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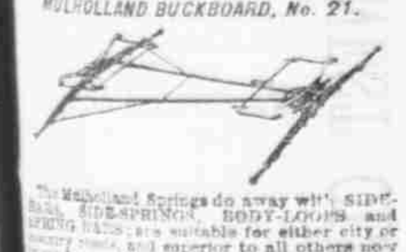

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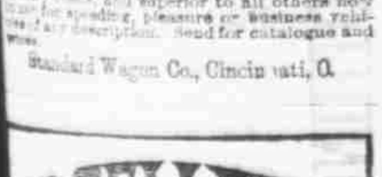

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CONSUMPTION

A CHILD OF THE STREETS.

CHAPTER I.

"A CHILD OF THE STREETS."

In an upper room of one of the houses in the densely-populated neighborhood of Covent Garden sat a girl cross-legged on the uncarpeted floor, singing softly to herself over her task of mending a very tattered, faded petticoat. It was a long, low apartment, with a slanting, smoke-blackened ceiling, close under which three narrow apertures, doing the work of windows, admitted a very small portion of heaven's light.

Face and voice and attitude indicated a placid content with present condition and prospects, notwithstanding the scanty clothing the girl wore, and the broken furniture of the room she inhabited.

In spite of all its defects, this garret had been her home ever since she could remember anything, and would remain so, just as long as she could earn enough to pay the very modest rent.

Her age was sixteen, her face exquisitely pretty, and what is more remarkable in a girl of her "caste," both intellectual and refined; for Mysie O'Farrell was only a waif, a stray, a child of the street, a little London lass, who lived from hand to mouth on the chance wages which her singing earned from passers-by on the pavement.

One stormy winter evening, some sixteen years back, a woman, with a baby, a whisky-bottle, and a brogue, had come to this same house seeking a night's shelter from the wind and rain. Judging by her appearance, the landlady reckoned her up as a tramp, but admitted her.

Here it was the weary woman ceased from her wanderings, and made her home in the garret, under the slanting roof. A malignant fever, prevalent in the neighborhood all through one dreary season, numbered the poor Irishwoman among its victims, and little golden-haired Mysie O'Farrell was left to fight the battle of life as best she might in the heart of crowded, cruel London.

So the girl grew up to womanhood. Fortunately from her mother she had inherited the rare gift of a singing-voice, thanks to which she had so far been always able to keep a roof over her head, and a loaf in the cupboard. And the future was left to take care of itself.

At last her task was finished, needle and thimble laid aside, and the once bright-hued garment donned. The wearer glanced down at its faded folds with a smile.

Between two of the windows, nailed up against the wall, was a small looking-glass in a cracked frame. Before this mirror stood Mysie O'Farrell, critically scanning her own image, as she twisted her long, fair hair into one heavy coil, fastening it up with a broad bit of ribbon that once was blue. Her beauty was the effect of the combination of Spanish languor and Irish vivacity, to which might be added a dash of native drollery.

A loud knocking at the door of the room startled the girl in the midst of her toilette.

"Come in," she said without turning her head, and a boy entered who seemed to have been well acquainted with "poverty, hunger, and dirt."

"I say, Mysie, how late you are—and after sayin' you'd be outside the Colonnade at five. I waited ever so long, keeping a sharp look-out right and left. But it's as well I was there, as it turned out, and I'll tell you why. I'm just in luck's way, and so are you, I reckon."

"Have you really had good luck, Gabriel? I am so glad, dear. Tell me all about it. It's a good thing you just came in. I was going out."

