries, for supper.

WHY THE SEA IS SALT

Once upon a time, long, long ago, there were two brothers, the one rich and the other poor. When Christmas Eve came, the poor one had not a bite in the house, either of meat or bread; so he went to his brother, and begged him, in God's name, to give him something for Christmas Day. It was by no means the first time that the brother had been forced to give something to him, and he was not better pleased at being asked now than he generally was.

"If you will do what I ask you, you shall have a whole ham," said he. The poor one immediately thanked him, and promised this.

"Well, here is the ham, and now you must go straight to Dead Man's Hall," said the rich brother, throwing the ham to him.

"Well, I will do what I have promised," said the other, and he took the ham and set off. He went on and on for the livelong day, and at nightfall he came to a place where there was a bright light.

"I have no doubt this is the place," thought the man with the ham.

An old man with a long white beard was standing in the outhouse, chopping Yule logs.

"Good-evening," said the man with the ham.

"Good-evening to you. Where are you going at this late hour?" said the man.

"I am going to Dead Man's Hall, if only I am on the right track," answered the poor man.

“Oh! yes, you are right enough, for it is here,” said the old man. “When you get inside they will all want to buy your ham, for they don’t get much meat to eat there; but you must not sell it unless you can get the hand-mill which stands behind the door for it. When you come out again I will teach you how to stop the hand-mill, which is useful for almost everything.”

So the man with the ham thanked the other for his good advice, and rapped at the door.

When he got in, everything happened just as the old man had said it would: all the people, great and small, came round him like ants on an ant-hill, and each tried to outbid the other for the ham.

“By rights my old woman and I ought to have it for our Christmas dinner, but, since you have set your hearts upon it, I must just give it up to you,” said the man. “But, if I sell it, I will have the hand-mill which is standing there behind the door.”

At first they would not hear of this, and haggled and bargained with the man, but he stuck to what he had said, and the people were forced to give him the hand-mill. When the man came out again into the yard, he asked the old wood-cutter how he was to stop the hand-mill, and when he had learned that, he thanked him and set off home with all the speed he could, but did not get there until after the clock had struck twelve on Christmas Eve.

“Where in the world have you been?” said the old woman. “Here I have sat waiting hour after hour, and have not even two sticks to lay across each other under the Christmas porridge-pot.”

“Oh! I could not come before; I had something of

importance to see about, and a long way to go, too; but now you shall just see!" said the man, and then he set the hand-mill on the table, and bade it first grind light, then a table-cloth, and then meat, and beer, and everything else that was good for a Christmas Eve's supper; and the mill ground all that he ordered. "Bless me!" said the old woman as one thing after another appeared; and she wanted to know where her husband had got the mill from, but he would not tell her that.

"Never mind where I got it; you can see that it is a good one, and the water that turns it will never freeze," said the man. So he ground meat and drink, and all kinds of good things, to last all Christmas-tide, and on the third day he invited all his friends to come to a feast.

Now when the rich brother saw all that there was at the banquet and in the house, he was both vexed and angry, for he grudged everything his brother had. "On Christmas Eve he was so poor that he came to me and begged for a trifle, for God's sake, and now he gives a feast as if he were both a count and a king!" thought he. "But, for heaven's sake, tell me where you got your riches from," said he to his brother.

"From behind the door," said he who owned the mill, for he did not choose to satisfy his brother on that point; but later in the evening, when he had taken a drop too much, he could not refrain from telling how he had come by the hand-mill. "There you see what has brought me all my wealth!" said he, and brought out the mill, and made it grind first one thing and then another. When the brother saw that, he insisted on having the mill, and after a great deal of persuasion got it; but he had to give three hundred dollars for it, and the poor brother was to keep it till the haymaking was over, for he thought: "If I keep it as long as

that, I can make it grind meat and drink that will last many a long year.” During that time you may imagine that the mill did not grow rusty, and when hay-harvest came the rich brother got it, but the other had taken good care not to teach him how to stop it. It was evening when the rich man got the mill home, and in the morning he bade the old woman go out and spread the hay after the mowers, and he would attend to the house himself that day, he said.

So, when dinner-time drew near, he set the mill on the kitchen-table, and said: “Grind herrings and milk pottage, and do it both quickly and well.”

So the mill began to grind herrings and milk pottage, and first all the dishes and tubs were filled, and then it came out all over the kitchen-floor. The man twisted and turned it, and did all he could to make the mill stop, but, howsoever he turned it and screwed it, the mill went on grinding, and in a short time the pottage rose so high that the man was like to be drowned. So he threw open the parlor door, but it was not long before the mill had ground the parlor full too, and it was with difficulty and danger that the man could go through the stream of pottage and get hold of the door-latch. When he got the door open, he did not stay long in the room, but ran out, and the herrings and pottage came after him, and it streamed out over both farm and field. Now the old woman, who was out spreading the hay, began to think dinner was long in coming, and said to the women and the mowers: “Though the master does not call us home, we may as well go. It may be that he finds he is not good at making pottage and I should do well to help him.” So they began to straggle homeward, but when they had got a little way up the hill they met the herrings and pottage and bread, all pouring forth and winding about one over the other, and the man himself in front of the flood. “Would to heaven

that each of you had a hundred stomachs! Take care that you are not drowned in the pottage!” he cried as he went by them as if Mischief were at his heels, down to where his brother dwelt. Then he begged him, for God’s sake, to take the mill back again, and that in an instant, for, said he: “If it grind one hour more the whole district will be destroyed by herrings and pottage.” But the brother would not take it until the other paid him three hundred dollars, and that he was obliged to do. Now the poor brother had both the money and the mill again. So it was not long before he had a farmhouse much finer than that in which his brother lived, but the mill ground him so much money that he covered it with plates of gold; and the farmhouse lay close by the sea-shore, so it shone and glittered far out to sea. Everyone who sailed by there now had to be put in to visit the rich man in the gold farmhouse, and everyone wanted to see the wonderful mill, for the report of it spread far and wide, and there was no one who had not heard tell of it.

After a long, long time came also a skipper who wished to see the mill. He asked if it could make salt. “Yes, it could make salt,” said he who owned it, and when the skipper heard that, he wished with all his might and main to have the mill, let it cost what it might, for, he thought, if he had it, he would get off having to sail far away over the perilous sea for freights of salt. At first the man would not hear of parting with it, but the skipper begged and prayed, and at last the man sold it to him, and got many, many thousand dollars for it. When the skipper had got the mill on his back he did not stay there long, for he was so afraid that the man would change his mind, and he had no time to ask how he was to stop it grinding, but got on board his ship as fast as he could.

When he had gone a little way out to sea he took the mill

on deck. “Grind salt, and grind both quickly and well,” said the skipper. So the mill began to grind salt, till it spouted out like water, and when the skipper had got the ship filled he wanted to stop the mill, but whichsoever way he turned it, and how much soever he tried, it went on grinding, and the heap of salt grew higher and higher, until at last the ship sank. There lies the mill at the bottom of the sea, and still, day by day, it grinds on; and that is why the sea is salt.

THE DRAGON OF THE NORTH

Very long ago, as old people have told me, there lived a terrible monster, who came out of the North, and laid waste whole tracts of country, devouring both men and beasts; and this monster was so destructive that it was feared that unless help came no living creature would be left on the face of the earth. It had a body like an ox, and legs like a frog, two short fore-legs, and two long ones behind, and besides that it had a tail like a serpent, ten fathoms in length. When it moved it jumped like a frog, and with every spring it covered half a mile of ground. Fortunately its habit, was to remain for several years in the same place, and not to move on till the whole neighbourhood was eaten up. Nothing could hunt it, because its whole body was covered with scales, which were harder than stone or metal; its two great eyes shone by night, and even by day, like the brightest lamps, and anyone who had the ill luck to look into those eyes became as it were bewitched, and was obliged to rush of his own accord into the monster's jaws. In this way the Dragon was able to feed upon both men and beasts without the least trouble to itself, as it needed not to move from the spot where it was lying. All the neighbouring kings had offered rich rewards to anyone who should be able to destroy the monster, either by force or enchantment, and many had tried their luck, but all had miserably failed. Once a great forest in which the Dragon lay had been set on fire; the forest was burnt down, but the fire did not do the monster the least harm. However, there was a tradition amongst the wise men of the country that the Dragon might be overcome by one who possessed King Solomon's signet-ring, upon which a secret writing was engraved. This inscription would enable anyone who was

wise enough to interpret it to find out how the Dragon could be destroyed. Only no one knew where the ring was hidden, nor was there any sorcerer or learned man to be found who would be able to explain the inscription.

At last a young man, with a good heart and plenty of courage, set out to search for the ring. He took his way towards the sunrising, because he knew that all the wisdom of old time comes from the East. After some years he met with a famous Eastern magician, and asked for his advice in the matter. The magician answered:

‘Mortal men have but little wisdom, and can give you no help, but the birds of the air would be better guides to you if you could learn their language. I can help you to understand it if you will stay with me a few days.’

The youth thankfully accepted the magician’s offer, and said, ‘I cannot now offer you any reward for your kindness, but should my undertaking succeed your trouble shall be richly repaid.’

Then the magician brewed a powerful potion out of nine sorts of herbs which he had gathered himself all alone by moonlight, and he gave the youth nine spoonfuls of it daily for three days, which made him able to understand the language of birds.

At parting the magician said to him. ‘If you ever find Solomon’s ring and get possession of it, then come back to me, that I may explain the inscription on the ring to you, for there is no one else in the world who can do this.’

From that time the youth never felt lonely as he walked along; he always had company, because he understood the language of birds; and in this way he learned many things which mere human knowledge could never have taught

him. But time went on, and he heard nothing about the ring. It happened one evening, when he was hot and tired with walking, and had sat down under a tree in a forest to eat his supper, that he saw two gaily-plumaged birds, that were strange to him, sitting at the top of the tree talking to one another about him. The first bird said:

‘I know that wandering fool under the tree there, who has come so far without finding what he seeks. He is trying to find King Solomon’s lost ring.’

The other bird answered, ‘He will have to seek help from the Witch-maiden,(3) who will doubtless be able to put him on the right track. If she has not got the ring herself, she knows well enough who has it.’

(3) Hollenmadchen.

‘But where is he to find the Witch-maiden?’ said the first bird. ‘She has no settled dwelling, but is here to-day and gone to-morrow. He might as well try to catch the wind.’

The other replied, ‘I do not know, certainly, where she is at present, but in three nights from now she will come to the spring to wash her face, as she does every month when the moon is full, in order that she may never grow old nor wrinkled, but may always keep the bloom of youth.’

‘Well,’ said the first bird, ‘the spring is not far from here. Shall we go and see how it is she does it?’

‘Willingly, if you like,’ said the other.

The youth immediately resolved to follow the birds to the spring, only two things made him uneasy: first, lest he might be asleep when the birds went, and secondly, lest he might lose sight of them, since he had not wings to carry him along so swiftly. He was too tired to keep awake all night, yet his anxiety prevented him from sleeping soundly,

and when with the earliest dawn he looked up to the tree-top, he was glad to see his feathered companions still asleep with their heads under their wings. He ate his breakfast, and waited until the birds should start, but they did not leave the place all day. They hopped about from one tree to another looking for food, all day long until the evening, when they went back to their old perch to sleep. The next day the same thing happened, but on the third morning one bird said to the other, 'To-day we must go to the spring to see the Witch-maiden wash her face.' They remained on the tree till noon; then they flew away and went towards the south. The young man's heart beat with anxiety lest he should lose sight of his guides, but he managed to keep the birds in view until they again perched upon a tree. The young man ran after them until he was quite exhausted and out of breath, and after three short rests the birds at length reached a small open space in the forest, on the edge of which they placed themselves on the top of a high tree. When the youth had overtaken them, he saw that there was a clear spring in the middle of the space. He sat down at the foot of the tree upon which the birds were perched, and listened attentively to what they were saying to each other.

'The sun is not down yet,' said the first bird; 'we must wait yet awhile till the moon rises and the maiden comes to the spring. Do you think she will see that young man sitting under the tree?'

'Nothing is likely to escape her eyes, certainly not a young man, said the other bird. 'Will the youth have the sense not to let himself be caught in her toils?'

'We will wait,' said the first bird, 'and see how they get on together.'

The evening light had quite faded, and the full moon was already shining down upon the forest, when the young man heard a slight rustling sound. After a few moments there came out of the forest a maiden, gliding over the grass so lightly that her feet seemed scarcely to touch the ground, and stood beside the spring. The youth could not turn away his eyes from the maiden, for he had never in his life seen a woman so beautiful. Without seeming to notice anything, she went to the spring, looked up to the full moon, then knelt down and bathed her face nine times, then looked up to the moon again and walked nine times round the well, and as she walked she sang this song:

‘Full-faced moon with light unshaded,

Let my beauty ne’er be faded.

Never let my cheek grow pale!

While the moon is waning nightly,

May the maiden bloom more brightly,

May her freshness never fail!’

Then she dried her face with her long hair, and was about to go away, when her eye suddenly fell upon the spot where the young man was sitting, and she turned towards the tree. The youth rose and stood waiting. Then the maiden said, ‘You ought to have a heavy punishment because you have presumed to watch my secret doings in the moonlight. But I will forgive you this time, because you are a stranger and knew no better. But you must tell me truly who you are and how you came to this place, where no mortal has ever set foot before.’

The youth answered humbly: ‘Forgive me, beautiful maiden, if I have unintentionally offended you. I chanced to come here after long wandering, and found a good place

to sleep under this tree. At your coming I did not know what to do, but stayed where I was, because I thought my silent watching could not offend you.'

The maiden answered kindly, 'Come and spend this night with us. You will sleep better on a pillow than on damp moss.'

The youth hesitated for a little, but presently he heard the birds saying from the top of the tree, 'Go where she calls you, but take care to give no blood, or you will sell your soul.' So the youth went with her, and soon they reached a beautiful garden, where stood a splendid house, which glittered in the moonlight as if it was all built out of gold and silver. When the youth entered he found many splendid chambers, each one finer than the last. Hundreds of tapers burnt upon golden candlesticks, and shed a light like the brightest day. At length they reached a chamber where a table was spread with the most costly dishes. At the table were placed two chairs, one of silver, the other of gold. The maiden seated herself upon the golden chair, and offered the silver one to her companion. They were served by maidens dressed in white, whose feet made no sound as they moved about, and not a word was spoken during the meal. Afterwards the youth and the Witch-maiden conversed pleasantly together, until a woman, dressed in red, came in to remind them that it was bedtime. The youth was now shown into another room, containing a silken bed with down cushions, where he slept delightfully, yet he seemed to hear a voice near his bed which repeated to him, 'Remember to give no blood!'

The next morning the maiden asked him whether he would not like to stay with her always in this beautiful place, and as he did not answer immediately, she continued: 'You see how I always remain young and beautiful, and I am under

no one's orders, but can do just what I like, so that I have never thought of marrying before. But from the moment I saw you I took a fancy to you, so if you agree, we might be married and might live together like princes, because I have great riches.'

The youth could not but be tempted with the beautiful maiden's offer, but he remembered how the birds had called her the witch, and their warning always sounded in his ears. Therefore he answered cautiously, 'Do not be angry, dear maiden, if I do not decide immediately on this important matter. Give me a few days to consider before we come to an understanding.'

'Why not?' answered the maiden. 'Take some weeks to consider if you like, and take counsel with your own heart.' And to make the time pass pleasantly, she took the youth over every part of her beautiful dwelling, and showed him all her splendid treasures. But these treasures were all produced by enchantment, for the maiden could make anything she wished appear by the help of King Solomon's signet ring; only none of these things remained fixed; they passed away like the wind without leaving a trace behind. But the youth did not know this; he thought they were all real.

One day the maiden took him into a secret chamber, where a little gold box was standing on a silver table. Pointing to the box, she said, 'Here is my greatest treasure, whose like is not to be found in the whole world. It is a precious gold ring. When you marry me, I will give you this ring as a marriage gift, and it will make you the happiest of mortal men. But in order that our love may last for ever, you must give me for the ring three drops of blood from the little finger of your left hand.'

When the youth heard these words a cold shudder ran over him, for he remembered that his soul was at stake. He was cunning enough, however, to conceal his feelings and to make no direct answer, but he only asked the maiden, as if carelessly, what was remarkable about the ring?

She answered, 'No mortal is able entirely to understand the power of this ring, because no one thoroughly understands the secret signs engraved upon it. But even with my half-knowledge I can work great wonders. If I put the ring upon the little finger of my left hand, then I can fly like a bird through the air wherever I wish to go. If I put it on the third finger of my left hand I am invisible, and I can see everything that passes around me, though no one can see me. If I put the ring upon the middle finger of my left hand, then neither fire nor water nor any sharp weapon can hurt me. If I put it on the forefinger of my left hand, then I can with its help produce whatever I wish. I can in a single moment build houses or anything I desire. Finally, as long as I wear the ring on the thumb of my left hand, that hand is so strong that it can break down rocks and walls. Besides these, the ring has other secret signs which, as I said, no one can understand. No doubt it contains secrets of great importance. The ring formerly belonged to King Solomon, the wisest of kings, during whose reign the wisest men lived. But it is not known whether this ring was ever made by mortal hands: it is supposed that an angel gave it to the wise King.'

When the youth heard all this he determined to try and get possession of the ring, though he did not quite believe in all its wonderful gifts. He wished the maiden would let him have it in his hand, but he did not quite like to ask her to do so, and after a while she put it back into the box. A few days after they were again speaking of the magic ring, and

the youth said, 'I do not think it possible that the ring can have all the power you say it has.'

Then the maiden opened the box and took the ring out, and it glittered as she held it like the clearest sunbeam. She put it on the middle finger of her left hand, and told the youth to take a knife and try as hard as he could to cut her with it, for he would not be able to hurt her. He was unwilling at first, but the maiden insisted. Then he tried, at first only in play, and then seriously, to strike her with the knife, but an invisible wall of iron seemed to be between them, and the maiden stood before him laughing and unhurt. Then she put the ring on her third finger, and in an instant she had vanished from his eyes. Presently she was beside him again laughing, and holding the ring between her fingers.

'Do let me try,' said the youth, 'whether I can do these wonderful things.'

The maiden, suspecting no treachery, gave him the magic ring.

The youth pretended to have forgotten what to do, and asked what finger he must put the ring on so that no sharp weapon could hurt him?'

'Oh, the middle finger of your left hand,' the maiden answered, laughing.

She took the knife and tried to strike the youth, and he even tried to cut himself with it, but found it impossible. Then he asked the maiden to show him how to split stones and rocks with the help of the ring. So she led him into a courtyard where stood a great boulder-stone. 'Now,' she said, 'put the ring upon the thumb of your left hand, and you will see how strong that hand has become. The youth did so, and found to his astonishment that with a single blow of his fist

the stone flew into a thousand pieces. Then the youth bethought him that he who does not use his luck when he has it is a fool, and that this was a chance which once lost might never return. So while they stood laughing at the shattered stone he placed the ring, as if in play, upon the third finger of his left hand.

‘Now,’ said the maiden, ‘you are invisible to me until you take the ring off again.’

But the youth had no mind to do that; on the contrary, he went farther off, then put the ring on the little finger of his left hand, and soared into the air like a bird.

When the maiden saw him flying away she thought at first that he was still in play, and cried, ‘Come back, friend, for now you see I have told you the truth.’ But the young man never came back.

Then the maiden saw she was deceived, and bitterly repented that she had ever trusted him with the ring.

The young man never halted in his flight until he reached the dwelling of the wise magician who had taught him the speech of birds. The magician was delighted to find that his search had been successful, and at once set to work to interpret the secret signs engraved upon the ring, but it took him seven weeks to make them out clearly. Then he gave the youth the following instructions how to overcome the Dragon of the North: ‘You must have an iron horse cast, which must have little wheels under each foot. You must also be armed with a spear two fathoms long, which you will be able to wield by means of the magic ring upon your left thumb. The spear must be as thick in the middle as a large tree, and both its ends must be sharp. In the middle of the spear you must have two strong chains ten fathoms in length. As soon as the Dragon has made himself fast to the

spear, which you must thrust through his jaws, you must spring quickly from the iron horse and fasten the ends of the chains firmly to the ground with iron stakes, so that he cannot get away from them. After two or three days the monster's strength will be so far exhausted that you will be able to come near him. Then you can put Solomon's ring upon your left thumb and give him the finishing stroke, but keep the ring on your third finger until you have come close to him, so that the monster cannot see you, else he might strike you dead with his long tail. But when all is done, take care you do not lose the ring, and that no one takes it from you by cunning.'

The young man thanked the magician for his directions, and promised, should they succeed, to reward him. But the magician answered, 'I have profited so much by the wisdom the ring has taught me that I desire no other reward.' Then they parted, and the youth quickly flew home through the air. After remaining in his own home for some weeks, he heard people say that the terrible Dragon of the North was not far off, and might shortly be expected in the country. The King announced publicly that he would give his daughter in marriage, as well as a large part of his kingdom, to whosoever should free the country from the monster. The youth then went to the King and told him that he had good hopes of subduing the Dragon, if the King would grant him all he desired for the purpose. The King willingly agreed, and the iron horse, the great spear, and the chains were all prepared as the youth requested. When all was ready, it was found that the iron horse was so heavy that a hundred men could not move it from the spot, so the youth found there was nothing for it but to move it with his own strength by means of the magic ring. The Dragon was now so near that in a couple of springs he would be over the frontier. The youth now began to consider how he

should act, for if he had to push the iron horse from behind he could not ride upon it as the sorcerer had said he must. But a raven unexpectedly gave him this advice: 'Ride upon the horse, and push the spear against the ground, as if you were pushing off a boat from the land.' The youth did so, and found that in this way he could easily move forwards. The Dragon had his monstrous jaws wide open, all ready for his expected prey. A few paces nearer, and man and horse would have been swallowed up by them! The youth trembled with horror, and his blood ran cold, yet he did not lose his courage; but, holding the iron spear upright in his hand, he brought it down with all his might right through the monster's lower jaw. Then quick as lightning he sprang from his horse before the Dragon had time to shut his mouth. A fearful clap like thunder, which could be heard for miles around, now warned him that the Dragon's jaws had closed upon the spear. When the youth turned round he saw the point of the spear sticking up high above the Dragon's upper jaw, and knew that the other end must be fastened firmly to the ground; but the Dragon had got his teeth fixed in the iron horse, which was now useless. The youth now hastened to fasten down the chains to the ground by means of the enormous iron pegs which he had provided. The death struggle of the monster lasted three days and three nights; in his writhing he beat his tail so violently against the ground, that at ten miles' distance the earth trembled as if with an earthquake. When he at length lost power to move his tail, the youth with the help of the ring took up a stone which twenty ordinary men could not have moved, and beat the Dragon so hard about the head with it that very soon the monster lay lifeless before him.

You can fancy how great was the rejoicing when the news was spread abroad that the terrible monster was dead. His conqueror was received into the city with as much pomp as

if he had been the mightiest of kings. The old King did not need to urge his daughter to marry the slayer of the Dragon; he found her already willing to bestow her hand upon this hero, who had done all alone what whole armies had tried in vain to do. In a few days a magnificent wedding was celebrated, at which the rejoicings lasted four whole weeks, for all the neighbouring kings had met together to thank the man who had freed the world from their common enemy. But everyone forgot amid the general joy that they ought to have buried the Dragon's monstrous body, for it began now to have such a bad smell that no one could live in the neighbourhood, and before long the whole air was poisoned, and a pestilence broke out which destroyed many hundreds of people. In this distress, the King's son-in-law resolved to seek help once more from the Eastern magician, to whom he at once travelled through the air like a bird by the help of the ring. But there is a proverb which says that ill-gotten gains never prosper, and the Prince found that the stolen ring brought him ill-luck after all. The Witch-maiden had never rested night nor day until she had found out where the ring was. As soon as she had discovered by means of magical arts that the Prince in the form of a bird was on his way to the Eastern magician, she changed herself into an eagle and watched in the air until the bird she was waiting for came in sight, for she knew him at once by the ring which was hung round his neck by a ribbon. Then the eagle pounced upon the bird, and the moment she seized him in her talons she tore the ring from his neck before the man in bird's shape had time to prevent her. Then the eagle flew down to the earth with her prey, and the two stood face to face once more in human form.

'Now, villain, you are in my power!' cried the Witch-maiden. 'I favoured you with my love, and you repaid me with treachery and theft. You stole my most precious jewel

from me, and do you expect to live happily as the King's son-in-law? Now the tables are turned; you are in my power, and I will be revenged on you for your crimes.'

'Forgive me! forgive me!' cried the Prince; 'I know too well how deeply I have wronged you, and most heartily do I repent it.'

The maiden answered, 'Your prayers and your repentance come too late, and if I were to spare you everyone would think me a fool. You have doubly wronged me; first you scorned my love, and then you stole my ring, and you must bear the punishment.'

With these words she put the ring upon her left thumb, lifted the young man with one hand, and walked away with him under her arm. This time she did not take him to a splendid palace, but to a deep cave in a rock, where there were chains hanging from the wall. The maiden now chained the young man's hands and feet so that he could not escape; then she said in an angry voice, 'Here you shall remain chained up until you die. I will bring you every day enough food to prevent you dying of hunger, but you need never hope for freedom any more.' With these words she left him.

The old King and his daughter waited anxiously for many weeks for the Prince's return, but no news of him arrived. The King's daughter often dreamed that her husband was going through some great suffering: she therefore begged her father to summon all the enchanters and magicians, that they might try to find out where the Prince was and how he could be set free. But the magicians, with all their arts, could find out nothing, except that he was still living and undergoing great suffering; but none could tell where he was to be found. At last a celebrated magician from Finland

was brought before the King, who had found out that the King's son-in-law was imprisoned in the East, not by men, but by some more powerful being. The King now sent messengers to the East to look for his son-in-law, and they by good luck met with the old magician who had interpreted the signs on King Solomon's ring, and thus was possessed of more wisdom than anyone else in the world. The magician soon found out what he wished to know, and pointed out the place where the Prince was imprisoned, but said: 'He is kept there by enchantment, and cannot be set free without my help. I will therefore go with you myself.'

So they all set out, guided by birds, and after some days came to the cave where the unfortunate Prince had been chained up for nearly seven years. He recognised the magician immediately, but the old man did not know him, he had grown so thin. However, he undid the chains by the help of magic, and took care of the Prince until he recovered and became strong enough to travel. When he reached home he found that the old King had died that morning, so that he was now raised to the throne. And now after his long suffering came prosperity, which lasted to the end of his life; but he never got back the magic ring, nor has it ever again been seen by mortal eyes.

Now, if YOU had been the Prince, would you not rather have stayed with the pretty witch-maiden?

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

Francis Scott Key

[Sidenote: Sept. 14, 1813] *After the British had burned the Capitol at Washington, in August, 1813, they retired to their ships, and on September 12th and 13th, they made an attack on Baltimore. This poem was written on the morning after the bombardment of Fort McHenry, while the author was a prisoner on the British fleet.*

Oh! say can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming;
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous
fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
Oh, say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore, dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze o'er the towering steep
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam;
Its full glory reflected now shines on the stream;
'Tis the star-spangled banner! Oh! long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

And where is the band who so vauntingly swore,
'Mid the havoc of war and the battle's confusion,
A home and a country they'd leave us no more?

Their blood hath washed out their foul footsteps' pollution;
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave,
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

Oh! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their loved home and the war's desolation;
Blessed with victory and peace, may the Heaven-rescued
land
Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, for our cause it is just,
And this be our motto, "In God is our trust":
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

O, CANADA!

Stanley Weir, 1908

O Canada! Our home and native land!
True patriot love thou dost in us command.
We see thee rising fair, dear land,
The True North, strong and free;
And stand on guard, O Canada,
We stand on guard for thee.

(Refrain)

O Canada! O Canada!
O Canada! We stand on guard for thee.
O Canada! We stand on guard for thee.

O Canada! Where pines and maples grow.
Great prairies spread and lordly rivers flow.
How dear to us thy broad domain,
From East to Western Sea,
Thou land of hope for all who toil!
Thou True North, strong and free!

(Refrain)

O Canada! Beneath thy shining skies
May stalwart sons and gentle maidens rise,
To keep thee steadfast through the years
From East to Western Sea,
Our own beloved native land!
Our True North, strong and free!

(Refrain)

Ruler supreme, who hearest humble prayer,
Hold our dominion within thy loving care;
Help us to find, O God, in thee
A lasting, rich reward,
As waiting for the Better Day,
We ever stand on guard.

(Refrain)

America, The Beautiful
Katharine Bates

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for pilgrim feet
Whose stern impassion'd stress
A thorough fare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness.
America! America!
God mend thine ev'ry flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law.

O beautiful for heroes prov'd
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved,
And mercy more than life.
America! America!
May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness,
And ev'ry gain divine.

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam

Undimmed by human tears.
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea.

Boyhood at Port Huron, Michigan

THE new home found by the Edison family at Port Huron, where Alva spent his brief boyhood before he became a telegraph operator and roamed the whole middle West of that period, was unfortunately destroyed by fire just after the close of the Civil War. A smaller but perhaps more comfortable home was then built by Edison's father on some property he had bought at the near-by village of Gratiot, and there his mother spent the remainder of her life in confirmed invalidism, dying in 1871. Hence the pictures and postal cards sold largely to souvenir-hunters as the Port Huron home do not actually show that in or around which the events now referred to took place.

It has been a romance of popular biographers, based upon the fact that Edison began his career as a newsboy, to assume that these earlier years were spent in poverty and privation, as indeed they usually are by the "newsies" who swarm and shout their papers in our large cities. While it seems a pity to destroy this erroneous idea, suggestive of a heroic climb from the depths to the heights, nothing could be further from the truth. Socially the Edison family stood high in Port Huron at a time when there was relatively more wealth and general activity than to-day. The town in its pristine prime was a great lumber centre, and hummed with the industry of numerous sawmills. An incredible quantity of lumber was made there yearly until the forests near-by vanished and the industry with them. The wealth of the community, invested largely in this business and in allied transportation companies, was accumulated rapidly and as freely spent during those days of prosperity in St. Clair County, bringing with it a high standard of domestic comfort. In all this the Edisons shared on equal terms.

