

THE LITTLE MINSTREL.

His hands are soiled, his throat is bare. His face is streaked with dirt and thin, And many a slip is in the air. He plays upon his violin: A sadness dwells within his eyes, The shoes are ragged on his feet, And scowls stop to criticize The little minstrel in the street.

THROUGH A PENSTOCK

By ALBERT W. TOLMAN.

WHILE on a railway journey between Springfield and Boston a few months ago I shared my seat with a quiet, well-dressed man of middle age. Some trivial circumstance engaged us in conversation, and I learned that my fellow passenger was an assistant superintendent in a Maine pulp mill.

On his watch chain hung a wooden charm, a dog's head, curved with such grotesque and peculiar ugliness that I had difficulty in keeping my eyes away from it. Whenever he looked out of the window my glance returned to the charm. At last I could restrain my curiosity no longer, and with an apology made some comment on the strangeness of the ornament. He took my inquisitiveness in good part, and was kind enough to tell me the story of the charm.

"Yes," he said, "it's a queer-looking piece of wood. It was carved for me 20 years ago by a friend who had a knack for that kind of work. It's the only thing I have to remember him by, and so I think a good deal of it. But I've another strong reason for recalling the birch snag he whittled it from, and it may interest you to hear it.

"When I was between 25 and 30 years old I was at work in a mill on the Kennebec river. My regular position was that of foreman of one of the departments, but as I was very handy with tools, I often did odd jobs to accommodate the superintendent.

"One August morning there was trouble with the wooden grate that kept drift stuff from getting into the penstock, which is, as you know, the great tube of iron or banded plank conveying the water from the mill race to the wheel. In the last high water a log had broken one of the upper spruce bars.

"The mill was running overtime to fill extra orders, and the company did not wish to close it for half a day unless it was absolutely necessary. So I was asked to repair the damage without shutting the gate at the head of the race. I looked at the break and saw that it would be no very difficult task to patch it while the water was on, provided the grate were swung back against the side of the conduit. So I sent for my tools and went to work.

"It was a drowsy midsummer morning. Dragon flies and swallows were darting over the surface of the river, and from the stubble fields on each side came the shrill rasping sound of the grasshopper. In the street above a group of little girls were laughing and playing. Several hundred feet up the river, under a grove of leaning willows, was a swimming hole, where a half dozen boys were disporting themselves.

"If I had not been interrupted three or four times by messengers from my department in the mill, I should have finished the job in less than an hour. As it was, it was almost noon before the break was repaired to my satisfaction. The hot sun beat down on my head as I worked away at the grate; below, the smooth, brown water ran steadily into the flume.

"With my back to the race, I was putting a few final touches on my work close to the water, when something happened that for a minute frightened me horribly. There came a sharp clench at my sleeve.

"I whirled round in surprise, and saw something like a lean brown arm rising from the water! I shook it off, and another arm rose slowly and deliberately and seemed to make a mechanical effort to grasp me, while the first as slowly sank out of sight.

"They were the long roots of a water-soaked stump that had lain for months, perhaps years, on the river-bottom, and had now been swept by the current to the head of the flume. It was against just such unwelcome visitors as this that the grate was designed to be a barrier.

"Now appeared a huge octopus-like body, revolving gradually in the flood. It hung for a moment at the opening of the penstock, and then disappeared down the dark cavity, its roots scraping against the sides and top as it rolled over.

"I snatched a boat-hook that lay on the embankment and made an effort to fix its steel tooth in the slimy stump. For a moment I thought I had succeeded. I leaned over a little farther; the earth crumbled under me, and I fell head foremost into the race!

"As I fell I caught with my hands at the lower part of the grate. My weight swung it out into the current, which immediately whirled it to; and there I hung, my body trailing off into the penstock, dragged down by the clutch of the water.

"My position was a terrible one. I

was holding on merely by the tips of my fingers, which were hooked round one of the wooden bars. The current lashed my body from one side of the pipe to the other. If I loosened my grip in the slightest I should be swept to death. Below me was the thousand feet of steel tube, through which an irresistible torrent was shooting; and at its end was the great wheel, revolving with the swiftness of light, and ready to incinerate and mangle whatever might be hurled against it.

