

**Author: Rev. Joseph Barlow Brooks (1874-1952)**

**Text type: Prose**

**Date of composition: 1951**

**Editions: 1951**

**Source text:**

*Brooks, Rev. Joseph Barlow. Noah Th' Boat Buildther (in Lancashire Dialect). Oxford: The Church Army Press, Cowley.*

**e-text:**

**Access and transcription: July 2011**

**Number of words: 7,507**

**Dialect represented: Lancashire**

**Produced by Javier Ruano-García**

Copyright © 2011– DING, The Salamanca Corpus, Universidad de Salamanca



**Brooks, Rev. Joseph Barlow (1874-1952),**  
***Noah Th' Boat Buildther (in Lancashire Dialect)***  
**(1951)**

[3]

“Excuse me, Lord!” said Gabriel, one mornin’, “but we’r o wondtherin’ if Yo’ ail owt, Yer Majesty. An Yo’ gotten th’ yed-warch, er summat?”

“Aye, Gabriel! th’ yed-warch, an’ th’ ‘eart-warch, too,” said God.

“Well! awm downreet sorry,” said Gabriel, “ ‘ow lung ‘as it bin thrubblin’ Yo’?”

“Monny a day, Gabriel!” said God.

“Is ther nowt as Yo con tak for it, Yer ‘Oliness?” axt Gabriel.

“Aye! ther is a remedy,” said God, “bur it’s very dhrastic, an’ Awm loth to use it.”

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

“Well! as Yo’ know, Lord,” said Gabriel, “a pennoth o’ yezz’s woth a penny; an’ aw waant Yo’ to know as t’other ark-angils an’ misell are rayther thrubblit about Yo’.”

“What’s this!” said God. “Yo’ durn’t myen to say as it’s upsettin’ annybody?”

“Beggin’ Yer pardon, bur it is, Lord!” said Gabriel. “In fact, so mich wer bein’ said bi th’ t’one an’ t’other, as aw coed a committee to see if owt could bi done. But not gradely knowin’ what wert matther, it wer a bit awkert to come to anny conclusions.”

“What did yo’ fancy wert matther?” inquir’t God, smilin’.

“Well! Michael thowt ther met bi threachery agen, somewheer,” said Gabriel, “so wi coed on every ark-angil to swear, on ‘is ‘onour, ‘is liyalty to th’ Throne. It prove’t ther wer no thrubble o’ that soart.”

“An’ what else wer it thowt met bi th’ matther?” axt God, rayther amused.

Gabriel wer so plez’t to see God breeten up, fer ther’d

[4]

bin a soart o’ gloom oer ‘Eaven o’ lately, ‘at ‘e took couridge to tell ‘Im a bit moor.

“Raphael wondher’t if Yo’ met ‘appen bu gettin’ owd, at last. Yo’ see, Lord, Yo’n noan bin as sprightly as usual, an’ yo’n bin stoopin’ an’ not smilin’ as mish as Yo’ used to do.”

“Oh! so that’s th’ idea!” said God. “Well! yo’ con cheer yersells up about that; Awve nobbut just started. Naw, Gabriel!” louft God, “it’s noan owt o’ that soart.” Then ‘E look’t serious agen. “Th’ fact’s is Awm bother’t about th’ Creation.”

“Th’ Creation, Lord!” cried Gabriel, “Why it’s o so splendid. It’s workin’ like clockwork. O th’ ark-angils ‘re agreed about that. Th’ ‘eavens declare Thi glory, an’ th’ firmament shows Thi ‘andiwark. Day shouts Thi praise to day, an’ neet gossips to neet about Thi wisdom; an’ th’ mornin’ stars sing together wi’ gladness!” Gabriel wer fair carried away as ‘e talked about God’s mestherpiece.

God wer very plez’t to yer Gabriel talk like that.