Thus, contrary to the stories that have been so widely published, the Edisons, while not rich by any means, were in comfortable circumstances, with a well-stocked farm and large orchard to draw upon also for sustenance. Samuel Edison, on moving to Port Huron, became a dealer in grain and feed, and gave attention to that business for many years. But he was also active in the lumber industry in the Saginaw district and several other things. It was difficult for a man of such mercurial, restless temperament to stay constant to any one occupation; in fact, had he been less visionary he would have been more prosperous, but might not have had a son so gifted with insight and imagination. One instance of the optimistic vagaries which led him incessantly to spend time and money on projects that would not have appealed to a man less sanguine was the construction on his property of a wooden observation tower over a hundred feet high, the top of which was reached toilsomely by winding stairs, after the payment of twenty-five cents. It is true that the tower commanded a pretty view by land and water, but Colonel Sellers himself might have projected this enterprise as a possible source of steady income. At first few visitors panted up the long flights of steps to the breezy platform. During the first two months Edison's father took in three dollars, and felt extremely blue over the prospect, and to young Edison and his relatives were left the lonely pleasures of the lookout and the enjoyment of the telescope with which it was equipped. But one fine day there came an excursion from an inland town to see the lake. They picnicked in the grove, and six hundred of them went up the tower. After that the railroad company began to advertise these excursions, and the receipts each year paid for the observatory.

It might be thought that, immersed in business and preoccupied with schemes of this character, Mr. Edison was

to blame for the neglect of his son's education. But that was not the case. The conditions were peculiar. It was at the Port Huron public school that Edison received all the regular scholastic instruction he ever enjoyed—just three months. He might have spent the full term there, but, as already noted, his teacher had found him "addled." He was always, according to his own recollection, at the foot of the class, and had come almost to regard himself as a dunce, while his father entertained vague anxieties as to his stupidity. The truth of the matter seems to be that Mrs. Edison, a teacher of uncommon ability and force, held no very high opinion of the average public-school methods and results, and was both eager to undertake the instruction of her son and ambitious for the future of a boy whom she knew from pedagogic experience to be receptive and thoughtful to a very unusual degree. With her he found study easy and pleasant. The quality of culture in that simple but refined home, as well as the intellectual character of this youth without schooling, may be inferred from the fact that before he had reached the age of twelve he had read, with his mother's help, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Hume's *History of England*, Sears' *History of the World*, Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, and the *Dictionary of Sciences*; and had even attempted to struggle through Newton's *Principia*, whose mathematics were decidedly beyond both teacher and student. Besides, Edison, like Faraday, was never a mathematician, and has had little personal use for arithmetic beyond that which is called "mental." He said once to a friend: "I can always hire some mathematicians, but they can't hire me." His father, by-the-way, always encouraged these literary tastes, and paid him a small sum for each new book mastered. It will be noted that fiction makes no showing in the list; but it was not altogether

excluded from the home library, and Edison has all his life enjoyed it, particularly the works of such writers as Victor Hugo, after whom, because of his enthusiastic admiration—possibly also because of his imagination—he was nicknamed by his fellow-operators, "Victor Hugo Edison."

Electricity at that moment could have no allure for a youthful mind. Crude telegraphy represented what was known of it practically, and about that the books read by young Edison were not redundantly informational. Even had that not been so, the inclinations of the boy barely ten years old were toward chemistry, and fifty years later there is seen no change of predilection. It sounds like heresy to say that Edison became an electrician by chance, but it is the sober fact that to this pre-eminent and brilliant leader in electrical achievement escape into the chemical domain still has the aspect of a delightful truant holiday. One of the earliest stories about his boyhood relates to the incident when he induced a lad employed in the family to swallow a large quantity of Seidlitz powders in the belief that the gases generated would enable him to fly. The agonies of the victim attracted attention, and Edison's mother marked her displeasure by an application of the switch kept behind the old Seth Thomas "grandfather clock." The disastrous result of this experiment did not discourage Edison at all, as he attributed failure to the lad rather than to the motive power. In the cellar of the Edison homestead young Alva soon accumulated a chemical outfit, constituting the first in a long series of laboratories. The word "laboratory" had always been associated with alchemists in the past, but as with "filament" this untutored stripling applied an iconoclastic practicability to it long before he realized the significance of the new departure. Goethe, in his legend of Faust, shows the traditional or conventional philosopher in his laboratory, an aged, tottering, gray-bearded investigator,

who only becomes youthful upon diabolical intervention, and would stay senile without it. In the Edison laboratory no such weird transformation has been necessary, for the philosopher had youth, fiery energy, and a grimly practical determination that would submit to no denial of the goal of something of real benefit to mankind. Edison and Faust are indeed the extremes of philosophic thought and accomplishment.

The home at Port Huron thus saw the first Edison laboratory. The boy began experimenting when he was about ten or eleven years of age. He got a copy of Parker's School Philosophy, an elementary book on physics, and about every experiment in it he tried. Young Alva, or "Al," as he was called, thus early displayed his great passion for chemistry, and in the cellar of the house he collected no fewer than two hundred bottles, gleaned in baskets from all parts of the town. These were arranged carefully on shelves and all labelled "Poison," so that no one else would handle or disturb them. They contained the chemicals with which he was constantly experimenting. To others this diversion was both mysterious and meaningless, but he had soon become familiar with all the chemicals obtainable at the local drug stores, and had tested to his satisfaction many of the statements encountered in his scientific reading. Edison has said that sometimes he has wondered how it was he did not become an analytical chemist instead of concentrating on electricity, for which he had at first no great inclination.

Deprived of the use of a large part of her cellar, tiring of the "mess" always to be found there, and somewhat fearful of results, his mother once told the boy to clear everything out and restore order. The thought of losing all his possessions was the cause of so much ardent distress that his mother relented, but insisted that he must get a lock and key, and

keep the embryonic laboratory closed up all the time except when he was there. This was done. From such work came an early familiarity with the nature of electrical batteries and the production of current from them. Apparently the greater part of his spare time was spent in the cellar, for he did not share to any extent in the sports of the boys of the neighborhood, his chum and chief companion, Michael Oates, being a lad of Dutch origin, many years older, who did chores around the house, and who could be recruited as a general utility Friday for the experiments of this young explorer—such as that with the Seidlitz powders.

Such pursuits as these consumed the scant pocket-money of the boy very rapidly. He was not in regular attendance at school, and had read all the books within reach. It was thus he turned newsboy, overcoming the reluctance of his parents, particularly that of his mother, by pointing out that he could by this means earn all he wanted for his experiments and get fresh reading in the shape of papers and magazines free of charge. Besides, his leisure hours in Detroit he would be able to spend at the public library. He applied (in 1859) for the privilege of selling newspapers on the trains of the Grand Trunk Railroad, between Port Huron and Detroit, and obtained the concession after a short delay, during which he made an essay in his task of selling newspapers.

Edison had, as a fact, already had some commercial experience from the age of eleven. The ten acres of the reservation offered an excellent opportunity for truck-farming, and the versatile head of the family could not avoid trying his luck in this branch of work. A large "market garden" was laid out, in which Edison worked pretty steadily with the help of the Dutch boy, Michael Oates—he of the flying experiment. These boys had a horse

and small wagon intrusted to them, and every morning in the season they would load up with onions, lettuce, peas, etc., and go through the town.

As much as \$600 was turned over to Mrs. Edison in one year from this source. The boy was indefatigable but not altogether charmed with agriculture. "After a while I tired of this work, as hoeing corn in a hot sun is unattractive, and I did not wonder that it had built up cities. Soon the Grand Trunk Railroad was extended from Toronto to Port Huron, at the foot of Lake Huron, and thence to Detroit, at about the same time the War of the Rebellion broke out. By a great amount of persistence I got permission from my mother to go on the local train as a newsboy. The local train from Port Huron to Detroit, a distance of sixty-three miles, left at 7 A.M. and arrived again at 9.30 P.M. After being on the train for several months, I started two stores in Port Huron—one for periodicals, and the other for vegetables, butter, and berries in the season. These were attended by two boys who shared in the profits. The periodical store I soon closed, as the boy in charge could not be trusted. The vegetable store I kept up for nearly a year. After the railroad had been opened a short time, they put on an express which left Detroit in the morning and returned in the evening. I received permission to put a newsboy on this train.

Connected with this train was a car, one part for baggage and the other part for U. S. mail, but for a long time it was not used. Every morning I had two large baskets of vegetables from the Detroit market loaded in the mail-car and sent to Port Huron, where the boy would take them to the store. They were much better than those grown locally, and sold readily. I never was asked to pay freight, and to this day cannot explain why, except that I was so small and industrious, and the nerve to appropriate a U. S. mail-car to do a free freight business was so monumental. However, I

kept this up for a long time, and in addition bought butter from the farmers along the line, and an immense amount of blackberries in the season. I bought wholesale and at a low price, and permitted the wives of the engineers and trainmen to have the benefit of the discount. After a while there was a daily immigrant train put on. This train generally had from seven to ten coaches filled always with Norwegians, all bound for Iowa and Minnesota. On these trains I employed a boy who sold bread, tobacco, and stick candy. As the war progressed the daily newspaper sales became very profitable, and I gave up the vegetable store."

The hours of this occupation were long, but the work was not particularly heavy, and Edison soon found opportunity for his favorite avocation—chemical experimentation. His train left Port Huron at 7 A.M., and made its southward trip to Detroit in about three hours. This gave a stay in that city from 10 A.M. until the late afternoon, when the train left, arriving at Port Huron about 9.30 P.M. The train was made up of three coaches—baggage, smoking, and ordinary passenger or "ladies." The baggage-car was divided into three compartments—one for trunks and packages, one for the mail, and one for smoking. In those days no use was made of the smoking-compartment, as there was no ventilation, and it was turned over to young Edison, who not only kept papers there and his stock of goods as a "candy butcher," but soon had it equipped with an extraordinary variety of apparatus. There was plenty of leisure on the two daily runs, even for an industrious boy, and thus he found time to transfer his laboratory from the cellar and re-establish it on the train.

His earnings were also excellent—so good, in fact, that eight or ten dollars a day were often taken in, and one dollar went every day to his mother. Thus supporting

himself, he felt entitled to spend any other profit left over on chemicals and apparatus. And spent it was, for with access to Detroit and its large stores, where he bought his supplies, and to the public library, where he could quench his thirst for technical information, Edison gave up all his spare time and money to chemistry. Surely the country could have presented at that moment no more striking example of the passionate pursuit of knowledge under difficulties than this newsboy, barely fourteen years of age, with his jars and test-tubes installed on a railway baggage-car.

Nor did this amazing equipment stop at batteries and bottles. The same little space a few feet square was soon converted by this precocious youth into a newspaper office. The outbreak of the Civil War gave a great stimulus to the demand for all newspapers, noticing which he became ambitious to publish a local journal of his own, devoted to the news of that section of the Grand Trunk road. A small printing-press that had been used for hotel bills of fare was picked up in Detroit, and type was also bought, some of it being placed on the train so that composition could go on in spells of leisure. To one so mechanical in his tastes as Edison, it was quite easy to learn the rudiments of the printing art, and thus the Weekly Herald came into existence, of which he was compositor, pressman, editor, publisher, and newsdealer. Only one or two copies of this journal are now discoverable, but its appearance can be judged from the reduced facsimile here shown. The thing was indeed well done as the work of a youth shown by the date to be less than fifteen years old. The literary style is good, there are only a few trivial slips in spelling, and the appreciation is keen of what would be interesting news and gossip. The price was three cents a copy, or eight cents a month for regular subscribers, and the circulation ran up to

over four hundred copies an issue. This was by no means the result of mere public curiosity, but attested the value of the sheet as a genuine newspaper, to which many persons in the railroad service along the line were willing contributors. Indeed, with the aid of the railway telegraph, Edison was often able to print late news of importance, of local origin, that the distant regular papers like those of Detroit, which he handled as a newsboy, could not get. It is no wonder that this clever little sheet received the approval and patronage of the English engineer Stephenson when inspecting the Grand Trunk system, and was noted by no less distinguished a contemporary than the London Times as the first newspaper in the world to be printed on a train in motion. The youthful proprietor sometimes cleared as much as twenty to thirty dollars a month from this unique journalistic enterprise.

But all this extra work required attention, and Edison solved the difficulty of attending also to the newsboy business by the employment of a young friend, whom he trained and treated liberally as an understudy. There was often plenty of work for both in the early days of the war, when the news of battle caused intense excitement and large sales of papers. Edison, with native shrewdness already so strikingly displayed, would telegraph the station agents and get them to bulletin the event of the day at the front, so that when each station was reached there were eager purchasers waiting. He recalls in particular the sensation caused by the great battle of Shiloh, or Pittsburg Landing, in April, 1862, in which both Grant and Sherman were engaged, in which Johnston died, and in which there was a ghastly total of 25,000 killed and wounded.

In describing his enterprising action that day, Edison says that when he reached Detroit the bulletin-boards of the

newspaper offices were surrounded with dense crowds, which read awestricken the news that there were 60,000 killed and wounded, and that the result was uncertain. "I knew that if the same excitement was attained at the various small towns along the road, and especially at Port Huron, the sale of papers would be great. I then conceived the idea of telegraphing the news ahead, went to the operator in the depot, and by giving him Harper's Weekly and some other papers for three months, he agreed to telegraph to all the stations the matter on the bulletin-board. I hurriedly copied it, and he sent it, requesting the agents to display it on the blackboards used for stating the arrival and departure of trains. I decided that instead of the usual one hundred papers I could sell one thousand; but not having sufficient money to purchase that number, I determined in my desperation to see the editor himself and get credit. The great paper at that time was the Detroit Free Press. I walked into the office marked 'Editorial' and told a young man that I wanted to see the editor on important business—important to me, anyway, I was taken into an office where there were two men, and I stated what I had done about telegraphing, and that I wanted a thousand papers, but only had money for three hundred, and I wanted credit. One of the men refused it, but the other told the first spokesman to let me have them. This man, I afterward learned, was Wilbur F. Storey, who subsequently founded the Chicago Times, and became celebrated in the newspaper world. By the aid of another boy I lugged the papers to the train and started folding them. The first station, called Utica, was a small one where I generally sold two papers. I saw a crowd ahead on the platform, and thought it some excursion, but the moment I landed there was a rush for me; then I realized that the telegraph was a great invention. I sold thirty-five papers there. The next station was Mount Clemens, now a

watering-place, but then a town of about one thousand. I usually sold six to eight papers there. I decided that if I found a corresponding crowd there, the only thing to do to correct my lack of judgment in not getting more papers was to raise the price from five cents to ten. The crowd was there, and I raised the price. At the various towns there were corresponding crowds. It had been my practice at Port Huron to jump from the train at a point about one-fourth of a mile from the station, where the train generally slackened speed. I had drawn several loads of sand to this point to jump on, and had become quite expert. The little Dutch boy with the horse met me at this point. When the wagon approached the outskirts of the town I was met by a large crowd. I then yelled: 'Twenty-five cents apiece, gentlemen! I haven't enough to go around!' I sold all out, and made what to me then was an immense sum of money."

Such episodes as this added materially to his income, but did not necessarily increase his savings, for he was then, as now, an utter spendthrift so long as some new apparatus or supplies for experiment could be had. In fact, the laboratory on wheels soon became crowded with such equipment, most costly chemicals were bought on the instalment plan, and Fresenius' Qualitative Analysis served as a basis for ceaseless testing and study. George Pullman, who then had a small shop at Detroit and was working on his sleeping-car, made Edison a lot of wooden apparatus for his chemicals, to the boy's delight. Unfortunately a sudden change came, fraught with disaster. The train, running one day at thirty miles an hour over a piece of poorly laid track, was thrown suddenly out of the perpendicular with a violent lurch, and, before Edison could catch it, a stick of phosphorus was jarred from its shelf, fell to the floor, and burst into flame. The car took fire, and the boy, in dismay, was still trying to quench the blaze when the conductor, a

quick-tempered Scotchman, who acted also as baggage-master, hastened to the scene with water and saved his car. On the arrival at Mount Clemens station, its next stop, Edison and his entire outfit, laboratory, printing-plant, and all, were promptly ejected by the enraged conductor, and the train then moved off, leaving him on the platform, tearful and indignant in the midst of his beloved but ruined possessions. It was lynch law of a kind; but in view of the responsibility, this action of the conductor lay well within his rights and duties.

It was through this incident that Edison acquired the deafness that has persisted all through his life, a severe box on the ears from the scorched and angry conductor being the direct cause of the infirmity. Although this deafness would be regarded as a great affliction by most people, and has brought in its train other serious baubles, Mr. Edison has always regarded it philosophically, and said about it recently: "This deafness has been of great advantage to me in various ways. When in a telegraph office, I could only hear the instrument directly on the table at which I sat, and unlike the other operators, I was not bothered by the other instruments. Again, in experimenting on the telephone, I had to improve the transmitter so I could hear it. This made the telephone commercial, as the magneto telephone receiver of Bell was too weak to be used as a transmitter commercially. It was the same with the phonograph. The great defect of that instrument was the rendering of the overtones in music, and the hissing consonants in speech. I worked over one year, twenty hours a day, Sundays and all, to get the word 'specie' perfectly recorded and reproduced on the phonograph. When this was done I knew that everything else could be done which was a fact. Again, my nerves have been preserved intact. Broadway is as quiet to me as a country village is to a person with normal hearing."

Saddened but not wholly discouraged, Edison soon reconstituted his laboratory and printing-office at home, although on the part of the family there was some fear and objection after this episode, on the score of fire. But Edison promised not to bring in anything of a dangerous nature. He did not cease the publication of the Weekly Herald. On the contrary, he prospered in both his enterprises until persuaded by the "printer's devil" in the office of the Port Huron Commercial to change the character of his journal, enlarge it, and issue it under the name of Paul Pry, a happy designation for this or kindred ventures in the domain of society journalism. No copies of Paul Pry can now be found, but it is known that its style was distinctly personal, that gossip was its specialty, and that no small offence was given to the people whose peculiarities or peccadilloes were discussed in a frank and breezy style by the two boys. In one instance the resentment of the victim of such unsought publicity was so intense he laid hands on Edison and pitched the startled young editor into the St. Clair River. The name of this violator of the freedom of the press was thereafter excluded studiously from the columns of Paul Pry, and the incident may have been one of those which soon caused the abandonment of the paper. Edison had great zest in this work, and but for the strong influences in other directions would probably have continued in the newspaper field, in which he was, beyond question, the youngest publisher and editor of the day.

Before leaving this period of his career, it is to be noted that it gave Edison many favorable opportunities. In Detroit he could spend frequent hours in the public library, and it is matter of record that he began his liberal acquaintance with its contents by grappling bravely with a certain section and trying to read it through consecutively, shelf by shelf, regardless of subject. In a way this is curiously suggestive

of the earnest, energetic method of "frontal attack" with which the inventor has since addressed himself to so many problems in the arts and sciences.

The Grand Trunk Railroad machine-shops at Port Huron were a great attraction to the boy, who appears to have spent a good deal of his time there. He who was to have much to do with the evolution of the modern electric locomotive was fascinated by the mechanism of the steam locomotive; and whenever he could get the chance Edison rode in the cab with the engineer of his train. He became thoroughly familiar with the intricacies of fire-box, boiler, valves, levers, and gears, and liked nothing better than to handle the locomotive himself during the run. On one trip, when the engineer lay asleep while his eager substitute piloted the train, the boiler "primed," and a deluge overwhelmed the young driver, who stuck to his post till the run and the ordeal were ended. Possibly this helped to spoil a locomotive engineer, but went to make a great master of the new motive power. "Steam is half an Englishman," said Emerson. The temptation is strong to say that workaday electricity is half an American. Edison's own account of the incident is very laughable: "The engine was one of a number leased to the Grand Trunk by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. It had bright brass bands all over, the woodwork beautifully painted, and everything highly polished, which was the custom up to the time old Commodore Vanderbilt stopped it on his roads. After running about fifteen miles the fireman couldn't keep his eyes open (this event followed an all-night dance of the trainmen's fraternal organization), and he agreed to permit me to run the engine. I took charge, reducing the speed to about twelve miles an hour, and brought the train of seven cars to her destination at the Grand Trunk junction safely. But something occurred which was very much out of the

ordinary. I was very much worried about the water, and I knew that if it got low the boiler was likely to explode. I hadn't gone twenty miles before black damp mud blew out of the stack and covered every part of the engine, including myself. I was about to awaken the fireman to find out the cause of this when it stopped. Then I approached a station where the fireman always went out to the cowcatcher, opened the oil-cup on the steam-chest, and poured oil in. I started to carry out the procedure when, upon opening the oil-cup, the steam rushed out with a tremendous noise, nearly knocking me off the engine. I succeeded in closing the oil-cup and got back in the cab, and made up my mind that she would pull through without oil. I learned afterward that the engineer always shut off steam when the fireman went out to oil. This point I failed to notice. My powers of observation were very much improved after this occurrence. Just before I reached the junction another outpour of black mud occurred, and the whole engine was a sight—so much so that when I pulled into the yard everybody turned to see it, laughing immoderately. I found the reason of the mud was that I carried so much water it passed over into the stack, and this washed out all the accumulated soot."

One afternoon about a week before Christmas Edison's train jumped the track near Utica, a station on the line. Four old Michigan Central cars with rotten sills collapsed in the ditch and went all to pieces, distributing figs, raisins, dates, and candies all over the track and the vicinity. Hating to see so much waste, Edison tried to save all he could by eating it on the spot, but as a result "our family doctor had the time of his life with me in this connection."

An absurd incident described by Edison throws a vivid light on the free-and-easy condition of early railroad travel

and on the Southern extravagance of the time. "In 1860, just before the war broke out there came to the train one afternoon, in Detroit, two fine-looking young men accompanied by a colored servant. They bought tickets for Port Huron, the terminal point for the train. After leaving the junction just outside of Detroit, I brought in the evening papers. When I came opposite the two young men, one of them said: 'Boy, what have you got?' I said: 'Papers.' 'All right.' He took them and threw them out of the window, and, turning to the colored man, said: 'Nicodemus, pay this boy.' I told Nicodemus the amount, and he opened a satchel and paid me. The passengers didn't know what to make of the transaction. I returned with the illustrated papers and magazines. These were seized and thrown out of the window, and I was told to get my money of Nicodemus. I then returned with all the old magazines and novels I had not been able to sell, thinking perhaps this would be too much for them. I was small and thin, and the layer reached above my head, and was all I could possibly carry. I had prepared a list, and knew the amount in case they bit again. When I opened the door, all the passengers roared with laughter. I walked right up to the young men. One asked me what I had. I said 'Magazines and novels.' He promptly threw them out of the window, and Nicodemus settled. Then I came in with cracked hickory nuts, then pop-corn balls, and, finally, molasses candy. All went out of the window. I felt like Alexander the Great!—I had no more chance! I had sold all I had. Finally I put a rope to my trunk, which was about the size of a carpenter's chest, and started to pull this from the baggage-car to the passenger-car. It was almost too much for my strength, but at last I got it in front of those men. I pulled off my coat, shoes, and hat, and laid them on the chest. Then he asked: 'What have you got, boy?' I said: 'Everything, sir, that I can spare that is

for sale.' The passengers fairly jumped with laughter. Nicodemus paid me \$27 for this last sale, and threw the whole out of the door in the rear of the car. These men were from the South, and I have always retained a soft spot in my heart for a Southern gentleman."

While Edison was a newsboy on the train a request came to him one day to go to the office of E. B. Ward & Company, at that time the largest owners of steamboats on the Great Lakes. The captain of their largest boat had died suddenly, and they wanted a message taken to another captain who lived about fourteen miles from Ridgeway station on the railroad. This captain had retired, taken up some lumber land, and had cleared part of it. Edison was offered \$15 by Mr. Ward to go and fetch him, but as it was a wild country and would be dark, Edison stood out for \$25, so that he could get the companionship of another lad. The terms were agreed to. Edison arrived at Ridgeway at 8.30 P.M., when it was raining and as dark as ink. Getting another boy with difficulty to volunteer, he launched out on his errand in the pitch-black night. The two boys carried lanterns, but the road was a rough path through dense forest. The country was wild, and it was a usual occurrence to see deer, bear, and coon skins nailed up on the sides of houses to dry. Edison had read about bears, but couldn't remember whether they were day or night prowlers. The farther they went the more apprehensive they became, and every stump in the ravished forest looked like a bear. The other lad proposed seeking safety up a tree, but Edison demurred on the plea that bears could climb, and that the message must be delivered that night to enable the captain to catch the morning train. First one lantern went out, then the other. "We leaned up against a tree and cried. I thought if I ever got out of that scrape alive I would know more about the habits of animals and everything else, and be prepared for

all kinds of mischance when I undertook an enterprise. However, the intense darkness dilated the pupils of our eyes so as to make them very sensitive, and we could just see at times the outlines of the road. Finally, just as a faint gleam of daylight arrived, we entered the captain's yard and delivered the message. In my whole life I never spent such a night of horror as this, but I got a good lesson."

An amusing incident of this period is told by Edison. "When I was a boy," he says, "the Prince of Wales, the late King Edward, came to Canada (1860). Great preparations were made at Sarnia, the Canadian town opposite Port Huron. About every boy, including myself, went over to see the affair. The town was draped in flags most profusely, and carpets were laid on the cross-walks for the prince to walk on. There were arches, etc. A stand was built raised above the general level, where the prince was to be received by the mayor. Seeing all these preparations, my idea of a prince was very high; but when he did arrive I mistook the Duke of Newcastle for him, the duke being a fine-looking man. I soon saw that I was mistaken: that the prince was a young stripling, and did not meet expectations. Several of us expressed our belief that a prince wasn't much, after all, and said that we were thoroughly disappointed. For this one boy was whipped. Soon the Canuck boys attacked the Yankee boys, and we were all badly licked. I, myself, got a black eye. That has always prejudiced me against that kind of ceremonial and folly." It is certainly interesting to note that in later years the prince for whom Edison endured the ignominy of a black eye made generous compensation in a graceful letter accompanying the gold Albert Medal awarded by the Royal Society of Arts.

Another incident of the period is as follows: "After selling papers in Port Huron, which was often not reached until

about 9.30 at night, I seldom got home before 11.00 or 11.30. About half-way home from the station and the town, and within twenty-five feet of the road in a dense wood, was a soldiers' graveyard where three hundred soldiers were buried, due to a cholera epidemic which took place at Fort Gratiot, near by, many years previously. At first we used to shut our eyes and run the horse past this graveyard, and if the horse stepped on a twig my heart would give a violent movement, and it is a wonder that I haven't some valvular disease of that organ. But soon this running of the horse became monotonous, and after a while all fears of graveyards absolutely disappeared from my system. I was in the condition of Sam Houston, the pioneer and founder of Texas, who, it was said, knew no fear. Houston lived some distance from the town and generally went home late at night, having to pass through a dark cypress swamp over a corduroy road. One night, to test his alleged fearlessness, a man stationed himself behind a tree and enveloped himself in a sheet. He confronted Houston suddenly, and Sam stopped and said: 'If you are a man, you can't hurt me. If you are a ghost, you don't want to hurt me. And if you are the devil, come home with me; I married your sister!'"

It is not to be inferred, however, from some of the preceding statements that the boy was of an exclusively studious bent of mind. He had then, as now, the keen enjoyment of a joke, and no particular aversion to the practical form. An incident of the time is in point. "After the breaking out of the war there was a regiment of volunteer soldiers quartered at Fort Gratiot, the reservation extending to the boundary line of our house. Nearly every night we would hear a call, such as 'Corporal of the Guard, No. 1.' This would be repeated from sentry to sentry until it reached the barracks, when Corporal of the Guard, No. 1, would come and see what was wanted. I and the little

Dutch boy, after returning from the town after selling our papers, thought we would take a hand at military affairs. So one night, when it was very dark, I shouted for Corporal of the Guard, No. 1. The second sentry, thinking it was the terminal sentry who shouted, repeated it to the third, and so on. This brought the corporal along the half mile, only to find that he was fooled. We tried him three nights; but the third night they were watching, and caught the little Dutch boy, took him to the lock-up at the fort, and shut him up. They chased me to the house. I rushed for the cellar. In one small apartment there were two barrels of potatoes and a third one nearly empty. I poured these remnants into the other barrels, sat down, and pulled the barrel over my head, bottom up. The soldiers had awakened my father, and they were searching for me with candles and lanterns. The corporal was absolutely certain I came into the cellar, and couldn't see how I could have gotten out, and wanted to know from my father if there was no secret hiding-place. On assurance of my father, who said that there was not, he said it was most extraordinary. I was glad when they left, as I was cramped, and the potatoes were rotten that had been in the barrel and violently offensive. The next morning I was found in bed, and received a good switching on the legs from my father, the first and only one I ever received from him, although my mother kept a switch behind the old Seth Thomas clock that had the bark worn off. My mother's ideas and mine differed at times, especially when I got experimenting and mused up things. The Dutch boy was released next morning.”

When Mr. Moose Lost His Horns

Thornton W. Burgess

PETER RABBIT had just seen Flathorns the Moose for the first time, and Peter was having hard work to believe that there wasn't something the matter with his eyes. Indeed they looked as if something was the matter with them, for they seemed about to pop right out of his head. If any one had *told* Peter that any one as big as Flathorns lived in the Great Woods, he wouldn't have believed it, but now that he had *seen* that it was so, he just had to believe. So Peter sat with his eyes popping out and his mouth gaping wide open in the most foolish way as he stared in the direction in which Flathorns had gone.

“Big, isn't he?”

Peter looked up to see Blacky the Crow in the top of a birch-tree just at one side, and Blacky, too, was looking after Flathorns. Then Blacky looked down at Peter and began to laugh. “Don't try to swallow him, Peter!” said he.

Peter closed his mouth with a snap.

“My, but he *is* big!” he exclaimed. “I never felt so small in all my life as when I first caught sight of him. What queer horns he has! I suppose they are horns, for he carries them on his head just as Lightfoot the Deer does his. They are so big I should think they would make his head ache.”

“Perhaps they do, and that is why he drops them every spring and grows a new pair during the summer,” replied Blacky.

“Drops them! Drops those great horns and grows new ones in a single summer! Do you mean to tell me that hard

things like those horns grow? And what do you mean by saying that he drops them every spring? Why, I saw him banging them against a tree just now, and I guess if they ever were coming off they would have come off then. You can't fool me with any such story as that, Blacky!"