"The penstock was perfectly straight, and about eight feet in diameter. For the first hundred yards a gradually decreasing portion of its top was above ground. Just where it disappeared beneath the earth was an open manhole, covered by a heavy wire-net. For the remainder of its length it was buried at an increasing depth beneath the surface, till it passed through the foundation wall of the mill and came out in the lowest basement. There was another open manhole a few feet from the end of the pipe.

"As I clung to the grating, with my face barely above the surface, I could see the little twigs and chips drawn into the current and sucked down the smooth incline. I tried to pull myself up to the grating in the hope that I might climb out of reach of the water that was dragging me down.

"But so slight was my hold that I could not get sufficient purchase to do this; and I was afraid to relax my grip in the least for fear that I might be swept away before I could regain it.

"It was plain that this state of affairs could not last very long. The strain was in nowise violent or rough, but it was steady. Far behind me down the long tunnel I could hear the water falling on the wheel. My fingers were growing numb. Little by little the strength was leaving them. I could not hold on much longer. Would no one come to rescue me? I thought of my wife and children, and clung with renewed energy. I shouted. But who could hear me, imprisoned as I was in the mouth of the pipe?

"Suddenly steps approached outside, and through the top of the grating above me I saw a red-whiskered face looking down. It was the Scotch engineer. I could see the little beads of sweat standing out on his forehead, and two or three wisps of thin red hair plastered down on his flushed skin.

"'Heaven preserve us!' I heard him say. 'It's Bickmore! Hold on, man, and I'll save ye!'

"He waved his hand to encourage me, and disappeared. I heard him running swiftly toward the mill. Then the sound of his footsteps died away.

"At the upper end of the channel that fed the penstock was the heavy wooden gate, operated from the engine-room by a system of rods and levers. I knew that Sandy was hurrying to close this gate and cut off the flow of the water into the race.

"But he had come too late. 'Not five seconds after his face disappeared my numbed fingers lost their grip, and I was swept like a feather down the penstock.

"The stream was only about four feet deep, and flowed with very little sound or turmoil. I managed to keep my head above the surface, and occasionally my feet touched bottom as I was borne along. But to stop my progress was simply impossible. The current was too strong and too swift.

"Occasionally I was dashed against the iron sides of the pipe, and involuntarily threw out my hands to clutch at them. Vain effort! for the sides were smooth and slimy; and even had I been able to arrest my course, my arms would have been torn from their sockets by the resistless power that was hurrying me along.

"Overhead a square of light flashed by. I had already gone a hundred yards and passed under the open manhole. Through its frame I caught what I felt was probably my last glimpse of blue sky. The branch of a poplar hung above the opening, and I saw its green leaves bright in the sun. Then darkness came again.

"On through the cylinder I rushed. I do not know how long it took me to traverse that thousand feet. It was probably in the neighborhood of two minutes. I remember looking back and seeing the round, white, grated mouth of the penstock growing steadily smaller and farther off. And every second the roar at the other end was becoming louder and louder. From the utter darkness in front the roar of the beaten water boomed up the narrow tunnel. In a few seconds all would be over.

"The end came before I had expected it. With a shock that drove the breath out of my body, I was flung against something rough and sharp and hard, something that seemed to clutch me with several arms, bruising and wounding me. I knew nothing else, for at that moment I lost consciousness.

"When I came to myself, I was lying on a heap of paper waste in the basement of the mill. Half a dozen of the workmen were around me. I felt sick and weak. My clothing was torn in several places, and I was covered with bruises. But to me the miracle was that I was still alive and that my bones were whole.

"The very thing that had been the cause of my peril had in the end proved to be my safety. The birch stump had been swept down the penstock, until within a few feet of the wheel its roots had caught on the edge of the last manhole. The shock of my body had dislodged it, but fortunately for me its hold was not entirely loosened until the engineer had closed the gate of the race and stopped the wheel. Just as the last root gave way the force of the water abated.