"I should have been savage if I'd missed you. Just listen. As I was standin' under the arch—our arch, you know—piping away at some tune, more for the sake of passing time than to turn a copper, suddenly I felt a hand laid slap on my shoulder. I was just openin' my mouth, thinkin' it was one o' them meddlesome bobbies, when I cocked my eye round the corner, and saw a tall chap with a puffy red face staring at me.—'What d'ye want,' says I to him. 'What is your occupation, employment, trade—that is, how do you earn your living, my lad?' he asks, still keeping his hand on my shoulder, as if he feared I'd cut and run afore he had his say out. 'What's that to you?' I replies, for I thought it precious cool of his popping such a question and just like his cheek. 'Don't be rude, my lad,' he went on, no ways offended; 'I only want to help you. I heard you singing just now. You have a fine voice, although it is quite untrained, I see—raw material, but capable of much.' Oh, lor' bless you, a lot more as I couldn't keep up with, but, to go on, 'I ask your daily occupation in order to tell you that I could set you in the way of earning an honest livelihood, by means of your voice, if you are prepared to be steady, persevering and industrious,' and a deal more said this big red-faced cove, who seemed a bit of a swell in his line, which is the operatic, I guess. However, be that as it may, he drew me under the archway, where we wasn't in the way of passers-by, and asked me a few questions, as were easy enough to answer. 'Had I any parents?' 'No,' I replies, 'I ain't, and it's just as well.' 'Why, that is a sad sentiment for a young man to express; how is it?' and the old fellow pulls a long face and shakes his head. 'Well, sir,' I explains, 'you see, when they'd got old, I'd have had to help keep 'em, and I find it hard enough to fill my own stomach to my satisfaction.' 'Well, well, we can alter all that,' says he, 'if you're hard working and honest. You've got a good voice, but remember it's uphill work to become a first-class singer.' Then he asked if I'd got a brother. 'No,' says I, 'but I've a sister. You should just hear her sing, sir. Her voice is as clear as a lark's.' I thought it best to say you was my sister to save bother. 'Dear me, bless my soul, a family gift evidently,' replied the old chap, raising his eyebrows. 'Now, look here, my lad; I should like to be of use to you, and I should not wish to see so much fine material wasted in the streets.' Well, he told me to go to him to-morrow and take you. I gave him my name, and he gave me this card. See: 'Signor Brunetti, Finchley-road, St. John's Wood.' Then he cut off like a rocket. So now, Miss Mysie, that's what's called luck, ain't it?"

This was Gabriel Cole.

Who his parents were, whence they had come, and whither they had gone, no one seemed to know or care.

His own early recollections came to a standstill in the retrospective road at a time when he himself must have been about six years of age, at which period of his life he asserted that he had sat all day long by the side of a woman, whom he supposed must have been his mother, and helped her to cook chestnuts under an old railway arch somewhere near a river.

He was a handsome lad when he liked to wash off the stain of the city's smoke and the dust of the streets—a black-eyed, sallow-skinned, fierce kind of beauty.

Such as he was anyhow, he satisfied Mysie O'Farrell, who had loved this dark-eyed boy, first by habit, later on by inclination, but in one way or another ever since they had met as children on the London pavement, and sworn eternal friendship over the first handful of coppers they had earned by their joint singing.

Gabriel was well acquainted with sin in all her many hideous shapes.

He loved the little girl who had grown up by his side, as a man must inevitably love what is beautiful and pure.

His affection for her was perhaps the only true vein in his selfish, pleasure-loving character; it held her sacred in his eyes, but did not prevent him from pursuing other women, of a very opposite type to Mysie, when he was away from her; yet she, too, in her way, perhaps by habit, perhaps by strange affinity of souls, had grown a necessity to his existence. He did not see that the real secret lay in the genuine love of this one for him which all the others lacked.

"Well, ain't you glad, Mysie? I think we're in for a reg'lar good thing."

"Oh, Gabriel, I am glad you met that kind man, and I hope he may help us to get along, only——" and Mysie paused and puckered her white brow doubtfully.

"Only what, now? Come, out with it."

"Only I wish you hadn't said I was your sister. I shall have to go on telling the same lie every time I see this man, and I'm certain some day to let it out."

"All right, so you can later on, don't ye see."

Mysie only sighed.

"Some day," said Gabriel, "when I've got a real good thing at the theatre, we'll go and get spliced, but there's no hurry about that business. We needn't wait for the parson's leave to love each other, eh?" and he drew down her pale, soft face, and looked closely and curiously into her large blue eyes, that met his so steadfastly.

"I don't quite understand you, Gabriel dear. Of course I sha'n't wait for anyone to give me leave to love you. I have always done that, and always shall—but, of course, to be your wife you will have to marry me."

"Could you live without me, Mysie? I mean would you be content all your life to be no more to me than you are to-day? Would you be satisfied to be my sister always, as now, and see another woman my wife?"

He watched her changing expression narrowly, perhaps anxiously.

