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Select Poetry.

THE BRIDE'S STORY.

When I was but a country lass, now fifteen years
ago,
I lived where flowed the Overpeck through meadows
wide and low;
There first, when skies were bending blue and
blossoms blowing free,
I saw the ragged little boy who went to school
with me.

His homespun coat was frayed and worn, with
patches covered o'er;
His hat—ah, such a hat as that was never seen
before!

The boys and girls, when first he came, they
shouted in their glee,
And jeered the little ragged boy who went to
school with me.

His father was a laboring man, and mine was
highly born;
Our people held both him and his in great contempt
and scorn—
They said I should not stoop to own a playmate
such as he.

The bright-eyed, ragged little boy who went to
school with me.

For years they had forgotten him, but when
again we met,
His look, his voice, his gentle ways remained in
memory yet;

They saw alone the man of mark, but I could
only see
The bright-eyed, ragged little boy who went to
school with me.

He had remembered me, it seems, as I remem-
bered him;

Nor time nor honors, in his mind, the cherished
past could dim;
Young love had grown to older love, and so to-day,
you see,
I wed the little ragged boy who went to school
with me.

MY FIRST CLIENT.

I HAD been called to the bar not quite
a year, and was seated with my friend
Frank Armitage, in our chambers in the
temple. Frank had been called on the
same day as myself, and we had agreed
to make our professional start together.
To that end we had become joint pos-
sors of a set of chambers at No. 99
Figtree street, and of a boy named
Blobs, who was known as our 'clerk,'
though his tender years and seedy gar-
ments made the dignified appellation
sound almost ironical. His style of dress
was peculiar, and gave one the idea that
he had several brothers of various sizes,
and had borrowed an article of apparel
from each—his boots belonging to the
eldest and his trousers to the youngest.
There were sundry other boys on our
staircase, with whom Blobs was con-
stantly having little differences and
fighting them out upon the landing;
indeed this, with occasional expeditions
to Prosper's for commissariat purposes,
formed the staple of his professional oc-
cupations.

When he first undertook his duties
we had started him with a pint bottle of
ink, a ream of draft paper, and a gross
of pens; and we had enjoined him to
employ all his leisure time in copying
precedents.

He began with great vigor, and cop-
ied about a page and a half in a large
school-boy hand the first morning, but
he never got any farther. The ream of
paper dwindled, somehow, and the ink
disappeared to an extent to which the
numerous little black imps, with which
Blobs had embellished his domain,
failed to account for, until one morning
I detected him in the act of blacking his
boots with it, and polishing them with a
pen wiper. Still, as boys go, Blobs was
not a very bad specimen; and, as we
really had no work for him to do, we were
not disposed to be extremely angry with
him for doing it.

Fortunately, Armitage and myself were
both, to a considerable extent, independ-
ent of our profession, for, to all appear-
ance, our profession was quite independ-
ent of us. We had been called, as I
have mentioned very nearly a year,

and neither of us had been favored with
a brief; nor did there appear to be any
particular likelihood that we ever should.
We had a friend, Charley Larcombe,
who had recently been articulated to a so-
licitor, and who had promised that
when he was out of his articles (which
would be in about four years,) and had
passed his examination, (which might
be forty,) he would "give us a lift."—
This rather vague prospect really ap-
peared to be our only chance; but, with
with natural sanguineness of youth, we
still looked for briefs, though we had not
the faintest notion where they were to
come from. In truth, in the very early
days of our professional career (when we
had only been barristers for a week or
two), we used to watch with anxious
solicitude any person of legal aspect who
was seen to cross the court in the direc-
tion of our staircase; but we found that
the person of legal aspect invariably
stopped at the chamber of Cocksure, Q.
C., which was immediately below ours,
and the approach of a stranger had
ceased to excite more than a casual in-
terest.

At the outset of our career we had
unanimously agreed that everything of
an unprofessional character in our sur-
roundings should be rigidly tabooed.—
In particular we had decided that our
breakfast should always be over and its
remains cleared away before nine a. m.,
and that smoking should not, on any
account, be permitted in the room des-
tined for the reception of clients. In ac-
cordance with these virtuous resolves we
were, or, I should rather say, had been,
always to be found by half-past nine,
each sitting in the rigidest of armchairs,
wearing the blackest of frock coats, and
the stiffest of shirt collars, attentively
perusing ponderous law books, and mak-
ing copious notes with the assistance of
a gigantic pewter inkstand, of positively
dazzling brightness. But this halcyon
state of things was too good to last. We
had screwed up our virtuous resolves to
too extreme a tension, and they had
gradually sunk down again. Who was
first to give way is a mooted point. My
own idea is that all should have
gone well had not Armitage insidiously
suggested our allowing ourselves just
one cigarette after breakfast; while he
will have it that the thin end of the
wedge was introduced by my surrepti-
tiously reading an occasional novel un-
der cover of "Cove on Littleton."—
However this may be, we had speedily
fallen away from our original high
standard.

