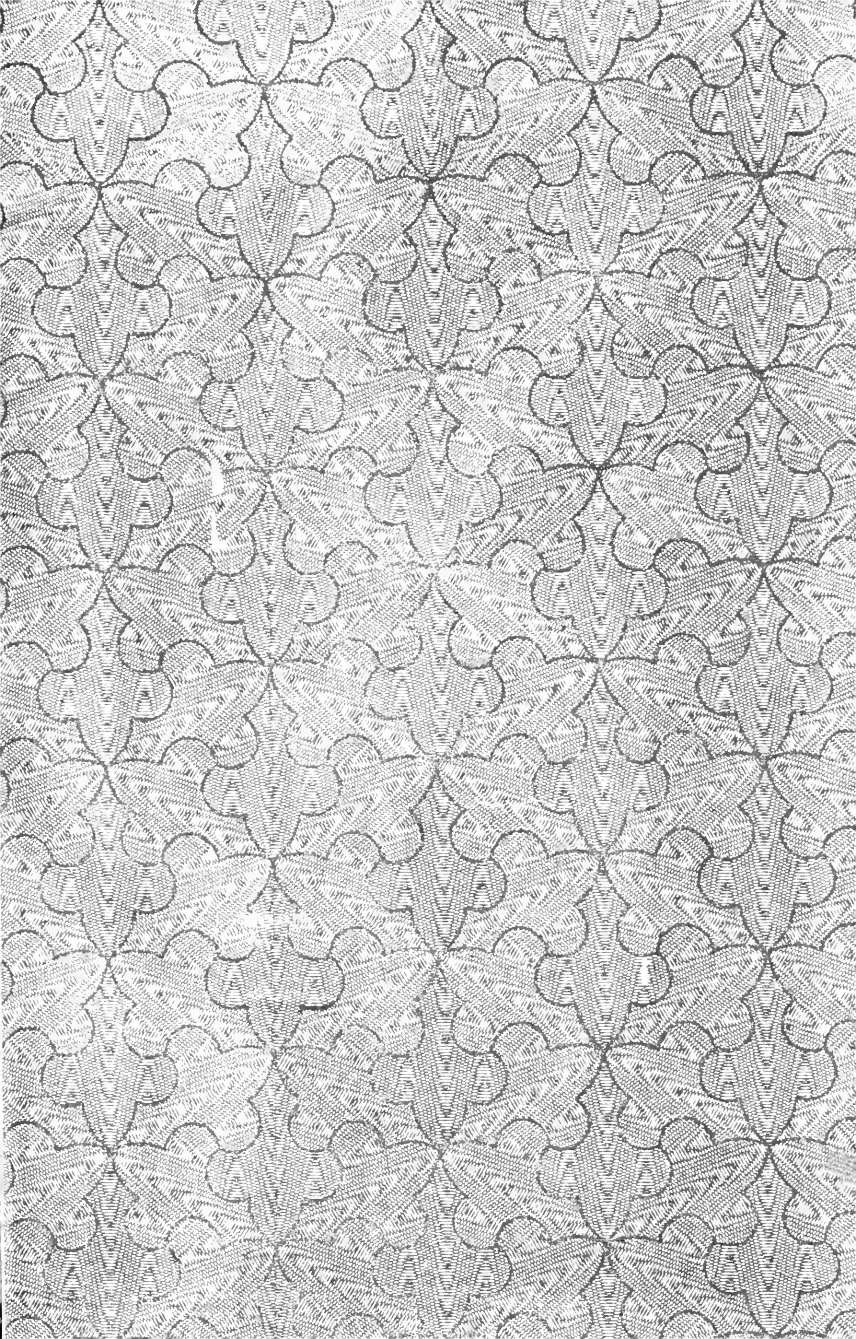


Edwin Waugh



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AN OLD CHIMNEY CORNER IN CHADDERTON FOLD.

The Chimney Corner.

By EDWIN WAUGH.



EDITED BY GEORGE MILNER.

JOHN HEYWOOD,
DEANSGATE, AND RIDGEFIELD, MANCHESTER;
2, AMEN CORNER, LONDON, E.C.



PR

5765

W3C45

1890



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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE sketches which were collected by their author under the title of *The Chimney Corner* were first published as a volume in 1874. Many of them had appeared in a Manchester journal, called *The Critic*. They are briefer and less elaborate, both in conception and execution, than most of Waugh's other productions. They may be said to be based on anecdotes rather than stories; and are just such simple and humorous narrations—rough and free-spoken sometimes—as may still be heard on winter nights in the “ingle-nook” of the old Lancashire farmhouse, and in the kitchen of the country inn. Many of them are clearly autobiographical, and furnish reminiscences of Waugh's own childhood, of his short school-days, and his early companions. The dialect is pithy, and full of odd, ancient, and interesting words, of which “ailo,” meaning “shy;” and “chylt-little” for “young,” or “small,” may serve as instances. The nervous strength of the dialect is illustrated in such sentences as the following:—“He'll be a greight, stark, strung-backed, wutherin' Englishman, o' th' owd breed, if he's luck.”

Two of the stories—“The Nomination” and “The Swallowed Sixpence”—have been often separately printed, and have been much used for public reading; but the finest piece in the volume is the one entitled, “A Berrin' Posy,” which gives an inimitable picture of the sufferings of the honest poor.

G. M.





Service Time.

Hail, Sabbath! thee I hail the poor man's day,
The pale mechanic now has leave to breathe
The morning air, pure from the city's smoke:
While wandering slowly up the river side,
He meditates on Him whose power he marks
In each green tree that proudly spreads the bough,
As in the tiny dew-bent flowers that bloom
Around its roots; and while he thus surveys,
With elevated joy, each rural charm,
He hopes—

As on the heights he marks the straggling bands
Returning homeward from the house of prayer.

GRAHAME.

A fine Sunday morning in August. The bell of the moorland chapel tolling for service. Stragglers on their way, from different points of the scene, towards the chapel. MARY O' NATHAN'S O' TOOTER'S, standing in the tree-shaded porch of an old farmhouse, with her little son, drest for church. She turns back—

“**N**OW, Martha, thou'll mind an' ha' th' dinner ready bi one; for there'll be no howdin' these childer when th' sarvice is o'er.”

“I'll have it ready.”

“An' mind thou doesn't burn that beef to a cinder, as thou did last Sunday! . . . An' make 'em plenty o' Yorkshire puddin',—doesto yer?”

"I yer."

"Wind yon clock up; an' don't let thi fire get too low; an' keep yon buttery-door shut, or else thou'll ha' some o'th cats in! . . . Whatever are yon childer doin' so lung? They're olez i'th felt when they should be i'th fowd!"

(She shouts upstairs.)

"Now, lasses; how lung ever are yo beawn to be fiddle-fadlin' up theer? Don yo yer yon bell? I begged an' prayed on yo to get ready i' time for once,—but yo winnot be said. If yo'r faither had been a-whoam he'd ha' stirred some on yo up afore now!"

"We're comin'!"

"Yo're comin'!—ay, an' so is Kessmas! (Christmas.) A lot o' up-groon yung folk, like yo,—whatever are yo thinkin' at? Yo needen moor tentin' nor if yo'rn in a caither!" (cradle.)

"We're comin', I tell yo!"

"Ay, an' I'm comin', too, if yo aren't down those stairs i' two minutes! Yo'n had th' whole mornin' to get yo'rsels ready in,—an' here yo are again! I wonder at yo,—that I do! Stir yo'rsels, I prayo! I fair shame to see yo trailin' into th' chapel after th' sarvice has begun,—disturbin' folk. An' th' parson doesn't like it, noather,—I can tell yo! What, yo're a town's talk,—that yo are! Mary, whatever are yo doin'?"

"It's our Ailse, here; hoo cannot get her yure reet!"

"If I have to come up those stairs I'll put her yure to reets, some soon,—an' thine, too!"

“Yo can be goin’ on, mother, we’n o’ertay yo!”

“I wonder how yo can for shame o’ yo’rsels, that I do! Good Sunday as it is! It’s a disgrace to yo,—that it is,—sniggerin’, an’ laughin’!”

“We aren’t laughin’!”

“Yo’n ha’ to laugh o’th wrang side o’th mouth, if yo don’t mind! Hie yo down, or I’ll bring a stick to yo!”

“We sha’not be a minute, mother. I’ve nobbut this bit o’ ribbon to tee, an’ then. We’n o’ertay yo afore yo getten to th’ Owler Nook.”

“’Od rot sich wark! I wish yo’r faither wur a-whoam!
. . . Come, William; we mun be gooin’, as how.”

(She shouts upstairs again.)

“Don yo yer?”

“Well!”

“Mind; if I have to turn back, I’ll warm some on yo,—to some tune! . . . Come, my lad; let’s be gettin’ on.”

They had not gone many yards before the old woman stopped suddenly and said, “Eh! I declare, I’ve forgotten mi Prayer Book! William; run back, my lad, an’ ax Martha for it,—hoo’ll find it a-top o’th drawers, wi’ a white pocket-handkerchief lapt round it. An’ there’s a bunch o’ neps a-side on it,—bring them, too.”

The lad ran back for his mother’s Prayer Book; and then they wandered on together down the old lane, under over-hangin’ boughs of thick-leaved summer green, through which the strong sunshine stole in fitful freaks of golden gleam. The air was clear, and pure, and bright, and save the songs of birds, and the quiet music of a little

brooklet here and there, the sound of the chapel bell floated far and wide over the rural parish with cheerful solemnity, calling the scattered inhabitants of hill and dale from their leafy nooks to the house of prayer. The sky was cloudless, and the green flower-sprent landscape seemed as still as the over-arching heavens. A strange serenity lay upon the beautiful summer scene, as if all nature felt that the day of God, and god of days, had dawned upon the earth once more. The old lane leading towards the chapel was flanked by a sprawling thorn hedge, overhung by the foliage of ancient forest trees. The hedge, on each side, was full of holes, and "hare gates," and tunnels, and runs, where the mole, the weazle, and the urchin wandered at will ; and where many a wasp-nest lurked unseen ; and it was overgrown with a world of herbs and wild-flowers, and prickly brushwood, the delight of the country botanist and the truant schoolboy. As old Mary wandered thoughtfully down the lane, with her Prayer Book in her hand, Billy lingered behind his mother, and began to play amongst the flowery wilderness by the wayside. Not hearing his footsteps, she turned round, and to her dismay she saw him a little way behind, up to the middle in prickles, quietly whistling, and cutting a twig with his knife.

"William !" cried she, "whatever arto doin'?"

"I'm makin' a wicken-whistle."

"I'll whistle tho ; thou little monkey, thou ! Doesto know what day it is ? Gi' me howd o' that knife, this minute ! An' look how thou's daubed thi clooas ! An' thi shoon, too,—they're o' cover't wi' frog-rud,—dirty lad ! An' tak that posy out o' thi hat ! I have sich wark wi' one

and another on yo that I'm fair moident out o' mi life,—that I am! . . . Now, then, wipe thi nose; an' come on! . . . Stop a minute; let's see if yon lasses are comin'!"

The old woman turned back a little, and looking back towards the house, through an opening in the hedge, she said, "Oh; they're comin' at last, I see! They'n nobbut just be i' time! Come, William, let's be goin' on!"

In another part of the landscape, where a rough bridle-path led up to the unshaded heights overlooking the pleasant vale, two old friends met on their way to chapel.

"Mornin', Sam!"

"Mornin'!"

"Fine mornin'!"

"Fine mornin', very! . . . Thou's a bit o' a smut o' thi nose, Enoch! . . . T'other side! . . . That's it! It's off, now! . . . Well; an' how are yo' o' up at th' Crag?"

"Oh,—meeterly. My wife's a bit bother't wi'th 'tic,—an' one o'th' childer's trouble't wi'th worms,—but t'other are o' reet. They're off to th' chapel, yon, sitho."

"Owd Bill o' Snatch-block's had a bit of a touch o'th worms,—but I think he's gotten rid on 'em o' somehow. Jone o' Collop's met him i'th' fowd one day, about a month sin', an' he says to him, he says, 'Bill; thou looks poorly; what's to do witho?' 'I'm trouble't wi'th' worms,' said Bill. 'Worms!' said Jone; 'I con soon get rid o' those for tho! Sitho; thou sees th' Seven Stars yon?' 'Ay!'

‘Well,—go thi ways reet in at th’ front dur, an’ get about seven pints of owd Jerry’s very best ale,—*an’ if it doesn’t kill th’ worms, by th’ mass, it’ll kill thee!*’”

“Ay; it’s just like Jone, is that. . . . Well; an’ how are yo gettin’ on wi’ yo’r hay?”

“Well; we’re leet-honded, raither; but I think it’ll do very fair,—if this weather howds out.”

“An’ it looks ever so likely.”

“Ay; it’s just let i’th reet nick, has this fine weather; an’ I think we’re safe as lung as this moon lasts. . . . Who’s yon, at’s wobblin by th’ end o’th lone, yon?”

“It’s Robin o’ Bob’s. . . . He geet o’ his hay in three days sin’; an’ they had their churn-supper o’ Friday neet; an’ he axed th’ hawve o’th’ parish to’t. But there wur so mony coom ’at had to stop o’ neet that his wife said to him, ‘I’ll tell thee what, Robin; I’se never be able to find beds for th’ hawve o’ these!’ ‘Oh, never thee mind,’ said Robin; ‘*give ’em drink enough,—an’ they’n find beds for theirsels!*’ an’ there’s one o’ ’em did find a bed for his-sel, for he wur taen ill th’ same neet; an’ he dee’d th’ next day.”

“It’s bin an ill haliday for that chap, as how ’tis. Who wur it, saysto?”

“It wur Jack o’ Waddle’s.”

“Nay, sure. Why, I thought that Jack had bin as hard as brazzil.”

“Well, an’ so he wur; but then thou knows, cast iron will not last for ever. It brings ’em down, titter or latter,—as how strung they are. . . . Poor owd Jack! He wur a daicent, hard-wortchin’, simple-hearted chap,—as innocent as a flea! He never thought he wur doin’ reet

unless he wur wortchin' like a slave,—for a little wage. If onybody had offer't him aboon fifteen shillin' a week, he'd ha' thought he wur beawn to ruin 'em."

"There's none so mony laft o' that mak."

"Nawe; that breed o' folk's gettin' thin strewn,—it is for sure. . . . Poor owd Jack! He co'de (called) wi' his cart at th' Birch Farm one day,—he'd brought some stuff up fro' th' town for 'em. It wur a blazin' whot summer day; an owd Jack's throttle wur as drusty as a lime-brunner's clog. Th' mistress co'de him into th' kitchen, an' hoo said, 'John, come in, an' sit yo down a minute. Yo could do wi' a drop of ale; couldn't yo?' 'Yigh,' said Jack, as he wiped his face wi' his handkitcher, 'I've nought again' it 'at I know on.' 'Here, Jane,' said th' mistress to one o' th' sarvants, 'goo into th' cellar, an' draw John a jug of ale.' Well, this wur a new sarvant, an' hoo went an' drew this ale out of a wrong barrel,—hoo drew it out of a barrel that they'd letten go sour a-purpose, becose they wanted to use it for aliker (aleger). Well, when th' lass brought this jug o' sour ale, th' mistress honded it to Jack, an' hoo said, 'Theer, John, get that into yo; I'm sure yo'n do wi' it sitch a day as this!' 'It's very warm, for sure,' said owd Jack; an' then he laid howd o'th' jug, an' he oppen't his gills, for he lippen't o' lettin' th' ale down o' at a woint; but th' first gulp wur enough, an' he stopt an' roll't it round his mouth, for th' taste wur terrible, an' he wur freetent o' givin' it bally-reawm; an' theer he stoode, swillin' it round, an' starin' like a twitchelt earwig. Th' owd lad didn't like sayin' that th' ale wur naught, so wi' mich ado he manage't to swallow th' odd mouthful, an' then

he set th' pitcher down, an' he said, 'Here, mistress ; *I'm happen noan dry!*' 'Eh, *do* finish yo'r ale, John,' said th' mistress. 'Nay,' said Jack ; 'let it ston a bit ; I dar say I's be lookin' in as I come back!' . . . Hello! isn't yon Jerry, th' huntsman?"

"It favours him."

"Heigh, Jerry! what's o' thi hurry? Poo up a bit, an' tak us witho! We's be in afore th' bell drops!"

"Well,—our maister's very particular about th' sarvants bein' in i' time."

"Ay, ay ; he's very religious,—of a Sunday,—I know. . . . Well,—an' when are yo beawn to get into yon grand new house o' yor's?"

"Oh, it'll be a week or two yet. There's nob'dy theer, nobbut old Liddy, th' housekeeper ; hoo's takken' care, till things getten put to reets. . . . Tother day, there wur a gentleman coom a-lookin' th' house o'er, an' after he'd gone through it, he said to owd Liddy, 'Well, it's really a very fine house,—an' beautifully finished!' 'Oh, nay!' said Liddy, it's not finished yet!' 'Indeed,' said he, 'why, what more do they intend to do at it?' 'Well,' said Liddy, 'I heard our master sayin' tother day, that he was *going to have a mortgage put on it!*' 'Oh, ay,' said th' gentleman, 'I see,—an' that does indeed prove a finisher, sometimes!' . . . Now then ; we're just i' time ; I see th' parson's comin' across th' felt, yon! . . . Hello ; what's owd Ben doin' stride-legs upo' th' riggin' o' th chapel? He looks if he wur ridin' a rush-cart."

"Some'at wrang wi'th bell, I think."

"Nay ; th' bell's goin' reet enough! What's up, thinken

yo? He'll ha' to come off th' peeorch (perch) in a minute or two, an' start of his clerkin'! This caps me! . . . Ston fur; th' parson's here! Let him goo in th' first!

"Good morning to you! A fine morning!"

"Good mornin', sir! It's a bonny mornin'!"

The old parson had walked across the fields, ready robed, for the morning service; and, as he passed through the ancient lych-gate, into the tree-shaded chapel-garth, he looked up with astonishment to find the old man who acted as sexton, clerk, and bell-ringer, sitting astride upon the roof of the chapel, in front of the little belfry, with a hammer in his hands.

"Hollo, Benjamin," said he, "whatever are you doing up there?"

And the old man turned half rounl upon his seat, and he said, "Well, sir; yo seen, it's a fine day, an' there hasn't bin so mony fine days latly; an' so *owd Sam Buckley has borrowed th' bell-rope, to lead his hay wi'—an' I've come'd here to ring in wi'th coal hommer!*"

"Come down; come down, at once!" said the parson, as he walked quietly on to the vestry door.

The old sexton came down from his perch, and followed his master. The stragglers who had been lounging in the chapel yard, where there fore-elders lay at rest, trickled quietly in, one after another, and took their seats; and in two or three minutes the solemn words of the service of the Church of England floated dreamily through the little chapel, and out at the open doors, into the listening sunshine.



Sunday Noon.

In summer, when the shade do creep
Below the Sunday steeple, round
The mossy stones that love cut deep
Wi' names that tongues no more do sound;
The lane do lose the stalken team,
An' dry-rimmed waggon-wheels be still,
An' hills do roll their down-shot stream
Below the resten wheel at mill.
O holy day, when toil do cease,
Sweet day o' rest, an' grace, an' peace!

WILLIAM BARNES.

O day, most calm, most bright,
The fruit of this the next world's bud.

The couch of time, care's balm and bay;
The week were dark but for thy light;
Thy torch doth show the way.

GEORGE HERBERT.

(A fine Sunday, in the height of summer. Interior of a little moorland chapel, during morning service. MARY O' NATHAN'S, with her little son BILLY, and her three daughters seated in their pew.)



THE day was cloudless and bright, and the scene outside the moorland chapel was still "as a resting wheel," save the songs of wild birds, the ripple of a brooklet, here and there, as it wandered through the secluded vale, and a sleepy rustle of trees in the church-

yard, which came with drowsy distinctness in at the open doors, mingling with the preacher's voice. More than half the morning service had gone by with the usual attentive observance, and the responses had risen in audible murmurs from old and young, of the simple congregation; but by the time the sun had reached the vertical point of his journey, and the noontide heat rained down in full force upon the roof of the little fane, the younger part of the assembly had begun to fidget upon their seats. The heat of the day, too, was beginning to tell, here and there, upon a drowsy nature in that rustic congregation, whose lives being mostly spent actively in the open air, made them more susceptible of the soporific influence of hot confinement, and long restraint in a sitting posture. More than once old Mary had found it necessary to nudge first one and then another of her daughters, as they were sinking into a dose. Little Billy, too, was beginning to yawn and get restless. Twice he had slyly pulled the three half-pennies out of his pocket, to count them over and fondle them; and twice he had been hastily checked by his mother for doing so. And again, whilst kneeling during the prayers, with his head bent down in an attitude of devotion, the little fellow had furtively begun to practise the art of carving upon the woodwork in front of him, when his mother caught sight of him, and suddenly defeated the first efforts of his genius, by giving him a smart rap on the arm, which knocked the clasp knife from his hand. The knife went to the floor with a clatter, which drew the attention of some of the congregation, and raised a blush upon the cheeks of every one of the family in old Mary's pew. She picked the knife up

from the floor, and put it into her pocket ; and shaking the lad by the shoulder, she whispered in his ear, "I'll warm, thee, gentleman, when we getten whoam !" After this, Billy struggled manfully for a while, to keep himself still ; but it was of no use. The little fellow's child-like sense of decorum had given way. The heat of the place, and the long continued thralldom of propriety, had been too much for him, and the solemn words of the service were gradually sinking into a monotonous buzz of wearisome sounds, from which he longed to escape into the open air. Beside, it was getting near "pudding time," and, during the sermon, the only thing that propped his drooping eyelids up was that his thoughts were beginning to concentrate upon a gnawing pain which marked a vigorous attack of his usual noontide stomach complaint ; and, when the parson came to the welcome words, "Now to God the Father," &c., he suddenly stood stock still, with the air of a devout young anchorite ; but, like a greyhound straining at the slip, he was only preparing all the while for a rush at the open doorway.

The old clerk had drawled out the last "Amen" in a solemn and tremulous tone ; and, after the usual reverential pause, the vicar had lifted his white head, and retired to the vestry. The organist struck up a lively voluntary ; and the young folk began to shake out their holiday feathers, and look around with an air of relief. Morning service was over ; and the congregation surged slowly out through the porch into the open sunshine ; with many a greeting, here and there, among the little crowd, as old friends and neighbours met. The greater part of the congregation

walked right on down the deep-worn pathway, out at the ancient lych-gate, into the lane which led to the church; and then took each his several way homeward through the pleasant landscape. A few staid folk lingered under the trees in the chapel-garth, seated on the low, moss-grown wall, chatting about the sermon, and the crops, and the general news of the parish; and, in one corner of the yard, apart from the rest, a middle-aged matron, with her two daughters and a little lad, all clad in "deep mourning," hovered about a new grave-stone, with moistened eyes, till all the rest had gone; then, slowly and silently took their way, hand-in-hand, up the old lane; and the grave-yard was left once more sleeping in the noontide sun, begirt by its guardian trees.

As different knots of the congregation straggled homeward through the landscape, old cronies began to "for-gather," here and there, and chat together by the way. The vicar's sermon had been on the Crucifixion; and, though this was a fitful theme of the talk of these rustic wanderers, yet their conversation drifted hither and thither, in all sorts of secular directions, in spite of an almost unconscious feeling of reverence for the sanctity of the day.

"Heigh, Robin! Slacken a bit; an' tak me witho. Thou'rt gooin' at a terrible bat!"

"I want mi dinner, mon."

"Well, well; what they'n surely lev a bit for thee, as how 'tis! Poo up, an' lets ha' thi company as fur as we're gooin'."

"Well; come on then! What's to do witho? Thou walks as if thou were hopshackle't!"

“Thou’d be hopshackle’t, too, if thou’d as mony corns o’ thi toes as I have.”

“Thou should drink less, and wear bigger shoon, my lad!”

“It’s noather drink nor little shoon ’ats brought these segs, Robin. It runs i’th blood. My faither wur trouble’t wi’ em, afore me.”

“Well, come; let’s tak it quietly, then; I’m noan i’ that hurry.”

“That’s reet, Robin; every time I set my fuut down there’s a steawngin’ pain strikes straight up fro my toe to th’ top o’ mi yed! It makes me envy a chap ’at’s a wood leg! . . . I’ll tell thou what, Robin; th’ own lad’s gan us a good sarmon, this mornin’!”

“He has that! an’ he con do, when he’s a mind. I don’t know that I ever yeard a bit o’ better talk about th’ Crucifixion i’ my life.”

“Nor me noather. There mun ha’ bin a quare mak o’ folk livin’ in thoose days, that would ston by, an’ see sich wark as that goin’ on! It’s terrible, mon!”

“It’s nought else. . . . But, between thee an’ me, I think thoose Jews mun ha’ bin a lot o’ cowards, Robin!”

“Nay; I don’t think that. Accordin’ to o’ accounts, they were’n olez agate o’ feightin’, oather amung theirsels, or wi’ some o’th outside lot. Oh, nay; I don’t think they wur cowards,—but they mun ha’ bin o’ a savage turn ’at could do sich things.”

“Well,—I don’t care. O’ that I con say is that if I’d bin upo’ that spot, I’d ha’ taen that Pontius Pilate bi’ th’ yure o’ th’ yed an’ I’d ha’ punce’t him round th’ yard once

or twice; an' I'd ha' taen some o' th' tother on 'em one after another,—come cut an' lung tail,—as lung as my shoon had stopt on!"

"Eh, there's no tellin'. They wur different times then, mon."

"Well, ay; they mun ha' bin so. They wouldn't ha' sich like wark as that now."

"Nawe, they wouldn't. But they han their own ways o' killin' folk i' these days."

"I guess they han. . . . Didto notice 'at Bill o' Fizzer's an' Sally Robishaw wur axed for th' third time i' th' chapel this mornin'?"

"Oh, ay. Sall 'll have a rough hond-full when hoo gets him."

"Hoo will that! . . . Well, what dost think he did, tother day?"

"Nay; he's noan to reckon on, isn't Bill. Summat quare, I'll uphowdto."

"Quare enough for onybody else; but nought to wonder at i' Bill. . . . Well, it wur this. He went up to th' parsonage one mornin', an' he knocked at th' dur, an' when th' sarvant coom, he said he wanted to see th' vicar,—very particular. Th' owd chap were sit bi his-sel, up to th' een among his books; so Martha went and knocked at his dur, an' told him that Bill o' Fizzer's wanted to see him. 'Send him in,' said th' vicar. An' in went Bill, o' cover't wi' slutch, an' rough out o' th' felt. 'Well, William,' said the vicar, 'take a seat. What can I do for you?' 'Well, yo known,' said Bill, "I put th' axins up about a fortnit sin!" 'Oh, yes,' said th' vicar, 'I remember. You are going

to be married to Sarah Robishaw, at the Hartley.' 'Ay,' said Bill, 'that's hur 'at I wur beawn to get wed to at first; but I've unbethought mysel' sin' then.' 'You have what?' said th' vicar. 'Well, said Bill, 'I've bin turnin' things o'er i' my mind, yo known, an' I think o' makin' a bit of an awteration. Sall's a daicent lass enough,—an' her an' me's bin axed twice i' th' chapel; so fur so good. But what I want to see you about is this,—sin Sall and me wur axed I've let of another woman that I'd rather have than her bi' th' have.' 'Why, William,' said th' vicar, 'what is the meaning of all this? You must be taking leave of your senses!' 'Oh, nay,' said Bill, 'its o' reet! This fresh un's a very good sort,—an' hoo's a bit o' brass;—its Ailse o' Mally's. Hoo's more to my likin' a good deeol than Sall. Her an' me's talked it o'er; an' I've made up my mind 'at I'll get wed to her,—if it con be shapt onyhow. . . . 'Th' same axins 'll do, I guess?' 'Certainly not,' said th' vicar. 'Oh,' said Bill, 'sha'n we ha' to be axed o'er agen?' 'Of course you will,' said the vicar. 'Why, then,' said Bill, 'let it ston as it is; I'll ha' Sally Robishaw; as how th' cat jumps!'"

"What a bowster-yed!"

"Ay, thou may well say that! 'Change is leetsome,' as th' sayin' is, thou knows; but there's no change i' Bill."

"Nawe; he's as big a foo as ever! God help her,—as who gets him! . . . Owd Mary o' Jamie's wur at chapel this mornin', I seed."

"Ay; poor owd lass; I'm sorry for her."

"Th' owd crater looks very ill, for sure; an' hoo's i' black for somebry."

"I see thou's never yerd."

"Yerd what?"

"Well,—about a fortnit sin', as I wur gooin wi' th' cart down to th' town, I gav' a look in at their house, thinkin' o' seein' Jem; but I fund nought in but poor owd Mary, rockin' hersel' bi th' fire wi' her yed lapt up, an' a pitcher full o' baum-tay upo' th' hob aside on her."

"Why, wheer wur Jem?"

"Well,—th' owd lad's off to another country, about a fortnit sin'."

"Oh, ay? Why, Susy Potter co'de tother day, an' hoo towd me 'at he wur laid up, an' couldn't stir a peg."

"Ay, an' Susy wur reet,—as it happens; for, laid up he is sure enough; an' he'll stir no moore, I doubt,—for they'n buried him i' th' owd chapel-yard, yon, among his fore-elders."

"Eh, dear! Why, I never yerd a cheep on't! But then, thou sees, he's bin laid up a good while, an' he's a great age, an' they live't at an outside place. Poor owd Mary; hoo'll be very lonely! Nawe; I never yerd on't afore."

"Nawe; I dar say not. There's moore agate i' this world than oather thee or me gets to yer on. It wur Jone o' Quifter's 'at code as he wur gooin' down to th' town, abuyin' a new scythe. Jone's a bit o' relation o' owd Jem's; an' Jone an' his faither wur at th' bedside when th' owd lad dee'd. It seems 'at he'd a terrible hard time on't afore he could draw away. Day after day, an' neet after neet, he lee moanin' an' strugglin' between life an' deeth,—an' th' last bit o' breath in his body kept comin' to th' edge of his lips, an' then turnin' back again,—as if it couldn't

stop in an' durstn't goo out,—like a child, fleyed o' bein' put out o' th' dur into th' cowl. Eh, bi what Jone towed me,—I believe it would ha' melted th' heart of a stone to ha' sin Mary while he lee theer, feightin' between life an' deeth. Th' owd lass wur fair worn to a shadow wi' watchin' neet an' day ; but hoo turn't his pillow, an' hoo weet his lips, an' hoo wiped th' cowl pain-sweat fro' his forehead,—but, do what hoo could, nought seemed to give him relief. An' still he kept stickin' to her hond, an' lookin' into her face, as if he would ha' said, 'Mary, connot thou help me?' Poor owd Mary,—hoo looked as ill as deeth hersel',—an', as hoo stood theer bi th' bedside, wi' tears running down her face, hoo said, 'Eh, my poor lad ! whatever mun I do? He'll ne'er ha' no pleasur' till it's o'er,—God help him!' At last, hoo leant down, an' hoo said, 'James, has thou somethin' on thi mind?' An' th' owd chap knowed what hoo said, for he oppent his een a bit, an' he gasped out, 'Nawe,—nawe!' 'Then, why doesn't thou dee?' An' sure enough, th' owd lad wur set at liberty the same neet."

"Poor owd Jem ! He'd had a lung bout on't; an' it would be a happy release. I'll tell tho what, deeth's a poor thing !"

"It is, Robin ; an' life's ncan so mich better ; for we're no sooner here nor we're off again ! . . . I've sin nought of our Joe upo' th' road ; where can he be stoppin', thinken yo ?"

"He's just at th' back on tho, here, sitho."

"Oh, thou'rt theer, arto? 'Talk o' the devil, an' he'll oather come or rick his chens,' I've herd folk say."

“Yo don’t co’ me the devil, dun yo, faither?”

“I think thou’rt a bit akin to him sometimes. But hie tho into th’ house, or thou’ll be missin’ thi dinner. . . . Well, good mornin’, Robin! I guess I’s e be leetin’ on tho at th’ latter sarvice?”

“Ay, I’s e be theer.”

“O’ reet!”





Snick-Snarles.

In roth I fancy
Some fiend, or fairy, nae sae very chancy,
Has driven me, by pawky wiles uncommon,
To wed this flytin' fury of a woman.

FERGUSSON.

Autumn evening. A little country town in Lancashire.
MATTY PEEVISH and SALL O'DOSSY'S at MATTY'S
cottage window, commenting on people passing by.

“**N**OW then, Sally! I'th name o' good Katty, what han we comin' now? Is it a mountebank's foo, or a morris-doancer, thinken yo? This is a bonny pictur' to turn out into dayleet, as how 'tis! If I wur th' sun I'd give o'er shinin' till that geet out o'th seet! Hoo favours a rush-cart pooper! There'll be some skrikin' when yon gets into th' market-place!”

“There will that! Folk'll think there's a circus comin'!”

“Yon's worn some brass o' ribbins, an' toppin'-fat, I'll awarnd yo!”

“I'll tell yo what, Matty; hoo'd mak a rare corn-boggart!”

“Well,—ay,—as yo say’n, Sally,—I’ve sin hondsoomer flay-crows i’ my time,—but, hoo’d do! There’s noan so mony brids that durst face yon top-knot! See yo, how hoo steps the ground! Is hoo lame, thinken yo? Hoo strides like a cat in a gutter!”

“Bless thi life, lass, hoo’s tryin’ to walk pratty!”

“Well—hoo may walk as hoo’s a mind; but, I don’t like th’ look on her! Yon’s gutter-bred, as wheer hoo comes fro’!”

“Ay! I’ll uphould yo, hoo’s bin fain to scrape a porritch-dish mony a time, has yon—for o’ her fithers!”

“Ay, Sally; it’s ever so wi’ sich like! Who’s yon ’at hoo’s talking to? See yo! but eh,—hoo’s bonny! I’ll tell yo what, hoo’d fot brass, if hoo wur in a show! . . . Who is it, i’ God’s name? Con yo mak her out?”

“Let’s see! . . . Eh, what a seet! . . . Well, I declare—it’s Nan o’ Fuzzock’s dowter,—Lizz o’ Nan o’ Fuzzock’s—hoo gwos by the name o’ ‘Midden i’ Fithers,’ wi’ some folk.”

“Nay, sure; is it that impident snicket?”

“It’s nought else, Matty!”

“What, hur ’at there’s bin so mich talk about?”

“Hoo lippen’t o’ bein’ wed, yo known,—but it fell through.”

“Oh, I’ve yerd o’ about it. . . . Well,—hoo’s a little brazen-faced madam,—that’s what hoo is! Hoo should cock her neb an’ waggle her flounces about,—wi’ a calico rag on her back that hasn’t sin wayter as three week! They may weel co’ her ‘Midden i’ Fithers!’ Little sloppety sliven as hoo is! I’ll uphowd yo that just meet now,—for

o' 'at hoo's fithered an' furbelowed to th' heels,—hoo's so ittert't wi' dirt that yo met (might) set potitos in her neck-hole! Hoo should be donned a bit, should yon,—for hoo'll tak a deeol o' donnin' to mak her nice! Did onybody ever see sich a be-ribbint foo as it is? It would beseem her better if hoo wur stonnin' i'th front of a weshin'-mug, wi' a lin brat afore her, an' a pair o' clogs on! But I doubt hoo's gan o'er wortchin'! Trampin' princess as hoo is, yon'll ha' to sup sorrow bi' spoonfuls afore hoo dees, yo'n see! Hoo's after some'at 'at's noan so good, just meet now? But, if hoo wur a lass o' mine, see yo, I'd larn her a different rub o'th spindle, afore who wur a day owder!”

“Hoo wants oather endin' or mendin', does yon, Matty; an' if hoo wur mine, I doubt I should lick her to th' seet of hersel,' to begin wi', an' see what that'd do? But, what can yo expect fro folk 'at's leet gi'n?”

“Between yo an' me, Sally,—it doesn't come out o' gradely wark, I'll uphowd yo.”

“Let her goo her own gate; I may (make) no 'count o' sich like pouse-dirt.”

“How's yo'r Sam, Matty?”

“Our Sam? Eh, never name it! I've a weary life wi' him. If ever ony poor soul wur punish't for their sins, it's me. T'other day——”

“Hello! See yo, Matty! What mak of a craitur han we here? Yon's a quare pattern, as how 'tis. I think I'd never a turn't yon out till after dark. Who owns yon, pray?”

“It's th' new sarvant at th' 'Buck.'”

“What a trollops, to be sure!”

"Aye,—hoo's a gradely draggel-tail."

"An' what a mouth!"

"Aye,—it'll bide some kussin', will yon! Hoo darn't oppen it o' at once."

"What for?"

"Freet'nt of her yed tumblin' off."

"Well, it's a terrible gash, for sure. If hoo gets howd of aught wi' yon mouth hoo'll lev a gap in it."

"Wheer does hoo belong?"

"Somewheer Manchester gate on; an' hoo'll ha' to go back afore aught's lung bi what I've yerd."

"How's that?"

"Well, hoo's nobbut bin a week at th' 'Buck,' an' they'n gan her notice o'ready."

"An' what's that for, pray yo?"

"Well, they say'n hoo's brokken moore windows an' pots than twice her wage comes to, an' afore hoo'd bin here three days hoo'd have a dozen colliers whewtin' an' tootin' after her every neet."

"Hoo favours one o' that mak, Matty,—does yon."

"Aye, it's true what I'm tellin' yo; beside, th' mistress at th' 'Buck' says hoo's so dirty; an' they keepen missin' stuff."

"Hoo's a basket wi' her now."

"Aye, an' hoo's croppen out at th' back, yo seen."

"Oh, I see! Aye, it's an ill look wi't, has that,—it has for sure. I'd get rid o' yon, if I wur them,—an' soon, too."

"Oh, hoo's nearly done her cap-full; hoo's nobbut another week to stop. . . . Now then; come, Sally, let's poo up to th' fire a bit, I'm gettin' quite parisht (perished)."

"Stop a minute, Matty,—who's this?"

"What's he like?"

"He's a wooden leg, wi' a brass ring on; an' his nose is as red as a cock's comb."

"It's Dick o' Fiddler's. A bigger wastrel never kommed (combed) a toppin'! He's bin sowed up three or four times, an' he owes brass o' up an' down this town. It's noan so lung he wur taen up for sellin' 'hush;' and he'll be taen up again afore lung, yo'n see, for some'at or another."

"Is he wed?"

"His wife is, whether he is or not. Hoo's had weary deed wi' him, I believe. A war divil never stepped a floor nor he is. If I mut (must) ha' my mind, yon would ha' to dangle at th' end of a bant afore mornin'. . . . Let him goo! we can do bout (without) yon when we're busy. . . . Now then, Sally; come, poo up to th' fire—it's bitter cowl. I'll put th' kettle on, an' we'n have a cup o' tay; an' between thee an' me I could like a toothful o' rum in it."

"Well, Matty; I'm noan agen that mysel', if yo'n let me goo out an' fotch it."

"Howd te din, lass! I've a saup in a nook i'th cubbort 'at nobody knows on nobbut mysel'. Thou knows, I'm ill o' my woint, an' I find 'at there's nought yezzes (eases) me like a saup o' rum,—except it be a drop o' good gin."

"I'm forc't to tak it mysel', Matty; but mine's for th' rheumatic."

"Ay; yo couldn't have ought better, Sally. Now then, poo up; an' I'll mend this fire a bit."

(The door opens, and a man looks in.)

"Now then,—what dun yo want?"

"Mistress, can yo tell me wheer Jenny Pepper lives?"

"Who, sayn yo?"

"Owd Bill Pepper widow. Her faither wur a butcher."

"I know nought about her. Sper fur; an shut th' dur."

(He retires.)

"Why, Matty, hoo lives close by here."

"I know that, but I wur noan boun' to tell yon nought about it. He favvours a bum-baillie."

(The door opens again, and a little girl looks in.)

"Well, an' what does thou want?"

"My mother wants to borrow yo'r hond-brush."

"Tell thi mother to buy a hond-brush o' her own,—an ax her when hoo's for sendin' that cupful o' saut back 'at hoo borrowed last Monday. . . . An' poo that dur to!"

"Who's lass is yon?"

"It's Mall o' Whistler's. They're never off these dur-stones, for one thing or another,—saut, an' flour, an' pepper, an' candles,—ay, an' evenly pins. If thou'll believe me, they'd ha' one out o' house an' harbour, if I wur to gi' way to 'em. T'other forenoon they coom in no less than three times to ax what time it wur,—till, at last, I could ston it no lunger,—so I took yon little snicket a souse o'th yed, an' I said, 'Tell thi mother to fot (fetch) th' clock, an' ha' done wi't!' . . . Hoo's a quare craitur, is owd Mall."

"What, this lass's mother 'at's bin in?"

"Ay;—owd Whistler Bill's her husban'. They coom fro' Ash'oth moor,—an' they're as feaw as fried pow-cats! . . ."

Did'n yo never yer tell on 'em gooin a-kessunin' (christening) that last chylt o' theirs ? ”

“ I dunnot remember.”

“ Eh, dear ! . . . Well, yo known, Mall an' owd Bill set off wi' this choilt o' theirs to have it kessun't at Ash'oth Chapel ; an' when they geet theer th' parson axed 'em what name they wanted to give it. ‘ Name,’ said owd Bill ; ‘ I never gan it a thought abeawt th' name. Ax my wife, theer. Doesto yer, lass ? He wants to know what it's to be co'de !’ ‘ Co'de,’ said Mall, ‘ I know no names !. Co' it what thou's a mind ! Pike a name out o'th Bible,—a fresh un !’ ‘ Well,’ said owd Bill, ‘ will Jezabel do for tho' ?’ ‘ Nawe !’ said Mall, ‘ I'll ha' no Jezabels !’ ‘ Well,’ said owd Bill, ‘ what's tho think about Habbakuk,—will that do ?’ ‘ Nay,’ said Mally, ‘ I wouldn't co' a dog sich a name as that ! Let's yer some'at at's moor sense in it nor that !’ ‘ Well,’ said owd Bill, ‘ mun he co' it Pontius Pilate, then ?’ ‘ Nawe, he munnot co' it Pontius Pilate !’ said Mally ; ‘ he munnot co' it Pontius Pilate ; thou greight leather-yed,—doesto want to have us taen up, or some'at ?’ ‘ Here,’ said owd Bill, turnin' to th' parson, ‘ co' it Nicodamus, an' ha' done wi't,—th' woman'll keep us botherin' here o' day !’ So they had it kessunt Nicodamus, an' off they went ; but afore they geet whoam they met Owd Thrum, th' weighver, that lives down i'th fowd, yon. ‘ Well, Bill,’ said Owd Thrum, ‘ yo'n gotten th' kessunin' o'er, I guess ?’ ‘ Ay !’ ‘ Well,—an' what han yo co'de it ?’ ‘ We'n co'de it Nicodamus,’ said Bill. ‘ Nicodamus !’ cried Thrum ; ‘ why, I thought it had bin a lass !’ ‘ Well, an it *is* a lass !’ said Bill. ‘ Well, then,’ said Owd Thrum, ‘ yo' mun

oather ha' th' name or th' choilt alter't, for Nicodamus is a lad's name!' 'The dule it is!' cried owd Bill; 'doesto yer, Mally? Come thi ways back; it'll ha' to be done o'er again! An' away they went back again to Ash'oth Chapel an' geet it unkessunt,—an' they had it kessunt Liddy, after her gronmother!'”

“Well, I never yerd sich a tale i' my life.”

“Eh, yo'd believe 'em if yo knowed 'em,—for hoo's nobbut about ninepence to th' shillin',—an' he hasn't dog-wit. . . . Now then, Sally; draw to, an' put sugar in for yo'rsel', and get a saup o' that rum,—it'll happen skift yo'r rheumatism a bit. It does me good, I can tell yo. An', if yo'n believe me, Sally, I'm like to ha' some'at, or else I could never keep up. I'm not one 'at talks much about sich like things,—but I find, myself gettin' war (worse) for wear, I can tell yo. What wi' lumbago, an' rheumatic, an' tic, an' coughs, an' cowds, an' one thing an' another, I haven't had a sound day as twel'-month. An' between yo an' me, Sally,—what wi' illness, an' frettin', an' tuggin', an' tewin' wi' yon chap o' mine, I'm gettin' weary o' my life,—an' I wouldn't care if it were o'er to-morn,—I wouldn't for sure! . . . Now, Sally, get a saup moor o' that rum.”

“I'm doing very weel, Matty; get some yo'rsel'.”

“I've just put some in. Oh, I'll go nought short. An' dunnot yo stint it, Sally; for there's plenty moor wheer that coom fro! . . . Ay; I may weel look ill, Sally; for I've had nought nobbut hard wark, an' trouble, an' starvation, an' ill-usage of o' maks sin I geet wed. I never rued weddin' nobbut once, an' that's been ever sin'.

Yon chap o' mine, see yo, he's no moore feelin' for me nor a stone,—that he hasn't! If I wur deein' afore his een, see yo, he wouldn't do a hond's turn! An' catch him missin' a meal! He can guttle, an' drink, an' sleep, like a greight o'er-groon pig, as he is! An' he looks upo' me just as if I wur dirt under his feet! But, thank God, it cannot last for ever,—that's one comfort. If he'd help me a bit when he comes in fro' his wark,—but, he, bless yo! I met as weel ax for one o' his teeth,—an' here I have o' this house to look after, fro' mornin' till neet,—ill or weel, I must keep dingin' at it! An' it'll ha' to be so, I guess, till I drop to th' floor! I don't know what I mut ha' done if I'd had ony childer!”

(Enter Matty's husband, returning from his work.)

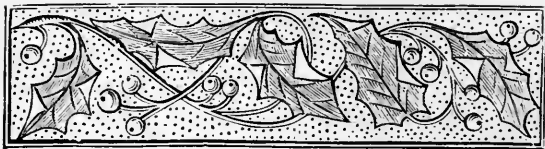
“Yo'n a fine smell i'th hole!”

“Well; an' if there is a fine smell i'th hole; thou hasn't brought it! It hasn't been paid for out o' *thy* brass! What is it to thee if Sally here has brought have a noggin o' rum wi' her? It's a bonny come-off if one cannot get a cup o' tay quietly,—an' me as ill as I am!—but one mun be worried an' harrish't wi' thy din!”

“Why; I've hardly oppen't mi mouth yet.”

“Thou's hardly oppen't thi mouth! I wonder how thou can for shame o' thi face abuse one as thou does!
. . . Here, Sally; help me to side this table; I'll goo out, an' lev him to it!”

“Well,—off witho'!”



The Nomination.

“Eh; that wur a good un!” “What wur it, Mally!” “I don’t know; but somebody’s caught it!”—VOICES IN THE CROWD.

AT the close of one of the old elections in Manchester, I sat at my window, in the market-place, watching the fall of a shower of rain. The stall-keepers had crept under the roofs of their sheds; and people stood in the doorways, shaking the wet from their clothing. The street was very still for a few minutes. Anon their came trickling round the corner a man with a woeful countenance. He was a little, square-built fellow, very poorly dressed. He looked like a hanger-on at some public-house, ready to do any kind of odd jobs, for drink and broken meat. One side of his face was covered with plaster; and his neck was swathed in a dirty woollen tie. He was working his passage along the opposite side of the street, with his hand upon his cheek, when a voice from below my window arrested his progress.

“Heigh, Joe,—come in here, mon: thae’ll be drown’t!

Arto hawkin' rain-wayter or some'at? Come in here! Thou looks like a two-legged dish-clout!"

He halted; and came slowly across into shelter.

His friend looked very hard at him, and then said, "By th' mon, owd lad, thou'rt wonderfully alter't! I should never ha' known tho but for that wart at thi nose end! What's to do wi' thi face? it looks terrible side-heavy."

"Oh," replied he, speaking out of the corner of his mouth, "it's eawt o' flutters a bit,—that's o'."

"Ay; an' so it is, bi th' look on't," said his friend. "What ails it?"

"Well,—I co' it 'Nomination.'"

"Nomination! What's that? Aw thought thae'd gotten th' tooth-warche."

"Well, an' I have gotten th' tooth-warche, aboon a bit. But then I haven't quite as mony teeth as I had last Monday,—that's one comfort. Th' best o' my teeth o' went that day. I'd one grand owd buck-tooth,—it wur as big as a piano-keigh, very near,—I wouldn't ha' lost that tooth for a sovereign,—but it went. I dar say somebody's made it into a chimbley ornament, or else a hondle for a umbrell. I lost about nine on 'em o' together; an' those 'at's left are wamblin' about like chips in a ponful o' warp-sizin'. It'll be a good while afore my teeth gotten saddle't again. If thou yers of onybody that's fund a lot o' fine teeth,—they're mine!"

"Well," said his friend, "I'm soorry to yer it, owd lad; willto have a bite o' moufin?"

"Moufin?" replied he; "nawe, I'll ha' noan, thae'd never ha' axed me that, if my teeth had bin reet."

"Well, but thou'rt welcome, if thou'll have a bit."

"Nay, aw'm livin o' spoon-meight at present."

"Oh, aw see. . . . Well, an' how wur it done?
D'ito run again summat?"

"Nawe; it run again *me*."

"Wur it a cart?"

"Nawe."

"What then?"

"It wur a breek."

"Oh!"

"I said 'Oh!' too—at th' time."

"Well, an' heaw wur it? Thou might tell a body."

"Well," replied he, "if thy mouth wur like mine, thae wouldn't want to cample so mich. But aw'll tell tho as weel as I con. . . . It wur done o'th nomination day. I let of a rook o' chaps gooin' down to see th' row; an' I thought I'd goo too, an' give a bit of a skrike for summat or another, among th' lot. An' a bonny hullabaloo it wur. Aw geet ram-jam into th' middle, wi' my elbow in an owd woman's ear-hole; an' I couldn't get it out again noather. Th' owd lass kept cryin' out, 'Maister; tak yo'r elbow out o' mi' ear-hole, win yo! I'm deeof enough without yo pluggin' me up o' that road! Tak it out, I tell yo! Yo'n ha' to pay rent for that ear-hole, if yo stoppen mich longer! . . . But, there it wur,—an' there it had to stop! for noather her nor me could stir a peg. . . . Well; they olez say'n there's th' most thrutchin' wheer there's th' least reawm; an' it wur so theer, by th' mon; First one lot sheawted, an' then another lot sheawted; an' I did my share; for I sheawted every time onybody else

sheawted,—so I couldn't get far wrang. Thae knows, I thought it wur o' gotten up for a spree. . . . Well, after these chaps upo' th' platform had palavert, an' co'ed (called) one another to ill to brun, thoose that wur down i'th front began o' snow-bo'in' one another, wi' breeks an' stones, an' ony mak o' stuff 'at coom th' first. Well, thae knows, aw use't to be a rare hond at cloddin' when aw're a lad, so that suited me to a tee. An' I flang a twothre (two or three) oddments mysel'; for I began to feel as if it wur a fuut-bo match, or summat. An' every time I chuckt a lump, I stood o' my tippy-toes, to see where it let (alighted). An' it's rare gam, too,—as lung as a body doesn't get hit theirsel'. But that mak' o' wark doesn't onswer lung wheer there's a good lot o' folk abeawt. . . . Aw dropt in for't in a bit. . . . I'd nobbut bin a sleepin' partner i' that consarn,—for a good while,—but they wakken't me up o' at once. . . . I'd just 'livert (delivered) a hondful o' slutch,—that let in a chap's neck-hole,—that stood upo' th' platform; an' aw're clappin' my honds, an' co'in' eawt, 'Here, here!'—to summat or another,—for I couldn't yer a word 'at noan on 'em said,—when a have-breek come wusk again my chops! . . . I began o' mindin' my own business at after that breek let (alighted). I'd quite a different way o' lookin' at things, for a minute or two. I sent no more parcels out. My een stroke fire! I sead Solomon's Temple, an' o' his glory! Folk thought I wur wrang i' my yed! An' I wur, too,—rayther! I took no moor notice o' their speeches. Th' election wur o'er,—as far as I wur consarn't. That breek wur a plumper. . . . Folk kept sayin' 'What's to do

wi' that chap?' an' then I yerd another say, 'Somebody's bin joggin' his memory?' . . . But I'd had enough. I don't know who's gotten in to this day,—an' I don't care. My mother use't to say, 'It'll come to tho, yet,—mind if it doesn't!' An' it *has* come'd. It coom o' Monday. At after that breek let, I don't believe I said another word, nobbut 'O my!' an' I began o' feelin' as if I didn't care so much abeawt stoppin' theer ony lunger; so I pike't off, wi' my yed deawn: for bits o' hard stuff kept flyin' up an' deawn, thick-an'-three-fowd,—like kest-iron pigeons. I geet whoam o' some-heaw; an' I've made up my mind to ha' nought no moor to do wi' noan o' their elections, wheer they begin o' tally-graftin' wi' breek. That's the end o' my nomination do! . . . Well, thae knows, Joe, I'm nobbut a poor hond at music; but my yed's bin agate o' singin' ever sin that day!"