"Well," she said at last, and a tender, far-away look stole into her blue eyes, and made them dim and soft, "that's difficult to say, Gabriel. I know what I mean, but the words won't come. I shouldn't like to see another girl your wife, and I'd rather come and live with you altogether, because I could do everything for you—mend your clothes, and cook your meals, and all that, and it would be nice to see you pleased. But still, if you didn't wish it, and didn't care to marry me right off, I should be happy enough going on as we are doing now; shouldn't you?"

Gabriel laughed and kissed her pretty bright hair.

"Oh, then you can be jealous, eh? But come along; we must be off. We'll take a new track to-night, and come home with no end of coppers to a jolly spread. Come on!"

And Mysie crossed her plaid shawl over her worn dress and drew her veil over her face.

So they stole down the rickety, broken stairs and let themselves out into the crowded, gas-lit streets, to earn the price of a supper, or each go hungry back to bed.

* * * * * * *

A few days later, Gabriel and Mysie found themselves at the door of the house of Signor Brunetti, director of the Royal Olympian Opera Company.

The trial of their voices did not last very long. It took place in the presence of the director and that great master of the vocal art, Andrew Brevet, who, at its close, rising from the piano, thus addressed them:

"You can go now, but remember, you must be with me punctually every day at the hour I shall indicate. Signor Brunetti will provide you with money and clothes, which will render it unnecessary for you to sing in the streets. You quite understand, that must not happen again. Some day you can repay him if you succeed. Be sure, be punctual, and steady."

"Good-bye, Miss Cole," added Brunetti, as he held open the door for the pair to pass through, fixing his bold blue eyes on Mysie's face as she shyly bade him farewell.

"Well, was I mistaken this time? Will they do?" asked Brunetti, turning to his companion when they were alone.

"I cannot yet say, so much depends on the personal energy of each. I believe the girl has genius. We shall see. The boy has a glorious organ, but I think he will not consent to drudgery. With his handsome face, and natural knack of rendering correctly, and his perfect ear, he will be sure to please any public—in England, at least. He will win popularity. I don't suppose he would care for fame. Notoriety is more in the line of his race and class."

So the two friends parted, having opened the gate of fame to Gabriel Cole and his supposed sister.

CHAPTER II.

FLEUR DE MARIE.

With his back to the frolicsome, foam-fringed waves that come tossing and tumbling noisily into Herne Bay, and his face to the Dolphin Hotel, sat a young man on a camping stool, with his hat tilted over his eyes, and his hands in his pockets, the picture of discontent. He looked hot and bored and cross. In real life, it is said, only lunatics talk to themselves, and none save poets, reformers, and lovers have been known to soliloquize. Nevertheless, had Cutlbert Newen given expression to his sentiments as he sat on the beach, unshaded from the July sun, his words would run thus, I fancy:

"Beastly place this; no music hall, no theatre; not a decent looking girl to be met from the pier to the cliff. It's all very well to breathe the ozone, but that can be done quite as well, and indeed, a deuce of a deal better, at Brighton. I like Brighton, it's healthy and wealthy. You get fashion and fine air combined, a sort of London-super-Mare. I've half a mind to return to town. Well, I'll wait and see what Curzon says when I go in."

"I say, Newen, old man, why won't you wear a straw hat and white flannels. You look warm. Nobody sees you here, we are out of our world—at least——"

Newen glanced up startled.

"That's just what I complain of, Curzon; but for all that I am not going to dress like a hop-grower out for a holiday, even here. No. *Vive la mode*, I say. But what's doing at the Dolphin? Any fresh arrivals?"

"Yes, indeed; and that's what I came to communicate. Something worth looking at."

"Who's the attraction? Age, gender, name, and address, if you please."

"I observe that you place 'age' in the first order."

"Of course, my dear fellow. If it is a 'she,' and an old one, I have no further interest in her. I hate women past thirty. They ought to retire into homes for decayed gentlewomen."

"Well, this one, in particular, is young—very young."

"Good, then she won't be old before I am tired of her. Proceed: name and address?"

"Fleur de Marie!"

"Who may she be when she's at home? A French flower-girl, or a vestal virgin?"

"Do you mean to tell me you have never heard of Fleur de Marie? But then, to be sure, you were in Algiers when she came out last season. She's the very best thing in the singing line since Grisi, believe me."

"What officious godfather christened her 'Fleur de Marie?' Probably her name is really Betsy Brown."