Not having been troubled with that
frantic rush of clients which we had
originally expected, we had become less
particular in our habits. The large law
books had been left unopened, the hour
of breakfast had become gradually later
and later, and short pipes and tweed
jackets had become the order of the day
until luncheon, and sometimes, I fear,
even until dinner time. In our earlier
days we had made it a point that one or
the other of us should always remain in
the chambers, so as to be ready for any-
thing that might turn up, but now we
made nothing of putting up the delusive
notice, "Return in five minutes," and
departed together for the rest of the day.
In order, however, to keep up the pleas-
ant fiction that we still expected to have
clients some day, we made a bet. Each
backed £5 to get the first brief, with
the proviso that (if ever the bet should
be decided) the winner was to stand a
dinner to the loser, in order to commem-
orate the event.

Imagine our emotions, therefore, when,
on the morning of my story, soon after
ten, a heavy step was heard to ascend
the staircase and pause at our door; and
when Blobs—who had been, according
to his usual habit, settling a little diffi-
culty with Cocksure's boy upon the
landing—rushed in, and in a hoarse
whisper said, frantic with excitement:
"A gentleman for Mister Brown!
And he's got a bundle of papers."

I must say that Armitage's behavior
did him credit. My landing the first
prize must naturally have been a
disappointment to him; but in the most
magnanimous way he exclaimed:

"Good for you, old man! Go in and
win. I'll hook it into the next room,
and leave the coast clear for you."

And he bolted accordingly into his
bedroom. I would have given much to
have been able to assume a more digni-
fied attire, and to straighten things gen-

erally, before the entrance of my client,
but it was out of the question. I had
only just time to pitch the end of my
cigar in the fire, open one of the large
law books—upside down as I afterwards
discovered—and to compose my features
into the most professional expression
compatible, when the visitor entered.—
He was a short, puffy little man, middle
aged, and of a good natured, unintel-
lectual cast of countenance. He wore a
shabby white hat and greasy black
gloves, and his trousers were shorter and
his umbrella fatter than is generally con-
sidered desirable in those articles; but,
notwithstanding, there was an air of
snug respectability about him, and the
bundle of papers, tied with red tape,
which he carried, had an eminently busi-
ness like appearance. He began:

"I must apologize for disturbing you at
this early hour in the morning, Mr.
Brown—he was evidently not a high
class practitioner—but, the fact is,
I have come to beg your assistance in a
very urgent case."

I tried to look as if urgent cases were
matters of the most common occurrence
in my professional appearance.

"Ah," I said, "quite so. Take a seat,
Mr. —"

"Ward, sir; Gribbins & Ward, of
High street, Bloomsbury. You have
heard the name, I dare say. Gribbins is
dead—he has been dead for some years,
but we keep up the old name, you
know."

I didn't know in the least. I had
never to my knowledge heard of Grib-
bins & Ward, but it would not do to ad-
mit the fact. Not to know Gribbin &
Ward would clearly be to argue myself
unknown. I took my cue accordingly.

"O yes; Gribbin & Ward, a most emi-
nent firm. I am delighted to have the
pleasure of making your acquaintance,
Mr. Ward."

"You are very kind, sir. Well, sir, I
was saying, or was about to say, I have
become connected with a case, a very
peculiar case—indeed, a most peculiar
case; and, hearing of you from my old
friend, Mr. Wiggins, I am a stranger to
you myself, I might venture to call
and ask you to assist me in it."

"Dear me," I thought, "whoever
would have thought of old Wiggins?"—
my hair dresser—"sending me a client."
And on the principle that one good turn
deserves another, I mentally resolved to
go and get my hair cut the very next
day. I replied:

"I shall be very happy, Mr. Ward.
Have you any particulars in writing?"