“Thanks, Gabriel!” ‘E said, “Aw understond an’ appreciate o as theh says about this universe as Awve made; Awm rayther proud on it Misell. But i’th’ biggest thing o’ o

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

Awve failt', Gabriel! Aw darsay yo' thowt Aw wer infallible, but yon little world o' 'uman bein's 'as byetten Mi. Even God con make mistakes, theh sees, an' Awve come to see as that Paradise idea wer a blundther. It wouldn't 'a' bin so bad if Aw'd just wiped it o' out at th' fust. Isted o' that, Aw some'ow kept thinkin' it'd bi sure to come reet i'th' end. Mi big mistake, of course, wer i' lerin' Lucifer come within a milion miles of Adam an' 'is lot. Ther wer bound to bi ructions. An' yet, Aw thowt, bowt summat to thry um, 'ow wer they to grow to bi mesthers o' thersells! That wer th' problum. Aw thowt, i' time as they'd larn to keep th' bant i'th' nick; an' now, it's o' out o' flunther."

"Con nowt bi done, Lord?" axt Gabriel.

"Only one thing, Gabriel," 'E said, "an' that's to wipe um off th' face o'th' earth!"

[5]

"What! o on um, Lord; th' men, wimmen an' childther; an' th' cattle an' th' wild crathers, an' th' creepin' things, an' th' brids? That's rayther dhrastic, isn't it, Lord? Afther takin' so mich thrubble oer um, to blot um out as if they'd ne'er bin wick!"

"Well!" said God, wi' a sigh, "'appen it is gooin' a bit to' far. Ther's one mon an' 'is family as Aw should rayther rue about, for 'e's a mon afther Mi own 'eart. 'Appen if Aw started a freesh world wi' 'im, 'e'd make a better fist at ir ner Adam did. It's woth a thrial annyroad, so Aw'll do it. As ferst rest on um ther noan woth a row o' pins, fer ther rotten to th' core. Awve bin gooin' an' comin' amung um a good dyel lately, an' ther o on um up to ther e'en i' o kinds o' foo's thricks; an' they'n not two ideas to rub agen one another, except fer nowtiness. Ther a lot o' niddy 'ommers, an' wuss. Aw thowt at one time 'at they mur mendin'. That young felly, Enoch, now, wer a gradely mon. Wi 'ad monny a talk together. 'E walk't wi Mi an' Wi planned things, bur it seem't a 'opeless business, an' i' th' end, Aw took 'im out o' th' silly waste an wickedness. An' ther wer men like Tubal Cain, as could make clever things i' brass; an' Jubal, as made th' most cute little instruments, an' thried to set foak singin'. But

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

Jubal's efforts wer only a flash i' the pon, an' they wer soon usin' Tubal Cain's skill fer feightin'. Th' very devil's spirit's in um--feightin'! feightin'! feightin'!"

"Awm very sorry to yer it, Lord", said Gabriel.

"Lottheries, dancin' i' brothels, family quarrels, cruelty an' 'atred; these are th' things ther minds are tan up wi'. Ther' noan fir to live! They stink i' Mi nose, an' they shall go back wheer they coom fro'," said God, grimly. "Aw'll spare noan on um except Noah an' 'is family. As fert dumb animals, We'll keep enoo o' them to re-stock th' earth."

So th' very next day, God went an' 'ad a talk wi' Noah.

"Noah!" said Gos. "Aw've mark't thee out as a just an' gradely mon; as nee as makes no matther."

"Well, now yer Almightyness! an' aw 'ope aw am," said Noah.

[6]

"Theh knows Me then?" said God.

"Aw should bi a barmyed, Lord, if aw didn't! said Noah.

"This earth's far to' fine a place fer them as cumbers it, Noah," said God.

"That's a throe word, Yer 'Oliness," said Noah, "an' if aw 'ad my way aw'd wipe um o off th' face o' th' earth, if that's not sayin' to' mich fer one as is far fro' perfect 'issell."

"Oh! Awm noan gooin' to pertend as Awm blind to thi little wakenesses, Mi lad! That fondness o' thine fer a dhrop o' licker'll bi leggin' thi down, one o' these days, if thert noan careful. Bur Awm noan one as expects foak to bi angils i' this world; an' Aw'll let thi into a sacret--even Mi ark-angils, Michael an' Raphael an' Gabriel, an' t'others, o an ther little bits o' crotches. A blind e'e to smo fawts 'as awlus bin one o' Mi mottoes. Bur what Aw do say is, as amoung o this forest o' rotten wood, thert a fine, upstondin' an' livin' three."