"What sacrilege to the Queen of Song. No; her true name is Mysie O'Farrell, I heard. On the night of her *debut as Marguerite*, a certain royal personage in Her Majesty's box was heard to remark, 'Such a face as hers must Eugene Sue have seen when he wrote of the Fleur de Marie.' The saying was caught up, as princes' speeches usually are, and the name stuck to her."

"When did this 'star' appear in the Herne Bay heaven?"

"By the 11:36 down. No end of luggage and a companion. Are you coming indoors? I believe the fair one is on view in the coffee-room."

"So she may be for all I care. I never run after celebrities. I like to get a woman into a corner all to myself, and not one who is looking over her shoulder at some other man instead of listening to me. I prefer ring-doves to lions."

"Ah, well; I must be off, for I've got let into a trip to Canterbury. "Ta-ta," and with a laugh he turned and strode up the beach, humming as he went—a broad-built, blue-eyed, bronzed Englishman, of medium height, and captain of the good ship Nimrod.

The dressing gong had sounded through the Dolphin Hotel some ten minutes when two men entered the hall and looked at the clock.

"As I thought, we are late," said the captain, and he hurried up the wide stair-case, leaving his more careless companion to follow at his leisure and pleasure.

At as slow a pace as if he were taking part in the *minuet de la cour*, and as if there were no such words as appetite and dinner in his dictionary, Cuthbert Newen sauntered down the long, dimly-lighted passage, and entered his room to dress.

Cuthbert Newen was a dandy from the crown of his close-cut, curly, dark head, to the soles of his well-shod, well-shaped feet.

Whether his character was as effeminate as his tastes remained to be proved. Hitherto his career had been one of Fortune's favorites. He had seen the best part of the world, but had never for one moment roughed it.

"I say, Newen, are you ready? Soup's a thing of the past, and if we don't mind we shall miss the fish. I came in to tell you a bit of news. No end of a 'go.' As good as a play!"

"What's up, now? Another *prima donna* arrived?" asked Newen carelessly, as he closed his door and followed his friend down the passage.

"Now that's a good shot, as it happens. I told you the Fleur de Marie was here. Well, by the next train down comes her great rival in all her war-paint, the queen of contraltos."

"What, the Leopardi?"

"Yes, the 'Leopardess' herself. Quite by chance, I believe. Of course, the manager of the hotel was aware of the coming collision; but he knew better than to let the cat out of the bag. Why, it's the making of the man. Half London will be down here presently. I believe the tenor, Gabriel, is expected to-morrow. He is always to be found in the shadow of one of the fair ladies. Poor chap! I always pitied him so much. Naturally he must admire them both, being, as they are, beauties of such contast. He must feel like an ass between two bundles of hay. Doubtless he has a rare old time of it with them, for I believe even the immaculate Fleur de Marie is, like London, at his feet. It's a good thing that the enmity of rivalry is all on the one side between these women, or the hotel wouldn't hold them. Come on, the Leopardi isn't down yet. Probably she's powdering! Fleur de Marie is up at the other end. Lucky dog, your seat makes her your *vis-a-vis*. Mine is on the opposite side. I must console myself with her rival—here she comes."

And Captain Curzon stepped aside to let her pass.

A whisper among the waiters, a slight stir at the table, and she had swept into the vacant chair near the window which had been reserved for her.

Newen took his seat, and after glancing down the *menu*, raised his eyes for a leisurely survey of those present.

This was Fleur de Marie. He looked at her between the barrier of twisted silver branches garlanded with flowers; looked, and looked again, till at last she felt the intensity of his quiet scrutiny, and, flushing slightly, raised her eyes and met his gaze. What she saw there made the color deepen in her cheek as she turned to speak to her neighbor. And Cuthbert Newen drew a deep breath as he leaned back in his chair, and let his plate pass untasted.

He noted, with the keen observation of a lover of women, each excellent item of her beauty—her soft, full, flaxen hair, gathered into a gold-silk net like a mesh of sunbeams; her large, dreamy eyes, blue and bright as sapphire gems, her red, small mouth, her slim, snow-white throat, circled with a triple twisted thread of shining pearls.

"I suppose that's what's called sweet simplicity," sneered the Leopardi in a loud whisper to her neighbor, Captain Curzon, staring contemptuously through her jewelled *pince-nez* at her rival's delicate costume of Indian muslin high up to the throat with its cascade of cretonne lace and shell-pink ribbons.