"Have it your own way, Peter," replied Blacky. "Some people never can believe a thing until they see it with their own eyes. All I've got to say is just keep an eye on Flathorns in the spring and then remember what I've told you." Before Peter could reply Blacky had spread his wings, and with a harsh "Caw, caw, caw," had flown away.

Of course, after that Peter was very very curious about Flathorns the

Moose, and he just ached all over to ask about those horns. But every time he saw them the idea that they ever would or could come off seemed so impossible that he held his tongue. You see, he didn't want to be laughed at. So the winter passed, and Peter was no wiser than before. Then the spring came, and one never-to-be-forgotten day Peter was hurrying along, lipperty-lipperty-lip, when right in front of him lay something that made him stop short and stare even harder than he had stared the first time he saw Flat-horns. What was it? Why, it was one of those very horns he had thought so much about! Yes, Sir, that is just what it was.

Even then Peter couldn't believe it was so. He couldn't believe it until he had hunted up Flathorns himself and seen with his own eyes that there were no longer any horns on that great head. Then Peter *had* to believe. It seemed to Peter the strangest thing he ever had heard of. There must be a reason, and if there were, Grandfather Frog would be sure to know it. So every day Peter visited the Smiling Pool to see if Grandfather Frog had wakened from his long

winter sleep. At last one day he found him and could hardly wait to tell him how glad he was to see him once more and to be properly polite before he asked him about those horns of Flat-horns the Moose.

“Chug-a-rum!” said Grandfather Frog. “It’s pretty early in the season to be asking me for a story, but seeing it is you, Peter, and that you’ve waited all winter for it, I’ll tell it to you. Way, way back in the days when the world was young, the first Moose, the great-great-ever-so-great-grandfather of Flathorns, was the biggest of all the animals in the Green Forest, but he had no horns, and he was such a homely fellow that everybody laughed at him and made fun of him. Now nothing hurts quite so much as being laughed at.”

“I know,” interrupted Peter.

“Mr. Moose felt so badly about it that he used to hide away and keep out of sight all he possibly could,” continued Grandfather Frog. “Big as he was and strong as he was, he would turn and run away to hide from even such little people as Mr. Skunk and Mr. Squirrel and your ever-so-great-grand-father, Mr. Rabbit. He just couldn’t bear to be laughed at. Old Mother Nature kept her eye on him and at last she took pity on him and crowned his head with the most wonderful horns, horns so big that no one smaller than Mr. Moose could possibly have carried them.

“Then Mr. Moose threw up his head and carried it proudly, for now no one laughed at him. He marched through the Great Woods boldly, and even old King Bear, who was king no longer, stepped aside respectfully. Then pride entered into Mr. Moose; pride in his wonderful horns; pride in his great strength. He feared no one. He beat the bushes with his great horns and bellowed until the Great Woods rang with his voice, and all those who had once laughed at him

hid in fear. He proclaimed himself king of the Great Woods, and no one dared to deny it.

“So he came and went when and where he pleased and felt himself every inch a king and carried his great horns as a crown. One day in the beginning of the springtime, he came face to face with Old Mother Nature. Once he would have bowed to her very humbly, but by now he had grown so proud and haughty that instead of stepping aside for her to pass, he boldly marched on with his head held high as if he did not see her. It was Old Mother Nature who stepped aside. She said nothing, but as he passed she reached forth and touched his great horns and they fell from his head, and with them fell all his pride and haughtiness. At once some of his neighbors who had been hiding near and had seen all that had happened began to mock him and make fun of him and laugh at him.

“Then, with his head hung low in shame, did Mr. Moose slink away and hide as he had done in the beginning, and none could find him save Old Mother Nature. Very humble was Mr. Moose when she visited him; all his pride was melted away in shame. Old Mother Nature was sorry for him. She promised him that he should have new horns, but that once a year he should lose his horns lest he should forget and again become over-proud and haughty. So while he kept hidden, the new horns grew and grew until they were greater and more wonderful than the ones he had had before. Then Mr. Moose once more came forth, holding his head high and glorying in his strength, and all his neighbors treated him with the greatest respect, quite as if he were really king of the Great Woods.

“But he never forgot what Old Mother Nature had said to him, and when the spring came, he slipped away and hid lest he should be seen without the glory of his horns, for in

his heart he knew that Old Mother Nature would keep her word. Sure enough, his great horns dropped off, and in humbleness and patience he waited for new horns to grow. So it was all the years of his life, and so it has been with his children and his grandchildren even to this day, and so it is with Flathorns, and so it will be with his children. And the Moose family never have forgotten and never can forget that there is nothing so foolish as pride in personal appearance.”

“Is that all?” asked Peter, as Grandfather Frog stopped.

“Isn't that enough?” demanded Grandfather Frog testily.

“Just think it over a while, and when you are tempted to be proud and haughty just remember the horns of Mr. Moose and what happened to them.”

“Thank you ever so much for the story,” replied Peter politely as he hopped away. Half way to the dear Old Briar-patch he paused. “It served old Mr. Moose just right!” he declared to no one in particular. And so it did.

Three Men of Gotham

There is a town in England called Go-tham, and many merry stories are told of the queer people who used to live there.

One day two men of Go-tham met on a bridge. Hodge was coming from the market, and Peter was going to the market.

"Where are you going?" said Hodge.

"I am going to the market to buy sheep," said Peter.

"Buy sheep?" said Hodge. "And which way will you bring them home?"

"I shall bring them over this bridge," said Peter.

"No, you shall not," said Hodge.

"Yes, but I will," said Peter.

"You shall not," said Hodge.

"I will," said Peter.

Then they beat with their sticks on the ground as though there had been a hundred sheep between them.

"Take care!" cried Peter. "Look out that my sheep don't jump on the bridge."

"I care not where they jump," said Hodge; "but they shall not go over it."

"But they shall," said Peter.

"Have a care," said Hodge; "for if you say too much, I will put my fingers in your mouth."

"Will you?" said Peter.

Just then another man of Gotham came from the market with a sack of meal on his horse. He heard his neighbors quarrel-ing about sheep; but he could see no sheep between them, and so he stopped and spoke to them.

"Ah, you foolish fellows!" he cried. "It is strange that you will never learn wisdom.—Come here, Peter, and help me lay my sack on my shoulder."

Peter did so, and the man carried his meal to the side of the bridge.

"Now look at me," he said, "and learn a lesson." And he opened the mouth of the sack, and poured all the meal into the river.

"Now, neighbors," he said, "can you tell how much meal is in my sack?"

"There is none at all!" cried Hodge and Peter together.

"You are right," said the man; "and you that stand here and quarrel about nothing, have no more sense in your heads than I have meal in my sack!"

Other Wise Men of Gotham

One day, news was brought to Gotham that the king was coming that way, and that he would pass through the town. This did not please the men of Gotham at all. They hated the king, for they knew that he was a cruel, bad man. If he came to their town, they would have to find food and lodging for him and his men; and if he saw anything that pleased him, he would be sure to take it for his own. What should they do?

They met together to talk the matter over.

"Let us chop down the big trees in the woods, so that they will block up all the roads that lead into the town," said one of the wise men.

"Good!" said all the rest.

So they went out with their axes, and soon all the roads and paths to the town were filled with logs and brush. The king's horse-men would have a hard time of it getting into Gotham. They would either have to make a new road, or give up the plan al-to-geth-er, and go on to some other place.

When the king came, and saw that the road had been blocked up, he was very angry.

"Who chopped those trees down in my way?" he asked of two country lads that were passing by.

"The men of Gotham," said the lads.

"Well," said the king, "go and tell the men of Gotham that I shall send my sher-iff into their town, and have all their

noses cut off."

The two lads ran to the town as fast as they could, and made known what the king had said.

Every-body was in great fright. The men ran from house to house, carrying the news, and asking one another what they should do.

"Our wits have kept the king out of the town," said one; "and so now our wits must save our noses."

"True, true!" said the others. "But what shall we do?"

Then one, whose name was Dobbin, and who was thought to be the wisest of them all, said, "Let me tell you something. Many a man has been punished because he was wise, but I have never heard of any one being harmed because he was a fool. So, when the king's sher-iff comes, let us all act like fools."

"Good, good!" cried the others. "We will all act like fools."

It was no easy thing for the king's men to open the roads; and while they were doing it, the king grew tired of waiting, and went back to London. But very early one morning, the sheriff with a party of fierce soldiers rode through the woods, and between the fields, toward Gotham. Just before they reached the town, they saw a queer sight. The old men were rolling big stones up the hill, and all the young men were looking on, and grunting very loudly.

The sheriff stopped his horses, and asked what they were doing.

"We are rolling stones up-hill to make the sun rise," said one of the old men.

"You foolish fellow!" said the sheriff. "Don't you know that the sun will rise without any help?"

"Ah! will it?" said the old man. "Well, I never thought of that. How wise you are!"

"And what are *you* doing?" said the sheriff to the young men.

"Oh, we do the grunting while our fathers do the working," they answered.

"I see," said the sheriff. "Well, that is the way the world goes every-where." And he rode on toward the town.

He soon came to a field where a number of men were building a stone wall.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"Why, master," they answered, "there is a cuck-oo in this field, and we are building a wall around it so as to keep the bird from straying away."

"You foolish fellows!" said the sheriff. "Don't you know that the bird will fly over the top of your wall, no matter how high you build it?"

"Why, no," they said. "We never thought of that. How very wise you are!"

The sheriff next met a man who was carrying a door on his back.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"I have just started on a long jour-ney," said the man.

"But why do you carry that door?" asked the sheriff.

"I left my money at home."

"Then why didn't you leave the door at home too?"

"I was afraid of thieves; and you see, if I have the door with

me, they can't break it open and get in."

"You foolish fellow!" said the sheriff. "It would be safer to leave the door at home, and carry the money with you."

"Ah, would it, though?" said the man. "Now, I never thought of that. You are the wisest man that I ever saw."

Then the sheriff rode on with his men; but every one that they met was doing some silly thing.

"Truly I believe that the people of Gotham are all fools," said one of the horsemen.

"That is true," said another. "It would be a shame to harm such simple people."

"Let us ride back to London, and tell the king all about them," said the sheriff.

"Yes, let us do so," said the horsemen.

So they went back, and told the king that Gotham was a town of fools; and the king laughed, and said that if that was the case, he would not harm them, but would let them keep their noses.

Pocahontas

There was once a very brave man whose name was John Smith. He came to this country many years ago, when there were great woods everywhere, and many wild beasts and Indians. Many tales are told of his ad-ven-tures, some of them true and some of them untrue. The most famous of all these is the fol-low-ing:—

One day when Smith was in the woods, some Indians came upon him, and made him their pris-on-er. They led him to their king, and in a short time they made ready to put him to death.

A large stone was brought in, and Smith was made to lie down with his head on it. Then two tall Indians with big clubs in their hands came forward. The king and all his great men stood around to see. The Indians raised their clubs. In another moment they would fall on Smith's head.

But just then a little Indian girl rushed in. She was the daugh-ter of the king, and her name was Po-ca-hon'tas. She ran and threw herself between Smith and the up-lift-ed clubs. She clasped Smith's head with her arms. She laid her own head upon his.

"O father!" she cried, "spare this man's life. I[59] am sure he has done you no harm, and we ought to be his friends."

The men with the clubs could not strike, for they did not want to hurt the child. The king at first did not know what to do. Then he spoke to some of his war-riors, and they lifted Smith from the ground. They untied the cords from his wrists and feet, and set him free.

The next day the king sent Smith home; and several Indians went with him to protect him from harm.

After that, as long as she lived, Po-ca-hon-tas was the friend of the white men, and she did a great many things to help them.

Buster Bear's Big Cousins

Buster Bear had been right about the coming of Farmer Brown. It was only a few minutes after Buster's disappearance that Farmer Brown's footsteps were heard coming down the Lone Little Path, and of course that ended school for that morning. But the next morning all were on hand again at sun-up, for every one wanted to hear about Buster Bear's big cousins.

“Way out in the mountains of the Far West, where Whistler the Marmot and Little Chief the Pika live, is a big cousin of Buster Bear,” began Old Mother Nature. “He is Silvertip the Grizzly Bear, and in the past no animal in all this great country was so feared by man, as he. But times have changed, and Silvertip has been so hunted with terrible guns that he has learned to fear man quite as much as Buster does.

“He is larger than Buster and possessed of tremendous strength. Instead of a black coat, he has a coat which varies from yellowish-brown to almost black. The tips of the hairs usually are lighter, giving him a frosted appearance, and this is what has given him his name. His claws are longer and more curved than those of Buster; in fact those claws are so big that they look very terrible. Because they are so long, Silvertip cannot climb trees. But if they prevent him climbing trees they are the finest kind of tools for digging out Marmots and ground Squirrels. Even when Whistler the Marmot makes his home down in among the rocks, he is not safe. Silvertip's strength is so great that he can pull over and roll aside great rocks.

“He is a great traveler and covers a wide range of country in his search for food. Sometimes he visits the Cattle ranges and kills Cattle. So great is his strength that he can kill a Cow with ease. Clumsy looking as he is, he is a very fast runner, and only a fast Horse can outrun him. Like Buster, he lives on anything he can find that is eatable. He has been so hunted by man that he has become very cunning, and in all the great mountains where he lives there is no one with quicker wits. At certain seasons of the year great numbers of a fish called Salmon come up the rivers in that country, and then Silvertip lives high. He watches beside a pool until a Salmon swims within reach; then, with a swift movement of one paw, he scoops the fish on to the bank. Or he finds a place where the water is so shallow that the fish have difficulty in getting across, and there he seizes them as they struggle up the river. In winter he sleeps just as Buster does, usually in a well-hidden cave.

“Mrs. Silvertip is a splendid mother. Usually the cubs, of which as a rule there are two, remain with her until they are a year old. Both Buster Bear and Silvertip have a queer habit of standing up against a tree and biting it as high up as they can reach. The next Bear who comes along that way sees the mark and makes his own on the same tree. Silvertip knows every inch of that part of the country in which he lives and always picks out the best way of getting from one place to another. He is one of the finest animals in this country, and it is a matter for sadness that his splendid race will soon come to an end unless man makes laws to protect him from the hunters. In very many places where he used to be found he lives no longer.

“Silvertip is not so good-natured as Buster, but all he asks is to be left alone. Of course when he turns Cattle killer he is getting into the worst possible kind of mischief and man

cannot be blamed for hunting him. But it is only now and then that one of Silvertip's family turns Cattle killer. The others do no harm.

“I told you yesterday that Buster Bear has one cousin beside whom he would look small. This is Bigfoot the Alaska or Great Brown Bear, who lives in the extreme northwest part of the continent. Even Silvertip would look small beside him. He is a giant, the largest flesh-eating animal in all the great world. His coat is dark brown. When he stands up on his hind legs, he is almost half again as tall as a tall man. He stands very high at the shoulders and his head is very large. Like the other members of the Bear family, he eats all sorts of things. He hunts for Mice and other small animals, digs up roots, stuffs himself with berries, and at times grazes on a kind of wild grass, just as Cattle might do. He is a great fish eater, for fish are very plentiful in the streams in the country where he lives. Big as he is, he has learned to fear man just as Silvertip has. Occasionally when surprised he has been known to attack man and kill him, but as a rule he will run at the first hint of man's approach.

“The last of the Bear cousins is Snow King the Polar Bear. Snow King is king of the Frozen North. He lives in the region of snow and ice, and his coat is all white. He also is a big Bear, and of somewhat different shape from his cousins. He is longer, and has a much longer neck and a long head. His ears are rather small and close to his head. Snow King lives the year round where it would seem that no animal could live, and he manages to live well. Though his home is in the coldest part of the Great World, he does not mind the cold at all.

“More than any other member of the Bear family, Snow King is a flesh eater. This is because only in certain places,

and then only for a few weeks in midsummer, is there any plant life. He is a great fisherman, and fish furnish him a great deal of his food. In that far northern country are great numbers of animals who live in the ocean, but come ashore to rest and bask in the sun, and to have their babies there. They are Seals, Sea Lions and Walruses. I will tell you about them later. On these Snow King depends for much of his food. He is himself a wonderful swimmer, and often swims far out in the icy water.

“Up there there are great fields of floating ice, and Snow King swims from one to another in search of Seals, for they often climb out on these ice fields, just as they do on shore. Sometimes Mrs. Bear takes her cubs for long swims. When they become tired, one will climb on her back, and the other will seize her tail, so she will carry one and tow the other.

“Snow King's babies are born in a house of snow. Early in the winter Mrs. Bear finds a sheltered place where the snow will drift over her. There she goes to sleep, and the snow drifts and drifts over her until she is buried deep. You might think she would be cold, but she isn't, for the snow keeps her warm. Her breath melts a little hole up through the snow, so that she always has air. There the babies are born, and there they remain, just as Buster Bear's remain in their home, until they are big enough to follow their mother about. Then she breaks her way out in the spring, and leads her cubs forth to teach them how to take care of themselves. Snow King, himself, does not sleep through the winter, but roams about, just as in the summer.

“Snow King is fearless and has not yet learned to dread man, as have his cousins. He will not hesitate to attack man and is terrible to meet at close quarters. Because he lives in that far, cold country, he is not hunted as much as other

bears are. Besides the Seals and fish, he sometimes catches an Arctic Hare. In the summer great numbers of Ducks and other sea birds nest in that far northern country, and their eggs and young add to Snow King's bill of fare. His white coat is so in keeping with his surroundings that it is of the greatest aid to him in his hunting. It is a very beautiful coat and makes him the most beautiful of all the Bear family.

“Now this is all about the Bears, and also it is all about the order of flesh eaters, or Carnivora. I think that next we will see what we can find out about a certain little friend of yours, who, though he eats flesh, is not a member of the flesh-eating order at all, but belongs to an order of which he is the only member in this country. I will leave you to guess who it is.”

WHY BUSTER BEAR APPEARS TO HAVE NO TAIL

Peter Rabbit had something new to bother his bump of curiosity. And it did bother it a lot. He had just seen Buster Bear for the first time, and what do you think had impressed him most? Well, it wasn't Buster's great size, or wonderful strength, or big claws, or deep, grumbly-rumbly voice. No, Sir, it wasn't one of these. It was the fact that Buster Bear seemed to have no tail! Peter couldn't get over that. He almost pitied Buster Bear. You see, Peter has a great admiration for fine tails. He has always been rather ashamed of the funny little one he has himself. Still, it is a real tail, and he has often comforted himself with that thought.

So the first thing Peter did when he saw Buster Bear was to look to see what kind of a tail he had. Just imagine how surprised he was when he couldn't make sure that Buster had any tail at all. There was something that might, just might, be meant for a tail, and Peter wasn't even sure of that. If it was, it was so ridiculously small that Peter felt that he had no reason to be ashamed of his own tail.

He was still thinking about this when he started for home. Half way there, he paused, saw that the way to the Smiling Pool was clear, and suddenly made up his mind to ask Grandfather Frog about Buster Bear's tail. Off he started, lipperty-lipperty-lip.

"Oh, Grandfather Frog," he panted, as soon as he reached the edge of the Smiling Pool, "has Buster Bear got a tail?"

Grandfather Frog regarded Peter in silence for a minute or two.

Then very slowly he asked: "What are your eyes for, Peter Rabbit? Couldn't you see whether or not he has a tail?"

"No, Grandfather Frog. I really couldn't tell whether he has a tail or not," replied Peter quite truthfully. "At first I thought he hadn't, and then I thought he might have. If he has, it doesn't seem to me that it is enough to call a really truly tail."

"Well, it is a really truly tail, even if you don't think so," retorted Grandfather Frog, "and he has it for a reminder."

"A reminder!" exclaimed Peter, looking very much puzzled. "A reminder of what?"

Grandfather Frog cleared his throat two or three times. "Sit down, Peter, and learn a lesson from the tale of the tail of Old King Bear," said he very seriously.

"You remember that once upon a time, long ago, when the world was young, Old King Bear ruled in the Green Forest, and everybody brought tribute to him."

Peter nodded and Grandfather Frog went on.

"Now Old King Bear was the great-great-ever-so-great grandfather of Buster Bear, and he looked very much as Buster does, except that he didn't have any tail at all, not the least sign of a tail. At first, before he was made king of the Green Forest, he didn't mind this at all. In fact, he was rather pleased that he didn't have a tail. You see, he couldn't think of any earthly use he would have for a tail, and so he was glad that he hadn't got one to bother with.

"This was just Old Mother Nature's view of the matter. She had done her very best to give everybody everything that they really needed, and not to give them things which they didn't need. She couldn't see that Mr. Bear had the least need of a tail, and so she hadn't given him one. Mr. Bear

was perfectly happy without one, and was so busy getting enough to eat that he didn't have time for silly thoughts or vain wishes.

"Then he was made king over all the people of the Green Forest, and his word was law. It was a very great honor, and for a while he felt it so and did his best to rule wisely. He went about just as before, hunting for his living, and had no more time than before for foolish thoughts or vain wishes. But after a little, the little people over whom he ruled began to bring him tribute, so that he no longer had to hunt for enough to eat. Indeed, he had so much brought to him, that he couldn't begin to eat all of it, and he grew very dainty and fussy about what he did eat. Having nothing to do but eat and sleep, he grew very fat and lazy, as is the case with most people who have nothing to do. He grew so fat that when he walked, he puffed and wheezed. He grew so lazy that he wanted to be waited on all the time.

"It happened about this time that he overheard Mr. Fox talking to Mr. Wolf when they both thought him asleep. 'A pretty kind of a king, he is!' sneered Mr. Fox. 'The idea of a king without a tail!'

"'That's so,' assented Mr. Wolf. 'Why, even that little upstart, Mr. Rabbit, has got a make-believe tail.'"

Grandfather Frog's eyes twinkled as he said this, and Peter looked very much embarrassed. But he didn't say anything, so Grandfather Frog went on.

"Old King Bear pretended to wake up just then, and right away Mr. Fox and Mr. Wolf were as polite and smiling as you please and began to flatter him. They told him how proud they were of their king, and how handsome he was, and a lot of other nice things, all of which he had heard often before and had believed. He pretended to believe

them now, but after they were through paying their respects and had gone away, he kept turning over and over in his mind what he had overheard them say when they thought he was asleep.

"After that he couldn't think of anything but the fact that he hadn't any tail. He took particular notice of all who came to pay him tribute, and he saw that every one of them had a tail. Some had long tails; some had short tails; some had handsome tails and some had homely tails; but everybody had a tail of some kind. The more he tried not to think of these tails, the more he did think of them. The more he thought of them, the more discontented he grew because he had none. He didn't stop to think that probably all of them had use for their tails. No, Sir, he didn't think of that. Everybody else had a tail, and he hadn't. He felt that it was a disgrace that he, the king, should have no tail. He brooded over it so much that he lost his appetite and grew cross and peevish.

"Then along came Old Mother Nature to see how things were going in the Green Forest. Of course she saw right away that something was wrong with Old King Bear. When she asked him what the matter was, he was ashamed to tell her at first. But after a little he told her that he wanted a tail; that he could never again be happy unless he had a tail. She told him that he hadn't the least use in the world for a tail, and that he wouldn't be any happier if he had one. Nothing that she could say made any difference—he wanted a tail. Finally she gave him one.

"For a few days Old King Bear was perfectly happy. He spent all his spare time admiring his new tail. He called the attention of all his subjects to it, and they all told him that it was a very wonderful tail and was very becoming to him. But it wasn't long before he found that his new tail was

very much in the way. It bothered him when he walked. It was in the way when he sat down. It was a nuisance when he climbed a tree. He didn't have a single use for it, and yet he had to carry it with him wherever he went. Worse still, he overheard little Mr. Squirrel and Mr. Possum making fun of it. And then he discovered that the very ones who admired his tail so to his face were laughing at him and poking fun at him behind his back.

"And then Old King Bear wished that he *hadn't* a tail more than ever he wished that he *did* have a tail. Again he lost his appetite and grew cross and peevish, so that no one dared come near him. So matters went from bad to worse, until once more Old Mother Nature visited the Green Forest to see how things were. Very humbly Old King Bear went down on his knees and begged her to take away his tail. At first Old Mother Nature refused, but he begged so hard and promised so faithfully never again to be discontented, that finally she relented and took away his tail, all but just a wee little bit. That she left as a reminder lest he should forget the lesson he had learned and should again grow envious.

"And every bear since that long-ago day has carried about with him a reminder—you can hardly call it a real tail—of the silly, foolish discontent of Old King Bear," concluded Grandfather Frog.

Peter Rabbit scratched one long ear thoughtfully as he replied: "Thank you, Grandfather Frog. I think that hereafter I will be quite content with what I've got and never want things it is not meant that I should have."

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Autobiography

Benjamin Franklin, a great and typical American, and one of the most influential founders of the young republic, was born at Boston, Mass., on January 17, 1706. The story of his first fifty years is related in the vigorous and inspiring "Autobiography," published in 1817. But the book does not carry the story further than the year 1758, which was just the time when he took a foremost place in world-politics, as official representative of the New World in the Old World. He came in that year to England, where he remained five years as agent of the colony of Pennsylvania. Again in London, as agent for several colonies, from 1764 to 1775, Franklin fought for their right not to be taxed by the home country without having a voice in matters which concerned themselves; and from 1776 to 1785 he represented his country in Paris, obtaining the assistance of the French government in the War of Independence. On his return to America in 1785 Franklin was chosen President of the State of Pennsylvania. He died on April 17, 1790. Franklin's correspondence, during these important years in Europe, as well as the letters of the last five years of his life, have been ably edited by John Bigelow, and form, in some sort, a continuation of the "Autobiography," published in 1874. The "Autobiography" is published in a number of inexpensive forms.

I.--Early Education

Our family had lived in the village of Ecton, Northamptonshire, for 300 years, the eldest son being always bred to the smith's business. I was the youngest son of the youngest son for five generations back. My father married young, and carried his wife and three children to New England, about 1682, in order that they might there enjoy their Non-conformist religion with freedom. He married a second time, and had in all seventeen children.

I had but little schooling, being taken home at ten years to help my father's business of tallow-chandler. I disliked the trade, and desired to go to sea; living near the water in our home at Boston, I learned to swim well, and to manage boats. From a child I was fond of reading, and laid out all my little money on books, such as Bunyan's works, which I sold to get Burton's "Historical Collections"; and in my father's little library there were Plutarch's "Lives," De Foe's "Essays on Projects," and Mather's "Essays to do Good." This bookish inclination determined my father to bind me apprentice to my brother James, a printer in Boston, and in a little time I became very proficient. I had access to more books, and often sat up most of the night reading. I had also a fancy to poetry, and made some little pieces; my brother printed them, and sent me about the town to sell them.

I now took in hand the improvement of my writing by various exercises in prose and verse, being extremely ambitious to become a good English writer. My time for these exercises was at night and on Sundays. At about 16 years of age, meeting with a book on the subject, I took to a vegetable diet, and thus not only saved an additional fund to buy books, but also gained greater clearness of head. I now studied arithmetic, navigation, geometry, and read Locke "On the Human Understanding," the "Art of

Thinking," by Messrs. du Port Royal, and Xenophon's "Memorable Things of Socrates." From this last I learned to drop my abrupt contradiction and positive argumentation, and to put on the humble inquirer and doubter.

My brother had begun to print a newspaper, "The New England Courant," the second that appeared in America. Some of his friends thought it not likely to succeed, one newspaper being enough for America; yet at this time there are not less than five-and-twenty. To this paper I began to contribute anonymously, disguising my hand, and putting my MSS. at night under the door of the printing-house. These were highly approved, until I claimed their authorship.

But I soon took upon me to assert my freedom, and determined to go to New York. A friend of mine agreed with the captain of a sloop for my passage; I was taken on board privately, and in three days found myself in New York, near 300 miles from home, a boy of but seventeen, and with very little money in my pocket. The printer there could not give me employment, but told me of a vacancy in Philadelphia, 100 miles further. Thither, therefore, I proceeded, partly by land, and partly by sea, and landed with one Dutch dollar in my pocket.

There were two printers in the town, both of them poorly qualified. Bradford was very illiterate, and Keimer, though something of a scholar, was a mere compositor, knowing nothing of press-work. Keimer gave me employment. He had been one of the French prophets, and could act their enthusiastic agitations. He did not profess any particular religion, but something of all on occasion, and had a good deal of the knave in his composition. I began to have acquaintance among the young people that were lovers of

reading; and gaining money by industry and frugality, I lived very agreeably, forgetting Boston as much as I could.

At length my brother-in-law, master of a sloop, heard of me, and wrote exhorting me to return, to which I answered in a letter which came under the eyes of Sir William Keith, governor of the province. He was surprised when he was told my age, and said that I ought to be encouraged; if I would set up in Philadelphia he would procure me the public business.

Sir William promised to set me up himself. I did not know his reputation for promises which he never meant to keep, and at his suggestion I sailed for England to choose the types. Understanding that his letters recommendatory to a number of friends and his letter of credit to furnish me with the necessary money, which he had failed to give me before the ship sailed, were with the rest of his despatches, I asked the captain for them, and when we came into the Channel he let me examine the bag. I found none upon which my name was put as under my care. I began to doubt his sincerity, and a fellow passenger, on my opening the affair to him, let me into the governor's character, and told me that no one had the smallest dependence on him.

I immediately got work at Palmer's, a famous printing-house in Bartholomew Close, London. I was employed in composing for the second edition of Wollaston's "Religion of Nature," and some of his reasonings not appearing to me well-founded, I wrote a little metaphysical piece entitled "A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain." This brought me the acquaintance of Dr. Mandeville, author of the "Fable of the Bees," a most facetious, entertaining companion. I presently left Palmer's to work at Watts, near Lincoln's Inn Fields, and here I continued for the rest of my eighteen months in London. But I had grown tired of that

city, and when a Mr. Denham, who was returning to Philadelphia to open a store, offered to take me as his clerk, I gladly accepted.

We landed in Philadelphia on October 11, 1726, where I found sundry alterations. Keith was no longer governor; and Miss Read, to whom I had paid some courtship, had been persuaded in my absence to marry one Rogers, a potter. With him, however, she was never happy, and soon parted from him; he was a worthless fellow. Mr. Denham took a store, but died next February, and I returned to Keimer's printing-house.