The Swallowed Sixpence.

Thou art gone from my gaze !

MODERN SONG.

Fare thee well ; and if for ever,

Then, for ever fare thee well !

BYRON.

“**T**HAT’S a corker !” said Enoch o’ Twilter’s, as he stood in front of a pork-shop window, with his eyes fixed upon a sucking pig, with a red-cheeked apple in its mouth. “That’s a corker !” said he, laying his hand upon his waistcoat, and staring right at the pig—which seemed as if it would have laughed but for the gag in its mouth. He stood stock still, looking at the pig,—and yet he did not see it. Although his gaze was fixed upon that well-scraped porkling, with the red-cheeked emblem of the fall of man in its jaws, his thoughts were evidently in some other quarter. There was a “yonderly” look about his eyes which showed that his mind had been suddenly concentrated upon something which had taken place in his inside. . . . The butcher stood in the doorway, beating time with his thwittle, and humming,—

Frisk it, frisk it, frisk it, lads,
Frisk it while you're able ;
Cheepin' layrocks round the board,
An' plenty upo' th' table ;
Crack your jokes, and let 'em leet,
Sly deception scornin' ;
Prank it out wi' glee to-neet,
An' strike to wark i' th' mornin' !

Till, catching sight of Enoch, gazing at the pig in the window, he stepped from the threshold, and said,—

“Come, Enoch, let's sell tho that pig.”

Enoch woke up from his dream ; and, turning round, he replied,—

“The dule tak' th' pig !”

The butcher looked at the pig to see what ailed it. But that innocent suckling seemed to smile a kind of blind smile upon the man who had dealt its death-blow, as if to assure him that it was contented with its fate. The pig was all right. So the butcher turned to Enoch again, and said,—

“What's up ?”

“Up,” replied Enoch ; “nay,—it's down !”

“What's down, then ?”

“I've just swallowed sixpence,” replied Enoch.

The butcher's eyes glided to the lowmost button of Enoch's waistcoat, as if he thought that the sixpence might have lodged somewhere about that spot ; and then his eyes wandered back to Enoch again.

“Swallowed sixpence,” said he. “Expensive diet, owd lad ! Has some doctor recommended it ?”

“Not he !” replied Enoch. “Th' doctor would ha’

swallowed th' sixpence his-sel', an' he'd ha' gan me some Spanish-juice an' wayter. It would ha' done me moor good, too."

"It would, owd lad," said the butcher. "But there are complaints that nought but money can cure."

"Ay, there are," said Enoch; "an' I'm trouble't wi' 'em sometimes. But money's a mak o' physic that shouldn't be takken in'ardly."

"Well, neaw," replied the butcher; "it makes things awk'ard, for sure. I thought bi th' look o' thi' face that summat ail't tho."

"Summat will ail me, I doubt, afore I get rid o' this," said Enoch, laying his hand upon his waistcoat again. "I begin to feel short o' breath, neaw."

"Well," answered the butcher, "if thae'rt short o' breath, thae'rt noan short o' brass, owd lad,—as lung as that sixpence stops i' thi inside."

"Well," replied Enoch, "one may as weel be short o' breath as short o' brass, for ought I know. But then, what's o' th' brass i'th world to a mon that cannot get his breath? If I wur ram-jam full o' sixpences I shouldn't feel comfortable."

"I don't think thae would," said the butcher. "I shouldn't mysel'. . . . But what didto swallow it for? Arto layin' by for th' rent, or summat?"

"Am I hectum as like," replied Enoch.

"I thought not," said the butcher.

Just then the butcher saw an acquaintance passing by; and, laying his hand upon Enoch's shoulder, he cried out,—

"Heigh, Joe; gi' me change for this chap, here! He's sixpence in his inside!"

"Cut him oppen!" replied Joe, and on he went laughing.

"Now, then," said Enoch to the butcher, "thae doesn't need to tell o' th' world, if I *have* swallowed sixpence. Thae'll have 'em borin' holes into me, if they catchen me asleep!"

"Thou'rt reet," replied the butcher, "let's keep it to ersels (ourselves)."

"I doubt I shall have to do that," replied Enoch.

"It'll happen breed," said the butcher.

"Ay," replied Enoch; "it'll breed a disturbance."

"Wur it a good un?" asked the butcher.

"Never a better," replied Enoch.

"Well, then, it should pass. . . . But, how didto get it down?"

"It went down itsel'," replied Enoch. "I couldn't help it."

"How so?"

"Well, thae sees," replied Enoch, "I wur comin' straight to this shop for a pound o' black puddin's wi' th' sixpence i' my mouth; an' as soon as I seed that pig i'th window, theer, it set me agate o' laughin',—an' o' at once,—down went my sixpence!"

"Well done, Enoch!" cried the butcher. "I've tow'd thee mony a time to save a bit o' brass; an' thae's done it at last! It's th' first time I ever knew thee lay ought by for a rainy day."

"That bit's safe enough, as long as it stops where it is, as how," replied Enoch.

"It is, owd lad," said the butcher. "Thae'rt a mon o' property now, go where tho will."

“Well, I’ve a bit o’ summat to fo’ back on, hayen’t I?” replied Enoch.

“Thae has, owd lad,” continued the butcher. “Thae’rt like a walkin’ purse. If I were thee, I’d swallow a thri-penny bit, an’ three owd penny pieces, now; an’ then thae’ll have a shillin’s worth o’ change i’ thi inside. Besides, thae’d jingle as thae walked, like a bell-wether.”

“Well, it’s noan so mony folk that gets their inside line’t wi’ silver, is it?” replied Enoch.

“Nawe, it isn’t, owd lad,” said the butcher. “Thae’rt like a rollin’-stock on a railroad, now.”

“Ay,” replied Enoch, “that’s o’ very weel, as far as it gwas; but how mun I manage for th’ puddin’s? . . . Yo’n be like to trust me a pound, now. Yo known that sixpence is yo’rs,—if ever it comes to th’ leet again.”

“Ay, ay,” said the butcher; “but it’ll happen stop where it is.”

“Well, yo known where to find it,” replied Enoch.

“Ay,” answered the butcher; “I could say so if it were at th’ bottom of a coal pit.”

“Well,” continued Enoch, “every time that I pass this dur yo’n know that it’s yo’r sixpence that’s goin’ by; so it’s as safe as th’ bank.”

“Ay,” said the butcher; “but it’ll nobbut pay poor interest, as long as it stops where it is. An’ yet,—there is ways o’ bringin’ it to th’ leet again.”

“So there is!” cried Enoch.

“Ay, ay,” said the butcher; “but it would happen cost aboon sixpence. But here, come thi ways. Thae shall ha’ some puddin’s, let it leet as it will. There’s a bit o’ summat good in tho at last. Come thi ways in!”



Tubbers Afloat.

Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of barren ground.—THE TEMPEST.

“**M**ORNING, Harry!”



“Morning!”

“What do you say to a bitter?”

“I’m your man.”

“Come along then! . . . Well; and where have you been? I’ve missed you on ’Change this many a day.”

“I’ve been in Ireland.”

“Ireland! I love that Irish land, Harry! ‘Green be thy fields, dearest isle of the ocean!’—

“Wert thou all that I could wish thee, great, glorious, and free,
First flower of the earth, and first gem of the sea,
I might hail thee with prouder, with happier brow,
But, oh, could I love thee more dearly than now?”

But you don’t like sentiment. Hard work, cop-bottoms, political economy, one God, no devil, and twenty shillings in the pound; a solemn Sunday, and as righteous a week as the exigencies of the day will allow; with a modest quencher

now and then, to wash down the dust of business ; this is thy creed, O Henry ! . . . So you had a jolly trip ? ”

“ Jolly ! I believe you, my boy ! The passage was very rough ; but we had some fun on board, in spite of the weather. A little knot of country folk, from Lancashire, went over with us ; and most of them had never been upon the sea before. They were a sturdy, comfortable lot ; and, when the boat started, they were the merriest folk on board ; and they kept us alive with their quaint talk and hearty ways ; but before we had got half-way across, they were all as sick as dogs, with one exception. One old fellow, ‘ with a frame of threescore and a spirit of twenty, ’ kept pacing the deck all the way, delighted with the storm. As the vessel pitched and rolled, he cried out, as he steadied himself upon his round pins, ‘ Woa, Dobbin ! Thae’s had too mich corn, owd crayter ! Woigh, my lad ! Gently does it ! Thae’ll waut (upset) th’ whole consarn i’ tho doesn’t mind ! Come ; thae’ll give o’er rompin’ afore thae gets to th’ fur end ! ’ And when the tail-end of a wave whisked across the deck, he ducked his head and cried, ‘ Go it, owd brid ; I’ll howd thi jacket ! See yo, lads ; I’m as weet as a wayter-dog ! Eh, I wouldn’t ha’ missed this for a five-pound note ! Look out, it’s comin’ again ! Blaze away ; I’m noather sugar nor saut ! By th’ mon, lads, this is a prime do ! It makes my toes tingle ! ’ And so he kept at it all the way. But the rest of his companions were in a sad state. One old man and his wife were worse than anybody else. The old woman couldn’t bide the atmosphere below ; so she lay upon deck, wrapt in rugs and shawls, heaving and moaning, and crying out now

and then, when she could get breath, 'Oh, I wish to the Lord I were a-whoam! Eh, if ever I set feet upo' dry lond again! This rollin' about 'll be th' end o' me! Look at my clooas! . . . Eh, whatever mun become o' yon childer, if aught happens me! . . . I say—reitch—that thing—I mun—Oh, dear o' me! . . . This sort o' wark doesn't agree wi' my inside! Oh—I'm done for!' The old fellow who was pacing the deck, stopped now and then, to hap her up, and to see if she wanted anything. 'Now, Betty,' said he, 'how arto gettin' on? Keep thi heart up, owd lass!' 'Eh, Joe,' said she, 'I haven't a bit o' heart in me! I'm as hollow as a drum!' 'Well,' said he, 'thae mun bide as weel as thae con. It'll soon be o'er! We're gettin' nar (nearer) Paddy's lond at every stride!' 'Thank the Lord for that,' replied the old girl; 'thank the Lord for that! Ony mak o' lond afore this rantipow! Oh, that I were a-whoam! Reitch me that—I shall be a bonny seet i'th mornin'! Eh, yon childer,—yon bits o' childer! . . . I say, Joe.' 'Now, then!' 'Wheer's our Sam?' 'He lies on his back down below, yon, as white as a sheet.' 'Go thi ways, an' tell him I want to see him! Eh, Joe, I'm finished this time! Tell him that if he wants to see me alive he mun come up this minute! We'n bin wed thirty year, thae knows, Joe! Eh, I mun see him! Joe, tell him I want to talk to him about th' childer. Eh, I'm welly (well-nigh) done! I'll try to howd on till he comes; but I mun draw away afore aught's lung! I pritho (I pray thee), do goo, an' bring him up!' 'May thisel' yezzy, lass (make thyself easy),' said Joe, happing her up again; 'may thisel' yezzy; I'll fot (fetch)

him up. Thae's have another look at th' owd brid, as how th' cat jumps!' And away went Joe to find her husband, who lay down below, as ill as herself, moaning and groaning. 'Eh, lads,' said he, speaking to the passengers near him, 'Eh, lads, if I'd known o' this I'd ha' gone tother gate on! . . . Dry lond for my brass. . . . This is a doleful spree! I say, stewart, hond me that what-doesto-co' it! . . . Oh, by th' mon, it's hard wark! Here, stewart, doesto yer, owd lad,—how lung will it tak us to get to a bit o' sensible floorin'?' 'Three hours.' 'Three hours! By th' mass, I'll sign o'er! Ten minutes moor, an' I'm done for! Hond me that——! Be sharp! . . . Oh, owd lad, I may as weel begin a-taperin' off! It's up wi' th' owd foo!' In the meantime his friend Joe had left the deck, and coming up to him, where he lay, he said, 'Now, Sam, owd lad; how arto gettin' on?' 'Gettin' on?' said he, panting for breath, 'Eh, Joe; this is th' last time round! Th' gam's up, owd lad! I've tried mony a complaint i' my time, but this licks o'! Look what a seet I am!' 'Couldto like aught?' said Joe. 'Like aught?' replied Sam; 'ay; I could that.' 'Well; what is it?' said Joe. 'I could like a bit o' dry lond, owd lad, if thae con shap it,' replied Sam; 'a bit o' dry lond! I'd sooner have that nor aught there is i' this hole! Eh, Joe; I'm o' of a wamble i'th inside. I laft whoam for an out; an' if ever I get out o' this they'n never catch me here no moor!' 'Well but,' said Joe, 'there's yo'r Betty, up at th' top, yon; an' hoo's as nee stitched up as ever onybody wur i' this world; and hoo says that if thae wants to see her alive thae mun goo just now.' 'Oh,' replied old Sam; 'an'

so I'm to goo just now, am I?' 'Ay,' said Joe; 'thae mun goo this minute, if thae wants to see her afore hoo draws away,—thoose are my orders.' 'Oh,—an' hoo's ill, is hoo?' 'Ill,—ay! I never see'd no poor soul sich a seet sin I were born.' 'Oh,—well,—go thi ways up again; an' tell our Betty,—fro' me,—that as how ill ever hoo is I'm ten thousand times war (worse)! If hoo's for dein', hoo mun dee. Hoo's olez (always) had her own road, so fur; an' hoo may have it to th' end, for me. As for deein',—tell her I'm just at th' same bat mysel'; an' if hoo dees th' first, I's o'ertak her afore hoo gets far. Now, off witho, an' tell her what I say; for I cannot stir a peg off this clod. . . . An' here, Joe; doesto yer?' 'Well, I'll lev (leave) thee my spectacles, an' my snuff-box, an' ony odd thing 'at thae's a mind to pike (pick) for thisel'. An', I say,—thae knows, I like our Mary,—thae mun let her ha' th' haue of everything that there is,—brass, an' everything 'at hoo's a mind to choose; an' then divide th' tother amung th' childer, share an' share alike. An' then thae'll find a bit o' brass about our Betty an' me, at after we're gone. Well; get a saup o' summat warm among yo, wi' that, as soon as yo getten to dry lond. . . . An', I say,—for th' Lord's sake, dunnot let us be buried i' Irelan', owd lad! Thae'll see us takken whoam again; an' laid down amung er (our) own folk, winnot tho?' 'Ay, I will!' 'That'll do! Well; gie me thi hond! Good day to tho, owd lad! Lap me up.'

"Well, of course, the old people landed all right; and, after a little rest, they were as merry as ever. But I fell in with another Lancashire man, who was on his first trip to

Dublin. We dined together in the city; and the story of his reception on landing tickled my fancy a good deal. He was a strange mixture of shrewdness, simplicity, and humour; and ——”

“Stop, Harry; I’m due on ’Change. We’ll have that after dinner.”

“All right.”





A Jolly Waggoner.

What hempen homespuns have we here?

SHAKESPEARE.

[*Time, 1820; a keen bright forenoon, in the depth of winter, The crisp snow lies glittering upon the streets of Manchester BEN O'THUNGER'S, a tall, strong, country fellow, dressed like a waggoner, is sauntering about Cannon Street, leading a little lad, who is muffled to the chin in a woollen "comfortable." BEN has come from the foot of Blackstone Edge in search of employment; and he is waiting to see the manufacturer to whom he has been recommended. As he wanders to and fro in the street, he peeps in at the warehouse windows, now and then; and he croons snatches of song as he gazes vacantly around.*]

HERE, Billy, my lad,—thou looks cowl! Thi nose is red,—an' thou'rt as keen as a young ferret! Let's tee that muffler o' thine, an' tuk it into thi singlet a bit! Theer, now,—thou'rt as grand as a parish bang-beggar! As soon as I've seen this chap we'n go down to th' Seven Stars, an' get a bit o' dinner, an' a

saup o' summat warm to it; an', then, heigh-up for Black's'n-edge! once moor. . . . Arto tire't, my lad?"

"Ay,—a bit."

"Ay,—an' thou may weel. It's a lung trawnce; an' thou's walked it like a drum-major, my lad! Well, come,—thou shall ride back i' Billy Robishaw's cart. He sets off about two o'clock; an' we's just ha' nice time to get a bit o' dinner, in a nook at th' owd house, yon. . . . Arto hungry, my lad?"

"Ay."

"That's reet, my lad! Thou's a rare twist,—an' it's a good sign! Thou taks o' me for that! I wur olez ready for mi meals; afore they were ready for me; though we'n bin nought short yet,—thank God! . . . Here, sitho; get this manchet an' cheese into tho; an' then thou'll happen howd out till dinner-time. . . . Stop. . . . Afore tho starts,—goo in at that warehouse dur, an' ax if th' maister's come'd. They said he'd be in about now."

(Billy goes in, and comes out again. The clerks peep through the window at the two on the street.)

"Well,—is he in?"

"Nawe. They say'n he'll be a quarter of an hour, yet. An' they wanten us to goo in, an' sit us down."

"Not I? I'm noan beawn to sit i' yon smudgy cote! It's as dark as a coal hole! I'd rather be i'th oppen street,—ten times o'er!"

(Begins to croon a song, as he walks about.)

I wish I was on yonder moor,
 An' my good dog wi' me, oh ;
 Among the blooming heather flower,
 Wading wild an' free, oh !
 Wild an' free !
 Wild an' free !
 Where the moorlan' breezes blow !

“What's yon? Th' Owd Church Clock ! It's strikin' twelve ! Another quarter of an hour, Billy, an' we's be liberated !”

I wish I was where th' moor-cock springs
 Up from the heath'ry lea, oh !
 An' the lonely mountain streamlet sings
 To the desert wild an' free, oh !
 Wild an' free !
 Wild an' free !
 Where the moorlan' breezes blow !

“See yo, faither ; see yo at yon chap wi' a tun-dish on his yed !”

“Ay ; yon's one o'th show folk, my lad. There's some quare craiters i' this town, Billy.”

“Faither, let's goo whoam. I don't like here”

“Nawe, nor me noather, Billy. It wouldn't do for me. I cannot draw mi breath gradely among these streets. They're o' thrutched up in a lump, here,—houses, an' folk an' o'. For th' bit o' time that I have to live I'd rather live where there's moore elbow-reawm than there is here. . . . Never mind, my lad. Bide a bit. We'n be off whoam again, soon after I've sin this chap.”

(Sings again.)

'Mong blooming woods, at twilight dim,
 The throstle chants with glee, oh !
 But the plover sings his evening hymn
 To the ferny wild so free, oh !
 Wild an' free !
 Wild an' free !
 Where the moorlan' breezes blow !

Upon yon hill I'll take my rest,
 And there my bed shall be, oh !
 With the lady-fern above my breast,
 In the keen blast waving free, oh !
 Wild an' free !
 Wild an' free !
 Where the moorlan' breezes blow !

“ See yo, faither,—see yo who there is o' t'other side yon ! ”

“ Ay, bi'th heart,—it's Parsley Bob,—an nought else ! Whatever's th' owd lad doin' here, I wonder. (*Shouts across the street.*) Heigh, Robin ! Now then, Bob, owd lad ! Doesto yer ? Where arto for at sich a pelt ? ”

“ Hello, Ben, owd layrock ! It's never thee, belike ! Whatever's blown thee this gate on, i' thi haliday jump ? An' here's yor Billy witho, I see ! Whatever han yo agate ? ”

“ Well,—if I mun tell the truth, Robin, I'm seechin' a shop ! ”

“ Why, thou's never laft owd Sam's, sure ? ”

“ Thou's hit th' mark, Robin. I've laft th' owd shop. ”

“ The dule thou has ! How leets that ? ”

“ Well,—it let thus : T'other day, owd Sam coom into th' stable to me,—he wur market fresh, an' so wur I, too, for that matter, for we'd both bin off at th' town,—well, he coom into th' stable to me when I're agate o' fodderin' up for th'

neet, an' he began o' gosterin' an' talkin' about th' horses,—he'd ha' this done, an' he'd ha' that done, or else he'd play th' upstroke wi' somebry. Well,—I couldn't ston' it a bit longer, so I chuck't th' bucket down, an' I said, 'D— thee, an' thi horses, too, Sam! If I cannot manage th' horses beawt bein' bother't wi' thee, thou'd better manage 'em thisel'!' Wi' that he made no moor ado, but he up wi' his fist, an' he fot (fetched) me a cotter o' th' chops. Well, thou knows, I couldn't ston' that—so I tackled him in a snift. We'n had mony a bit of a doo afore, but this time I believe I gav him a gradely good towellin'. Well,—there wur a bonny racket i' that hole for a bit, I'll uphowd to! (I will uphold thee!) Well, thou knows, we're both on us of a tickle temper,—an' th' owd lad's a rare pluck't un, an' he feights rough when th' blood's up, so we didn't play dainty, I can tell tho, but went at it, hommer an' tungs; an', amung us, somehow, th' owd lad geet lamed—an' then he thrut up his hond, an' he said, 'Howd, Ben; let's drop it! Help me up; I believe my shoolder's out!' Well,—we'd made sich a din while we were agate, that they yerd us into th' house, an' it brought th' sarvants out,—an' then th' mistress coom, an' th' two daughters,—an' there were sich a kick up i'th hole as never wur yerd tell on. Th' sarvants wanted to carry th' owd lad into th' house; but he wouldn't let nobody lay a finger on nim nobbut me—noather th' wife, nor nobody else. 'Ben,' he said, 'come, thou'll ha' to help me in! It's bin a far tussle,—but I'm nobbut th' topmost but one this time!' So I pushed 'em o' one side, an' I helped th' owd lad into th' house, an' geet him laid on a couch cheer. . . . Well,—th mistress looked as if hoo could like to cut my throat,—an

hoo as good as swore that I should never do another stroke for them as lung as hoo wur alive! An' then hoo towd me to walk off, an' never darken a durhole o' theirs again; an' hoo co'de me war than a powcat. Well, thou knows, owd Sam lee theer gruntin' wi' his shoolder,—an' he kept tellin' me to tak' no notice on her, but goo an' finish my wark. But th' owd lass stuck to it bitterly that hoo would never sleep another neet under that roof if ever I wur allowed to touch another job about th' premises. So at last, my own yure began o' bristlin' up a bit, an' I whipt th' stable keigh out o' my pocket, an' I said, 'Here, Sam; tak' thi keigh! I'll sattle this job at once! If thou'rt gooin' to be rule't bi th' spindle, I'm not! So I'll find another shop—an' I'll bid yo good neet,—o' on yo!' An' wi' that I coom out, an' banged th' dur to beheend me."

"Oh, be hanged! That breeze'll blow o'er thou'll see! Th' owd chap'll send for tho back afore th' week end."

"Oh, I could do wi' him weel enough, but it's yon woman, mon! I cannot bide her!—hoo's so nattle, an' hoo's olez meddlin'. . . . But, my time's up, I see. This chap should ha' come'd in by now."

"Who is he?"

"They say'n he's a very daicent sort o' a chap. He comes fro' somewheer about th' moor-ends. But ho'ever,—he wants somebry to look after his horses, an' he gi's good wage, an' there's no harm i' seein' what he's made on, thou knows."

"No moor there is, owd lad. Well, I wish tho good luck, Ben!"

"Th' same to thee, owd buzzar. "

“Now then, Billy, my lad—slip in again, an’ see if he’s lounded.”

(Billy goes in at the warehouse door, and comes out again.)

“Faither, he’s come’d. They say’n yo mun goo in.”

“That’s reet. Come on, my lad!”

(They go in together.)

“Which is th’ maister?”

“Come forrud!”

“Are yo th’ maister?”

“Ay. What doesto want?”

“They say’n yo wanten a chap to look after th’ horses, an’ sich like.”

“Wheer doesto come fro’?”

“Th’ bottom o’ Black’s’nedge. . . . Shall I do, thinken yo?”

“Well, thou’rt big enough, as how ’tis. Who hasto bin wortchin’ for?”

“Sam o’ Matty’s,—Copper Nob, as they co’ him. I’ve druvven for him aboon twelve year.”

“Well, an’ what didto lev for?”

“For hommerin’ th’ maister.”

“Oh, ay! An’ he didn’t like it, I guess?”

“Well,—I don’t think he care’t so mich,—but his wife didn’t like it.”

“Oh,—I see. Is that a lad o’ thine?”

“One on ’em. I’ve seven moor a-whoam!”

“Hasto brought thi character?”

“Nawe,—I never axed for noan. An’, to tell yo truth, I’m better beawt it.”

“I dar’ say thou art. . . . Well,—thou may come’ o’ Monday mornin’; an we’s see how we can get on.”

“O’ reet, maister !”





The Wimberry Cake.

It was the last that she had left.

WILLY'S GRAVE.

AS I came down the main street the other day I was overtaken by an impulsive friend of mine,—a man of singular mental fertility and uncommon culture,—whose rare acquirements and racy humour have always delighted me. The range of his sympathies was unusually wide and warm. To him the small was great, and the great was small ; and the commonest things in life could lead him into regions of lofty and reverent thought. In such moods it was a rare pleasure to listen to his discourse. He was at all times an interesting companion. From his well-stored and inventive mind something rich and strange was continually springing in allusion to the things around him : and even passing incidents upon the street often called forth some ingenious remark, or some apt quotation from famous books,—books too much neglected in these days of ephemeral scribble, hurried off the end of the pen to bring bread for the day.

He overtook me upon the street ; and seizing my arm, as usual, he led me aside into St. Ann's Square. It was not a

parade day in that fashionable lounge, and therefore we had a good deal of it to ourselves. The statue of Richard Cobden seemed to be the first thing that caught his eye. "Ah, now," said he, "there stands the counterfeit presentment of one of the greatest benefactors of mankind in our day. He wrought hard, and long, and suffered much; and it will be long before his countrymen comprehend the wide-embracing harmonies of the scheme which occupied that lucid mind. Even his immediate companions have not all of them grown up to the pitch of his great conceptions. I am almost disposed to endorse the high eulogium of his illustrious friend and co-worker, who once said to his audience, as he pointed to a marble bust of the great free-trader, 'I tell you that not even marble is more enduring than that man's fame.'" . . . From this theme he glided to the subject of art; and, after severely criticising the statue itself, he said, "The arts, my dear sir, though several in manifestation, are one in their source,—like the fingers of a man's hand. And then, how different are men's ways of working in art. For instance, one man, by slow and sedulous effort, and careful retouching, achieves some embodiment of his ideal; but anon, there comes another,—a man of noble creative force,—who strikes the amorphous block with the wand of divine command, and lo, there riseth into the ambient air an image full of the extremest beauty! Genius does what it *must*; talent does what it *can*." . . . And thus, as we paced to and fro, the temper of his discourse glided from one theme to another, as the leafy rustlings of a tree are changed in tone by the changes of the wind.

On the opposite side of the square, a man, who was once

of some eminence in this city, was trailing his weary limbs along, shattered in health, and steeped to the lips in poverty,—although little more than forty years of age. “Ah,” said my friend, “yonder goes one whose sun is going down while it is yet day. The hand of the Ancient Master is in that worn countenance. Where are his friends? There are none so poor to do him reverence now! Another hapless soldier stricken down prematurely in the battle; and no kind hand to carry him to the rearward, out of the trampling press of the fight. Ah, my dear sir, it is very sad; it is very sad!” . . . And thus he went on, in plaintive descant, until the massive form of a well-known lawyer came shouldering its way slowly through the sunshine; and my friend changed his note at once. . . . “Ah, there now,” said he, “there goes a man of mighty physical mould! One of the sons of Anak! There goes a man whose bulk and big assemblage is touched with something finer than the dull world dreams of. I know him well; and an excellent fellow he is, for all his rugged exterior,—a man with the strength of a giant, and the tenderness of a woman. By the way, I heard an anecdote of him the other day, which may not be uninteresting. You know him sufficiently to know that though ‘the patch is kind,’ he, like Launcelot Gobbo, is a ‘huge feeder.’ Well, it seems that he had occasion, once, to go far away from town, up to one of our wild Lancashire moorland hills, upon some legal business; and after wandering about there for some hours, he found, to his dismay, that when his usual dinner-time came, he was miles away from any visible place of refreshment.

“Hollo!” cried he, looking at his watch; “how’s this? Where am I to dine? There are no hotels, nor anything here! I must have something to eat’ What’s to be done?”

The man who was in attendance upon him pointed to a lonely cottage, far down the moor-side, and suggested that *something* might be had there. It was the only dwelling in sight, and away they went towards the spot. The hungry lawyer found a poor woman in the cottage, with six little children playing around her.

“Mistress,” said he, in a jovial off-hand way, “can you find me anything to eat? Eggs and bacon; bread and cheese; anything! I’m quite famished!”

The woman gazed with astonishment at that mighty, well-filled frame, which looked so unlike starvation; and then, giving a quiet look around her poor hut, she replied,—

“Well; I’ve just made a wimberry cake, for these childer. Yo can have a bit o’ that, if yo’n a mind.”

“Wimberry cake!” cried he, rubbing his hands, “Wimberry cake! Grand! It’ll do! Bring it on!”

The poor woman set the cake before him, and he fell to with a right good will.

“Ah!” said he, “this is excellent! It’s very wholesome, too! very good, indeed!”

In the meantime, the children,—who had been silent up to this point, overawed by the great stranger’s appearance,—began to creep out from their corners; and, as they watched slice after slice disappear in the lawyer’s hungry jaws, tears rose into their eyes. At last, they

could bear it no longer; and they burst out, as if by common consent, with one cry,—“Mother, mother, he’s heytin’ it o’! he’s heytin’ it o’!”

“Good God!” cried the lawyer, flinging down his knife, “am I eating the children’s dinner?”

The poor woman raised her apron to her eyes and she said, “Ay, it’s o’ that I had for ’em. I had a bit o’ flour i’th house, an’ I sent th’ childer on th’ moor a-gettin’ some wimberry, so that I could make it into a cake for ’em. I thought it would be a bit of a puttin’-on, till to-morn.”

“Poor little things!” said the lawyer, as he pushed the remainder of the cake away from him, “why didn’t you tell me that before? I’ll not have another bite!”

Then, putting a sovereign into the woman’s hand, he said, “For Heaven’s sake get them something to eat!”

And he came away from that poor moorland cottage with tears rolling down his rough cheeks.





The Unexpected Visitor.

An' how came this man here,
Without the leave o' me?

SCOTCH SONG.



AS I sauntered along the street the other day, I met with an old acquaintance,—a humorous fellow, who is, also, a kind of vocal artist, in a small way,—and after the usual salutations, he told me the following story:—

“By the by,” said he, “a curious thing has happened to me since the last time we foregathered. I had been engaged to take part in a public entertainment, in a manufacturing town about twelve miles from Manchester; and on the morning of the appointed day, I received a note from the secretary of the institution on behalf of which the entertainment had been got up, simply saying that ‘Mr. B—— would be glad of my company at tea,’ and, if I would leave Manchester by a certain train, he would meet me on the platform at the end of the journey. This note was accompanied by a programme of the proceedings, announcing that ‘N. B——, Esq., of Carr Hill, would take the chair.’ This

gentleman I had no personal knowledge of; and, indeed I had no intimate acquaintance with a single soul in the place I was going to. However, I left Manchester by the train mentioned in the secretary's note, and on my arrival at the journey's end I sauntered about the platform, expecting every minute to be accosted by Mr. B——, whose person was unknown to me. But, one after another, the passengers trickled away from the scene, and nobody seemed to notice me. The train went on its way; and, at last, I was left alone, pacing the silent platform with resounding step. It seemed strange; and, as I knew nobody in the town, I began to cast about in my mind what was to be done. I looked at the programme again. 'N. B——, Esq., of Carr Hill, in the chair.' It was all right. Inquiring of the porter, I found that Carr Hill was about a mile and a half from the station; and, seeing nothing better for it, I took my way thitherward at once.

"It was a fine day; and as my walk brought me into the outskirts of the town, the scenery became more and more striking. I found the house, a quaint mansion, pleasantly seated in its own grounds, high upon the hill-side, and commanding a fine view of the bold hills on the opposite side of the valley. Entering by the front gate, I walked through the garden, up to the door, and rang the bell. When the servant came, I inquired if Mr. B—— was at home. She replied that he was not, but that he was expected in three-quarters of an hour; and then she held the door, and gazed as if waiting to see whether I had anything more to say. I thought it strange; and, after a minute's pause, I said that I was expected to tea there that evening. 'Oh, indeed!'

replied she, with an air of surprise, letting go the door. 'Step in, sir!' said she. Whereupon I walked in; and when I had hung up my hat, and deposited my stick in the stand, she opened a side door in the lobby, and pointing into the room she said, 'Take a seat, sir, please.' I entered; she closed the door behind me, and I was alone.

"It was a quaint apartment, richly and tastefully furnished. The walls were hung with pictures by famous artists, and costly books lay strewn upon the tables. I took up one of these. It was an illustrated copy of Froissart's 'Chronicles;' and, seating myself upon a sofa, I was beginning to lose myself in the Middle Ages, when—'Tap, tap, tap!' The door opened, and the servant looked in. 'Would you be kind enough to send your name, sir, please?'" I gave her my name, and once more she disappeared. It seemed queer that they didn't know about it. Perhaps he has forgotten to tell them, thought I. And then, easy-hearted, I was relapsing into old Froissart again, when another tap came to the door. It was the servant again. 'Will you step this way, sir, please?' I rose, and walked to the door. 'Take a seat in that room, sir, please,' said she, pointing to an open door on the opposite side of the lobby. I went in. It was a room very like the one I had just left. Costly books, and pictures, and furniture, with a cosy charm pervading the whole—a quaint nest of rich and tasteful homeliness. And then, in this case, a cheerful fire tinged the shady light with a genial glow. 'Mrs. B—— will be down in a few minutes,' said the servant, as she closed the door behind her. I was examining a fine oil painting by Sam Bough, when a silken rustle in the lobby announced the

approach of the lady of the house. She entered; and, with quiet courtesy bidding me 'Good evening!' she sat down to crochet, saying that she expected her husband every minute. So we chatted quietly about the weather and about the books which lay upon the table. In a little while the front door of the house was heard opening. 'He's here!' said she; and, rising from her seat, she went out and closed the door after her. There seemed to be a dead silence on all around for the next two or three minutes, and then Mr. B—— himself entered the room, and, with a twinkle of quiet humour in his eye, he shook me by the hand, and bade me welcome. His face was new to me, but I liked it. And now, thinks I, 'all's right!' and I began to feel thoroughly at home; and I began to chatter—as is my wont, now and then, when the fit is on me, about this and that—books, politics, pictures, music, antiquities, and the scenery around us; and the genuine, though undemonstrative, geniality of his manner soon made me feel as if we had been 'as thick as inkle-weavers' all our lives. And then he began to bring out rare books,—first one, then another,—some of them the most costly existing illustrated works upon botany,—in which science I thought that he seemed to feel an especial interest. After a pleasant, discursive chat, he offered me a cigar, and proposed a stroll in the grounds belonging to the house, until tea was laid out. And away we went, followed by his little terrier. It was a lovely evening. The bold outline of the opposite hills stood in grand relief against the sky; and as the dreamy glamour of twilight sank upon the scene the landscape looked finer than before. As we sauntered about, I found that he was well acquainted

with the historic associations of the scene. After a pleasant stroll, we went to tea, at which we were joined by his wife and his little daughter. Nearly an hour passed away in pleasant talk over the evening meal; and then, after a chirruping cup, we walked to town together,—he to preside over the evening's entertainment, and I to take my share in the performance.

“The affair went off in a satisfactory way; and, when it was over, he walked with me to the station to catch the returning train. Just before I took my seat in the carriage, he shook hands with me. ‘Good bye!’ said he,—‘*somebody* of my name has invited you to tea this evening, but, mind, *it was not me!*’ For a minute or so I was stunned; and then I made all sorts of blundering apologies. ‘Oh, don’ say a word about it,’ replied he; ‘I have enjoyed the whole thing; and I hope you will find your way to the same place again as soon as you have opportunity.’ And yet I felt a little uneasy about the thing until I received a letter from him to the same kindly effect.”





Working his Passage.

Poor lad; he had a deal o' heart,
But very little head.

NATTERIN' NAN.

[NAT SLASHER *and* NATHAN O' DOLL'S *meeting in a green lane.*]

“**N**OW then, owd dog!”

“Now then!”

“Nice melch mak o' a mornin'.”

“Grand groo-weather, for sure. Weet an' warm, like Owdham brewis.”

“What's to do wi' tho? Thou stonds very keckley.”

“Rheumatic or summat. I've never bin reet o' mi pins sin' Rushbearin'.”

“Thou wackers about like a tripe doll. We mun ha' tho spelk't up a bit, owd craiter, or else thou'll be tumblin' i' lumps.”

“I feel very wambly, for sure. I'm as slamp as a seck-full o' swillin's.”

"It's this rakin' out at neet, mon. It'll not howd wayter. Thou mun oather poo up, or sign o'er. Pike for thisel'."

"Our Mally says so."

"Ay; an' your Mally's reet. . . . Well, an' how are things shappin' down i'th cloof, yon?"

"About th' owd bat. There's nought uncuth (strange) agate 'at I know on. Well,—Bill o' Swiper's has order't a new dur to his pig-cote; it should ha' bin ready th' day after, but owd Churn-pow, th' joiner, wur off at a weddin'. Dan o' Cumper's wur axed for th' first time to Lizzy o' Flipper's, last Sunday, an' Ben at th' Hauve Moon's gotten his sign painted o'er again, wi' th' shap of his gronfather, smookin', i'th middle. There's nought else stirrin', mich. Well,—yigh,—Dick o' Belltinker's is for havin' one of his front teeth poo'd out, if it doesn't give o'er warchin'."

"Why, yo're quite in a boil, then. But it olez wur a lively nook, for th' size on't."

"Ay; th' town's busy if there' three folk talkin' together at once."

.

"Well; an' how's Owd Tupper gettin' on? Didto tell him what I said?"

"Ay; I tow'd him, mich and moor; an' I gav him th' best advice 'at I could."

"An' how then?"

"Well; thou knows what a wild kempie he is. He hearken't what I had to say, an' then took his own road,—th' same as 'ever. At it he went,—ticklebut,—like a bull at a gate. I'd better ha' save't mi breath to cool mi porritch wi'."

“Well,—I lippen’t o’ nought better. Mon, there’s some folk ’at winnot be said,—an’ Dick’s one on ’em. Reet or wrang, he’ll have his own gate; an’ nought’ll stop him,—but a stone wole.”

“I tow’d him I thought he wur stonnin’ in his own leet.”

“Thou met as weel ha’ chanted th’ ‘Evenin’ Hymn’ to a deod pow-cat. There’s nought for’t but lettin’ him tak his own gate. Sich like olez leeten o’ summat ’at poos ’em up afore they dee’n. He’ll come to of his-sel’, thou’ll see.”

“Well,—I laft him to’t.”

“Thou couldn’t do better. Let him powler about th’ world a bit; it’s a rare schoo’ for bull-necked scholars.”

“Hasto yerd about Nat o’ Softly’s gooin’ to Runcorn last week?”

“Nawe; I never yerd. Poor little Nat! What’s he bin doin’ theer?”

“Oh, by th’ mass, I mun tell tho that. Here; let’s sit us down upo’ th’ hedge-side a bit. . . Well, thou knows, Nat’s nobbut about ninepence th’ shillin’ at th’ best, poor lad, an’ he’s bin ill knocked about amung it, for he’s bin taen in of o’ sides,—it oft leets so wi’ folk ’at’s no ill in ’em if they happen to be of a dull turn,——”

“He’s as numb as a clay dobber!”

“That’s noather here nor theer. Th’ lad cannot help it. His faither wur so afore him; an’ there isn’t a mon livin’ ’at can jump out of his own skin into another. . . Well,—but,—as I wur tellin’ tho. Little Nat’s bin out o’ wark a good while; an’ he’s bin ill put to’t for a bit o’ scran, now an’ then. He’s had to fly up wi’ th’ hens mony

a time. Well,—about a week sin' he yerd of a job deawn at Runcorn; an' he pricked his ears at news, an' settle't his-sel for after it. Well, thou knows, th' owd lad wur as clemmed as a whisket,—an' he wur fair staggged up o' gates,—for he'd addle't nought of a good while; an' he took th' gate out o' Boarcloof wi' fourpence hawp'ny in his pocket. Well,—when he geet down into Manchester, he bethought his-sel about th' boat 'at runs to Runcorn fro Knott Mill, upo' th' Duke's Cut; an' off he set to see if he couldn't get to go by it; for he wur nobbut a hawmplin' mak of a walker at th' best,—an' he're as wake as a weet dishclout,—besides, he thought it'd save shoe-leather, an' sich like. Well, when he geet to Knott Mill, he went up to th' captain o' th' boat, an' he said, 'How soon does this boat start, maister?'

“‘In about ten minutes.’

“‘Con I goo wi' it?’

“‘Ay, sure thou con.’

“‘But I have no brass.’

“‘Oh, then, thou connot goo wi' it.’

“‘Ay, but, maister,’ said Nat, ‘yo'n be like to let me goo, for it's a matter o' life and deeth, mon.’ An' then he up an' towd th' captain about this job 'at he'd yerd on at Runcorn, an' he said, ‘I'll tell yo what I'll do wi' yo!’

“‘Well; what wilto do?’

“‘I'll wortch my passage, if yo'n a mind.’

“Well, th' captain looked at Nat a minute or two, an' then he said, ‘Wait a bit till I speak to yon chap o' mine; and I'll see what I can do for tho.’ In a twothre (two or three) minutes th' captain coom up again, an' he said to Nat, ‘Well, I think we can shap that job for tho!’

“‘That’s reet!’” cried Nat, rubbin’ his honds, ‘I have nobbut fourpence, yo known, an’ I’se want it for a bit o’ summat to heyt. One good turn desarves another. I’ll pay you back th’ first time I’ve a chance,—I will for sure,—if I’m a livin’ mon!’

“‘O’ reet, my lad! Well,—thou says thou’ll wortch thi’ passage?’

“‘Sure, I will!’

“‘What conto do?’

“‘Oh,—aught at o’!’

“‘Arto ony hond at drivin’?’

“‘Well, I should be, for I drove a cart for Owd Shapper six year.’

“‘Conto manage to drive yon horse for us?’

“‘Me? Ay! as weel as ony mon i’ Manchester.’

“‘Well, off witho, an’ get agate then; it’s time to start.’

‘An’ away went Nat, as content as a king; an’ mile after mile he drove th’ horse along th’ canal bank, thinking to his-sel, now an’ then, as he looked down at th’ ground, ‘I met as weel ha’ gone up th’ owd road, an’ walked it, for aught ‘at I can see.’ An’ then he’d give a look back at th’ boat an’ console his-sel wi’ sayin’, ‘But I *am* gooin’ wi’ ‘em ‘at after o’.’ An’ o’ this time th’ captain stood wi’ th’ tiller in his hond, steerin’, an’ watchin’ poor Nat as he trail’t along th’ bank, an’ wonderin’ how fur he’d goo afore he fund it out. But Nat drove to th’ fur end, as quiet as an owd sheep; an’ when they geet to Runcorn he shook honds wi’ th’ captain, an’ he said, ‘Well; I can nobbut thank yo,—I’se never forget yo!’

“‘Well,—th’ captain wur a daycent chap, and he saic

‘ Nawe ; nor I’se never forget thee, owd lad ! Here, come ; we’re noan beawn to put upo’ good natur’. Thou’s be paid for thi drivin’, as how !’ So they raise’t him five shillin’,—an’ they gave him a good feed,—an’ they towd him what a foo he made of his-sel.

“ ‘By th’ mass,’ said Nat, ‘I kept thinkin’ there wur summat wrang about it !’ ”





Pop an' Cockles.

Owd Pinder wur a rackless foo',
An' spent his days i' spreen';
At th' end of every drinkin'-do,
He're sure to crack o' deein !

“**H**ELLO ; wheer arto for, at sich a pelt ? Arto
runnin' thi country ?”

“I'm gooin' down to Posy Bill's for a canful
o' traycle, an' a burn (burden) o' Payshen Docks 'at I left
last neet.”

“Well,—if thou'll stop an' rosin have a minute, I'll goo
witho. . . . Is yon Rondle o' Crumper's marlockin
about th' fowd again ?”

“It's nought else. Th' owd lad's brokken out in a fresh
place ; an he's as peeort as a pynot.”

“It's never true, belike. Why, by th' mass, I lippent o'
yerrin' his passin'-bell every day.”

“Ay ; an' so did I. He's had a tight run wi' th' owd
mower this whet ; but he *is* yon, again, thou sees,—as cant
as a kittlin !”

“Ay ; he's yon, for sure. I'll tell tho what,—some folk
takken a deool o' killin'.”

“Ay; they done—an’ owd Rondle’s as hard as brazzil. But it’s bin a rough poo through for th’ owd dog this time.”

“So they say’n. Why they tell’n me that he wur clen off at th’ side for a while.”

“Ay; an’ it’s true enough, too. He weren’t his own person for mony a week; an’ he wander’t an’ maunder’t in his talk; an’ they could get nought into him nobbut suction.”

“An’ they tell me he yammer’t for rum,—neet an’ day.”

“An’ so he did; an’ th’ doctor tow’d Betty that hoo weren’t to let him ha’ noan upo’ no ’ceawnt. But it seems that while her back wur turn’t one day, th’ owdest lad fot him some, an’ leet him have a poo at it,—for quietness. Well, when th’ doctor coom, he snifted about a bit, an’ he said, ‘Hello, Betty; yo’n bin givin’ him rum again!’ but Betty said nich an’ moor that hoo’d never gan him noan. ‘Well, then,’ said th’ doctor, lookin’ round among ’em, ‘somebry else has!’ Well,—th’ owd’st lad happen’t to be theer at th’ time, an’ he said, ‘It’s me ’at did it! I couldn’t help it! He went on so, ’at I couldn’t bide to yer it; so I fot (fetched) him a saup, an’ leet him sup a time or two, while my mother wur out.’ ‘Well, but,’ said the doctor, ‘I tell yo again,—yo munnot do it! Yo’n kill him if yo letten him ha’ rum!’ ‘Well,’ said th’ lad, wipin’ his een, ‘I couldn’t bide to yer him.’ ‘But it’ll kill him, I tell tho!’ ‘Well, an’ if it does kill him,’ said th’ lad, ‘he couldn’t dee o’ nought ’at he likes better!’

“Well, thou knows, th’ lad wur reet as far as it went. But they had to give o’er givin’ him rum, an’ sich like stuff as that; an’, in a bit, he began o’ pickin’ up his crumbs, an’

he coom to his-sel' again. . . . Didto never yer about 'em changin' his diet?"

"Nawe; I don't know 'at I have."

"Well, then, gi's a reech o' 'bacco, an' I'll tell tho. . . . This is how it let. . . . 'Th' doctor went in one day, th' same as usual, an' he said, 'Well, Betty, how's th' owd lad gettin on?' 'Eh,' said Betty, 'he's very ill,—he is for sure. I don't know what I mun do. But yo'd better goo up, an' look at him.' So he went up stairs; an' when he coom down again, Betty said, Well,—what thinken yo?' 'Well,' said th' doctor, 'he's ill enough, God knows,—but it's no use givin' him physic,—physic's no use,—keep him warm, an' keep him quiet, an' let him have a saup o' broth, now an' then, an' happen natur' may help him to poo through.' 'Is there nought that one could do for him, then?' said Betty. 'Well,—sartinly,' said th' doctor; 'there is one thing that would give him a chance,—if yo' could get it for him,—an' it's th' only thing I can think on, that's likely.' 'Eh, whatever is it?' said Betty; 'whatever is it? he's have it,—if I sell up, dish an' spoon!' 'Well,' said th' doctor, 'a change o' diet's what I should recommend.' 'Eh, bless yo,' said Betty, 'he's have it,—as what it is!' 'Well, then, Betty,' said th' doctor, 'if yo can get him some good champagne,—an' some fresh native oysters, an' let him have his fill at his will, it's about the best thing for him that I can think on.' 'Eh, bless yo,—he's have it!' cried Betty, 'if I pop th' clock!' 'That'll do!' said th' doctor, an' away he went. . . . In a twothre days he coom again. 'Well, Betty,' said he, 'how is th' owd craiter, bi now?' 'I think yo'n find him a bit better,' said

Betty, 'I left him about two minutes sin' up-ended i' bed, yon,—croodlin' a bit of a tune.' 'That favvours mendin,' said th' doctor. 'It does, for sure,' said Betty; 'up wi' yo,—an' look at him.' Well,—when th' doctor coom down stairs again, Betty said, 'Well, doctor, what thinken yo? Is he upo th' turn?' 'Ay, ay,' said th' doctor. 'He's gotten th' warst o'er. He isn't like th' same mon. I thought a change o' diet would bring him to,—if aught would. . . . Of course, yo' geet him what I towd yo?'

“‘What wur that?’

“‘I towd yo to get him some champagne an' oysters; an' yo geet it, I guess?’

“‘Well,—nay, doctor,—I didn't justly get him that; but I geet him th' next best thing to't, 'at I could think on.'

“‘What wur that?’

“‘Well; I geet him some *pop an' cockles*. It's very nee th' same, yo known,—an' it comes in chepper!’”





“Send Tummus Up!”

“Thou’ll come to mi berrin’, Jone,” hoo said;
An’ I said I should be glad.

—NATTERIN’ NAN.

OWD BILL O’ SPIGGIT’S, *leaning against the village horse-trough, with a dog in a bant.* BUMPER *coming down the lane, with a sprig o’ thorn blossom in his hat, singing—*

Then swap yor hats round, lads, to keep yor yeds warm;
An’ a saup o’ good ale it’ll do us no harm.

“**H**ELLO, Bumper, my lad! What, fuddle’t li noon!
Bi lady, owd brid, thou’s let o’ thi feet; mindto
doesn’t leet o’ thi back afore neet.”

“Me fuddle’t, Billy! me fuddle’t,—nought o’ th’ sort,
owd buck-stick,—I can see a hole through a ladder, yet.”

“Well, well,—we’n say cheepin’-merry, then. By the good
Katty, thou’s bin having haliday deed, bi th’ look on tho’,
for thou cocks thi neb primely.”

“Eh, Billy, Billy,—I wish thou’d bin wi’ me! ‘Lilters
for ever!’ cried Thunge. Eh, Billy! I’ve been wheer
there’s roast and boiled,—an’ a lopperin’ stew, that it would

make a mon's yure curl to smell at,—free to o' comers ; ay, an' as brisk a tap o' brown ale as ever damped a mortal lip ! It sang like a brid as it went down !”