Cutbert Newen started and glanced at the speaker.

Lorita Leopardi was a fine dark woman—a red and white beauty, with full face, and figure inclining to *embonpoint*, just such as Reubens put into his pictures, lips like pouting poppy-leaves, hair black as night, eyes as dark as it is possible for eyes to be that are only brown. A bad, sensual face, at once revolting and attractive.

"Are you one of Lorita's admirers?" asked Curzon, as they sat over wine and cigars, when the ladies had quitted the room.

"No, there's too much of her."

"Can't you have too much of a good thing?"

"Query. You say she is a fine creature—so is a tigress."

"But doesn't she dress well?"

"That's decidedly an open question in her case. She leaves nothing to the imagination."

"Come now, you are too hard on her."

"Better than being too soft, which wouldn't pay."

"What do you say to Fleur de Marie?"

"Nice-looking little thing, as blondes go," replied Newen, leisurely sipping his claret.

"Nice-looking, indeed! What a critical chap you are. Why, she's a pearl!"

"Hush, they are singing. Let's join them. It is worth hearing."

They lingered at the open door to listen. Newen loved music as part of that passion for the beautiful which possessed him.

A few simple chords struck by fingers "as fair as the lilies," and then it broke forth, as if impatient of control, that voice which flooded the room with melody and arrested even the steps of the passers-by on the pavement outside, who stopped spell-bound by the window.

The one most keenly alive to the power and purity of that voice experienced a sense of relief when it was silent. It was indeed a novel sensation for him, the *blase*, world-weary man, to feel his heart throbbing in such a tumult of mingled pleasure and pain.

She had chosen that pretty simple old ballad, which all English girls know so well, "On the banks of Allan water."

The clear, bell-like tones fell on the air like drops of some divine essence of sound. At the close of the song no one applauded, no one thought of praising the singer, and so far from calling for an encore, nearly all those present felt that one ballad sung by that one voice was just about as much as they could bear, and already several heads had turned aside.

Fleur de Marie rose from the piano, and quietly bowing to the assembled company, floated down the room, her delicate draperies floating after her as she went.

Her companion followed, bidding "good-night" right and left.

The Leopardi, who had been lying back in the depths of a divan, listening with half-closed eyes, now looked up over the top of her black satin fan, and showed all her brilliant white teeth as she said:

"Was there ever so sad a song? I must own that, for my part, I like to leave a smile with my audience, and not a tear."

So saying she moved towards the piano. She was determined to dispel the effect produced by her rival's song; so, with a couple of crashing chords and a laugh, she threw back her head and dashed into a wild Jacobite ballad, entering fully into the spirit which breathes through every word.

Her voice was too perfect to fall short of its aim. A burst of applause rang through the room as the singer paused, flushed, triumphant, and breathless. Then, almost before the excitement which she caused subsided, she broke forth again into that inimitable piece of musical mutiny, "La Marseillaise."

The listeners rose to their feet and rushed towards the piano, with one accord clapping their hands. Outside, on the pavement, the crowd that had gathered in the moonlight shouted loud hurrahs and called for encores. But Lorita, though she laughed, well pleased, pleaded fatigue.

Fleur de Marie and her sad-sweet beautiful ballad, were, for the moment, forgotten. After all, the world has an April heart, and it liketh better to laugh than to weep.

"Come, now, I must own that's more to my taste," said Curzon, his *debonair* face once more bright and smiling. "There's trouble enough in this world without singing dirges."

[To be Continued.]

Base Ball in Church.

I believe in athletic sports; they build up the bodies and so aid in the grand work of making the symmetrical man. God has given us this tripartite nature of body, mind, and spirit, and he expects of us that each division of our nature shall be equally cared for. The minister, the professional man, the merchant, and the lawyer would all brighten the mind by building up the body by some simple and effective method of exercise. But you may say the business of a professional base-ball player is hardly to be commended in the church. It is true that it is not as dignified as some of the learned professions, but I would rather be an honest member of the professional nine that won the pennant than a dishonest merchant who fails once a year with unfailing regularity. I would rather be an honest professional base-ball player than a pettifogging lawyer haunting the divorce courts to eke out a living from the revenue of scandal. For all men amusements should be the incidents, not the business, of life, but no Christian life will be made imperfect if the glimpses of happiness are enjoyed as they pass, with no forgetfulness of the more serious duties which we owe to God.—[Rev. Thomas Green, of Chicago.