II.--Making His Way

I had now just passed my twenty-first year; and it may be well to let you know the then state of my mind with regard to my principles and morals. My parents had brought me through my childhood piously in the dissenting way, but now I had become a thorough Deist. My arguments had perverted some others, but as each of these persons had afterwards wronged me greatly without the least compunction, and as my own conduct towards others had given me great trouble, I began to suspect that this doctrine, though it might be true, was not very useful. I now, therefore, grew convinced that truth, sincerity, and integrity between man and man were of the utmost importance to the felicity of life; and I formed written resolutions to practice them ever while I lived.

I now set up in partnership with Meredith, one of Keimer's workmen, the money being found by Meredith's father. In the autumn of the preceding year, I had formed most of my ingenious acquaintance into a club of mutual improvement, which we called the Junto; it met on Friday evenings for

essays and debates. Every one of its members exerted himself in recommending business to our new firm.

Soon Keimer started a newspaper, "The Universal Instructor in all Arts and Sciences and Pennsylvania Gazette," but after carrying it on for some months with only ninety subscribers he sold it to me for a trifle, and it proved in a few years extremely profitable. With the help of two good friends I bought out Meredith in 1729, and continued the business alone.

I had turned my thoughts to marriage, but soon found that, the business of a printer being thought a poor one, I was not to expect money with a wife. Friendly relations had continued between me and Mrs. Read's family; I pitied poor Miss Read's unfortunate situation, and our mutual affection revived. Though there was a report of her husband's death, and another report that he had a preceding wife in England, neither of these were certain, and he had left many debts, which his successor might be called on to pay.

But we ventured over these difficulties, and I took her to wife September 1, 1730. None of the inconveniences happened that we had apprehended; she proved a good and faithful helpmate, assisted me much by attending the shop; we throve together, and have ever mutually endeavoured to make each other happy.

I now set on foot my first project of a public nature, that for a subscription library. By the help of our club, the Junto, I procured fifty subscribers of forty shillings each to begin with, and ten shillings a year for fifty years. We afterwards obtained a charter, and this was the mother of all the North American subscription libraries now so numerous, which

have made the common tradesmen and farmers as intelligent as most gentlemen from other countries.

III.--The Scheme of Virtues

It was about 1733 that I conceived the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection. I wished to live without committing any fault at any time; I would conquer all that natural inclination, custom, or company might lead me into. As I knew, or thought I knew, what was right and wrong, I did not see why I might not always do the one and avoid the other. But I soon found that I had undertaken a task of great difficulty, and I therefore contrived the following method. I included under thirteen names of virtues all that at that time occurred to me as necessary or desirable, and annexed to each a short precept, which expressed the extent which I gave to its meaning.

The names of virtues were: Temperance, silence, order, resolution, frugality, industry, sincerity, justice, moderation, cleanliness, tranquillity, chastity, and humility. My list contained at first only twelve virtues, but a friend having informed me that I was generally thought proud, I determined endeavouring to cure myself of this vice or folly among the rest; and, though I cannot boast of much success in acquiring the reality of this virtue, I had a good deal of success with regard to the appearance of it. My intention being to acquire the habitude of all these virtues, I determined to give a week's strict attention to each of them successively, thus going through a complete course in thirteen weeks, and four courses in a year. I had a little book, in which I allotted a page for each of the virtues; the page was ruled into days of the week, and I marked in it, by a little black spot, every fault I found by examination to have been committed respecting that virtue upon that day.

I was surprised to find myself much fuller of faults than I had imagined, but I had the satisfaction of seeing them diminish. After a while I went through one course only in a year, and afterwards only one in several years, till at length I omitted them entirely; but I always carried my little book with me. My scheme of order gave me most trouble. It was as follows.

5--8 a.m. What good shall I do this day? Rise, wash, and address Powerful Goodness. Contrive day's business, and take the resolution of the day; prosecute the present study, and breakfast.

8 a.m.--12 noon. Work.

12--1 p.m.--Read, or overlook my accounts, and dine.

2--6 p.m. Work.

6--10 p.m. Put things in their places. Supper. Music or diversion, or conversation. Examination of the day. What good have I done this day?

10 p.m.--5 a.m. Sleep.

In truth, I found myself incorrigible with regard to order, yet I was, by the endeavour, a better and a happier man than I should have been if I had not attempted it. It may be well that my posterity should be informed that to this little artifice, with the blessing of God, their ancestor owed the constant felicity of his life.

I purposed publishing my scheme, writing a little comment on each virtue, and I should have called my book "The Art of Virtue," distinguishing it from the mere exhortation to be good. But my intention was never fulfilled, for it was connected in my mind with a great and extensive project, which I have never had time to attend to. I had set forth on paper the substance of an intended creed, containing, as I thought, the essentials of every known religion, and I conceived the project of raising a united party for virtue, by forming the virtuous and good men of all nations into a regular body, to be governed by suitable good and wise rules. I thought that the sect should be begun and spread at first among young and single men only, that each person to be initiated should declare his assent to my creed, and should have exercised himself with the thirteen weeks' practice of the virtues, that the existence of the society should be kept a secret until it was become considerable, that the members should engage to assist one another's interests, business, and advancement in life, and that we should be called "The Society of the Free and Easy," as being free from the dominion of vice and of debt. I am still of opinion that it was a practicable scheme.

In 1732 I first published my Almanack, commonly called "Poor Richard's Almanack," and continued it for about twenty-five years. It had a great circulation, and I considered it a proper vehicle for conveying instruction among the common people. Thus, I assembled the proverbs containing the wisdom of many ages and nations into a discourse prefixed to the Almanack of 1757, as the harangue of a wise old man to the people attending an auction. I considered my newspaper also as a means of instruction, and published in it extracts from moral writers and little pieces of my own, in the form sometimes of a

Socratic dialogue, tending to prove the advantages of virtue.

I had begun in 1733 to study languages. I made myself master of French so as to be able to read books with ease, and then Italian, and later Spanish. Having an acquaintance with these, I found, on looking over a Latin Testament, that I understood much of that language, which encouraged me to study it with success.

Our secret club, the Junto, had turned out to be so useful that I now set every member of it to form each of them a subordinate club, with the same rules, but without informing the new clubs of their connection with the Junto. The advantages proposed were, the improvement of so many young citizens; our better acquaintance with the general sentiments of the inhabitants on any occasion, as the Junto member was to report to the Junto what passed in his separate club; the promotion of our particular interests in business by more extensive recommendation; and the increase of our influence in public affairs. Five or six clubs were completed, and answered our views of influencing public opinion on particular occasions.

IV.--Public Life

My first promotion was my being chosen, in 1736, clerk of the General Assembly. In the following year I received the commission of postmaster at Philadelphia, and found it of great advantage. I now began to turn my thoughts a little to public affairs, beginning, however, with small matters, and preparing the way for my reforms through the Junto and subordinate clubs. Thus I reformed the city watch, and established a company for the extinguishing of fires. In 1739 the Rev. Mr. Whitefield arrived among us and

preached to enormous audiences throughout the colonies. I knew him intimately, being employed in printing his sermons and journals; he used sometimes to pray for my conversion, but never had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were heard. Our friendship lasted till his death.

My business was now continually augmenting, and my circumstances daily growing easier. Spain having been several years at war against Great Britain, and being at length joined by France, our situation became one of great danger; our colony was defenceless, and our Assembly was composed principally of Quakers. I therefore formed an association of citizens, numbering ten thousand, into a militia; these all furnished themselves with arms and met every week for drill, while the women provided silk colours painted with devices and mottoes which I supplied. With the proceeds of a lottery we built a battery below the town, and borrowed eighteen cannon of the governor of New York.

Peace being concluded, and the association business therefore at an end, I turned my thoughts to the establishment of an academy. I published a pamphlet; set on foot a subscription, not as an act of mine, but of some "public-spirited gentleman," and the schools were opened in 1749. They were soon moved to our largest hall; the trustees were incorporated by a charter from the governor, and thus was established the University of Pennsylvania. The building of a hospital for the sick, and the paving, lighting, and sweeping of the streets of the city, were among the reforms in which I had a hand at this time. In 1753 I was appointed, jointly with another, postmaster-general of America, and the following year I drew up a plan for the union of all the colonies under one government for defence and other important general purposes. Its fate was

singular; the assemblies did not adopt it, as they thought there was too much prerogative in it, and in England it was judged to be too democratic. The Board of Trade therefore did not approve of it, but substituted another scheme for the same end. I believe that my plan was really the true medium, and that it would have been happy for both sides of the water if it had been adopted.

When war was in a manner commenced with France, the British Government, not choosing to trust the union of the colonies with their defence, lest they should feel their own strength, sent over General Braddock in 1755 with two regiments of regular English troops for that purpose. He landed at Alexandria and marched to Frederictown in Maryland, where he halted for carriages. I was sent to him by the Assembly, stayed with him for several days, and had full opportunity of removing all his prejudices against the colonies by informing him of what the assemblies had done and would still do to facilitate his operations.

This general was a brave man, and might have made a figure as a good officer in some European war. But he had too much self-confidence, too high an opinion of regular troops, and too mean a one of both Americans and Indians. Our Indian interpreter joined him with 100 guides and scouts, who might have been of great use to him; but he slighted and neglected them and they left him. He said to one of the Indians, "These savages may indeed be a formidable enemy to your raw American militia, but upon the king's regular and disciplined troops, sir, it is impossible that they should make any impression." In the first engagement his force was routed in panic, and two-thirds of them were killed, by no more than 400 Indians and French together. This gave us the first suspicion that our exalted ideas of the prowess of British regulars had not been well

founded. Besides, from the day of their landing, they had plundered, insulted, and abused our inhabitants. We wanted no such defenders.

After this the governor prevailed with me to take charge of our north-west frontier, which was infested by the enemy, and I undertook this military business, although I did not conceive myself well suited for it.

My account of my electrical experiments was read before the Royal Society of London, and afterwards printed in a pamphlet. The Count de Buffon, a philosopher of great reputation, had the book translated into French, and then it appeared in the Italian, German, and Latin languages. What gave it the more sudden celebrity was the success of its proposed experiment for drawing lightning from the clouds. I was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and they presented me with the gold medal of Sir Godfrey Copley, for 1753.

The Assembly had long had much trouble with the "proprietary," or great hereditary landowners. Finally, finding that they persisted obstinately in manacling their deputies with instructions inconsistent, not only with the privileges of the people, but with the service of the crown, the Assembly resolved to petition the king against them, and appointed me agent in England to present and support the petition. I sailed from New York with my son in the end of June; we dropped anchor in Falmouth harbour, and reached London on July 27, 1757.

THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE

I had called upon my friend, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, one day in the autumn of last year and found him in deep conversation with a very stout, florid-faced, elderly gentleman with fiery red hair. With an apology for my intrusion, I was about to withdraw when Holmes pulled me abruptly into the room and closed the door behind me. "You could not possibly have come at a better time, my dear Watson," he said cordially. "I was afraid that you were engaged." "So I am. Very much so." "Then I can wait in the next room." "Not at all. This gentleman, Mr. Wilson, has been my partner and helper in many of my most successful cases, and I have no doubt that he will be of the utmost use to me in yours also." The stout gentleman half rose from his chair and gave a bob of greeting, with a quick little questioning glance from his small fat-encircled eyes. "Try the settee," said Holmes, relapsing into his armchair and putting his fingertips together, as was his custom when in judicial moods. "I know, my dear Watson, that you share my love of all that is bizarre and outside the conventions and humdrum routine of everyday life. You have shown your relish for it by the enthusiasm which has prompted you to chronicle, and, if you will excuse my saying so, somewhat to embellish so many of my own little adventures." "Your cases have indeed been of the greatest interest to me," I observed. "You will remember that I

remarked the other day, just before we went into the very simple problem presented by Miss Mary Sutherland, that for strange effects and extraordinary combinations we must go to life itself, which is always far more daring than any effort of the imagination.” “A proposition which I took the liberty of doubting.” “You did, Doctor, but none the less you must come round to my view, for otherwise I shall keep on piling fact upon fact on you until your reason breaks down under them and acknowledges me to be right. Now, Mr. Jabez Wilson here has been good enough to call upon me this morning, and to begin a narrative which promises to be one of the most singular which I have listened to for some time. You have heard me remark that the strangest and most unique things are very often connected not with the larger but with the smaller crimes, and occasionally, indeed, where there is room for doubt whether any positive crime has been committed. As far as I have heard, it is impossible for me to say whether the present case is an instance of crime or not, but the course of events is certainly among the most singular that I have ever listened to. Perhaps, Mr. Wilson, you would have the great kindness to recommence your narrative. I ask you not merely because my friend Dr. Watson has not heard the opening part but also because the peculiar nature of the story makes me anxious to have every possible detail from your lips. As a rule, when I have heard some slight indication of the course of events, I am able to guide myself by the thousands of other similar cases which occur to my memory. In the present instance I am forced to admit that the facts are, to the best of my belief, unique.” The portly client puffed out his chest with an appearance of some little pride and pulled a dirty and wrinkled newspaper from the inside pocket of his greatcoat. As he glanced down the advertisement column, with his head thrust forward and the

paper flattened out upon his knee, I took a good look at the man and endeavoured, after the fashion of my companion, to read the indications which might be presented by his dress or appearance.

I did not gain very much, however, by my inspection. Our visitor bore every mark of being an average commonplace British tradesman, obese, pompous, and slow. He wore rather baggy grey shepherd's check trousers, a not over-clean black frock-coat, unbuttoned in the front, and a drab waistcoat with a heavy brassy Albert chain, and a square pierced bit of metal dangling down as an ornament. A frayed top-hat and a faded brown overcoat with a wrinkled velvet collar lay upon a chair beside him. Altogether, look as I would, there was nothing remarkable about the man save his blazing red head, and the expression of extreme chagrin and discontent upon his features. Sherlock Holmes' quick eye took in my occupation, and he shook his head with a smile as he noticed my questioning glances.

"Beyond the obvious facts that he has at some time done manual labour, that he takes snuff, that he is a Freemason, that he has been in China, and that he has done a considerable amount of writing lately, I can deduce nothing else." Mr. Jabez Wilson started up in his chair, with his forefinger upon the paper, but his eyes upon my companion. "How, in the name of good-fortune, did you know all that, Mr. Holmes?" he asked. "How did you know, for example, that I did manual labour. It's as true as gospel, for I began as a ship's carpenter." "Your hands, my dear sir. Your right hand is quite a size larger than your left. You have worked with it, and the muscles are more developed." "Well, the snuff, then, and the Freemasonry?" "I won't insult your intelligence by telling you how I read that, especially as, rather against the strict rules of your order, you use an arc-and-compass breastpin." "Ah, of course, I

forgot that. But the writing?" "What else can be indicated by that right cuff so very shiny for five inches, and the left one with the smooth patch near the elbow where you rest it upon the desk?" "Well, but China?" "The fish that you have tattooed immediately above your right wrist could only have been done in China. I have made a small study of tattoo marks and have even contributed to the literature of the subject. That trick of staining the fishes' scales of a delicate pink is quite peculiar to China. When, in addition, I see a Chinese coin hanging from your watch-chain, the matter becomes even more simple." Mr. Jabez Wilson laughed heavily. "Well, I never!" said he. "I thought at first that you had done something clever, but I see that there was nothing in it after all." "I begin to think, Watson," said Holmes, "that I make a mistake in explaining. 'Omne ignotum pro magnifico,' you know, and my poor little reputation, such as it is, will suffer shipwreck if I am so candid. Can you not find the advertisement, Mr. Wilson?" "Yes, I have got it now," he answered with his thick red finger planted halfway down the column. "Here it is. This is what began it all. You just read it for yourself, sir." I took the paper from him and read as follows: "TO THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE: On account of the bequest of the late Ezekiah Hopkins, of Lebanon, Pennsylvania, U. S. A., there is now another vacancy open which entitles a member of the League to a salary of £4 a week for purely nominal services. All red-headed men who are sound in body and mind and above the age of twenty-one years, are eligible. Apply in person on Monday, at eleven o'clock, to Duncan Ross, at the offices of the League, 7 Pope's Court, Fleet Street."

"What on earth does this mean?" I ejaculated after I had twice read over the extraordinary announcement. Holmes chuckled and wriggled in his chair, as was his habit when

in high spirits. "It is a little off the beaten track, isn't it?" said he. "And now, Mr. Wilson, off you go at scratch and tell us all about yourself, your household, and the effect which this advertisement had upon your fortunes. You will first make a note, Doctor, of the paper and the date." "It is The Morning Chronicle of April 27, 1890. Just two months ago." "Very good. Now, Mr. Wilson?" "Well, it is just as I have been telling you, Mr. Sherlock Holmes," said Jabez Wilson, mopping his forehead; "I have a small pawnbroker's business at Coburg Square, near the City. It's not a very large affair, and of late years it has not done more than just give me a living. I used to be able to keep two assistants, but now I only keep one; and I would have a job to pay him but that he is willing to come for half wages so as to learn the business." "What is the name of this obliging youth?" asked Sherlock Holmes. "His name is Vincent Spaulding, and he's not such a youth, either. It's hard to say his age. I should not wish a smarter assistant, Mr. Holmes; and I know very well that he could better himself and earn twice what I am able to give him. But, after all, if he is satisfied, why should I put ideas in his head?" "Why, indeed? You seem most fortunate in having an employé who comes under the full market price. It is not a common experience among employers in this age. I don't know that your assistant is not as remarkable as your advertisement." "Oh, he has his faults, too," said Mr. Wilson. "Never was such a fellow for photography. Snapping away with a camera when he ought to be improving his mind, and then diving down into the cellar like a rabbit into its hole to develop his pictures. That is his main fault, but on the whole he's a good worker. There's no vice in him." "He is still with you, I presume?" "Yes, sir. He and a girl of fourteen, who does a bit of simple cooking and keeps the place clean—that's all I have in the house,

for I am a widower and never had any family. We live very quietly, sir, the three of us; and we keep a roof over our heads and pay our debts, if we do nothing more. "The first thing that put us out was that advertisement. Spaulding, he came down into the office just this day eight weeks, with this very paper in his hand, and he says: " 'I wish to the Lord, Mr. Wilson, that I was a red-headed man.' " " 'Why that?' I asks. " 'Why,' says he, 'here's another vacancy on the League of the Red-headed Men. It's worth quite a little fortune to any man who gets it, and I understand that there are more vacancies than there are men, so that the trustees are at their wits' end what to do with the money. If my hair would only change colour, here's a nice little crib all ready for me to step into.' " " 'Why, what is it, then?' I asked. You see, Mr. Holmes, I am a very stay-at-home man, and as my business came to me instead of my having to go to it, I was often weeks on end without putting my foot over the door-mat. In that way I didn't know much of what was going on outside, and I was always glad of a bit of news. " 'Have you never heard of the League of the Red-headed Men?' he asked with his eyes open. " 'Never.' " " 'Why, I wonder at that, for you are eligible yourself for one of the vacancies.' " " 'And what are they worth?' I asked. " 'Oh, merely a couple of hundred a year, but the work is slight, and it need not interfere very much with one's other occupations.' " " 'Well, you can easily think that that made me prick up my ears, for the business has not been over good for some years, and an extra couple of hundred would have been very handy. " 'Tell me all about it,' said I. " 'Well,' said he, showing me the advertisement, 'you can see for yourself that the League has a vacancy, and there is the address where you should apply for particulars. As far as I can make out, the League was founded by an American millionaire, Ezekiah Hopkins, who was very peculiar in his

ways. He was himself red-headed, and he had a great sympathy for all red-headed men; so, when he died, it was found that he had left his enormous fortune in the hands of trustees, with instructions to apply the interest to the providing of easy berths to men whose hair is of that colour. From all I hear it is splendid pay and very little to do.’ “ ‘But,’ said I, ‘there would be millions of red-headed men who would apply.’ “ ‘Not so many as you might think,’ he answered. ‘You see it is really confined to Londoners, and to grown men. This American had started from London when he was young, and he wanted to do the old town a good turn. Then, again, I have heard it is no use your applying if your hair is light red, or dark red, or anything but real bright, blazing, fiery red. Now, if you cared to apply, Mr. Wilson, you would just walk in; but perhaps it would hardly be worth your while to put yourself out of the way for the sake of a few hundred pounds.’ “ ‘Now, it is a fact, gentlemen, as you may see for yourselves, that my hair is of a very full and rich tint, so that it seemed to me that if there was to be any competition in the matter I stood as good a chance as any man that I had ever met. Vincent Spaulding seemed to know so much about it that I thought he might prove useful, so I just ordered him to put up the shutters for the day and to come right away with me. He was very willing to have a holiday, so we shut the business up and started off for the address that was given us in the advertisement. “ ‘I never hope to see such a sight as that again, Mr. Holmes. From north, south, east, and west every man who had a shade of red in his hair had tramped into the city to answer the advertisement. Fleet Street was choked with red-headed folk, and Pope’s Court looked like a coster’s orange barrow. I should not have thought there were so many in the whole country as were brought together by that single advertisement. Every shade of

colour they were—straw, lemon, orange, brick, Irish-setter, liver, clay; but, as Spaulding said, there were not many who had the real vivid flame-coloured tint. When I saw how many were waiting, I would have given it up in despair; but Spaulding would not hear of it. How he did it I could not imagine, but he pushed and pulled and butted until he got me through the crowd, and right up to the steps which led to the office. There was a double stream upon the stair, some going up in hope, and some coming back dejected; but we wedged in as well as we could and soon found ourselves in the office.” “Your experience has been a most entertaining one,” remarked Holmes as his client paused and refreshed his memory with a huge pinch of snuff. “Pray continue your very interesting statement.” “There was nothing in the office but a couple of wooden chairs and a deal table, behind which sat a small man with a head that was even redder than mine. He said a few words to each candidate as he came up, and then he always managed to find some fault in them which would disqualify them. Getting a vacancy did not seem to be such a very easy matter, after all.

However, when our turn came the little man was much more favourable to me than to any of the others, and he closed the door as we entered, so that he might have a private word with us. “ ‘This is Mr. Jabez Wilson,’ said my assistant, ‘and he is willing to fill a vacancy in the League.’ “ ‘And he is admirably suited for it,’ the other answered. ‘He has every requirement. I cannot recall when I have seen anything so fine.’ He took a step backward, cocked his head on one side, and gazed at my hair until I felt quite bashful. Then suddenly he plunged forward, wrung my hand, and congratulated me warmly on my success. “ ‘It would be injustice to hesitate,’ said he. ‘You will, however, I am sure, excuse me for taking an obvious precaution.’

With that he seized my hair in both his hands, and tugged until I yelled with the pain. 'There is water in your eyes,' said he as he released me. 'I perceive that all is as it should be. But we have to be careful, for we have twice been deceived by wigs and once by paint. I could tell you tales of cobbler's wax which would disgust you with human nature.' He stepped over to the window and shouted through it at the top of his voice that the vacancy was filled. A groan of disappointment came up from below, and the folk all trooped away in different directions until there was not a red-head to be seen except my own and that of the manager. " 'My name,' said he, 'is Mr. Duncan Ross, and I am myself one of the pensioners upon the fund left by our noble benefactor. Are you a married man, Mr. Wilson? Have you a family?' "I answered that I had not. "His face fell immediately. " 'Dear me!' he said gravely, 'that is very serious indeed! I am sorry to hear you say that. The fund was, of course, for the propagation and spread of the red-heads as well as for their maintenance. It is exceedingly unfortunate that you should be a bachelor.' "My face lengthened at this, Mr. Holmes, for I thought that I was not to have the vacancy after all; but after thinking it over for a few minutes he said that it would be all right. " 'In the case of another,' said he, 'the objection might be fatal, but we must stretch a point in favour of a man with such a head of hair as yours. When shall you be able to enter upon your new duties?' " 'Well, it is a little awkward, for I have a business already,' said I. " 'Oh, never mind about that, Mr. Wilson!' said Vincent Spaulding. 'I should be able to look after that for you.' " 'What would be the hours?' I asked. " 'Ten to two.' "Now a pawnbroker's business is mostly done of an evening, Mr. Holmes, especially Thursday and Friday evening, which is just before pay-day; so it would suit me very well to earn a little in the mornings. Besides, I

knew that my assistant was a good man, and that he would see to anything that turned up. “ ‘That would suit me very well,’ said I. ‘And the pay?’ “ ‘Is £4 a week.’ “ ‘And the work?’ “ ‘Is purely nominal.’ “ ‘What do you call purely nominal?’ “ ‘Well, you have to be in the office, or at least in the building, the whole time. If you leave, you forfeit your whole position forever. The will is very clear upon that point. You don’t comply with the conditions if you budge from the office during that time.’ “ ‘It’s only four hours a day, and I should not think of leaving,’ said I.

“ ‘No excuse will avail,’ said Mr. Duncan Ross; ‘neither sickness nor business nor anything else. There you must stay, or you lose your billet.’ “ ‘And the work?’ “ ‘Is to copy out the Encyclopaedia Britannica. There is the first volume of it in that press. You must find your own ink, pens, and blotting-paper, but we provide this table and chair. Will you be ready to-morrow?’ “ ‘Certainly,’ I answered. “ ‘Then, good-bye, Mr. Jabez Wilson, and let me congratulate you once more on the important position which you have been fortunate enough to gain.’ He bowed me out of the room and I went home with my assistant, hardly knowing what to say or do, I was so pleased at my own good fortune. “ ‘Well, I thought over the matter all day, and by evening I was in low spirits again; for I had quite persuaded myself that the whole affair must be some great hoax or fraud, though what its object might be I could not imagine. It seemed altogether past belief that anyone could make such a will, or that they would pay such a sum for doing anything so simple as copying out the Encyclopaedia Britannica. Vincent Spaulding did what he could to cheer me up, but by bedtime I had reasoned myself out of the whole thing. However, in the morning I determined to have a look at it anyhow, so I bought a penny bottle of ink, and with a quill-pen, and seven sheets of foolscap paper, I

started off for Pope's Court. "Well, to my surprise and delight, everything was as right as possible. The table was set out ready for me, and Mr. Duncan Ross was there to see that I got fairly to work. He started me off upon the letter A, and then he left me; but he would drop in from time to time to see that all was right with me. At two o'clock he bade me good-day, complimented me upon the amount that I had written, and locked the door of the office after me. "This went on day after day, Mr. Holmes, and on Saturday the manager came in and planked down four golden sovereigns for my week's work. It was the same next week, and the same the week after. Every morning I was there at ten, and every afternoon I left at two. By degrees Mr. Duncan Ross took to coming in only once of a morning, and then, after a time, he did not come in at all. Still, of course, I never dared to leave the room for an instant, for I was not sure when he might come, and the billet was such a good one, and suited me so well, that I would not risk the loss of it. "Eight weeks passed away like this, and I had written about Abbots and Archery and Armour and Architecture and Attica, and hoped with diligence that I might get on to the B's before very long. It cost me something in foolscap, and I had pretty nearly filled a shelf with my writings. And then suddenly the whole business came to an end." "To an end?" "Yes, sir. And no later than this morning. I went to my work as usual at ten o'clock, but the door was shut and locked, with a little square of cardboard hammered on to the middle of the panel with a tack. Here it is, and you can read for yourself." He held up a piece of white cardboard about the size of a sheet of note-paper. It read in this fashion:

THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE IS

DISSOLVED. October 9, 1890.

Sherlock Holmes and I surveyed this curt announcement and the rueful face behind it, until the comical side of the affair so completely overtopped every other consideration that we both burst out into a roar of laughter. "I cannot see that there is anything very funny," cried our client, flushing up to the roots of his flaming head. "If you can do nothing better than laugh at me, I can go elsewhere." "No, no," cried Holmes, shoving him back into the chair from which he had half risen. "I really wouldn't miss your case for the world. It is most refreshingly unusual. But there is, if you will excuse my saying so, something just a little funny about it. Pray what steps did you take when you found the card upon the door?" "I was staggered, sir. I did not know what to do. Then I called at the offices round, but none of them seemed to know anything about it. Finally, I went to the landlord, who is an accountant living on the ground floor, and I asked him if he could tell me what had become of the Redheaded League. He said that he had never heard of any such body. Then I asked him who Mr. Duncan Ross was. He answered that the name was new to him. " 'Well,' said I, 'the gentleman at No. 4.' " 'What, the red-headed man?' " 'Yes.' " 'Oh,' said he, 'his name was William Morris. He was a solicitor and was using my room as a temporary convenience until his new premises were ready. He moved out yesterday.' " 'Where could I find him?' " 'Oh, at his new offices. He did tell me the address. Yes, 17 King Edward Street, near St. Paul's.' "I started off, Mr. Holmes, but when I got to that address it was a manufactory of artificial kneecaps, and no one in it had ever heard of either Mr. William Morris or Mr. Duncan Ross." "And what did you do then?" asked Holmes. "I went home to Saxe-Coburg Square, and I took the advice of my assistant. But he could not help me in any way. He could only say that if I waited I should hear by post. But that was

not quite good enough, Mr. Holmes. I did not wish to lose such a place without a struggle, so, as I had heard that you were good enough to give advice to poor folk who were in need of it, I came right away to you.” “And you did very wisely,” said Holmes. “Your case is an exceedingly remarkable one, and I shall be happy to look into it. From what you have told me I think that it is possible that graver issues hang from it than might at first sight appear.” “Grave enough!” said Mr. Jabez Wilson. “Why, I have lost four pound a week.” “As far as you are personally concerned,” remarked Holmes, “I do not see that you have any grievance against this extraordinary league. On the contrary, you are, as I understand, richer by some £30, to say nothing of the minute knowledge which you have gained on every subject which comes under the letter A. You have lost nothing by them.”