“ Ay, ay ; what, thou's bin among it, then. ‘ Heigho, jolly tinker !’ Thou may weel twinkle and twitter so. Some folk leeten on strangely. Come, keawer tho down a bit, an' cool thisel', for thou reeches like a lime-kill.”

“ Hast ony bacco ?”

“ Here ; help thisel' ; an' pipe up.”

“ Who's yon 'at's off through th' fowd at sich a scutch ?”

“ Nay ; I know not ; but, by the hectum, he's switchin' along like an uncarterd stag, as hoo he is.”

“ Ay ; he's cuttin' th' woint, for sure, is th' lad. What's up, I wonder ?”

“ A labbor or summat, I dar say.”

“ More likker a weddin', bi th' look on him ; for he's donned like a mountebank's foo.”

“ Ay ; an' he thinks he's bonny, too. He's worn some brass o' horse-gowd, has yon lad. Look at his waistcut ; by guy, it glitters like th' front of a rush-cart. Who is he, thinksto ?”

“ Nay ; I cannot make him out, yet. I wish he'd come a bit nar. He favvours a ale-taster about th' nose. I wonder if he'll turn in at th' Seven Stars ? If he does, I'se have a like aim who it is. But there's no tellin'. He's noan use't to yon suit o' clooas,—I can tell that bi his walk. He looks as if he'd a tin singlet on.”

“ I've sin yon mon wheelin' slutch, somewheer.”

“ Well ; I like as if I should know his wobble.”

“Wobble or no wobble, he’s a kenspeckle mak of a face, as far as I can judge. I could tell him better if he’d his own clooas on.”

“Ay, ay ; but he’ll need a deeol o’ donnin’, will yon lad,—to make him pratty,—for as fur as I can see, he’s as feaw as a fried neet-mare.”

“Softly, Bill, softly ; th’ lad didn’t make his-sel’, thou knows.”

“Nawe ; but he’s marred his-sel’ primely, bi th’ look on him ; for his chops are o’ in a blaze wi’ ale-blossom,—an’ they’re a troublesome mak’ o’ posies, are thoose. . . . Keep thi een on him, an’ see where he holes.”

“Howd ! . . . He’s kennel’t !”

“Wheer at ?”

“Th’ Seven Stars.”

“Bi th’ maskins, I know him,—to a yure !”

“Who is it ?”

“It’s Tummy o’ Galker’s, ’at played Bowd Slasher when we went a-pace-eggin’ last year.”

“Thou’s hit it ! What’s he after, thinksto ?”

“He’s off to th’ ‘Hirin’s,’ like a hunted red-shank.”

“Why ; has he laft th’ owd shop ?”

“Ay ; bi th’ ounters ; an’ I wonder ’at he’s stopt as lung as he has. Owd Mall’s bad to bide,—for hoo’s as crammed as a crushed whisket.”

“Hoo’s a nattle, ill-contrive’t camplin’ fuzzock,—if ever there wur one.”

“Bill, thou’rt in a terrible way for co’in’ folk to-day.”

“Well, I cannot bide her mon ; hoo’ll do no reet, nor hoo’ll tay no wrang ; an’ hoo’s no feelin’ for nobry nobbut

hersel'; an' that's th' top an' tail on't. . . . But Tummy use't to match her meeterly weel. . . . One day Owd Sam an' Tummy wur busy wortchin' i'th garden; and Sam had gotten a lung ladder rear't again th' gable-end o'th house; an' he wur gooin' up a-doin' summat at th' spout, when in comes Mall to th' garden, gosterin', an' hectorin', an' yeawlin' up an' down, reet and lift, th' same as usual. 'Come down that ladder this minute, doesto yer!' cried hoo; 'come down, I tell tho—thou gawmless leather-yed,—for thou hasn't cat-wit! Doesto know that ladder's as rotten as a brunt rag? Thou'll breighk thi neck! Come down, I tell tho,—an' *send Tummus up!*' 'Noan so, Mally,' said Tummus; 'noan so! I've a neck as weel as yor Sam,—an' mine's worth more brass to me nor yor Sam's is. If its noan fit for him, it's noan fit for me. If yo'n goo up, I'll howd th' ladder for yo; but I'm beawn to stop o'th floor, this time,—if yo pleasen.'"

"Well done, Tummy; he just sarve't her reet!"

"Oh, Tummus wur too mony for her. Hoo couldn't bant him at o'. Never a day passed but they'd a bit of a scog o' some mak. . . . One day, when th' rain wur peltin' down, at full bat, i' gill drops, Tummy coom runnin' into th' kitchen, out o'th garden, sipein' weet; an' he began a-shakin' th' rain off him. Well,—owd Mall wur helpin' th' sarvant wi' summat, an' as soon as Tummy coom in, hoo lays howd of a greight tin can 'at stood upo' th' sink stone, an' hoo says, 'Here, Tummus,—*thou art weet, an' thou con nobbut be weet*,—fotch us a can-full o' soft wayter fro th' well, yon.' Th' well wur about a quarter of a mile off. Well,—Tummy wur noan so weel suited wi' that, thou may depend,

so he looked at her for a minute, an' then he said, 'Here, gi' me howd o' that can!' an' away he went for th' wayter, through th' heavy rain. In a bit he comes in again, weeter than ever,—wi' th' can on his yed,—an' he said, 'Now then, Mally, wheer are yo?' 'Here, Tummus,' said Mally; 'set it down upo' th' sink.' But, i'sted o' settin' it upo' th' sink, he tipt th' whole can-ful o' wayter slap on to owd Mall; an' flingin' th' can upo' th' floor, he said, '*Now then,—thou art weet, an' thou con nobbut be weet,—fot th' next for thisel'!*'”

“Well done, Tummy! Bi th' ounters, he just sarve't her reet. Hoo wants sleckin' a bit,—for hoo's a prodigal pouze.”

“Oh, th' owd lad could fit her up nicely, when he're reet side out. Th' first time I let on him, at after he gan th' owd lass sich a swilkin', I took him into th' Seven Stars, an' I said, 'Here, Tummy; co' for aught there is i' this house, an' thou's have it, for what thou did at owd Mall!' . . . He's noan so breet i' some things, noather. I remember him an' me gooin' to Southport, an' it wur o' new to him, for it wur th' first time 'at ever he'd sin th' say. Well, thou knows, when th' tide gwos out at Southport, yo' can hardly see th' saut wayter, it's so fur off th' town. Well, one day, when Tummy an' me were walkin' bi th' shore, we coom to some fishin'-boats, 'at were laft dry upo' th' sond. Well,—Tummy looked at these boats a bit, an' then he said to a chap 'at wur gooin' past, 'Maister, how dun they get these boats down to th' wayter?' An' th' chap said, '*They dunnot tak' 'em down to th' wayter,—th' wayter comes a fottin'* (fetching) '*'em!*' 'Here, here,' said Tummy, '*thou munnot tell me that tale,—I COME FRO' OWDHAM!*'”



“ Oh, My Nose ! ”

“ I don't know how yo' feel,
But I feel quite queer.”

—THE OPERA TICKET.

[*Two Friends on 'Change.*]

“ **A**NYTHING new this morning? ”



“ Nothing.”

“ No more fires? ”

“ Not yet.”

“ Trade must be mending, then.”

“ Oh, wait till the *Evening News* comes out.”

“ What was that wild burst of merriment about as I came in? ”

“ A railway accident,—that's all.”

“ Oh,—‘ that's all,’ eh? Ay,—well,—‘ There's olez a summat to keep one's spirits up!’ as Kempy said when he roll't off th' kitchen slate into th' duck-poand. But, I don't exactly see where the fun comes in with a railway accident, my friend.”

“ Ay; you should have heard Doctor Bateson tell the story.”

“ I thought he was in London.”

“He came back last night ; and he was in the collision ”

“And yet, it doesn't seem like a laughing matter,—to me.”

“Oh, it wasn't a *very* serious affair. The passengers were all, more or less, frightened and shaken ; and one fine old Roman nose was broken,—but that seems to have been the principal damage.”

“Ay ; I see. ‘When Greek meets Greek, then comes the’—what's his name? The owner of the nose wouldn't laugh, I suppose?”

“Well,—I believe not,—according to the Doctor's account.”

“But what's the story, my friend, what's the story?”

“Well,—it seems that Bateson had finished his business in Loudon early in the afternoon yesterday ; and he hurried down from his hotel to catch the 5-15 train to Manchester. He was just in time ; and he got comfortably seated in a first-class carriage by himself. The tickets had been examined, and the porters were closing the doors, when a fat old man, with an enormous gold watch-chain, came waddling up to the door puffing and perspiring like a hot Scotch haggis. The porters pushed him in ; the whistle screamed ; away went the train ; and Bateson and the new comer, sitting opposite each other, had the carriage to themselves. For the first few miles hardly a word passed between the two, for it took the old man some time to recover his breath. At last he came to ; and he began to squirt out a little jet of neighbourly chat, now and then, as they rolled along. The old man had a pleasant countenance, the most remarkable feature of which was a

fine aquiline nose; and every sentence he uttered revealed that he was a native of Lancashire. He was evidently well off, and a good-natured man, but very illiterate; and, as Bateson said, 'his clumsy attempts at politeness said a great deal for the goodness of his heart, but very little for his education.' But, in spite of the old man's strained efforts at 'parlour talk,' Bateson was delighted with him, and they travelled on, mile after mile, chatting genially together, and well pleased with one another. 'Are you going far!' said he to Bateson. 'I'm going to Manchester,' replied the doctor. 'So am I!' said the old man, rubbing his hands; 'So am I! Come, that's good! We shall be company! . . . You're not teetotal, are yo'?' 'Well,—not quite.' 'Ay, well come, that's reet! All right, sir. We shall get on in a bit!' And so, pleasantly they hobnobbed together, for an hour or more, sitting opposite each other,—the old man with his huge paunch, and his fine old aquiline nose, and Bateson, with his bald, bullet-shaped head, as white and as hard as a billiard ball. They had reached the green plains of middle England, and the old man was drawing the attention of his companion to the beauty of the landscape, when a sudden shock of the train brought Bateson's bald head bang against the old man's nose,—like a cannon ball. In an instant, the old man's politeness disappeared; and his language suddenly changed to the broad, strong, idiomatic dialect of Lancashire. Seizing his nose with both hands, he cried out,—'Oh, by ——! Eh,—h! What the —— hasto done that for!' And eke he groaned, and eke he swore, in strong, set phrase. As soon as the doctor had recovered from

his astonishment, he said to the old man, ‘Allow me to examine it.’

“‘Keep off, yo — scamp!’ cried the old man; ‘keep off! Allow thee, eh? By th’ mass; I wish I had never set een on tho! Here; keep off! Thou’s done enough at me! They use’t to co’ this a Roman nose; but, by —, thou’s awter’t it!’

“‘Well, but I’m a doctor,’ said Bateson.

“‘Eh, my nose!’ continued the old man; ‘it’ll never be reet again! Oh —! . . . So, thou’rt a doctor, arto? Oh! hearken that; he says he’s a doctor! Ay; an’ I guess thou’rt gooin’ up an’ down th’ country makin’ jobs for thisel’, arto? Keep off me, I tell tho,—or I’ll warm th’ shins for tho! Oh, my nose! A doctor, eh? By th’ mon, I’se want a parson in a bit if I’m to be knocked about o’ this shap!’

“‘But I’m a surgeon, I tell you,’ said Bateson.

“‘Surgeon, be —! Thou’s surge’t me nicely! Keep off! Go to yon tother end! I’ll be noan surge’t wi’ thee, no moor!’

“‘Well, sir,’ said Bateson, ‘I’m very sorry for it.’

“‘Soory for it, arto? Thou lies,—thou’rt nought o’ th’ sort,—I can tell bi thi een! I’ll ha’ thee ta’en up at th’ next station! Soory for it, eh? Thou met kill a body, an’ then say, “I’m soory for it;” but th’ law shall have its course, by —!’

“‘My dear sir,’ said Bateson, ‘I assure you that it was quite an accident.’

“‘Dear sir, eh?’ replied the old man; ‘dear sir, he says. I *will* be a “dear sir” to thee, afore I’ve done witho!

Thou thought o' makin' some brass out o' my nose, didto? I'll mak' thee fork out, when we getten to th' fur end,—see if I dunnot !'

“ I can put it all right for you.' ”

“ ‘ Thou can put it “ all right,” conto? What the —— didto put it wrang for? Tell me that? Keep off! Thou'll ha' to sit up for this job? Keep off me; an' go to tother side !' ”

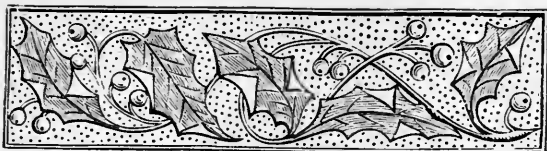
“ And so he went on, groaning, and swearing, and mopping his broken nose, to the end of the journey. Bateson's efforts at reconciliation were all useless; and he is now hourly expecting to be summoned before the magistrates for an assault.”

“ Poor old fellow! I hope he got his bowsprit handsomely repaired. That story reminds me of another. . . . You remember an accident that happened in a tunnel, during the Chester race week, a few years ago? ”

“ Ay, that was a shocking affair.”

“ It was a fearful business. . . . An old friend of mine was in the same unfortunate train. He was a fine, portly old man, more than six feet high, and as straight as a 'pickin'-rod.' I saw him the day after the accident; and he assured me that the carriage he was in was smashed into splinters, and he was shot bodily out of one compartment into another,—and yet he escaped unhurt. It must have been a terrible scene. The dark tunnel was filled with steam, and crushed carriages, and screams and groans of the wounded passengers. My friend crept out of the ruins of his carriage in the dark; and, stepping over the dead and the dying, he reached the side of the tunnel, and then he groped his way

slowly by the wall towards the open air. He had not gone far before he was aware of a voice that was following him along the tunnel. It was some poor Lancashire chap who had been at the races; and he was crawling along the wall, on his hands and knees, through the horrible wreck, towards the mouth of the tunnel; and as he crept along, he muttered in terrified tones,—‘O Lord, shall I ever get out o’ this hole alive! Eh, that’s another deed un! Eh, good God! yo’n never catch me at th’ races again! Oh, by th’ mon! “Our Father, which art in Heaven.” — Hello, that’s another kilt! Eh, I wish I wur a-whoam! “Give us this day our daily bread!” Eh, if ever I get out o’ this I’ll live a different life!’ And so he went on, creeping in the wake of my friend, till he came out at the end of the tunnel; but, as soon as he reached the open air, he sprang to his feet, and, clapping his hands, he cried out, ‘*Thank God, I’m noan kilt!*’ There happened to be a low stone wall near the mouth of the tunnel, and the revulsion of the poor fellow’s feelings was so strong on finding himself safe that he cried out, ‘Ston fur! Here goes!’ and then, as an expression of gratitude for his deliverance, he sprang right over the wall. Unfortunately there was a deep reservoir on the other side, and down he went overhead like a stone. Again and again he rose to the top, spluttering and splashing, and crying for help. Just in time, he was fished out by the crowd at the mouth of the tunnel; and then, with downcast head, he silently slunk away through the crowd, in his wet clothes, and was no more seen.’”



A Herrin' Losy.

OPHELIA: There's rosemary—that's for remembrance; pray you love, remember; and there is pansies—that's for thoughts.

LAERTES: A document in madness; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

OPHELIA: There's fennel for you, and columbines; there's rue for you; and here's some for me: we may call it herb o' grace o' Sundays:—you may wear your rue with a difference. There's a daisy; I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died. They say he made a good end. (*Sings.*)

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

—HAMLET.

[*Winter afternoon; snow falling. Two countrywomen on the road.*]

“**T**'S a good mon's case, Betty, when o's said an' done,—it's a good mon's case.”

“I doubt it is, Matty; for o' 'at there's so mich feaw talk gooin'.”

“It's nought else, Betty. I tak no notice o' sich creepin' saints as yon. They known nought what folk han to go through,—an' they care'n less; an' that's what makes 'em so ready i'th' tung.”

"Talk's chep sometimes, Matty, for sure, wi' folk 'at's noather sense nor feelin'."

"A lot o' camplin', concayted wickstarts, 'at hannot had time to reckon their limbs up gradely. Th' less they known an' th' moore they talken; an' they're never within a lie or two. Sich like are noan fit to be trusted with a tung. . . . An' then, what can yo' expect fro' folk 'at never had a finger-ache or a fret,—folk 'at han bin shaded fro' th' sun, an' happed fro' th' cowd o' their days,—folk 'at han bin fatten't, an' filled, an' coozle't, an' foozle't, an' pamper't o' ends up, till they dunnot know whose legs they're walkin' wi',—folk 'at never did a hond's-turn for theirsels sin they wur born into th' world,—folk 'at never missed a meal, an' never knew what i' wur to addle one,—mon, they'n no moore notion o' life nor a midge 'at's born into th' morning sunshine, an' dees afore it sets."

"They dunnot know 'at they're wick, Matty,—they dun not, for sure. They mun be harrish't, an' parish't (perished) an' hamper't, an' pincer't, an' powler't about th' cowd world fro' window to wole a while,—an' they mun be druvven to their wits'-end, now an' then, for a bit of a thin livin', to keep soul an' body together,—an' they mun lie hour after hour, an' neet after neet, tossin' an' frettin' i'th' dark, an' longin' for mornin', yet fretten't o' th' comin' day,—they mun do this, an' then they'n larn summat 'at'll last their time."

"Ay, ay, Betty, lass; an' they wouldn't be as flayed o' deein' as they are; I know it bi mysel'. . . . Well, an' what mak o' stuff han yo bin takin', say'n yo, Betty?"

"Well, yo known, I've bin havin' baumtay, sweeten't wi' traycle, for a while; but Nanny o' Grout-yed's sent me some dried sage tother day, an' I'm tryin' that now."

“Ay ; an’ it’s as fine a yarb as ever grew upo’ God’s ground! . . . Here, Betty, let’s tee this hankitcher round yor yed. Yo munnot get cowl into that face. . . . Let’s look at that lump again.”

“Ay ; just look at it, win yo? . . . Oh,—mind, Matty ! It’s as sore as a boil ! . . . If yo’n believe me, I didn’t get a wink o’ sleep last neet.”

“Sleep ! Bless us an’ save us, lass, how ever hasto bidden this? Sleep ; nay, marry ; thou’ll sleep noan while that’s agate ! Thou mun have a poultice on,—an’ keep thisel’ warm. Thou’re noan fit to be areawt (outside) sich a day as this. Lap thisel’ up, lass ; pritho, lap thisel’ up ! How does it feel now ?”

“Feel ! Why, it steawnges an’ latches to that degree that I sometimes wish my yed would fly straight off,—an’ saddle it that road !”

“I’m sure it’s bad to bide, lass. How are yo off for blankets ?”

“Well, we’re olez pincht for coverin’, thou knows, when winter comes on ; an’ th’ warst on’t is that, ever since our John dee’d (died), I’ve had th’ young’st lass sleepin’ wi’ mo, an’ th’ little thing potes clooas off i’th’ neet-time ; an’ theer I am i’th’ cowl, thou knows, as bare as a robin.”

“Eh, that’ll do noan, lass. . . . Here ; let’s look at that thing again. . . . I’ll tell tho what, Betty, I think it’ll gether !”

“Our Sally says so.”

“Ay ; an’ it’ll be a good deeol easier when it comes to a yed.”

“I wish it’d come to a yed, then, for I’ve a feaw life on’t as it is.”

"I'm sure thou has, lass. There's olez a summat i' this world. If we hannot one great ailment we'n a lot o' little uns; an' it isn't to tell how a bit of a thing like th' tooth-warche can potter a body. It reminds me o' Tummy Glen an' his lad. Th' lad had been wrang in his inside a while, an' one day he says to his faither, 'Eh, faither, I do like th' bally-warche!' 'Thou likes it? Why, what for?' 'Becose *it's so nice when it gi's o'er!*'"

"Eh, Matty, dunnot make me laugh, pritho. My heart's good enough, thou knows, but my face is terribly out o' gear."

"It'll do tho no harm, lass, for thou doesn't get mich to laugh at."

"Eh dear, nawe. . . . An' now then, Matty, I mun part wi' yo. I'se be like to turn off up this lone. Yon childer'll be wonderin' what's become'n on me."

"Well thou'll be like to go, lass—God help tho! . . . Here,—put that i' thi pocket."

"Raylee o' me, Matty, I dunnot like takkin' it—I dunnot, for sure. I could do wi' it weel enough, yo known,—but"—

"Put it i' thi pocket, I tell tho,—an' dunnot be a foo'! Bless mi life; wi' a lot o' little childer yammerin' round tho, an' nobry to feight an' fend for 'em nobbut thisel'; I wonder how thou poos through,—that I do!"

"Well, thou knows, our James sends me a bit o' firin', an' a sich like, now an' then."

"He's as poor as a crow his-sel'."

"Well, he's nought mich to stir on, for sure; but he helps me as weel as he con. An' as for a bit o' meight, if thou'll

believe me, Matty, *I thank God, sometimes, that He's takken mi appetite away ; for it levs raither moore for th' childer.*"

"God help tho, lass!"

"Well, now then, Matty ; I'll bid yo good day ; an' thank yo!"

"Good day, Betty ; an' God bless tho ! Now, rap thisel' weel up!"

(BETTY goes away slowly up the lane, through the falling snow. MATTY stands for a minute or two, watching her, with tears in her eyes ; then she turns away with a sigh, and taps at a cottage window by the roadside.)

"Now then, Sarah, are yo ready?"

(The door opens, and SARAH comes forth, with her bonnet and shawl on.)

"I wur just waitin' for yo, Matty. Eh, what a wild day it is ! Sha'n we be i' time, thinken yo?"

"We's be about reet,—an' nought to spare. I promised th' owd woman that I'd be theer at four o'clock ; an' hoo'll be lookin' out for me ; for though her wits are gwon, as a body may say, yet, yo known, Sarah, hoo's very nice, poor soul, an' hoo's very particular."

"Poor owd craiter ! . . . But, yo said yo'd tell me about her, Matty."

"So I did, Sarah. . . . Well, yo see'n,—owd Mary'll be turn't threescore ; an' I think her husban' would be raither of oather th' owder o'th two ; an' a honsomer, sweeter-lookin', better-dispose't owd couple never stept shoe-leather. They'd no childer o' their own ; but o' th'

childer i'th county met (might) ha' belunged to 'em, for everything 'at they let on seemed to tak to 'em, as if they were'n ever so sib (akin). Owd John wur a kind-hearted owd chap; he wur like a grey-yure't chylt, in his ways. He wur a mak of a yed-beetler amung th' porters, up at th' railway-station; an' he'd bin there a lung while; an' he wur a great favourite amung th' men. He use to goo away in a mornin' an' tak his dinner with him; an' then th' owd woman used to send him his baggin' bi a lad, about four i'th afternoon. At last he wur takken ill; an' he lee i' bed about three months; an' then he deed. He went out as quiet as th' snuft o' a candle. Owd Mary took it very ill th' first day; but hoo change't o' at once; an' hoo began o' gooin' up an' down th' house just as if nought had happen't. Hoo watched 'em carry him away to his grave; an' hoo looked after th' coffin, an' hoo said, 'He'll not be long;' an' th' very same afternoon hoo cut his bread an' butter, an' geet his baggin' ready, an' sent it off,—just as if he'd bin alive. An' then we knew that th' poor craiter's wits were gone. Owd John wur in a berrin' club when he deed; an' when they brought her th' club money, hoo thought it wur his wages; an' hoo went out an' bought him two pairs o' woollen stockin's. At last hoo began a-gooiin' so helplessly about her bits o' house affa'rs that we had to give her house up, an' sell her bits o' furnitur', an tak two rooms for her, in a house where there were folk that would be kind to her. An', if yo'n believe me, Sarah, th' poor craiter never notice't th' change; but just leet us do what we'd a mind wi' her, like a child. An' we never tried to undeceive her; for hoo wur quite comfortable; an' it

seemed like a merciful thing. The house where hoo lodge't wur next to ours, an' I use't to go in nearly every day, an' chat with her ; an' whatever I said, all her talk ended i' John. I tried, sometimes, to draw her away to other things ; but before we'd said many words hoo wur sure to come back to John again ; and hoo olez spoke on him as if hoo expected him comin' in a few minutes. An' if hoo yerd a foot passin' th' house, hoo geet up, an' looked through th' window ; an' then hoo'd goo to th' door, an' look at th' weather ; an' hoo'd say, 'Eh, dear ; it's beginnin' to rain, an' he's noather umbrell nor overcoat wi' him.' Sometimes hoo'd bring his shirts out, an' turn 'em o'er, one after another, to see if th' buttons were reet ; an' hoo'd hang one o'er a cheer i'th front o'th fire ; an' then sit down to her knittin', rockin', an' waitin' till four o'clock drew near ; an' then hoo'd get up an' cut his bread an' butter, an' get his tay ready,—th' same as ever. An' then, when neet coom, an' hoo geet tire't, hoo'd goo quietly off to bed bi hersel', and say, 'I think he'll not be long, now ;' an' th' next mornin', hoo'd come down th' stairs, smilin', as comfortable as could be, an' hoo'd say, 'John was here last night ; he was tellin' me this, an' that, an' tother.' An' thus, day after day has gone by wi' her for this two year back. An', eh, Sarah ! mony a time as I've sat theer watchin' her sweet owd face, as hoo cut his bread an' butter, an' talked about his comin' in, I could hardly help for cryin', when I thought on him lyin' o' th' while in his quiet grave, safe kept away fro' wind and weather, an' th' aches an' pains o' life ; an' I've prayed mony a time that hoo met (might) never come to hersel' again, but just keep airin'

his clooas, an' gettin' his baggin' ready, till th' day comes that hoo has to be laid down quietly beside him."

"This is th' house, isn't it, Matty?"

"Yigh. We're just i' time. Let's see!"

(MATTY *peeps in at the window.*)

"Hoo's cuttin' his bread an' butter! Come in,—quietly."





Bitter-Sweet.

“Howd, Sam; yo’r Margit’s up i’th town;
I yerd her ax for thee at th’ Crown;
An’ just meet now I’ve scamper’t down,—
It’s true as ought i’th Bible!
I know yc’r Margit well of owd:
Her tung,—it makes me fair go cowl,
Sin’ th’ day hoo broke mi nose it’h fowd,
Wi’th end o’th porritch-thible.”

—MARGIT’S COMIN’.

[*Scene: Kitchen of the Brid an’ Bantling. BILL O’ SNICKET’S
an’ OWD TRINEL seated in a dark nook by the fire-side.*]

“**A**RE we to sit dry-mouth, Bill, or how?”

“Nawe. Here, Betty, bring us a quart an’ a
quiftin’-pot.”

“Ay; be sharp, Betty; I’m as dry as soot.”

(*BETTY brings the drink.*)

“Chalk it up, Betty; I haven’t a hawp’ny about mi rags.

. . . . Trinel; buttle, an’ let’s sup.”

“I will, my lad. . . . An’ I say, Betty, put that dur
to, an’ let’s ha’ th’ hole to ersels. Theer! Now then, Bill,
wipe thi face, and tak howd! We’re as reet as a ribbin.”

(*Enter BILL'S Wife.*)

(*To the Landlady.*)—"Has our Bill bin here?"

"Go forrud. Yo'n find him i'th nook, yon."

(*BILL to OWD TRINEL.*)—"By th' hectum, Trinel; hoo's ta'en us! Sit tho still; an' plog thi ears up!"

"Oh, thou'rt theer, I see, arto?"

"Ay; I'm here, thou sees."

"Ay; an' thou may weel cruttle into a nook. I'd keep out o'th seet if I're thee!"

"Well; I am keepin' out o'th seet."

"Thou darn't show thi face i'th dayleet. I'd stop thee if I're thee,—for thou'rt likker a corn-boggart than a Christian. I wish thou could see thisel'!"

"Well; fot (fetch) a seemin'-glass, an' let's have a look!"

"Let's have a look! Thou'rt feaw enough to breighk ony seemin'-glass i'th world! I wonder how thou can for shame o' thi face sit keawerin' thee, hutch't of a lump, like a garden-twod! Ay; thou may weel snigger and laugh! I see nought to laugh at, mysel'. Arto for comin' whoam, or what?"

"I think I'll bide here a bit,—till th' wynt sattles."

"Bide here a bit,—thou hawmplin' cauve! I'd bide here o'together, if I wur thee. They'n find tho some mak of a bed i'th brew-house, I dar say. I'd stop till dark, as how 'tis,—for thou'rt noan fit to turn out i'th dayleet. A bonny pattern for yon bits o' childer, thou art! Thou greight slaverin' hag-a-knowe! If I wur thee, I'd ha' mi pickter

takken, just now, — it'd do for a ale-house sign, — for thou'rt as like a wild Indian as ought I can think on."

"Well,—tak mi pickter, then ; and sell it. Let's make a bit a brass, while there's a chance."

"Make bit o' brass! If thou wur in a show thou'd fo summat! Thou'rt too idle to make ony brass for thisel',—t thou loungin' rack-an'-hook,—an' if onybody else con make ony, thou'll make it away for 'em. I wish I'd never clapt een on tho!"

"Well; tak' thi een away, then. What doesto ston starin' theer for?"

"Starin' theer! Thou'd make a lapstone stare! A drunken slotch, as thou art,—keawerin' i'th chimbley barkle't wi' slutch!"

"Wipe thi mouth, owd lass,—an' start again."

"Wipe mi mouth! Thou's gotten thy mouth wipe't this time, to some tune. It never wur a pratty un—but it gwos feawer. A bonny hal thou's bin makin' thisel' again, I yer."

"Howd te din."

"Howd mi din! Thou may weel say 'howd mi din! Thou'rt a town's talk, mon! Th' childer putten their tungs out at tho, as thou gwos through th' fowd!"

"Well; let 'em put 'em out. I'm moore bother't wi' thine than theirs."

"Thou greight, starin', sunbrunt foo! To goo an' come straight out o' thi looms, an' walk three mile, i'th leet-lookin' day to feight a battle! Sich seely wark! an' to feight wi' Jone o' Woggy's, too, of o' th' folk it'h world! A mon owd enough to be thi faither,—a poor tatter-clout, 'at's nought noather in him nor on him,—a clemmed craiter 'at doesn't

get a gradely bally-full o' meight in a week's time. Thou met as weel ha' foughten wi' an owd seck. A poor hobblin' cratchinly felly, wi' one fuut i'th grave. I wonder how thou can for shame o' thi face; thou greight, o'er-groon, idle, lollopin' hount! Never thee brag o' thi feightin' no moore. I could ha' lickt him mysel',—wi' one hond teed beheend me! Thee, an' thi feightin'! Thou may weel win,—feightin' owd folk an' childer! But, as poor a thing as he is, he's laft a twothre bits o' notches upo' that pratty face o' thine. Thee feight! Thou can feight noan, wheer a mon comes! If I did feight, I'd have a bit o' credit o' mi feightin', if I wur thee. It'll cost thrippence or fourpence for Solomon's Seal to get thi een reet!"

"Give o'er; thou makes mi yed warche."

"Thi yed may weel warche. Two foos,—stonnin' up, an' penkin' at one another's faces, like a couple o' nailmakers. A bonny trade thou's gotten' bi th' hond! A feighter! Sore bwons, an' ragged clooas! Thou'll be havin' another arran' to th' Whit'oth Doctor's,—I lippen o' nought else."

"Thou's no 'casion to talk about feightin': it's noan so lung sin' thou hit Mall o' Slutter's o' th' yed wi' thi clog patten."

"Ay; an' I'll hit her again, if hoo'll say haue as mich to me again! If hoo'll just boke her finger at me once't, I'll have a penk at her piggin', if I have to pay for th' garthin' on't."

"Thou'rt too rough, lass."

"Rough or smooth, I'll chine her to th' floor if ever hoo meddles o' me again,—a camplin' snicket as hoo is! . . . Who's that feaw-lookin' twod, at th' side on tho theer, i'th corner?"

“It’s owd Trinel.”

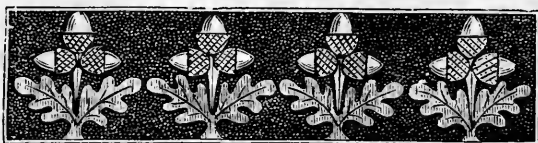
“Owd Trinel! That’s another racketty slotch! A bigger waistrel never bote of a cake! If I had ony company, I’d pike somebry ’at wur some bit like daycent; I wouldn’t tak up wi’ every drunken berm-yed ’at I could rake out o’ a gutter! But yo’r brids of a fither! Yo’r too fat an’ too full! Yo wanten takkin’ down a peg or two!”

“Well, tak mo down, then.”

“Tak tho down! Thou’ll need noan in a bit. ‘Thou’rt gooin’ th’ reet gate to tak down both thisel’ and everybody at belongs tho. Eh, dear o’ me; whatever mun I do? Eh, I wish to the Lord thou would have a bit o’ sense, Bill,—an’ think what’s to become on us o’!”

“Here; wipe thi een, lass; I’ll go witho.”





Wakken Beggar.

What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,
So near the cradle of the fairy queen?

—SHAKESPEARE.

[ROBIN O' BANTER'S *and* BILLY COCKTOE *coming from the market.*]

“**A** GRIMONY'S a good yarb, Bill.”

“I believe it is. But there's nought 'at groos
'at isn't good for some'at or another.”

“I guess not,— if they can nobbut find out wheer it fits.
. . . How's th' market? Hasto bought aught?”

“I've both bought an' sowd,—but nought o' no weight.”

“Hasto gotten rid o' th' two-year-owd cowt, yet?”

“Nawe. I'll part noan, till I can leet on better nor aught
at's turn't up, yet.”

“It's worth brass, is that cowt.”

“It's as prime a bit o' stuff, Robin, as ever went upo'
legs; an' thoose 'at gets it 'll ha' to pay for't though it
looks a bit rough wi' lyin' out thoose raggy neets.”

“It's as pratty a limber-legged craiter as ever I clapped een
on, Bill. Thou hasn't had it down at th' market, then.”

“Nawe; it needs no hawkin’. Thoose ’at wanten it mun come to’t. . . . I geet a fairish price for two cauves; an’ I bought two new shuttles, an’ a couple o’ pickin’-sticks; an’ I geet a good oak lung-sattle, an’ a prial o’ looms chep, at Owd Kempy sale; an’ I bought a twothre oddments ’at we wanten a-whoam. ’Thou knows our Betty’s at th’ down-lyin’, or else hoo’d ha’ bin here hersel’. Th’ looms an’ things are comin up i’ Jone o’ Kitter’s cart. . . . Oh, an’ I bought a bit o’ fustian for a suit o’ clooas for th’ young’st lad.”

“That’s yo’r Antony, isn’t it?”

“Yigh; it’s Antony.”

“He’s a little scopperil!”

“He’s nobbut just turn’t nine; but he’s th’ roughest cowl at ever we had at our house. We’n fourteen on ’em round th’ table when they’re ’o theer; an’ he’ll side as mich beef at an odd sittin’ as ony lusty felly upo’ Wardle moorside.”

“He’ll be a greight, stark, strung backed, wutherin, Englishman, o’ th’ owd breed, if he’s luck!”

“He’s offerin’ very weel,—so far.”

“He taks of his uncle Joe.”

“He does; an’ his uncle Joe never wur quiet but when he’re feightin’.”

“Ay; he’re a regilar kempie. . . . What hasto gotten i’th basket, theer?”

“A keaw-yed.”

“Ay; an’ a fine un, too. . . . Hello; there’s summat i’th inside on’t here!”

“Ay; it’s a pound o’ stokin’-yorn, for th’ knitters.”

“By Guy, Bill; thou mun mind they dunnot boil th’ yed an’ th’ yorn together.”

“Well, an’ if they did they’d never find it out till it wur o’ etten.”

“I dar say. . . . An’ is yo’r Antony nobbut nine, saysto?”

“He’re nine th’ last thar-cake time.”

“What trade arto beawn to make him?”

“He says, mich an’ moor, ’at he’ll oather be a sailor or a bobby-cocker.”

“Let him go for a sailor! By th’ mon! Owd Englan’ for ever! Mi uncle Joe wur a sailor! He kilt mony a score o’ folk i’th owd war! Let him go for a sailor!”

“Well; I’ve nought much again it, ’at I know on. He’ll do summat, as what he is. Beside, folk cannot expect to live for ever. An’ he’s the best hond at swarmin’ a pow ’at ever I clapt een on!”

“He gwos to schoo’ yet, doesn’t he?”

“Yigh.”

“Who to?”

“Bill o’ Mi Lady’s.”

“What, Owd Flutterslutch?”

“Ay; but he’s gettin’ rather too mony for his maister. I think this last do they’n had has about played th’ upstroke.”

“How’s that?”

“Well; it’s nobbut about a week sin’ his mother set him off to schoo’ one mornin’, at nine o’clock, wi’ a butter-cake in his hond as big as a churn-lid,—an’ off he went. Well,—what does he do, but he gwos down th’ bruck-side yon, an’ sits down, up to th’ een among posies, finishin’ his butter-cake. An’ then,—schoo’ or no schoo’, an’ sich like, he didn’t care a hep for nought i’th wide world,—so he doffed

his shoon an' stockin's, an' down he went into th' wayter ; an' theer he flasket't about i'th bruck after jack-sharps. An' o' th' time, th' day ran by, thou knows, but th' lad kept powlerin' about among th' wayter, as if o' th' world wur his own, an' that wur a favourite bit on't. Schoo', an' everything else, had slipt his mind, an',—lad-like,—he're as free as a new-fither't linnet, flutterin' an' twitterin' amung th' summer's green."

"Eh, by th' mass, Bill, I wish I're a lad again !"

"Ay ; but thou'rt too far gone, now, mon. Never mind ; we's happen have another do some day. . . . Well,—as I wur tellin' tho. . . . About th' middle o' th' forenoon, his mother had to go down th' fowd, after some'at or other, an' when hoo coom to th' bruck, th' first thing hoo clapt een on wur Antony, up to th' middle i'th wayter, as thrung as Throp wife. 'Hello !' cried hoo ; 'how leets thou artn't at schoo' ? What arto doin' theer ?' 'I'm catchin' jack-sharps.' 'Ay ; an' thou'll catch some'at else,' said his mother, 'if thou doesn't be off to schoo' !' 'I darn't go now,' said Antony. 'What for ?' 'Becose he'll hit me !' 'Will he ? Just thee tell mo,—an' if he lays a finger on tho, I'll kom his yure for him !' 'Well,—but I darn't go bi mysel,' said Antony. 'Here ; I'll go witho', said hoo ; 'an' thee go reet in, an' I'll stop o' th' outside ; an' if he does aught at tho, thee skrike out,—an' I'll come.'"

"I think hoo mars him a bit, Bill."

"Mars him ! By th' mon, there's no goin' between 'em,—they're so thick ! Well, but,—as I wur tellin' tho,—his mother took him up to th' schoo'-dur, an' in he went,—an' hoo waited o'th outside, wi' a greight burn-can in her

hond. 'Now, Antony,' hoo said, as he went in, 'thee skrike,—if aught happens!' Well,—in he went,—an' shut th' dur beheend him,—an' hoo stood under th' window, prickin' her ears. 'Hello,' said th' maister, as soon as he clapt his een upo' th' lad; 'Hello, wheer has thou bin till now?' 'I've bin catchin' jack-sharps,' said Antony,—as peeort as a pynot. 'Oh, ay,' said th' maister, 'well, then, come up here,—an' be rubbed!' So Antony went up,—for he's noan fleyed o' nought i' this world. 'So thou's bin catchin' jack-sharps, hasto?' said th' maister; an' he leet fly at Antony, wi' a greight strap 'at he had,' an' he said,—'Hasto caught that?' 'Come, give o'er,' said Antony, 'give o'er; yo'r to lungous! Now yo'd better give o'er, Flutterslutch,' said Antony, 'or else yo'n drop in for't,—so I've tow'd yo!' 'Doesto co me Flutterslutch, thou ill-made whelp!' said th' maister; an' at him he went, an' started o' givin' him a gradely good towellin'. Then Antony geet to wark, an' he set his clogs upo' th' swing, an' o' th' time he kept skrikin' out, 'Mother, mother, murder! Mother, murder!' Well, th' minute hoo yerd that, bang coom th' burn-can slap through th' window, full o' some mak' of an ill-savour't mixin'. I know nought what it wur, but it alter't that hole to some tune,—an' every livin' craitur geet a swatch on't. I believe some on 'em's never bin sweet sin'. Well,—hoo're noan content wi' that, but hoo sent th' dur in wi' her fuut an' hoo flounce't reet in among 'em. Well,—thou knows what a greight strung Jezabil hoo is,—an' hoo coom pounce again' th' schoo'maister, like a broody hen,—an' hoo geet her claws weel set among his yure; an' hoo rove him about fro' window to wole, till he skrike't like a

witchel't cat; an' while th' cammed daffock, an' this kestrilt of a schoo'maister wur agate o' feightin', th' childer cruttle't o' of a rook, for they thought there were beawn to be murder i'th hole. An' they co'de one another,—too ill to brun. He co'de her a mismanner't daggle-tail,—an' a mawkin',—an' a daffockin', sloppety sliven,—an' an ill-contrive't snicketty fussock,—an' sich like. An' hoo laft him nought short, I'll uphowd to; for hoo're i' full wark, o't time, hommer an' tungs,—an' hoo awter't th' colour of his face afore hoo'd done wi' him."

"It's bin a bonny bit of a flirt, ow'd lad."

"It wur nought else; but th' end on't wur that hoo brought our Antony away, an' th' better haue o'th schoo' maister's yure (hair) at th' same time."





Baum-Tay an' Puncakes.

Like an old tale still; which will have matter to rehearse, though credit be asleep, and not an ear open.—SHAKESPEARE.

[ADAM O' RAPPER'S *an'* RONDLE O' BONNY MOUTH'S *coming home in the dark.*]

I'LL tell tho what, Adam,—Owd Bill wur gettin' raither to warm under saddle, weren't he?"

"Ay; he comes of a fast-gaited breed; an' he's a good deol o' slack about his jaw."

"To my thinkin', Adam, he's o' fluzzins' an' beggar-berm."

"Time 'll tell. We's see what it winds to in a bit."

"I'll tell tho what, Adam,—some folk would sarve hell wi' brimstone, if they could make ony brass by it."

"There is o' that mak, for sure, Rondle."

"Ay, is there; an' if it were to burn their father wi, they'd do it."

"I think ten per cent would fot (fetch) 'em. An', as for talk,—it'd weary a grooin' tree to yer a chap like yon talk."

"Talk's chep, Adam! I could larn moore wi' watchin' two kitlin's marlock upo' th' hearthstone nor ony mak o' talk 'at ever wur slatter't off th' edge o' a mortal lip!"

"Thou'rt about haue reet, Rondle. Th' big'st part 'o th' talk at's gooin's fit for nought nobbut shooin' hens wi'."

"Ay; an' there's some hens 'at would give o'er layin' if they yerd owd Bill talk."

"Well,—they'd oather drop it, or lay away."

"I know *I* would, if *I* wur a hen. . . . An', then, as for fine houses, an' sich like, Adam,—there isn't haue as mich in it as folk thinken. . . . Talk about houses! By th' mass, there isn't a house i' this world 'at's as grand as Lobden Moorside, about th' back-end o' th' year! An' as for ceilin's,—wheer is there a ceilin' like th' sky? But if thou'll notice, Adam, folk getten so use't to't, while (until) they clen forgotten 'at it's o'er th' top on 'em! By th' hectum,—it's full o' flyin' pickters, an' o' maks o' grand glitterment! Ceilin's!—There isn't a ceilin' between here an' Jerusalem at's fit to howd th' candle to th' oppen sky!—An' then, doesn't thou see,—if a chap wur a king, an' he own't a hundred an' fifty houses, o' different maks, he could nobbut be i' one on 'em at once."

"I guess not."

"Not he! An' he could nobbut be i' one nook at once An' then, if he'd five hundred suits o' clooas, made o' silk, an' satin, an' three-pile velvet,—an' o' covert wi' horse-gowd. an' haliday ribbins, an' sich like,—he could nobbut wear one suit at once."

"Yigh,—he could if he'd a mind."

"Well,—ay,—but he'd look like a foo' if he did."

"Agreed on; but there's some on 'em thinken nought o' that."

"Well,—as thou says, Adam, about that. Beside,—look

here! If a chap wur th' owner of o' th' heightin'- stuff (eat-
ing-stuff) i' this world he could nobbut do wi' one meal at a
time, could he?"

"Howd, Rondle, howd! I know a chap 'at can put as
mich out o' seet at one sittin' as would fit thee an' me for
hauve a dozen meals!"

"Well, then, he's a gradely pile-driver, Adam, as who he
is,—for thou's a twist like Robin Hood, thisel'! . . . But,
let that leet as it will, there isn't a mon i' this wide world
'at's more fun nor I have! A king can nobbut be i' one
spot at once,—an' he can nobbut wear one suit o' clooas at
once,—an' he can nobbut height one dinner at once,—an' if
he's a better stomach nor me, it's a crumper, that's o',—an
I've as big a farm i'th sky as ony londlort 'at's under it,—
an',—I'll wroastle th' best king i' this country-side for a quart,
just this minute. . . . Hello; what han we here?"

(FIDDLER BILL, *coming down the hill, in the dark, singing.*)

"Then to't they fell, an' fought full well,
I con both sing an' say;
An' they laid on mony a lusty bang,
In good owd English play."

"Rondle; that's oather Fiddler Bill, or the dule his-sel!"

(*Sings again.*)

"Yung Chirrup, thou'rt a gallant lad;
I'll feight till set o' sun;
But, at every throw, yung Chirrup's foe
Wur th' topmost mon—but one."

"Fiddler Bill for a theausan' peawnd, Adam! Husht!
He's startin' again."

“ Sneck up, sneck up ; I’m done ; sneck up ;
 Yung Chirrup wins ! ’ cried he ;
 ‘ Thou art the starkest, swipper’st lad
 That ever I did see ;
 I’d liefer than a hundred pound
 That I could feight like thee ! ”

“ It’s Fiddler Bill, again, I say ! Gi’ mouth, Rondle ! ”

“ Hello ! Who’s theer ? ”

“ Who’s here ? An Ancient Briton ; wi’ kest-iron shins ;
 an’ yure like pin-wire ! Who art thou ? Oppen thi chops ;
 or I’se be a-top on tho ! ”

“ Mi name’s Fiddler Bill,——”

“ Thou’rt oather lvin’, or I’m swapped. But, get forrud
 witho, an’ let’s yer ! What trade arto ? ”

“ I’m a foo bi trade, an’ my faither wur a foo afore mo. ”

(BILL) *aside*.—“ Bi lakin, it’s somebry ’at knows summat
 about me. Come a bit nar, an’ let’s have a penk at thi
 nob. . . . Eh, is it thee, Rondle ? ”

“ It’s nought else. ”

“ By th’ mass, lads, I’m fain to leet on yo ! ”

“ Th’ same here, owd brid ! ”

“ Oh, give o’er, Rondle ! Dunnot shake me ! I’m noan
 so weel ! ”

“ What’s to do ? ”

“ I’ve bin havin’ berm-bo’ an’ traycle to mi dinner ;
 an’ I feel as swelled as a new-blown bledher. ”

“ Come on wi’ thi berm-bo ! Thou’rt olez among berm,
 i’ some shap or another ! Come on ; I’ll see thee safe
 londed, afore we parten ! ”



Blendspice.

Said out guidman to our guidwife,
"Get up, and bar the door, oh."

OLD SCOTCH SONG.

[BILLY POTYARB *an'* CALEB O' CAUVE-LICKED ABRAM'S
on the road.]

BILL, owd towel; what mak o' pousement hasto
bin rootin' amung? Thou's a smudgy mak of
a look; an' thou'rt out o' gear, fro' top to toe."

"Well; if thou'll believe me, I're i' sich a feight to get
out o'th house this mornin' that I hadn't time to wesh
mysel' gradely; so I just ga' my face a lick an' a promise,
an' donned mysel' at the readi'st; an' then I crope off as
nicely as I could,—for our Nan wur agate; full bat."

"Thou'rt a weary pictur', as how 'tis. Thou's deeted
thi face primely with some'at; an' thi clooas looken as if
they'd bin thrut on wi a pike-fork. Here; tak howd o'
this horn, an' ready thi yure a bit,—for thou'rt moore likker
a corn-boggart nor aught belungin' this world. Arto for
gooin' off it o'together, or how?"

"Thou'd ha' bin off it lung sin' i' thou'd gone through
as mich as me. Eh, I have sich a hoast! My throttle's

as reawsty as a bone-house-dur lock,—an' I'm as stiff as a rubbin'-stoop, fro yed to foot."

"What hasto bin agate on?"

"Well; I'd a pummer of a day on't, yesterday, wi' one thing an' another. The first go to I geet caught i' that thunner-shower, i'th forenoon,—an' I had it o' to mysel'."

"Nay, thou hadn't it o', owd craiter; for I geet a saup on't, mysel'. I're comin' o'er 'Th' Thistley Feelt' when it started; an' I took to my heels, like 'Owd Stump' wi' th' 'Pie Lad' beheend him; but afore I could get into Th' Brid an' Bantlin' dur-hole, I hadn't a dry threed on me. Eh, how it did come down! Drops as big as marbles!"

"Drops! Nay, bi th' heart; I thought th' welkin' had gan way! It coom again my face i' quart lumps; an', in about two minutes, I're as weel soaked as if I'd bin steepin' three week in a well-trough; an' at after that, I went whistlin' through it, an' leet it do as it liked,—for I're gotten wayter-proof."

"How leets thou didn't hole?"

"Hole! wheer mut I hole, at th' top o' Rooly Moor, where o's as bare as a bakstone for five mile round? There isn't a slifter, nor a ginnel, nor a gorse-bush 'at 'ud house aught bigger than a modiwarp."

"Why, thou'd be witchod (wet-shod) afore tho geet whoam."

"Witchod! Ay,—I're witchod ole o'er. Talk about walkin' through th' Red Say! I'd wade fro' here to Jerusalem for a bowl o' stew!"

"Thou'd catch it upo' that moor-top."

"Catch it! I geet it o', I tell tho,—full measur' . . ."

An' it wur a grand seet, too! Thou knows I'm noan yezzy fleyed; but it made my yure stir a bit, now an' then,—for it sounded as if they were'n agate o' crabin' worlds together,—an' every time it leeten't it let up Brown Wardle Hill like a greight flash o' melted silver! . . . But I walked through it, like a wayter-dog, for about three mile; an' then I popt into th' Greenbooth ale-house, an' dropt asleep in 'a nook, sipein' weet. Afore lung my clooas began o' reechin' like a lime-kil'; an' when they rooze't me up I're as mazy as a goose wi' a brass nail in, it yed; an' they had to dad me whoam; for I couldn't see a hole through a ladder; an' I maunder't an talked o' 'maks o' bull-scutter."

"Thou's bin ill, owd lad."

"Ill! I shan't be reet again as month."

"Doesto tak nought for it?"

"Nawe; but I will do, as soon as I come to a pictur' shop."

"Well, cheer up, owd brid,—thou'rt noan bi thisel'. I dropt in for't, honsomely, last neet,—wi' one thing an' another. Smell at mi jacket!"

"Ay,—is it tar? I've bin wonderin' what that wur, a good while. I thought there an ill savvour about, somewheer. If my nose is aught to go by, Bill,—thou's bin among some'at 'at's not so nice!"

"Thou's guessed to a hay-seed."

"Well,—go fur off,—thou'rt war nor a pow-cat!"

"Here; feel at my yed, first. Well; hasto fund aught?"

"A twothre lumps."

"Ay; seventeen on 'em. Those wur o' done last neet."