A Sudden Rise.

"What is it that keeps you busy writing so late in your study every night?" asked Mrs. Yerger of her husband.

"I am writing the history of my life, Mrs. Yerger."

"I suppose you mention me in it?"

"Oh, yes; I call you the sunshine of my existence."

"Do I really throw so much sunshine into your daily life?"

"I refer to you as the sunshine of my existence because you make it hot for me."

A rise in the thermometer occurred immediately after the foregoing conversation.

A "SECRET OF THE SEA."

The following story was told me a short time ago by a friend, who had it only second hand from an eye-witness of the whole affair. My friend began thus:

"The strange thing I am going to tell you is true; I know it because I have it from a friend, or, rather, a relation, of one of the officers on board the ship.

"Some years ago, before the existence of the Suez Canal, a large East Indiaman was making her way easily, with light summer winds, along through the Indian Ocean to Calcutta. The Cape had been passed several days before, and now, with charming weather, officers and passengers, to say nothing of the crew, were looking forward to the end of what had been a pleasant, though quite uneventful voyage.

"They had had nothing more serious than a 'half-gale o' wind,' had met only three or four ships homeward bound; and in spite of a score of more agreeable passengers, in spite of last sensation novels, of musical entertainments, of flirtations by moonlight on deck, and even in spite of unlimited gossip, the days had grown very monotonous, and the weeks unaccountably long; even light-hearted middies had begun to chafe and fret over the long confinement on shipboard, and the young ladies to sigh for an excitement.

"I take it for granted that you know that the service of the East India Company's ships was like the Naval in its organization; there were captain, lieutenants, midshipmen and petty officers; the ships were mounted with heavy guns, and were well armed, and manned with men trained for fighting. The voyage was long, and in time of war the Indiamen were regarded as very desirable booty. These ships were large, strongly built and very commodious, and often luxuriously fitted up.

"The day had been hot, and the light wind had died almost entirely away; the great ship rose and fell on the long waves, and her sails hung loosely from the tall masts that slowly swayed back and forth with a monotonous, creaking sound one knows so well who has been much at sea. It was sundown, and the short twilight of the tropics was fast deepening into night; everybody had come upon deck to enjoy such whiffs of air as might be stirring, the passengers and officers on the quarter-deck, while the crew were hanging over the side or lazily lounging on the neat coils of rope about the deck.

"Suddenly a faint, very faint sound—so faint, one knew not what it was nor whence it came—or scarcely if there had been a sound at all. People asked each other about it; some had heard it and others had not; and after some discussion it was decided there really was nothing at all. And just as they reached that conclusion the sound came again, and a little clearer, more positive than before, so that every one heard something. 'It was the moan of the breeze through the rigging!' 'No, it was the bell for'ard!' It was fifty most ordinary sounds in the world, and quite a matter of course that it should have been heard; and then—again it came—as if it dropped from the air, and were the sob of some sad-hearted spirit floating by. And then the thing was talked over and over, and everybody had a theory, and no body was satisfied with any of them.

"Meantime it grew darker, and the great stars of the Southern World started out, making the night luminous with their wonderful glory. A silence fell upon the busy tongues, and all eyes were gazing upward, when suddenly through the hush broke the tone of a bell. Full, clear, musical it rang out, then died slowly, seeming to go further and further away, until the last faint sound came from a long distance off; then again silence, and people looked strangely at each other, and almost as if they were fearful of breaking that stillness by speaking the words that hung on every lip. At last Captain Stanley hailed the masthead.

"'No, sir, nothing in sight. It's a little misty up to windward.'

"'Keep a sharp lookout—d'ye hear?'

"'Ay, ay, sir!'

"A slight puff of wind blew past the ship—just slight enough to bear the distinct tone of the mysterious bell, and also to tell from which direction it came; it was deeper, clearer, fuller than before. The mystery deepened, but Captain Stanley said, quietly: 'That mist undoubtedly holds the solution of the affair; it is some ship's bell, as we shall see as soon as it lifts a little.' But hour after hour went on, and still the mist hung low on the water, and still the mournful sound of that bell was borne to the ears that listened all through the night on board the Dare. Few left the deck, and all night long the sad, weird tolling kept them company—now seemingly closer to them, and again so faint and far away. It was uncanny, and to the sensitive ones sounded like the strokes of doom.