"Well, not exactly, said Mr. Ward,
depositing his bundle of papers in his
hat. "I have a few rough memoranda,
but I'll tell you in half a dozen words
the state of the case. The party I re-
present is a Mrs. Podgers, and I think
that you'll agree with me that she has
been very badly used. The fact is, she
was the daughter of an old fellow named
Grubb, in the oil and color trade, a man
reputed to be worth a mint of money.—
When she married Podgers, who was a
pork butcher in a small business, Pod-
gers naturally wanted to know what the
old man would do for them. A little
ready money would have been very ac-
ceptable, and as they knew that Susan—
that's Mrs. Podgers—was the only
daughter, and would come in for all the
old man's money at his death, they did
not see why he shouldn't give them a
little at once, on account like. But old
Grubb wasn't to be had in this way.—
'No,' says he, 'if you marry Susan,
when I die you'll have all I've got, which
may be ten thousand or it may be twen-
ty, but I'm not going to undress before
I go to bed, as the saying is.' So upon
that, and quite relying that the old man
would keep his word, Podgers gets mar-
ried. They all knew that the old man
couldn't last very long, so on the strength
of his expectations Podgers put
in a new shop window and starts a pony
trap. Trade was bad, and Podgers found
himself outrunning the constable a bit;
but he didn't mind feeling sure it would
be all right when the old man went off
the hooks."

I began to see my way. Podgers had
married on the strength of the old gen-
tleman's promise, and the old gen-
tleman had subsequently changed his
mind. Here was an opportunity of im-
pressing Mr. Ward with my legal acumen.

"Excuse my interrupting you one

moment, Mr. Ward," and I rang the
bell Blobs entered.

"Blobs, get 'Chitty on Contracts,' and
then go and ask Cocksure's clerk to
oblige me with loan of the sixth volume
of 'Messon and Welsby.' I think I can
give you a case just in point, Mr. Ward."
Blobs handed me 'Chitty on Contracts,'
which in point of fact was on the man-
tepiece immediately behind me, and de-
parted to execute the remainder of my
order. I referred to the index, mur-
muring, audibly: "Consideration—good
—valuable—marriage—page 18," then
turned to the passage and silently per-
used it with much attention. "Ah, yes,
I thought so!"

Blobs here returned with the bor-
rowed volume in which, with an air of
deep reflection, I turned to an imaginary
authority.

"No, that won't do. I had forgotten
for a moment that that case was over-
ruled by Jones vs. Robinson. Pray
proceed, Mr. Ward."

Mr. Ward had more than once at-
tempted to continue his story, but, with a
gentle wave of the hand, I had cau-
tiously, yet firmly deprecated interrup-
tion. He resumed, apologetically:

"I'm afraid I'm giving you a deal of
trouble, Mr. Brown."

"Not at all, Mr. Ward, I assure you I
always like to make sure, from the out-
set, as to the broad principles applica-
ble."

"Quite so, sir; very true. But I'm
afraid there is a little misunderstanding."

"I think not. I have followed you
with great attention. A married B's
daughter C on the faith of an under-
standing by B that he will on his death,
leave C the whole of his property; B—
that's Grubb, you know—dies, and he
does not leave his property to C—that's
Podgers—but to somebody else. Isn't
that your case?" And I leaned back in
my chair and eyed him with a deny-
that-if-you-can sort of expression.

"Just exactly so, sir. You had been
one of the family yourself you couldn't
have got it more pat. They all went on
as comfortable as possible until one Sun-
day, the old gentleman dined with the
Podgers, and found a caterpillar in the
vegetables. He would have it that they
did it on purpose. He went home at
once, tore up his will and made another,
leaving every penny of his money to the
Asylum for Incurable Clearstarchers.
The excitement brought on an apoplec-
tic fit and he died the very same night.
Personally sworn under \$25,000, and
Podgers all but in the Gazette."

I now began to fear that the case
would prove to be a chancery matter, and
that my share in it would be limited to
giving Mr. Ward an elaborate opinion
to that effect. But it clearly would not
do to make any suggestion of the kind
at the present stage of the proceedings.

"Ah, just as I thought, you see." I
tried to look as if I had anticipated
every detail of the case, even to the cat-
erpillar. "Well, the question now is,
what evidence have we, first of distinct
agreement on the part of B (otherwise
Grubb) to leave all his property to his
daughter, and, secondly that A (other-
wise Podgers) married on the faith of
that promise? You hear what Chitty
says: "A valuable consideration is such
as money, marriage, or the like, which
the law esteems an equivalent given for
the grant, and is therefore founded on
motives of justice. That's the law, but
how about the facts? Mere assertion
won't do, you know; we want evidence."

"Well, as to evidence, I'm afraid there
isn't much in a legal sense. Mr. Cock-
sure has advised upon the case, and he
says that we haven't any evidence in
fact we haven't a leg to stand upon."