“No, sir. But I want to find out about them, and who they are, and what their object was in playing this prank—if it was a prank—upon me. It was a pretty expensive joke for them, for it cost them two and thirty pounds.” “We shall endeavour to clear up these points for you. And, first, one or two questions, Mr. Wilson. This assistant of yours who first called your attention to the advertisement—how long had he been with you?” “About a month then.” “How did he come?” “In answer to an advertisement.” “Was he the only applicant?” “No, I had a dozen.” “Why did you pick him?” “Because he was handy and would come cheap.” “At half wages, in fact.” “Yes.” “What is he like, this Vincent Spaulding?” “Small, stout-built, very quick in his ways, no hair on his face, though he’s not short of thirty. Has a white splash of acid upon his forehead.” Holmes sat up in his chair in considerable excitement. “I thought as much,” said he. “Have you ever observed that his ears are pierced for earrings?” “Yes, sir. He told me that a gipsy had done it for

him when he was a lad." "Hum!" said Holmes, sinking back in deep thought. "He is still with you?" "Oh, yes, sir; I have only just left him." "And has your business been attended to in your absence?" "Nothing to complain of, sir. There's never very much to do of a morning." "That will do, Mr. Wilson. I shall be happy to give you an opinion upon the subject in the course of a day or two. To-day is Saturday, and I hope that by Monday we may come to a conclusion." "Well, Watson," said Holmes when our visitor had left us, "what do you make of it all?" "I make nothing of it," I answered frankly. "It is a most mysterious business." "As a rule," said Holmes, "the more bizarre a thing is the less mysterious it proves to be. It is your commonplace, featureless crimes which are really puzzling, just as a commonplace face is the most difficult to identify. But I must be prompt over this matter." "What are you going to do, then?" I asked. "To smoke," he answered. "It is quite a three pipe problem, and I beg that you won't speak to me for fifty minutes." He curled himself up in his chair, with his thin knees drawn up to his hawklike nose, and there he sat with his eyes closed and his black clay pipe thrusting out like the bill of some strange bird. I had come to the conclusion that he had dropped asleep, and indeed was nodding myself, when he suddenly sprang out of his chair with the gesture of a man who has made up his mind and put his pipe down upon the mantelpiece. "Sarasate plays at the St. James's Hall this afternoon," he remarked. "What do you think, Watson? Could your patients spare you for a few hours?" "I have nothing to do to-day. My practice is never very absorbing." "Then put on your hat and come. I am going through the City first, and we can have some lunch on the way. I observe that there is a good deal of German music on the programme, which is rather more to my taste than Italian or French. It is introspective,

and I want to introspect. Come along!”

We travelled by the Underground as far as Aldersgate; and a short walk took us to Saxe-Coburg Square, the scene of the singular story which we had listened to in the morning. It was a poky, little, shabby-genteel place, where four lines of dingy two-storied brick houses looked out into a small railed-in enclosure, where a lawn of weedy grass and a few clumps of faded laurel bushes made a hard fight against a smoke-laden and uncongenial atmosphere. Three gilt balls and a brown board with “JABEZ WILSON” in white letters, upon a corner house, announced the place where our red-headed client carried on his business. Sherlock Holmes stopped in front of it with his head on one side and looked it all over, with his eyes shining brightly between puckered lids. Then he walked slowly up the street, and then down again to the corner, still looking keenly at the houses. Finally he returned to the pawnbroker’s, and, having thumped vigorously upon the pavement with his stick two or three times, he went up to the door and knocked. It was instantly opened by a bright-looking, clean-shaven young fellow, who asked him to step in. “Thank you,” said Holmes, “I only wished to ask you how you would go from here to the Strand.” “Third right, fourth left,” answered the assistant promptly, closing the door. “Smart fellow, that,” observed Holmes as we walked away. “He is, in my judgment, the fourth smartest man in London, and for daring I am not sure that he has not a claim to be third. I have known something of him before.” “Evidently,” said I, “Mr. Wilson’s assistant counts for a good deal in this mystery of the Redheaded League. I am sure that you inquired your way merely in order that you might see him.” “Not him.” “What then?” “The knees of his trousers.” “And what did you see?” “What I expected to see.” “Why did you beat the pavement?” “My dear doctor, this is a time for

observation, not for talk. We are spies in an enemy's country. We know something of Saxe-Coburg Square. Let us now explore the parts which lie behind it." The road in which we found ourselves as we turned round the corner from the retired SaxeCoburg Square presented as great a contrast to it as the front of a picture does to the back. It was one of the main arteries which conveyed the traffic of the City to the north and west. The roadway was blocked with the immense stream of commerce flowing in a double tide inward and outward, while the footpaths were black with the hurrying swarm of pedestrians. It was difficult to realise as we looked at the line of fine shops and stately business premises that they really abutted on the other side upon the faded and stagnant square which we had just quitted. "Let me see," said Holmes, standing at the corner and glancing along the line, "I should like just to remember the order of the houses here. It is a hobby of mine to have an exact knowledge of London. There is Mortimer's, the tobacconist, the little newspaper shop, the Coburg branch of the City and Suburban Bank, the Vegetarian Restaurant, and McFarlane's carriage-building depot. That carries us right on to the other block. And now, Doctor, we've done our work, so it's time we had some play. A sandwich and a cup of coffee, and then off to violin-land, where all is sweetness and delicacy and harmony, and there are no red-headed clients to vex us with their conundrums." My friend was an enthusiastic musician, being himself not only a very capable performer but a composer of no ordinary merit. All the afternoon he sat in the stalls wrapped in the most perfect happiness, gently waving his long, thin fingers in time to the music, while his gently smiling face

and his languid, dreamy eyes were as unlike those of Holmes the sleuth-hound, Holmes the relentless, keen-witted, ready-handed criminal agent, as it was possible to

conceive. In his singular character the dual nature alternately asserted itself, and his extreme exactness and astuteness represented, as I have often thought, the reaction against the poetic and contemplative mood which occasionally predominated in him. The swing of his nature took him from extreme languor to devouring energy; and, as I knew well, he was never so truly formidable as when, for days on end, he had been lounging in his armchair amid his improvisations and his black-letter editions. Then it was that the lust of the chase would suddenly come upon him, and that his brilliant reasoning power would rise to the level of intuition, until those who were unacquainted with his methods would look askance at him as on a man whose knowledge was not that of other mortals. When I saw him that afternoon so enwrapped in the music at St. James's Hall I felt that an evil time might be coming upon those whom he had set himself to hunt down. "You want to go home, no doubt, Doctor," he remarked as we emerged. "Yes, it would be as well." "And I have some business to do which will take some hours. This business at Coburg Square is serious." "Why serious?" "A considerable crime is in contemplation. I have every reason to believe that we shall be in time to stop it. But to-day being Saturday rather complicates matters. I shall want your help to-night." "At what time?" "Ten will be early enough." "I shall be at Baker Street at ten." "Very well. And, I say, Doctor, there may be some little danger, so kindly put your army revolver in your pocket." He waved his hand, turned on his heel, and disappeared in an instant among the crowd. I trust that I am not more dense than my neighbours, but I was always oppressed with a sense of my own stupidity in my dealings with Sherlock Holmes. Here I had heard what he had heard, I had seen what he had seen, and yet from his words it was evident that he saw clearly not only what had happened but

what was about to happen, while to me the whole business was still confused and grotesque. As I drove home to my house in Kensington I thought over it all, from the extraordinary story of the red-headed copier of the Encyclopaedia down to the visit to SaxeCoburg Square, and the ominous words with which he had parted from me. What was this nocturnal expedition, and why should I go armed? Where were we going, and what were we to do? I had the hint from Holmes that this smooth-faced pawnbroker's assistant was a formidable man—a man who might play a deep game. I tried to puzzle it out, but gave it up in despair and set the matter aside until night should bring an explanation. It was a quarter-past nine when I started from home and made my way across the Park, and so through Oxford Street to Baker Street. Two hansoms were standing at the door, and as I entered the passage I heard the sound of voices from above. On entering his room, I found Holmes in animated conversation with two men, one of whom I recognised as Peter Jones, the official police agent, while the other was a long, thin, sad-faced man, with a very shiny hat and oppressively respectable frock-coat. "Ha! Our party is complete," said Holmes, buttoning up his pea-jacket and taking his heavy hunting crop from the rack. "Watson, I think you know Mr. Jones, of Scotland Yard? Let me introduce you to Mr. Merryweather, who is to be our companion in to-night's adventure."

"We're hunting in couples again, Doctor, you see," said Jones in his consequential way. "Our friend here is a wonderful man for starting a chase. All he wants is an old dog to help him to do the running down." "I hope a wild goose may not prove to be the end of our chase," observed Mr. Merryweather gloomily. "You may place considerable confidence in Mr. Holmes, sir," said the police agent loftily.

“He has his own little methods, which are, if he won’t mind my saying so, just a little too theoretical and fantastic, but he has the makings of a detective in him. It is not too much to say that once or twice, as in that business of the Sholto murder and the Agra treasure, he has been more nearly correct than the official force.” “Oh, if you say so, Mr. Jones, it is all right,” said the stranger with deference. “Still, I confess that I miss my rubber. It is the first Saturday night for seven-and-twenty years that I have not had my rubber.” “I think you will find,” said Sherlock Holmes, “that you will play for a higher stake to-night than you have ever done yet, and that the play will be more exciting. For you, Mr. Merryweather, the stake will be some £30,000; and for you, Jones, it will be the man upon whom you wish to lay your hands.” “John Clay, the murderer, thief, smasher, and forger. He’s a young man, Mr. Merryweather, but he is at the head of his profession, and I would rather have my bracelets on him than on any criminal in London. He’s a remarkable man, is young John Clay. His grandfather was a royal duke, and he himself has been to Eton and Oxford. His brain is as cunning as his fingers, and though we meet signs of him at every turn, we never know where to find the man himself. He’ll crack a crib in Scotland one week, and be raising money to build an orphanage in Cornwall the next. I’ve been on his track for years and have never set eyes on him yet.” “I hope that I may have the pleasure of introducing you to-night. I’ve had one or two little turns also with Mr. John Clay, and I agree with you that he is at the head of his profession. It is past ten, however, and quite time that we started. If you two will take the first hansom, Watson and I will follow in the second.” Sherlock Holmes was not very communicative during the long drive and lay back in the cab humming the tunes which he had heard in the afternoon. We rattled

through an endless labyrinth of gas-lit streets until we emerged into Farrington Street. "We are close there now," my friend remarked. "This fellow Merryweather is a bank director, and personally interested in the matter. I thought it as well to have Jones with us also. He is not a bad fellow, though an absolute imbecile in his profession. He has one positive virtue. He is as brave as a bulldog and as tenacious as a lobster if he gets his claws upon anyone. Here we are, and they are waiting for us." We had reached the same crowded thoroughfare in which we had found ourselves in the morning. Our cabs were dismissed, and, following the guidance of Mr. Merryweather, we passed down a narrow passage and through a side door, which he opened for us. Within there was a small corridor, which ended in a very massive iron gate. This also was opened, and led down a flight of winding stone steps, which terminated at another formidable gate. Mr. Merryweather stopped to light a lantern, and then conducted us down a dark, earth-smelling passage, and so, after opening a third door, into a huge vault or cellar, which was piled all round with crates and massive boxes. "You are not very vulnerable from above," Holmes remarked as he held up the lantern and gazed about him.

"Nor from below," said Mr. Merryweather, striking his stick upon the flags which lined the floor. "Why, dear me, it sounds quite hollow!" he remarked, looking up in surprise. "I must really ask you to be a little more quiet!" said Holmes severely. "You have already imperilled the whole success of our expedition. Might I beg that you would have the goodness to sit down upon one of those boxes, and not to interfere?" The solemn Mr. Merryweather perched himself upon a crate, with a very injured expression upon his face, while Holmes fell upon his knees upon the floor and, with the lantern and a magnifying lens, began to

examine minutely the cracks between the stones. A few seconds sufficed to satisfy him, for he sprang to his feet again and put his glass in his pocket. "We have at least an hour before us," he remarked, "for they can hardly take any steps until the good pawnbroker is safely in bed. Then they will not lose a minute, for the sooner they do their work the longer time they will have for their escape. We are at present, Doctor—as no doubt you have divined—in the cellar of the City branch of one of the principal London banks. Mr. Merryweather is the chairman of directors, and he will explain to you that there are reasons why the more daring criminals of London should take a considerable interest in this cellar at present." "It is our French gold," whispered the director. "We have had several warnings that an attempt might be made upon it." "Your French gold?" "Yes. We had occasion some months ago to strengthen our resources and borrowed for that purpose 30,000 napoleons from the Bank of France. It has become known that we have never had occasion to unpack the money, and that it is still lying in our cellar. The crate upon which I sit contains 2,000 napoleons packed between layers of lead foil. Our reserve of bullion is much larger at present than is usually kept in a single branch office, and the directors have had misgivings upon the subject." "Which were very well justified," observed Holmes. "And now it is time that we arranged our little plans. I expect that within an hour matters will come to a head. In the meantime Mr. Merryweather, we must put the screen over that dark lantern." "And sit in the dark?" "I am afraid so. I had brought a pack of cards in my pocket, and I thought that, as we were a *partie carrée*, you might have your rubber after all. But I see that the enemy's preparations have gone so far that we cannot risk the presence of a light. And, first of all, we must choose our positions. These are daring men, and

though we shall take them at a disadvantage, they may do us some harm unless we are careful. I shall stand behind this crate, and do you conceal yourselves behind those. Then, when I flash a light upon them, close in swiftly. If they fire, Watson, have no compunction about shooting them down.” I placed my revolver, cocked, upon the top of the wooden case behind which I crouched. Holmes shot the slide across the front of his lantern and left us in pitch darkness—such an absolute darkness as I have never before experienced. The smell of hot metal remained to assure us that the light was still there, ready to flash out at a moment’s notice. To me, with my nerves worked up to a pitch of expectancy, there was something depressing and subduing in the sudden gloom, and in the cold dank air of the vault. “They have but one retreat,” whispered Holmes. “That is back through the house into SaxeCoburg Square. I hope that you have done what I asked you, Jones?” “I have an inspector and two officers waiting at the front door.” “Then we have stopped all the holes. And now we must be silent and wait.”

What a time it seemed! From comparing notes afterwards it was but an hour and a quarter, yet it appeared to me that the night must have almost gone, and the dawn be breaking above us. My limbs were weary and stiff, for I feared to change my position; yet my nerves were worked up to the highest pitch of tension, and my hearing was so acute that I could not only hear the gentle breathing of my companions, but I could distinguish the deeper, heavier in-breath of the bulky Jones from the thin, sighing note of the bank director. From my position I could look over the case in the direction of the floor. Suddenly my eyes caught the glint of a light. At first it was but a lurid spark upon the stone pavement. Then it lengthened out until it became a yellow line, and then, without any warning or sound, a gash

seemed to open and a hand appeared, a white, almost womanly hand, which felt about in the centre of the little area of light. For a minute or more the hand, with its writhing fingers, protruded out of the floor. Then it was withdrawn as suddenly as it appeared, and all was dark again save the single lurid spark which marked a chink between the stones. Its disappearance, however, was but momentary. With a rending, tearing sound, one of the broad, white stones turned over upon its side and left a square, gaping hole, through which streamed the light of a lantern. Over the edge there peeped a clean-cut, boyish face, which looked keenly about it, and then, with a hand on either side of the aperture, drew itself shoulder-high and waisthigh, until one knee rested upon the edge. In another instant he stood at the side of the hole and was hauling after him a companion, lithe and small like himself, with a pale face and a shock of very red hair. "It's all clear," he whispered. "Have you the chisel and the bags? Great Scott! Jump, Archie, jump, and I'll swing for it!" Sherlock Holmes had sprung out and seized the intruder by the collar. The other dived down the hole, and I heard the sound of rending cloth as Jones clutched at his skirts. The light flashed upon the barrel of a revolver, but Holmes' hunting crop came down on the man's wrist, and the pistol clinked upon the stone floor. "It's no use, John Clay," said Holmes blandly. "You have no chance at all." "So I see," the other answered with the utmost coolness. "I fancy that my pal is all right, though I see you have got his coat-tails." "There are three men waiting for him at the door," said Holmes. "Oh, indeed! You seem to have done the thing very completely. I must compliment you." "And I you," Holmes answered. "Your red-headed idea was very new and effective." "You'll see your pal again presently," said Jones. "He's quicker at climbing down holes than I am. Just

hold out while I fix the derbies.” “I beg that you will not touch me with your filthy hands,” remarked our prisoner as the handcuffs clattered upon his wrists. “You may not be aware that I have royal blood in my veins. Have the goodness, also, when you address me always to say ‘sir’ and ‘please.’ ” “All right,” said Jones with a stare and a snigger. “Well, would you please, sir, march upstairs, where we can get a cab to carry your Highness to the police-station?” “That is better,” said John Clay serenely. He made a sweeping bow to the three of us and walked quietly off in the custody of the detective. “Really, Mr. Holmes,” said Mr. Merryweather as we followed them from the cellar, “I do not know how the bank can thank you or repay you. There is no doubt that you have detected and defeated in the most complete manner one of the most determined attempts at bank robbery that have ever come within my experience.”

“I have had one or two little scores of my own to settle with Mr. John Clay,” said Holmes. “I have been at some small expense over this matter, which I shall expect the bank to refund, but beyond that I am amply repaid by having had an experience which is in many ways unique, and by hearing the very remarkable narrative of the Red-headed League.” “You see, Watson,” he explained in the early hours of the morning as we sat over a glass of whisky and soda in Baker Street, “it was perfectly obvious from the first that the only possible object of this rather fantastic business of the advertisement of the League, and the copying of the Encyclopaedia, must be to get this not over-bright pawnbroker out of the way for a number of hours every day. It was a curious way of managing it, but, really, it would be difficult to suggest a better. The method was no doubt suggested to Clay’s ingenious mind by the colour of his accomplice’s hair. The £4 a week was a lure which must draw him, and what was it to them, who were playing for

thousands? They put in the advertisement, one rogue has the temporary office, the other rogue incites the man to apply for it, and together they manage to secure his absence every morning in the week. From the time that I heard of the assistant having come for half wages, it was obvious to me that he had some strong motive for securing the situation.” “But how could you guess what the motive was?” “Had there been women in the house, I should have suspected a mere vulgar intrigue. That, however, was out of the question. The man’s business was a small one, and there was nothing in his house which could account for such elaborate preparations, and such an expenditure as they were at. It must, then, be something out of the house. What could it be? I thought of the assistant’s fondness for photography, and his trick of vanishing into the cellar. The cellar! There was the end of this tangled clue. Then I made inquiries as to this mysterious assistant and found that I had to deal with one of the coolest and most daring criminals in London. He was doing something in the cellar—something which took many hours a day for months on end. What could it be, once more? I could think of nothing save that he was running a tunnel to some other building. “So far I had got when we went to visit the scene of action. I surprised you by beating upon the pavement with my stick. I was ascertaining whether the cellar stretched out in front or behind. It was not in front. Then I rang the bell, and, as I hoped, the assistant answered it. We have had some skirmishes, but we had never set eyes upon each other before. I hardly looked at his face. His knees were what I wished to see. You must yourself have remarked how worn, wrinkled, and stained they were. They spoke of those hours of burrowing. The only remaining point was what they were burrowing for. I walked round the corner, saw the City and Suburban Bank abutted on our friend’s premises,

and felt that I had solved my problem. When you drove home after the concert I called upon Scotland Yard and upon the chairman of the bank directors, with the result that you have seen.” “And how could you tell that they would make their attempt to-night?” I asked. “Well, when they closed their League offices that was a sign that they cared no longer about Mr. Jabez Wilson’s presence—in other words, that they had completed their tunnel. But it was essential that they should use it soon, as it might be discovered, or the bullion might be removed. Saturday would suit them better than any other day, as it would give them two days for their escape. For all these reasons I expected them to come to-night.” “You reasoned it out beautifully,” I exclaimed in unfeigned admiration. “It is so long a chain, and yet every link rings true.”

“It saved me from ennui,” he answered, yawning. “Alas! I already feel it closing in upon me. My life is spent in one long effort to escape from the commonplaces of existence. These little problems help me to do so.” “And you are a benefactor of the race,” said I. He shrugged his shoulders. “Well, perhaps, after all, it is of some little use,” he remarked. “‘L’homme c’est rien—l’oeuvre c’est tout,’ as Gustave Flaubert wrote to George Sand.”

THE STEADFAST TIN SOLDIER

There were once five and twenty tin soldiers. They were brothers, for they had all been made out of the same old tin spoon. They all shouldered their bayonets, held themselves upright, and looked straight before them. Their uniforms were very smart-looking—red and blue—and very splendid. The first thing they heard in the world, when the lid was taken off the box in which they lay, was the words "Tin soldiers!" These words were spoken by a little boy, who clapped his hands for joy. The soldiers had been given him because it was his birthday, and now he was putting them out upon the table.

Each was exactly like the rest to a hair, except one who had but one leg. He had been cast last of all, and there had not been quite enough tin to finish him; but he stood as firmly upon his one leg as the others upon their two, and it was he whose fortunes became so remarkable.

On the table where the tin soldiers had been set up were several other toys, but the one that attracted most attention was a pretty little paper castle. Through its tiny windows one could see straight into the hall. In front of the castle stood little trees, clustering round a small mirror which was meant to represent a transparent lake. Swans of wax swam upon its surface, and it reflected back their images.

All this was very pretty, but prettiest of all was a little lady who stood at the castle's open door. She too was cut out of paper, but she wore a frock of the clearest gauze and a narrow blue ribbon over her shoulders, like a scarf, and in the middle of the ribbon was placed a shining tinsel rose. The little lady stretched out both her arms, for she was a dancer, and then she lifted one leg so high that the Soldier quite lost sight of it. He thought that, like himself, she had but one leg.

"That would be just the wife for me," thought he, "if she were not too grand. But she lives in a castle, while I have only a box, and there are five and twenty of us in that. It would be no place for a lady. Still, I must try to make her acquaintance." A snuffbox happened to be upon the table and he lay down at full length behind it, and here he could easily watch the dainty little lady, who still remained standing on one leg without losing her balance.

When the evening came all the other tin soldiers were put away in their box, and the people in the house went to bed. Now the playthings began to play in their turn. They visited, fought battles, and gave balls. The tin soldiers rattled in the box, for they wished to join the rest, but they could not lift the lid. The nutcrackers turned somersaults, and the pencil jumped about in a most amusing way. There was such a din that the canary woke and began to speak—and in verse, too. The only ones who did not move from their places were the Tin Soldier and the Lady Dancer. She stood on tiptoe with outstretched arms, and he was just as persevering on his one leg; he never once turned away his eyes from her.

Twelve o'clock struck—crash! up sprang the lid of the snuffbox. There was no snuff in it, but a little black goblin. You see it was not a real snuffbox, but a jack-in-the-box.

"Tin Soldier," said the Goblin, "keep thine eyes to thyself. Gaze not at what does not concern thee!"

But the Tin Soldier pretended not to hear.

"Only wait, then, till to-morrow," remarked the Goblin.

Next morning, when the children got up, the Tin Soldier was placed on the window sill, and, whether it was the Goblin or the wind that did it, all at once the window flew open and the Tin Soldier fell head foremost from the third story to the street below. It was a tremendous fall! Over and over he turned in the air, till at last he rested, his cap and bayonet sticking fast between the paving stones, while his one leg stood upright in the air.

The maidservant and the little boy came down at once to look for him, but, though they nearly trod upon him, they could not manage to find him. If the Soldier had but once called "Here am I!" they might easily enough have heard him, but he did not think it becoming to cry out for help, being in uniform.

It now began to rain; faster and faster fell the drops, until there was a heavy shower; and when it was over, two street boys came by.

"Look you," said one, "there lies a tin soldier. He must come out and sail in a boat."

So they made a boat out of an old newspaper and put the Tin Soldier in the middle of it, and away he sailed down the gutter, while the boys ran along by his side, clapping their hands.

Goodness! how the waves rocked that paper boat, and how fast the stream ran! The Tin Soldier became quite giddy, the

boat veered round so quickly; still he moved not a muscle, but looked straight before him and held his bayonet tightly.

All at once the boat passed into a drain, and it became as dark as his own old home in the box. "Where am I going now?" thought he. "Yes, to be sure, it is all that Goblin's doing. Ah! if the little lady were but sailing with me in the boat, I would not care if it were twice as dark."

Just then a great water rat, that lived under the drain, darted suddenly out.

"Have you a passport?" asked the rat. "Where is your passport?"

But the Tin Soldier kept silence and only held his bayonet with a firmer grasp.

The boat sailed on, but the rat followed. Whew! how he gnashed his teeth and cried to the sticks and straws: "Stop him! stop him! He hasn't paid toll! He hasn't shown his passport!"

But the stream grew stronger and stronger. Already the Tin Soldier could see daylight at the point where the tunnel ended; but at the same time he heard a rushing, roaring noise, at which a bolder man might have trembled. Think! just where the tunnel ended, the drain widened into a great sheet that fell into the mouth of a sewer. It was as perilous a situation for the Soldier as sailing down a mighty waterfall would be for us.

He was now so near it that he could not stop. The boat dashed on, and the Tin Soldier held himself so well that no one might say of him that he so much as winked an eye. Three or four times the boat whirled round and round; it was full of water to the brim and must certainly sink.

The Tin Soldier stood up to his neck in water; deeper and deeper sank the boat, softer and softer grew the paper; and now the water closed over the Soldier's head. He thought of the pretty little dancer whom he should never see again, and in his ears rang the words of the song:

Wild adventure, mortal
danger,
Be thy portion, valiant
stranger.

The paper boat parted in the middle, and the Soldier was about to sink, when he was swallowed by a great fish.

Oh, how dark it was! darker even than in the drain, and so narrow; but the Tin Soldier retained his courage; there he lay at full length, shouldering his bayonet as before.

To and fro swam the fish, turning and twisting and making the strangest movements, till at last he became perfectly still.

Something like a flash of daylight passed through him, and a voice said, "Tin Soldier!" The fish had been caught, taken to market, sold and bought, and taken to the kitchen, where the cook had cut him with a large knife. She seized the Tin Soldier between her finger and thumb and took him to the room where the family sat, and where all were eager to see the celebrated man who had traveled in the maw of a fish; but the Tin Soldier remained unmoved. He was not at all proud.

They set him upon the table there. But how could so curious a thing happen? The Soldier was in the very same room in which he had been before. He saw the same children, the same toys stood upon the table, and among them the pretty dancing maiden, who still stood upon one

leg. She too was steadfast. That touched the Tin Soldier's heart. He could have wept tin tears, but that would not have been proper. He looked at her and she looked at him, but neither spoke a word.

And now one of the little boys took the Tin Soldier and threw him into the stove. He gave no reason for doing so, but no doubt the Goblin in the snuffbox had something to do with it.

The Tin Soldier stood now in a blaze of red light. The heat he felt was terrible, but whether it proceeded from the fire or from the love in his heart, he did not know. He saw that the colors were quite gone from his uniform, but whether that had happened on the journey or had been caused by grief, no one could say. He looked at the little lady, she looked at him, and he felt himself melting; still he stood firm as ever, with his bayonet on his shoulder. Then suddenly the door flew open; the wind caught the Dancer, and she flew straight into the stove to the Tin Soldier, flashed up in a flame, and was gone! The Tin Soldier melted into a lump; and in the ashes the maid found him next day, in the shape of a little tin heart, while of the Dancer nothing remained save the tinsel rose, and that was burned as black as a coal.

FRANKENSTEIN

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

Introduction

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, the daughter of William Godwin (see Vol. IV) and Mary Wollstonecraft, was born in London, August 30, 1797, and married to the poet Shelley in 1816, on the death of his first wife Harriet. Two years previous to this she had eloped with Shelley (see Vol. XVIII) to Switzerland, and they lived together in Italy till his death in 1823, when Mrs. Shelley returned to England, and continued her literary work. "Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus," the first of Mary Shelley's books, was published in 1818, and owed its origin to the summer spent by the Shelleys on the shores of Geneva when Byron was their neighbour. It was "a wet, ungenial summer," according to the account Mary Shelley has left. "Some volumes of ghost stories, translated from the German into French, fell into our hands." Then one evening Byron said, "we will each write a ghost story," and the proposition was agreed to, and Mary Shelley's contribution was developed till at length "Frankenstein" was written. The story is at once a remarkable and impressive performance. The influence of Mrs. Shelley's father is apparent throughout, but probably the authoress was most influenced by the old German tales of the supernatural. The theme of a mortal creating, by the aid of natural science, a being in the shape of man, was at the time a bold and daring innovation in

English literature. Mrs. Shelley died February 21, 1851.

I.--Robert Walton's Letter

August 5, 17--

My Dear Sister.--This letter will reach England by a merchantman now on its homeward voyage from Archangel; more fortunate than I, who may not see my native land, perhaps for many years. We have already reached a very high latitude, and it is the height of summer; but last Monday, July 31, we were nearly surrounded by ice which closed in the ship on all sides. Our situation was somewhat dangerous, especially as we were compassed round by a very thick fog. About two o'clock the mist cleared away, and we beheld in every direction, vast and irregular plains of ice. A strange sight suddenly attracted our attention. We perceived a low carriage, fixed on a sledge and drawn by dogs, pass on towards the North: a being which had the shape of a man, but apparently of gigantic stature, sat in the sledge and guided the dogs. We watched the rapid progress of the traveller until he was lost among the distant inequalities of the ice. Before night the ice broke and freed our ship.

In the morning, as soon as it was light, I went upon deck, and found all the sailors apparently talking to some one in the sea, it was, in fact, a sledge, like that we had seen before, which had drifted towards us in the night, on a large fragment of ice. Only one dog remained alive, but there was a human being whom the sailors were persuading to enter the vessel.

On perceiving me, the stranger addressed me in English. "Before I come on board your vessel," said he, "will you

have the kindness to inform me whither you are bound?"

I replied that we were on a voyage of discovery towards the northern pole.

Upon hearing this he consented to come on board. His limbs were nearly frozen, and his body dreadfully emaciated. I never saw a man in so wretched a condition, and I often feel that his sufferings had deprived him of understanding.

Once the lieutenant asked why he had come so far upon the ice in so strange a vehicle. He replied, "To seek one who fled from me." "And did the man whom you pursued travel in the same fashion?"

"Yes."

"Then I fancy we have seen him; for the day before we picked you up, we saw some dogs drawing a sledge, with a man in it, across the ice."

From this time a new spirit of life animated the decaying frame of the stranger. He manifested the greatest eagerness to be upon deck, to watch for the sledge which had before appeared.