"Just before early dawn, while it was yet only a clear starlight, the mist lifted, and at once came the cry from the masthead: 'Something to windward.'

"'What is she like?'

"'Well, it's a queer sort of craft altogether.'

"'Mr. Crabbs, will you go up and see what you make of her?' said Captain Stanley; and Mr. Crabbs, a lightfooted young middy, sprang up the rigging, and in a few moments returned, saying:

"'She, or it, is a very queer-looking thing, sir; it is pretty dark yet, but, as well as I can see, it looks like a big flat boat with a sort of house on it—it floats low in the water. And that bell, sir—keeps on tolling, sir,' said little Crabbs, hesitatingly.

"'Yes—yes—we can all hear the bell plainly enough, Mr. Crabbs' and turning to the first-lieutenant, Captain [illegible] went on: 'Mr. Fraser, see a boat [illegible] away at once; send Mr. Crabbs in command of her, to board this strange [illegible] find out what this means.'

"A few minutes later one of the ship's boats, manned with a crew of six men, and little Crabbs in the stern, was pulling towards the flatboat, which had become visible from the ship's deck. There was no steady wind, but a slight puff or two had been made the most of to draw a little closer to the strange thing, and the Dare now lay almost or quite becalmed about two miles distant from it; the house, or cabin—the top of it at least—could be seen and a sort of cross-beam arrangement on which hung the bell whose solemn voice was heard as the boat rose and fell with the waves, but no living soul was visible. Every glass was directed upon the little boat as it came up alongside. Mr. Crabbs was seen to climb up the side and instantly disappear, while in the same moment the boat pushed off and made for the ship, pulling in a disordered, hesitating manner, stopping for a few minutes' discussion seemingly, then resuming their way with a long, regular stroke.

"Arrived at the ship's side they came on board in a dazed sort of way, with white, scared faces; and upon Captain Stanley's stern demand for an explanation they managed to tell their story.

"They saw no human being, they heard no sound of human voice on that haunted thing; but as Mr. Crabbs stepped upon the top of the high bulwark, a large black figure reached up and seized him with its long arms, and dragged him down; and there was a sound of rattling chains and of shrieks and yells of fiendish laughter; and the thing was loaded with devils, and the Foul Fiend himself had got poor Mr. Crabbs, and they got away as fast as they could.

"And sad and terrible enough it all was, and that burial bell went on tolling an awful knell for poor, bright-hearted little Crabbs. There were sobs and tears, and pale cheeks, and mourning for the lad; and after a little the captain said, with a hard voice, and a set, stern look on his pleasant face:

"'Mr. Fraser, send that boat back with a fresh crew; or, rather, take command yourself, sir—take the best men and plenty of arms.'

"And in a few moments the little boat went back, carrying men who had rather fight a man-of-war twice their size than face a foe that was unknown, and doubtless belonged to the unseen world; but they went, and resolutely, for everybody loved little Crabbs.

"How earnestly and anxious they were watched from the decks of the Dare one can well imagine. Mr. Fraser and the boatswain, well armed and revolver in hand, climbed cautiously up the side of the flatboat, and were seen to raise their heads slowly above the bulwark. And this is what they saw: a magnificent Bengal tiger of the finest breed just finishing his revolting meal! They fired together, and the great creature fell over and died without a struggle.

"Then the boat's crew were ordered to come up, and they carefully climbed on board, and with a pistol in each hand, began an exploration of the cabin; there was no door to it, and as they entered the wide doorway, there right before them they saw two skeletons—of a man and woman, chained, one against each side of the room. Between them, in the midst, was a broken chain, one end still riveted to the floor—the other hung to the neck of the slain tiger!

"Fronting the doorway, on the wall was written in Arabic: 'Such is my vengeance upon those who rouse my jealousy.' The ghastly tale was told.

"Silent from horror, they gathered together all that was left of the gay middie, and covering them with a boat-cloak, the Dare's men rowed back and told their story.

"Lieutenant Fraser told it all to the person who told it to me, and strange and horrible as it is—well, you know, 'nothing is too strange' or too horrible 'to be true'; and my story is true."