“Thou’s bin i’th wars, Caleb?”

“Raither.”

“What were there agate?”

“Bide, till I leet mi pipe ; an’ I’ll tell tho. . . . Well, thou knows, it wur ‘ Mischief Neet ’ last neet ; an’ th’ lads i’th fowd an’ me agreed to turn out at th’ edge o’ dark, an’ have a bit of a marlock amung th’ neighbours. Well,—when o’ wur sattlin’ nicely down, an’ th’ most o’ folk had croppen off to bed, Twitchel Tummy whisper’t in at our back-dur, ‘ Now then, Caleb,—arto ready ! ’ So I nipt up, an’ off we set ; an’ as soon as we’d turn’t th’ house-end, Dan o’ Swapper’s said, ‘ Now then, Caleb,—we’n made it for thee to carry th’ pow’,—an’ he ga’ me howd of a greight stang, about twelve fuut lung, ’at they had hud (hidden) in a nook. So I said, ‘ What mun I do wi’ this ? ’ ‘ Well,’ said Dan, ‘ we’re beawn to knock at folk’s durs, wheer they’re gone to bed, an’ when they looken out at th’ chamber-window, thou mun fot ’em a crack o’ th’ yed wi’ th’ pow, and then run,—that’s o’ ’at thou has to do,—we’n manage tother amung us. So I said, ‘ O’ reet ! ’ an’ away we went ; an’ we’d some rare gam for a while, for I played my pow primely ; an’ every time ’at they looked out aboon, I kept droppin’ em a notch or two, an’ we left ’em rubbin’ their yeds i’th inside. Well,—at last, Dan said, ‘ Now then, lads ; afore we gwon whoam, let’s give owd Fullocker a bit of a touch, for a finisher.’ Well,—that just tickle’t me up ; so I ga’ my pow a bit of a shake, and I said, ‘ Go it lads ! He borrowed tuppence o’ me th’ last Winter Fair day, an’ he’s ne’er gan’t me back, so I’ll just raise a couple o’ nobbs on his yed,—an’ tak it out that road.’ Agreed on ; an’ off we set ; an’ they thunged at owd Ful-

locker's dur. In a bit, up went th' window, an' I leet fly wi' mi' pow, but, afore I could tak aim again, there wur some'at coom fluskin' down fro' th' window, an' in have a second I wur fair smoor't wi' an ill mixtur' at I think i' my heart they'd bin savin' up for me. Well, I'd hardly gotten my breath afore owd Fullocker an' his two lads popt off at th' house-end; an' they took mi stang o' me, an' they raddle't my bwons to some tune, I can tell tho'; and that's how I geet these lumps upo' my yed."

"I guess thou'd be fain to drop it, at after that?"

"Howd, stop; I haven't done yet. . . . Well,—we o' took to o'r heels, thou knows; an' when we coom to a quiet nook, I rested mysel' again a wole a bit, an' groped at my lumps. Dan an' tother lads did nought nobbut laugh; an' they wouldn't come within three yards on me,—for I stank like a foomart. So Dan said, 'Goo an' wesh thisel' i'th' bruck a bit,—an' let's go whoam.' So I went in, up to th' middle; an' did as weel as I could; but o' th' wayter i'th' world wouldn't sweeten me now. At last I coom out,—sipein' weet, an' as down as a hommer,—for I wur fleyed o' gooin' whoam. Well, as I crope off, down th' fowd, after these tother chaps,—for they would't walk beheend ine,—a woman thrut a chamber-window up, an' started o' coin' out, "Help, help! Somebry's plogged th' dur-lock-hole up; an' I want to go to mi weshin'!" 'By th' mass,' said Dan, 'it's Mall o' Bedflock's! Run for a ladther!' So they went an' geet a ladther, an' Dan said, 'Up witho, Caleb; an' let her out!' So, without givin' it a thought, thou knows, I bowted up; but I'd no sooner gotten into th' chamber than they nipt th' ladther away; an' theer I wur, fast i'th house with owd

Mall; an' I did what I could to oppen th' dur, but it wur no use. . . . Well, owd Bedflock happen't to be drinkin', with a rook o' th' same mak, at th' Bull's Yed; an' somebry ran an' towd him to be sharp, for there wur a chap i'th house wi' his wife. Well,—Bedflock come off, tickle-but, wi' a cleaver in his hond; an' th' owd fowd wur up i' no time; an' th' women cried out, 'Crash th' dur in, Bedflock, an' give him a good towellin';' but, just as th' dur began to gi' way, I lope slap through a window at the back, an' I let solsh up to the middle 'i some slutch; and theer I stuck, till Dan an' these tother come an' pood me out wi' a rope. . . . Well, thou knows, I're war wus nor ever; but I did no moore weshin'. I crope off whoam, just as I wur,—for I wur about three-quarters deed. . . . Hello; what comes here?"

(AMOS O' COCKTOE'S *comin' up the road, with a door on his back, singing.*)

" We're neighbours, an' very weel met;
 We're o' merry lads, o' good mettle;
 Here's Kester,—wur never licked yet;
 An' Nathan's i' rattlin' fettle;
 Wi' a pipe, an' a tot, an' a crack,
 An' a crony, I'm just i' my glory;
 I'll tipple the world fro' my back,
 An' brast off wi' a bit of a story.
 Fal-lal-der-dal, layrol-i-day!
 Tother day, when I're rovin' areawt,
 I let of owd—

Hello; who's theer?"

"What, Amos! owd lad; is that thee? What arto for wi' th' dur?"

“Eh, lad ; I’m fain to see yo ! Howd a minute till I put this dur down ; an’ I’ll tell yo o’ about it . . . When I coom out o’ th’ house to-neet, my wife says, ‘ Wheerto for ? ’ an’ I said, ‘ I’m gooin’ to have a gill.’ An’ hoo says, ‘ Well, if thou stops out after ten o’clock thou’ll ha’ to stop out o’ neet, for I’ll lock th’ dur on tho.’ So I says, ‘ Here, owd lass ; I’ll save thee th’ trouble o’ lockin. th’ dur on me,—I’ll tak it wi’ me ; ’ an’ then I hove it off th’ hinges, an’ browt it wi’ me.”

“ Why ; thou’rt keepin’ oppen house, then ? ”

“ Ay ; an’ it shall be oppen house for me ; as lung as I ha’ one.”





The Wind Storm.

Cease, rude Boreas, blust'ring railer!

[*Scene, the kitchen of the Brid an' Bantlin'.—Time, a windy evening, in December. Persons, FLOP, SLOTCH, TWITTER, LOBSCOUSE, and "OWD SAM," the landlord, gathered about the hearthstone.*]

“**B**ETTY, lass, put that dur to, or thou'll have us blown away! There's some'at flown up th' chimbley, just now. What wur it, lads?”

“It wur th' cat,” said Twitter; “I just geet a wap o' th' tail as it wur gooin' out o' seet.”

“Nay,” said the landlord; “th' cat's theer, i'th inside o' th' fender.”

“Well, then,” replied Twitter, “it wur oather a pair o' sithors (scissors), or a brid-cage. I'll swear it wur some'at,—for I see'd it!”

“By th' mon,” cried the landlord, glancing round, “it's mi Sunday singlet! Put that dur to, Betty; or thou'll ha th' hole emptied in a minute! Lads; if yo'n ony loce (loose) teeth, keep yo'r mouths shut! It's as much as I can do to howd mi yure (hair) on! Put that dur to!”

“Stop a minute, there’s a woman comin’!”

(Enter MALL O’ PUMMER’S, *rolling and puffing like a porpoise.*)

“Oh, I’m done up!”

“Eh, Mally, is it yo? How ever dar yo ventur’ out i’ sich a storm as this?”

“Eh, what a breeze! My bonnet’s gone!”

“It’s a wonder yo aren’t blown away o’together.”

“Well,—I’m sich a size, yo see’n, or else. Eh, I’ve had sich wark to keep my feet! Put that dur to! Here; I’ll help yo! . . . Now then! Stop till I get my breath! I’m so fat, yo see’n.”

“Sit yo down, Mally. Win yo hav a saup o’ some’at?”

“Wait a bit. . . . (*In a whisper.*) Is our Judd here?”

“Nawe.”

“Has he bin here to-day?”

“Nawe.”

“When wur he here?”

“About a fortnit sin’ (since).”

“Wur he here o’ Thursday neet?”

“Nawe; I think he’s taen th’ sulk about some’at.”

“Oh, then; he’s noan here?”

“Nawe.”

“Oh! . . . Betty; I think I’ll try a saup o’ gin. I’ve sich a pain, just here, wi’ comin’ up yon broo.”

“I dar say. See yo, Mally; come into this room; an’ yo’n be quiet.”

"Hello, Sam," said Lobsouse, "I've knocked my ale o'er."

"That's reet, my lad," said Sam; "one good sheeder's (spiller) worth two fuddlers, ony day! . . . Never mind, owd brid; our Betty 'll wipe it up, an' bring th' another, directly."

"O' reet! Eh, Sam; yo should ha' bin i'th town to-day! Slate-stones an' chimbley-pots were flying about like brids; an' th' factory chimbleys wur wavin' an' wobblin' about like willow trees. We's yer o' some lumber when this gale's o'er."

"Ah, but," said Billy Twitter, "it's noan o'er yet. By th' mon, when I wur i'th town, I couldn't ha' walked up th' street if I hadn't borrowed two fifty-sixes of owd Jem, th' cheesemonger, to carry i' my honds. . . . Husht! There's somebry at th' dur!"

"Ay, there is," said the landlord. "I dar say Betty's fasten't it. Go thi ways, an' let 'em in, as who they are."

The minute Twitter opened the door, in shot a short, thick-set fellow, with a great round face, and a hard, bullet head.

"By th' mon," cried he, "I'm fain to get into this cote!"

"Ay," said Twitter, as he thrust the door to, "it's a blowy day, isn't it?"

"Blowy! It's a gradely sneezer, is this! I've had to walk o' mi honds an' knees part o' th' gate; an' then I've had to howd on bi th' woles (walls); an', just as I wur comin' up th' broo, there wur some'at about th' size of a tombstone coom wuzzin' past, upo' th' wynt, within about three-quarters of an inch o' my left ear. . . . Hutch up, lads!"

"Ay; sit tho down. . . . How fur hasto come'd?"

"Fro' Rachda'."

"I like as I should know thee, owd brid. Wheer doesto belong to?"

"Rachda'."

"An' what arto code (called)?"

"I'm th' best known bi 'Blackwayter Ben.'"

"An' where's th' 'Blackwayter'?"

"Rachda'."

"Hasto ony relations?"

"Lots."

"What are they?"

"Rachda' folk."

"Is thi faither alive?"

"Ay."

"What is he?"

"He's a Rachda' chap."

"What trade arto?"

"Flannel."

"What mak?"

"Rachda' flannel."

"An' wheer arto gooin' to?"

"Rachda'."

"By th' mon, thou'rt Rachda' fro' top to toe, owd brid!
. . . Well, an' how's this bit o'th breeze yo'r gate on?"


"Breeze! I're in a ale-house, at top o' Wardleo'th Broo, this mornin', an' it blew th' window out; but, in a minute or two after, it blew another in, that just fitted."

"That'll do, owd brid! . . . Poo together, lads; an' keep yon dur shut!"



The Lost Donkey.

[*Scene, kitchen of the old inn.—Time, winter evening. Persons, FLOP, SLOTCH, TWITTER, OWD SAM, and the RACHDA' CHAP.*]

“ELL, an' how arto, owd dog?” said the landlord to ‘Rachda’ Ben.’

“I’m nobbut thus an’ so.”

“How’s that?”

“Well. I’ve sprain’t my anclif (ankle), an’ my elbow warches, an’ I’ve a singin’ i’ my lift (left) ear, an’ some’at ails my neck, an’ I’ve an ill cowd, an’ my ribs are sore,—an’ I’m noan reet i’ my inside, an’ I’ve had a twothre (two or three) fresh knobs set on at th’ top here ——”

“Thou’rt rarely out o’ flunters, owd mon.”

“Ay, rayther. . . . An’ I’ve had two teeth knocked out, an’ I’ve had my shins punce’t, an my yure wants powin’ (cutting), an’ I’m hungry, an’ I’m dry, an’ my yed feels like a mug-ful o’ slutch,—an’ I’m beginnin’ o’ skennin’,—an’ I’m wrang o’ gates (all ways).”

“Ay ; an’ thou’s two black een. . . Thou’s bin i’th wars, owd brid.”

“Well,—ay. I had a bit of a dust wi’ Ab o’ Pinders,—but we saddle’t it.”

“Come, that’s better. How did yo saddle it?”

“He saddle’t it his-sel’.”

“How so?”

“He tanned my hide for me.”

“Nay, sure?”

“Yigh ; an’ it’s third time, too.”

“Well, come ; that’s done wi’.”

“Ay,—till we leeten o’ one another again.”

“Thou’rt for havin’ another twell (twirl), then?”

“Ay ; I’ll mak up th’ hauve dozen afore I give in.”

“Well,—among yo be it. . . . Trade’s bad yo’r gate on, isn’t it?”

“Yigh, it is. I’ve bin out o’ wark nine week.”

“Never mind, owd craiter. It’s a lung lone ’at’s never a turn. Fear not, but trust i’ Providence, owd brid.”

“Oh, I’ve tried it. But it’s my opinion ’at Providence intends every mon to do a bit o’ some’at for his-sel’.”

“An’ nought nobbut reet, noather. But, there’s moore in it than that.”

“I guess there is. . . . I could manage weel enough, but it makes th’ wife so nattle.”

“That makes ill war (worse).”

“I tell her so ; but hoo’ll have her own road.”

“They’re o’ alike for that.”

“Ay, they are. . . . But our Nan’s war than the dule.”

“Nay, nay; noan so, sure.”

“Yigh, hoo is,—an’ I can prove it out o’th Bible.”

“How so?”

“Well; doesn’t it say, ‘Resist the devil and he’ll flee from thee?’”

“It does, I believe.”

“Well; if I resist our Nan hoo flies *at* me.”

“An’ then ——”

“Well, an’ then I have to give in,—that’s what it comes to i’th end.”

“I dar say. . . . Well, an’ I guess thou’rt lookin’ out for a job, now?”

“Nay; to-day I’ve been powlerin’ about th’ country side, seechin’ a jackass ’at belongs a relation o’ mine,—I dar say yo know him,—‘Lobden Ben,’—he sells besoms.”

“Know him! Sure I know him! ‘Besom Ben,’—as daycent a chap as ever stept shoe-leather. Ay, ay,—an’ has he lost his jackass, then?”

“Ay, it’s bin lost a week, now; an’ he’s some put about o’er it, too. I’m quite soory for th’ lad. He cannot sleep at neet; an’ he does nought but maunder up an’ down axin’ folk if they’n sin Dimple,—an’ he runs at every jackass ’at comes into th’ seet; an’ when he finds it’s wrang un, he brasts out a-cryin’. I’m-flayed th’ lad’ll goo off it o’together.”

“It’s a pity for him.”

“He’ll never look o’er it if it doesn’t turn up.”

“Then thou’s had no tidin’s on’t, hasto?”

“Nawe; I can noather yer top nor tail on’t.”

"Sam," said Lobscouse, "thou remembers that great flood 'at coom down th' cloof about four year sin'?"

"What, when Owd Neckhole Mill wur wshed down?"

"Th' same dooment, owd lad,—little Flitter wur nearly drown't in't,—but he cotched howd o'th bough of a tree."

"I remember."

"Well, when th' flood wur at th' height I stode i'th middle o' th' fowd, watchin' th' wayter go roarin' by, when, o' at once owd Mall o' Flazer's coom runnin' up, an' hoo cried, 'Eh, lads, do help us! Our jackass is gooin' down th' wayter!' Well, off we set, tickle-butt, an' down th' cloof we went, about have-a-dozen on us, wi' owd Mall an' th' lads after us as hard as they could pelt, till we coom to th' 'Fairy Nook,' when there's a bit of a bend i'th bruck,—an' theer we catch't th' jackass. But it wur as deod as a nit. . . . Well, they began o' cryin' an' skrikin', as if it had bin a gradely Christian istid of a down-craiter; an' nought would sarve owd Mall but th' jackass mut (must) be carried into th' house. 'Bring it whoam!' hoo kept sayin', 'bring it to it's own whoam!' Well, I felt soory for th' owd lass; so we geet howd, an' we carried it up into th' house; an' then,—I never seed sich a seet sin I're born,—they cried o'er this jackass, an' they stroked it, an' they talked to it, an' they cried again, till, by th' mass, I could hardly help for cryin' mysel'. Well, in a bit, th' owd chap geet up, i'th nook, an' he said, 'Well, thou's bin a good jackass to me, Jenny, an' I hope we's meet again in another world!' An' th' next day they had it buried i'th garden,—an' they flang bits o' rosemary, an' sich like, into th' grave."

(Enter JUDD O' SIMON'S.)

"Capital races, lad!" cried Judd.

"What's up?"

"'Th' hunt's up! Our Mally's after me! I've just slipt her!"

"Thou hasn't slipt her so mich," said the landlord;
"hoo's i' tother reawm, yon, wi' my wife, so sing low!"

"Then I'm off again!"

"Here, here; 'thou doesn't need to goo! Hoo'll be off directly! Hoo doesn't know thou'rt here! Hud (hide) thisel' i'th buttery, theer, till hoo's gone!"

"O' reet!" said Judd, creeping into the buttery.

"An', doesto yer?" whispered the landlord, as he closed the buttery-door, "keep still, an' help thisel' to what there is while thou art theer! I'll bring tho a gill!"

"O' reet!"





The Worm Doctor.


We have been rambling all the night,
And nearly all the day ;
And now we've rambled back again,
With a bloomy branch of May.

OLD SONG.

[*Haytime.*—JONE O' RUMBLE'S, *leading the mowers in a nine-acre meadow.*—DAN O' ROUGH CAP'S, *with a tuft of wild roses in his hat, comes down the lane, singing*]—

Oh, the merry month of June,
It's the jewel of the year ;
And down in yonder meadows
There runs a river clear ;
And in its pleasant waters
The little fish do play,
While the lads and bonny lasses
Are tumbling in the hay.

[*He stops, and leans upon the gate, looking into the meadow.*]

“ELL, Jone, owd lad ; thou'rt switchin' it down,
I see.”

“Hellow, Dan ; is that thee ? Ay ; we're
fot'in' (fetching) it down. It's a swelter of a job, too.”

“I'll tell tho what, Jone ; it doesn't look amiss.”

"Oh, naw ; it's a grand yarb this time ! I could fair lie me down an' height (eat) it !"

"He'll have a rare crop, too,—if it's weel-getten."

"Never better. But we're raither leet-honded. I guess thou couldn't lend us a mon or two, couldto ?"

"Nawe, by Guy ! We're up to th' een in it ersel's. I've just bin seechin' help, but I can leet o' noan."

"I dar say. They're snapt up of o' sides. We geet ours in last week, or else I shouldn't ha' bin here, mysel'. . . . Here wait a minute ; what's o' thi hurry ?"

(JONE, *to the mowers.*)

"Stop, an' rosin, lads ; while I have a word wi' Dan."

(*Mowers.*)

"Ay ; let's whet ! . . . Where's that lad ? . . . Here, Billy ; buttle out ; and let Dan sup."

"That's reet. Here, Dan ; thou'll do wi' an odd tot."

"Oh, ay. Well, come ; here's lucks a-piece."

"Th' same to thee, owd brid !"

"Well, Jone ; an' how's th' owd lad gettin' on wi' this slobbery bit o' lond of his ?"

"Oh, primely ! Well, th' corn'll be raither leet this time, I doubt ; but, tak' it o'together, he's done very weel. Mon, he knows what he's about. He's noan like Jerry o' th' Knowe, 'at muck't wi' sond, an' drain't wi' cinders. Oh, there's worse lond than this upo' th' moor-ends. Beside, it lies weel ; an' th' owd lad knows how to hondle it ; an' he behaves weel to't, an' keeps it i' good heart."

"I'll tell tho what, Jone ; I wish I'd about forty acre o' th' same mak."

"Why, yon o' thine's as good, every bit. . . . But some folk are never content; if they'd o' th' world gan to 'em they'd yammer for th' lower shop, to put their rubbish in. . . . What, thou's bin down to th' 'Rushbearin',' I yer."

"Ay; I've had a bit of a flirt amung 'em."

"Well; an' how didto get on?"

"Well; to tell tho truth, Jone, I hardly know, for I haven't quite gotten o'er it yet."

"Th' owder an' th' madder!"

"Thou may weel say that. . . . I know one thing, Jone; I laft whoam upo' th' owd mare, an' I coom back, th' neet after in a cauve cart, wi' th' tone lap riven off, an' seven or eight fresh notches upo' mi shins."

"Yo'n had lively doin's, then?"

"Well,—raither."

"Didto leet o' Bull Robin, or somebry?"

"Oh, nawe, it were a fresh do o'together. But, I'll tell tho. . . . I hadn't bin i'th town have-an-hour afore th' Marlan' Rushcart an' the Smo'bridge Rushcart met, down i'th 'Butts,' an' they geet agate o' feightin'. Th' first go to, th' Smo'bridge lads poo'd their stangs out o' th' ropes, an th' Marlan lads did th' same, an' to't they went hommer an' tungs; an', o' somehow, I geet mixed up amung th' rook, an' I wur force't to do a bit for mysel'. Thou'd ha' done th' same if thou'd bin theer. Well,—at th' end of o', th' Smo'bridge lads wautet (upset) th' Marlan' cart into th' river, an' then they set to an' clear't th' felt wi' their pows; an' when things geet saddle't down a bit, I piked off, out o' th dust, an' went up to 'Th' Hare an' Hounds,' to weet my whistle. Well; I geet croppen into th'

kitchen, among a rook o' chaps fro' th' moor-end, an' theer I sit. Well; when it geet near th' edge o' dark, an' we'rn o' gettin' th' mettlesome side out, there coom in a rough-lookin' chap, wi' a hairy cap on, an' he began o' camplin' about warts, an' doctor's stuff, an' sich like. I hearken't his talk a good while; but I could make noather top nor tail on him. He sed he wur born a bit aboon 'Keb Coit,' but he laft theer when he wur a lad; an' I can believe it, too, for they'n never let yon mon stop lung together i' one spot. He looked to me a sort of a haue-breed between a gipsy an' a rantin' parson,—mixed with a bit o' bull-an'-tarrier. I axed him what trade he wur; an' he said his father was a yarb-doctor, an' did a bit at butchers' skewer makin'; his mother rule't planets, an' tow'd fortin', an' sich as that; an' he'd bin brought up to pills, his-sel', but he're agate o' worms at present. It seems he'd had a stall i'th market, but he'd sowl up o' his powder's an' stuff, nobbut some oddments 'at he had in his pockets, an' he'd let us have 'em chep, as he'd a good way to go. Th' best stuff 'at ever wur, for aught i'th inside—particular worms. There never wur a worm i' th's world 'at could ston it. Well; we'd some rare gam wi' him, for he wur about as quare a cowl as ever I set een on; an' he goster't up an' down th' hole, an' talked sich keaw-slaver 'at I could hardly howd fro' flingin' a pot at him. But th' owd lad began o' takkin' his drink raither too fast, till, at th' end of o', he dropt sound asleep in a cheer i'th nook, an' began o' snorin', like a reawsty coffee-mill i' full wark. But what capt everybody i'th hole wur that though he're sound asleep, wi' one e'e shut, as close as pasted papper, tother e'e wur laft wide oppen, starin' straight at a ham 'at hung upo' th' ceilin'

At first I thought he're winkin', but I soon fund out 'at it weren't a gradely wink : an' it made a cowd crill run through me, fro' yed to fuut, for, by th' mon, he did look flaysome ! Th' folk i'th kitchen wur th' same ; one o' two supt up, an' crope out ; an' tother began o' sattlin' down, an' whisperin' to one another. Some said he're nobbut makin' gam on us, an' othersome said 'at he'd forgotten to shut his left e'e when he fell asleep. At last one on 'em jumped up, an' he said, 'Ston fur ; I'll sattle this job, o' somehow ! An, then he went an' shaked him, an' said, 'Now then, owd lad ! Doesto yer ! Wakken a minute ! If thou wants to have a bit of a snoore, do it gradely—an' put o' the shuts up ! Doesto yer ; thou's laft thi left e'e oppen !' Wi' that he wakken't up a bit, an oppen't his tother e'e, an' he grunted out, 'O' reet !'—an' then he thrut (threw) his yed back, an' dropt asleep again, wi' his mouth wide oppen, an' th' odd e'e starin' straight up at th' ham, th' same as before. . . . Well ; by th' mon, I began o' feelin' ill. Bill o' th' Husted Nook, sit th' next to me, an' he whisper't i' my ear, 'Dan ; I'm off ! That chap's some'at to do wi' th' owd lad !' An' off he went. An' we o' sit theer, staring at this chap, an' talkin' together in a low keigh. An' one said to th' landlort, 'If I wur thee, Joe, I'd shift that ham ;' an' another said, 'I'll tell yo what lads, I don't know what to make o' this chap ; but it's my belief 'at he's one o' thoose 'at never dar shut both een at once.' At last, I could ston it no lunger ; so I went quietly up to him, an' boked my finger at this oppen e'e,—but it noather winked nor stirred. Wi' that I touched it. It wur as hard as brazzil ! An' I shouted out, 'By Guy, lads, it's made o' glass !' An' as I wur givin' a bit of a caper, I happen't to

come slap down upo' this chap's toe wi' my shoon. An' then,—by the hectum, Jone,—thou should ha' sin what a dust there wur kick't up i' that hole, in about haue a minute ! I never see'd nobry better wakken't than that chap wur ! He sprang out o' th' cheer as if he'd bin fire't out of a gun ; an' he coom at me, tickle-butt, th' yed first, rambazz, again th' bottom end o' mi waistcoat, like a cannon bo'. It took mi breath a bit—but I coom to ; an' then we were up an' down that hole, out o' one nook into another, o' mixed up together, pots, an' ale' an' cinders, an' folk,—thou never see'd sich a row sin' thou're born ! Well ; I'd some'at to do to bant him ; for he're as swipper as a kitlin', an' as strung as a lion ; but, I leet him taste o' mi shoon, now an' then,—an' I began o' 'liverin' hits o' parcels, one after another, about th' end of his nose,—carriage paid ;—an', in a bit, I brought him round to my way o' thinkin',—an' he seem't to awter his mind about things o' at once,—for he started o' givin' o'er ; an' he looked at me wi' his odd e'e,—tother e'e had gan o'er lookin' for that day.—he looked at me, an' he said, 'Drop it !' Well, thou knows, Jone, some folk takken a deool o' convar-tin' ; an' if yo cannot get at their consciences, there's nought for it but warmin' their shins. But I can tell tho one thing,—that lad wur quite a change't character when I'd done with him."

"An' how did he goo on wi' his wormpowders ?"

"Nay ; I yerd no moore about that. I left him sit i'th nook, as quiet as a mouse, feelin' up an' down his clooas for brass for another pint. . . . But, I think thou's had enough for one do. I'll tell tho moore when we meeten again, I mun be off to th' hayfeelt ; so I'll bid tho good day !"

“ Good day to tho, Dan ! ”

(Away goes DAN, singing.)

“ In come the jolly mowers,
To mow the meadows down ;
With budgets, and with bottles
Of ale, so stout an' brown ;
All hearty lads, of courage bold,
They come their strength to try ;
They sweat, an' blow, an' cut, an' mow,
For the grass is very dry.”





The Goblin Lovers.

And many another goblin tale
May, perhaps, be just as true.

BLOOMFIELD.

IT was a wild-looking November night. The clock of Rochdale old church struck nine, and the chimes began to play "Sandy o'er the lea,"—wheezing a little here, and stammering a little there,—like an old man struggling with a song. Straggled masses of white cloud were scudding wildly across the sky, into the south-east, between which the moon threw checkered fits of pensive light upon the old church, and the worn grave-stones around. There was something unusually sombre about the night, which seemed to subdue all ordinary sounds of life. The wind came through the vicarage trees with mournful sough, and the fallen leaves whirled audibly about the dwellings of the dead. In a shady nook of the churchyard, two lovers stood shivering by the side of an old tombstone.

"Eh, Jem," said Mary, tucking her shawl under her chin, "it's very cowl. I mun be gooin'. If my mother

knowed I wur here hoo'd be as mad as a wasp. Besides, it's gettin' late, an' I've some things to iron afore I go to bed. Hoo said mich an' moore tother day that if ever hoo yerd o' thee an' me meetin' again hoo'd brun mi clooas."

"Well, let her brun 'em," said Jem; "let her brun em,—if hoo's short o' firin'. I care nought for thi clooas. Nobody may ha' th' shell, Mary,—if they'n lev me th' kindle (kernel.) An' if hoo does brun thi clooas, come thi ways to me, an' I'll find tho summat to put on, thou'll see."

"Eh, Jem," said Mary, "don't talk sich stuff! Our folk are so quare wi' me that I cannot sleep at neet for thinkin' about it; and yo'r folk are just as ill. Tother day I met thi mother down i'th fowd, and hoo shaked her fist at me, and hoo said, 'Thou doesn't need to set thi cap at yon lad o' mine, thou little snicket! We'n bin hag-ridden lung enough wi' one an' another on yo'! 'Thou's never have him! We wanten nought to do wi' folk o' a boggart-breed!' An' then hoo towd me i'th oppen street about my great-gronmother bein' hanged for a witch."

"Never mind her, Mary," said Jem; "never mind her. Hoo *is* my mother, sure enough; but hoo desary't throttlin' for sayin' sich a thing. But never mind her. I'd ha' tho, sitho, Mary, ay, if 'Th' Owd Lad' wur thi faither! . . . But, yo'r folk are just th' same wi' me. I let o' yo'r Sam i'th 'White Hart' dur-hole tother day, an' he said, 'Keep thi een off me! I want no truck wi nought belungin' th' lower shop! 'Thi faither rule't planets, an' towd fortin',—an' thi mother's noan o' theer; an' yo're o' of a dark mixtur' together, seed, breed, and generation; so keep o'

thi own side ; an' if ever I catch thee talkin' to our Mary again, it'll ha' to be thee an' me for it !' Well, thou knows, Mary, if he hadn't bin thi own brother I'd ha' had a bit of a do wi' him as soon as look at it ; but, as it wur him, I kept my tung between my teeth, an' leet him have it to his-sel'. It wur hard wark, too, I can tell tho. If it had bin onybody else I'd ha' warm't his ear-hole."

"Eh, Jem, we're quarely fixed o' both sides. It looks very hard that folk should ha' to suffer for what's bin done bi thoose 'at went afore 'em. . . . I'm sure my life's quite miserable. . . . But, let's not talk about it. It makes me o' goose-flesh."

"Well," said Jem, "thou'll come to-morn at neet, then?"

"Ay," said Mary, tucking her shawl about her, "I'll be here at eight o'clock."

"Well, come on then," said Jem. "I'll go down th' church-steps ; thou'd better go through th' gates,—an' then nobody'll know."

And away they sauntered across the grave stones.

Before they were well out of sight, two heads popped up from behind the wall, near where they had been standing.

"Are they gone?" said one.

"Keep still a minute," said the other. "They're off. Now, we'n have a bit of a prank wi' yon two, if thou's a mind."

And the thoughtless mischief-makers laid their heads together, and chuckled with delight as they walked away, considering how they could most effectually defeat the intended meeting, and trouble the troubled hearts of the simple pair, whose love for each other was already painfully

mingled with superstitious fears; which were constantly fed by the bitter prejudices and unfeeling ignorance of their friends on each side.

The two conspirators were well acquainted with the girl's brother, who was the deadly foe of the unhappy swain; and he entered into the plot they had laid with malicious delight. With him they arranged that she should be carefully imprisoned in the house on the night of the promised meeting. Through him also, they obtained a dress, and a shawl of hers, in which they disguised one of themselves, whose face they painted with blue rings round the eyes, and with such a generally hideous and ghastly effect that the rude artist suddenly flung down his brush, and said, "By th' mon' I'll do no moore at thee! I'm gettin' freeten't mysel'!"

On the following night, as the old church clock struck "the trysted hour," the disguised conspirator was at his post, leaning against a tombstone, in the shady corner of the churchyard, with his face muffled in Mary's shawl. Before the last stroke had boomed from the church tower, poor Jem made his appearance on the other side of the churchyard. With a mind full of unhappy forebodings, and naturally inclined to unearthly fancies, he trod the grave-stones as if he was afraid to waken the dead. With fluttering heart he quickened his step when he saw the figure leaning upon the tombstone in the corner; and, as he drew near, he whispered, "Mary, I'm just i' time!" "Just i' time!" replied the other, uncovering his hideous face to the pale moonlight, and advancing to meet the approaching swain.

In one wild flush, the latent superstitions and smouldering fears which had haunted him so long, overwhelmed the unhappy lover's mind ; and, with a fearful cry, he turned and fled,—across the churchyard, and down the steps, and through the town, until he reached his mother's cottage. Rushing in, with his pale face bathed in cold sweat, he hastily barred the door behind him, and dropping into a chair, he cried, "Mother, it's o' true! Thank God we are not wed!"

And they never were wed.

The poor fellow was seized with brain fever. After his recovery, he took ship for America, and was never again seen in his native land ; and Mary lived and died in forlorn loneliness, the unhappy victim of wanton mischief and ignorant superstition.





Deet no Zapper.

[*Autumn evening.*—JONE O' WOGGY'S and BILLY MINTCAKE
coming down the moorside.]

“**F**’LL tell tho what, Bill; there’s some foos laft i’th
world, yet.”

“Well,—ay,—there’s thee an’ me, for a start.”

“Speighk for thisel’, Bill.”

“I have spokken for misel’,—an’ for thee, too. To th’ best
o’ my thinkin’, Jone,—wherever yo finden folk, yo’n find
foos.”

“Well; it’s th’ likeliest shop to seech for ’em in, as how
’tis.”

“It is, owd lad; an’ if yo leeten of onybody at o’, yo con-
not go wrang; for I believe there isn’t a wick soul i’ this
world ’at hasn’t a foo-side.”

“I doubt it is so, Bill.”

“Ay, marry is’t. Thou’rt noan o’er-breet thisel’, Jone; or
else thou’d ne’er ha’ bin trodden on as thou has bin.”

“Happen not.”

“Thou’rt noan quite up to concert-pitch, my lad.”

“I dar say.”

"I tell tho, thou'rt a slate or two short, owd brid."

"I shouldn't wonder, Bill. But thou con happen lend me one or two o' thine."

"I've noan to spare, Jone; an' if I had thou wouldn't know what to do wi' 'em."

"Why, then, I'm just as weel without. But, I'll tell tho what,—I wish thou'd let mi slates alone. They bother'n thee moore nor they bother'n me."

"I know that. Thou'll keep hawmplin' an' slutterin' through it, onyhow,—till thou comes to th' shuntin'-spot,—an' then we's yer no moore about tho."

"It matters nought if one's content, does it?"

"Happen not; but folk say'n they're content sometimes, when they are not quite content."

"Well,—it goes again th' grain to be ta'en in, as thou says, for sure; but do what yo wi'n, mon, yo connot tent o' sides at once, in a world like this."

"Nawe, yo connot, Jone. It's like livin' in a whisket-ful o' ferrets, sometimes. Tak it o'together it's noan sich a feaw world at o',—but, here an' theer, there's a quare bit of a nook in't,—an' folk that rooten amung varmin are sure to get bitten titter or later (sooner or later). . . . So thou didn't get saddle't wi' owd Fullocker, didto?"

"Not I, marry; nor no signs on't."

"I'll tell tho what, Jone; thou mun keep thi een upo' th' fogle-man while thou't agate wi' him, for he's as slippy as a snig, an' as keen as a clemmed foomart. He wouldn't make two bites of a chap like thee."

"Oh, I could ha' saddle't wi' him in a minute if I'd ha letten him have his own road."

“Ay, marry; thou may saddle wi’ the dule his-sel’ upo’ that fuutin’.

“Well; I’re i’ twenty minds to let him have his fling; for I’ make no ’count o’ sich like shammockin’ wark; an’ I wanted to get rid on him, an’ go mi own gate.”

“Well; an’ it would ha’ bin happen as well. But, my advice to thee is this,—deet no papper.”

“Bi th’ heart, Bill; I cannot do that, except I fling th’ ink-bottle at it,—for I con noather read nor write.”

“Thou cannot read! By th’ mon, that had clen slipt my mind. Thou’rt in a bonny pickle, owd craiter. But I’d like to bin th’ same misel’; for, when I’re a lad, we’d no books; an’ we’d nought to spare for schoo’-wage, for it wur hard-peighlin’ for us o’ to raise as mich as would keep body an’ soul together. That wur i’ ‘barley times,’ thou knows. Ay,—we’d noather books nor brass to spare; so, when we’d had an hour or two to spare, mi faither use’t to tak me up an’ down th’ streets, an’ larn me to read off th’ alehouse signs. That’s wheer I geet my larnin’. Thou met do th’ same. I’ll goo wi’ tho ony time, an’ gi’ tho a bit of a lesson. I geet on very weel at first,—for I wur olez a good un at takkin’ things in; but, at th’ latter end, there wur a lung spell of weet weather coom on; an’ every time a shower o’ rain started, mi faither gav o’er readin’ th’ sign, an’ he popped inside to get a gill; an’ that put an end to o’ mi schooin’, as far as mi faither wur concern’t. But after that I took it up o’ misel’,—an’ I powler’t up an’ down readin’ everything ’at I coom at,—an’ what wi’ th’ signs, an’ tomb-stones, an’ bits o’ readin’ upo’ th’ carts, an’ sich like, I geet quite a dab hond at last; an’ now I’ve a twothre

books o' mi own,—an' I root into 'em now and then, for a bit of a leetenin'. . . . So, thou cannot read! Bi th' ounters, Jone, thou'rt as ill-shackle't as Dody o' Snicket's! I pept in at his dur-hole tother day to ax if he'd had ony word o' their Jack; an' he said, Ay; we'n had a letter from him; an' he code o' their Sam to bring him th' letter. So Sam brought him th' letter; an' Dody spread it out, an' he said, 'Now then, Bill, I'll read it to tho'. Well, that capt me, thou knows, for I knew very weel that he didn't know th' difference between a B an' a bull's fuut. But I soon fund him out. Thou sees, he'd had this letter up an' down th' fowd o' day, gettin' first one and then another to read it for him, till at last he'd gettin it off bi heart. Well; when Sam brought him th' letter, he sprad it out, an' began 'o pretendin' to read it; but I pept o'er his shoolder, an' bi th' mass, he'd gotten it th' wrang side up. So I said to him, 'Howd, Dody, howd; thou's gotten it th' wrang side up, mon!' Well; he wapt it round in a minute, an' he said, 'It's noan o' my faut; I have it as our Sam gav' it mo; *thou sees he's left-honded!*' . . . But that's noather here nor theer. We wur talkin' about this bit o' th' scog 'at thou has agate wi' owd Fullocker; an' my advice to thee, again, Jone, is this: deet (mark, soil) no papper about nought at o'. Mi faither wur about as fause a chap as ever I let on; an' when I coome to be groon up to a lusty chap, he said to me, 'Bill; mind what I'm beawn to tell tho. Whatever else thou does, deet thee no papper, an' then thou'll be o' th' reet side for' runnin'. Let other folk deet as mich as they'n a mind; but deet thee noan!' That's what mi faither towd me. Eh, mon; I've sin sich pranks

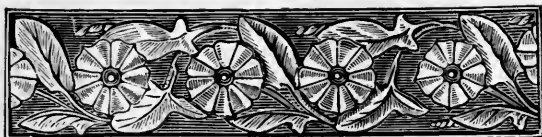
played wi' bits o' papper 'at a cowl shiver comes o'er me every time 'at I look at a sheet; so, once for o' I tell tho again, Jone,—*deet thee no papper!*"

"Now, then, here we are at th' 'Moor Cock,' thou sees. Are we to co', or how?"

"I could do wi' an odd tot."

"Come in, then."






Jobscouse.

Which side are yo feightin for, master?" says I.
Says he, "I'm noan tickle at o'."

"Keep thick wi' that 'at's naught, an' that 'at's aught 'll never hurt yo."—NORTHERN PROVERB.

[BILLY BEDFLOCK *and* OWD BETONY *smoking on a bench, at a cottage door.*]

" TELL tho, Bill, it wur as bonny a bit o' branglement as ever I clapt een on,—while it lasted."
"It's bin meeterly lively, for sure, seemingly. How did it get agate, saysto?"

"Well, thou sees, Buttercup an' Owd Quarrel hannot bin gradely thick sin' thar-cake time,—an' it's o' about that lass o' Posy Matty's,—her 'at they co'n 'Pratty Strider.' Well,—th' last Cow Fair Day, Owd Quarrel happen't to be stonnin' in his gronmother's dur-hole, at th' side of a greight mug-ful o' churn-milk, as Buttercup coom swingin by wi' a curly-yure't dog under his arm; an' Quarrel couldn't find in his heart to let him go past quietly. 'Now then, Flopper-mouth,' said Quarrel, 'whose dog hasto stown this time?'

Well,—thou knows,—Buttercup's a greight wutherin, lung-legged chap, but he's nobbut a short temper, so he made no moore ado, but he whipt th' dog fro' under his arm, an' dipt it into th' churn-milk, an' then he slat Owd Quarrel bang i'th face wi' th' weet dog; an' for a minute or two he never oppen't his lips, but kept agate, first stirrin' th' churn-milk up wi' th' dog, then floppin it at Owd Quarrel's chops again—like a white-limer i' full wark."

"An' what wur Quarrel doin' o' this time?"

"Oh, he kept his shoon upo' th' swing like a mon, I'll uphowd to."

"I thought he'd be somewheer about, thou knows."

"Ay, ay, marry. He'll ax for nought better than a bit of feight. . . . Well—as I wur tellin' tho. Th' dog yeawl't, an' th' churn-milk splash't reet an' left, an' they thunge't an' peel (pelted) at one another, full bat; but, as Buttercup swang th' dog round his yed—like a battle-axe—th' weet tail slipt through his fingers, an' th' dog flew slap through 'Owd Tabernacle's' tay-shop window. Out coom Tabernacle an' th' wife, an' o' th' folk i'th fowd; an' at it they went, hommer and tungs—every mon feightin' for his-sel'! . . . Now then, what comes here?"

(PARSLEY DICK, *coming down the fold, whistling, with a plucked chicken slung over his shoulder.*)

"Hello, Dick; what's that bit o' th' tanklin' thou's gotten thrut o'er thi shoolder?"

"It's a cock-chicken, owd lad?"

"What arto for wi't?"

"I'm beawn't t' ha' this brid to mi tay,—an' then I'll go for a sodiur."

"Here,—dunnot make a gommeril o' thisel',—because thou doesn't need. Come, keawer (cower) tho down,—an talk to some sense. Wheer dost reckon to be gooin' to?"

"Well,—if thou wants to know both th' hare an' th' hare-gate,—I'm gooin' with this bit o' th' brid, an' a pot o' black curran' presarves, an' a bottle o' elder-fleawer wine, an' haue-a-suverin', fro' our mistress down to Owd Ben's wife, at 'Th' Swine Rootins' Bar,' yon,—doesto yer that, now?"

"What's to do wi' her?"

"Why, hoo's laid up, is th' owd lass; an' hoo's gradely ill this time, too. It's mich if hoo gets o'er it."

"Let's see; hoo use't to be a sarvant up at th' ho', didn't hoo?"

"Yigh, hoo did,—but it's aboon forty year sin'. It wur i'th owd folks' time. Hoo nurse't this yunger end on 'em, fro' bein' chylt-little; an' now, thou knows, they looken after th' owd woman a bit."

"An nought but reet, noather."

"Nawe, it isn't. Oh, they'n see 'at hoo's nought short."

"I tell tho what; there's a deeol o' folk ill, just now."

"Ay, there is, for sure."

"They're mostly owd folk, too."

"Ay, they are. I reckon that when they'n turn't three-score it's time for 'em to look out, for they'n very nee deawn't their cut."

"Ay, ay, marry. Neet brings th' crows whom, thou knows; an' when th' back-end o' th' year comes, th' leeovs mun fo'."

“As thou says, Bill,—as thou says. . . . How’s owd Doldrum’s wife gooin’ on?”

“Her yed’s gan o’er warchin’ at last.”

“Oh, ay. What has hoo ta’en for’t?”

“It’s what they’n co’n ‘quietness.’”

“Some mak of a yarb, I guess?”

“If it be a yarb, it mun be ‘ground-ivy.’”

“Ground-ivy, eh? Is that yarb good for th’ yed-warche?”

“Ay; an’ for th’ heart-warche an’ o’. Hoo nobbut took one dose, and hoo’s never complain’t sin’.”

“Ground-ivy! I’s be like to try this ‘ground-ivy.’”

“Thou’l ha’ to try it some day, whether thou likes or not,—th’ same as everybody else.”

“How’s that?”

“Hoo’s deed, mon,—doesn’to see?—hoo’s deed an’ buried.”

“Thou never says? By th’ mass, that is ‘ground-ivy’ with a vengeance!”

“Yigh. Th’ owd craiter’s flitted,—an’, I doubt, hoo’ll pay no rent for th’ house ’at hoo’s ta’en this time.”

“Ay, ay! Hoo’s off th’ rate-book at last, then, is hoo? Nawe; hoo’ll pay no rent down theer, Bill.”

“I doubt not. But, whether hoo does or not, they’n never send the bailies into that hole.”

“It’s mich if they done, Bill. But then, thou sees, there’s nought to sell up, or else.”

“Well, nawe,—there’s nought to speigk on. If it wur o’ put up to th’ hommer it wouldn’t fot (fetch) mich, for sure.”

“Nawe, it wouldn’t. Poor owd Mall! Hoo’s out o’ th’ gate o’ th’ carts now.”

“Ay; it’s a very quiet nook, down theer, for snre. Hoo’ll not be trouble’t wi’ mony folk co’n’ a seein’ her, noather.”

“Not if they can help it, Bill, not if they can help it.”

“Poor owd craiter! Hoo’s bin bedfast a good while.”

“Ay; hoo’ll have had about ten year on’t, as far as I can judge.”

“I guess hoo has. What, hoo’ll be turn’t fourscore?”

“Every minute, Bill, every minute. Owd Doldrum wur kilt just nineteen year sin’, come Candlemas; I remember it as if it wur to-day.”

“Poor owd Mall! Hoo’d a hard poo through after th’ owd chap dee’d. I remember ’em tellin’ me about a parson co’in’ a-seein’ her; an’ it seems this chap bother’t an’ talked to her about one thing an’ another till hoo geet quite daze’t i’th yed; an’ at last he axed her if hoo kept the Commandments. ‘Eh, maister,’ said Mall, ‘to tell yo God in heaven’s truth, *it’s as mich as ever I con do to keep mysel’!*’ Well, wi’ that th’ owd lad weren’t content, but he at her again, about God an’ the devil, an’ which on ’em hoo wur for,—an sich like,—till owd Mall hardly knowed which wur which; an’ hoo tow’d him that there were a time when hoo noather fear’t God nor devil; but that now hoo wur thick wi’ both. Well,—that didn’t suit, noather,—an’ he tow’d her, mich an’ moore, that hoo mutn’t ha’ nought to do wi’ the devil, o’ no shap. ‘But, eh, maister,’ said owd Mall, ‘*I cannot help feelin’ sorry for him sometimes, for he’s a feaw life on’t, bi o’ acceawnts.*’ Well, this wur noan reet, noather; an’ th’ parson tow’d her that it sarve’t him reet for what he’d done,—an’ sich like,—an’ come what would, hoo mut (must) drop o’ connections wi’ the devil, for he’d never do

her no good. 'Well, maister,' said owd Mall, 'I thought *I wur doin' reet, yo known; becose a body cannot tell which on 'em they may ha' to do wi' at th' end of o'.*'"

"Poor owd Mall! . . . Well,—I think I'll be hutchin a bit fur up."

"Arto for gooin', then?"

"Ay."

"What's o' thi hurry?"

"Well,—I'm o' th' wrang side o' mi baggin'."

"O' reet; off witho!"

"At after I've 'liver't this stuff, an' gotten' mi baggin, I'll coom an' have a bit of a conk wi' yo'."

"That's reet, owd brid!"





A Poor Swap.

[*Summer evening. SNAFFLE O' THATCHER'S and OLD SAM, the landlord, have just climbed the hill. BETTY, who has seen them coming up, in the distance, has spread out the "Baggin'" upon the table. SAM sits down at the table.*]

BY th' mass, Snaffle," said Sam, wiping his face, "it's bin a stiff poo up that broo."

"Thou'rt so fat, mon."

"Fat! I'm nobbut eighteen stone. Thou should ha' sin my faither; he wur two-an'-twenty,—an' as limber as a snig. Fat! Yo cannot ha' good meight (meat) beawt fat. Ax Owd Boswell, th' butcher, an' he'll tell tho. As for thee, thou'rt o' gristle, an' jumpin'-pows. If thou wur render't down, they wouldn't get as mich fat out on tho as would grace (grease) a wheel-barrow trindle. It'd be like stewin' a lot o' fire-irons. There isn't stuff enough for a tallow-candle i' whole bugh (bigness, bulk) on tho, fro' yed to fuut. When thou dees we'n ha' tho hommer't out, an' made into coffin-plates."

"Ay; but yo'n happen need thoose afore I'm ready."

"We happen sha'n, lad."

(SAM looks at the table.)

"Hello; what han we here? Is this o' for me?"

"To be sure it is," replied Betty.

"What, an' art thou for havin' noan, then?"

"I've had mine."

"An' what wur tho i' sich a splutter for? Thou met (might) ha' waited a bit."

"Well, Sam, if I'd thought thou'd ha' bin back by now, I would ha' waited; but thou knows thou'rt noan to reckon on when thou gets into yon town. I never lippen't o' seein' tho again afore th' edge o' dark. If it had bin th' 'Rushbearin'' thou wouldn't ha' lounded afore to-morn."

"Nawe, I shouldn't, owd lass; an' happen not then. But that's noather here nor theer. I hate gettin' my baggin' bi mysel'. Is there nob'dy else i'th house nobbut thee an' me, thinksto?"

"Nawe; there's nob'dy nobbut Snaffle, theer."

"Well; an' if thou'll tak a good look at that lad thou'll find that he's a nick under his nose,—an' not a little un, noather. Connot he have a bit wi' mo?"

"Sure he con, if he wants."

"Wants; look at him! Didto ever see him when he didn't want? Bring another set o' tools. What, we're noan beawn to ha' th' lad clemmed in a Christian country, belike; . . . Theer; now thou shaps! Come, Snaffle, owd dog! poo up, an' fo' to. Thou sees what there is."

"Ay, reitch to," said Betty. "Th' brade's whoam-baked;

an' that's a bit o' good cow-butter,—I made it mysel',—an' there's some fresh-poo'd sallet theer, an' some cowl beef, an' some cheese,—so reitch to, an' dunnot be ailo (shy),—for I'm nobbut a poor hond at laithin' (inviting)."

"Hasto no oon-cake?"

"Plenty! Come, I'll fotch it. . . . Theer, now; reitch to."

"So thou bargain't wi' Sniggle, i'th end, didto?"

"Ay; but it wur a hard job, Sam; he's so keen-bitten, mon."

"He's as keen as a Greenlan' winter!"

"An' I'll tell tho what, Sam, I think they're noan so partial to him down yon."

"Nawe, by Guy, they aren't that! An' I don't wonder at it; for he's a chap 'at'll soon wear his welcome out,—go where he will. There moore laughin' at th' seet of his heels nor there is at th' seet of his toes."

"I doubt there's some'at wrang wi' his inside, Sam."