August 17, 17--

Yesterday the stranger said to me, "You may easily perceive, Capt. Walton, that I have suffered great and unparalleled misfortunes. My fate is nearly fulfilled. I wait but for one event, and then I shall repose in peace. Listen to my history, and you will perceive how irrevocably my destiny is determined."

II.--Frankenstein's Story

I am by birth a Genevese; and my family is one of the most distinguished of that republic. My father has filled several public situations with honour and reputation. He passed his younger days perpetually occupied by the affairs of his country, and it was not until the decline of life that he became a husband and the father of a family.

When I was about five years old, my mother, whose benevolent disposition often made her enter the cottages of the poor, brought to our house a child fairer than pictured cherub, an orphan whom she found in a peasant's hut; the infant daughter of a nobleman who had died fighting for Italy. Thus Elizabeth became the inmate of my parents' house. Every one loved her, and I looked upon Elizabeth as mine, to protect, love, and cherish. We called each other familiarly by the name cousin, and were brought up together. No human being could have passed a happier childhood than myself.

When I had attained the age of seventeen, my parents resolved that I should become a student at the University of Ingolstadt; I had hitherto attended the schools, of Geneva.

Before the day of my departure arrived, the first misfortune of my life occurred--an omen of my future misery. My mother attended Elizabeth in an attack of scarlet fever. Elizabeth was saved, but my mother sickened and died. On her deathbed she joined the hands of Elizabeth and myself:--"My children," she said, "my firmest hopes of future happiness were placed on the prospect of your union. This expectation will now be the consolation of your father."

The day of my departure for Ingolstadt, deferred for some weeks by my mother's death, at length arrived. I reached

the town after a long and fatiguing journey, delivered my letters of introduction, and paid a visit to some of the principal professors.

M. Krempe, professor of Natural Philosophy, was an uncouth man. He asked me several questions concerning my progress in different branches of science, and informed me I must begin my studies entirely anew.

M. Waldman was very unlike his colleague. His voice was the sweetest I had ever heard. Partly from curiosity, and partly from idleness, I entered his lecture room, and his panegyric upon modern chemistry I shall never forget:--"The ancient teachers of this science," said he, "promised impossibilities, and performed nothing. The modern masters promise very little, and have, indeed, performed miracles. They have discovered how the blood circulates, and the nature of the air we breathe. They have acquired new and almost unlimited powers; they can command the thunders of the heaven, mimic the earthquake, and even mock the invisible world with its own shadows."

Such were the professor's words, words of fate enounced to destroy me. As he went on, I felt as if my soul were grappling with a palpable enemy. So much has been done, exclaimed the soul of Frankenstein. More, far more, will I achieve: I will pioneer a new way, explore unknown powers, and unfold to the world the deepest mysteries of creation. I closed not my eyes that night; and from this time natural philosophy, and particularly chemistry, became nearly my sole occupation. My progress was rapid, and at the end of two years I made some discoveries in the improvement of chemical instruments which procured me great esteem at the University.

I became acquainted with the science of anatomy, and often asked myself, Whence did the principle of life proceed? I observed the natural decay of the human body, and saw how the fine form of man was degraded and wasted. I examined and analysed all the minutiae of causation in the change from life to death and death to life, until from the midst of this darkness a sudden light broke in upon me. I became dizzy with the immensity of the prospect, and surprised that among so many men of genius I alone should be reserved to discover so astonishing a secret.

Although I possessed the capacity of bestowing animation, yet to prepare a frame for the reception of it remained a work of inconceivable difficulty and labour. I collected bones from charnel houses, and the dissecting room and the slaughter house furnished many of my materials. Often my nature turned with loathing from my occupation, but the thought that if I could bestow animation upon lifeless matter I might in process of time renew life where death had apparently devoted the body to corruption, supported my spirits.

In a solitary chamber at the top of the house I kept my workshop of filthy creation. The summer months passed, but my eyes were insensible to the charms of nature. Winter, spring, and summer passed away before my work drew to a close, but now every day showed me how well I had succeeded. But I had become a wreck, so engrossing was my occupation, and nervous to a most painful degree. I shunned my fellow-creatures as if I had been guilty of a crime.

III.--Frankenstein's Creation

It was on a dreary night of November that I beheld the

accomplishment of my toil. With an anxiety that amounted to agony, I collected the instruments of life around me, that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet. I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open; it breathed hard; and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs.

How can I delineate the wretch whom with such infinite pains and care I had endeavoured to form? His yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of a pearly whiteness; but his watery eyes seemed almost of the same colour as the dun-white sockets in which they were set.

I had worked hard for nearly two years for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body. For this I had deprived myself of rest and health. But now that I had finished, breathless horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the aspect of the being I had created, I rushed out of the room. I tried to sleep, but disturbed by the wildest dreams, I started up. By the dim and yellow light of the moon I beheld the miserable monster whom I had created. He held up the curtains of the bed, and his eyes were fixed on me. He might have spoken, but I did not hear; one hand was stretched out, seemingly to detain me, but I escaped and rushed downstairs.

No mortal could support the horror of that countenance. I had gazed on him while unfinished; he was ugly then, but when those muscles and joints were rendered capable of motion, no mummy could be so hideous. I took refuge in the court-yard, and passed the night wretchedly.

For several months I was confined by a nervous fever, and on my recovery was filled with a violent antipathy even to

the name of Natural Philosophy.

A letter from my father telling me that my youngest brother William had been found murdered, and bidding me return and comfort Elizabeth, made me decide to hasten home.

It was completely dark when I arrived in the environs of Geneva. The gates of the town were shut, and I was obliged to pass the night at a village outside. A storm was raging on the mountains, and I wandered out to watch the tempest and resolved to visit the spot where my poor William had been murdered.

Suddenly I perceived in the gloom a figure which stole from behind a clump of trees near me; I could not be mistaken. A flash of lightning illuminated the object, and discovered its shape plainly to me. Its gigantic stature, and the deformity of its aspect, more hideous than belongs to humanity, instantly informed me that it was the wretch to whom I had given life. What did he there? Could he be the murderer of my brother? No sooner did that idea cross my imagination than I became convinced of its truth. The figure passed me quickly, and I lost it in the gloom. I thought of pursuing, but it would have been in vain, for another flash discovered him to me hanging among the rocks, and he soon reached the summit and disappeared.

It was about five in the morning when I entered my father's house. It was a house of mourning, and from that time I lived in daily fear lest the monster I had created should perpetrate some new wickedness. I wished to see him again that I might avenge the death of William.

My wish was soon gratified. I had wandered off alone up the valley of Chamounix, and was resting on the side of the mountain, when I beheld the figure of a man advancing towards me, over the crevices in the ice, with superhuman

speed. He approached: his countenance bespoke bitter anguish--it was the wretch whom I had created.

"Devil," I exclaimed, "do you dare approach me? Begone, vile insect! Or, rather, stay, that I may trample you to dust!"

"I expected this reception," said the monster. "All men hate the wretched: how, then, must I be hated, who am miserable beyond all living things. You purpose to kill me. Do your duty towards me and I will do mine towards you and the rest of mankind. If you will comply with my conditions I will leave them and you at peace; but if you refuse, I will glut the maw of death with the blood of your remaining friends."

My rage was without bounds, but he easily eluded me and said:

"Have I not suffered enough, that you seek to increase my misery? Remember that I am thy creature. Everywhere I see bliss, from which I alone am excluded. I was benevolent and good; misery made me a fiend. I have assisted the labours of man, I have saved human beings from destruction, and I have been stoned and shot at as a recompense. The feelings of kindness and gentleness have given place to rage. Mankind spurns and hates me. The desert mountains and dreary glaciers are my refuge, and the bleak sky is kinder to me than your fellow-beings. Shall I not hate them who abhor me? Listen to me, Frankenstein. I have wandered through these mountains consumed by a burning passion which you alone can gratify. You must create a female for me with whom I can live. I am alone and miserable; man will not associate with me; but one as deformed and horrible as myself would not deny herself to me.

"What I ask of you is reasonable and moderate. It is true,

we shall be monstrous, cut off from all the world: but on that account we shall be more attached to one another. Our lives will not be happy, but they will be harmless, and free from the misery I now feel. If you consent, neither you nor any other human being shall ever see us again: I will go to the vast wilds of South America. We shall make our bed of dried leaves; the sun will shine on us as on man, and will ripen our foods. My evil passion will have fled, for I shall meet with sympathy. My life will flow quietly away, and in my dying moments I shall not curse my maker."

His words had a strange effect on me. I compassionated him, and concluded that the justest view both to him and my fellow-creatures demanded of me that I should comply with his request.

"I consent to your demand," I said, "on your solemn oath to quit Europe forever."

"I swear," he cried, "by the sun and by the fire of love which burns in my heart that if you grant my prayer, while they exist you shall never behold me again. Depart to your home, and commence your labours: I shall watch their progress with unutterable anxiety."

Saying this, he suddenly quitted me, fearful, perhaps, of any change in my sentiments.

IV.--The Doom of Frankenstein

I travelled to England with my friend Henry Clerval, and we parted in Scotland. I had fixed on one of the remotest of the Orkneys as the scene of my labours.

Three years before I was engaged in the same manner, and had created a fiend whose barbarity had desolated my heart. I was now about to form another being, of whose

dispositions I was alike ignorant. He had sworn to quit the neighbourhood of man, and hide himself in deserts, but she had not. They might even hate each other, and she might quit him. Even if they were to leave Europe, a race of devils would be propagated upon the earth, who might make the very existence of man precarious and full of terror.

I was alone on a solitary island, when looking up, the monster whom I dreaded appeared. My mind was made up: I would never create another like to him.

"Begone," I cried, "I break my promise. Never will I create your equal in deformity and wickedness. Leave me; I am inexorable."

The monster saw my determination in my face, and gnashed his teeth in anger. "Shall each man," cried he, "find a wife for his bosom, and each beast have his mate, and I be alone? I had feelings of affection, and they were requited by detestation and scorn. Are you to be happy, while I grovel in the intensity of my wretchedness? I go, but remember, I shall be with you on your wedding night."

I started forward, but he quitted the house with precipitation. In a few moments I saw him in his boat, which shot across the waters with an arrowy swiftness.

The next day I set off to rejoin Clerval, and return home. But I never saw my friend again. The monster murdered him, and for a time I lay in prison on suspicion of the crime. On my release one duty remained to me. It was necessary that I should hasten without delay to Geneva, there to watch over the lives of those I loved, and to lie in wait for the murderer.

Soon after my arrival, my father spoke of my long-

contemplated marriage with Elizabeth. I remembered the fiend's words, "I shall be with you on your wedding night," and if I had thought what might be the devilish intention of my adversary I would never have consented. But thinking it was only my own death I was preparing I agreed with a cheerful countenance.

Elizabeth seemed happy, and I was tranquil. In the meantime I took every precaution, carrying pistols and dagger, lest the fiend should openly attack me.

After the ceremony was performed, a large party assembled at my father's; it was agreed that Elizabeth and I should proceed immediately to the shores of Lake Como.

That night we stopped at an inn. I reflected how fearful a combat, which I momentarily expected, would be to my wife, and earnestly entreated her to retire. She left me, and I walked up and down the passages of the house inspecting every corner that might afford a retreat to my adversary.

Suddenly I heard a shrill and dreadful scream. It came from the room into which Elizabeth had retired. I rushed in. There, lifeless and inanimate, thrown across the bed, her head hanging down, and her pale and distorted features half covered with her hair, was the purest creature on earth, my love, my wife, so lately living, and so dear.

And at the open window I saw a figure the most hideous and abhorred. A grin was on the face of the monster as with his fiendish finger he pointed towards the corpse.

Drawing a pistol I fired; but he eluded me, and running with the swiftness of lightning, plunged into the lake.

The report of the pistol brought a crowd into the room. I pointed to the spot where he had disappeared, and we followed the track with boats. Nets were cast, but in vain.

On my return to Geneva, my father sank under the tidings I bore, for Elizabeth had been to him more than a daughter, and in a few days he died in my arms.

Then I decided to tell my story to a criminal judge in the town, and beseech him to assert his whole authority for the apprehension of the murderer. This Genevan magistrate endeavoured to soothe me as a nurse does a child, and treated my tale as the effects of delirium. I broke from the house angry and disturbed, and soon quitted Geneva, hurried away by fury. Revenge has kept me alive; I dared not die and leave my adversary in being.

For many months this has been my task. Guided by a slight clue, I followed the windings of the Rhone, but vainly. The blue Mediterranean appeared; and, by a strange chance, I saw the fiend hide himself in a vessel bound for the Black Sea.

Amidst the wilds of Tartary and Russia, although he still evaded me, I have ever followed in his track. Sometimes the peasants informed me of his path; sometimes he himself left some mark to guide me. The snows descended on my head, and I saw the print of his huge step on the white plain.

My life, as it passed thus, was indeed hateful to me, and it was during sleep alone that I could taste joy.

As I still pursued my journey to the northward, the snows thickened and the cold increased in the degree almost too severe to support. I found the fiend had pursued his journey across the frost-bound sea in a direction that led to no land, and exchanging my land sledge for one fashioned for the Frozen Ocean I followed him.

I cannot guess how many days have passed since then. I

was about to sink under the accumulation of distress when you took me on board. But I had determined, if you were going southward, still to trust myself to the mercy of the seas rather than abandon my purpose--for my task is unfulfilled.

V.--Walton's Letter, continued

A week has passed away while I have listened to the strangest tale that ever imagination formed.

The only joy that Frankenstein can now know will be when he composes his shattered spirit to peace and death.

September 12

I am returning to England. I have lost my hopes of utility and glory. September 9 the ice began to move, and we were in the most imminent peril. I had promised the sailors that should a passage open to the south, I would not continue my voyage, but would instantly direct my course southward. On the 11th a breeze sprung from the west, and the passage towards the south became perfectly free. Frankenstein bade me farewell when he heard my decision, and died pressing my hand.

At midnight I heard the sound of a hoarse human voice in the cabin where the remains of Frankenstein were lying. I entered, and there, over the body, hung a form gigantic, but uncouth and distorted, and with a face of appalling hideousness.

The monster uttered wild and incoherent self-reproaches. "He is dead who called me into being," he cried, "and the

remembrance of us both will speedily vanish. Soon I shall die, and what I now feel be no longer felt."

He sprang from the cabin window as he said this, upon the ice-raft which lay close to the vessel, and was borne away by the waves, and lost in darkness and distance.

THE GHOST OF WASHINGTON

It was early on Christmas morning when John Reilly wheeled away from a picturesque little village where he had passed the previous night, to continue his cycling tour through eastern Pennsylvania. To-day his intention was to stop at Valley Forge, and then to ride on up the Schuylkill Valley, visiting in turn the many points of historical interest that lay along his route. Valley Forge, his road map indicated, was but a short distance further on. All around him were the hills and fields and roads over which Washington and his half-starved army had foraged and roamed throughout the trying winter of 1777-8—one hundred and twenty-six years ago.

It was a beautiful Christmas day, truly, and, as he wheeled along, young Reilly's thoughts were almost equally divided between the surrounding pleasant scenery and the folks at home, who, he knew very well, were assembling at just about the present time around a heavily laden Christmas tree in the front parlor. The sun rose higher and higher and Reilly pedaled on down the valley, passing every now and then quaint, pleasant-looking farmhouses, many of which, no doubt, had been built anterior to the period which had given the vicinity its history.

Arriving, finally, at a place where the road forked off in two directions, Reilly was puzzled which way to go on. There happened to be a dwelling close by. Accordingly he dismounted, left his wheel leaning against a gate-post at the side of the road, and walked up a wretchedly flagged walk leading to the house, with the idea of getting instructions from its inmates.

Situated in the center of an unkempt field of rank grass and

weeds, the building lay back from the highway probably one hundred and fifty feet. It was long and low in shape, containing but one story and having what is termed a gabled roof, under which there must have been an attic of no mean size. On coming close to the house, a fact Reilly had not noticed from the road became plainly evident. It was deserted. He saw that the roof and side shingles were in wretched condition; that the window sashes and frames as well as the doors and door frames were missing from the openings in the side walls where once they had been, and that the entire side of the house, including that part of the stone foundation which showed above the ground, was full of cracks and seams. At first on the point of turning back, he concluded to see what the interior was like anyway.

Accordingly he went inside. Glancing around the large dust-filled room he had entered his gaze at first failed to locate any object of the least interest. A rickety appearing set of steps went up into the attic from one side of the apartment and over in one corner was a large open fireplace, from the walls of which much of the brickwork had become loosened and fallen out. Reilly had started up the steps toward the attic, when happening to look back for an instant, his attention was attracted to a singular-looking, jug-shaped bottle no larger than a vinegar cruet, which lay upon its side on the hearth of the fireplace, partly covered up by debris of loose bricks and mortar. He hastened back down the steps and crossed the room, taking the bottle up in his hand and examining it with curiosity. Being partly filled with a liquid of some kind or other the bottle was very soon uncorked and held under the young man's nose. The liquid gave forth a peculiar, pungent and inviting odor. Without further hesitation Reilly's lips sought the neck of the bottle. It is hardly possible to describe the pleasure and satisfaction his senses experienced as he drank.

While the fluid was still gurgling down his throat a heavy hand was placed most suddenly on his shoulder and his body was given a violent shaking. The bottle fell to the floor and was broken into a hundred pieces.

“Hello!” said a rough voice almost in Reilly’s ear. “Who are you, anyway? And what are you doing within the lines? A spy, I’ll be bound.”

As most assuredly there had been no one else in the vicinity of the building when he had entered it and with equal certainty no one had come down the steps from the attic, Reilly was naturally surprised and mystified by this unexpected assault. He struggled instinctively to break loose from the unfriendly grasp, and when he finally succeeded he twisted his body around so that he faced across the room. Immediately he made the remarkable discovery that there were four other persons in the apartment—three uncouth-looking fellows habited in fantastic but ragged garments, and a matronly-looking woman, the latter standing over a washtub which had been elevated upon two chairs in a corner near the fireplace. To all appearance the woman had been busy at her work and had stopped for the moment to see what the men were going to do; her waist sleeves were rolled up to the shoulders and her arms dripped with water and soapsuds. Over the tops of the tubs, partly filled with water, there were visible the edges of several well-soaked fabrics. Too add to his astonishment he noticed that in the chimney-place, which a moment before was falling apart, but now seemed to be clean and in good condition, a cheerful fire burned, and that above the flames was suspended an iron pot, from which issued a jet of steam. He noticed also that the entire appearance of the room had undergone a great change. Everything seemed to be in good repair, tidy and

neat; the ceilings, the walls and the door; even the stairway leading to the attic. The openings in the walls were fitted with window sashes and well-painted doors. The apartment had, in fact, evolved under his very eyesight from a state of absolute ruin into one of excellent preservation.

All of this seemed so weird and uncanny, that Reilly stood for a moment or two in the transformed apartment, utterly dumbfounded, with his mouth wide open and his eyes all but popping out of his head. He was brought to his senses by the fellow who had shaken him growling out:

“Come! Explain yourself!”

“An explanation is due me,” Reilly managed to gasp.

“Don’t bandy words with the rascal, Harry,” one of the other men spoke up. “Bring him along to headquarters.”

Thereupon, without further parley, the three men marched Reilly in military fashion into the open air and down to the road. Here he picked up at the gate-post his bicycle, while they unstacked a group of three old-fashioned-looking muskets located close by. When the young man had entered the house a few minutes before, this stack of arms had not been there. He could not understand it. Neither could he understand, on looking back at the building as he was marched off down the road, the mysterious agency that had transformed its dilapidated exterior, just as had been the interior, into a practically new condition.

While they trudged along, the strangers exhibited a singular interest in the wheel Reilly pushed at his side, running their coarse hands over the frame and handle-bar, and acting on the whole as though they never before had seen a bicycle. This in itself was another surprise. He had hardly supposed there were three men in the country so totally unacquainted

with what is a most familiar piece of mechanism everywhere.

At the same time that they were paying so much attention to the wheel, Reilly in turn was studying with great curiosity his singular-looking captors. Rough, unprepossessing appearing fellows they were, large of frame and unshaven, and, it must be added, dirty of face. What remained of their very ragged clothing, he had already noticed, was of a most remarkable cut and design, resembling closely the garments worn by the Continental militiamen in the War of Independence. The hats were broad, low of crown, and three-cornered in shape; the trousers were buff-colored and ended at the knees, and the long, blue spike-tailed coats were flapped over at the extremities of the tails, the flaps being fastened down with good-sized brass buttons. Leather leggings were strapped around cowhide boots, through the badly worn feet of which, in places where the leather had cracked open, the flesh, unprotected by stockings, could be seen. Dressed as he was, in a cleanly, gray cycling costume, Reilly's appearance, most assuredly, was strongly in contrast to that of his companions.

After a brisk walk of twenty minutes, during which they occasionally met and passed by one or two or perhaps a group of men clothed and outfitted like Reilly's escorts, the little party followed the road up a slight incline and around a well-wooded bend to the left, coming quite suddenly, and to the captive, very unexpectedly, to what was without doubt a military encampment; a village, in fact, composed of many rows of small log huts. Along the streets, between the buildings, muskets were stacked in hundreds of places. Over in one corner, on a slight eminence commanding the road up which they had come, and cleverly hidden from it

behind trees and shrubbery, the young man noticed a battery of field pieces. Wherever the eye was turned on this singular scene were countless numbers of soldiers all garmented in three-cornered hats, spike-tailed coats and knee breeches, walking lazily hither and thither, grouped around crackling fires, or parading up and down the streets in platoons under the guidance of ragged but stern-looking officers.

Harry stopped the little procession of four in front of one of the larger of the log houses. Then, while they stood there, the long blast from a bugle was heard, followed by the roll of drums. A minute or two afterward, several companies of militia marched up and grounded their arms, forming three sides of a hollow square around them, the fourth and open side being toward the log house. Directly succeeding this maneuver there came through the doorway of the house and stepped up the center of the square, stopping directly in front of Reilly, a dignified-looking person, tall and straight and splendidly proportioned of figure, and having a face of great nobility and character.

The cold chills chased one another down Reilly's back. His limbs swayed and tottered beneath his weight. He had never experienced another such sensation of mingled astonishment and fright.

He was in the presence of General Washington. Not a phantom Washington, either, but Washington in the flesh and blood; as material and earthly a being as ever crossed a person's line of vision. Reilly, in his time, had seen so many portraits, marble busts and statues of the great commander that he could not be mistaken. Recovering the use of his faculties, which for the moment he seemed to have lost, Reilly did the very commonplace thing that others before him have done when placed unexpectedly in

remarkable situations. He pinched himself to make sure that he was in reality wide awake and in the natural possession of his senses. He felt like pinching the figure in front of him also, but he could not muster up the courage to do that. He stood there trying to think it all out, and as his thoughts became less stagnant, his fright dissolved under the process of reasoning his mind pursued. To reason a thing out, even though an explanation can only be obtained by leaving much of the subject unaccounted for, tends to make one bolder and less shaky in the knees.

The series of strange incidents which he was experiencing had been inaugurated in the old-fashioned dwelling he had visited after information concerning the roads. And everything had been going along in a perfectly normal way up to, the very moment when he had taken a drink from the bottle found in the fireplace. But from that precise time everything had gone wrongly. Hence the inference that the drinking of the peculiar liquid was accountable in some way or other for his troubles. There was a supernatural agency in the whole thing. That much must be admitted. And whatever that agency was, and however it might be accounted for, it had taken Reilly back into a period of time more than a hundred years ago, and landed him, body and soul, within the lines of the patriot forces wintering at Valley Forge. He might have stood there, turning over and over in his mind, pinching himself and muttering, all the morning, had not the newcomer ceased a silent but curious inspection of his person, and asked: "Who are you, sir?"

"John Reilly, at your pleasure," the young man replied, adding a question on his own account: "And who are you, sir?"

Immediately he received a heavy thump on his back from Harry's hard fist.

“It is not for you to question the general,” the ragged administrator of the blow exclaimed.

“And it is not for you to be so gay,” Reilly returned, angrily, giving the blow back with added force.

“Here, here!” broke in the first questioner. “Fisticuffs under my very nose! No more of this, I command you both.” To Harry he added an extra caution: “Your zeal in my behalf will be better appreciated by being less demonstrative. Blows should be struck only on the battlefield.” To Reilly he said, with a slight smile hovering over his face, “My name is Washington. Perhaps you may have heard of me?”

To this Reilly replied: “I have, indeed, and heard you very well spoken of, too.” Emboldened by the other’s smile, he ventured another question: “I think my reckoning of the day and year is badly at fault. An hour ago I thought the day was Christmas day. How far out of the way did my calculation take me, sir?”

“The day is indeed Christmas day, and the year is, as you must know, the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven.”

Reilly again pinched himself.

“Why do you bring this man to me?” Washington now inquired, turning to Harry and his companions.

“He is a spy, sir,” said Harry.

“That is a lie!” Reilly indignantly interpolated. “I have done nothing to warrant any such charge.”

“We found him in the Widow Robin’s house, pouring strong liquor down his throat.”

“I had gone inside after information concerning the roads
_____”

“Which he was getting from a bottle, sir.”

“If drinking from a bottle of necessity constitutes being a spy, I fear our camp is already a hotbed,” Washington somewhat sagely remarked, casting his eye around slyly at his officers and men. “Tell me,” he went on, with sudden sternness, looking Reilly through and through, as though to read his very thoughts, “is the charge true? Do you come from Howe?”

“The charge is not true, sir. I come from no one. I simply am making a tour of pleasure through this part of the country on my bicycle.”

“With the country swarming with the men from two hostile armies, any kind of a tour, save one of absolute necessity, seems ill-timed.”

“When I set out I knew nothing about any armies. The fact is, sir——” Reilly started to make an explanation, but he checked himself on realizing that the telling of any such improbable yarn would only increase the hazardousness of his position.

“Well?” Washington questioned, in a tone of growing suspicion.

“I certainly did not know that your army or any other army was quartered in this vicinity.” Reilly hesitated for lack of something further to say. “You see,” he finally added, prompted by a happy idea, “I rode my wheel from New York.”

“You may have come from New York, though it is hard to believe you came on that singular-looking machine so great a distance. Where is the horse which drew the vehicle?”

Reilly touched his bicycle. “This is the horse, sir, just as it is; the vehicle,” he said.

“The man is crazy!” Harry exclaimed. Washington only looked the incredulity he felt, and this time asked a double question.

“How can the thing be balanced without it be held upright by a pair of shafts from a horse’s back, and how is the motive power acquired?”

For an answer Reilly jumped upon the wheel, and at a considerable speed and in a haphazard way pedaled around the space within the hollow square of soldiers. Hither and thither he went, at one second nearly wheeling over the toes of the line of astonished, if not frightened, militiamen; at the next, bearing suddenly down on Harry and his companions and making them dance and jump about most alertly to avoid a collision. Even the dignified Washington was once or twice put to the necessity of dodging hurriedly aside when his equilibrium was threatened. Reilly eventually dismounted, doing so with assumed clumsiness by stopping the wheel at Harry’s back and falling over heavily against the soldier. Harry tumbled to the ground, but Reilly dexterously landed on his feet. At once he began offering a profusion of apologies.

“You did that by design!” Harry shouted, jumping to his feet. His face was red with anger and he shook his fist threateningly at the bicyclist.

Washington commanded the man to hold his peace. Then to Reilly he expressed a great surprise at his performance and a desire to know more about the bicycle. The young man thereupon described the machine minutely, lifting it into the air and spinning the wheels to illustrate how smoothly they rotated.

“I can see it is possible to ride the contrivance with rapidity. It has been put together with wonderful ingenuity,”

Washington said, when Reilly had replaced the wheel on the ground.

“And you, sir, it is but a toy,” an officer spoke up. “Put our friend on his bundle of tin and race him against one of our horsemen and he would make a sorry showing.”

Reilly smiled. “I bear the gentleman no ill-will for his opinion,” he said. “Still, I should like to show him by a practical test of the subject that his ignorance of it is most profound.”

“You would test the speed of the machine against that of a horse?” Washington said, in amazement.

“I would, sir. You have a good road yonder. With your permission and a worthy opponent I would make the test at once.”

“But, sir, the man is a spy,” Harry broke in. “Would it not be better to throw a rope around his neck and give him his deserts?”

“The charge is by no means proven,” Washington replied. “Nor can it be until a court martial convenes this afternoon. And I see no reason why we may not in the meantime enjoy the unique contest which has been suggested. It will make a pleasant break in the routine of camp life.”

A murmur of approval went up from the masses of men by whom they were surrounded. While they had been talking it seemed as though everybody in the camp not already on the scene had gathered together behind the square of infantry.

“Then, sir,” Harry said, with some eagerness, “I would like to be the man to ride the horse. There is no better animal than mine anywhere. And I understand his tricks and humors quite well enough to put him to his best pace.”

“I confess I have heard you well spoken of as a horseman,” Washington said. “Be away with you! Saddle and bridle your horse at once.”

It was the chain of singular circumstances narrated above which brought John Reilly into the most remarkable contest of his life. He had entered many bicycle races at one time or other, always with credit to himself and to the club whose colors he wore. And he had every expectation of making a good showing to-day. Yet a reflection of the weird conditions which had brought about the present contest took away some of his self-possession when a few minutes later he was marched over to the turnpike and left to his own thoughts, while the officers were pacing out a one mile straightaway course down the road.

After the measurements had been taken, two unbroken lines of soldiers were formed along the entire mile; a most evident precaution against Reilly leaving the race course at any point to escape across the fields. Washington came up to him again, when the preparations were completed, to shake his hand and whisper a word or two of encouragement in his ear. Having performed these kindly acts he left to take up a position near the point of finish.

The beginning of the course was located close to the battery of half concealed field pieces. Reilly was now conducted to this place. Shortly afterward Harry appeared on his horse. He leered at the bicyclist contemptuously and said something of a sarcastic nature partly under his breath when the two lined up, side by side, for the start. To these slights Reilly paid no heed; he had a strong belief that when the race was over there would be left in the mutton-like head of his opponent very little of his present inclination toward the humorous. The soldier's mount was a handsome black mare, fourteen and a half hands high; strong of limbs

and at the flanks, and animated by a spirit that kept her prancing around with continuous action. It must be admitted that the man rode very well. He guided the animal with ease and nonchalance when she reared and plunged, and kept her movements confined to an incredibly small piece of ground, considering her abundance of action.