THE MASONIC GOAT.

SCOTT WAY IN PUCK.

I'm not a member of the Society for the Prevention of cruelty to Animals, but I cannot refrain from speaking out as forcibly as my timid nature will allow against the cruel wrongs practiced upon the Masonic goat. I desire an opportunity to shriek for more liberty for the Masonic goat.

Did you ever think, dear reader, of the lonesome condition, the quiet, monotonous and yet patient uncomplaining life of the Masonic goat between lodge-meetings? Did the cruel wrongs of the Masonic goat never appeal to the warmer sympathies of your bosom? Did the fact never come to your mind that while the free and frolicksome worldly goat is wandering according to his own sweet will up and down the back yards of the nation, chewing with glad smile the succulent tomato-can of long ago, surveying with a critic's eye the family wash on a clothes-line, chewing up the best gauze undershirt, and butting the thoughtless wayfarer into the adjoining school-district, the patient and grievously wronged Masonic goat is lying within the tiled recesses of the lodge with a dreamy far-away look in his eyes, and naught to cheer him but the hope that he may soon be called from refreshment to labor and be given an opportunity to break the back-bone of a too-confiding candidate?

I trust you have.

My dear friend, consider the ways of the free, untrammeled worldly goat; but don't stand too close to him when you consider his ways. Give the free, untrammeled worldly goat elbow-room. If you would not be sad, in the end, give the free, untrammeled worldly goat an acre of elbow-room. Give him all the elbow-room his warm, ardent, impulsive nature would seem to require; for if you trust him, gentle stranger, when you least expect it, he may hit you in a vulnerable spot and have exceeding great fun with you.

But it is only on stated occasions that the Masonic goat is called up and his eye brightens with enthusiasm as he stretches his limbs and goes forth to indulge in his favorite brand of amusement. At other times there is no funny business for him. And yet how patient and uncomplaining in his daily walks is the sad-eyed, lodge-trammeled Masonic goat! If I had time I could weep for him.

Masonically speaking, the goat is an emblem of force, and serves to teach us that however safe we may feel from the wrath to come—however bright and glittering and joyous and silk-papered the world may seem to us, when we look straight out in front, we do not know at what moment something powerful may strike us from behind, drive a foot or two of our delicate and sensitive spinal-column through the top of our white plug-hat, and make us unhappy.

For myself, I have no objection to the lesson the goat teaches, so long as he does not come too close to me to teach it. It is not, however, to discuss the uses of the goat, Masonically or otherwise, that this article is written, but rather to move the kindly hearts of a most worthy fraternity, so that they may see the wrongs of the patient and long-suffering Masonic goat as I see them, and to persuade them to take the lodge-goat down into the back yard occasionally, and give him some old succulent tomato cans and fresh air.

To those who have not become warmly intimate with the Masonic goat, and are inclined to withold their sympathy and influence in his behalf, from a wrong opinion of his character, and misunderstanding of his ardent, impulsive nature, I desire to say that he is as harmless as a dove and as gentle as a prospective heir, after you have been around with him and know him, can give him the correct grip and pass-word.

The Resurrection Morning.

A Boston household was recently increased by the advent, unwelcome to all but the youngest member, of seven kittens. Their doom, of course, was unquestioned; so, also, was the manner of their taking off, which, according to the custom of all civilized people, is drowning in a wash-tub, followed by burial at the root of the grape vine. The sacrifice was postponed until such time as the younger member aforesaid was absent on a visit of a day, when the deed was done. Arrived home, the first inquiry after breakfast was:

"Where are the kitties?"

Diplomacy was necessary. The whole of the awful truth could not be communicated without danger.

"They died yesterday," he was told.

"What did you do with 'em?" pursued the inquisitor.

The place of burial was indicated, and with a face expressing thoughtful determination the infant investigator left the room. Nothing was surmised of his purpose until, in the course of the forenoon, he made his appearance at the library door, smeared with soil but with a glow of triumphant benevolence on his features, bearing in his arms six moist and muddy lumps of fur which were mewing and showing every unmistakable sign of kittenish life.

"I've got 'em all but one," he proudly remarked, as he emptied his burden on the rug. "I can't find her, and I'm 'fraid she's lost."

Kentucky pride is as dense as Kentucky ignorance, which is the darkest hue in the pot.—[Louisville Democrat.