"By th' mass, he never wur reet in his inside, yet."

"Ay; but he looks to me as if he'd fo'n off terribly this year or two back."

"Well, ay; his clooas are out-thrivin' his carcase, very fast; an' let 'em thrive on, say I."

"There's folk at'll be war (worse) missed nor him, Sam."

"Ay, marry is there! as for me,—he may dee when he will,—I's cry noan! . . . Come, reitch to!"

"O' reet, Sam; I'm doin' very weel. That's a bit o' prime beef."

"Well, go at it, then; an' need no moore tellin'; an' get some'at onto those lantern-ribs o' thine!"

“O’ reet. I’ll have a bit moore o’ this fat. . . . Eh, I’ll tell tho what, Sam, I think mony a time about th’ days when we were a’ schoo’-lads together, down i’th fowd.”

“Ay; an’ so do I. I remember thee an’ me, we used to tak er (our) dinners wi’ us when we set off in a morning; an’ I used to finish mine mony a time, long afore it geet noon. Little Billy Butt went to schoo’ at th’ same time; an’ he’d very seldom ony dinner with him, poor lad; he wur badly clemmed. I’ve sin him pike peigh-swads out o’ th’ swillin’ tub mony a time. An’ never a breeter nor a better lad drew breath than Billy. I remember one time, my mother had set me off to schoo’ i’th mornin’, wi’ a greight fayberry-cake (gooseberry) under my arm, for my dinner; an’ when dinner-time coom, I wur sit i’th schoo’, heightin’ (eating) this cake; an’ Billy kept watchin’ us o’ agate of er dinners,—an’ he kept maunderin’ about like a starve’t ratton, wi’ not a bite to put into his mouth, poor lad! till, at last, he could ston it no longer, an’ he coom quietly up to me, an’ he said, ‘Sam; if thou’ll let me bite o’ thy fayberry cake, I’ll gi’ tho two pot marbles, an’ a bell-button, an’ *I’ll let tho look at mi sore toe.*’ Poor Billy; it wur o’ that he had! . . . Thou’ll remember Owd Nanny Shackleton’s toffy-shop, I guess?”

“Me! Eh, ay; I should think I do. I like as if I can see Owd Nanny just now, sit i’th nook, wi’ a lung pipe in her mouth, an’ a white cap on her yed, teed round wi’ a piece o’ black ribbin; an’ a little table bi her side, wi’ a Bible, an’ some baum-tay on it; an’ th’ cat asleep upo’ th’ hearth. Eh, mony a time, when I’ve gone in a-buyin’ some’at,—traycle-toffy, happen, or a haw’p’ny tak-up,—hoo’s gan me a hondful o’ nuts to fotch her some ’bacco. Poor Owd Nanny!

Eh, it wur a grand shop, too, wur that toffy-shop, i' those days. Th' ceilin' wur o' cover't wi' dried yarbs, an' cake-brade; an' close again th' dur-cheek, there wur a greight bottle o' smo'-drink, at a haw'p'ny a pint. There wur a wooden spiggit i'th bottle, an' it stoo'de a-top of an empty butter-tub. Upo' th' little counter, there wur a tin full o' traycle-toffy; an' another full of Indy Rock; an' another wi' mint-cake in it; an' there wur a glass bottle full o' humbugs,—two for a haw'p'ny; an' at th' end of o', there wur a pile o' thar-cake. An' as for th' window,—it's moore nor I can reckon up. I use't to think that there wur everything 'at wur needed i' this world i' that window. There were comfits, an' marrables, an' gingerbrade dogs, an' clewkin', an' volentines, an' Jack-jumpers, an' tak-ups, an' penny moufins, an' seed-beads, a haw'p'ny a thimbleful,—thoos wur for th' lasses,—an' there wur crackers, an' dolls, an' kites, an' tin-whistles, an' rick-racks, an' kissin's, an' th' dule knows what. An' there wur red-yerrin', an' peighs, an' bacco-pipes,—an' as for th' haw'p'ny books,—by th' mass,——”

“Here, come; afore tho goes ony fur: wilto have ony moore o' this beef?”

“Not another toothful, Sam; I've done weel!”

“Here, then, lass; thou may side these things.”





“He’s Comin’ To!”

[*Time, summer evening.—Scene, the old kitchen.—Persons SNAFFLE O’ THATCHER’S and SAM, the landlord, smoking by the fire ; BETTY, on the opposite side, knitting.*]

“**R**RAND groo-weather, Sam.”

“It’s nought else. We’n the finest yarb (herb, grass) i’ yon top meadow, this time, ’at ever I clapt een on!”

“Hast ony ’bacco?”

“Here ; help thisel’. . . . Hasto sin owd Tharcake lately?”

“Ay ; I’re goin’ by th’ dur tother neet, as he sit i’th shippon, milkin’, at th’ edge o’ dark, an’ he code out, ‘Now then, what’s o’ thi hurry? Han yo a labbor agate, or some’at? Come, keawer (cower) tho down a bit, an’ let’s have a conk!’ So I geet my ’bacco’ out, an’ poo’d up a milkin’-stoo’ an’ he ga’ me a droight (draught) o’ afterin’s ; an’ theer we sat, crackin’ about owd times, till th’ owl-leet had gone ; an’ then I nipt up, an’ took my gate whoam, i’th dark, o’er th’ knowe, an’ cross th’ ‘Thistley Feelt,’ an’ just afore I coom to ‘Th’ Pedler’s Nook,’ down i’th ‘Fir Grove,’ as sure as I’m a livin’ mon, I oather see’d Clegg Ho’ Boggart or th’ dule his-sel’!”

"It'd be th' latter chap, I dar say. He's bin a good deool upo' yo'r side lately. But, I tell tho what, Snaffle; thou'rt terribly gan to boggarts. How is it?"

"Oh,—thou'd be so, too, if thou'd bin brought up amung em, th' same as I have. I guess thou never sees noan?"

"Well,—yigh,—I catch't one, once; an' that's moore nor ever thou did, I think."

"Nawe; I never did. I matter havin' nought to do wi' 'em. If they'n keep off me, I'll keep off thame."

"Well, but I tell tho' I catch't this one dark neet, bi th' scuff o' th' neck, an' I warm't it shins for it, an' then I took it bi th' slack o' th' breeches, an' chuck't it into th' poand, an' I never see'd a boggart swim better than that swam i' o' my horn days! An', mindto, it took care to lond o' th' fur side fro' me; an' as soon as ever it coom to a bit o' dry lond, it just ga' one look back, an' then it played for another township, as hard as it could pelt; and thou may make thisel' sure about one thing, owd lad,—*that* boggart's never bin back into this quarter sin' then."

"Oh, never tell me! It's noan bin o' th' same breed as they are our gate on, or else, bi th' heart, it'd ha' ta'en *thee*,—an' it'd ha' come'd back for moore."

"Well, I don't know. But I can tell tho what breed this wur, to a yure. It're Bill o' Pobs 'at had bin playin' his marlocks, neet after neet, about th' shippon, yon, till I couldn't get one of our folk to goo out after dark. But, I laid *that* boggart, for one; an' th' next time I leet on't, I'll lay it again,—if my shoon stops on!"

"Bill o' Pobs! oh, go look! I could lay hawe-a-dozen sich as him, mysel'! I'm noan fleyed of nought 'ats gradely

wick; but it’s th’ tother mak as gets o’er me. Mon, we noather known where they come’n fro’, nor what they wanten, nor what they’re made on.”

“Mostly moonshine, owd lad, I think.”

“Well,—thou may think so; but, it’s a mak o’ moonshine ’at doesn’t agree wi’ me.”

“But *that* wur noan made o’ moonshine that I catch’t tother neet.”

“Nawe, it weren’t. But that’s noather here nor theer. Sitho, Sam; noather thee nor me knows what there is, an’ what there isn’t, between this world an’ th’ next. It’s my opinion ——”

“Here; howd te din! Sitho, Snaffle; if thy opinion wur a bit o’ papper, I’d leet my pipe wi’t,—th’ same as I’m doin’ wi’ this. Thou’s bin born under a knocky-kneed planet o’ some mak. Let’s drop it. It’s no use talkin’. . . . Well; what’s good wi’ owd Tharcake?”

“I guess thou’s yerd that his faither’s deed?”

“Oh, ay. But what, he’d gotten to a good age. What, he’d be close upo’ ninety.”

“Ay; o’ out.”

“Ay, well; deein’s no trouble to a mon at that time o’ life. . . . Ay, ay; they keepen droppin’ off, an’ comin’ on’—droppin’ off, an’ comin’ on. It’s once a-piece for us, o’ round. It’ll be our kale (turn) in a bit, Snaffle.”

“I guess it will. I can reckon about hauce-a-dozen ’at’s dee’d upo’ th’ moorside within three week. There’s ‘Splash,’ an’ ‘Kempy,’ an’ ‘Dick-in-a-minute,’—as likely a mon as ever stept shoe-leather,—an’ there’s ‘Thrutcher,’——”

“Howd, stop! Thou may chalk ‘Thrutcher’ off! He’s

wick an' hearty! It's nobbut three days sin' I sowl him a pig!"

"Sam; thou'rt wrang this time, if thou never wur i' thi life afore. I tell tho he dee'd three week sin'; an' I wur axed to th' berrin', but I couldn't goo."

"Well, an' a tell tho, *I* wur axed to th' berrin',—an' I *did* goo. But it's nobbut three days sin' I sowl him a pig, for o' that!"

"Sam; thou'rt lyin' belike."

"Snaffle; I never spoke a truer word sin' I'd a tung in my yed. Ax our Betty."

"Ay," said Betty; "its true, for sure."

"Betty," said Snaffle, "I can believe yo,—as a general thing,—but yo'n ta'en me bi th' face this time,—both on yo! Here, Sam; there's some'at at 'th back o' this! Come, let me into th' inseet on't, afore we go ony fur,—for I begin o' feelin' quare i' my yed!"

"That's nought fresh," said Sam. "But, come, if thou'll howd together a twothre minutes, I'll tell tho how it wur. It wur a strange dooment,—there's no doubt about that. . . . Well, thou knows, I'd yerd on him bein' laid up, but I're fair gloppen't when they coom round a-laithin' to his berrin'. But, I thought I couldn't do less than goo an' see th' end o'th owd brid, as him an' me had bin schoo' lads together; so, when th' time coom, I donned th' black 'at I geet when my faither dee'd, an' off I set. When I geet theer, I fund th' house full o' relations, an' owd friends,—donned i' sad-colour't clooas, an' o' sit round, as quiet as mice, wi' sprigs o' rosemary, an' sich like, i' their honds; an' they kept blowin' their noses, an'

shakin’ their yeds, an’ whisperin’ to one another,—th’ same as folk dun at sich times. ‘Bill o’th Crag’ met me at th’ dur-hole, wi’ th’ berrin’ drink, an’ I had a poo out o’ th’ tankard, o’ twine’t round wi’ lemon-pill; an’ then I took a cheer among th’ rest. Thrutcher’s wife wur sit bi th’ fire, cryin’, an’ rockin’ hersel’ fro’ side to side, wi’ two or three neighbour women about her. Th’ table wur spread wi’ cheese, an’ brade, an’ butter, an’ sallet, an’ spice-cake, an’ sich like; an’ there wur a plateful o’ baccho for th’ smookers. Well; it wanted aboon an hour to th’ startin’-time, so I let up (lighted up), an’ a lot moor did th’ same; an’, afore lung, we’d a bonny reech i’th hole. Th’ corpse wur laid out in a reawm off at th’ side, up four or five steps. In a bit Thrutcher’s wife brast off into a gradely wuther o’ crying’, an’ hoo said, ‘I think I’ll have another look at him, afore they screw’n him up!’ An’ off hoo went up th’ steps, wi’ her hankitcher to her een. ‘Poor Matty,’ said Daunt o’ Peggy’s, ‘I’m soory for her, hoo taks it so ill!’ In a minute or two, we yerd a great clatter i’th reawm where he wur laid; and Bill o’ th Crag said to his wife, “Run thee up, an’ see after yon poor craiter; hoo’s fo’n, or some’at.’ So Bill’s wife went up th’ steps, an’ hoo looked in at dur-hole, an’ hoo said, ‘Matty, lass; whatever’s to do?’ ‘Do!’ cried Matty; ‘This is a bonny come off! He’s sittin’ up, here; an’ he wants some warm ale wi’ ginger in it!’ Well; an’ so it turned out. Th’ lung an’ short on’t wur he coom to; an’ afore nine days wur o’er, he wur powlerin’ about th’ moorside, gettin’ wimberry. But he nobbut took it just i’ time, for if he’d put it off have an hour lunger, he’d ha’ fund hissel’ i’th wrong box.”

“Well,” said Snaffle, “that’s capt my trash!”

“Ah,” said Sam, “an’ it capt th’ berrin’-folk, too, I can tell tho! But it awter’t (altered) th’ shape o’ their faces in a snift; an’ it ended in a brokken day for th’ whole lot.
 . . . Hello; who comes here?”

(*Enter BILLY TWITTER, singing.*)

“Lither folk wi’ their stomachs so dainty,
 They wanten their proven made fine;
 If it nobbut be good and there’s plenty,
 I’m never so tickle wi’ mine;
 When I’ve ploughed till I’m keen as a hunter,
 A jug o’ good ale bring me then,
 Two pound o’ cow’d beef, and a jannock,—
 You never set een on’t again!”

“Hello, Belltinker, wheer has thou sprung fro’?”

“I am Saint George, that noble knight,
 That oft has fought for England’s right.
 England’s might, and England’s main;
 Rise up, Bold Slasher, and fight again!”

“Thou’s bin i’th sun, owd brid.”

“Nay, but I’ve bin i’th Th’ Hauve Moon a while; an’ I went fro’ theer into Th’ Seven Stars, an’ rare doin’s we had.”

“What hasto i’ that poke?”

“Porritch-powder.”

“Well, come, poo up; an’ let’s yer what yo’n had agate.”



Heart-Smitten.

[*Time, summer evening.—Scene, the winding road leading up the moorside to the old inn.—Persons, SNAFFLE O' THATCHER'S and OWD SAM, the landlord, on their way up.*]

“**I**'LL tell tho what, Sam; ‘Th’ Putty Lad’s’ as feelin’ a felly as there is i’ yon town.”

“A daycent chap, very. He comes of a tender-hearted breed. Raither to mich so for th’ sort o’ folk there is goin’ i’th world, just now.”

“There’s no mouse-neests about him, Sam.”

“Nawe; he’s very good to read.”

“There’s some folk, Sam, that’ll do no reet, nor tak (take) no wrang; but ‘Th’ Putty Lad’ ’ll do no wrang to nob’dy, if he knows it.”

“He wouldn’t wrang a ratton.”

“Nawe, not if it bote him, he wouldn’t. An’ he’s as oppen-temper’t a chap as ever I let on.”

“Ay; an’ he’s oppen-honded. He’d give his teeth away if he yerd of onybody ’at wanted a set.”

“Ay, he would; an’ he’d pay for ’em bein’ put in. Sitho, Sam; if ‘Th’ Putty Lad’ had bin about a quarter as keen

as some folk he met (might) ha' bin drivin' his carriage, just now. But he's bin ta'en in of o' sides."

"Ay, he has. But th' owd lad seems quite comfortable about it. He taks it like a thing 'at mut (must) be. An' he keeps powlerin' on, at th' same bat, an' letting 'em do as they'n a mind wi' him; an' yo never yer a wrang word come out of his yed about nob'dy."

"I'll tell tho what, Sam; I'm sorry for that lad of his. Eh, his mother is some put about o'er him!"

"Ay, an' weel hoo may; for he's as nice a lad as ever bote off th' edge of a moufin'. It's a thousan' pities! I doubt he's done for,—dee when he will."

"I never see'd nob'dy so lapt up in a lass sin' I're born, as he is, poor lad!"

"Well, hoo's a hon'some lass, there's no doubt. But, they're noan reet sorted, mon. He's too fine-natur't for hur. Hoo wants one of a rougher mak. But, it's no use talkin'; likin's like leetenin',—there's nob'dy can tell where it's beawn (going) to strike, nor what mak o' lumber it's beawn to do."

"Hoo doesn't care a pep for him, Sam."

"Not hoo. But hoo happen met (might) if he didn't care so mich for her."

"He'll never look o'er it, Sam."

"I doubt not. An' if he doesn't it'll kill his mother; for he's o' th' lad they han; an' hoo's fair bund up in him. They'n ta'en him o' up and down, to an' fro, to try to wean his mind to some'at new. But, goo where he would, it wur o' th' same, every sound that he yerd, an' every seet that he see'd, brought her to his mind. An' mornin', noon, an'

neet, his een wander't wearily, as if he wur lookin' for some'at that he couldn't find. He never talked about it; but he pines,—an' pines,—an' he'll pine away."

"It's a feaw (painful) life, Sam."

"It is that. There's nought worse to cure, when it gets so deep as that."

"That lad of Owd Crapple's wur just the same. His gronmother wur as poor as a crow; but hoo'd ha' sowd up, dish an' spoon, if hoo could ha' brought him to his-sel' again; an' one day, when hoo'd promised him this, an' that, an' tother, to cheer him up a bit, he turn't round i' bed, an' he said, 'It's no use, gronmother; yo cannot cure a brokken heart wi' gooseberry puddin' an' new clooas!'"

"Ay; he're a bit touched, but he coom to i'th end."

"He did, Sam."

"Ay; but it's strucken twelve wi' this son o' 'Th' Putty Lad's.'"

"Now, I never wur so ill ta'en to as that, Sam."

"Nawe; nor me noather. But, then, folk aren't o' alike, mon."

"I guess not. Some are raither of a finer reed nor other some. . . . But come, owd lad; let's wind a bit! I'm gettin' warm under th' saddle! It's a stiffish poo up this broo! There's a nice conkin'-pleck bi' th' side o' th' well, here. What saysto?"

"Thou may just plez thy bonny sel'! I'm as warm as thee! Keawer tho down; an' let's pipe up! It's nice an' cool at th' side o' this well. . . . Th' moorside looks weel, doesn't it?"

"It does that! There'll be rare a lot o' brids this time!"

"Ay ; an' there'll be some stock o' wimberrry, too, when 'Rushbearin'' gets o'er."

"I wish we'd some'at to sup, Sam."

"Well, there's th' well, here ; an' it's as fine wayter as ever rindle't fro' a broo-side ! Fill thi belly !"

"I don't like drinkin' dry wayter."

"Nawe, thou'd raither pay some'at for worse stuff."

"Well, an' if thou sowd nought nobbut wayter, Sam, thou'd ha' to shut up."

"I doubt I should. . . . Well, how didto goo on wi' Owd Sniggle ?"

"Oh, he's as hard as brazzil ! But I banted him i'th end. I'll tell tho what, Sam ; I don't think it's a wise plan to push for th' last penny in a bargain ; there's danger in it."

"Thou's hit th' nail this time, owd brid !"

"Have I spokken, Sam ?"

"Ay, marry, hasto. But Sniggle's too greedy to part wi' th' smoke o' his porritch ; an' he wur so when he wur a lad. What, thou'll remember him when we went to schoo' together i'th fowd ?"

"Ay ; I should think I do ! I remember gooin' wi' him once into owd Nanny Shackleton's toffee-shop, a-buyin' a hawp'orth o' humbugs ; an' as soon as he'd gotten th' humbugs, he popt one into his mouth, an' tother into his pocket, an' he went an' sit upo' th' durstep till he'd finished 'em ; an' then he went straight into th' shop again, an' began cryin' for owd Nanny to give him his hawp'ny back."

"It's just like him. . . . But, come ; let's be gooin'. We's just be i' nice time for th' baggin'."




Rough Lodgings.

My lodging is on the cold ground,
And oh, very hard is my fare.

—OLD SONG.

[*Time, winter forenoon.—Scene, the old kitchen.—Persons, OWD SAM, the landlord; JONE O' WOBBLER'S and BETTY, the landlady.*]

“HO is yon chap?”

“I cannot bring him to mind. He favours an ill-stuffed earwig,—as who he is.”

“Ay,—he's come'd off poor stock, has yon. An' he's bin badly clemmed, too, poor lad. By th' mon, I could see to read a ballet through him, welly (well-nigh)! I think he mun ha' bin born in a milk-shop.”

“What makes tho think that?”

“Well,—he looks as if his pap had been wayter't.”

“What had he to sup, Betty?”

“Pop.”

“He may well look solid (serious).”

“Well, come; th' lad didn't make his-sel', I guess. But, I wouldn't be as sober as he is for a cow-price, this minute!

. . . Hello; what's this?”

(*Enter WOGGY O' SHOG'S, singing.*)

“‘Oh, it's rollin' in the dew
Makes the milkmaids fair!’”

“Well, Wog, owd brid; what, thou's loded whoam again, it seems?”

“Ay; an' it's as mich as th' bargain, too.”

“How didto goo on?”

“Eh, it'd tak a week to tell.”

“Who hadto witho?”

“Well,—when we started, there wur me, an' Harry o' Mon John's, an' Copper Nob, an' Sol o' th' Hout Broo, an' Jem o' th' owd Surs,—we o' set off together; but we hadn't bin i' Lunnon aboon two hours before we lost th' end o' one another, snap,—an' at after that every mon had to do for his-sel': an' by th' mass, some on 'em went through St. Peter's needle,—I know I did.”

“Ay; thou looks as if thou'd bin i'th wars, owd lad.”

“Well, I haven't mich time; but I'll just tell tho one bit, an' thou may guess at tother. . . Well, thou knows, when we loded i' Lunnon, o' that I had about mi rags wur mi railway ticket, an' three an' ninepence-hawp'ny, an' an owd knife, an' two ounces o' bacco, twisted in a bit o' papper; but I thought th' brass would howd out weel enough, as we had to come whoam again th' next mornin'. Well, we powler't up an' down Lunnon streets till I geet as dateless as a lapstone; an', o' at once, o' somehow, I lost these chaps, an' I never see'd noather top or tail on 'em,—but they did nought but laugh at me. Well, thou knows, I began o' thinkin' it wur up wi' th' owd foo; an' I geet quite down i'th mouth.

In a bit I spied a cook's-shop, in a nook; an' in I went an' geet a shillin's-'oth o' potato pie, an' nine-pen'oth o' lobsouse, an' a lump o' cheese an' brade, an' a quart o' ale to 't; an' then I thought to mysel',—'Come, I can howd out till mornin', now, as how th' cat jumps!' So, off I set to see this exhibition; an' I maunder't up an' down among th' rook till I geet as mazy as a tup. An' by th' mass, owd lad, I wur some fain to get out o' that hole! It wur war (worse) tha being in a whisket full o' rattons! At last, neet coom on, an' it began o' rainin'; an' I thought to mysel', 'By th' mon, I mun hole somewheer till mornin' or else I'se be ta'en up, or some lumber!' So I reckon't mi brass up-an' I fund that I'd just fourpence-hawp'ny left out o' th' stock. 'Come, I's do!' thinks I. An' wi' that I axed a policeman if he could tell me wheer I could leet o' chep lodgin's; an' I towd him what brass I had. An' then he took me up one street, an' down another, till we coom to th' end of a ginnel 'at looked as dark as a breast-hee coal-pit: an' he said, 'Sitho; knock at yon third dur, an' tell 'em 'at I've sent tho,—an, thou'll be o' reet.' So, when I geet to th' house, I fund (found) a yollo-lookin' sort of a chap rear't up again th' dur-cheek,—an' he stare't at me,—an' I stare't at him; an' I don't know what he thought o' me, but I noather liked him nor th' hole 'at he live't in. But, thou knows, it wur rainin' like mad, an' I're gettin' weet, an' I didn't care wheer it wur, so as I geet under cover till dayleet; an' I said to him, 'Maister, dun yo keep lodgin's here?' An' he said, 'Ay!' An' I said, 'What mak are they?' An' he said, 'Well,—thou can have a fither-bed for sixpence,—or thou can have a flock bed for fourpence,—or thou can lie on a wood bench for twopence,

—or thou may ston again a wole (wall) for a penny.' 'That's just about my size, owd brid,' said I,—'I'll have a pen'oth!' So he put out his hond for th' brass, an' he said, 'Come forrud!' An' then he took me into a long, dark reawm (room), wheer there wur a hawp'ny candle let (lighted). Eh, it wur a smart cote! By th' mon, a pigsty's an angel to't for a stink! An' there wur folk lyin' about i' o' nooks an' corners,—an' bonny baigles (beagles, dogs) they wur,—as fur as th' leet went! As I glendurt round, I thought to mysel', 'By th' mass, this is bad to bide,—but I'll howd out till mornin'!' Well, he showed me th' wole that I had to rear mysel' up to; an' theer he left me. There wur a lot moore again th' same wole, but I kept mysel' to mysel' as weel as I could,—for I didn't like th' look o' their clooas. Well, thou knows, there wur a thick rope ran i'th front o' this wole o' mine, fro' one end to tother, about breast-hee; an' when we geet tire't o' th' wole we could rest upo' th' rope. I tried th' wole a good while; but when it geet past midneet, I couldn't prop my een oppen no lunger, so I leant forrud upo' th' rope, and fell fast asleep. Well, now, just tak notice o' th' upshot! It seems that when they wanten to teen th' hole (empty the room) in a mornin' they letten this rope goo, an' if there happens to be onybody upo' th' rope they gwon too. Well, when six o'clock i'th mornin' coom, I wur sound asleep; an' when they leet th' end o' th' rope goo, I shot reet forrud, th' yed (head) first, amung a lot o' folk that wur lyin' asleep, i'th dark, upo' th' floor; an' eh, by th' mon, thou should ha' sin what a dust there wur kicked up i' that hole in about a minute! I thought I'd fo'n down a coal-pit, at first; an'

afore I could gether mysel' together, there wur a great hondful o' hard fingers come bang among my een! By th' mass, that wakken't me up,—an' I began o' letten fly, reet an' left, among th' rook, first wi' my neighve (fist), an' then wi' my shoon,—an' I know it tow'd, now an' then, for first one an' then another set up a yeawl (howl), like a lad 'at's fund a lump o' toffy. Th' best on't wur that nobody knew who they wur hittin', it wur so dark. Well, at the end of o', I wriggle't out at th' dur-hole; an' I left 'em feightin' among theirsels; an' I darsay they thought they were hommerin' me when I'd gotten two or three streets off. . . . Well,—I wshed my face at a pump, an' I geet a pint of ale, an' went straight to th' station; an' I loded awhoam th' same day, wi' nought i' my pocket, but two black een. . . . An' that's th' end o' my Lunnon do! Here, Betty, I'll have an odd gill!"





Nippin' Times.

It looks very hard
To be brought into war'd
To be clemmed, an' do th' best 'at one con.

JONE O' GREENFIELD.

[*Time, winter evening.—Scene, kitchen of the old inn.—Persons, TWITTER, OWD SAM, AND JONE O' WOBBLER'S.—BEN O' KITTER'S looks in at the doorway.*]

“**D**UN yo want ony sond, Betty?”

“Ay; sitho; put two-pen'oth into this can.
. . . How's yo'r Sally?”

“Oh, hoo's gettin' o'er it nicely. They're doin' very weel.”

“What is it?”

“As fine a lad as ever I set een on!”

“Thou'll have a bonny stock in a bit.”

“Th' moore an' th' merrier, Betty! I wouldn't care if I'd a hundred,—as lung as I've plenty o' some'at for 'em! If yo'n believe me, we're better off now than when we'd noan at o'!”

“I dar say!”

"It's true, what I'm tellin' yo. . . . Will two-pen'oth be enough?"

"Ay."

"Well,—good day!"

"Good day!"

"Jone," said Owd Sam, "where hasto bin rommin' (ramming, putting) thisel' this good while? I ha' not sin tho this mony a bakin'-day."

"I've bin upo' th' tramp, lookin' for wark. Billy Pullet an' me set off together. Mon, I couldn't bide no longer. I wur tire't o' doin' nought, an' seein' everybody clemmin' about me."

"Well; an how didto goo on?"

"Well; at after I'd walked mi shoon off mi feet I geet a job among some chaps 'at wur makin' a railroad. It's hard wark; but I've poo'd through, so far; an' I get whoam every week-end,—wi' a bit o' brass i' my hond."

"An' what becom o' Billy?"

"Well; he met (might) ha' gotten on at th' same job; but he's too leet (light) for heavy wark. He'd ha' bin kilt in a snift! He's noan shört o' pluck, thou knows; an' he would ha' ta'en howd; but I towd him to try th' town first; an' then he could come back to me, if he let o' nought. So, he went forrud; an' as it happen't, one o' th' street-sweepers had bin buried that day, an' Billy geet his shop."

"Eh, he'll not like that job!"

"Nawe; I know that. But then, there's no jobs to pike at, now; an' a chap 'at's clemmin' mun tak th' first thing 'at comes to his hond, till better times. 'Sitho, Jone,' he

says to me, when we parted, 'Sitho, Jone; I'll do ony mak o' wark i' this world afore I'll be behouden to folk!' An' he did as he said."

"Well,—it shows willin', ony how. Oh, he's a daicent lad, is Billy,—but he hasn't mich in him. . . . Doesto think he'll manage this street-sweepin'?"

"Well; he'll be o' reet as far as a bit o' straight-forrud sweepin' goes, I darsay; but if he comes to sweep round a gas-lamp it'll bother him, I doubt. . . . But, I like Billy, let it leet as it will. He's a lad that'll do fair, as far as he con; an' if he is a bit short i'th top-knot he didn't mak his-sel'. I'd raither have him than some folk 'at's larn't-up. Th' breetest folk are not olez th' best o' folk."

"Nawe, they aren't, Jone, owd craiter. . . . Why, that owd'st lad o' thine's gone to Manchester, hasn't he?"

"Yigh, he has. He geet quite weary o' livin' o' green-sauce cake, an' nettle-puddin', an' slotchin' up an' down wi' his honds in his pockets; so he jumped up, one mornin', an' he said, 'Mother; I'll ston this no lunger! Yo're ill enough stinted beawt me! I'll find a job o' some sort, or else I'll walk mi legs off.' Well,—his mother wur fleyed on him gooin' away fro' whoam, so hoo said, 'Bide where thou art, James, an' be patient a bit. Summat'll turn up afore long, thou'll see.' But he wouldn't yer tell on't; an' he said mich 'an moore that he couldn't find in his heart to put a bite into his mouth, an' onybody i'th house clemmin'; so he're determine't to try fresh ground,—an' he'd tak th' first wark he could leet on,—as what it wur,—till he could turn his-sel' round. So, at last, hoo consented; an' off he set."

"Th' lad's quite reet," said Betty. "I howd his wit good! There nought war (worse) than slingin' about at a loce (loose) end! If they're yung an' strung, an' they'n th' use o' their limbs, they should be agate o' ome mak o' wark! I declare I'd elder (rather) see 'em wortchin' for th' next to nought nor (than) see 'em doin' nought. It keeps 'em out o' lumber,—an' that's summat! . . . An han yo yerd (heard) nought on him yet?"

"Yigh; we'd a bit of a letter this mornin'."

"Oh, ay; an' what says he?"

"It is here. . . . Sam; thee read it."

"Gi's howd."

(*Reads.*)

"Cock-a-doodle-doo!—what's this?—ay, it is! By th' mass, that' a quare beginnin', as how!"

"Cock-a-doodle-doo! I've made fourpence, to-day, wi' gettin' a rook (a lot) o' coals in! That'll do for a start! I towd yo I wouldn't write till I'd gettin' some'at to do. But, by th' mon, this is a quare shop! I loded here o' Thursday noon, wi' ninepence-hawp'ny, an' some cheese an' loaf, at my Aunt Margit ga' me; an' I'd just finished th' last o' mi cheese an' loaf when I geet this job. . . . By th' mass, this is th' reet mak of a country for takkin' th' white out o' yo'r shirts. There's bin nought nobbut reech' (smoke) an' rain sin I coom. It's noan like Rooley Moor, isn't this! I can hardly get my breath,—we're o' so thrutch up together. There's no stirrin' for folk, an' carts, an' sich like. I keep jowin' first again one thing, then again another, till folk thinken I'm crazy,—I think they're the

same. I'd like to bin run o'er three times to-day; an' as I stood i'th street, lookin' up at th' church-clock, there wur a horse blowed its nose i' my neck-hole; an' I bounce't back like a scopperill, an' fell o'er a trotter-stall. Th' owd woman wur fur havin' me walked off; but I helped her to pike her stuff up; an' hoo coom to at last. . . . I've sin nobry that I like, here, yet. . . . I keep lookin' up an' down to see if I can leet of onybody fro our side,—but I can find noan. I'm like as I wur born alive an' kin to nobry. T'other neet I went out at th' town-end till I geet at th' top of a bit of a knowe; an' I looked towards whoam; an' I began o' cryin' like a foo,—till a chap coom up; an' tow'd me to be off, or else he'd ha' me ta'en up. . . . I geet lodgin's up a ginnel. It isn't a nice place; but it'll do to goo on wi'. It's th' next to a milk-shop. Th' chap's code (called) 'Iron Jack,' an' his wife's a Bowtoner. They're hard-wortchin' folk. . . . I'm noan beawn (going) to give in; an' I's come noan whoam till I've addle't some'at. . . . I'll let yo knôw how I'm gotten on, about once a week; an' if I don't write yo may know 'at I'm oather out o' wark, or else I've gotten th' tooth-warch. I've gotten thick wi' a little lad 'at lives at th' next dur, an' he ga' me a lev (leaf) out of his copy-book to write my letter on. Tell mi mother I'll send her some brass afore aught's lung."

"Well done, Jemmy!" said Sam, taking his spectacles off.
"He'll get on, will that lad!"



A Bit o' Courtin'.

Gie me a canny hour at e'en,
My arms about my dearie, oh,
An' warldly cares an' warldly men
May a' gae tapselteerie, oh.

—BURNS.

[*Autumn night, two hours after sunset. An old farmhouse, in a moorland clough. NANNY, the servant lass, bustling about the kitchen by candle-light. TOM POSY, a lad from the neighbouring fold, lurking among the trees in the orchard. He gives a low whistle, and then taps quietly at the kitchen window. The door opens softly, and NANNY slips out.*]

“**G**H, Tom, whatever arto thinkin' on to come an' knock at th' window like that? Th' mistress has nobbut just gone up stairs. It's a wonder hoo didn't yer tho!”

“I don't care whether hoo did or not.”

“Nawe; I dar say not; but I care,—I'm force't to care.”

“Thou'd better go back to her, then.”

“Well, an' I con soon do that, Tom. What's th' matter that thou'rt so rivven to-neet?”

"Matter? Matter enoof, I think! Look what a time tho's bin wi' comin',—after what thou said to me last neet."

"I couldn't get out a minute sooner."

"An' here I've bin maunderin' up an' down i'th cloof by mysel', aboon two hours,—like a foo, as I am."

"I couldn't help it, Tom,—I couldn't for sure!"

"If thou thinks thou'rt goin' to mak a hal o' me, Nanny, thou'rt mista'en!"

"I'm sure I don't want to mak a hal on tho, Tom,—if thou doesn't wish to mak one o' thisel'."

"Thou met ha' slipt out an' towd me,—an' if tho couldn't come thysel' thou met ha' sent word by somebry, instead o' keepin' me hangin' about under th' trees yon, like a thief lookin' out for a job."

"Well, I couldn't get out mysel', I tell tho,—for there's bin a lot o' folk fro' th' Birches o' th' afternoon,—they ha' not bin gone aboon hauce-an-hour,—an' I've had mi honds as full as a fitch every minute o' this day, till I didn't know which way to turn mysel',—for our lasses are off at th' town, an' there hasn't been a wick soul i' yon house to do a hond's turn but mysel',—not a soul there hasn't,—nobbut th' owd mistress,—an' hoo's so lame that hoo con noather lift fuut nor finger,—I have to feed her mornin', noon, and neet; an' hoo wants lookin' after at bye-times beside,—and hoo has to be hovven out o' bed an' into bed,—an', tak it o' together, th' owd woman's aboon one body's wark hersel'. There weren't a soul i'th house belongin' our family but th' owd woman, an' thou surely doesn't think I could ha' sent her down into th' cloof to tell tho I couldn't get out, doesto?"

"This is noan o' th time that thou promised to meet me, is't?"

"Well, nawe, Tom, what's th' use o' talkin' that road?"

"Ay; I know! Thou doesn't care! I begin a-thinkin' my talk's raither too chep wi' thee! But, I con tell tho one thing,—while I've bin powlerin' up an' down yon i'th dark I've bin i' twenty minds to go whoam again, an' come no more to be made a foo on bi thee,—crack that nut!"

"Well, I'm sure! What a grand way we're in! It isn't too late for tho to goo whoam again, now, if thou wants,—there's nobry howdin tho! Eh, dear o' me! It's come'd to some'at, however. Hie tho whoam again, do; there's as good fish left i'th say as ony that ever wur catch't yet,—crack that nut!"

"Ay, that's just where it is. Thou's more fish upo' th' hooks than ever thou'll manage to fry gradely. An' I'll tell thee another thing, Nanny,—if I'm one on 'em,—I'm happen noan as ill catch't as thou thinks on. Crack that nut!"

"Well, Tom, I don' know what thou'rt talkin' about; but, as thou art so terribly th' wrang side out, I'd ha tho to know that I think thou'rt no great catch, as who gets tho. Crack that nut, while thou art cracking!"

"Well, Nanny, afore I goo, I'll just tell tho another thing. There's one o' these fish o' thine that'll ha' my fist i' his gills if ever I see him maulin' an' sniggerin' about thee ony moore; an' thou may tell him I say so."

"Well, an' who's that, then?"

"It's Joss o' Jerry's, fro' th' Syke Broo."

"What! My own cousin?"

"Ay, thi own cousin—if he is thi own cousin. I dar say he's somewheer about th' house just now!"

"Eh, Tom, whatever's come'd o'er tho? What do I want

wi' Joss o' Jerry's; or what does he want wi' me that he should be hangin' about this house after me? He thinks no more o' me than he does o' one of his own sisters."

"Oh, doesn't he?"

"Nawe, he doesn't. . . . Eh, Tom, Tom, whatever have I done that thou should think so ill on me?"

"Oh, don't tell me. Cousin or no cousin—when it comes to luggin' an' kissin' in a nook, it's raither too much of a good thing."

"Well,—he has never done that to me!"

"Yigh, he has! I see'd him!"

"When?"

"Th' neet o'th Churn Supper. I see'd him put his arms round thi waist an' gi' tho a kiss i'th dur-hole, just afore he went whoam."

"Well, an' if he did, whatever is there so much amiss i' that? My own cousin! I'm sure I never thought ought about it. An' I'm sure he didn't! An' I'm sure I didn't ax him to gi' me a kiss! Eh, Tom, whatever arto thinkin' on?"

"I don't care, Nanny; I don't like it! An' if I catch him at it again, I'll spoil yon pratty mouth of his for him!"

"Eh, Tom, Tom, whatever's to be done? I didn't think thou'd bin o' sich a jealous turn as this! It'll be a weary life for onybody that has to live wi' thee."

"Well,—thou doesn't need to do it, then."

"Well,—e'en just let it be so, Tom,—but I cannot help but pity thoose 'at has to goo through it,—if ever thou gets onybody to do it."

"Oh, dunnot thee fret thisel' about that! There's moore folk i'th world than thee, Nan!"

“Well, thou'd better goo an' help thisel' to some on 'em, then! . . . Dear o' me! If one's to walk up an' down th' world wi' their lips buttoned up,—an' if one cannot stir, nor look off at th' side, but thou mun fly into a ragin' passion, I think I should be a good deool better off bi mysel',—so I'll be gooin' into th' house.”

“Well, Nanny, an' if thou's set thi heart upo' yon chap at Syke Broo, I think we met as weel break it off at once, an part for good; for I'm noan beawn to join jiblets wi' nobody!”

“Me set my heart upo' yon chap at Syke Broo? Eh, Tom, I wonder how tho con talk sich rubbish! I wonder whatever's made thee think so ill on me. I'm sure I've never gan thee occasion! If I'd liked onybody better, I'm sure I'd never ha' come'd out to meet *thee*,—so thou doesn't need to think it! Thou mun surely ha' bin use't to some mak o' folk 'at's noan so very particular, or else sich things would never enter thi yed. An' look what I've had to meet wi'—o' through thee,—fro' mi faither, an' mi mother, an' one an' another on 'em! (*She begins to cry.*) They tow'd me how it would be,—an' I con see it now! . . . But it's all done wi'! So I'll be gooin' in; an' thou'll not ha' th' chance o' snappin' an' snarlin' at me again, I con tell thee!”

“Come, Nan,—come here! Don't cry, lass! I can't ston it! I'll not say another wrang word to thee as lung as I live! Come, let's make it up, an' ha' done wi' this mak o' bother! Here, dry thi een! Come here, my lass!”

“Nawe, give o'er! I'll not be mauled an' kissed bi nobry!”

“What ! not bi thi cousin Joss ?”

“Nawe, nor thee noather ! If one’s een wur made for nought but cryin’, an’ one’s lips wur made for nought but poutin’, I’d better be gettin’ my hond in.”

“Don’t say another word about it, Nanny ! Here ; I’se be like to taste again !”

“Tom, do give o’er ! I’ll not stop another minute, if thou doesn’t behave thisel’ ! O !—do be quiet ! Look how thou’s tumble’t my yure !”

“Don’t co’ me jealous again, Nanny, wilto ? I nobbut did it to try tho, lass !”

“Well, I think it’s very wrung on tho, Tom. Thou doesn’t need to try me,—an’ thou knows that, too. . . . Husht ! What’s that ?”

(A country chap, going down the lane, singing in the dark.)

Oh, I know not, I care not,
I can’t tell how to woo ;
But we’ll away to the merry greenwood,
An we’ll get nuts enoo !

“Who’s yon ?”

“It’s Billy Panzy, comin’ whoam fro’ th’ town, as full as a fiddler. . . . Husht ! he’s strikin’ up again !”

(He sings again.)

The dusky night rides down the sky,
And ushers in the morn ;
The dogs all join in jovial cry,
The huntsman winds his horn.
Then a-hunting we will go !

The wife around her husband throws
 Her arms to make him stay ;
 My dear, it rains, it hails, it snows,
 You cannot hunt to-day.
 Yet a-hunting we will go !

“Ay, th' owd lad's gotten about as much as he can carry ; an' he'll sing every inch o'th road,—till he gets within seet o' his own house ; an' then he'll be as dumb as a mile-stone.”

“Well, Tom, I've left that dur oppen, an' I mun be gooin' in now, for I expect our maister back fro' th' town every minute !”

“Well, couldn't I goo in till he comes ?”

“Eh, nawe, I durstn't do sich a thing ! If he happened to come ——”

“Well,—I could slip out at th' back.”

“Eh, nawe, Tom ; don't ax me sich a thing ! I durstn't do it,—I durstn't for sure ! . . . Beside, th' mistress is lyin' wakken up-stairs, just this minute, an' hoo con yer every fuut 'at stirs ! Hoo never gets a wink o' sleep till mornin'. . . . Husht ! Husht ! . . . What's that ? . . . Yon's our maister comin', an' somebry wi' him ! I mun goo in this minute. Don't, Tom, don't. Do let me goo ! Good neet !”

“Good neet, my lass ! I'll come to-morn at neet.”

[NANNY runs into the kitchen, and begins to wash up the pots. Enter the old farmer, with his friend SAM O' ALICK'S, o'th Wayter-side.]

“Well, Nanny, how's th' mistress ?”

“Hoo's about th' same.”

“Thou's gotten her to bed, I guess ?”

“Yes ; nearly an hour sin'.”

"Well, conto give us some supper? There's Sam, here; he'll have a bit wi' me."

"I'll set it out in a minute. Win yo have cowl beef again, or what?"

"Ay,—bring us that beef out, to begin wi'."

"Nanny, thou mun mind an' fasten o' th' durs, an' th' shutters, too,—for there's bin a lot o' ill-lookin' tramps prowlin' about th' cloof this day or two back,—there wur some mak o' a gipsy ran through th' orchard as Sam an' me coom up,—so thou mun keep thi een about tho, an' make o' fast, or else we's be robbed again, th' same as we wur th' last back-end."

"There wur two or three poachers ta'en up our gate on, tother day."

"I dar say. . . . Th' maister up at th' ho, yon, wur walkin' through th' wood tother day, an' he let o' Black Dan o' Ben's, th' neet hunter, an' he said, 'Dan, what are you doing here?' 'I'm walkin', said Dan. 'Well, do you know that you are walkin' on my ground?' 'Well,' said Dan, '*I'm like to walk o' somebry's ground,—I've noan o' mi own!*'"

"Well,—an' th' maister couldn't get o'er that very weel."

"Nawe, he had him theer, for sure. . . . Nanny, how's this clock?"

"I think it'll be reet; for it wur just haue-past one by it when th' postman went by."

"Come, that'll do, Nanny. . . . Thou'rt like Johnny Peighswad. When they axed him if his watch wur reet, he said, 'Ay, *I set it by th' milk-cart this mornin'!*' . . . Here, Sam, poo up, an' let's get a bit o' supper!"



The Pig and the Purse.

Thou art gone from my gaze.

—SONG.

[*Time, autumn evening, after sunset. Scene, the kitchen of the old "Running Horses" public-house, on Kersal Moor. Three or four country fellows seated about the fire. Enter old JOHN BURNETT, and JEM ROYLE, two country farmers, on their way home from the cattle market.*]



THE evening air was touched with frost, and there was a bright fire in the kitchen of the "Running Horses."

As old John entered the place he spied two of his men from the farm amongst the company gathered round the hearth.

"Hello, lads," said the old man, "yo'n gotten into th' nook again, I see. Han yo 'livert (delivered) that stuff down i'th town?"

"Ay; it's o' reet, maister."

"An' what han yo dun wi' th' horses?"

"Why, we'n ta'en 'em down whoam, an' done 'em up for th' neet; an' after that we thought we'd come up here an' have a quiet gill or two. . . . Win yo have a gill wi' us, maister?"

“Nawe, nawe, lads; yo’n no brass to spare for no gills, noather on yo; but yo’s ha’ one wi’ me if yo’n a mind; an’ then I could like yo to get down i’ fairish time; for yo’n ha’ to set off wi’, th’ carts afore break o’ day i’th mornin’.”

“O reet, maister!”

“Matty, bring these lads a pint a-piece!”

The sweet-looking matronly old landlady came sailing into the kitchen with a smiling face, and as clean as a new pin from top to toe.

“Hello, John,” cried she, “is that yo? Bless us an’ save us,—this is good for sore een! I’ll tell yo what, yo’r lockin’ as cant (canty) as a kitlin’! . . . Hello; is this yo’r William that yo’n getten wi’ yo? I’ll tell yo what, John, he gets a bonny lad! Ah, he shoots up apace—he does, for sure!”

And then, remembering that the little fellow had lost his mother, the tears rose into the eyes of the kind old dame as she stroked his head tenderly and said, “Ay, ay, poor lad! God bless him, an’ guide him through this rough world,—for there’s nobody so weel kept as those that He keeps! . . . Come hither wi’ me, Billy, an’ let’s see what I have!”

“Ay, ay,” said old John, smiling quietly, “tak him into th’ tother room a bit; I’m not gooin’ to stop mony minutes!”

“Now, then, Jem,” said old John to his friend, “poo thi cheer into this nook, an’ let’s have a chat.”

“Agreed on,” replied Jem, “for I’ve bin on mi feet th’ most o’ this day. Han yo ony ’bacco, John?”

“Ay; thou’ll find a bit o’ good stuff i’ that pouch, sitho!
. . . An’ reitch me a pipe, too, while thou’rt agate.
I’ll have a wift mysel’!”

Then the two old cronies charged their pipes, and settled themselves at a little round table in the corner for a quiet talk.

“I’ll tell tho what, Jem,” said old John, “I’m fast what to do wi’ yon lad o’ mine! He’s terrible fond o’ books, an’ sich as that; an’ he seems to tak very little delight i’ ought else. A better-natur’t lad never broke brade; an’ I cannot find i’ my heart to speighk sharp to him, for if I happen to say a cross word, it brings th’ wayter to his een in a minute,—an’, between thee an’ me, I cannot bide to see it,—for he’s the very pictur of his mother. I raily don’t know what I mun make on him. I lie wakken mony an hour i’th neet-time thinkin’ about him. I doubt I’s never be able to make a farmer on him,—nought o’th sort. He likes dreamin’ an’ dozin’ about th’ fields, an’ gatherin’ posies an’ wanderin’ off into th’ woods by his-sel’, but he seems to tak no interest i’ ought that’s gooin’ on i’th farm-yard, except playin’ wi’ th’ dogs, an’ th’ yung cattle, an’ sich like. He’ll never make a farmer,—nought o’th sort. He’s too tender-hearted,—an’ too simple, to feight wi’ a rook o’ rough, keen-witted, cattle-chaps. Besides, I doubt he hasn’t weft in him for that job,—for a little thing makes him ill. I don’t know what to do with him, I’m sure. He’s a puzzle to me. He’s like nobody else; an’ yet he’s a favourite wi’ everybody that knows him. An’ he’s so fond o’ readin’ that if he sees a bit o’ printed papper lyin’ upo’ th’ road, he’ll pick it up, an’ look at it; an’ if he can get howd of a book, away he’ll goo into a corner, i’th barn, or i’th shippon, or onywheer, if it’s far enough out o’th road; an’ sometimes he gets so lapt up in it that we han actilly

to root him out to get him to come to his meals ; an' when he does come, he nobbut picks a bit here an' a bit theer,—like a brid among hay-seeds. Poor lad ! I feel soory for him mony a time ; for he is as he is,—an' he connot alter his-sel',—an' I wonder what'll become on him after my yed's lapt,—for this is a rough world for a tender heart an' a tickle stomach to feight through."

"I'll tell tho what, John ; he'd make a rare 'torney !"

"'Torney ! Bless thi life, Jem, what arto talkin' about ? He'd be as helpless as a kitlin' in a pig-sty ! 'Torney ! Nay, marry ; he'd be no moore use at that job than a midge in a fire-hole ! What's th' use o' sendin' a lad wi' two wood legs to a dancin'-schoo' ?"

"Well ; there's nobody can whistle 'bout top-lip, John ; an'—as thou says,—it's no use puttin' a lad to a job that he cares nought about, for sure."

"Not a bit, Jem,—not a bit ! It's like tryin' to lade wayter wi' a sieve ! . . . But, I'll tell tho what,—I wish I could get him into th' owd college, yon ! He'd be like a cat in a tripe-shop among those books ! I believe if I could get him in theer he'd never look beheend him !"

"Well, I'll tell tho what to do, John ! Speighk to th' parson, yon, about it ! He's thick wi' o' th' quality o' th' country-side ; an' if onybody can do it, he con !"

"By th' mass, thou'rt reet, Jem !"

"Nought venture't nought won, John ! Do it at once !"

"Well, I think there's no harm i' axin,' as how 'tis !"

"Not a bit, John ! Think wi' one hond, an' act wi' tother, an' get it o'er !"