“Keep to your own side of the road throughout the race. I don’t want to be collided with by your big beast,” Reilly cautioned, while they were awaiting two signals from the starter.

To this Harry replied in some derision, “I’ll give you a good share of the road at the start, and all of it and my dust, too, afterward.” And then the officer who held the pistol fired the first shot.

Reilly was well satisfied with the conditions under which the race was to be made. The road was wide and level, smooth, hard and straight, and a strong breeze which had sprung up, blew squarely against his back. His wheel was geared up to eighty-four inches; the breeze promised to be a valuable adjunct in pushing it along. Awaiting the second and last signal, Reilly glanced down the two blue ranks of soldiers, which stretched away into hazy lines in the distance and converged at the termination of the course where a flag had been stuck into the ground. The soldiers were at parade rest. Their unceasing movements as they chatted to one another, turning their bodies this way and that and craning their heads forward to look toward the starting point, and then jerking them back, made the lines seem like long, squirming snakes. At the end of the course a thick bunch of militiamen clogged the road and overspread into the fields.

Crack! The signal to be off. Reilly shoved aside the fellow

who had been holding his wheel upright while astride of it, and pushed down on the pedals. The mare's hoofs dug the earth; her great muscular legs straightened out; she sprang forward with a snort of apparent pleasure, taking the lead at the very start. Reilly heard the shout of excitement run along the two ranks of soldiers. He saw them waving their arms and hats as he went by. And on ahead through the cloud of dust there was visible the shadow-like outlines of the snorting, galloping horse, whose hoof beats sounded clear and sharp above the din which came from the sides of the highway. The mare crept farther and farther ahead. Very soon a hundred feet or more of the road lay between her and the bicyclist. Harry turned in his saddle and called out another sarcasm.

"I shall pass you very soon. Keep to your own side of the road!" Reilly shouted, not a bit daunted by the way the race had commenced. His head was well down over the handlebars, his back had the shape of the upper portion of an immense egg. Up and down his legs moved; faster and faster and faster yet. He went by the soldiers so rapidly that they only appeared to be two streaks of blurry color. Their sharp rasping shouts sounded like the cracking of musketry. The cloud of dust blew against the bicyclist's head and into his mouth and throat. When he glanced ahead again he saw with satisfaction that the mare was no longer increasing her lead. It soon became evident even that he was slowly cutting down the advantages she had secured.

Harry again turned his head shortly afterward, doubtless expecting to find his opponent hopelessly distanced by this time. Instead of this Reilly was alarmingly close upon him. The man ejaculated a sudden oath and lashed his animal furiously. Straining every nerve and sinew the mare for the moment pushed further ahead. Then her pace slackened a

bit and Reilly again crept up to her. Closer and closer to her than before, until his head was abreast of her outstretched tail. Harry was lashing the mare and swearing at her unceasingly now. But she had spurted once and appeared to be incapable of again increasing her speed. In this way they went on for some little distance, Harry using his whip brutally, the mare desperately struggling to attain a greater pace, Reilly hanging on with tenacity to her hind flanks and giving up not an inch of ground.

A mile is indeed a very short distance when traversed at such a pace. The finishing flag was already but a few hundred feet further on. Reilly realized that it was time now to go to the front. He gritted his teeth together with determination and bent his head down even further toward his front wheel. Then his feet began to move so quickly that there was only visible an indistinct blur at the sides of his crank shaft. At this very second, with a face marked with rage and hatred, Harry brought his horse suddenly across the road to that part of it which he had been warned to avoid.

It is hard to tell what kept Reilly from being run into and trampled under foot. An attempt at back pedaling, a sudden twist of the handle-bar, a lurch to one side that almost threw him from his seat. Then, in the fraction of a second he was over on the other side of the road, pushing ahead of the mare almost as though she were standing still. The outburst of alarm from the throats of the soldiers changed when they saw that Reilly had not been injured; first into a shout of indignation at the dastardly attempt which had been made to run him down, and then into a roar of delight when the bicyclist breasted the flag a winner of the race by twenty feet.

As he crossed the line Reilly caught a glimpse of

Washington. He stood close to the flag and was waving his hat in the air with the enthusiasm of a schoolboy. Reilly went on down the road slackening his speed as effectively as he could. But before it was possible to entirely stop his wheel's momentum the noisy acclamations in his rear ceased with startling suddenness. He turned in his saddle and looked back. As sure as St. Peter he had the road entirely to himself. There wasn't a soldier or the ghost of a soldier in sight.

As soon as he could he turned his bicycle about and rode slowly back along the highway, now so singularly deserted, looking hither and thither in vain for some trace of the vanished army. Even the flag which had been stuck into the ground at the end of the one-mile race course was gone. The breeze had died out again and the air was tranquil and warm. In the branches of a nearby tree two sparrows chirped and twittered peacefully. Reilly went back to the place where the camp had been. He found there only open fields on one side of the road and a clump of woodland on the other. He continued on down the little hill up which Harry and his companions had brought him a few hours previously and followed the road on further, coming finally to the fork in it near which was located the old farmhouse wherein he had been taken captive. The house was, as it had been when he had previously entered it, falling apart from age and neglect. When he went inside he found lying on the brick hearth in front of the fireplace a number of pieces of broken glass.

The End.

THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW

by Washington Irving

FOUND AMONG THE PAPERS OF THE LATE
DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER.

*A pleasing land of drowsy head it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
Forever flushing round a summer sky.*

CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

In the bosom of one of those spacious coves which indent the eastern shore of the Hudson, at that broad expansion of the river denominated by the ancient Dutch navigators the Tappan Zee, and where they always prudently shortened sail and implored the protection of St. Nicholas when they crossed, there lies a small market town or rural port, which by some is called Greensburgh, but which is more generally and properly known by the name of Tarry Town. This name was given, we are told, in former days, by the good housewives of the adjacent country, from the inveterate propensity of their husbands to linger about the village tavern on market days. Be that as it may, I do not vouch for the fact, but merely advert to it, for the sake of being precise and authentic. Not far from this village, perhaps

about two miles, there is a little valley or rather lap of land among high hills, which is one of the quietest places in the whole world. A small brook glides through it, with just murmur enough to lull one to repose; and the occasional whistle of a quail or tapping of a woodpecker is almost the only sound that ever breaks in upon the uniform tranquillity.

I recollect that, when a stripling, my first exploit in squirrel-shooting was in a grove of tall walnut-trees that shades one side of the valley. I had wandered into it at noontime, when all nature is peculiarly quiet, and was startled by the roar of my own gun, as it broke the Sabbath stillness around and was prolonged and reverberated by the angry echoes. If ever I should wish for a retreat whither I might steal from the world and its distractions, and dream quietly away the remnant of a troubled life, I know of none more promising than this little valley.

From the listless repose of the place, and the peculiar character of its inhabitants, who are descendants from the original Dutch settlers, this sequestered glen has long been known by the name of SLEEPY HOLLOW, and its rustic lads are called the Sleepy Hollow Boys throughout all the neighboring country. A drowsy, dreamy influence seems to hang over the land, and to pervade the very atmosphere. Some say that the place was bewitched by a High German doctor, during the early days of the settlement; others, that an old Indian chief, the prophet or wizard of his tribe, held his powwows there before the country was discovered by Master Hendrick Hudson. Certain it is, the place still continues under the sway of some witching power, that holds a spell over the minds of the good people, causing them to walk in a continual reverie. They are given to all kinds of marvellous beliefs, are subject to trances and

visions, and frequently see strange sights, and hear music and voices in the air. The whole neighborhood abounds with local tales, haunted spots, and twilight superstitions; stars shoot and meteors glare oftener across the valley than in any other part of the country, and the nightmare, with her whole ninefold, seems to make it the favorite scene of her gambols.

The dominant spirit, however, that haunts this enchanted region, and seems to be commander-in-chief of all the powers of the air, is the apparition of a figure on horseback, without a head. It is said by some to be the ghost of a Hessian trooper, whose head had been carried away by a cannon-ball, in some nameless battle during the Revolutionary War, and who is ever and anon seen by the country folk hurrying along in the gloom of night, as if on the wings of the wind. His haunts are not confined to the valley, but extend at times to the adjacent roads, and especially to the vicinity of a church at no great distance. Indeed, certain of the most authentic historians of those parts, who have been careful in collecting and collating the floating facts concerning this spectre, allege that the body of the trooper having been buried in the churchyard, the ghost rides forth to the scene of battle in nightly quest of his head, and that the rushing speed with which he sometimes passes along the Hollow, like a midnight blast, is owing to his being belated, and in a hurry to get back to the churchyard before daybreak.

Such is the general purport of this legendary superstition, which has furnished materials for many a wild story in that region of shadows; and the spectre is known at all the country firesides, by the name of the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow.

It is remarkable that the visionary propensity I have

mentioned is not confined to the native inhabitants of the valley, but is unconsciously imbibed by every one who resides there for a time. However wide awake they may have been before they entered that sleepy region, they are sure, in a little time, to inhale the witching influence of the air, and begin to grow imaginative, to dream dreams, and see apparitions.

I mention this peaceful spot with all possible laud, for it is in such little retired Dutch valleys, found here and there embosomed in the great State of New York, that population, manners, and customs remain fixed, while the great torrent of migration and improvement, which is making such incessant changes in other parts of this restless country, sweeps by them unobserved. They are like those little nooks of still water, which border a rapid stream, where we may see the straw and bubble riding quietly at anchor, or slowly revolving in their mimic harbor, undisturbed by the rush of the passing current. Though many years have elapsed since I trod the drowsy shades of Sleepy Hollow, yet I question whether I should not still find the same trees and the same families vegetating in its sheltered bosom.

In this by-place of nature there abode, in a remote period of American history, that is to say, some thirty years since, a worthy wight of the name of Ichabod Crane, who sojourned, or, as he expressed it, "tarried," in Sleepy Hollow, for the purpose of instructing the children of the vicinity. He was a native of Connecticut, a State which supplies the Union with pioneers for the mind as well as for the forest, and sends forth yearly its legions of frontier woodmen and country schoolmasters. The cognomen of Crane was not inapplicable to his person. He was tall, but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, feet that

might have served for shovels, and his whole frame most loosely hung together. His head was small, and flat at top, with huge ears, large green glassy eyes, and a long snipe nose, so that it looked like a weather-cock perched upon his spindle neck to tell which way the wind blew. To see him striding along the profile of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering about him, one might have mistaken him for the genius of famine descending upon the earth, or some scarecrow eloped from a cornfield.

His schoolhouse was a low building of one large room, rudely constructed of logs; the windows partly glazed, and partly patched with leaves of old copybooks. It was most ingeniously secured at vacant hours, by a withe twisted in the handle of the door, and stakes set against the window shutters; so that though a thief might get in with perfect ease, he would find some embarrassment in getting out,—an idea most probably borrowed by the architect, Yost Van Houten, from the mystery of an eel-pot. The schoolhouse stood in a rather lonely but pleasant situation, just at the foot of a woody hill, with a brook running close by, and a formidable birch-tree growing at one end of it. From hence the low murmur of his pupils' voices, conning over their lessons, might be heard in a drowsy summer's day, like the hum of a beehive; interrupted now and then by the authoritative voice of the master, in the tone of menace or command, or, peradventure, by the appalling sound of the birch, as he urged some tardy loiterer along the flowery path of knowledge. Truth to say, he was a conscientious man, and ever bore in mind the golden maxim, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." Ichabod Crane's scholars certainly were not spoiled.

I would not have it imagined, however, that he was one of those cruel potentates of the school who joy in the smart of

their subjects; on the contrary, he administered justice with discrimination rather than severity; taking the burden off the backs of the weak, and laying it on those of the strong. Your mere puny stripling, that winced at the least flourish of the rod, was passed by with indulgence; but the claims of justice were satisfied by inflicting a double portion on some little tough wrong-headed, broad-skirted Dutch urchin, who sulked and swelled and grew dogged and sullen beneath the birch. All this he called “doing his duty by their parents;” and he never inflicted a chastisement without following it by the assurance, so consolatory to the smarting urchin, that “he would remember it and thank him for it the longest day he had to live.”

When school hours were over, he was even the companion and playmate of the larger boys; and on holiday afternoons would convoy some of the smaller ones home, who happened to have pretty sisters, or good housewives for mothers, noted for the comforts of the cupboard. Indeed, it behooved him to keep on good terms with his pupils. The revenue arising from his school was small, and would have been scarcely sufficient to furnish him with daily bread, for he was a huge feeder, and, though lank, had the dilating powers of an anaconda; but to help out his maintenance, he was, according to country custom in those parts, boarded and lodged at the houses of the farmers whose children he instructed. With these he lived successively a week at a time, thus going the rounds of the neighborhood, with all his worldly effects tied up in a cotton handkerchief.

That all this might not be too onerous on the purses of his rustic patrons, who are apt to consider the costs of schooling a grievous burden, and schoolmasters as mere drones, he had various ways of rendering himself both useful and agreeable. He assisted the farmers occasionally

in the lighter labors of their farms, helped to make hay, mended the fences, took the horses to water, drove the cows from pasture, and cut wood for the winter fire. He laid aside, too, all the dominant dignity and absolute sway with which he lorded it in his little empire, the school, and became wonderfully gentle and ingratiating. He found favor in the eyes of the mothers by petting the children, particularly the youngest; and like the lion bold, which whilom so magnanimously the lamb did hold, he would sit with a child on one knee, and rock a cradle with his foot for whole hours together.

In addition to his other vocations, he was the singing-master of the neighborhood, and picked up many bright shillings by instructing the young folks in psalmody. It was a matter of no little vanity to him on Sundays, to take his station in front of the church gallery, with a band of chosen singers; where, in his own mind, he completely carried away the palm from the parson. Certain it is, his voice resounded far above all the rest of the congregation; and there are peculiar quavers still to be heard in that church, and which may even be heard half a mile off, quite to the opposite side of the millpond, on a still Sunday morning, which are said to be legitimately descended from the nose of Ichabod Crane. Thus, by divers little makeshifts, in that ingenious way which is commonly denominated "by hook and by crook," the worthy pedagogue got on tolerably enough, and was thought, by all who understood nothing of the labor of headwork, to have a wonderfully easy life of it.

The schoolmaster is generally a man of some importance in the female circle of a rural neighborhood; being considered a kind of idle, gentlemanlike personage, of vastly superior taste and accomplishments to the rough country swains, and, indeed, inferior in learning only to the parson. His

appearance, therefore, is apt to occasion some little stir at the tea-table of a farmhouse, and the addition of a supernumerary dish of cakes or sweetmeats, or, peradventure, the parade of a silver teapot. Our man of letters, therefore, was peculiarly happy in the smiles of all the country damsels. How he would figure among them in the churchyard, between services on Sundays; gathering grapes for them from the wild vines that overran the surrounding trees; reciting for their amusement all the epitaphs on the tombstones; or sauntering, with a whole bevy of them, along the banks of the adjacent millpond; while the more bashful country bumpkins hung sheepishly back, envying his superior elegance and address.

From his half-itinerant life, also, he was a kind of travelling gazette, carrying the whole budget of local gossip from house to house, so that his appearance was always greeted with satisfaction. He was, moreover, esteemed by the women as a man of great erudition, for he had read several books quite through, and was a perfect master of Cotton Mather's "History of New England Witchcraft," in which, by the way, he most firmly and potently believed.

He was, in fact, an odd mixture of small shrewdness and simple credulity. His appetite for the marvellous, and his powers of digesting it, were equally extraordinary; and both had been increased by his residence in this spell-bound region. No tale was too gross or monstrous for his capacious swallow. It was often his delight, after his school was dismissed in the afternoon, to stretch himself on the rich bed of clover bordering the little brook that whimpered by his schoolhouse, and there con over old Mather's direful tales, until the gathering dusk of evening made the printed page a mere mist before his eyes. Then, as he wended his way by swamp and stream and awful woodland, to the

farmhouse where he happened to be quartered, every sound of nature, at that witching hour, fluttered his excited imagination,—the moan of the whip-poor-will from the hillside, the boding cry of the tree toad, that harbinger of storm, the dreary hooting of the screech owl, or the sudden rustling in the thicket of birds frightened from their roost. The fireflies, too, which sparkled most vividly in the darkest places, now and then startled him, as one of uncommon brightness would stream across his path; and if, by chance, a huge blockhead of a beetle came winging his blundering flight against him, the poor varlet was ready to give up the ghost, with the idea that he was struck with a witch's token. His only resource on such occasions, either to drown thought or drive away evil spirits, was to sing psalm tunes and the good people of Sleepy Hollow, as they sat by their doors of an evening, were often filled with awe at hearing his nasal melody, "in linked sweetness long drawn out," floating from the distant hill, or along the dusky road.

Another of his sources of fearful pleasure was to pass long winter evenings with the old Dutch wives, as they sat spinning by the fire, with a row of apples roasting and spluttering along the hearth, and listen to their marvellous tales of ghosts and goblins, and haunted fields, and haunted brooks, and haunted bridges, and haunted houses, and particularly of the headless horseman, or Galloping Hessian of the Hollow, as they sometimes called him. He would delight them equally by his anecdotes of witchcraft, and of the direful omens and portentous sights and sounds in the air, which prevailed in the earlier times of Connecticut; and would frighten them woefully with speculations upon comets and shooting stars; and with the alarming fact that the world did absolutely turn round, and that they were half the time topsy-turvy!

But if there was a pleasure in all this, while snugly cuddling in the chimney corner of a chamber that was all of a ruddy glow from the crackling wood fire, and where, of course, no spectre dared to show its face, it was dearly purchased by the terrors of his subsequent walk homewards. What fearful shapes and shadows beset his path, amidst the dim and ghastly glare of a snowy night! With what wistful look did he eye every trembling ray of light streaming across the waste fields from some distant window! How often was he appalled by some shrub covered with snow, which, like a sheeted spectre, beset his very path! How often did he shrink with curdling awe at the sound of his own steps on the frosty crust beneath his feet; and dread to look over his shoulder, lest he should behold some uncouth being tramping close behind him! And how often was he thrown into complete dismay by some rushing blast, howling among the trees, in the idea that it was the Galloping Hessian on one of his nightly scourings!

All these, however, were mere terrors of the night, phantoms of the mind that walk in darkness; and though he had seen many spectres in his time, and been more than once beset by Satan in divers shapes, in his lonely perambulations, yet daylight put an end to all these evils; and he would have passed a pleasant life of it, in despite of the Devil and all his works, if his path had not been crossed by a being that causes more perplexity to mortal man than ghosts, goblins, and the whole race of witches put together, and that was—a woman.

Among the musical disciples who assembled, one evening in each week, to receive his instructions in psalmody, was Katrina Van Tassel, the daughter and only child of a substantial Dutch farmer. She was a blooming lass of fresh eighteen; plump as a partridge; ripe and melting and rosy-

cheeked as one of her father's peaches, and universally famed, not merely for her beauty, but her vast expectations. She was withal a little of a coquette, as might be perceived even in her dress, which was a mixture of ancient and modern fashions, as most suited to set off her charms. She wore the ornaments of pure yellow gold, which her great-great-grandmother had brought over from Saardam; the tempting stomacher of the olden time, and withal a provokingly short petticoat, to display the prettiest foot and ankle in the country round.

Ichabod Crane had a soft and foolish heart towards the sex; and it is not to be wondered at that so tempting a morsel soon found favor in his eyes, more especially after he had visited her in her paternal mansion. Old Baltus Van Tassel was a perfect picture of a thriving, contented, liberal-hearted farmer. He seldom, it is true, sent either his eyes or his thoughts beyond the boundaries of his own farm; but within those everything was snug, happy and well-conditioned. He was satisfied with his wealth, but not proud of it; and piqued himself upon the hearty abundance, rather than the style in which he lived. His stronghold was situated on the banks of the Hudson, in one of those green, sheltered, fertile nooks in which the Dutch farmers are so fond of nestling. A great elm tree spread its broad branches over it, at the foot of which bubbled up a spring of the softest and sweetest water, in a little well formed of a barrel; and then stole sparkling away through the grass, to a neighboring brook, that babbled along among alders and dwarf willows. Hard by the farmhouse was a vast barn, that might have served for a church; every window and crevice of which seemed bursting forth with the treasures of the farm; the flail was busily resounding within it from morning to night; swallows and martins skimmed twittering about the eaves; and rows of pigeons, some with one eye

turned up, as if watching the weather, some with their heads under their wings or buried in their bosoms, and others swelling, and cooing, and bowing about their dames, were enjoying the sunshine on the roof. Sleek unwieldy porkers were grunting in the repose and abundance of their pens, from whence sallied forth, now and then, troops of sucking pigs, as if to snuff the air. A stately squadron of snowy geese were riding in an adjoining pond, convoying whole fleets of ducks; regiments of turkeys were gobbling through the farmyard, and Guinea fowls fretting about it, like ill-tempered housewives, with their peevish, discontented cry. Before the barn door strutted the gallant cock, that pattern of a husband, a warrior and a fine gentleman, clapping his burnished wings and crowing in the pride and gladness of his heart,—sometimes tearing up the earth with his feet, and then generously calling his ever-hungry family of wives and children to enjoy the rich morsel which he had discovered.

The pedagogue's mouth watered as he looked upon this sumptuous promise of luxurious winter fare. In his devouring mind's eye, he pictured to himself every roasting-pig running about with a pudding in his belly, and an apple in his mouth; the pigeons were snugly put to bed in a comfortable pie, and tucked in with a coverlet of crust; the geese were swimming in their own gravy; and the ducks pairing cosily in dishes, like snug married couples, with a decent competency of onion sauce. In the porkers he saw carved out the future sleek side of bacon, and juicy relishing ham; not a turkey but he beheld daintily trussed up, with its gizzard under its wing, and, peradventure, a necklace of savory sausages; and even bright chanticleer himself lay sprawling on his back, in a side dish, with uplifted claws, as if craving that quarter which his chivalrous spirit disdained to ask while living.

As the enraptured Ichabod fancied all this, and as he rolled his great green eyes over the fat meadow lands, the rich fields of wheat, of rye, of buckwheat, and Indian corn, and the orchards burdened with ruddy fruit, which surrounded the warm tenement of Van Tassel, his heart yearned after the damsel who was to inherit these domains, and his imagination expanded with the idea, how they might be readily turned into cash, and the money invested in immense tracts of wild land, and shingle palaces in the wilderness. Nay, his busy fancy already realized his hopes, and presented to him the blooming Katrina, with a whole family of children, mounted on the top of a wagon loaded with household trumpery, with pots and kettles dangling beneath; and he beheld himself bestriding a pacing mare, with a colt at her heels, setting out for Kentucky, Tennessee,—or the Lord knows where!

When he entered the house, the conquest of his heart was complete. It was one of those spacious farmhouses, with high-ridged but lowly sloping roofs, built in the style handed down from the first Dutch settlers; the low projecting eaves forming a piazza along the front, capable of being closed up in bad weather. Under this were hung flails, harness, various utensils of husbandry, and nets for fishing in the neighboring river. Benches were built along the sides for summer use; and a great spinning-wheel at one end, and a churn at the other, showed the various uses to which this important porch might be devoted. From this piazza the wondering Ichabod entered the hall, which formed the centre of the mansion, and the place of usual residence. Here rows of resplendent pewter, ranged on a long dresser, dazzled his eyes. In one corner stood a huge bag of wool, ready to be spun; in another, a quantity of linsey-woolsey just from the loom; ears of Indian corn, and strings of dried apples and peaches, hung in gay festoons

along the walls, mingled with the gaud of red peppers; and a door left ajar gave him a peep into the best parlor, where the claw-footed chairs and dark mahogany tables shone like mirrors; andirons, with their accompanying shovel and tongs, glistened from their covert of asparagus tops; mock-oranges and conch-shells decorated the mantelpiece; strings of various-colored birds eggs were suspended above it; a great ostrich egg was hung from the centre of the room, and a corner cupboard, knowingly left open, displayed immense treasures of old silver and well-mended china.

From the moment Ichabod laid his eyes upon these regions of delight, the peace of his mind was at an end, and his only study was how to gain the affections of the peerless daughter of Van Tassel. In this enterprise, however, he had more real difficulties than generally fell to the lot of a knight-errant of yore, who seldom had anything but giants, enchanters, fiery dragons, and such like easily conquered adversaries, to contend with and had to make his way merely through gates of iron and brass, and walls of adamant to the castle keep, where the lady of his heart was confined; all which he achieved as easily as a man would carve his way to the centre of a Christmas pie; and then the lady gave him her hand as a matter of course. Ichabod, on the contrary, had to win his way to the heart of a country coquette, beset with a labyrinth of whims and caprices, which were forever presenting new difficulties and impediments; and he had to encounter a host of fearful adversaries of real flesh and blood, the numerous rustic admirers, who beset every portal to her heart, keeping a watchful and angry eye upon each other, but ready to fly out in the common cause against any new competitor.

Among these, the most formidable was a burly, roaring, roystering blade, of the name of Abraham, or, according to

the Dutch abbreviation, Brom Van Brunt, the hero of the country round, which rang with his feats of strength and hardihood. He was broad-shouldered and double-jointed, with short curly black hair, and a bluff but not unpleasant countenance, having a mingled air of fun and arrogance. From his Herculean frame and great powers of limb he had received the nickname of BROM BONES, by which he was universally known. He was famed for great knowledge and skill in horsemanship, being as dexterous on horseback as a Tartar. He was foremost at all races and cock fights; and, with the ascendancy which bodily strength always acquires in rustic life, was the umpire in all disputes, setting his hat on one side, and giving his decisions with an air and tone that admitted of no gainsay or appeal. He was always ready for either a fight or a frolic; but had more mischief than ill-will in his composition; and with all his overbearing roughness, there was a strong dash of waggish good humor at bottom. He had three or four boon companions, who regarded him as their model, and at the head of whom he scoured the country, attending every scene of feud or merriment for miles round. In cold weather he was distinguished by a fur cap, surmounted with a flaunting fox's tail; and when the folks at a country gathering descried this well-known crest at a distance, whisking about among a squad of hard riders, they always stood by for a squall. Sometimes his crew would be heard dashing along past the farmhouses at midnight, with whoop and halloo, like a troop of Don Cossacks; and the old dames, startled out of their sleep, would listen for a moment till the hurry-scurry had clattered by, and then exclaim, "Ay, there goes Brom Bones and his gang!" The neighbors looked upon him with a mixture of awe, admiration, and goodwill; and, when any madcap prank or rustic brawl occurred in the vicinity, always shook their heads, and warranted

Brom Bones was at the bottom of it.

This rantipole hero had for some time singled out the blooming Katrina for the object of his uncouth gallantries, and though his amorous toyings were something like the gentle caresses and endearments of a bear, yet it was whispered that she did not altogether discourage his hopes. Certain it is, his advances were signals for rival candidates to retire, who felt no inclination to cross a lion in his amours; insomuch, that when his horse was seen tied to Van Tassel's paling, on a Sunday night, a sure sign that his master was courting, or, as it is termed, "sparking," within, all other suitors passed by in despair, and carried the war into other quarters.

Such was the formidable rival with whom Ichabod Crane had to contend, and, considering all things, a stouter man than he would have shrunk from the competition, and a wiser man would have despaired. He had, however, a happy mixture of pliability and perseverance in his nature; he was in form and spirit like a supple-jack—yielding, but tough; though he bent, he never broke; and though he bowed beneath the slightest pressure, yet, the moment it was away—jerk!—he was as erect, and carried his head as high as ever.

To have taken the field openly against his rival would have been madness; for he was not a man to be thwarted in his amours, any more than that stormy lover, Achilles. Ichabod, therefore, made his advances in a quiet and gently insinuating manner. Under cover of his character of singing-master, he made frequent visits at the farmhouse; not that he had anything to apprehend from the meddling interference of parents, which is so often a stumbling-block in the path of lovers. Balt Van Tassel was an easy indulgent soul; he loved his daughter better even

than his pipe, and, like a reasonable man and an excellent father, let her have her way in everything. His notable little wife, too, had enough to do to attend to her housekeeping and manage her poultry; for, as she sagely observed, ducks and geese are foolish things, and must be looked after, but girls can take care of themselves. Thus, while the busy dame bustled about the house, or plied her spinning-wheel at one end of the piazza, honest Balt would sit smoking his evening pipe at the other, watching the achievements of a little wooden warrior, who, armed with a sword in each hand, was most valiantly fighting the wind on the pinnacle of the barn. In the mean time, Ichabod would carry on his suit with the daughter by the side of the spring under the great elm, or sauntering along in the twilight, that hour so favorable to the lover's eloquence.

I profess not to know how women's hearts are wooed and won. To me they have always been matters of riddle and admiration. Some seem to have but one vulnerable point, or door of access; while others have a thousand avenues, and may be captured in a thousand different ways. It is a great triumph of skill to gain the former, but a still greater proof of generalship to maintain possession of the latter, for man must battle for his fortress at every door and window. He who wins a thousand common hearts is therefore entitled to some renown; but he who keeps undisputed sway over the heart of a coquette is indeed a hero. Certain it is, this was not the case with the redoubtable Brom Bones; and from the moment Ichabod Crane made his advances, the interests of the former evidently declined: his horse was no longer seen tied to the palings on Sunday nights, and a deadly feud gradually arose between him and the preceptor of Sleepy Hollow.

Brom, who had a degree of rough chivalry in his nature,

would fain have carried matters to open warfare and have settled their pretensions to the lady, according to the mode of those most concise and simple reasoners, the knights-errant of yore,—by single combat; but Ichabod was too conscious of the superior might of his adversary to enter the lists against him; he had overheard a boast of Bones, that he would “double the schoolmaster up, and lay him on a shelf of his own schoolhouse;” and he was too wary to give him an opportunity. There was something extremely provoking in this obstinately pacific system; it left Brom no alternative but to draw upon the funds of rustic waggery in his disposition, and to play off boorish practical jokes upon his rival. Ichabod became the object of whimsical persecution to Bones and his gang of rough riders. They harried his hitherto peaceful domains; smoked out his singing school by stopping up the chimney; broke into the schoolhouse at night, in spite of its formidable fastenings of withe and window stakes, and turned everything topsy-turvy, so that the poor schoolmaster began to think all the witches in the country held their meetings there. But what was still more annoying, Brom took all opportunities of turning him into ridicule in presence of his mistress, and had a scoundrel dog whom he taught to whine in the most ludicrous manner, and introduced as a rival of Ichabod’s, to instruct her in psalmody.