It was flattering, and at the same time
a little alarming, to be consulted in a
case in which Mr. Cocksure was timid I
had better at least be cautious.

"You have up hill work before you,
I'm afraid, and I should recommend
you, Mr. Ward, as a man of business
(that is, of course, between ourselves) to
see your way clear as to the costs out of
pocket. The Incurable Clearstarchers
will fight hard sir, you may depend on
it."

"O, dear, yes, sir; no doubt they
would. But we've quite made up our
minds not to go to law about the matter.
It would be throwing good money after
bad; leastwise it would, if we had any
to throw; but we haven't. Podgers ran
away to America last Monday, and his

poor wife and five young children are
living in a two pair back in Camden
town, sustaining a miserable existence
on the scanty remains of the stock-in-
trade."

A horrible misgiving crossed my
mind, and I shut up Chitty.

"I thought—I mean to say I supposed—
I really don't quite see, then, in
what way I can be of service in the case,
Mr. Ward."

"Well, you see, sir, Mr. Wiggins told
me as you was an uncommon kind-
hearted gentleman, so I made bold to
call and ask if you would put down
your name for a trifle for the widow
and orphans—not that Mrs. P. is precise-
ly a widow, nor yet the children exactly
orphans, but rather worse, if anything,
in my opinion."

I was fairly caught. Not for worlds
would I have let Mr. Ward know that I
had been laboring under a misapprehen-
sion, and had been mentally welcoming
him as my first client. On the other
hand, after the extreme interest I had
exhibited in the case, I could not do less
than give him a handsome donation.
Smiling amiably, but inwardly breath-
ing the most awful imprecations against
Wiggins (and very nearly vowing, on
the spur of the moment, never to have
hair cut again as long as I live,) I ex-
pressed my extreme gratification at
having the opportunity of contributing
a sovereign to the necessities of the
Podgers family. Mr. Ward beamed with
delight, and pressed my acceptance of
his card, assuring me that, if I should at
any time require anything in his line,
it would be his most earnest endeavor—
these words, by the way, he apparently
spelt with an h—to give me satisfaction.
He insisted in shaking hands at parting,
and appeared to find considerable diffi-
culty in tearing himself away. At last,
however, he departed, leaving me still
holding his card' whereon I read: Grib-
bins & Ward, Greengrocers, 195 High
street, Bloomsbury. Evening parties
attended.

My absorbing thought, as soon as I
could think at all, was how on earth to
conceal the facts from Armitage—what
possible fiction to invent which should
save my dignity from exposure of the
horrible truth. What dreadful falsehood
I might ultimately have given birth to
I cannot say, for I was saved from the
ordel by hearing a burst, or rather a
succession of bursts, of frantic laughter
from the room to which Armitage had
retired. I pushed the door which yield-
ed to my touch. My worst fears were
realized! He knew all! He was lying
upon the bed, his feet considerable above
his head, cramming a pocket-handker-
chief in his mouth, and every now and
then breaking out afresh into a peal of
maniac laughter.

"Well, Brown, old boy, I hope you
have given the new client a good, sound
legal opinion. O dear, my poor sides!
Where shall we have the dinner, eh, old
man?"

"Come, Frank," I said addressing him
more in sorrow than in anger, "don't be
adding insult to injury. You've had
the door ajar, you scoundrel; so I
needn't tell you any particulars. But
at any rate promise to keep my secret."

"I'll be hanged if I do old boy; the
joke is a great deal too good to keep to
myself. How about 'Chitty on Con-
tracts' and 'Wesson and Welsby'?"
Oh, you old impostor! I'll be hanged if I
don't tell the story to every fellow I
meet."

So for fear that the facts should be
misrepresented—I hate misrepresenta-
tion—I determined to tell it myself.

A Singular Hatching Place.

A hen at South Carolina railroad
yard, in this city, took a notion a few
days since to lay her eggs in the tender-
box on Bob Hubbard's switch-engine,
and notwithstanding that veteran's
views to the contrary she persisted in
getting her work so far advanced that
it was deemed prudent to let her "lay."
After depositing, as she thought, the
usual complement of fresh eggs in order
to go into the spring chicken business,
she finally settled down to her work and
is now daily sitting on her nest. She
never leaves the engine only occasion-
ally when it stops in the yard, and then
only for a few moments, to fly off, pick
around and stretch herself. The engine
is in constant use and crossing and re-
crossing the city daily, pulling long
trains of cars. The engineer has fitted
her up with a nice, comfortable cotton
nest, and before long expects to have a
whole lot of steam-engine chickens.—
Augusta (Ga.) News.