"I had been found insensible in the very end of the pipe. Death had been only a few seconds away from me. This watch-charm was carved out of a piece of the stump that saved my life."—Youth's Companion.

Then and Now. "Wedman, you and your good lady don't seem to get on so well together as you used. How is that?" "Well, she's a bit changed, old man. At first she was bliss—now she's a blister!"—Ally Sloper.

He Is Dead Now. Snodgrass—What's become of Tawfer? I have not seen him for six months or more. He had one foot in the grave then. Snively—He has six feet in now.—Harlem Life.

That's Right Too. Mrs. Winks—I wonder why it is that people always call a locomotive "she"? Mr. Binks—I don't know, I'm sure, unless it is because she isn't good for much without a man to run her.—Somerville Journal.

A Hint from Dad. "Darling, please answer me," he fairly moaned, as he stood in the center of the parlor. "I am on the rack." "So is your hat," shouted the old gentleman, who had a gallery seat on the stairway.—Tit-Bits.

After the Proposal. He—Do you think your mother will be surprised? She—Yes, indeed. She was saying only this afternoon that she didn't believe you'd ever get up the courage to propose.—Judge.

Veiled Sarcasm. Mrs. Wedderly—I wonder why it is that single men are always the most anxious to go to war? Wedderly—I suppose it's because they don't know what war really is.—Chicago Daily News.

Correct Information. Johnny is sent to the corner drug store for a box of Dr. Blank's pellets. "Anti-bilious?" asks the clerk. "Oh, no," comes Johnny's answer, "uncle's sick."—N. Y. Times.

After the Finish. Jaggles—The fees of fashionable surgeons are something enormous. Waggles—Yet the autopsy often discloses that they operated for nothing at all.—Town Topics.

A WORD TO WOMEN.—Any sick woman is invited to consult by letter with Dr. R. V. Pierce, chief consulting physician of the Invalids' Hotel and Surgical Institute, Buffalo, N. Y. In an active practice of more than thirty years, assisted by a staff of nearly a score of associate physicians, Dr. Pierce has treated and cured over half a million women. All diseases peculiar to women are treated with success. This consultation by letter is absolutely free. Every letter is treated as strictly private and sacredly confidential. Answers are mailed promptly giving the best of medical advice. All answers are sent in plain envelopes bearing on them no printing of any kind. Write without fear and without fee to Dr. R. V. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y.

The girls with small waists usually have great staying qualities. SPEECHLESS AND PARALYZED.—"I had valvular disease of the heart," writes Mrs. J. S. Goble, of Troy, N. Y. "I suffered terribly and was often speechless and partially paralyzed. One dose of Dr. Agnew's Cure for the Heart gave me instant relief, and before I finished one bottle I was able to go about. To day I am a well woman." Sold by C. A. Klein.

A GREAT SURPRISE is in store for all who use Kemp's Balsam for the Throat and Lungs, the great guaranteed remedy. Would you believe that it is sold on its merits and any druggist is authorized by the proprietor of this wonderful remedy to give you a sample bottle free? It never fails to cure acute or chronic coughs. All druggists sell Kemp's Balsam. Price, 25 and 50c. 213441

The political pull is often applied to legs. McClure's Magazine For March.

Good Stories and Timely Articles in Many Different Fields. The distinction of the March number of "McClure's Magazine" lies not less in the remarkably well considered variety of its contents than in the excellence of individual articles. Three very timely and yet very different articles are Carl Snyder's account of the wonderful medical discoveries of Professor Loeb of Chicago University, which two months ago startled the whole scientific world, and which are now first clearly and soundly treated in popular form; Julian Ralph's concise review of Conan Doyle's great book on the Boer War, just published; and a character sketch by Maurice Sherman Porter of "Denis Mulvihill, Stoker and Mayor," the new mayor of Bridgeport, Conn., and one of the most picturesque figures in American political life to-day.