And now there was a thoughtful pause in the conversa-

tion, and the two old friends smoked on in silence for two or three minutes. At last Jem took his pipe from his mouth, and began :—

“ I looked in at ‘ Hard Nan’s ’ ale-house, yon, as I coom up th’ broo ; an’ I fund about as pratty a swarm o’ cow-jobbers an’ sich like i’th hole as ever I clapt een on ; an’ they made th’ owd house fair ring again wi’ their wild fun an’ their racketty din. . . . One on ’em wur tellin’ about a chap fro’ Bury that had been down at th’ market about a month sin’ wi’ some little pigs to sell. It seems that this chap geet rid of his pigs soon on i’th day, an’ then he geet upo’ th’ fuddle, an’ he went gosterin’ up an’ down amung th’ pig-folk wi’ his brass in his hond. At last he fell in wi’ two or three owd cronies, that wur gettin’ ‘ market fresh,’ like his-sel’. ‘ Hello, Jack,’ cried one on ’em, ‘ how hasto gotten on, owd brid?’ ‘ Getten on? Why, I’ve sowd lung sin’,—and at a good price, too,—an’ th’ brass is here, sitho.’ An’ wi’ that he chuckt his greasy purse up into th’ air, an’ caught it again as it coom down. ‘ Bravo, owd lad ; thou’ll be as reet as a ribbon now.’ ‘ Well ; I’se do as long as th’ brass lasts.’ An’ wi’ that he chuckt th’ purse up again ; but he missed his aim this time ; an’ istid o’ catchin’ it he drove it amung a lot o’ pigs that stooede in a pen close by. Well, thou knows, pigs are nobbut pigs,—an’ this owd purse wur as greasy as a lump o’ suet,—so it had hardly time to get to th’ floor afore one o’ these pigs swallowed it, wi’ seven sovereigns an’ a haue in it. Well ; these chaps that wur lookin’ on brast out a laughin’. ‘ Well done, Jack, owd lad. That bacon’ll cost some brass, if it’s boun to be fed up wi’ sovereigns. Thou’s fund a four-

legged savin's-bank at last.' 'Wheer's mi purse?' said Jack, routin' amung th' slutch i'th pig-pen. 'Nay, thou doesn't need to root theer. One o' thoose pigs has swallowed it! I seed it!' 'Which on 'em wur it?' said Jack. 'I believe it wur that big un,—but I'm noan quite sure,—they're so mich alike!' 'Well, that's a corker, as how 'tis!' said Jack, scrattin' his yed, an' lookin' first at one pig, then at another; 'that's a corker! But I'se be like to stick to this lot till I get my brass back!' 'It wur that biggest pig that geet it!' said a chap that wur stonnin' by; 'I seed it swallow it! 'What's th' price o' this pig?' said Jack to th' owner. 'I'll tak eight pound for it!' 'Why, what weight doesto' co' it?' 'It's twelve score, good!' 'Come, come, owd lad; that's a deeol moore than th' market price!' 'I don't care. I'll ax no moore, an' tak no less, sell it or never sell it! That's a valuable pig! I could sell th' inside for moore than that!' Th' poor fellow seed that it wur no use botherin',—th' pig had his purse, an' th' chap had th' pig; so he made no moore ado, but borrowed brass amung his cronies to buy this pig wi'; an' as they drove it off, Jack looked at this pig an' said, 'Thou's some property o' mine i' thi inside, owd lad! I don't know how it'll agree wi' tho; but I munnot let thee goo out o' mi seet till it turns up!' Well; about th' edge o' dark, when he'd gotten about three mile on th' road whoam wi' his pig, he stopt a minute or two to tee his boot-lace, an' while he wur bendin' down th' pig ran into a deep wood that led off at the road-side. 'Hello,' said Jack, when he looked up, 'wheer's my banker gone?' In a minute he yerd it gruntin' down i'th wood, an' off he set after it, like mad,—for he wur fretten't o' some'at

happenin' to th' pig. He geet it whoam at th' end, an' he looked after it very carefully for mony a day; but it wur no use,—there were no signs of ony brass. At last they had th' pig kilt; an' they looked very carefully among it, to see if they could find this lost purse; but they could find noather money nor purse. Th' fact on't wur that th' owd lad had bought th' wrong pig. It wur another pig that had swallowed th' purse; an' a sly cow-jobber that had bin watchin' th' whole thing, bought th' reet pig after he'd druvven tother away. But, to this day, he firmly believes that th' purse is lyin' somewhere i'th wood that th' pig ran into as he wur drivin' it whoam; an' he spent mony a score o' hours theer, lookin' for it; an' he'll spend a lot moore yet, afore he's satisfied."

"Well," said old John, as he knocked the ashes from his pipe, "o' that I can say is that th' owd lad paid very dear for his market-fuddle! . . . But I mun be gooin'! It's gettin' dark! Come, William, my lad; let's be gettin' down th' broo! I guess thou'rt for stoppin' a bit, Jem?"





Fause Benjamin.

Though this be madness, yet there is method in it.

—HAMLET.

[*Time, winter evening.—Scene, the old kitchen.—Persons, OWD SAM, the landlord; JONE O' WOBBLER'S; FLOP; TWITTER; and BETTY, the landlady.*]

TWITTER," cried Betty, as she took up the poker to stir the fire, "if I wur thee I'd give o'er lyin', an' start o' thievin',—thou'd make moore by it."

"Ay, but it's as true as deooth," cried Twitter.

"I care nought whether it's true or not," said the landlord; "it's a good tale, an' it's weel towd!"

"Ay, ay," replied Betty, "thou'rt noan to a shavin' i' thi talk, no moore than he is."

"Well," said Sam, "some folk's o' for cowd truth, but I like mine mixed a bit!"

"Eh, Sammul," said Betty, "I wonder how thou can for shame o' thi face say sich a thing, for there isn't a mon alive 'at hates lyin' worse than thou does!"

"Betty," said Sam, "I wish to th' Lord thou'd give o'er preitchin', an' get forrud wi' thi bakin',—an' let us have a bit o' talk to ersels (ourselves), quietly!"

.

"Well, Sam," said Twitter, "I'll tell tho another thing about th' same chap,—an' this is true, too. . . . One neet when he'd stop't at th' 'Amen Corner' alehouse till he couldn't see a hole through a ladthur, he set off to go whoam, i'th dark, an' istid (instead) o' takkin' straight down th' hee-road, he turn't into th' avenue o' trees, 'at leads up to th' squire's. Well, th' first thing he did, he ran again a tree; and he doffed his hat an' said, 'I beg yo'r pardon, maister; I didn't see yo!' In a minute or two, he ran again another; an' he begged pardon again; an' then he did it a third time, a bit fur on. An' then he began o' thinkin' to his-sel' that as there wur so many folk about he'd happen better try th' tother side o' th' road. So, he wamble't across, as weel as he could; but when he geet theer, he fund it as ill as ever; for he kept jowin' again tree after tree, till, at last, he dropt down on his hinder-end, bi th' wole-side, an' he said, 'It's no use tryin' to goo ony fur! I'll stop where I am; *till this procession gets by!*'"

"Well if ever!" cried Betty, "that sheds o'!" (excels all).

"It's a crumper, for sure," said Flop; "an' it reminds me o' Ben o' th' Biggin's, an' th' gate-post."

"Howd a minute, Twitter," said Sam; "who is this chap 'at thou's bin tellin' on? Isn't he some'at akin to Rondle o' Dernshaw, 'at wur poo'd up for sellin' *hus/i*?"

"Sure he is! They're own cousins. There's about forty on 'em i' that fowd that are o' sib an' sib, rib an' rib,—like Kitter's pigs."

"I thought so. Well, Flop,—what's this tale about Ben o' th' Biggin's?"

"Well,—as owd Ben wur waddlin' whoam fuddie't one winter neet, he coom ram-bazz again th' gate-post, at th' end o' th' lone,—an' down he went. Well, Ben's a short-temper't chap, so he flew into a passion, an' as soon as he could crapple up to his feet again, he went at this gate-post, hommer an' tungs, wi' his fists. 'Thou did that o' purpose,' said Ben; 'but I'll set thee one on, devil!' Th' parson happen't to be comin' by, an' he said, 'Here Benjamin; what are you doing? You'll hurt yourself! Don't you see what it is?' 'I care nought who he is!' cried Ben; 'I'll larn him for runnin' again me, o' that road!' an' he stroke out again. 'Stop, stop,' said th' parson; 'don't you see it's the post?' 'Post!' said Ben,—'well; *how leets he didn't blow his horn, then?*'"

"Good again!" said the landlord; "keep it up, lads; keep it up!"

"Well," said Flop, "one neet, about a week afore th' last 'Rushbearin', I went into th' 'Gowden Bo' a-gettin' a gill, an' theer I fund Ben, an' owd Bill Hollan', an' Boswell, th' butcher, an' Dan Neild, an' a rook moore. 'Ben!' says one on 'em, 'arto ready for th' Rushbearin'?' 'Oh, ay,' says Ben; 'I've bin howdin' back o' purpose.' 'I'll tell tho what,' said Boswell, 'I'll gi' tho have a crown i' tho'll keep sober this Rushbearin!' 'An' I'll be another,' said owd Bill Hollan'!' An' then another said he'd be a shillin'; an' so

on, till they made it up into fifteen shillin' amung 'em. Well, this made Ben scrat his yed a bit; for he're noan use't to havin' fifteen shillin' at once in his pocket. So, he turn't it o'er in his mind a bit; but, at last, down coome his neighve (fist) upo' th' table, with a bang; an' he said, 'Nawe; it'll do noan! I'll not be lad (led) into temptation wi' yo! I've bin fuddle't every Rushbearin' this last sixteen year,—an' *I'm noan beawn to be a backslider now!*'"

"Eh, this drink, this drink!" said Betty.

"Flop," said the landlord, "weren't owd Ben i'th asylum once?"

"Yigh, he wur," answered Flop; "an' th' doctor sarve't him out nicely while he wur theer."

"How wur that?"

"Well, thou knows, Ben wur olez (always) to lither (lazy) to wortch, fro' bein' a lad; an' he wur of a fause, schamin' turn, bi natur'. Some folk reckon't 'at he pretended to be wrang in his yed becose he thote that if he geet into th' asylum he should be out o'th gate o' wark. Let that be as it may,—he hadn't bin lung i'th asylum, afore he see'd at thouse 'at live't i'th infirmary had daintier diet, an' less to do nor tother. So, he began o' gruntin', an' groanin', an' pretendin' to be ill. Th' keepers see'd through him weel enough, for they'd bin done bi th' same sort aforetime; an' when th' doctor coom, they said, 'Now, yo mun mind this chap. He's an owd file. He's shammin' Abraham; so that he may get into th' infirmary.' 'I see!' said th' doctor, 'Leave him to me!' So, when Ben coom, th' doctor said, 'Yo'r not well, I understan'. What's the matter?' An' Ben said at he wur ill here,—an' he wur ill theer,—an' he couldn't

tell wheer he wur ill ; it shifted up an' down so. Then th' doctor looked into his een, an' he said, 'Ay!' Then he felt at his pulse, and he said, 'Ay!' again. Then he axed Ben to put his tung out. An' Ben put his tung out. 'Ay ; I see,' said th' doctor,—'O'er-fed ! I'll soon put you to rights ! I'll alter yo'r diet ! You may go !' Ben began o' thinkin' that he wur sowd. An' he wur, too ; for th' doctor gav orders that he wur to have nought but skilly an' dry toast, twice a day, till further orders. Well, at th' end o'th fourth day, he looked at Ben again. 'Put yo'r tung out !' said th' doctor ; an' Ben put his tung out. 'Ay, ay,' said the doctor ; 'yo'r mendin' ! I think I may change yo'r diet a little. Do you think you could eat an egg, now ?' Ben poo'd his tung in, an'—glarin' at th' doctor, as savage as a tiger,—he cried out, '*Could I,—height,—a HEGG? Ay ; by th' mass,—an' th' hen an' o'.*'"

"Sally," said the landlady, "put some coal upo' this fire ! If it had been summer time, thou'd ha' had it th' haue road up th' chimbly ! An' stir tho, do ! Thou trails those limbs o' thine up an' down, like a flea in a glue-pot !"





Moider't Mally.

No livin' soul a-top o'th earth's
Bin tried as I've bin tried ;
There's nob'dy but the Lord an' me
That know's what I've to bide !

—BEN PRESTRON.

T was a bright winter forenoon. The air was keen ; the ground was hard and slippery under foot ; and hoar frost glittered everywhere in the unclouded sunshine. Mally o' Ben's had been taking the washing to her customers in the town, and she was now sauntering homeward to the outskirts, with a basketful of odd things on her arm, and leading by the hand her little lad, Tommy, who was busy sucking a piece of sugar-toffy, as he dragged lazily along by her side. They had reached the town-end, where the houses began to blend pleasantly with the green country, and the last dwelling of all,—standing apart from all the rest, in front of a grove of trees,—was now in sight. This was a neat thatched cottage, in a garden, by the roadside, belonging to a comfortable old widow called Jenny Lee. Jenny's nest was half-hidden by tall bushes of box-wood and holly ; and upon the thick thorn-hedge that overhung the roadside “wreaths of fairy frost-work hung where

grew last summer's leaves." She had known Mally o' Ben's from early childhood, for she had been a friend and companion of her mother's ; and amongst Mally and her children the kind old widow always went by the name of "Aunt Jane."

As Mally and her little lad came trailing along, in the clear, cold sunshine, the old woman chanced to be sweeping the flagged footpath which led through the garden up to her cottage door. Knocking the dust from her brush upon the front step, she looked up the road before closing the gate.

"Well, I declare," said she, "if this isn't Mally that's comin'!"

As Mally came across the road towards the garden gate, she whispered to her little lad, "Sitho, Tommy, who's yon?"

"It's my Aunt Jane!" said Tommy.

"Why, it's never thee, Mally, is it?" said the old woman.

"It's me, for sure."

"Well, well! Come thi ways into th' house, an' get thi things off. . . . An' thou's getten Tommy wi' tho, too. . . . Come hither, thou little rollin', rompin', twinklin' squirrel! Let's have howd on tho! Come; give us a kiss,—an' be sharp! . . . Hello; where hasto bin? Wherever hasto had this lad, Mally? He's as sticky as a glue-pot! What's he daubed his face with?"

"It's toffy!" said Tommy.

"Toffy!" cried the old woman, laughing, "I'll toffy tho, —thou little kempie! . . . Here; let's have another! . . . Good gracious, lad,—thou'rt varnished fro' yed to fuut! It's like kissin' a traycle-tub! (*Shouts to the servant-*

girl.) Here, Martha, tak him an' wesh him ; an' turn his bishop (pinafore), an' let's sarve him up tidy. . . .
(*To MALLY.*) Now, Mally, tak thi things off, lass. Yo mun stop an' have a bit o' dinner."

"Eh, Aunt Jane ; I munnot stop long. Yo known I've two o'th childer down."

"Ay, ay ; I know. Who hasto left with 'em ?"

"Our John's wife's tentin' 'em till I get back."

"That's reet. . . . Now, while I think on it,—brimstone an' gin's an excellent thing for th' chicken-pox, Mally. It cured our Joseph's childer. I'll gi' tho a saup o' gin to tak wi' tho. Hasto ony brimstone ?"

"Plenty, thank yo."

"An' which on 'em is it that's gotten th' ring-worm ?"

"It's our Nelly."

"Poor little thing! Well, keep her warm, Mally ; an' give her some gentle oppenin' physic ; and wesh her yed weel, now and then, wi' 'bacco-wayter."

"I believe it's a good thing."

"There's nothing better, Mally. Here, gi' me thi basket, an' I'll put some 'bacco in for tho."

"Well, yo're very good, Aunt Jane ; an' I con nobbut thank yo."

"Eh, howd thi din, lass. It's some'at an' nought. What's th' use o' folk livin' if they cannot do a good turn now an' then ? An' then, I'm sure thou'll have hard wark to make ends meet with o' yon childer about tho."

"I have that, Aunt Jane. I've ten on 'em, yonder, o' under my feet at once, as a body may say,—for th' owdest wi'not be eleven till Ladymass."

"Thou's had 'em very fast, Mary!"

"Eh,— bless yo! . . . It's nobbut a poor look-out for me, I doubt! . . . But what can a body do, Aunt Jane?"

"Thou mun do as well as thou con, lass. Folk cannot have it o' their own road, thou knows. But, bless my life, thou'rt quite young, yet."

"Well; I'm turn't nine-an'-twenty."

"Ay, ay, marry! What! yo'n want a bigger house, if things don't alter."

"Yon's too little, as it is, Aunt Jane."

"Never mind, lass; what! thou'rt hardly i'th prime o' life, yet."

"Eh, never name it! I feel a very poor craiter, sometimes, I can tell yo. An' I may weel; for I get so hamper't an' so bother't an' poo'd wi' these childer, an' one thing an' another, that mony a time it drives me to my wit's end, —it does, for sure."

"I can believe it, Mary. A lot o' childer like yon bide'n a deal o' doin' for."

"Doin' for! Eh, Aunt Jane! Lord bless us, an' save us! Th' mendin', an' th' fendin',—an' th' rootin' an' th' tootin', an' th' tentin' that I have to go through is beyond tellin'! Eh; yo should see 'em when they're o' yammerin' round th' table, at dinner-time! An' if yo'n believe me, Aunt Jane, I hardly know, sometimes, how to scrape an' scrat a bit o' stuff together to stop their din with,—I don't, for sure. An' ten little hungry mouths like yon takken a deal o' fillin', Aunt Jane!"

"I'm sure they do, Mary."

“It’s true what I’m tellin’ yo, Aunt Jane. . . . An’ as for yon guttlin’ slotch of a husband o’ mine, he thinks o’ nobody but his-sel’,—an’ he’s not satisfied with a little, I can tell yo! Catch him missin’ a meal,—or stintin’ his appetite, as who else goes short! Nawe, nawe; he wouldn’t deny his-sel’ of aught that he took a fancy to,—nawe, not if o’ th’ world were clemmin’ round him! . . . Tother day I set th’ last poor cake o’ brade that we had i’th house afore him, an’ he flung it down as if it had bin dirt, an’ he cried out, ‘Here; what’s this?’ Bring me some loaf! I want noan o’ thi baked mooushine!’ ‘Ay, my lad,’ thinks I, ‘thou’ll be fain of a bit o’ haver-brade yet afore thou dees! Thou’rt too fat an’ too full; but thou’ll come to thi cake an’ milk in a bit!’ An’ he will, too, Aunt Jane. I wonder wherever he thinks I can get stuff fro’,—that I do. . . . Eh, bless yo, wi’ one thing an’ another, I’m mony a time fit to fling every-thing down an’ run mi country,—I am, for sure! But what can a body do, Aunt Jane? Th’ childer are there, yo known. If it wern’t for them, Aunt Jane, I raily believe I should give this job up o’ together. Sometimes I get so moider’t, an’ so weary, an’ so mazy, that I have to sit down a bit to gether my wits together. But I haven’t long to sit, yo may depend, before I’m force’t to get up an’ buckle to again. An’ there’s nought else for it that I can see.”

“There’s nought else for it, Mary.”

“Eh, Aunt Jane! The life that I have to go through,—it would weary a groin’ tree,—it would for sure! . . . What with him, an’ what wi’ th’ childer, an’ what with one thing, an’ what with another,—I’m tugged an’ poo’d, an’ hamper’t an’ harassed to that degree that I’m fit to rive th’ yure off

my yed, mony a time,—I am, for sure! Fro' mornin' to neet, fro' day to day, fro' week end to week end, an' hour after hour, it's 'mother' here, an' 'mother' there; an' 'mother' this, an' 'mother' that;—an' feightin' here, an' strikin' there; an' there's never a minute's quietness for me th' day through, till I get my yed laid down at neet; an' then it's a hundred to one if they'n let me lie still, to get a bit o' rest. An' then, as soon as dayleet comes,—ay, an' sometimes before,—I have to jump up, ill or weel, an' grind th' same grind o'er again. Eh, dear o' me! Some folk don't know that they're alive, bless yo! What wi' weshin', an' what wi' ironin', an' mendin' stockin's, an' stitchin', an' contrivin', an' petchin' clooas, an' docterin', an' cookin',—when there's nought to cook,—an' swillin', an' scourin', an' tryin' to keep things reet an' straight, an' some bit like as they should be—it's enough to drive a milestone crazy,—it is, for sure! One's brokken his nose; another's paintin' th' chairs with a blackin'-brush; another's cracked a window; another's swallowed a pin; another's gotten th' bally-warch, with eatin' sour gooseberries an' churn milk; another comes skrikin' into th' house with a bloody nose; another's tumblin' down th' cellar steps; another's steighlin' mi bit o' sugar; another's teemin' traycle into th' child's cradle; an' another wants a butter-cake,—an' that sets 'em o' agate o' yammerin' for their dinners; an' I have to scrat, an' scrat, like an owd hen tryin' to scrat some'at for her chickens out of a bare rock. Eh dear, eh dear! An' then, to mend o', he comes in,—rollin' drunk,—i'th leet-lookin' day,—an' he co's me for everything that he can lay his tung to, becose th' house is upset. Eh, Aunt Jane, what I have to go through is very bad to bide, I can tell yo!"

“Ay, ay, lass ; thou’s quite enough to do, no doubt ; an’ thou’rt not by thisel’, as far as that goes. As for th’ childer, —well, they’re a deal o’ trouble, i’ one sense,—but there’s worse things than childer i’ this world, Mary. Bless thi life, I know folk that would give th’ yure off their yeds to have one ! An’ thee, now,—thou wouldn’t like to part wi’ one o’ thine, as mony as thou has.”

“Eh, nawe, bless yo, nawe ! But, see yo, Aunt Jane,—if yon chap o’ mine wur worth his ears ——”

“Come, come ; howd thi din ! Thou’s said enough ! There’s no interferin’ between th’ bark an’ th’ tree ! There’s worse sort o’ folk i’ this world than yo’r Ben ! But, if he wur as ill as th’ dule, thou would have him,—as what onybody said. An’ if folk are determin’t to make their own beds, Mary, they should e’en try to be content to lie on ’em ! Ben’s a bit of a temper of his own, that’s true enough,—but thou’rt noan without temper thisel’, Mary,—mind that ! An’, as for trouble,—thou’rt not by thisel’, theer,—for everybody has trouble o’ some sort,—an’ those that han noan are never content till they’n made some. . . . An’ there’s another thing, Mary, there’s nobody ever made their troubles less by goin’ up an’ down th’ world talkin’ about ’em, an’ oppenin’ every foo’s mouth that they meeten with. So, whatever thou has to go through, Mary, keep it to thisel’ ; an’ don’t be gabblin’ up an’ down, tryin’ to make little o’ yo’r Ben, for if thou does, thou’rt makin’ still less o’ thisel’ ! . . . Now, poo up to th’ table, an’ let’s have a bit o’ dinner ! . . . Come, Tommy, my lad ! ”



The Wrong Chimney.

When chill November's surly blast
Lays fields and forests bare.

BURNS.

The cottage hind
Hangs o'er th' enlivening blaze, and, taleful, there
Recounts his simple frolic; much he talks,
And much he laughs, nor recks the storm that blows
Without, and rattles on his humble roof.

THOMSON.



ULL November was closing, sullen and sad, with wan, uncertain skies and dwindling days, whose sombre light,—oft obscured by clouds of driving sleet,—was hastening to its shortest span. The pallid sun shone fitfully, with faint, cold ray, upon delightless fields, where a few starved cattle were cropping the sodden aftermath with listless dislike; and an air of desolation pervaded all the withered scene. In the open country, the year's gay foliage lay mouldering slushily in the ditches and on the lonely walks; and a damp odour of decaying verdure sicklied the air of the little vale which, a few weeks ago, smiled so sweetly in the floral beauty of summer. Oft, now, across the bleak moor, sighed "the sad genius of the coming

storm." Keen winds that skirmish in the van of approaching winter were beginning to wail and whistle wildly through "bare, ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang;" and in lonely woods, gaunt, leafless boughs creaked gloomily in the blast, where no other sound was heard. Everything from earth to sky told that before long the white shroud of the year would hide the faded scene. The voice of the streamlet, as it hurried cheerlessly down the hollow of the clough, between flowerless banks, rose now with pensive tone upon the silent air; for the fields were desolate, and the song-birds of summer were all gone,—all but the twittering red robin, creeping nearer, day by day, to the haunts of man with his cheerful little trill, as the weather grew colder, and the dying year deepened into days of "darkness and of gloominess, of clouds and of thick darkness, even very dark, and no brightness in it, for the land is darkened." And yet, it is not all unrelieved gloom; for, now and then, there comes a keen, bright night, followed by a sharp, clear morning, when the air is bracing and pure; and hoar frost lies glittering upon the fields like a robe of pearls; and the hard footpath rings under the traveller's foot like a metal plate; and little ice-clad pools, here and there, shine in the morning sun like burnished silver. But the year is dying; and the white seal of winter will soon be set upon the land. . . . Now houseless stragglers peep wistfully in at the doors of cosy cottages, as the cheerless day declines, and sighing, think of the home of their childhood, as they wander on into the shelterless gloom; and the footsore tramp, in search of work, with his bundle under his arm, bends down in the fading light to read the

milestone, that he may see how far he has yet to travel before he can get relief and housing from the winter night.

. . . Now, as evening sinks down, with a "hard, dull, bitterness of cold," the cottage housewife mends her fire, and bars her door upon the darkened scene; and old folks light their pipes, and draw closer to the glowing grate, and sit listening to the mournful cadences of the wind, whilst they dreamily eye the crackling fire, the clean-swept hearth, and the cosy-looking kettle upon the hob, "singing a quiet tune," with steaming lips.

It was at the close of a cheerless wintry day that Robin o' Romper's, the boots at the "Moorcock Inn," took a besom from one of the outhouses, and began to sweep the stable-yard, singing as he swept,—

It's true my love is listed,
And he wears a white cockade ;
He is a handsome young man,
Likewise a roving blade ;
He is a handsome young man,
That's gone to serve the king,
And my very heart is breaking
All for the loss of him.

He had got thus far with his song when the kitchen door opened, and a stout, red-haired servant lass cried out in a shrill voice, "Robin, thou'rt wanted!"

"Comin'!" cried Robin; and flinging his besom back into the outhouse, he went towards the kitchen, stamping the snow from his shoes as he went. When he entered the house, he said in a sharp tone, as he looked round the kitchen, "Well, what is it?"

"Look theer!" said the servant lass, pointing to a stiff-built, bullet headed little fellow, with a leather apron on, who was sitting by the fire warming his hands.

It was Clinker Bill, the village cobbler, who had brought Robin's new boots home, and was waiting for the money.

"Hello, Bill," said Robin, "is that thee? Where's my boots?"

"Here they are," said the cobbler, holding them up.

"Ay," said Robin, examining them quietly, "they looken reet enough. How much are they, Bill?"

"Ten shillin'."

"Well, wait here a minute or two till I goo an' get th' brass. . . . Matty, bring Bill a pint of ale!"

And away he went to the landlady to borrow the money for his boots. Meanwhile the cobbler took a pull at the foaming pot, then lit his pipe, and sat warming his hands at the fire, till he heard the sound of Robin's feet returning with the money.

"Here we are," said Robin. "Howd thi hond! . . . There's two haue-crowns to begin wi',—an' one, two, three, four, five shillin'! Will that do for tho?"

"It's o' reet, Robin," replied the cobbler, "it's o' reet, my lad, an' thank tho!"

"Then that job's done wi'," said Robin. "An', now then," continued he, "I think I'll have a gill mysel', for it's gotten nearly dark, an' I've nought much to do. . . . Matty, bring me a pint!"

Then drawing a chair up he took his seat by the side of the cobbler, and slapping him on the knee, he said, "Well, owd Wax-brat, an' how are they gotten on down i'th fowd, yon?"

“ Oh,—th’ same as ever : it’s a quiet place, to be sure,—but we can manage to keep one another alive, o’ somehow,—for there’s olez a bit o’ some’at stirrin’,—an’ a little thing tickles folks’ fancy in a country nook that would never be thought on in a busy town.”

“ I dar say. . . . How’s little Dumpy gettin’ on? I haven’t sin him sin’ Michaelmas.”

“ Ay, well, now,—there’s Dumpy,—he’s as daicent a chap as ever darken’t a dur-hole,—an’ he’s as poor as a crow; but th’ owd lad’s gotten his hond-ful this time, for his wife had twins last week. . . . Poor little Dumpy! He did a bit of a trick about a fortnet sin’ that set th’ whole fowd agate o’ laughin’ for mony a day after.”

“ Oh, ay! what wur that? ”

“ Well, thou knows, Dumpy lives i’th middle house o’ that row, of eight or nine that goes by th’ name of ‘Tum’s Biggins,’ becose they wur built by owd Tum o’ Leather-caps, that owned that delph upo’ th moorside, yon. . . . Well, one windy day, as Dumpy an’ th’ wife wur sittin’ by th’ fire, a greight smudge o’ soot come down th’ chimbly, flush into their faces,—an’ it made ’em sit back a bit. . . . Well, as soon as they’d gotten their breath, an’ put things to reets again, th’ wife said to Dumpy, ‘John, this chimbly mun be looked to, or else there’ll be no livin’ i’th house! It wants sweepin’, badly!’ ‘It does, lass,’ said Dumpy, wipin’ th’ soot out of his een again, ‘it does; an’ Ill have it done at once,—for, though I’ve yerd folk say that soot wur a good thing for th’ ballywarch, I’d as soon dee o’ th’ ballywarch as be smoor’t wi’ soot! . . . An’ ’tis no use sendin’ for a chimbly sweep, for I think I can

manage this job mysel'!' 'How so?' said th' wife. 'Well—when we live't up at th' owd house, aboon th' Syke, yon,—if th' chimbly wanted sweepin' my faither uste' to tee a stone an' wisp o' strae to th' end of a long rope, an' then he geet a ladder, an' went upo' th' riggin' o'th house, an' he dropt th' stone an' th' wisp into th' chimbly, an' he poo'd it up an' down till th' chimbly wur as clean as a new-swept hearthstone. An' surely I can do th' same. It's simple enough. There's no harm i' tryin' it, as how 'tis.

. . . But, mind,' said he, 'thou mun fasten an owd seck or some'at o'er th' fire-place here, while I'm agate, or else we's ha' th' house full o' soot. . . . An' I may as weel do it now, while I'm thinkin' on it,—so thee cover that fire-hole up, an' I'll go an' get ready!' . . . An' wi' that off he set, an' borrowed a rope, an' fettle't up his sweepin'-gear; an' then away he went onto th' riggin' o'th house, an' started o' sweepin' like mad. Well, Dumpy's wife stoode bi th' fire-hole, howdin' th' seck up, to keep th' soot in, an' hearkenin' for th' sound o' this wisp an' stone i'th chimbly, but o' wur still; so hoo went outside, an' hoo shouted up to Dumpy, 'John, how soon arto goin' to begin? Get done, an' come down, or else thou'll be gettin' cowl!' 'Begin!' said Dumpy, 'I've bin agate o' sweepin', a quarter of an hour! Keep yon seck to,—there'll be a cart-load o' soot at th' bottom when I've finished!' . . . Well, i'th next house to Dumpy's, owd Ben o' Tumbler's an' his wife live't by theirsels; an' it happened that, just as Dumpy geet onto th' riggin' an' started a-sweepin', they wur sittin' down to their dinner; but afore they'd gotten two mouthfuls, a greight cloud of soot coom flusk into their faces, an' cover't

th' dinner, an' th' table, an' th' floor, an' everything i'th house. An' again an' again it coom,—as thick as leetnin', till owd Ben an' th' wife wur as black as two colliers, an' they couldn't see one another for th' smudge. As soon as owd Ben could get his breath, he gasped out, 'Oppen that dur! I'm smoorin'!' An' then he ran outside, an' looked up to th' riggin' where Dumpy wur as thrung as Throp's wife, wortchin' his rope up an' down, like a chap pumpin' wayter. 'What the devil arto doin', Dumpy?' cried Ben; 'our house is full o' soot!' 'By th' mass,' said Dumpy, as he let go th' rope, an' roll't off th' slate into a midden at th' back o' th' house, '*I've bin sweepin' th' wrong chimbly!*'"

"Now then," said the landlady, as she came into the kitchen with a pair of shoes in her hand, "what are yo two laughin' about at such a rate?"

"It's a bit of a tale that Bill's bin tellin' about little Dumpy sweepin' a chimbly."

"What's he doin' sweepin' chimblys? He'd better stick to his looms I think!"

"I don't think he'll sweep yon chimbly again, mistress, as how 'tis."

"Robin, has thou done yon horses up?"

"Ay, an hour sin'."

"Then go thi ways an' lock th' yard-gate; an' see that th' back doors are all fast; an' then make these fires up. It's goin' to be a wild night."

(*Exit* ROBIN.)

"Here, William, look at these shoes. Are they worth mendin', think yo?"

“Oh, ay! They’n want solein’, an’ heelin’, an’ weltin’,—an’ then they’n be as good as new!”

“Tak ’em wi’ yo, then,—an’ let’s have ’em back as soon as yo con,—an’ I’ll see if I cannot find yo some more odd jobs. . . . How’s Mary?”

“Well, hoo’s a very hard time on it, mistress; an’ I don’t know how it’ll turn with her, for hoo’s a great deal o’ trouble to get her breath; an’ hoo doesn’t seem to mend much.”

“Poor body! Don’t goo till I see yo! I’ll put some bits o’ things up in a basket for her.”

“Thank yo, mistress.”

“Matty, bring William a drop more ale!”

“Thank yo, mistress.”





Cobbler Bill.

Now all amid the rigours of the year,
In the wild depth of winter, while without
The ceaseless winds blow ice, be my retreat
A rural, solitary, sheltered scene ;
Where ruddy fire and gleaming tapers join
To cheer the gloom.

THOMSON.

THE short cold day had died out in the west, and the shades of night had closed upon the winter scene. A death-like hush lay on all the snow-clad landscape, save when the wind swept across the solitude with hollow moan. . . . The "Moorcock Inn" stood near the highway upon the northern slope of Blackstone Edge, about four miles distant from the nearest market town. As the darkness deepened, a cheerful gleam of rosy light shone across the snowy road from the kitchen of the inn, where Clinker Bill, the village cobbler, sat by the fire, waiting the return of the landlady, who had gone to "put up" a few nourishments for his wife, who lay ill of a fever in the hamlet at the foot of the hill.

The cobbler had just finished his bread and cheese, and was shaking the crumbs from his leather apron, when the landlady returned, carrying a little basket, covered with a white cloth.

"Now then, William," said she, handing the basket to the cobbler, "there's some black currans, an' a few bits o' things, for your Mary; and tell her that I'll come down to see her to-morn. Yo mun carry th' basket nicely now, for there's a bottle in it. . . . But don't go away just yet; I think I can find two or three more cobblin' jobs for yo. There's always some'at wantin' in a house like this; an' our lads are terrible for runnin' their shoon off their feet. But, whatever you do, you must let me have those shoes of George's back bi Thursday, for he hasn't a daicent pair to put on his feet, and this is bad weather to go ill shod.

. . . Wait there a bit."

She was turnin' to go when the sound of broken glass came from the next room.

"Martha," said she to the servant in the next room, "is that another window?"

"Yes," replied the girl in a timid voice.

"Well, an' in th' name o' goodness, now, how didto manage that?"

"I wur puttin' th' shuts (shutters) to," replied the girl, "I wur puttin' th' shuts to,—wi th' long brush i' my hand,—an' th' brush hit th' window."

"I never yerd sich a tale i' my life!" cried the landlady. "Whatever wur tho doin' puttin' th' shuts to wi' th' long brush i' thi hond? Good gracious! Thou says th' brush hit th' window. A bonny tale that is? Weren't it th' "

window that hit th' brush, thinksto? But it doesn't matter, —for whether it's th' window that hits th' brush, or th' brush that hits th' window,—it's th' window that suffers; an' it's me that has to pay. . . . I wish to the Lord thou'd mind what thou'rt doin'! Bless my life, lass, thou costs more for breakage, o' one sort an' another, than thi wage comes to! I wouldn't be so careless an' so clumsy, if I wur thee! Thou'rt like as if thou'd a malice again aught that's brittle! First it's a pot, then it's a glass, then it's a window or two,—an' then it's another glass, then it's another pot, an' then it's another window or two! If I wur thee I'd empty th' pot-shelf into th' middle o' th' floor, an' jump onto 'em, at once! It wur nobbut yesterday thou tried to break th' iron kettle, but it wur raither too hard for tho! . . . Come, don't ston there hangin' thi knockles,—it's done now! Get on wi' thi wark an' do try to keep out o' lumber as weel as thou con! . . . Warm a pint of ale for William here,—an' mend this fire,—an' then goo an' sweep th' snow away fro' yon front dur! . . . Come, stir tho! . . . An' keep that back dur shut,—do! It's cowl enough to fleece an otter."

(Away goes the girl, with tears in her eyes.)

"William, sit where you are till I come back."

The girl brought the cobbler his drink. He took a pull at the pitcher, and set it down to cool. Then, filling his pipe, he drew nearer to the hob, and sat smoking and listening to the roaring of the wind in the chimney.

In a few minutes the back door opened, and Robin, the hostler, came in, rubbing his hands and stamping his feet.

“By th’ mass, Bill,” said Robin, as he drew a chair up beside the cobbler, “this is gooin’ to be a nipper of a neet! . . . Where’s our mistress?”

“Hoo’s gone a-lookin’ up some cobblin’ for me.”

“That’s reet! Hoo’ll find a job or two, if there is aught! . . . Well, I think I’ve about done for this day, as how ’tis. I had to help owd Ben with his brewin’ this forenoon! . . . Martha, bring me a pint,—an’ a pen’oth o’ ’bacco! . . . Ben, reitch me a pipe out o’ that nook at thi elbow! . . . (*Fills his pipe.*) Now, then! . . . Well, Bill, my lad; when didto see owd Throddy?”

“I seed him last Thursday, gooin’ wobblin’ through th’ fowd as fuddle’t as a fiddler, wi’ a lot o’ childer after him!”

“He’s as numb an’ as racketty as ever, I yer.”

“He’s about th’ same, Robin; an’ he’ll never mend now,—he’s gettin’ too owd.”

“Is he dooin’ aught?”

“Well,—ay. He should be wortchin’ i’th stone-delph; but it’s off an’ on with him; for he’s never to be depended upon mony days together. . . . Tother mornin’ he went creepin’ to his wark about an hour after th’ time; an’ he met th’ maister just as he wur gooin’ into th’ delph. ‘It’s a wild mornin’, maister,’ said Throddy. ‘Ay, it’s a wild morning,’ said th’ maister; ‘an’ thou’s a wild look, too, Throddy. Where wur tho last neet?’ ‘I wur at a churn-supper up at th’ Doldrum,’ said Throddy. ‘I thought thou’d bin agate o’ some’at o’th sort,’ said th’ maister. ‘Thou doesn’t look like wark this mornin’, my lad!’ ‘Well, if I mun tell yo truth, maister,’ said Throddy, ‘I don’t care whether I do ony wark or not

to-day. Con yo let me off?" 'I could like,' said th' maister, 'for I doubt thou'll never addle thi wage if thou starts.' 'Then yo con let me off to-day?' said Throddy. 'Ay, ay,' said th' maister, 'I con let thee off ony time, my lad! How much brass hasto?' 'Well, I've about fourpence-haw'p'ny.' 'Is that o'?' said th' maister. I doubt thou hardly have enough to tak' th' weather up wi', my lad.' 'Well, if I'd another shillin', said Throddy, 'I think I could manage.' 'Well, here it is, then!' said th' maister. 'Off witho; an' fuddle thisel' sober. I'd better gi' thee a shillin' to drink, than pay tho a day's wage for doin' nought!' "

"I wonder at 'em keepin' him."

"Well, they wouldn't have him at o', but they're leet-honded. He's not so much use at th' best; but he's willin',—when he's th' reet side out,—an' he does for an' odd lad, thou knows. . . . Did I ever tell tho what a trick he played down i'th town last week?"

"Nawe; what wur that?"

"Well, it wur that day when th' great snowstorm coom on. Throddy went down to th' town for some'at or another, an' while he wur theer he went maunderin' about th' streets i'th snow, with a thick woollen tee round his neck, till he coom to some sort of a quack-doctor's shop, where there wur a ticket i'th window,—'*The Poor treated free, between Twelve and Two.*'—'Hello,' said Throddy, as soon as he'd made th' ticket out, 'this is the shop for me! an' I'm i' good time, too; it's just stricken one bi th' owd church!' An' wi' that he knocked at th' dur, an' a lass coom an' showed him into a room, where there wur a lot o' folk

waitin' for th' doctor. Well, Throddy waited an' waited, an' first one wur beckon't out, an' then another wur beckon't out, an' Throddy thought to his-sel', 'Come, it'll be my turn afore lung!' In a bit th' doctor his-sel' looked in; an' Throddy shouted to him, 'Heigh, maister; I want to be gooin'!' 'You must wait your turn!' said th' doctor, an' out he went again. But Throddy followed him to th' dur, an' shouted after him, 'Heigh, couldn't yo gi' me a saup o' some'at, now? It'll not tak yo a minute; an' I want to be gooin'!' 'No,' said th' doctor; 'you must wait your turn, I tell you!' an' he shut th' dur beheend him with a bang. 'Stupid foo'!' said Throddy, as he went back an' sat down again, 'he might ha' sarv't me in a snift; an' then I should ha' bin off, out of his road!' But he thought he'd better wait; so he took his chair, an' he waited, an' waited, till he wur th' last mon left i'th hole; an' then th' lass coom an' towd him that he wur wanted. 'Now for it!' said Throddy, an' off he went into th' next room. As soon as he geet in th' doctor beckon't him to a chair, an' said, 'Sit down, an' let's look at you! . . . Now, then, what's the matter? . . . Oh, I see,—it's your neck!' 'Ay,' said Throddy, 'mi neck's noan reet,—an' I don't feel well i' mi inside. I thought yo could happen gi' me a saup o' some'at warm, that would do me good,—as it's sich a cowl mornin'!' 'Well, we'll see,' said th' doctor. 'Put your tongue out! . . . That'll do! . . . Now, let's feel your pulse! . . . Yes, I see! I'll soon get you right! I think a good dose of jalap is all you require!' . . . 'Jollup!' cried Throddy; 'well,—I thought yo wur givin' drink away!' 'What do you mean?' said th' doctor. 'Well,

said Throddy, 'as I wur gooin' by,—with a throttle as dry as soot,—I seed a ticket i'th window here that said, '*The poor treated free!*' so I thought to mysel',—this is the very shop for me; for I'm poor enough,—I haven't a hawp'ny about my rags!' . . . Well, th' doctor stare't at him for a minute, an' then he said, 'Here, come this way!' an' he took Throddy into th' lobby; an' he oppen't th' front dur; an' he sent him yed first into th' street,—an' he gav him a bit of a lifter beheend with his fuut,—to help him on,—an' then he banged th' dur to. . . . Well, when Throddy had piked (picked) his-sel' up out o' th' slutch, he looked up at th' doctor's window, an' he said, 'Well, by th' heart,—that's a corker! If this be yo're way o' *tratin'* poor folk, I'll come no more to this shop, as how 'tis!'"

"Well done, Throddy!" cried Robin, with a great laugh. . . . "That reminds me of a bit of a do that Jem Leech had a year or two back. . . . One summer's day, about noon, Jem wur trampin' down th' moorside into Owdham, when he coom to a comfortable-lookin' cottage that stoode bi th' roadside, where there wur a ticket i'th window that said, '*LEECHES kept here!*' Jem stopt and read this ticket; and he looked at th' house. Well, th' dur o' th' cottage stoode wide open, an' there wur a rare smell coom fro' th' inside, for th' family wur just sittin' down to a potito pie, about a stone weight. Jem sniffed a bit,—an' then he read th' ticket again. '*Leeches kept here!*' said Jem. 'O' reet! This is the shop for me!' An' he made no more ado, but in he went, an' poo'd a chair up to th' table. Well, they looked at him for a minute or so, but th' owd woman set a plate afore him, an' hoo said, 'Now then,

help yo'rsel', maister,—for yo're as welcome as th' flowers i' May!' So Jem pegged away at this pie, till he'd tightened his waistcoat to his heart's content. At last th' owd woman said, 'Now, yo munnot be vex't at me,—I remember yo'r face very weel,—but I cannot co' yo'r name to mind! what is it, if I may be so bowd?' 'Well,' said Jem, 'My name's JEM LEECH, an' as I coom by I seed that ticket i'th window that said, "*LEECHES kept here,*"—so I thought I'd drop o' mi feet for once.' Well, they o' set up a greight laugh. 'Eh, I never yerd sich a tale i' my life!' cried th' owd woman. 'I raily thought that it wur one of our Jonathan lads out o' Yorkshire,—I did for sure! Well, come; we're noan to a mouthful o' pie; not we, marry! Co' whenever yo'n a mind, maister! yo'n olez be welcome,—particular if it happens to be dinner-time!'"

And now the landlady returned to the kitchen, with two pairs of shoes in her hands.

"Here, William," said she, giving the shoes to the cobbler, "look at those; an' do anything that they need doin' at. An' tell yo'r Mary that I'll be sure to come an' see her to-morn i'th afternoon. An' don't stop here long, now; for hoo'll be wantin' yo back, poor body!"

"Thank yo, mistress," said the cobbler; "I'll be off as soon as I've emptied this pot."





Market Meet.

“When chapman billies leave the street
And droughty neibors neibors meet,
As market days are wearin’ late,
And folk begin to tak the gate;
While we sit boozing at the nappy,
And getting fou and unco happy.”

—BURNS.



THE chill November evening was darkening down on Kersall Moor; the rooks of Agecroft Hall were settled in their nests for the night; the stars were beginning to crowd the sky with solemn splendour; and there was not a sound to be heard upon the fading scene save the wild moan of the wind and the distant bark of a dog at Jem Royle’s farm down by the river side. Jem’s old friend, “Jone o’ Plunger’s,” had taken his way homeward, down the hill; and now Jem drew his chair nearer to the hearth, where three or four neighbour folk,—and amongst the rest, Reuben o’ Nell’s and his little lad, Johnny,—were gathered,

“Fast by the ingle, bleezing finely.”

They had called at the old ale-house on their way home from the market, for a genial hour together, as usual, at the

close of the day. The scene outside had faded from view ; and as old Matty, the landlady, closed the window-shutters, she said to the servant lass, " Jenny, fling some coals upo' this fire ; and bring another chair or two out o' that back room ; we's ha' more company in afore th' neet's o'er, as it's bin market day." Jem charged his pipe again, and called for another pot ; and then, like the rest of the company, he sat silent for a minute or two, looking into the fire, and listening to the sough of the wind outside. Reuben's little lad, who stood between his father's knees, basking his sunny round face in the firelight, was the first to break the silence.

" Faither," said he, looking suddenly up, with a smile, " I do so like th' ballywarche ! "

" Whatever for, my lad ? "

" *Becose it's so nice when it gi's o'er !* "

" This set the whole company off into a roar of laughter.

" Bravo, Johnny, my lad ! " cried Jem Royle ; " that's th' best thing I've yerd this day ! "

" Ay ; it's noan amiss, for sure," said Reuben, stroking his little lad's bullet-head with his great brown hand ; " it's noan amiss ! But it's just like him ! . . . Johnny, my lad, go thi ways into tother reawm, an' play wi' little Sam a bit ! I'll shout on tho when I'm ready ! "

Away went Johnny into the next room, to play with the landlady's little grandson.

" I'll tell tho what, Reuben," said Jem Royle, " yon lad o' thine should make a fine mon, if he's luck."

" Ay ; th' lad'll be o' reet,—if he's luck, as thou says. He's as sharp as a needle ; an' he's as strong as a little

galloway. But he may weel be strong, for he can put as much churn-milk an' porritch out o' seet as ony groon-up mon. An' he makes some o' the quarest speeches that ever coom out of a mortal mouth. But we'n a deool o' bother wi' him, too, sometimes ; for th' lad's a will of his own ; an' if onybody strokes his yure th' wrong road on, he'll dee afore he'll give in."

"He taks o' his faither, I see," said Jem Royle.

"Ay ; an' o' his mother, too, for that matter," replied Reuben. "But that's noather here nor theer. Th' lad's a fine lad, though I say it that shouldn't say it. An' he's as tender-hearted a little thing as ever stept shoe-leather,—an' yo wouldn't think it to look at him. . . . I never seed sich a lad as he is for dogs i' my life ! If he meets wi' a dog at's lost, he's sure to bring it whoam. I've seen him beg an' pray, wi' tears in his een, like a cripple at a gate, for his mother to let a dog stop o' neet that he'd fund upo' th' street as he coom fro' schoo'. An' th' feawer an' poorer it wur, th' moore he seemed to tak to it. Sometimes he'd cart it off quietly into th' stable, or into a nook i'th barn, an' theer he'd feed it, an' nurse it, an' keep it till he'd fund it a shop somewheer. . . . Ay ; he's a quare lad. . . . Tother day, when he wur wanderin' i'th felt down by th' river side, yon, he fund a bit of a mangy mongrel whelp that somebody had been tryin' to drown ; but it had just managed to crapple through th' wayter an' out at tother side ; an' there it lay upo' th' bank, drippin' an' shiverin', an' strugglin' at th' last gasp, with a stone teed to its neck. Well, that wur quite a Godsend for our Johnny ; an' he cut th' bant off th' dog's neck, an' away he brought it whoam in his arms,

wi' tears in his een. Then he took it into th' stable first; an' then he had it in a nook i'th barn; an' then he smuggle't it up into th' little reawm where he sleeps; an' he nurse't it, an' fed it, an' wshed it, an' gav it warm milk an' stuff, till he brought it quite round again,—except that it wur as mangy as thump, an' he didn't know how to cure that. At last his mother fund out that he'd gotten this dog, an' hoo said mich an' moore that hoo wouldn't have it i'th house a minute longer,—fillin' everythin' wi' fleas. 'Send it away,' hoo said; 'send it away this minute!' 'But it has nowheer to goo to,' said Johnny, cryin' as if his heart would break. 'I don't care,' said his mother, 'I'll not have it here! Turn it out, an' let it goo wheer it coom fro!' An' hoo co'de th' poor craiter o' sorts o' ugly names,—it wur feaw, an' it wur mangy, an' it wur noather use nor ornament,—an' sich like. Then Johnny begged an' prayed again, an' he said that if it wur feaw, an' mangy, it wur noan o' th' dog's faut,—an' he wur sure he could cure it. An' he even offer't to tak it to a doctor, an' pay for it his-sel', wi' some money that he had save't up in a little wood box. But his mother wouldn't yer on it. 'I'm sure it'll go mad,' hoo said,—'I'm sure it'll go mad,—bi th' look on't. An' if it goes mad, an' bites tho,—then what wilto do?' But Johnny's monkey wur gettin' up, an' he said, 'I don't care whether it bites me or not! an' I don't care whether I go mad or not!' 'But I'll make tho care, thou little kempie!' said his mother. 'It shall go out o' this house,—an' it shall go just now!' 'Well, then, I'll go too!' said Johnny, as bowd as Hector. Well, when it coom to this I had to step in between, an' saddle it mysel', an' wi' mich ado I geet his mother to consent

to let one o'th men tak this dog whoam wi' him, an' try to cure it o'th mange ; an' day after day Johnny went to look after it, like a regular doctor. Th' dog's theer yet, an' our Johnny an' it are as thick as two inkle-weighvers. . . . An' between thee an' me, Jem, I raither like th' lad's feelin' about sich things. It grieves me mony a time to see how down craiturs are abused. Beside, there's no mon can tell what's gooin' on in a poor craitur's yed that connot speighk for itsel'."

(Enter LITHER DICK, a labouring man, sometimes.)

"Hello, Dick," said Jem Royle, "is that thee? What hasto agate?"

"Nought much. I'm out o' wark."

"Then thou'll be comfortable, I guess?"

"Nay; not very; it's thin pikein' when there's no wark agate."

"Well, but thou'd raither clem than wortch, wouldn'to?"

"I don't know. I'm noan so fond o' clemmin."

"Well, an' thou'rt noan so fond o' wark,—I know that."

"I'm gettin' weary o' livin' o' saut-wayter bullocks, and sawdust puddin',—an' noan so much o' that noather."

"What doesto meeon by saut-wayter bullocks?"

"Red herring."