In this way matters went on for some time, without producing any material effect on the relative situations of the contending powers. On a fine autumnal afternoon, Ichabod, in pensive mood, sat enthroned on the lofty stool from whence he usually watched all the concerns of his little literary realm. In his hand he swayed a ferule, that sceptre of despotic power; the birch of justice reposed on three nails behind the throne, a constant terror to evil doers, while on the desk before him might be seen sundry

contraband articles and prohibited weapons, detected upon the persons of idle urchins, such as half-munched apples, popguns, whirligigs, fly-cages, and whole legions of rampant little paper gamecocks. Apparently there had been some appalling act of justice recently inflicted, for his scholars were all busily intent upon their books, or slyly whispering behind them with one eye kept upon the master; and a kind of buzzing stillness reigned throughout the schoolroom. It was suddenly interrupted by the appearance of a negro in tow-cloth jacket and trowsers, a round-crowned fragment of a hat, like the cap of Mercury, and mounted on the back of a ragged, wild, half-broken colt, which he managed with a rope by way of halter. He came clattering up to the school door with an invitation to Ichabod to attend a merry-making or “quilting frolic,” to be held that evening at Mynheer Van Tassel’s; and having delivered his message with that air of importance, and effort at fine language, which a negro is apt to display on petty embassies of the kind, he dashed over the brook, and was seen scampering away up the hollow, full of the importance and hurry of his mission.

All was now bustle and hubbub in the late quiet schoolroom. The scholars were hurried through their lessons without stopping at trifles; those who were nimble skipped over half with impunity, and those who were tardy had a smart application now and then in the rear, to quicken their speed or help them over a tall word. Books were flung aside without being put away on the shelves, inkstands were overturned, benches thrown down, and the whole school was turned loose an hour before the usual time, bursting forth like a legion of young imps, yelping and racketing about the green in joy at their early emancipation.

The gallant Ichabod now spent at least an extra half hour at

his toilet, brushing and furbishing up his best, and indeed only suit of rusty black, and arranging his locks by a bit of broken looking-glass that hung up in the schoolhouse. That he might make his appearance before his mistress in the true style of a cavalier, he borrowed a horse from the farmer with whom he was domiciliated, a choleric old Dutchman of the name of Hans Van Ripper, and, thus gallantly mounted, issued forth like a knight-errant in quest of adventures. But it is meet I should, in the true spirit of romantic story, give some account of the looks and equipments of my hero and his steed. The animal he bestrode was a broken-down plow-horse, that had outlived almost everything but its viciousness. He was gaunt and shagged, with a ewe neck, and a head like a hammer; his rusty mane and tail were tangled and knotted with burs; one eye had lost its pupil, and was glaring and spectral, but the other had the gleam of a genuine devil in it. Still he must have had fire and mettle in his day, if we may judge from the name he bore of Gunpowder. He had, in fact, been a favorite steed of his master's, the choleric Van Ripper, who was a furious rider, and had infused, very probably, some of his own spirit into the animal; for, old and broken-down as he looked, there was more of the lurking devil in him than in any young filly in the country.

Ichabod was a suitable figure for such a steed. He rode with short stirrups, which brought his knees nearly up to the pommel of the saddle; his sharp elbows stuck out like grasshoppers'; he carried his whip perpendicularly in his hand, like a sceptre, and as his horse jogged on, the motion of his arms was not unlike the flapping of a pair of wings. A small wool hat rested on the top of his nose, for so his scanty strip of forehead might be called, and the skirts of his black coat fluttered out almost to the horse's tail. Such was the appearance of Ichabod and his steed as they

shambled out of the gate of Hans Van Ripper, and it was altogether such an apparition as is seldom to be met with in broad daylight.

It was, as I have said, a fine autumnal day; the sky was clear and serene, and nature wore that rich and golden livery which we always associate with the idea of abundance. The forests had put on their sober brown and yellow, while some trees of the tenderer kind had been nipped by the frosts into brilliant dyes of orange, purple, and scarlet. Streaming files of wild ducks began to make their appearance high in the air; the bark of the squirrel might be heard from the groves of beech and hickory-nuts, and the pensive whistle of the quail at intervals from the neighboring stubble field.

The small birds were taking their farewell banquets. In the fullness of their revelry, they fluttered, chirping and frolicking from bush to bush, and tree to tree, capricious from the very profusion and variety around them. There was the honest cock robin, the favorite game of stripling sportsmen, with its loud querulous note; and the twittering blackbirds flying in sable clouds; and the golden-winged woodpecker with his crimson crest, his broad black gorget, and splendid plumage; and the cedar bird, with its red-tipt wings and yellow-tipt tail and its little monteiro cap of feathers; and the blue jay, that noisy coxcomb, in his gay light blue coat and white underclothes, screaming and chattering, nodding and bobbing and bowing, and pretending to be on good terms with every songster of the grove.

As Ichabod jogged slowly on his way, his eye, ever open to every symptom of culinary abundance, ranged with delight over the treasures of jolly autumn. On all sides he beheld vast store of apples; some hanging in oppressive opulence

on the trees; some gathered into baskets and barrels for the market; others heaped up in rich piles for the cider-press. Farther on he beheld great fields of Indian corn, with its golden ears peeping from their leafy coverts, and holding out the promise of cakes and hasty-pudding; and the yellow pumpkins lying beneath them, turning up their fair round bellies to the sun, and giving ample prospects of the most luxurious of pies; and anon he passed the fragrant buckwheat fields breathing the odor of the beehive, and as he beheld them, soft anticipations stole over his mind of dainty slapjacks, well buttered, and garnished with honey or treacle, by the delicate little dimpled hand of Katrina Van Tassel.

Thus feeding his mind with many sweet thoughts and “sugared suppositions,” he journeyed along the sides of a range of hills which look out upon some of the goodliest scenes of the mighty Hudson. The sun gradually wheeled his broad disk down in the west. The wide bosom of the Tappan Zee lay motionless and glassy, excepting that here and there a gentle undulation waved and prolonged the blue shadow of the distant mountain. A few amber clouds floated in the sky, without a breath of air to move them. The horizon was of a fine golden tint, changing gradually into a pure apple green, and from that into the deep blue of the mid-heaven. A slanting ray lingered on the woody crests of the precipices that overhung some parts of the river, giving greater depth to the dark gray and purple of their rocky sides. A sloop was loitering in the distance, dropping slowly down with the tide, her sail hanging uselessly against the mast; and as the reflection of the sky gleamed along the still water, it seemed as if the vessel was suspended in the air.

It was toward evening that Ichabod arrived at the castle of

the Heer Van Tassel, which he found thronged with the pride and flower of the adjacent country. Old farmers, a spare leathern-faced race, in homespun coats and breeches, blue stockings, huge shoes, and magnificent pewter buckles. Their brisk, withered little dames, in close-crimped caps, long-waisted short gowns, homespun petticoats, with scissors and pincushions, and gay calico pockets hanging on the outside. Buxom lasses, almost as antiquated as their mothers, excepting where a straw hat, a fine ribbon, or perhaps a white frock, gave symptoms of city innovation. The sons, in short square-skirted coats, with rows of stupendous brass buttons, and their hair generally queued in the fashion of the times, especially if they could procure an eel-skin for the purpose, it being esteemed throughout the country as a potent nourisher and strengthener of the hair.

Brom Bones, however, was the hero of the scene, having come to the gathering on his favorite steed Daredevil, a creature, like himself, full of mettle and mischief, and which no one but himself could manage. He was, in fact, noted for preferring vicious animals, given to all kinds of tricks which kept the rider in constant risk of his neck, for he held a tractable, well-broken horse as unworthy of a lad of spirit.

Fain would I pause to dwell upon the world of charms that burst upon the enraptured gaze of my hero, as he entered the state parlor of Van Tassel's mansion. Not those of the bevy of buxom lasses, with their luxurious display of red and white; but the ample charms of a genuine Dutch country tea-table, in the sumptuous time of autumn. Such heaped up platters of cakes of various and almost indescribable kinds, known only to experienced Dutch housewives! There was the doughty doughnut, the tender

oly koek, and the crisp and crumbling cruller; sweet cakes and short cakes, ginger cakes and honey cakes, and the whole family of cakes. And then there were apple pies, and peach pies, and pumpkin pies; besides slices of ham and smoked beef; and moreover delectable dishes of preserved plums, and peaches, and pears, and quinces; not to mention broiled shad and roasted chickens; together with bowls of milk and cream, all mingled higgledy-piggledy, pretty much as I have enumerated them, with the motherly teapot sending up its clouds of vapor from the midst—Heaven bless the mark! I want breath and time to discuss this banquet as it deserves, and am too eager to get on with my story. Happily, Ichabod Crane was not in so great a hurry as his historian, but did ample justice to every dainty.

He was a kind and thankful creature, whose heart dilated in proportion as his skin was filled with good cheer, and whose spirits rose with eating, as some men's do with drink. He could not help, too, rolling his large eyes round him as he ate, and chuckling with the possibility that he might one day be lord of all this scene of almost unimaginable luxury and splendor. Then, he thought, how soon he'd turn his back upon the old schoolhouse; snap his fingers in the face of Hans Van Ripper, and every other niggardly patron, and kick any itinerant pedagogue out of doors that should dare to call him comrade!

Old Baltus Van Tassel moved about among his guests with a face dilated with content and good humor, round and jolly as the harvest moon. His hospitable attentions were brief, but expressive, being confined to a shake of the hand, a slap on the shoulder, a loud laugh, and a pressing invitation to “fall to, and help themselves.”

And now the sound of the music from the common room, or hall, summoned to the dance. The musician was an old

gray-headed negro, who had been the itinerant orchestra of the neighborhood for more than half a century. His instrument was as old and battered as himself. The greater part of the time he scraped on two or three strings, accompanying every movement of the bow with a motion of the head; bowing almost to the ground, and stamping with his foot whenever a fresh couple were to start.

Ichabod prided himself upon his dancing as much as upon his vocal powers. Not a limb, not a fibre about him was idle; and to have seen his loosely hung frame in full motion, and clattering about the room, you would have thought St. Vitus himself, that blessed patron of the dance, was figuring before you in person. He was the admiration of all the negroes; who, having gathered, of all ages and sizes, from the farm and the neighborhood, stood forming a pyramid of shining black faces at every door and window, gazing with delight at the scene, rolling their white eyeballs, and showing grinning rows of ivory from ear to ear. How could the flogger of urchins be otherwise than animated and joyous? The lady of his heart was his partner in the dance, and smiling graciously in reply to all his amorous oglings; while Brom Bones, sorely smitten with love and jealousy, sat brooding by himself in one corner.

When the dance was at an end, Ichabod was attracted to a knot of the sager folks, who, with Old Van Tassel, sat smoking at one end of the piazza, gossiping over former times, and drawing out long stories about the war.

This neighborhood, at the time of which I am speaking, was one of those highly favored places which abound with chronicle and great men. The British and American line had run near it during the war; it had, therefore, been the scene of marauding and infested with refugees, cowboys, and all kinds of border chivalry. Just sufficient time had elapsed to

enable each storyteller to dress up his tale with a little becoming fiction, and, in the indistinctness of his recollection, to make himself the hero of every exploit.

There was the story of Doffue Martling, a large blue-bearded Dutchman, who had nearly taken a British frigate with an old iron nine-pounder from a mud breastwork, only that his gun burst at the sixth discharge. And there was an old gentleman who shall be nameless, being too rich a mynheer to be lightly mentioned, who, in the battle of White Plains, being an excellent master of defence, parried a musket-ball with a small sword, insomuch that he absolutely felt it whiz round the blade, and glance off at the hilt; in proof of which he was ready at any time to show the sword, with the hilt a little bent. There were several more that had been equally great in the field, not one of whom but was persuaded that he had a considerable hand in bringing the war to a happy termination.

But all these were nothing to the tales of ghosts and apparitions that succeeded. The neighborhood is rich in legendary treasures of the kind. Local tales and superstitions thrive best in these sheltered, long-settled retreats; but are trampled under foot by the shifting throng that forms the population of most of our country places. Besides, there is no encouragement for ghosts in most of our villages, for they have scarcely had time to finish their first nap and turn themselves in their graves, before their surviving friends have travelled away from the neighborhood; so that when they turn out at night to walk their rounds, they have no acquaintance left to call upon. This is perhaps the reason why we so seldom hear of ghosts except in our long-established Dutch communities.

The immediate cause, however, of the prevalence of supernatural stories in these parts, was doubtless owing to

the vicinity of Sleepy Hollow. There was a contagion in the very air that blew from that haunted region; it breathed forth an atmosphere of dreams and fancies infecting all the land. Several of the Sleepy Hollow people were present at Van Tassel's, and, as usual, were doling out their wild and wonderful legends. Many dismal tales were told about funeral trains, and mourning cries and wailings heard and seen about the great tree where the unfortunate Major André was taken, and which stood in the neighborhood. Some mention was made also of the woman in white, that haunted the dark glen at Raven Rock, and was often heard to shriek on winter nights before a storm, having perished there in the snow. The chief part of the stories, however, turned upon the favorite spectre of Sleepy Hollow, the Headless Horseman, who had been heard several times of late, patrolling the country; and, it was said, tethered his horse nightly among the graves in the churchyard.

The sequestered situation of this church seems always to have made it a favorite haunt of troubled spirits. It stands on a knoll, surrounded by locust-trees and lofty elms, from among which its decent, whitewashed walls shine modestly forth, like Christian purity beaming through the shades of retirement. A gentle slope descends from it to a silver sheet of water, bordered by high trees, between which, peeps may be caught at the blue hills of the Hudson. To look upon its grass-grown yard, where the sunbeams seem to sleep so quietly, one would think that there at least the dead might rest in peace. On one side of the church extends a wide woody dell, along which raves a large brook among broken rocks and trunks of fallen trees. Over a deep black part of the stream, not far from the church, was formerly thrown a wooden bridge; the road that led to it, and the bridge itself, were thickly shaded by overhanging trees, which cast a gloom about it, even in the daytime; but occasioned a

fearful darkness at night. Such was one of the favorite haunts of the Headless Horseman, and the place where he was most frequently encountered. The tale was told of old Brouwer, a most heretical disbeliever in ghosts, how he met the Horseman returning from his foray into Sleepy Hollow, and was obliged to get up behind him; how they galloped over bush and brake, over hill and swamp, until they reached the bridge; when the Horseman suddenly turned into a skeleton, threw old Brouwer into the brook, and sprang away over the tree-tops with a clap of thunder.

This story was immediately matched by a thrice marvellous adventure of Brom Bones, who made light of the Galloping Hessian as an arrant jockey. He affirmed that on returning one night from the neighboring village of Sing Sing, he had been overtaken by this midnight trooper; that he had offered to race with him for a bowl of punch, and should have won it too, for Daredevil beat the goblin horse all hollow, but just as they came to the church bridge, the Hessian bolted, and vanished in a flash of fire.

All these tales, told in that drowsy undertone with which men talk in the dark, the countenances of the listeners only now and then receiving a casual gleam from the glare of a pipe, sank deep in the mind of Ichabod. He repaid them in kind with large extracts from his invaluable author, Cotton Mather, and added many marvellous events that had taken place in his native State of Connecticut, and fearful sights which he had seen in his nightly walks about Sleepy Hollow.

The revel now gradually broke up. The old farmers gathered together their families in their wagons, and were heard for some time rattling along the hollow roads, and over the distant hills. Some of the damsels mounted on pillions behind their favorite swains, and their light-hearted

laughter, mingling with the clatter of hoofs, echoed along the silent woodlands, sounding fainter and fainter, until they gradually died away,—and the late scene of noise and frolic was all silent and deserted. Ichabod only lingered behind, according to the custom of country lovers, to have a tête-à-tête with the heiress; fully convinced that he was now on the high road to success. What passed at this interview I will not pretend to say, for in fact I do not know. Something, however, I fear me, must have gone wrong, for he certainly sallied forth, after no very great interval, with an air quite desolate and chapfallen. Oh, these women! these women! Could that girl have been playing off any of her coquettish tricks? Was her encouragement of the poor pedagogue all a mere sham to secure her conquest of his rival? Heaven only knows, not I! Let it suffice to say, Ichabod stole forth with the air of one who had been sacking a henroost, rather than a fair lady's heart. Without looking to the right or left to notice the scene of rural wealth, on which he had so often gloated, he went straight to the stable, and with several hearty cuffs and kicks roused his steed most uncourteously from the comfortable quarters in which he was soundly sleeping, dreaming of mountains of corn and oats, and whole valleys of timothy and clover.

It was the very witching time of night that Ichabod, heavy-hearted and crestfallen, pursued his travels homewards, along the sides of the lofty hills which rise above Tarry Town, and which he had traversed so cheerily in the afternoon. The hour was as dismal as himself. Far below him the Tappan Zee spread its dusky and indistinct waste of waters, with here and there the tall mast of a sloop, riding quietly at anchor under the land. In the dead hush of midnight, he could even hear the barking of the watchdog from the opposite shore of the Hudson; but it was so vague and faint as only to give an idea of his distance from this

faithful companion of man. Now and then, too, the long-drawn crowing of a cock, accidentally awakened, would sound far, far off, from some farmhouse away among the hills—but it was like a dreaming sound in his ear. No signs of life occurred near him, but occasionally the melancholy chirp of a cricket, or perhaps the guttural twang of a bullfrog from a neighboring marsh, as if sleeping uncomfortably and turning suddenly in his bed.

All the stories of ghosts and goblins that he had heard in the afternoon now came crowding upon his recollection. The night grew darker and darker; the stars seemed to sink deeper in the sky, and driving clouds occasionally hid them from his sight. He had never felt so lonely and dismal. He was, moreover, approaching the very place where many of the scenes of the ghost stories had been laid. In the centre of the road stood an enormous tulip-tree, which towered like a giant above all the other trees of the neighborhood, and formed a kind of landmark. Its limbs were gnarled and fantastic, large enough to form trunks for ordinary trees, twisting down almost to the earth, and rising again into the air. It was connected with the tragical story of the unfortunate André, who had been taken prisoner hard by; and was universally known by the name of Major André's tree. The common people regarded it with a mixture of respect and superstition, partly out of sympathy for the fate of its ill-starred namesake, and partly from the tales of strange sights, and doleful lamentations, told concerning it.

As Ichabod approached this fearful tree, he began to whistle; he thought his whistle was answered; it was but a blast sweeping sharply through the dry branches. As he approached a little nearer, he thought he saw something white, hanging in the midst of the tree: he paused and ceased whistling but, on looking more narrowly, perceived

that it was a place where the tree had been scathed by lightning, and the white wood laid bare. Suddenly he heard a groan—his teeth chattered, and his knees smote against the saddle: it was but the rubbing of one huge bough upon another, as they were swayed about by the breeze. He passed the tree in safety, but new perils lay before him.

About two hundred yards from the tree, a small brook crossed the road, and ran into a marshy and thickly-wooded glen, known by the name of Wiley's Swamp. A few rough logs, laid side by side, served for a bridge over this stream. On that side of the road where the brook entered the wood, a group of oaks and chestnuts, matted thick with wild grape-vines, threw a cavernous gloom over it. To pass this bridge was the severest trial. It was at this identical spot that the unfortunate André was captured, and under the covert of those chestnuts and vines were the sturdy yeomen concealed who surprised him. This has ever since been considered a haunted stream, and fearful are the feelings of the schoolboy who has to pass it alone after dark.

As he approached the stream, his heart began to thump; he summoned up, however, all his resolution, gave his horse half a score of kicks in the ribs, and attempted to dash briskly across the bridge; but instead of starting forward, the perverse old animal made a lateral movement, and ran broadside against the fence. Ichabod, whose fears increased with the delay, jerked the reins on the other side, and kicked lustily with the contrary foot: it was all in vain; his steed started, it is true, but it was only to plunge to the opposite side of the road into a thicket of brambles and alder bushes. The schoolmaster now bestowed both whip and heel upon the starveling ribs of old Gunpowder, who dashed forward, snuffling and snorting, but came to a stand just by the bridge, with a suddenness that had nearly sent

his rider sprawling over his head. Just at this moment a plashy tramp by the side of the bridge caught the sensitive ear of Ichabod. In the dark shadow of the grove, on the margin of the brook, he beheld something huge, misshapen and towering. It stirred not, but seemed gathered up in the gloom, like some gigantic monster ready to spring upon the traveller.

The hair of the affrighted pedagogue rose upon his head with terror. What was to be done? To turn and fly was now too late; and besides, what chance was there of escaping ghost or goblin, if such it was, which could ride upon the wings of the wind? Summoning up, therefore, a show of courage, he demanded in stammering accents, "Who are you?" He received no reply. He repeated his demand in a still more agitated voice. Still there was no answer. Once more he cudgelled the sides of the inflexible Gunpowder, and, shutting his eyes, broke forth with involuntary fervor into a psalm tune. Just then the shadowy object of alarm put itself in motion, and with a scramble and a bound stood at once in the middle of the road. Though the night was dark and dismal, yet the form of the unknown might now in some degree be ascertained. He appeared to be a horseman of large dimensions, and mounted on a black horse of powerful frame. He made no offer of molestation or sociability, but kept aloof on one side of the road, jogging along on the blind side of old Gunpowder, who had now got over his fright and waywardness.

Ichabod, who had no relish for this strange midnight companion, and bethought himself of the adventure of Brom Bones with the Galloping Hessian, now quickened his steed in hopes of leaving him behind. The stranger, however, quickened his horse to an equal pace. Ichabod pulled up, and fell into a walk, thinking to lag behind,—the

other did the same. His heart began to sink within him; he endeavored to resume his psalm tune, but his parched tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, and he could not utter a stave. There was something in the moody and dogged silence of this pertinacious companion that was mysterious and appalling. It was soon fearfully accounted for. On mounting a rising ground, which brought the figure of his fellow-traveller in relief against the sky, gigantic in height, and muffled in a cloak, Ichabod was horror-struck on perceiving that he was headless!—but his horror was still more increased on observing that the head, which should have rested on his shoulders, was carried before him on the pommel of his saddle! His terror rose to desperation; he rained a shower of kicks and blows upon Gunpowder, hoping by a sudden movement to give his companion the slip; but the spectre started full jump with him. Away, then, they dashed through thick and thin; stones flying and sparks flashing at every bound. Ichabod's flimsy garments fluttered in the air, as he stretched his long lank body away over his horse's head, in the eagerness of his flight.

They had now reached the road which turns off to Sleepy Hollow; but Gunpowder, who seemed possessed with a demon, instead of keeping up it, made an opposite turn, and plunged headlong downhill to the left. This road leads through a sandy hollow shaded by trees for about a quarter of a mile, where it crosses the bridge famous in goblin story; and just beyond swells the green knoll on which stands the whitewashed church.

As yet the panic of the steed had given his unskilful rider an apparent advantage in the chase, but just as he had got half way through the hollow, the girths of the saddle gave way, and he felt it slipping from under him. He seized it by the pommel, and endeavored to hold it firm, but in vain;

and had just time to save himself by clasping old Gunpowder round the neck, when the saddle fell to the earth, and he heard it trampled under foot by his pursuer. For a moment the terror of Hans Van Ripper's wrath passed across his mind,—for it was his Sunday saddle; but this was no time for petty fears; the goblin was hard on his haunches; and (unskilful rider that he was!) he had much ado to maintain his seat; sometimes slipping on one side, sometimes on another, and sometimes jolted on the high ridge of his horse's backbone, with a violence that he verily feared would cleave him asunder.

An opening in the trees now cheered him with the hopes that the church bridge was at hand. The wavering reflection of a silver star in the bosom of the brook told him that he was not mistaken. He saw the walls of the church dimly glaring under the trees beyond. He recollected the place where Brom Bones's ghostly competitor had disappeared. "If I can but reach that bridge," thought Ichabod, "I am safe." Just then he heard the black steed panting and blowing close behind him; he even fancied that he felt his hot breath. Another convulsive kick in the ribs, and old Gunpowder sprang upon the bridge; he thundered over the resounding planks; he gained the opposite side; and now Ichabod cast a look behind to see if his pursuer should vanish, according to rule, in a flash of fire and brimstone. Just then he saw the goblin rising in his stirrups, and in the very act of hurling his head at him. Ichabod endeavored to dodge the horrible missile, but too late. It encountered his cranium with a tremendous crash,—he was tumbled headlong into the dust, and Gunpowder, the black steed, and the goblin rider, passed by like a whirlwind.

The next morning the old horse was found without his saddle, and with the bridle under his feet, soberly cropping

the grass at his master's gate. Ichabod did not make his appearance at breakfast; dinner-hour came, but no Ichabod. The boys assembled at the schoolhouse, and strolled idly about the banks of the brook; but no schoolmaster. Hans Van Ripper now began to feel some uneasiness about the fate of poor Ichabod, and his saddle. An inquiry was set on foot, and after diligent investigation they came upon his traces. In one part of the road leading to the church was found the saddle trampled in the dirt; the tracks of horses' hoofs deeply dented in the road, and evidently at furious speed, were traced to the bridge, beyond which, on the bank of a broad part of the brook, where the water ran deep and black, was found the hat of the unfortunate Ichabod, and close beside it a shattered pumpkin.

The brook was searched, but the body of the schoolmaster was not to be discovered. Hans Van Ripper as executor of his estate, examined the bundle which contained all his worldly effects. They consisted of two shirts and a half; two stocks for the neck; a pair or two of worsted stockings; an old pair of corduroy small-clothes; a rusty razor; a book of psalm tunes full of dog's-ears; and a broken pitch-pipe. As to the books and furniture of the schoolhouse, they belonged to the community, excepting Cotton Mather's "History of Witchcraft," a "New England Almanac," and a book of dreams and fortune-telling; in which last was a sheet of foolscap much scribbled and blotted in several fruitless attempts to make a copy of verses in honor of the heiress of Van Tassel. These magic books and the poetic scrawl were forthwith consigned to the flames by Hans Van Ripper; who, from that time forward, determined to send his children no more to school, observing that he never knew any good come of this same reading and writing. Whatever money the schoolmaster possessed, and he had received his quarter's pay but a day or two before, he must

have had about his person at the time of his disappearance.

The mysterious event caused much speculation at the church on the following Sunday. Knots of gazers and gossips were collected in the churchyard, at the bridge, and at the spot where the hat and pumpkin had been found. The stories of Brouwer, of Bones, and a whole budget of others were called to mind; and when they had diligently considered them all, and compared them with the symptoms of the present case, they shook their heads, and came to the conclusion that Ichabod had been carried off by the Galloping Hessian. As he was a bachelor, and in nobody's debt, nobody troubled his head any more about him; the school was removed to a different quarter of the hollow, and another pedagogue reigned in his stead.

It is true, an old farmer, who had been down to New York on a visit several years after, and from whom this account of the ghostly adventure was received, brought home the intelligence that Ichabod Crane was still alive; that he had left the neighborhood partly through fear of the goblin and Hans Van Ripper, and partly in mortification at having been suddenly dismissed by the heiress; that he had changed his quarters to a distant part of the country; had kept school and studied law at the same time; had been admitted to the bar; turned politician; electioneered; written for the newspapers; and finally had been made a justice of the Ten Pound Court. Brom Bones, too, who, shortly after his rival's disappearance conducted the blooming Katrina in triumph to the altar, was observed to look exceedingly knowing whenever the story of Ichabod was related, and always burst into a hearty laugh at the mention of the pumpkin; which led some to suspect that he knew more about the matter than he chose to tell.

The old country wives, however, who are the best judges of

these matters, maintain to this day that Ichabod was spirited away by supernatural means; and it is a favorite story often told about the neighborhood round the winter evening fire. The bridge became more than ever an object of superstitious awe; and that may be the reason why the road has been altered of late years, so as to approach the church by the border of the millpond. The schoolhouse being deserted soon fell to decay, and was reported to be haunted by the ghost of the unfortunate pedagogue and the plowboy, loitering homeward of a still summer evening, has often fancied his voice at a distance, chanting a melancholy psalm tune among the tranquil solitudes of Sleepy Hollow.

POSTSCRIPT.

FOUND IN THE HANDWRITING OF MR. KNICKERBOCKER.

The preceding tale is given almost in the precise words in which I heard it related at a Corporation meeting at the ancient city of Manhattoes, at which were present many of its sagest and most illustrious burghers. The narrator was a pleasant, shabby, gentlemanly old fellow, in pepper-and-salt clothes, with a sadly humourous face, and one whom I strongly suspected of being poor--he made such efforts to be entertaining. When his story was concluded, there was much laughter and approbation, particularly from two or three deputy aldermen, who had been asleep the greater part of the time. There was, however, one tall, dry-looking old gentleman, with beetling eyebrows, who maintained a grave and rather severe face throughout, now and then folding his arms, inclining his head, and looking down upon the floor, as if turning a doubt over in his mind. He was one of your wary men, who never laugh but upon good

grounds--when they have reason and law on their side. When the mirth of the rest of the company had subsided, and silence was restored, he leaned one arm on the elbow of his chair, and sticking the other akimbo, demanded, with a slight, but exceedingly sage motion of the head, and contraction of the brow, what was the moral of the story, and what it went to prove?

The story-teller, who was just putting a glass of wine to his lips, as a refreshment after his toils, paused for a moment, looked at his inquirer with an air of infinite deference, and, lowering the glass slowly to the table, observed that the story was intended most logically to prove--

“That there is no situation in life but has its advantages and pleasures--provided we will but take a joke as we find it:

“That, therefore, he that runs races with goblin troopers is likely to have rough riding of it.

“Ergo, for a country schoolmaster to be refused the hand of a Dutch heiress is a certain step to high preferment in the state.”

The cautious old gentleman knit his brows tenfold closer after this explanation, being sorely puzzled by the ratiocination of the syllogism, while, methought, the one in pepper-and-salt eyed him with something of a triumphant leer. At length he observed that all this was very well, but still he thought the story a little on the extravagant--there were one or two points on which he had his doubts.

“Faith, sir,” replied the story-teller, “as to that matter, I don’t believe one-half of it myself.” D. K.

THE END.

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