An historical essay, in vivid narrative form, is Ida M. Tarbell's story of the trial of Aaron Burr, a dramatic and yet little known episode of American history. Clara Morris has a paper on her old friend, himself best known as the founder of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Henry Bergh, enlivened with the kind of anecdotes which Miss Morris knows so well how to tell. William Davenport Hulbert writes about the "Life of a Canada Lynx" in the same fresh and simple way in which he has already told about the other wild animals of our Northern forests. A pleasant paper of the "Next to the Ground" series is Martha McCullough Williams' "Cow."

The stories are all good and all different. George Madden Martin has another Enemy Lost story, "All the Winds of Doctrine," which shows "the little heroine struggling in the Fifth Reader with the mysteries of creeds and the Dictionary. Norman Duncan's "The Raging of the Sea" is a moving story of a battle with the storm in a cranky Newfoundland fisherman's punt. In "Mrs. Oatfield's Outer Kaiment," M. J. Stewart Cutting tells with delightfully quick humor a little story of a new dress for the mother of a family. Chauncey Thomas contributes "Kiowa's Revival," a rattling tale of the track that the cowmen of Kiowa played on the eastern prairie who come to live among them. "Barn-door's Romance," by Carrie Hunt Lotta, is a homely little idyll of farm life. Miss Daskam's "Verses for a Child" are simple and quaint and childlike, and are beautifully illustrated with decorative borders by Ethel Franklin Betts.

Some people couldn't break into society with a burglar's kit. CASTORIA. The Kind You Have Always Bought Bears the Signature of

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Intuition, Perhaps. After they had been silent for a long time she timidly asked: "Do you carry a love charm?" "No," he answered. "Why?" "Well, I—I don't know, but somehow something seemed to make me think that you must, because—because—oh, dear, you know, I just thought perhaps you must, for I—well, if you don't, of course, no matter."

After he had kissed her for about the twentieth time she looked up into his handsome, manly face and asked: "Alfred, dear, how did you ever guess that I cared for you?"—Chicago Record-Herald.

The Woman of It. Should Jack propose to-night, at every plea I'd laugh, and say to him, with manner cool, "You've wooed and flitted others; as for me, in love I'm much too wise for you to fool!" I'd flay and torture him, I'd laugh and jeer, in proving him presumptuous take delight, and then, should he persist—ah, then, I fear I'd answer "Yes"—should Jack propose to-night!—Town Topics.

OH, SO SUDDEN. Miss Short—Isn't my name an absurd misfit, Mr. Long? Mr. Long (thoughtlessly)—Yes, rather. If you could have mine it would be all right, wouldn't it? Miss Short—Oh, Mr. Long, this is so sudden.—London Punch.

THE TOUCH DOES IT. Benson's Plasters are like your other friends—they hate to see you in pain or in weakness and are dog-tired hearing you complain about it. They want to cure you and send you along to your business—whole and happy. They can do it and will do it. Try them on. What for? Why for any cough or cold you may be troubled with, or any othering pain or ache, or worry with kidneys or liver. Possibly some old clutch of muscular rheumatism renders an arm or a leg worth only half price just now. For anything that makes the machine work slow and stiff, with pain maybe in the motion of it, clep a Benson's Porous Plaster squarely on the hot spot. They are the get-out-tomorrow plasters—not the sort that go to sleep on your skin like a cat on a cushion. There is comfort and speedy relief in the touch of them. No other external remedy, no matter how made or how called, is worthy to live in the same street with Benson's Plasters. Pains and ailments melt away under them as a sheet of ice does under the Spring sun. You cannot foretell the weather but you can always foretell the effect of Benson's Plasters. It is as sure as the effect of a hot breakfast in a hungry man's stomach. But look out for substitutes. Get the genuine. All druggists, or we will prepay postage on any number ordered in the United States on receipt of 25c. each. Seabury & Johnson, Mfg. Chemists, N. Y.