"Well, it's thi own faut, my lad; it's thi own faut. Thou'rt yung an' strung; an' if thou'll not wortch thou desarves to clem. . . . Doesto ever wesh thisel?"

"Now an' then."

"How oft?"

"Two or three times a week."

“Well, thou’rt a weary pictur’. If anybody sees thee i’th dayleet I’m sure they’n never want to run away wi’ tho i’th dark. Go thi ways, an’ get a good swill,—for thou’ll tak a deal o’ sweetenin’ afore thou’rt fit to goo amung daicent folk,—an’ get that reawsty yure o’ thine pow’d a bit,—an’ borrow a clen shirt somewheer; if thou con,—an’ then thou may goo an’ rob a hen-cote safely, for nobody’ll ever know that it’s thee!”

“I think I’ll be gooin’!”

“Well, I’ve nought again tho gooin’. Off wi’ tho,—an’ rear thisel’ up again a wole (wall) somewheer,—an’ scrat thisel’,—till somebody brings tho a pint of ale an’ a butter-cake.”

“I owe yo nought, Jem, do I?”

“Nawe; nor thou never shall do,—not wi’ my consent, my lad!”

“Well, good neet!”

“Good neet to tho, my lad,—an’ a good shuttance!”

(*Exit* LITHER DICK.)

“By th’ mass, Jem, yo’n tickle’t yon mon up!”

“Sarve him reet, for he’s a sunbrunt wastrel,—if ever there wur one. Greight skulkin’ slotch,—they may well co’ him ‘Lither Dick,’ for he’s too idle to trail his legs one after tother!”

“I believe it would take him a long while to do very little wark, Jem, by o’ accounts.”

“Ay, marry; he’s one o’ those that can ston a good deal o’ rest, is yon!”

"He's a chap that likes bein' quiet, I guess?"

"Just so; an' if thou's notic't, Reuben, folk o' that sort generally wear'n th' back o' their breeches out very soon."

"What trade is he?"

"Trade? Nay, marry, now thou fastens me. . . . Well, he's a swill-shifter,—when he can get ony to shift. An' he's a good sitter, I think he met (might) make a trifle now and then bi sittin' duck-eggs; but I cannot think o' aught else."

"I knew his faither very well. He wur a comical sort of a cowl wur th' owd chap,—an' he wur nobbut about haue rocked.—They played sad pranks wi' him among 'em, up i'th fowd, yon. I's never forget a marlock that he played i'th church when th' sarvice were agate one Sunday."

"Oh, ay! What wur that?"

"Well, one Setterday neet, when he wur fuddlin' at 'Th' Church Inn,' among th' lads i'th fowd, they towd him that th' parson had been complainin' about so mony folk fo'in' asleep while th' sarmon wur agate; an' that he'd said if he could get onybody to keep 'em wakken, bi hook or bi crook, he should be thankful; an' he'd reward 'em handsomely; an' as th' parish clerk wur among th' company he thought it wur o' reet. So they persuaded him to tak a peigh-shooter an' a lot o' peighs with him to church th' next day, an' let fly at onybody that he see'd asleep while th' sarmon wur agate. Well, th' owd vicar started of his sarmon,—an' he hadn't bin agate mony minutes afore first one dropt off, an' then another dropt off; an' Bill whipt his peigh-shooter out, an' he leet fly into their ear-holes. An', by th' mass,—didn't it wakken 'em! Well; they jumped,

an' stare't round, one after another, as if they'd bin shot. An' I believe one or two on 'em stode straight up, an' mutter't a rough word or two at him! Th' parson had bin watchin' him a bit, too; an' at last he stopt in his sarmon, an' he said, 'Before I go any further, my friends, I must request William Robishaw, in the second pew there, to leave off pea-shooting!' '*Get for'ad wi' yo'r sarmon!*' said Bill, '*an' I'll keep 'em wakken till it's o'er!*' . . . Hello; what's that?"

The old clock in the next room struck nine, in slow and solemn tones.

"Nine o'clock," said Reuben, rising from his chair, and drinking up his ale. "I mun be off! Come, Johnny, my lad! Good neet, Jem!"

"Good neet, Reuben!"





A Snip in a Trap.

Wha is that at my bower door?
Oh, wha is it but Findlay?
Then gae ye're gate, ye'se na be here!—
Indeed, maun I, quo' Findlay.

BURNS.

THE gorgeous hues of sunset had faded from the sky, and a rich after-glow filled the soft, clear summer twilight with dreamy beauty. In a clean, quiet street of the suburban village, where thick-leaved garden trees gushed over the footpath here and there, a buxom widow kept a little shop, the one window of which was well filled with "smallwares," neatly arranged. Jenny was still a handsome woman, and in the prime of life. Amongst all the village dames she was especially remarkable for her cleanliness and thrift; and it was quietly whispered through the neighbourhood that she had "a snug stockin'-ful o' sovreigns laid by somewheer." This rare combination of charms brought Jenny a host of wooers, and, amongst them, some who were considerably younger than herself. But the chief favourite of all the devoted crowd was a merry stiff-built tailor, known by the name of "Jack

o' Squirrel's,"—a little hearty, round-faced, rollicking blade, full of "quips and cranks and wanton wiles," and as brisk as bottled ale. Little Jack's humour and comical pranks were the theme of many a fireside story; and he himself was always hailed with delight among the thoughtless and the gay; but many a sage matron of the village wondered "whatever Jenny could see i' sich a rackety foo," as that; and here and there a greybeard of the hamlet smiled a quiet smile, and shook his head as he muttered "th' owder an' th' madder,—th' owder an' th' madder!" It was true that Jenny had seen forty years of human life, but long experience and sage advice were utterly unavailing in this case, for she was fairly carried off her feet by the lively little snip.

It had been market day in the neighbouring town; and the tailor had promised to call at the widow's on his way home. But the "trysted hour" had long gone by; and, as the shades of night stole on, and stillness sank upon the village, Jenny sat waiting, and listening for the footsteps of her careless lover, with all the fidgety impatience of a disappointed heart. Again and again, on one pretence or another, she went to the door, and gazed wistfully along the quiet street, in the deepening dusk, but still no footstep came.

"Martha," said the widow to her daughter, "I think thou'd better go to bed. I'll stop up a bit, an' iron these clooas. Here; tak this pair o' stockin's up stairs for yon lad; he'll want 'em i'th mornin'. Now, off witho, this minute; an' get some sleep; for thou can hardly keep thi een oppen."

The daughter crept up stairs ; and Jenny remained below working, and waiting, and listening ; but still the merry little tailor came not. At last, tired out, she, too, crept off to bed ; and all the house was still.

In the meantime the last tinge of day had died out from the west. The full moon is aloft in the midsummer sky ; and the tailor is toddling homewards from the market-town, with tossing head, and careless heart, unconsciously delighted with the radiant beauty of the night, and crooning as he goes :—

My new shoon, they are so good,
I could doance morrice, if I would ;
And, when hat and sark are drest,
I con doance morrice wi' the best.

Then he varied the amusement of his solitary walk with a hunting-cry, which startled the silent woods around :—

“ Heigh, Bugle !—Blossom !—Bouncer !—Bangle, little lass ! Come back, good dog ! By, dogs, by ! Hark away ! ”

Here, lapsing once more into a lyrical pause, he sang in a clear tenor,—

Then swap your hats round, lads, to keep your yeds warm,
An' a saup o' good ale, it'll do us no harm !

The little top-heavy tailor was a notable sword-dancer, and he finished this snatch of song with a wild gyration, which brought him down in the middle of the road.

“ Wo-oh, Tinker ! ” cried he, “ woigh ! . . . Rise up, bold Slasher, an' fight again ! ”

The lively little fellow was on his feet again in an instant, and away he went liting in at the end of the village as merry as a cricket, singing in the moonlight,—

John and Jane,
Jane and John,
John loves Jane,
And Jane loves John!

Here, he was just about to turn in at the end of the shady street where his buxom sweetheart dwelt, when a voice from the opposite side of the road pulled him up with a start.

“Hello, Squirrel, owd craiter; what art thou doin’ here, at this time o’ th’ neet? Thou’rt after some mischief, I doubt?”

“Nay,” said the tailor, “I wur just goin’ to tak a short cut whoam across th’ cobby (coppice), here.”

“Thou wur just goin’ to do nought o’th sort,” said his friend, “thou wur playin’ straight in at th’ street end theer, toward Jenny Pepper’s, yon!”

“Well,” replied the tailor, “if I mun tell truth, owd lad,—thou’s just hit it! But thou doesn’t need to make a bother about it, thou knows!”

“Not I, marry,” said his friend; “not I! I’ll be goin’ whoam,—an’ lev yo to’t! So good neet, Squirrel, owd lad; good neet! I think hoo’s stonnin’ in her own leet,—but it’s nought to me! Good neet!”

“Good neet, Billy,” said the tailor; “an’ God bless tho for gooin’!”

Then each went on his separate way.

As the little tailor drew nigh to his sweetheart's door he became silent, and he trod the ground with softer footstep than before. Halting in the middle of the street, he cast his eyes aloft and alow, and he saw at once that all was still.

"Hello," said he, "gone to bed!" (*He hearkens at the door.*) "Not a mouse stirrin'!" (*He peeps through the window.*) "O's dark,—dark as a soot-seck! . . . I shouldn't wonder but hoo's dropt asleep upo' th' couch-cheer! Hoo said hoo'd wait up a bit; but I'm raither beheend time! . . . Hush! . . . Nay; it's nobbut a twitch-clock, or a cricket, or some'at! . . . I darn't knock,—freeten't o' wakkenin' th' neighbours! . . . Let's see! . . . I have it! . . . I'll goo down th' coal-grid! . . . Now for a marlock!"

Finding the coal-grid loose, he quietly lifted it up, and in he crept, feet foremost to the cellar. Floundering about in the dark, he fell over a barrel, and knocked over a milk-bowl, which came to the ground with a crash. Then creeping quietly up, he tried the door at the head of the cellar-steps, but to his dismay, he found it fastened on the other side. Wiping the coal dust from his eyes, he sat down upon the top step, and began to whisper through the opening at the bottom of the cellar door:—

"Jenny! Doesto yer? Heigh! It's me!"

In the meantime, the din in the cellar has awakened the widow; and thoroughly frightened, she lies listening to the rattle of the sneck, and the mutter at the cellar-door. At last she leaps out of bed, and rousing her son and her daughter, she cries out, "Get up; there's thieves i'th

house!" Then, throwing up the window, the whole three begin to scream out, "Help! Help! Thieves! Murder! Police!"

The uproar brought two or three of the neighbours to their windows; and, in a few minutes, a slow-motioned Irish policeman came up to the door, and the terrified widow came down stairs, and let him into the house.

"There's thieves i'th cellar!" said Jenny to the policeman. "I've bin hearkenin' 'em a good while! . . . Now, don't open that cellar door yet! . . . Martha, gi' me howd o' th' poker! . . . Eh, I wish John had bin here! . . . Husht! What's that?"

The little tailor, hearing something of the noise above, muttered to himself,—“Hoo's gotten up at last! . . . Come; I'll have a bit of a mank!” Then creeping back up the coal-grid again, he popped his head out, just under the window, and he cried out, “Heigh, Jenny, lass! What's to do?” Then slipping back into the cellar, he went and sat at the head of the steps again, waiting for the door to be opened.

The widow knew her lover's voice; and whipping open the door, she said, “Eh, that's John! I am so fain!” Then, looking around from the doorway, she cried out, “John! Where are you?” But there was not a soul in sight; and as she closed the door again with a sigh, she muttered to herself, “Well,—I could ha' sworn that was his voice!”

“Now, then,” said Jenny to the policeman, “mind what yo'r doin'! They're a rough lot; and I don't want to have anybody hurt! . . . Here, Martha; howd th' candle;

an' ston a bit fur back ! . . . There's one on 'em at th' top o'th steps just this minute ! . . . Han yo yo'r truncheon ready ? . . . Gently, till I oppen th' dur ! ”

Jenny slipt the bolt, and opened the cellar door, and there, at the head of the steps, sat the little tailor, half drunk, and as black as a sweep with coal-dust from head to foot.

“ Now, then, ye scoundrel ! ” said the policeman, seizing him by the collar, “ I got ye this time ! Are ye goan quietly or not ? ”

“ Hello ! ” said the little tailor, rubbing his grimy eyes and staring at the policeman,—“ Hello, Jenny ; what's up now ? ”

“ Eh ! ” cried the widow, seizing the policeman's arm,—“ Don't touch him,—for God's sake, don't touch him ! It's John,—it's John ? ”

“ Oh, it's John, is it ? ” said the policeman ; “ an' av it's John,—as ye call the dirty-looking divul on the steps there—what's the manin' o' the hullabaloo ye wur kickin' up, mi darlin' ? See now, for a couple o' pins I'd take both yerself an' the little sweep ye call ‘ John ’ to the lock-ups ! ”

“ Husht, ” said the widow, closing the door, “ don't make a din ! Sit yo down, an' I'll goo into th' cellar for a drop o' ale. ”



A Run wi' th' Dogs.

"There's slutch upo' the cowt, mon, an' blood upo' thi chin ;
It's welly time for milkin' ; now, wherever hasto bin ?"

"I've bin to see the gentlefolk o'th county ride a run ;
Owd wench, I've bin a-huntin', an' I've sin some rattlin' fun !"

SQUIRE WARBURTON.

[*Winter evening. Kitchen of an old ale-house in a moorland fold amongst the hills. JIM O' BILLY'S WI' TH' PIPES, and SAM, the landlord, sitting by the fire. MALLY, the landlady, bustling about.*]

"**A**Y ; I tell tho, Jem," said the landlord, "th' owd lad skrike't like a witch in a lock-hole."

"By th' heart," replied Jem, "he might weel skrike wi' that dog hangin' at his hinder-end."

"Well, it sarve't him reet ; for I'd gan him fair warnin' afore," said the landlord. "But he coom no moore into our garden i'th neet-time, after that, I can tell tho."

"Th' owd lad seems to have nought but ill-luck wi' gardens an' garden-gates," said Jem. . . . "Tother day I dropt in at Bull's Yed, i' Wardle Fowd, yon ; an' just as I went in owd Ben coom up with his jackass-cart ; an' he

tether't his jackass to th' garden-gate, at th' end o'th house, an' went in for a gill. Well, there were a racketty lot o' lads i'th house at the time ; an' when Ben entered the kitchen they cried out, ' Hello, Ben, where's thi jackass ? ' ' I've left it outside, yon, teed to th' garden-gate,' said Ben. Well in a bit, one o' the crew slipt out, an' loosed th' jackass out o' th shafts,—an' then he pushed th' shafts through th' garden-gate, an' fastened th' jackass into th' shafts again,—an' there he left 'em, wi' cart o' one side o' th gate an' th' jackass at tother. . . . Well, when Ben coom out he stare't at the cart, an' he stare't at th' gate, an' he stare't at th' jackass,—an' he scrat his yed, an' he said to th' jackass, ' Well, this is a crumper, owd lad ! How the devil hasto managed this ? ' . . . Well, thou knows, if he loosed th' jackass out o'th shafts again, an' poo'd th' shafts out o' th gate he'd ha' bin reet again. But he never thought o' that. Th' only way he could see were to lift th' garden-gate off th' hinges, an' bring it away with him. An' he would ha' done, too ; but they were watchin' him through th' window, an' they cried out, ' Now, then, drop that ! Connot thou be content wi' steighlin' th' stuff out o'th garden, without steighlin' th' garden-gate ? ' . . . Hello ; who's this ? "

(*Enter DIÇK O' ROUGH CAP'S, singing.*)

Our hounds they were staunch, and our horses were good,
As ever broke cover, or dashed through a wood !

Tally-ho, tally-ho !

Sing, hark forward ! huzza ; tally-ho !

" Top-boots for my brass ! Now, then,—is there nought alive i'th hole ? Hutch up, lads, or else I'll knock some on y o'er ! Sam ; where's th' mistress ? "

“Hoo'll be here in a minute.”

(Enter the Landlady.)

“Mally; con yo do a bit of a job for me?”

“What's it like, Dick?”

“Con yo stitch me a gallows-button on? I'm breakin'-down.”

(She gets the needle and thread.)

“Come here; and let's see what I can do for tho. . . . Now, thou mun ston still, or else I's be runnin' th' needle into tho!”

“O' reet, Mally!”

(Begins to sing.)

The dusky night rides down the sky,
And ushers in the morn;
The hounds all join in jovial cry,
The huntsman winds his horn.
And a-hunting we will go.

“Mak a less o' thi yeawlin' din; an' ston still, I tell tho. How con onybody sew, an' thee bouncin' up an' down like a jack-jumper?”

“O' reet, Mally!”

“Ay; thou keeps sayin', ‘O' reet! . . . Now, then, button thisel' up,—an' sit down,—for thou'rt as restless as wick-silver!”

“I'm as dry as soot, Mally! Bring me a pint! Well, Sam, owd lad, how arto?”

“ Well ; I’m th’ better side out, Dick ! Wherever hasto bin ? ”

“ Bin ? I’ve bin a-huntin’, owd craiter ! an’ we’n had a run that would make ony mon’s yure curl ! This chase’ll be towd on a hundred year after to-day !

(*Sings.*)

Bright chanticleer proclaims the dawn
And spangles deck the thorn ;
The lowing herds now quit the lawn,
The lark springs from the corn ;

Dogs, huntsmen, all, the window throng,
Fleet Towler leads the cry ;
Arise, the burden of my song—
This day a stag must die !

Eh, Sam, I wish to the Lord thou’d bin theer ! Th’ finest felt o’ hunters that ever I clapt een on !—

(*Sings.*)

They’d o’ got buckskin leathers on, a-fitting ’em so tight,
As round an’ plump as turnips are, and just about as white ;
Their spurs were made o’ silver, an’ their buttons made o’ brass ;
Their coats were red as carrits, an’ their collars green as grass !—

—I’ll tell tho what, Sam, Brown Wardle’s th’ finest huntin’ ground i’ Lancashire ! I’ll bate nought at it ! Eh, lads ; we’n had a rattling run ! We’n kilt three times ! I haven’t had a bite o’ nought to eat sin I left whoam this mornin’ but a cowd berm-bo’ that I begged at my uncle Joss’s, at the Pot-House Farm, as we ran by ! . . . Mally ; if yo’re willin’ to save life,—bring me some’at to bite at !

Aught'll do! I'm hungry enough to chew a smoothin'-iron!"

"I'll bring tho some'at, lad, if thou'll be quiet."

"That's reet, Mally! . . . Eh, lads; if yo'd bin wheer I've bin this day!

(Sings again.)

Eh, my! a pratty little jingle then went ringin' through the sky;
First victory, then Villager, began their merry cry;
Then every mouth were oppen, from the owd un to the pup,
An' o' the pack together took the swelling chorus up!

Heigh, Beauty! Blossom! Bouncer! Heigh, Bugle,
bonny lass! Hark to Bugle! By, dogs, by! Ho, Bangle,
good wench! O'er a gate,—o'er a gate! Heigh, Blossom,
my little darlin'! Ho, good dogs! Hark away! Hark
away! Yo-ho! Yo-ho!"

"For the Lord's sake, lad, do mak a less o' thi yeawlin'
din! Thou'rt worse than a sheep-shouter! Good gracious!
It's enough to stop th' clock! Thou's freeten't th' cat out;
an' thou'rt actilly bringin' th' soot down i'th chimbly! Do
bridle a bit, I pritho!"

"Eh, Mally; if yo'd bin wi' me this day; it would ha'
made yo shout, too! It's enough to mak a lapstone sing!

(Sings again.)

Eh, my! a pretty scouwer then were kicked up in the vale;
They skimmed across the running brook, they topped the post an'
rail;
They didn't stop for razzor cop, but played at touch an' go;
An' them as missed a footin' theer lay doubled up below!

“Ay; an’ thou’s bin doubled up, too, by th’ look on tho. What’s that mark at th’ side o’ thi face?”

“Well, Snaffle o’ Thatcher’s an’ me fell out as we coom down th’ Syke Broo; an’ he ga’ me a clout o’ th’ chops. But he geet nought by it. I returned his lead wi’ my left hond,—an’ that took th’ odd trick. . . . Come, Mally; are yo gettin’ me a bit o’ some’at to bite at?”

“Directly, my lad; directly!”

“Be as sharp as yo con, for I’m famish’t! . . . Come, let’s sup!

(Sings again.)

Mash tubs an’ barrels!
 Bottles, an’ galkers, an’ coolers;
 Bonny quart pots,
 An’ nice little tots,
 An’ spiggits, an’ wooden maut-shoolers!

Eh, Sam; this has bin a glorious day! By Guy, we’n cover’t some stretch o’ ground sin’ we set off wi’ th’ dogs this mornin’!”

“Ay; an’ thou’ll be weel tire’t, owd lad!”

“Me tire’t! By th’ mass, I’ll doance onybody i’ this house for a seck a’ potitos! Here, Jem; thou use’t to be a rare hond at a caper! I’ll doance thee for a cow-yed—th’ most beats an’ least fauts—leet, heavy, an’ rollin’! Now then, get agate!”

“Here,” said the landlady; “come an’ get thi supper; an’ let thi meat stop thi mouth; for, I declare, thou’s less wit than th’ huntin’ dogs!”



“ Shaving, Please ? ”

Here, drop it ; I've had quite enough !
Thou's nicked mi chin to th' quick !
If thou'rt boun to cut thi customers,
I'm boun to cut mi stick !

ANON.

[*A cold morning in Autumn. NICE TOMMY, the polite village barber, at work in his shop. Enter JOE O' LUNG ENOCH'S, commonly called TULIP, a village gardener.*]

“ **G**OOD morning, sir ! It's a cold morning ! ”

“ Ay, it's cowl, for sure, Tommy ; an' if I wur thee, I'd have a bit o' fire i'th hole ; th' look o' that frost-bitten face o' thine is enough to perish an otter. What's th' matter ? Arto behind i' thi rent,—or hasto bin robbin' a hen-cote, or some'at ? ”

“ I'm all right, Joseph, thank you ! . . . Shaving, please ? ”

“ Ay,—shavin',—but no slaughter, mind ! ”

“ All right, sir ! . . . Take this chair, please. (*JOE sits down.*) Thank you ! (*TOMMY tucks the cloth under his chin.*) I think it is some time since I shaved you before, sir ! ”

“ Ay, it is ; an' thou wouldn't ha' shaved me now if I could ha' gotten onybody else to do it ! ”

"Thank you! . . . Let me see, aren't you cousin to the sexton at the old church?"

"Never thee mind whether I am or not!"

"Thank you!"

"An', now,—stop, Tommy,—afore thou begins o' this job,—let me gi' tho fair warnin'!"

"Thank you!"

"Hasto sharpen't that razor?"

"Yes, sir."

"Will it cut ony?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, then,—just tak care what thou cuts with it! Thou'rt welcome to as much yure (hair) as thou can get at comfortably, but if thou goes ony deeper, I'll let fly at thi shins! Doesto yer that, now?"

"Thank you!"

"Look at these shoon o' mine!"

"Yes; they're a fine pair! Thank you!"

"Ay; but thou'll give o'er thankin' me if thou gets a crack with 'em. But, now thou's sin 'em, thou knows what to expect."

"Thank you!"

"Well, then; get agate o' thi job. An' mind how thou scrapes round that wart on my chin. Thou took a piece out th' last time I wur here!"

"Did I, indeed? I've quite forgot. I'm very sorry, I'm sure! . . . How's the gardening trade now?"

"Th' gardenin' trade's o' reet. Get done as soon asto con; I want to be gooin'."

"All right, sir! I'll lose no time! . . . I should

think your trade's one of the oldest trades in the world, Mr. Joseph!”

“Never thee mind whether it is or not! Let's have less o' thi ornamental talk; an' get for'ad wi' thi shavin'. Thou'rt not one o' those chaps that can manage two jobs at once. . . . Theer yo go again! By th' mass, thou's made another notch! . . . Here; let's look! (*Gets up, and looks in the glass.*) Ay; thou's left thi mark upo' mi chin again,—an' bowdly, too! Here; gi' me howd o' that razor; an' goo an' sit tho down somewheer! I'll finish this mysel'! Thou should ha' bin a butcher, my lad, instead of a barber! Gi's a bit o' some'at to stop this bleedin'!”

(*Somebody tries the latch.*)

“Now, then, Tommy, there's another customer for tho! Tak that tother razor, an' notch his chin, same as thou's done mine!”

(*Enter HARRY O' MON JOHN'S, singing*):—

“O, Billy, my boy! O, Billy, my boy!
If thou'd live like a horse, an' drink when thou'rt dry,
Thou'd have haliday duds, an' brass i' thi purse,
An' thou'd walk wi' thi face turned up to th' sky!”

“Good morning, Mr. Henry! You're quite merry this morning!”

“Good mornin', Tommy! Thou'rt busy, I see.”

“Well, yes. I've just been ‘scraping an acquaintance,’ as my old master used to say.”

(*The old gardener turns round from the glass.*)

"Thou may co' it *scrapin' an acquaintance*, Tommy, but I co' it *cuttin' an acquaintance!* Look at my chin, Harry!"

"Hello ; is that thee, Tulip?"

"Ay ; it's o' there is left on me. Thou mun tak care o' that barber, or else he'll have a slice out on tho!"

"Well ; an' if he does, I'll have a slice out of him! . . . Now then, Tommy, where mun I sit?"

"Take this chair, Mr. Henry."

(HARRY *sits down.*)

"Now then, get into thi looms, Tommy, an' get done ; for I want to be off."

"All right. . . . All well at home, Mr. Henry?"

"If thou co's me 'Mr. Henry' again, I'll gi' tho a bat o' th' ear-hole! Keep thi tung between thi teeth ; an' get on wi' thi mowin'. . . . Aught fresh agate, Tulip?"

"Nought mich, I think. . . . Oh, yigh! Th' yung Squire's gotten wed!"

"Oh, ay! Who's he gotten wed to?"

"Well, bi what I can yer, hoo's one o'th Queen's ladies o'th bed-chamber."

"Th' dule hoo is! Why, that's no greight catch, as how 'tis! I doubt his mother'll not like it."

"What for?"

"What for? Why, just to think on him gettin' wed to a sarvant! An' goin' o' th' road to Lunnon for her, too! By th' hectum, he could ha' fund better stuff than that at whoam, here! I tell tho his mother'll never tak her in,—never i' this world,—for hoo's as proud as Lucifer! An' I

wonder at him, too, for he's as prodigal a cowl as ever step't i' shoe-leather his-sel'!”

“Howd thi din, mon; th' lass is a lady!”

“Lady me noan o' thi ladies! Hoo's nought but a chamber-maid, I tell tho! An' I guess hoo makes th' beds, an' empties th' slops, an' sich like! By th' mass, if his faither had bin alive there'd ha' bin a bonny dust kicked up! I wonder what th' lad's bin thinkin' on? . . . Who's lass is hoo, saysto?”

“Nay; I didn't yer.”

“Some o'th coachmen, I guess. . . . Well, let it leet as it will, hoo's nobbut a sarvant!”

“Weel; thou has it just as I had it; an' I mun be off. . . . Hello; it's rainin'!”

“Yes; it's very heavy, too! You'd better wait till it's over. See; take this chair, sir?”

“Ay, I'll sit me down, an' have a reech o' 'bacco till it clears up. . . . Hasto done wi' that lad's chin?”

“I've just finished, Mr. Joseph.”

“Well, then, I'll tell tho what do, Tommy.”

“Yes, Mr. Joseph!”

“Rom a arm-ful o' shavin's into that fire-hole; an' put a leet to't. A bit of a blash'll be better than nought; for it's as cowl as a coal-house i' this cote. . . . Here, Harry, come an' keawer (cower) tho down a minute or two, till th' rain's o'er. It isn't fit to turn a dog out just now.”

“O' reet! I'll be witho in a minute; as soon as I've wiped this lother off my face! . . . Now then, Tulip, owd lad, how's th' world waggin' witho? Conto find me a stick or two o' celery, if I look in at th' garden to-morn?”

“I’ll gi’ tho a arm-ful if thou’ll come i’th forenoon, Harry.”

“That’s reet, owd brid, I’ll co. . . . Are thi potitos o’ reet this time?”

“First rate! But I’ve hard wark to keep ’em. Times are so bad, an’ there are so mony tramps an’ beggars wanderin’ about, haue clemmed to death, that I miss a lot every neet. An’ it’s th’ same wi’ th’ farmers o’ round. Tum o’ Flup’s up at th’ Ridge, yon, had as fine a felt o’ Lapstone Kidneys as ever went into a pon; but they kept disappearin’, neet after neet, at such a rate that he thought he’d find out wheer they went to; an’ one neet he muffle’t his-sel’ up a bit after dark had come on, an’ he said to th’ wife, ‘Nanny, I’m gooin’ to watch yon potitos a bit to-neet; an’ if I can catch ony o’ these thieves it’ll be worse for ’em!’ So he took a knob-stick out o’ th’ nook, an’ a ten-gallon can, an’ off he set, an’ keawer’t his-sel’ down at th’ bottom end o’th felt, close bi th’ bruck-side, ’at runs through th’ hollow. ‘Now then,’ said he, as he filled his can wi’ wayter, an’ laid his cudgel down at th’ side on’t, ‘there’s wood an’ wayter theer; an’ th’ first thief that comes shall ha’ both hard an’ soft, as who they are!’ Well, he waited an’ waited, till he wur nearly starve’t to deooth; but he wur determin’t to see it out; so he gript his cudgel, an’ gran (grinned), an’ bode (did abide), expectin’ some’at turnin’ up every minute. In a while his wife began to think that it wur time for him to have a bit o’ supper; so hoo tucked her gown o’er her yed, to keep th’ rain off, an’ away hoo crept to th’ potito-felt, to ax him to come in an’ warm his-sel’, an’ have his supper. Well; it wur as dark as a

fox's mouth; an' hoo went very quietly in at th' top end o' th' felt, an' began a-tootin' about, an' whisperin', 'Tom; wheer arto? Come to thi supper, an' warm tho a bit!' Well, Tum could see th' whole felt fro' th' place where he wur lyin'; an' as soon as he spied this strange figure creepin' in at th' top-gate, he mutter't to hissel', 'By th' maskins, there's one on 'em here at last! An' it's a woman, too, bi th' look on it!' So he crept up by th' hedge side, with th' knobstick under his arm, an' th' canful o' wayter in his hond, till he geet close beheend her; an' he let fly th' whole ten-gallon o' wayter slap on th' top on her; an' then he gript her by th' shoulder, an' he said, 'Come, I've catched thee, have I? Here; thou'll ha' to goo wi' me; I'll have a look at thee bi candle-leet!' An' away he dragged her toward th' house, that stood about three felt-breadths off. Well, Nanny had gotten sich a dowsin' wi' th' wayter that it had takken her breath at first; an' then, as soon as hoo see'd what a blunder he'd made, hoo thought hoo met (might) as weel let him have it out. So hoo kept her gown tucked o'er her yed, an' hoo went with him very quietly, an' never oppen't her lips. Th' dur stood wide oppen; an' there wur a good fire; an' a candle burnin' up' th' table. So Tum took his prisoner in; an', as he looked round th' house, he cried out, 'Here, Nanny; wheer arto? Come an' look at this wayter-dog! I've catched one o' th' thieves, here!' Wi' that Nanny flung her gown off her yed, an' hoo said, 'Ay; thou'rt a bonny thief-catcher, thou art! Look at mi clooas! Thou may well co' me a wayter-dog!' 'Well,' said Tummy, 'this is a toe-biter, as how 'tis! How leets thou didn't speighk?' 'Speighk! How could I

speighk wi' o' that wayter about me? I've hardly gotten my breath yet!' 'Well,' said Tum; 'put that dur to; an' away witho up stairs, an' get thoose weet things off! *I've done enough o' potito-tentin' for one neet*, as how 'tis!"

"Well done, Tum! I'll tell tho what, Tulip, if it had bin some women he'd ha' catched it!"

"He would that! But th' rain's dropt, I see. I mun be off!"

"An' so mun I! . . . Good mornin', Tommy!"

"Good mornin', gentlemen,—and thank you!"





Miserable Sinners.

[*Time, winter evening.—Scene, the old kitchen.—Persons, OWD SAM, TWITTER, WOBBLE, JEM O' TH' OWD SUR'S; and BETTY, the landlady.*]

“**Y**ON'S a quare cowl, Sam.”

“He's nought else.”

“What a mouth he has!”

“It's a terrible gash, for sure.”

“His yed's th' haue road off, when it's oppen.”

“Another inch would ha' done it.”

“I wish they'd ta'en it o' round.”

“Didto ever see him agate o' puttin' butter't muffins out o' seet?”

“Ay; an' I never want to see it again. He looked as if he were postin' letters. I'd rather keep him a week than a fortnit.”

“I don't care who keeps him, if he'll keep off me.”

“I tell tho what, Sam, I don't think he's o' theer.”

“Thou'rt about reet, Twitter; but there's too mich on him yet, for my brass.”

“There is, Sam; just about thirteen stone too mich.”

"He's o' offal, an' boilin'-pieces, fro' yed to fuut."

"Well, but," said Betty, "he reckons to be converted, doesn't he?"

"So he does, lass; but he's one o' thoose that takes a deool o' convertin'."

"Ay," said Jem o' th' Owd Sur's, "I think they'n ha' to have another do at him, afore he's good for mich."

"I wish they'd turn him into a pillar o' saut, th' same as Lot's wife."

"Well, an' if they did," said Sam, "I'd ha' noan."

"What doesto think, Sam," said Twitter; "it isn't aboon a fortnit sin' I catch't him steighlin' our coals. I yerd a din i'th back-yard, about two o'clock i'th mornin'; an' I oppen't th' window, an' look't out; an' theer he wur, sure enough, quietly filling a whisket out o' th' coal-rook. 'Now then,' I said, 'thou'rt pikin' 'em out, I see!' An' he said, 'Nay; thou lies; I'm takkin' 'em as they come!' What dun yo think o' that?"

"Oh, I know him," said Betty. "He's a brazen, ready-tunged good-for-nought! An' he's a wastrel o' gates (all ways)."

"Ready-tunged!" said Twitter; "ay, ay; he's lost th' latch of his lip, mon!"

"By th' mass," said Sam, "I wish he'd lost his lip o'together!"

"Well," continued Twitter, "the very next news I yerd wur that he'd turn't Ranter parson."

"Eh," said Betty, "what a world this is for change!"

"Well, but, Betty, didn't yo yer what he code us just now?"

"Foos, happen," said Betty.

"Nay; he says we're o' miserable sinners."

"Well; an' so yo are."

"Well, ay; as fur as sinnin' goes, yo know, I dar say there isn't a pin to choose among th' lot! I've nought again that! I'm a sinner, I know! Arn't thou a sinner, Wobble?"

"I doubt I am," said Wobble.

"Thou may put me down for another, while thou'rt agate," said Jem o' th' Owd Sur's.

"An' me, too," said Sam; "but, by th' mass, I'll not be reckon't up among th' same lot as yon mon is, as how th' cat jumps!"

"Well, thou may put me down, too," said Betty, "i'th same lot as our Sam."

"Howd yo'r din, Betty," said Twitter; "yo'r o' reet! But, it's noather here nor theer! What, we're o' sinners, oather o' one sort or another!"

"Ay, ay," said Betty; "if we're gradely reckon't up, there'd be about six o' tone an' hauxe-a-dozen o' tother."

"So far, so good," said Twitter; "but, here Sam; let me ax thee one thing."

"Get forrud wi' thi barrow."

"Sam; art thou miserable?"

"Well, I don't know 'at I am; nobbut, now an' then,—when th' dinner's noan ready."

"Well, Jem, owd brid; now, art thou miserable?"

"Oh, I'm o' reet, for aught that I know."

"Well, Wobble, owd lad, art thou miserable?"

"Who miserable? Me? Am I hectum as like!"

“ Well, an’ as for mysel’,—see yo, lads,—I’m as leetsome as a layrock ! He may co’ us sinners, if he’s a mind ; but, by th’ mass, if he says that we’re miserable sinners, he’s talkin’ off at th’ side ! . . . Here, Betty, bring me another tot ! ”





The Hay-Bag.

“**H**ID I ever tell tho abeawt Jone o’ Bob’s an’ th’ Hay-bag?” said the quarryman.

“Nawe; but I could like to hear it,” replied the landlord.

“Well,” said the quarryman, “Jone went to th’ rent-supper; an’ he stopt till o’ th’ tother had gone; an’ when he turn’t out, at one o’clock i’th mornin’, quite knocked up, he manag’t o’ someheaw to tak th’ wrong gate (road). Istead o’ goin’ towards whoam, he took th’ road to Manchester. Well, he maunder’t on an’ on, i’th dark, by hissel’! At last th’ moon broke out, an’ he began o’ lookin’ about him a bit. ‘Hello,’ said he, starin’ at a house that stood close by th’ road,—‘that use’t to be at the left-hond side once! Howd,—let’s see! If I turn round, th’ heawse’ll be on th’ reet side. But stop,—I’s be wrong then. I’s ha’ to walk whoam th’ back road on, if I turn me round! That’ll do noan! There’s summat out o’ tune here! I’ll sit me deawn, an’ think a bit!’ An’ he rear’t hissel’ again a mile-stone, an’ dropt asleep. An’ theer he slept on, till four i’th mornin’. An’ he’d ha’ slept a good while lunger, but there

was a waggon coom by, pile't up wi' stuff for Manchester. 'Hello!' says th' waggoner, shaking Jone up, 'what arto doin' here?' 'I'm beawn whoam,' said Jone, rubbin' his een. 'Thae'll be a good while i' gettin' theer if thou travels at this rate,' said th' waggoner. 'Wheer doest live?' 'Smo'-bridge!' said Jone. 'Smo'-bridge!' cried th' waggoner; 'why, thou'rt within a mile o' Middleton!' 'Middleton!' said Jone. 'By th' mass, I've ta'en th' wrong turn! . . . I've a good mind to goo on to Middleton now, owd lad,—if thou'll gi' me a bit of a lift. Eawr Mary lives at Middleton. I'll goo an' see her.' 'I'll gi' tho a lift, wi' o' th' pleasur i'th world,' said th' waggoner; 'but I doubt thae'll never be able to climb to th' top o' this stuff!' an' he pointed to th' pile upo' th' waggon. 'Here, come,' said he, 'I'll manage it! Get into this hay-bag! Thae'll be as snug as a button!' 'Well, thou mun put me out at Middleton, thou knows,' said Jone. 'O' reet,' said th' waggoner; 'I'll put tho out, owd lad! Make thisel' comfortable.' So Jone crope (crept) into th' hay-bag; an' away went th' waggon,—wi' Jone fast asleep i'th hay-bag,—an' his yed hangin' out at th' top,—like th' nob of a onion. An' away went th' waggoner, whistlin',—away he went, straight through Middleton,—till he coom to Blakeley, two mile further on; for he'd quite forgotten that he had Jone i'th hay-bag. But, when he poo'd up at th' Blakeley ale-heawse, and went round to get some hay for th' horses, he see'd Jone's curly nob hangin' out of th' bag, an' he said, 'Eh, I've forgotten to put this chap out at Middleton!' An' he roos't (aroused) him up. 'Now, then! Come, owd lad, get up!' 'O' reet!' said Jone, rubbin' his een. 'Are we at Middleton?' 'Ay

—an' two mile o' tother side,' said th' waggoner. 'We're at Blakeley!' 'Why, what hasto brought me here for? I wanted to get out at Middleton.' 'Well, I clen forgeet that thou were i'th hay-bag—an' that's God's truth, owd lad,' said th' waggoner. Well,—by th' mon,' said Jone, as he looked round,—'I never wur here afore i' my life! I am getten nicely knock'd about between one town an' another, this neet. . . . I'se ha' to walk o' that gate back, thou sees,' said he to th' waggoner. Oh, nay,' said th' waggoner; 'I can manage better than that for tho, I think. There's Billy Robishaw comin' yon, wi' his cart, I see. He's gooin' to Rachda'; an' I con get him to let tho ride.' 'That'll do,' said Jone. So, when Billy coom up, he agreed to let him ride back wi' him; an' when Jone had gotten into th' cart, Billy gave him a pack-sheet, an' he said, 'Lap that round tho, owd lad; thou'll be starv't.' When Jone had gotten lapped up, he looked out o' th' pack-sheet, an' he said to Billy, 'If thou'll just poo up abeawt ten minutes when thou gets into Middleton, I'll gi' tho sixpence. I want to speighk to our Mary. It's close to th' Boar's Yed.' 'O' reet,' said Billy. An' then Jone went back into his pack-sheet; an' in about two minutes he wur sound asleep again. Well, by th' mon, Billy Robishaw just did th' same as th' waggoner had done. He forgeet Jone, as clean as a whistle, an' he drove through Middleton, an' straight on to Rachda', afore he unbethought hissels. But, when he poo'd up at th' 'Saddle,' he said, 'Eh, by th' mon! there's that chap i'th pack sheet! He wanted to get out at Middleton! An' he went an' looked for Jone among th' pack-sheet; an' when he fund him, he said, 'Here, owd

mon ; wakken up !' 'O' reet,' said Jone ; 'are we at Middleton?' 'Middleton—!' said Billy ; 'we're at Rachda!' 'Rachda'! said Jone, starin'. 'Wheer——shall I get to th' next? . . . Here, I'll come out o' this.' An' he crope out of th' pack-sheet. 'I've had a smart neet on't amung yo,' said Jone, as he coom out o' th' cart. 'I went off in a hay-bag ; an' I coom back in a pack-sheet ; an' I've bin at three different towns ; an' I'm noan reet yet ! "Well, an' wheer arto for, now?" said Billy. "I'm for Smo'-bridge," said Jone, 'as hard as ever I con.' 'Well,' said Billy, 'I'm gooin' through Smo'-bridge. Thou may as weel ride forrud wi' me.' 'Nay, I'll not !' said Jone ; 'I'se happen fo' asleep, an' find mysel' i' Halifax th' next. It's day-leet now. I'll finish this bit wi' my legs. Off witho' bi thisel' ; for I'll trust no moore to noather carts nor waggons ! . . . An' that's th' end o' Jone an' th' hay-bag," said the quarryman.

"Well done, Sam!" said the landlord, lifting his glass ;
"here's a merry Christmas to tho, when th' time comes !"






Caves-Droppings.

'Tis some folk's joy to take the road,
An' go abroad, a-wand'rin' wide,
From shore to shore, from place to place,
The swiftest pace that folk can ride :
But I've a joy within the door,
With friends about the fire-side.

WILLIAM BARNES.

Summer twilight. Kitchen of "The Eagle and Child," an old roadside inn, better known thereabouts as "Thi' Brid an' Bantlin'." JONE O' MARLER'S seated alone by an open window overlooking the bowling-green behind the house. Rain falling. JONE looks through the window into the rain, and begins to talk to himself :—

“ELL ; here I am bi mysel', again ! An' my pot's empty ! There's nought seems to stop wi' me that's ony sense in it,—noather folk, nor drink, nor brass ! As for brass,—I wortch for that like a horse, an' I spend it like a jackass,—an' that'll keep mi nose close to th' grindle-stone as long as I've breath i' mi body ! I wonder if I've ever come to mysel' ! An' even time, too—time'll not stop wi' me ! Ay, ay ; time's a steady traveller,—

an' I'se never be able to keep up wi' him at th' rate I'm gooin' at,—for he minds his wark better than some of us ! Our Mally said I wur a foo when I coom out,—an' our Mally wur reet ! . . . How still everything is ! Of o' th' deawly nooks I ever wur in this caps the lot ! An' th' owl-leet's comin' on too ! There's nought i' th' world stirrin',—nobbut th' rain,—an' I can yer (hear) every drop as it leets ! . . . It's getten to th' edge o' dark ; an' there'll be boggarts abroad in a bit. I wish it would thunner, or some'at ! This is too mich for me ! My yure's beginnin' a-craikin' o' my broo' an' I'm gooin' o' goose-flesh ! . . . Where's o' th' owd fuddlers ! What's th' matter wi' folk that they do'not come a drinkin' ? Is th' world comin' to its senses ? An' am I th' last foo there is left to swill his throttle wi' beggar-berm, and barrel-weshin's ? I'm noan gooin' to sit here bi mysel' mich lunger,—I cannot ston it ! . . . Another good day gone by, too, an' never a stroke stricken ! By the bowd tinker, this an' better *may* do, but this an' worse never will ! . . . What's to be done ? . . . A chap that's getten ale for his master is nobbut a poor mak of a craiter,—an' he get's ill paid for his wark ; but, it doesn't matter,—I'm dry,—an' I may as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb ! . . . Hello, theer ! Bring me another tot."

"I'm comin' !"

"Be slippy, then,—I'm deein' !"

(Aside, in the next room—)

"Well ; dee then, an' get done wi't,—for thou'rt not mich good alive. (*Louder.*) I'm comin' in a minute, I tell yo !"

(The landlady's voice heard in the next room talking to the village dressmaker.)

“This is a bit o’ good stuff, mistress. How wi’n yo have this dress made?”

“Well; I want it makin’ up to th’ throttle an’ down to th’ shackle; a walkin’ length; an’ a stridin’ breadth; an’ a belt round th’ middle; an founce’t at th’ bottom!”

“Same as th’ last, I guess?”

“I mun have raither moore girth for stridin’ this time, Sally,—an’ I’se want a lunger belt, thou knows, just now.”

“I know.”

“An’,—Sally,—dun yo yer?”

“Well?”

“Mind, an’ put plenty o’ stitches in; for I poo my things to pieces terribly.”

“I’ll see to it, mistress.”

“Thou’ll have it done bi Thursday, Sally; thou knows it’s rent-supper that neet?”

“I’ll have it done.”

“That’ll do, Sally! Good neet to yo! It is fine, just now, I see. But it’s a good job yo brought yo’r umbrell; for, bi th’ look o’th sky, I doubt that it’ll rain at intervals.”

“It’ll rain here, afore aught’s long, mistress, whether it rains at intervals or not. . . . Good neet to yo!”

“Good neet, Sally!”

(JONE, in the kitchen, knocks on the table with his pot.)

“Now, then; how long are yo boun to be wi bringin’ that ale?”

“ I’m comin’, I tell yo ! ”

“ Ay ; an’ so is Christmas ! ”

(Enter the landlady.)

“ Now, then ; what’s wanted ? ”

“ What’s wanted ! I’ve bin bawlin’ here, like a sheep-shouter, this last hauve-hour ; an’ never a soul i’th hole stirs a peg ! It’s like shoutin’ to a lot o’ rubbin’-stoops in a moor-end pastur ! ”

“ Well ; an’ what dun yo want, now that I am here ? ”

“ I want this pot fillin’.”

“ Jone, yo’n had enough for one sittin’.”

“ Who says I’ve had enough ? ”

“ I say so. Yo’r Matty ’ll be comin’ directly.”

“ Well ; let her come ! I’m noan freeten’t o’ frogs ! ”

“ Frogs or no frogs, I think it’s time for yo to be gooin’, for yo looken quite done up.”

“ Who’s done up ? Me done up ! Nought o’th sort ! An’ if I am done up, it’s noan of yo’r ale that’s done it, Liddy.”

“ I doubt it is, Jone.”

“ Well, if it is, it’s th’ weight on’t,—for I’m sure it isn’t th’ strength on’t.”

“ Whether it’s th’ weight on’t, or th’ strength on’t, yo’n had quite enough to sarve ony gradely mon, Jone.”

“ Why ; how mich have I had, Liddy ? ”

“ Yo’n had seven pints that I know on.”

“ Seven pints ! Is that o’ ? What’s seven pints to a mon o’ my size ? I need more sleckin’ than these under-size’t kitlins that has noather height nor weight about ’em !

Bring me another pint, Liddy! I'm noan boun to sit dry-mouth bi mysel' in a hole like this!"

"Well, I'll bring yo another, Jone; but, if onybody comes in, mind an' keep a civil tung i' yo'r yed."

(Exit the landlady. JONE shouts after her.)

"Thee keep thi tung between thi teeth,—an' bi sharp wi' that ale!"

(Enter a country woman, with a basket on her arm.)

"Maister, han yo sin a chap wi' a red yed?"

"Ay; mony a one."

"But has there bin one o' that mak in here?"

"Nawe; we'n had nobody in here with a ginger-toppin' to-day. Come an' sit yo down."

"Nawe; I munnot sit, thank yo. . . . Yo're sure he hasn't bin here, then?—he's a bow-legged chap,—an' he wears a cauve-skin singlet."

"Nawe; we'n had no bow-legged chaps, wi' red yeds, an' cauve-skin singlets here. . . . But what's o' yo'r hurry? How are yo getting on?"

"Oh, just middlin'. . . . Why; dun yo know me?"

"Ay, sure I do. Do'not yo know me?"

"Nawe; yo'n th' odds o' me, this time, maister."

"Why, dun yo mean to say that yo'n forgotten me, then?"

"Ay; who are yo?—for I've plump forgotten yo."

"Well, that's a good un, as how 'tis."

"It's true, for sure, maister; an' I cannot co' yo to mind, yet."

"Yo'n cappen me, Mally."

"I'm noan code (called) Mally."

"Why; aren't yo one of owd Bill o' Fairhoff lasses, at th' 'Swine Rootins?'"

"Not I, marry! Mi faither wur code Nathan o' Fotcher's; but he wur better known bi th' name o' Bitter-bump."

"Why, then, I mun be wrang,—an' it's noan o' yo."

"Yo're wrang, for sure, maister. . . . But, now that I come to look at yo, I can remember yo very well. I've nobbut just fund yo out. . . . How's yo'r Jonathan?"

"What Jonathan?"

"Yo'r brother Jonathan."

"I have no brother Jonathan."

"Why; aren't yo one o'th Kitters o'th Smo'bridge?"

"Nawe; by th' mass,—I'm noan come'd to that yet!"

"Why, then; I'll be hanged if I am not wrang, too, maister; an' it turns out to be noather yo nor me!"

"Nawe; it's noather on us, as yo say'n, mistress. . . . But it matters nought. We're both on us somebody, when o's said an' done."

"Ay; we're somebody, for sure. But who are yo, maister, so that I can tell yo th' next time I leet on yo?"

"I'm code Jone o' Marlers; an' mi faither's name wur Sleck-trough."

"Well; it's a good name to think on is Sleck-trough,—for I've a brother 'at's a blacksmith. . . . So I'll bid yo good day, maister! I mun goo an' look for yon chap o' mine!"

"Good day to yo, mistress! Yo winnot think no warse o' me for speighkin' to yo, wi'n yo?"

"Not a hawp'oth!"

“That’s reet! Good day to yo!”

(*Exit NANNY O’ NATHAN’S. JONE is left alone again. He begins to sing*)

I have lived a good while,
 And I’ve seen a good deal
 Of mirth, and of toil,
 And of woe and of weal;
 But when a man’s old,
 I do think it is well
 For to rest in the fold
 Where the weary do dwell,
 Do dwell;
 Where the weary do dwell.

(*Enter a tattered country hawker, with a face full of ale-blossoms.*)

“Hello! Where’s thou sprung fro’?”

“I come fro’ th’ Gank, i’ Rachda’.”

“An’ what arto code?”

“Galker Jack. I-wur brought up in a brew-house.”

“Thou’s had a rare bringin’-up, my lad; an’ it tells on tho, too. . . . What arto sellin’?”

“Corn-plaisters,—an’ clooas-pegs,—an’ smo-tooth koms (combs). Buy a kom?”

“Nawe; I want noan.”

“Well; I’ve some stuff i’th corner o’ mi basket, here, for killin’ bed-varmin. Wi’n yo have a packet o’ that?”

“Nawe; I want noan o’ that, noather. I kill my varmin mysel’,—when I con catch ’em?”

“Oh, ay! How dun yo kill ’em?”