The outcome of a courtship often depends on the income. CATARRH AND COLDS RELIEVED IN 10 TO 60 MINUTES.—One short puff of the breath through the blower supplied with each bottle of Dr. Agnew's Catarrhal Powder diffuses this powder over the surface of the nasal passages. Painless and delightful to use. It relieves instantly, and permanently cures catarrh, hay fever, colds, headache, sore throat, tonsillitis and deafness. 50 cents. Sold by C. A. Klein, 21

Even the vegetarian isn't averse to making both ends meet. CASTORIA. The Kind You Have Always Bought Bears the Signature of

THE MARKETS. BLOOMSBURG MARKETS. CORRECTED WEEKLY. RETAIL PRICES. Butter, per pound..... 24 Eggs, per dozen..... 24 Lard, per pound..... 14 Ham, per pound..... 14 Beef (quarter), per pound..... 6 to 8 Wheat, per bushel..... 1 00 Oats, do..... 65 Rye, do..... 60 Flour, per bbl..... 4 40 Hay, per ton..... 14 00 Potatoes, (new), per bushel..... 1 10 Turnips, do..... 40 Tallow, per pound..... 05 Shoulder, do..... 10 Side meat, do..... 09 Vinegar, per qt..... 05 Dried apples, per pound..... 06 Cow hides, do..... 33 Steer do..... 05 Sheep do..... 75 Sheep pelts, do..... 90 Corn meal, cwt..... 2 00 Bran, cwt..... 1 40 Chop, cwt..... 1 50 Middlings, cwt..... 1 40 Chickens, per pound, new..... 10 do do old..... 10 Geese, do..... 12 Ducks, do..... 12 COAL. Number 6, delivered..... 3 50 do 4 and 5 delivered..... 4 40 do 6, at yard..... 3 15 do 4 and 5, at yard..... 4 25

CASTORIA The Kind You Have Always Bought, and which has been in use for over 30 years, has borne the signature of and has been made under his personal supervision since its infancy. Allow no one to deceive you in this. All Counterfeits, Imitations and "Just-as-good" are but Experiments that trifle with and endanger the health of Infants and Children—Experience against Experiment. What is CASTORIA Castoria is a harmless substitute for Castor Oil, Paregoric, Drops and Soothing Syrups. It is Pleasant. It contains neither Opium, Morphine nor other Narcotic substance. Its age is its guarantee. It destroys Worms and allays Feverishness. It cures Diarrhoea and Wind Colic. It relieves Teething Troubles, cures Constipation and Flatulency. It assimilates the Food, regulates the Stomach and Bowels, giving healthy and natural sleep. The Children's Panacea—The Mother's Friend. GENUINE CASTORIA ALWAYS Bears the Signature of

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A Short Review of the March Ladies' Home Journal. The March number of the Ladies' Home Journal is an admirable example of a real "home" magazine. From the beautiful cover, by Mr. W. L. Taylor, to the very last page it is replete with delightful fiction and interesting articles. The number opens with the unique story of "The Sexton Who Ruled New York City," by William Ferrine, and then comes a real treat, another "Lady or the Tiger" story, by the same Stockton who gave us that remarkable tale of mystery. This one is called "My Balloon Hunt." Neijze Blanchard begins a series of unusual articles about birds and their "personalities," and "The Dominic" tells an amusing story of his journeyings in Europe with two companions. Then there is the second installment of Miss Portor's "Those Days in Old Virginia," and a page of pictures of "Pretty Country Homes from \$400 to \$3200." "His Mother" is a touching story by Kate Whiting Hatch, and the fourth of "The Russells in Chicago" shows us some of the old customs and characteristics of the "Windy City." Mr. Bok's editorial is written under the title "She Dast," and deals fearlessly with the woman who is afraid to come out and do things as she thinks they should be done. The special feature of the editorial section is Mr. Hamilton W. Mabie's first "Literary Talk." These talks will appear monthly hereafter. Other valuable articles in the magazine, outside of the regular departments, are: "How to Have a Home Wedding," "Animated Silhouettes and other Games," and "The Literary Beginner," a column of advice to young writers by Franklin B. Wiley. The illustrations include another of the popular double pages of college girls—this time "At Her Fun and in Her Room." By The Curtis Publishing Co., Philadelphia. One dollar a year; ten cents a copy. The fellow who can't pay his dues and is dropped from his club is apt to be broke. CASTORIA For Infants and Children. The Kind You Have Always Bought Bears the Signature of