“I kill ’em wi’ a hommer.”

“ Well ; I’ll be gooin’.”

“ Here ; stop a minute ! Thou’s have a gill afore thou goes. How owd arto ?”

“ Five-an’-twenty, come Thar-cake Monday.”

“ Thou’rt gettin’ on, my lad. An’ hasto had middlin’ o’ schooin’ ?”

“ Not so much ; for I don’t know a B fro’ a bull’s fuut.”

“ Oh, I see. Thou’s bin to neet-schoo’, where they’d no candles. Conto tak thi meals middlin’ ?”

“ Ay ; when I con get howd on ’em.”

“ Is thi faither alive ?”

“ Ay.”

“ How owd is he ?”

“ Seventy-four.”

“ He’ll never get o’er that. . . . Thou smooks, I see. I don’t like to see lads smookin’. Aren’t tho ashamed o’ thisel’ ? I wur forty year owd afore I began a-smokin’.”

“ You should ha’ had moore sense bi that time, maister.”

“ Come ; that’ll do, my lad ! . . . Arto wed ?”

“ Nawe.”

“ Keep single, then,—whatever thou does, keep single,—we’n plenty o’ thy sort i’ this world o’ready ! . . . Arto aught akin to feaw Tummy, o’ Lobden, that wur hanged for sheep steighlin’,—thou’s a great favvour on him ?”

“ Nawe ; I know nought about him.”

“ I’m fain to yer it, my lad. But, to tell truth, I didn’t think there’d bin two folk alive so mich alike as thee an’ him. . . . Sit tho down ; what arto stonnin’ theer for ? Sit tho down for a minute ; an’ let’s have a gradely look at tho.”

(The hawkers sits down. JONE stares at him silently for a minute or two, and then mutters to himself)—

“ ‘ And God made man after his own image.’ So th’ owd book says,—an’ I believe it, too. But mon makes a terrible hond of hissel’, sometimes.”

“ Are yo talkin’ about me ? ”

“ Ay ; I’m talkin’ about thee, my lad.”

“ Well, then ; I’m noan boun to ston no moore nasty talk ! . . . Dun yo want to feight ? ”

“ Nawe ; I don’t want to feight, my lad. An’ if I did, I wouldn’t feight thee. Thy days’ll be short enough as it is ; but if thee an’ me gets agate o’ feightin’, they’n be a deal shorter. An’ do’not thee bother thi yed about gooin’ into th’ feightin’ line ; for, if tho does, thou’rt sure to lose by it.”

(JONE knocks on the table with his pot. Enter the landlady.)

“ Here, Liddy ; bring this lad a pint o’ ale ! ”

(She brings the ale.)

“ There, my lad ; get that into tho ; an’ do’not thee ston i’ thi own leet ! I wish tho no ill ! Wortch hard ; an’ save as mich o’ thi wage as tho con ; for thou’ll never addle nought bi thi wits. Give o’er drinkin’, an’ live o’ churn-milk, an’ porritch, an’ cheese an’ brade ; an’ keep among daicent folk, as weel as tho con,—for if thou gets among th’ tother mak thou’rt sure to tak after ’em,—an’ it’ll bring tho to th’ floor wi’ a rattle. . . . An’ if thou mun drink, drink nought but whoam-brewed ale,—it’s strung enough for strunger chaps than thee. An’ drink slow,—an’ don’t sit wi’ thi back to th’ fire ; an’ then thou’ll happen live till thou dees,—if th’ dogs don’t worry tho ! ”



Under the Snow.

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail ;
When blood is nipped, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
 Tu-whit,
Tu-who ; a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

SHAKESPEARE.

CHRISTMAS DAY had glided by, with a shiver and a song ; and the old year was creeping to his close, “ wrapped in many weeds, to keep the cold away, and blowing his nails to warm them if he may.” The carols of the season were still ringing faintly in the wintry air ; and here and there, around a comfortable fire, the fine old festival of the Christian Church was still kept up in a pensively-merry way amongst those who were healthy, and strong, and well-to-do. But the unusual bitterness of the weather, the strange combination of disasters that afflicted the times, and the daily-increasing destitution of the poor, had touched the warmest hearth in the kingdom

with a tone of melancholy. . . . The poor old year was creeping with feeble steps towards his end. The white seal of winter lay upon the land ; and the intense frost, which had turned the fields to stone, and imprisoned the waters so long, showed no sign of abatement. Everything boded the continuance of an unusually severe winter, and the sufferings of the poverty-stricken were deepening from day to day, both in town and country ; for the whole land was smitten.

There had been heavy falls of snow in quick succession, from one end of the country to the other ; and in cloughs, and creases, and lonely valleys, amongst the hills of the Blackstone Edge range, it lay in greater piles and drifts than had been known for a quarter of a century. . . . Deep in a rut of the hills there stood a rude, but roomy, and firmly-built cottage of stone close by the moorland stream, which runs into the wild clough of Turvin. In this solitary nook there dwelt for many years "Jem o'th Ranger's," a sturdy, studious old bachelor, who earned his simple living by hand-loom weaving, and by keeping a few sheep, and watching the neighbouring moors for the owners. Jem did all his washing, and cooking, and mending for himself ; and his house and his person were scrupulously clean. He liked the lonely moorlands ; and nothing on earth could tempt him from his old cottage and his solitary way of life. He had weathered many a hard storm there alone ; but hardly ever so bitter a winter as this. And as he sat musing by the light of a fire made of tree-roots and dried heather, he listened, and wondered whether the two old friends who had promised to come up from Todmorden Vale to spend New Year's Eve with him would come or

not,—for his little house was snowed-up to the top of the doorway, and his only way out for the present was up the wide chimney.

It was early in the afternoon of the last day of the year when Jem's friends,—two sturdy country weavers,—who were fond of botany and mathematics, made their way up through the clough of Turvin, and across the trackless waste of deep snow that lay between the old moorland road and Jem's cottage, with long staves in their hands and woollen mufflers round their necks.

"Ben," said the elder of the two, "I see no signs o'th house yet ; but we cannot be far off, for th' ash-tree ston's yon, down i'th hollow."

"Sitho, Jack," replied the other, pointing ahead, "does thou see a bit of blue smooke curlin' up out of a snow-drift, yon, about two hundred yards off?"

"Ay ; I can see that,—but I can see no house."

"Never thee mind. That smooke comes fro' th' house ; an' th' house is under that snow, as sure as I'm a livin' mon !"

"By th' mass, I believe thou'rt reet ! Th' owd lad's snowed up this time, if he never wur afore ! I hope he's laid in some'at to fo' back on. If he hasn't he'll be badly nipped afore this storm's o'er !"

"Oh ! thou doesn't need to be fretten't. Jem knows what he's doin'. He's as hard as nails ; an' it isn't th' first storm he's had to weather."

"But, how mun we get at him ; for th' house is snowed up to th' edge o'th slate?"

"Come thi ways on ! We'n find a road to him ; or else we'n goo in at th' top."

One end of Jem's cottage was built against the hill side. Carefully surveying the ground, so as to avoid the snow-filled hollow, Jem's two friends stepped from the slope of the hill on to the snow-clad roof of the cottage, and peering down the wide chimney, they cried out,—

“Hello, Jem ; arto theer ?”

“Hello !” replied a strong, cheerful voice, from the fireplace below. “Is that yo, lads ? Come in ; an' sit yo down !”

“Ay ; but how mun we get in ?”

“Well, yo mun come down th' chimbly, th' same as I do. There's no other road at present. Th' chimbly's wide enough for a cow to come down. Yo'n tak no harm if yo'n good shoon on ; for I'll tak some o' this fire off. An' there's a bit of a ladder here for yo ! Come down ; an' don't ston there starin' into th' chimbly, like a pair o' barn-owls !”

“Well, I've nought on that'll tak ony harm,” said Ben.

“Nor me, noather,” said Jack.

And, without more ado, they stept in at the top of the chimney, one after the other ; and, in a few minutes, they were comfortably seated with their old friend Jem in front of a great fire, newly fed with great crackling roots of dried loak and fir.

“Well,” said Ben, looking round the clean little house, which was all aglow with the light of a great wood fire, “considerin' th' spot, an' th' situation, I mun say that thou ooks vast comfortable. I don't know that thee and me, an' Jack here, ever met under a snow-drift afore.”

“Nawe ; I don't know that we ever did, Ben. An' I can

tell th' another thing,—it's th' first time that ever I had to come down th' chimbly to get to bed."

"Oh, thou does get out, then?"

"Out? Ay! I've bin up th' chimbly mony a time this day or two back; but I've always bin fain to come down again; for, between thee an' me, I find it far moore comfortable under this snow than it is up at th' top. Bless thi life, I think I'm very snug, an' very weel off. I know bits o' lonely cots among these hills where there's no fire, an' hardly meight enough to keep soul an' body together. Poor craiters! it's a hard time for them! It makes one think they'd be better i' their graves. I'm buried alive mysel',—in a manner of speakin',—but I shall rise again, if nought no worse happens."

"How arto off for provender?"

"Oh! I've as much laid in as will last me two or three week. An' if I want aught I've nought to do but creep up th' chimbly, theer; an' I can always uanage to powler some'at out o' some nook afore I come down again. Oh, ay; I've thought mony a time when I've bin sittin' here at fireside, bi mysel', that there's not mony folk i' this world, just now, that's better off than I am under this bit o' snow."

"Well, I begin a-thinkin' so, too, Jem; for it's a terrible time up at th' top,—it is that!"

"It cannot miss; for it's th' hardest winter that I can recollect; an' it's mich if there isn't lots o' folk clemmed to deeth. . . . How are they gooin' on up at Keb Coit?"

"Oh! starvation, an' hunger, an' folk out o' wark of o' sides. An' th' farmers han suffer't, too, for there's bin so

mich raggy weather upo' th' moors that there's bin a great lot o' sheep lost."

"It's bin a rough back-end, for sure. . . . Hasto sin owd Dan o' Fotcher's, th' butcher, lately?"

"Well, it's about three week sin' I see'd him; an' I don't think he'll be sin about this quarter again, for a good while,—at least I hope not."

"How's that?"

"Becose he's off to another shop."

"Oh, ay! Where's that?"

"Well; I cannot exactly tell; but,—they'n buried him."

"Nay, sure! What's that for?"

"Becose he dee'd!"

"Well, well! There's a trick for yo! . . . Why, it isn't aboon a month sin' I see'd him switchin' through Todmorden Market,—leet, an' breet, an' lark-heelt,—with a pluck-an-liver i' one hond, an' a thwittle i'th tother, as pert as a pynot; ay, an' he'd a face like a full moon; an' his yure flew like a driftin' hay-cock! Well, well, what poor things we are! An' so the owd lad's gone, is he?"

"Ay; he's left this country-side."

"What ail't him?"

"Well, he geet an ill cowd while he wur rootin' about th' moor-tops, i' this hard weather, after sheep; an' then it turn't to some'at worse; an' he weren't his own mon for a bit; an' he maunder't an' wander't in his talk; for he'd gotten it into his yed that his legs wur i' Scotlan', an' his arms wur i' Ireland, an' his neck wur i' Yorkshire; an' he kept sayin', 'I wish some on yo would write, an' see how my legs are gotten on!' An' then, when they showed him

his legs, and said, 'Sitho; thi legs are here!' he geet quite vext, an' he cried out, 'Nought o' th' sort! They're i' Scotlan', I tell yo! I see'd 'em goo!' An' so he went on. In a bit he type't o'er,—an' o' wur still."

"Poor owd Dan! He's gan' o'er cuttin' beef up, then."

"He'll cut no moore up i' this quarter, as how 'tis."

"Why; he'd hardly gotten to th' best of his day. It hadn't stricken twelve with him!"

"It doesn't matter; th' clock stopt."

"Ay, ay; an' between thee an' me, Ben, there's no tellin' when th' clock may stop. . . . Husht! . . . What's that? . . . There's somebody a-top o'th house!"

And now a strong clear voice shouted down the chimney,—

"Hello, Jem! Where arto?"

"I'm here!" replied Jem. "Who is it?"

"It's me!"

"Hello; is it thee, William? Artn'to for comin' in?"

"Nawe; we thought we'd just see if yo wur alive."

"I'm wick an' hearty, William!"

"Well, my faither's sent yo some bits o' things in a basket, here! How mun I get 'em down?"

"Thou'll find a rope at th' back o'th chimbly, theer. Tee it to th' basket-hondle, an' let it down!"

"There it is, Jem."

"Jem emptied the basket, and sent it up again."

"There's thi basket back, William; an' tell thi faither I'm mich obleeg't to him!"

"Yo'r quite welcome, Jem; an' A Happy New Year to yo!"

“The same to thee, William,—an’ mony on ’em!”

“Now, lads,” said Jem, as he spread his stores out upon the table, “we’n have a bit o’ baggin’! Yo’n be like to stop o’ neet.”

“I’m willin’,” said Ben.

“An’ so am I,” said Jack.





“Where’s th’ Reigh?”

’Tis done! dread winter spreads his latest glooms,
And reigns triumphant o’er the conquered year.
How dead the vegetable kingdom lies!
How dumb the tuneful! . . .

Muttering, the winds at eve, with blunted point, subdued,
Blow hollow-blustering from the south.
The frost resolves into a trickling thaw.
Spotted the mountains shine; loose sleet descends,
And floods the country round. The rivers swell,
Of bonds impatient. Sudden from the hills,
O’er rocks and woods, in broad brown cataracts,
A thousand snow-fed torrents shoot at once;
And where they rush, the wide-resounding plain
Is left one slimy slush.

THOMSON.



THE old year was laid in his grave amongst the things that are gone; and the wide-spread snow that hung upon his departing skirts like a shroud was beginning to melt away from the landscape. The long keen frost was giving way at last; and famished birds, which, a week ago, might be seen now and then flitting in spectral silence through the bitter air, with “the cauld drift upon their wings,” were beginning to cluster about the haunts of

man again in twittering flocks. The first hard spell of winter was over, and a rapid thaw had set in. The air was softening; and bland southerly winds, and drizzling showers, were changing the whole aspect of the scene from the pure severity of winter to a muggy, murky, mildness. The streets of the city, and the travelled roads outside, were all changed from the crisp and slippery footing of hard frost to a slushy mixture of mud and snow-broth. The snowed-up railway lines were gradually opening up to traffic again; the rivers were beginning to swell dangerously beneath the thinning ice; and the fields and trees in the open country, which lately looked so beautiful in their glittering robes of stainless frost-work, were now all flecked and sodden, and sullied with the sooty, sulphurous mixture brought down by the rain from our manufacturing air.

It was New Year’s Eve; and the short-lived light of a gloomy day was declining. The sky was dark with moist clouds; and the roads were splashy with mud and melting snow, as two old neighbours—Tom o’ mi-Gronny’s and Ben o’ Long Mat’s,—took their way homeward, out at the town-end, towards a little suburban village, about three miles off. They chatted, cheerfully, as they went along, for the prevailing distress had not yet touched them; and each had a little parcel of groceries under his arm; and each had his pockets stored with seasonable toys for the children at home. In addition to this, they had spent a genial hour together in a cosy corner before starting. “Now, Ben,” said Tom, “thou mun mind thi feet, here; it’s as slippy as glass! I’ve bin down o’ mi back twice to-day, mysel’,—an’ I can feel it yet. . . . Whoa, Tinker! By th’ mass, I’d like to bin

down again. . . . Here ; let's tak th' middle o'th road ! It's slutchy, but it's safe !” They were drawing near the last cluster of dwellings at the end of the town when a heavy shower of rain began to fall.

“ Hello !” cried Tom, “ this'll do noan ! We'd better house somewhere, while there's a chance, or else we's be weet to skin i' no time ! Run into th' cabman's hut, yon,— I dar say they'n let us sit down till it's o'er.”

“ Nawe, nawe,” said Ben ; “ let's goo in to Fiddler Bill's, here !”

“ Oh, ay, bi th' mass,—th' owd butcher's ! In witho !”

And in they ran at the open doorway. There was not a soul in the place ; but they could hear the voice of the jolly old butcher, singing in the little room behind the shop—

My faither once co'de me a foo ;
 An', egadlin, my faither were reet ;
 An' I doubt yo'n be thinkin so too.
 When I tell yo what happen't last neet.
 But that may be just as it will,
 I'll let it off free as the wind,
 For a mortal can never be weel
 As long as he's thrutched in his mind,
 Fal-derdal-lal-derdal-ay !
 Come round, then, an' hearken my sung,
 It may 'liven yor hearts up a bit ;
 For, though it'll not keep yo lung,
 It's a comical sort of a skit.

“ There he is,” said Tom, “ there he is,—th' owd lad,— as merry as a cricket, as usal !”

Then, knocking upon the floor with his stick, he shouted, “ Hello ! Shop ! Now then, Bill ! There's some beef wanted here !”

“Hello!” cried the butcher, as he came in from the back room, sharpening his thwittle, “Hello! What’s o’ this din about? . . . What? Is it thee, Ben? Never, sure! . . . Well; I’ve some prime stuff, here, lads! What mun I cut yo?”

“Thou mun cut me nought,” said Ben.

“Nor me, noather,” said Tom. “We’n nobbut slipt in out o’th rain.”

“Oh, I see,” replied the butcher, laughing, “I see. By Guy, lads, I’m doin’ a rare trade among yo! . . . Well; come into this back reawm. It’s as chep sittin’ as stonnin’. An’ if yo wanten nought to eat yo can happen do with a saup o’ some’at to sup,—as it’s Kessmas time.”

They were just turning to follow him into the back room when a little lad came into the shop.

“Well,” said the butcher, “what dost want, my lad?”

“A pen’oth o’ cat-meight.”

“Is it for thi mother?”

“Nawe; it’s for th’ cat.”

“Well; there it is, sitho.”

“There,” said the butcher, pointing to the lad as he went out, “that’s th’ best customer I’ve had this afternoon. Yo may guess what a trade I’m doin’. . . . But, come for’ad lads, into this back reawm; and sit yo down till th’ shower’s o’er.”

“I’ll tell tho what, Bill,” said Tom, as they went into the butcher’s little back room, “thou’s gotten a nice snug nook, here, to creep into.”

“Ay,” replied the butcher, “it does very weel. I’ve mony a comfortable smooke i’ this corner, by mysel’. An’ there’s

a bit of a window, here, sitho. I've nought to do but peep through that, an' I can see o' that's gooin' on i'th shop; an' I see some quare things, now and then. I've nobbut had two customers in sin three o'clock this afternoon,—one wur that lad that coom in just now, for a pen'oth o' cat-meight; an' tother wur a customer wi' four legs. . . . I sit smookin' here, about hauve-past three, an' I happen't to peep through thie window just i' time to get a wap of a great hungry-lookin' dog as it darted out at th' front dur-hole, yon, with a sheep's pluck in it mouth. I nipt up, an' after it like a redshank, with a clever i' my hond; but I hadn't gotten to th' end o'th street afore I coom bang o' my back; an' th' cleaver flew out o' my hond. I see'd no moore o' that dog,—nor th' sheep's pluck noather,—an' I doubt I never shall. . . . Those two are o' th' customers I've had in sin' three o'clock this afternoon. . . . Howd; stop! There's another comin', now? This'll be three! . . . I'll be back in a minute!"

Away went the butcher into his shop. Returning almost immediately to his friends, he said, as he entered the little back room again, "Well; I haven't bin long i' sarvin' you customer, as how 'tis!"

"Nawe, tho hasn't," said Ben. "What did he want?"

"He wanted to know what time it wur."

"Wur that o'?"

"Ay; that wur o'. . . . By th' hectum, I'm driving' a gainful trade, at present,—as how long it'll last! . . . Well, come; never mind! Poo up to th' fire; an' I'll find yo a tot o' whoam-brewed ale a-piece. . . . Here; try that! . . . Well, Ben, owd lad; how are they gotten

on i’th owd fowd, yon? Keepin’ th’ owd haliday up, I guess?”

“Ay; keepin’ it up, ay,—thoose ’at’s aught left to keep it up wi’; an’ that’s noan so mony, I can tell tho, for it’s a hard time, it is that! . . . But my wife an’ me kept it up rarely tother neet, for o’ that.”

“Oh, ay! How wur that?”

“Well; my wife an’ me,—we locked th’ house up about noon, an’ off we set to th’ town together, to look about us, an’ buy some oddments that we wanted for Kesmass. It wur the very day that we co’de at this shop, an’ bought that cow-yed. My uncle Sam had sent us a goose; but I thought we’d be nought short, if it wur rough; so that we could give a bit o’ some’at away, thou knows,—for there’s a deal o’ folk clemmin’ about yon nook, just now. Well; we knocked up an’ down th’ town, out o’ one nook into another, an’ we kept leetin’ first o’ one body that we knew, then o’ another body that we knew; an’ what wi’ one thing an’ another, I geet like market-fresh, an’ careless; an’ it wur late on afore we londed a-whoam. An’, at after we’d gotten a bit o’ supper, I said to my wife, ‘Now then, Betty; I think I’ll creep off to th’ blanket-market! Thou’ll not be long, I guess?’ ‘Ay,’ said our Betty, ‘off witho! I’ll just side these things, an’ then I’ll be up after tho!’ Well; I’d hardly gotten saddle’t i’ bed afore hoo coom to th’ bottom o’th stairs, an’ hoo cried out, ‘Ben!’ ‘Now then!’ ‘What’s thou done wi’ th’ keigh?’ ‘What keigh?’ ‘Th’ keigh o’th dur!’ ‘Which dur?’ ‘Th’ front dur!’ ‘I know nought about th’ keigh!’ ‘Well, but thou put it i’ thi pocket when we set off!’ ‘Well; feel i’ my pocket, then!’ ‘I’ve felt i’

every pocket thou has, but I cannot find it !' 'Is it upo' th' mantle-piece?' 'Nawe, it isn't!' 'Look at th' back o'th clock!' 'It isn't at th' back o'th clock, noather!' 'Hasto looked into th' cow-yed?' 'What's th' use o' talkin' sich stuff as that ! Thou knows very weel it isn't theer ! How can it be i'th cow-yed?' 'Well ; it mun be somewhere. Hasto looked?' 'Ay ; I've looked ; an' it isn't theer !' 'Well, then ; I mun ha' left it upo' th' table at Bull's Yed ; I remember knockin' for some ale with it. Never mind th' keigh ! Put a cheer at th' back o'th dur an' a lot o' loaf-tins a-top on't, an' come thi ways to bed ! We's be sure to yer if aught comes in.' So, hoo propped these things again th' back o'th dur, an' hoo coom up stairs ; an' in a bit, we geet saddle't down to sleep. . . . Well ; about three o'clock i'th mornin', when o' wur still, there wur such a clatter kicked up down below that yo might ha' yerd it a mile off. Our Betty an' me both jumped up at once. 'Now then,' I said, 'what the dule hasto agate now?' 'Eh, Ben!' said our Betty, 'do get up ! There's thieves i'th house !' An' hoo tremble't like a dog in a weet seck. Well ; I sprang out o' bed ; an' off I went down th' stairs, i' my shirt ; but, afore I'd getten the haue road down, I stopt, for there wur a lung, dark figure, stonnin' i'th middle o'th floor with a lantron in it hond. 'Now then,' I said, 'what the — art thou after?' 'Are yo noan fretten't o' bein' robbed?' 'Well,' said I, 'it just depends. What does thou want?' 'Well,' he said, 'I want yo to lock th' dur. *What han yo left th' keigh outside for ?*' It wur th' policeman. . . . I gav th' owd lad a pint o' ale ; and crope off to bed again. . . . But fro' that day to this,

our Betty an’ me can never sattle which on us it wur that left that keigh outside.”

“Come, Ben,” said “Tom o’ mi Gronny’s,” rising from his seat, “it’s time for us to be gooin’. Th’ rain’s dropt; an’ I want to get to bed soon to-neet!”

“Well,” said the butcher, “mind thou locks th’ dur, Tom, afore thou goes up stairs.”

“I’ll not lock it wi’ loaf-tins, as how ’tis!” replied Tom.

“Now, lads,” said the butcher, “afore yo starten off we’n just have another tot a-piece; an’ we’n tak it up-standin’ if yo’n a mind. . . . Come; here’s th’ owd toast:—

Meight when we’re hungry;
 Drink when we’re dry;
 Brass when we’re short on’t,
 An’ heaven when we die.

“So mote it be!” said Ben.

“Amen!” said Tom.

“A Happy New Year to yo, lads!” said the butcher.

“Th’ same to thee, Bill ”





Todlin' Whoam.

Todlin' whoam, fro th' market rant :
Todlin' whoam, content an' cant :
Wi' mi yed i' mi hat, an' mi feet i' mi shoon,
Todlin' whoam, bi th' leet o'th moon ;
I'm fain to be todlin' whoam !

Todlin' whoam, for fireside bliss ;
Todlin' whoam, for th' childer's kiss ;
God bless yon little ingle-nook !
God bless yon bit o' curlin' smooke !
I'm fain to be todlin' whoam !

Todlin' whoam, for prattlin' tungs ;
Todlin' whoam for twitterin' suns ;
To fondle, an' croodle, an' sink to rest,
Wi' th' wife an' little brids i'th nest ;
I'm fain to be todlin' whoam !

E. W.

T was a beautiful moonlight night as Betty's brother Joseph, and his friend, left Tummy o' Burdock's cottage, and took their way out at the town-end towards the quiet village of Marland, about two miles off, Betty stood in the doorway a little while, with her apron at her eyes, looking after Joseph as he walked pensively away in the moonlight. She watched his retiring figure as long as he was in sight ; and then she turned into the house again, touched with lonely feeling,—for he was her only brother,

and they were very fond of each other. Joseph, too, went on his way in silence ; for under his rough exterior beat a heart that was keenly alive to the tenderest feelings of humanity ; and the parting words in which she had reminded him that he was now the only one left to her of all their own family since her mother died, had saddened the thoughts of his mind, and sealed his lips for the time. On they went, past the "Pinfold," at the town-end, and past the old farmstead at "Goose lone," into the green country beyond. On they went, with the shadows of overhanging trees lying clear upon the moonlight road, as they stepped silently side by side, in the bright still midsummer night,—and, though the air seemed to swarm with invisible life, there was not a breath stirring, there was not a sound to be heard, except the faint rattle of distant wheels upon the road, and the loud clear knell of the old church clock in the town behind them, as it tolled nine ; every stroke of which floated far and wide with startling distinctness, as if it was sole tenant of all the listening scene. On they went in silence together ; for Sam, too, had heard poor Betty's plaintive farewell words to her brother, and, with a fine, instinctive sympathy, he held his tongue, loth to disturb the emotional reverie that swelled the kind heart of his companion. At length Joseph seemed to recover himself ; and, halting under the overhanging trees at Sparth, he took off his hat, and wiped his forehead ; and sighing as he looked down into the picturesque village lying asleep below the road he said : "It's a bonny neet, Sam, but it's very close. Don't go so fast." "I'm i' no hurry," replied Sam. This broke the spell ; and now they gradually got into talk together, as they went along.

"I'll tell tho' what, Joe," said Sam, "yo'r Betty makes Burdock a rare good wife. I don't know that I ever set een on a cleaner little house i' my life."

"Aye," replied Joe, "hoo likes havin' things tidy about her, does our Betty, It's bred in her; for my mother wur just th' same. An' my wife's just o'th same turn; but I think sometimes that hoo's rather too particular. If thou'll believe me, hoo's nipped, an' scraped, an' save't at o' ends to make yon little parlour of ours look nice, an' put good things into it; an' now hoo's made it so nice that hoo'll not let one on us set a fuut into't. A week or two back hoo went o'er to Unsworth a-seein' her mother, an' while hoo wur away, yon owd'st lass o' mine just ventur't to poo th' blind up, an' let a bit o' dayleet in; but there wur wigs upo' th' green when our Sally coom back, I can tell tho."

"Let's see," said Sam; "Unsworth, saysto? That's where th' Pow is, isn't it?"

"Yigh, it is—Unsworth Pow—it's well known, far an' wide."

"Ay; I've yerd tell on't mony a time. When they took th' owd May-pow down, that had stood for mony a generation, they put a new un up; but, when they fund that it wur a bit short, they mucked th' ground about it, to make it groo."

"It's a tale that somebody's made up," said Joe.

"Oh, nay," continued Sam; "I believe its true; for it's th' same place where they shot a wheelbarrow becose it had bin bitten by a mad dog."

"I don't believe it," replied Joe.

"Well, but; howd thi din a bit," continued Sam; "where is Unsworth? Isn't it close to Heaton Park?"

“Ay, sure it is.”

“Well, I’ve yerd folk tell mony a time about a fine antler’t stag breakin’ out o’th park, an’ gettin’ into th’ road, close to Unsworth; an’ th’ first Unsworth chap that see’d it took to his heels, an’ ran into th’ owd alehouse, an’ he cried out, ‘Heigh, lads; look out! There’s a wild cowlt runnin’ up an’ down th’ fowd, wi’ a cheer (chair) on it’s yed.’ Doesto believe that now?”

“Nawe, I don’t. That’s another tale o’th same breed. I don’t believe that Unsworth folk are bigger foos than other folk.”

“I guess thou never met wi’ a foo i’ Unsworth, becose yo’r Sally comes fro theer?”

“Well, between thee an’ me, Sam, I seldom meet wi’ aught else, onywheer.”

“That’s one for me,” replied Sam.

“Never mind,” said Joe; “thou’ll get o’er it, I dar say. But let’s drop Unsworth, an’ I’ll tell tho a bit of a tale about my uncle Abram. He lives at Bury, an’ that’s nobbut about four mile fro Unsworth.”

“Is that him that stoole a gravestone to bake muffins on?”

“Th’ same chap, Sam. But he didn’t steighl it—he bought it.”

“There’s not much difference, Joe; for it didn’t belong to th’ chap that sowl it. But get for’ard wi’ thi tale.”

“Well; at th’ last election for Bury there wur a terrible feight between one side an’ tother which mut (must) get their mon in. An’ as it happen’t, my uncle Abram wur for one colour, an’ the maister that he wortched for wur for tother colour; an’ that made it raither awk’ard, for things ran

so close that noather side stick't at a trifle. But two or three days afore th' election coom off, th' maister code (called) at my uncle Abram's, an' axed him for his vote. 'Well, maister,' said my uncle Abram, 'yo know very weel that I'm for tother side.' 'Ay,' said th' maister, 'I know that, Abram; but then, as I've fund work for thee an' th' family so mony years, I think thou cannot do less than vote for my side for an odd time. If thou doesn't, thou'd better look out; for I can get plenty o' folk to wortch for me that'll vote o' my side beawt ony bother.' Well; my uncle Abram wur nobbut a poor chap, an' he'd a greight family, an' wark wur scarce; an' it raiter put him about; so he tow'd th' maister that he'd think it o'er a bit, an' let him know. So th' maister went away an' left him to't. Well; as soon as th' maister wur gone, my aint Sally said, 'Abram; whatever arto thinkin' on? Thou knows that our Sarah, an' our Mary, an' our Ailse, an' our Sam, an' his childer,—they o' wortchen at his mill; an' as sure as ever thou votes for tother side, they'n every one get th' bag! I wonder at tho! Good Lord o' me, I cannot see what difference it makes between tone an' 'tother! This chap that th' maister's for is as nice-lookin' a chap as ever I clapt een on! If I'd twenty votes he should have 'em! How leets thou cannot vote for thoose that we getten a livin' by! Doesto want to have us clemmed to death? I'th name o' good Katty, what is a vote, that thou mun make sich a bother about it? Thou knows what a family we han; an' I hope to the Lord that they'n never come to no harin through thee an' thi votin'!' Then my uncle Abram turn't round, an' he said, 'I'll tell tho what it is, lass!—thou's bin a good wife to me, an' a

good mother to th' childer,—but between thee an' me, thou'rt talkin' a lot o' talk that would be better untalked! Th' top an' bottom on't is, thou knows nought at o' about it; an' it's no use tryin' to larn tho! I believe thou'd vote for the devil his-sel', if he coom wi' a smooth tung, an' thou could make ony brass by it!' Well, he very seldom said aught so hard as this to her; an' it put my aint Sally about to that degree that hoo began a-cryin'. But at it he went, ding-dong,—for th' owd lad's blood wur up. Well; as it happen't there wur a neighbour chap in,—an' owd friend o' mi uncle Abram's,—that went by th' name o' 'Camomile,' an' Camomile tried to persuade him to get o'er it by keepin' out o' th' road till th' election wur o'er. 'Ay,' said my aint Sally; 'do, Abram! Goo o'er to Halifax a-seein' thi sister for a day or two till th' election's o'er; an' then they cannot blame tho for votin' noather for one side nor tother!' 'Camomile,' said my uncle Abram, cockin' his little finger up, 'does thou see that little finger?' 'Well,' said Camomile, 'an' what bi that?' 'Well,' said my uncle Abram, 'I'd sooner bite th' end o' that finger off than I'd vote for yon chap o' th' maister's! An' I never will vote for him, noather!' Then my aint Sally began a-cryin' again, an' hoo said, 'I wonder at tho botherin' about it so mich, when thou knows that thi livin' depends on it!' 'Livin' or no livin',' cried my uncle Abram, 'I'll vote as I've a mind,—by ——!—that is, if I vote at o'!' But at last they geet him persuaded to goo o'er to Halifax, to his sister's, for a day or two, till th' election wur o'er; an' Camomile agreed to go wi' him for company. . . . Well, off they set together for Halifax; but, when they geet to th' town

end, Camomile stopt, an' he said, 'By th' mass, Abram, istid o' gooin' to Halifax, let's run o'er to th' Isle o' Man for a day or two,—it'll be a deal nicer out!' Well, my uncle Abram agreed to't in a minute, an' away they went to th' Isle of Man; an' never a soul at whoam knew but that he'd gone to Halifax. Well, the election row went on, an' folk kept co'in', fro day to day, to see how Abram wur gooin' to vote; but, they o' geet one onswer, 'He's gone to Halifax a-seein' a sister of his that's poorly.' Well, my cousin Sam,—that's my uncle Abram's owdest son,—wur o'th opposite side to his faither, an when th' votin' day coom they sent Sam to look after his faither, an' he wur to bring him up to vote oather bi feaw means or fair. Sam had getten a hint that they wur keeping his faither out o'th gate till th' election wur o'er, so he coom into th' house in a great passion, an' he cried out, 'Where's mi faither? Turn him out, or else I'll play hell i' this hole!' 'Now, Samuel,' said mi aint Sally, 'do be quiet, I beg on tho! Thi faither's noan beawn to vote for noather side!' 'Isn't he, bi ——? I'll see about that! Turn him out, I tell yo; or else I'll punce this table o'er!' 'Now, Sammul,' said my aint Sally; 'I don't want ony disturbance i' this house! Thi faither's not a-whoam!' 'Where is he, then?' 'He's gone o'er to Halifax, a-seein' thy aint Matty!' Well, Sam swore that he'd fotch him back with a rattle, an' make him vote for th' maister's mon; so he darted off to th' train, an' away he went to Halifax; but, when he geet theer, an' they tow'd him that his faither had never bin near th' place, he wouldn't believe it, an' he kickt up sich a dust that he geet walked off to th' lock-ups, an' afore he geet out again th' election

had bin o'er some time ; an' he coom whoam again wi' his tail between his legs, for both him an' his faither had lost their votes. . . . Hello, what's that?"

"It's somebody singin' i'th ale-house, yon."

"Husht! There's two on 'em at it!"

"Ay, there's two on 'em,—an' it sounds like a duet between a corncrake an' a scouring-stone."

They were now within five hundred yards of home. The tranquil little mere of Marland lay between the ancient village and the old roadside inn like a sheet of burnished silver.

They stood for a minute listening and looking round at the pleasant scene. At last Sam said, "Well, it's not so late. I guess there'll be time for an odd gill at th' owd shop here?" "Agreed on," replied Joe, and in they went.





A Bite too Much.

As I went whistlin' whoam fro wark,
One autumn neet, at th' edge o' dark,
As blithe as ony flutt'rin' lark,
I thowt to mysel',
I'll stop an' look about a bit,
Fro th' top o'th hill.

Farm folk wur callin' in their kye ;
A plain owd chap wur trailin' by ;
"Come hither, Jone, owd lad," said I,
"And have a sit ;
An' while this dayleet dees i'th sky,
Let's talk a bit."

OWD ISAAC.

T was a gloomy autumn evening. The rain had fallen heavily in the night ; and it had rained nearly all day. The gutters by the side of the road were flushed with water ; and rain-drops danced on every "pointed thorn." There was not a breath of air stirring. The brooding landscape seemed wrapt in melancholy thought and the steeped foliage, now touched by the finger of death, was ready to come down in a shower, with the first wind that blew. At the close of a glorious hay-time,

we had been cheered by flickering hopes that the ensuing autumn might "turn out" a kind of "Indian summer," or, "a fine back-end," as country folk call it. But, no sooner was the crop well housed than the inconstant "glass" began to flirt restlessly between sun and shade, settling at last into solid gloom, and a steady downpour; and now, the whole scene looked as soaked, and sloppy, and disconsolate as if the sun had taken an eternal farewell, and left the doomed land a prey to everlasting damp. Altogether it was what Johnny Collop calls "a weet look out;" for every voice upon the street, every clock that struck, and every bell that tolled in the distance came upon the ear with a distinctness of sound that clearly foretold continued rain. But, in spite of the dampness of the air, and the dreariness of the scene,—and in spite of his four-score and eight years' pilgrimage in this rough world of ours, hearty old "Bob o' Kersal" came toddling forth from his nest, staff in hand, when the rain ceased for an hour, at the close of the day, to take a parting look at the landscape before going to rest. The changes of the weather seemed to make little difference to Bob, for, rain or fair, his constant cry was, "I cannot bide under cover!" and even in the wildest storm, his unvarying salutation to the passer-by was, "It's a foine day!" . . . The old man took his usual seat by the wayside, where the dead leaves from overhanging trees lay thick about his feet; and, as he sat there, looking around, now and then, another sere leaf came quivering quietly down upon his head, as if claiming a natural companionship of decay with the veteran whose days were dwindling to the shortest span.

The old man had not been seated many minutes before an empty coal cart came slowly down the road, attended by two grimy-looking young carters. As soon as they saw the sturdy grey-beard under the trees, "Amos o' Nancy's," the elder of the two, said to his companion, a squat, square-built young fellow, known as "Jack o'th Clubs,"—"Hello, Jack; there's owd Bob, here! Poo up a minute; an' let's have a word wi' him!"

"Agreed on!" replied Jack; "agreed on! An' then we'n have a warm gill i'th house, yon, afore we gwon ony further; for I haven't a dry stitch o' mi back! . . . Woigh!"

The horse stopped; and the two came slinging up to the hedge-side, where old Bob was sitting.

"Is that yo, Robert?"

"Ay; it's me. . . . Is that thee, Amos?"

"Ay; it's me. . . . Hutch up a bit. Han yo ony reawm?"

"Ay; there's reawm for both on yo. . . . Who's this chap 'at's witho?"

"It's little Jack o'th Clubs. Don't yo know him?"

"Ay; I know him,—weel enough. An' I knowed his uncle Sam, too. There wur mony a bigger foo than thy uncle Sam, my lad."

"Ay; I believe so, Robert."

"Ay, it's true, my lad. There wur mony a bigger foo than thy uncle Sam,—an' mony a bigger wastrel, too,—but, not so mony, noather. . . . I hope thou doesn't tak on him, my lad."

"Nawe. They tellen me that I tak terribly o' my faither."

“Well, come, that is raither better,—but not so inich, noather. . . . Well, Amos; an’ how art thou gettin’ on?”

“Well,—nobbut middlin’. . . . Yo’re lookin’ very weel for yer age, Robert.”

“Well; an’ I *am* very weel for mi age, my lad. I consider that if I wur bowled out to-day I should have had a very fair innings. . . . But what’s th’ matter wi’ thee? Thou says thou’rt nobbut middlin’.”

“An’ it’s true, too, Robert; I am nobbut middlin’,—an’ hardly that.”

“But what’s to do I ax thi again,—what’s to do that thou hangs thi nether lip so?”

“Well; I think I mun ha’ bin kessunt (christened) bi a left-honded parson, Robert; for I’ve had nought but ill-luck, latly.”

“But what’s happen’t, my lad? Out wi’t,—an’ let it leet (alight)!”

“Well; yo known that rough stone wole that goes round th’ owd nursery?”

“Ay, sure; I know it. It’s about a mile long; an’ there’s no end to ’t; for its as round as a racecourse.”

“That’s the very spot, Robert.”

“I know it very well; an’ I dar say I can tell tho a bit o’ some’at about it thou doesn’t know.”

“No doubt yo can, Robert. What is it?”

“Ay; an’ what’s moore, thi uncle Jonas wor in at it.”

“Well, then; let’s be yerrin (hearing)!”

“Well, one neet, about twenty year sin, thi uncle Jonas coom rollin whoam fro th’ fair as drunk as a lord. It wur

pitch dark, but he managed to hit th' gate pratty weel, till he coom to th' nursery-wole ; an' theer he seemed to lose his yed o' together, for he began a-wanderin' round an' round th' nursery, gropin' at th' wole o' th' road as he went for a dur-latch ; an' shoutin' for his wife to coom down stairs an' let him in. Well, one o'th park gam-keepers happen't to be gooin by at th' time, an' he watched thi uncle Jonas a bit ; an', at last, he went up to him, an' he said, 'Now, then, what arto makin' this din about?' 'I'm lookin' for our house !' 'Wheer doesto live?' 'I live i' this street !' 'Street, be —— ! There's no street here, thou drunken leather-yed ! This is th' nursery, an' thou's walked twice round it while I've bin here ; groping at th' wole, an' yeawlin' out for yo'r Betty to open the dur. Come thi ways wi' me, thou'rt haue a mile off whoam, yet ; an' thou'll never get theer to-neet bi thisel' !"

"Is that true, Robert ?"

"It's as true as I'm sittin' here, my lad."

"Well, then, that nursery-wole runs i' th' famiij, for I'd as ill a do as that with it, about a fortnight sin."

"Oh, ay? How wur that, then?"

"Well ; this last year or two I've bin tryin' to save a bit o' brass ; an' I managed to scrape six pound ten together, hit by bit, an' put it into th' savings bank. Well ; somebody i'th fowd had towd me that this brass weren't safe ; so I went down to th' town o'th market day about a fortnight sin, and drew it out o' th' bank. Well, as the dule would have it, I met wi' a lot of owd cronies, an' I spent about ten shillin' o' mi brass amung 'em ; an' away I coom off whoam, as drunk as Chloe, wi' six pound teed up in a

bit o' rag, as tight as wax. Well; whatever coom into my yed, I cannot tell; but I wur so fleyed o' losin' this brass that, when I geet to the nursery wole, I poo'd a loose stone out, an' popped this six pound into th' hole, an' then put th' stone back again. 'Theer,' thinks I, 'that's safe now, as how 'tis!' an' off I went whoam as content as a king. But, by Guy, when I geet up next mornin', I wur a good while afore I could remember what I'd done wi' mi brass; an' when I bethought me about th' nursery-wole, off I set to th' spot; but when I get theer I could no moore tell nor th' mon i'th moon what part o'th wole I'd put it in. So I hanged about till neet coom on; an' then I began a-poin' th' wole down, but I hadn't done above a yard or so afore a policeman coom an' walked me off to th' lockups. I nobbut geet out yesterday. But, I'll ha' that brass yet, if I have to poo every stone o' th' wole down, bit bi bit, i'th neet-time,—an' it's aboon a mile long!"

"Let th' brass stop i'th wole, mon! It'll do no harm where it is; an' it'll do thee no good if thou gets it! Beside thou'rt a man o' property as long as it's theer; an' if ever thou gets howd on't, it'll run through thi fingers th' first Rushbearing' that comes."

"I'll ha' that brass, I tell yo, Robert; or else I'll rive yon wole down!"

"Well, then; thee an th' wole mun saddle between yo, Amos . . I guess thou'll not remember thi uncle Jonas?"

"Well; I can just remember him, Robert; but it's as mich as th' bargain."

"I dar say. . . . Him and me wur particular friends. We had a rare do together i'th Isle o' Man once, twenty

year sin. There wur thi uncle Jonas, an' Jone o' Simeon's, th' bazzoon-player. Jone had a wood leg, shod wi' iron. We o' set off together to th' Isle o' Man, an' when we geet theer, we went straight across to a place co'de Port Erin, at th' west end o' th' islan'; where there wur very good fishin'; an' it's a terrible place for conger eel, an' o' sorts o' big fish. Well; one day we took a boat, an' a boatman, an' we went out a fishin' i'th bay,—wi' strong lines, an' great hooks, ready for ought that coom. An' while we sat theer, danglin' th' lines o'er th' edge o'th boat, thi uncle Jonas began a-jokin Jone about his wood leg. 'Jone,' he said, 'If this boat happens to upset thou'll float longer than me.' 'How so?' 'Thou's so mich wood about tho.' 'Well, but,' said Jone, 'I think thou'll ston as good a chance as me,—if I have a wood leg.' 'How so?' 'Because thou'rt so well timber't at th' top end.' But while they were agate o' their fun, thi uncle Jonas felt a great tug at his line. 'Hello!' cried he, 'what the devil's this? Come here, lads!' The boatman went and geet owd o'th line. 'Aye,' said he, 'this is a conger; an' a big un, too! I hope it'll not break th' line! By th' mass, how it tugs! Gently! It's a big fish is this! Let him play a bit! It's comin'! Eh, what a mouth! Ston fur! Here it is! It wur a tremendous size; an' as soon as we'd getten it o'er th' edge o'th boat it flew fro side to side, snappin' savagely first at one then at another on us. 'Look out!' cried one. 'Punce it!' cried another. 'It's a devil!' cried another. 'Mind; thou'll upset th' boat! Heigh, Jone; its coming to thee! Look out!' Jone took aim at it with his iron-shod wood leg; but he missed 'th fish, an sent his wood leg slap through th'

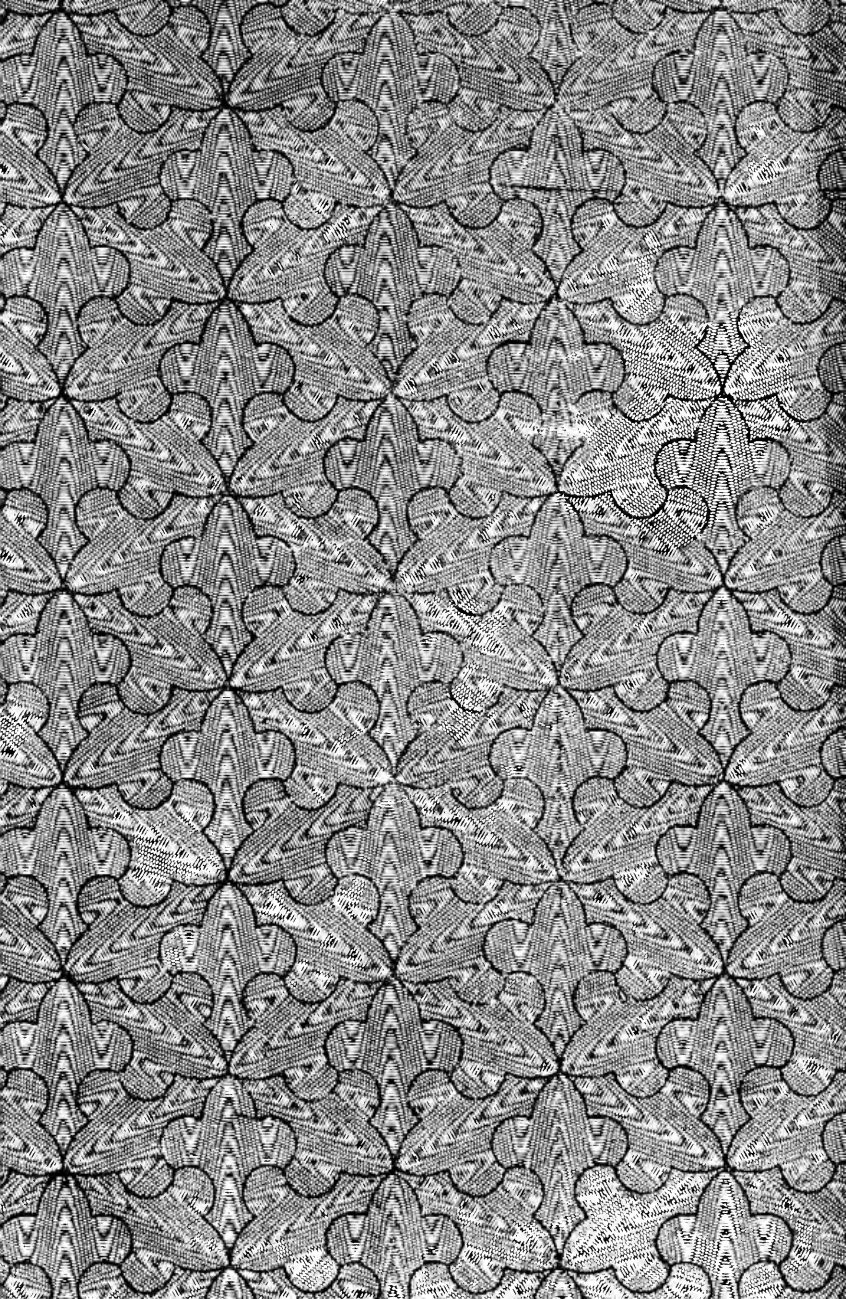
bottom o'th owd boat, reet up to th' knee. 'Theighur!' cried thi uncle Jonas; 'thou's shapt that grandly, owd lad!' 'Poo me up!' cried Jone; 'Poo me up, some on you; I'm fast!' 'Howd, stop!' said thi uncle Jonas; 'Thou munnot tak thi leg out! We's be drown't! 'Drown't or not drown't,' cried Jone, 'I mun lia' my leg out o' this hole!' 'Thou mun keep it where it is, I tell tho, or else we's ha' th' boat full o' wayter in a minute.' 'An how long am I to cruttle down here,' cried Jone, 'wi my leg i' this hole?' Then he gave a sudden jerk, an' he skrike't out louder than ever, Oh! Poo me up, this minute!' 'What's to do, now?' 'Th' conger's gotten howd on me beheend! Tak it off!' An' sure enough it had gotten fast owd o'th soft end of his back,—an' theer it stuck. 'For pity's sake take it off!' cried Jone. 'Oh, don't poo so hard! Let it get loose of itsel'! Prize it mouth oppen! Oh! I cannot ston this!' 'It's no use,' said thi uncle Jonas, 'it'll not let go!' 'Then cut it yed off!' cried Jone; 'an' poo ashore as fast as you con,—I'm bleedin' like a cauve!' So we poo'd ashore, as fast as we could, wi' Jone's leg stickin' through th' bottom o'th boat; but when we were gettin' near lond, Jone's leg coom again a sunken rock, an' snapt off close to th' boat. 'Theer,' said Jone, pooin' his stump out o'th hole, 'thank God for that,—sink or swim! Now then, tak this thing off my hinder-end!' So, wi' much ado, we manage't to cut the conger off, close to'th yed; but th' yed stuck fast to th' owd lad's breeches when done. An' thi uncle Jonas had to carry Jone on his back fro th' boat to th' alehouse, with his broken stump, an' th' conger's yed hangin' beheend him. An when th' folk at th' ale-

house seed us coming', they shouted fro' th' dur-hole, an' axed what luck we'd had. 'Luck!' said Jone; 'look at th' back o' me, here! I've had a bite, if nobody else has!'"

And now the rain began to descend in torrents again.

"Fling a sheet o'er that horse, Jack," said Amos; "an' let's go into th' house till th' shower's o'er! Come, Robert; come, an' have a gill wi' us!"





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Waugh, Edwin
The chimney corner

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