"Thanks, Lord, Yo'n yezzed mi mind, aw con tell Yo', wi' them words o' Yo'res. Fer, when awve bin rebukin' th' folly o' mi neighbors, summat inside on mi's kept

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

sayin': "Neh, then! theh 'ypocrite, fust cure thisell. Thi own pon'd do wi' a bit o' sowtherin', afore theh starts mendin' other foak's kettles."

"Thoose sentiments does thi credit, Noah," said God, "an' covers a gradely lot o' sins--not as Awm suggestin' as theh's committed so monny. Theh plezzes Me very weel, welly as mich as o'th' ruck angers Me, an' Awm gooin' to tell thi Mi plan."

"Annythin' as Yo' perpose, Lord, 'Il meet wi' mi' backin', fer aw've bin at mi wits end fer a good while, wi' evrybody up to ther e'broos i' sin," said Noah.

"Well, Noah, ther con bi no awf measures. Awm sorry to say so, bur Aw've come to th' conclusion as Awst 'a' to do what theh sez the'd like to do, an' wesh this scum off th' face o'th' earth. It'll make a mess o' this lovely world o' Mine, but thee an' thi family mun bi saved, so's yo' con make

[7]

a new start. Theh'll tak it as a greight favour, an' a greight responsibility as Awm puttin' on thi, Noah!

"Thank Yo', Lord, it's a greight 'onour fer sure, an' it makes mi feel very 'umble. Tell mi what Yo' waant mi to do, an', if th' 'eavens fo' aw'll do it, if aw con," said Noah, bowin' down, an' kissin' God's feet.

"Theh's said ir," said God, "th' 'eaven's'll welly nee 'a' to fo', er it'll seem like it. Fert clouds'll dhrop, an' th' sun an' moon an' th' stars'll bi blotted out. An' th' fountins o' th' deep'll bi brokken up, an' a greight wynt'll rise an' blow everythin' to bits.

God, who's bin gazin' at th' sky, as 'E talk't, wi a look awf sorrow an' awf anger on 'Is face, look't down an' seed Noah cowert down wi' 'is een full o' terror. "Now then!" said God, "theh's no need to bi fret'nt, Noah. Aw'll promise theh, if theh carries out Mi instruitions faithfully, not a yure o' thi yed'll bi injert, ner noan o' thi family."

"Aw'll do what Yo' waant, Lord, even if awm dhrown't like a kitlin," said Noah.

God smiled, "Theh wurn't even get witchert, Noah; that's noan th' road Aw dyel wi' dacent foak. Besides, Awst waant thee an' thine, afther't flood, to start things ower agen."

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

“Very weel, Lord,” said Noah, “an’ when does this flood begin, an’ what ’ave aw to do to get ready for it? Aw’ll waant a barge, er summat.”

“The’ll waant moor ner a barge; theh’ll want a’ Ark. Becose, theh sees, ther’ll ’a’ to bi rowm fer th’animals; two soarts o’ every livin’ things, an’ seven o’ some fer a spezhall reason,” said God.

“It’ll be a sossin’ big Ark, Lord, to ’ows o soarts o’ cattle an’ brids an’ reptiles an’ insects; besides mi wife an’ me, an’ eawr Shem an’ Ham an’ Japhet, an’ ther wives an’ childther! An’ ’ow are wi’ gooin’ to get together o th’ wild beasts, an’ th’ creepin’ things, Lord?” said Noah.

“Well!” said God, “Aw dursay theh’ll ’a’ noatic’t as when ther’s a storm brewin’, th’ wild crathers collect wheer thers foak livin’, an’ if it gos on, they get quite tame, spezhally

[8]

if ther clemm’t. That’s just what’ll ’appen. Th’ dreigh weather’ll parch an’ crack th’ lond, an’ then th’ storm’ll follow. Shem an’ ’is brothers con start gettin’ ready fert animals sthrecht away. They con begin bi makin’ pens an’ fowds an’ cages an’ dens, o on um carefully fenced in, so’s noan con get in er out bowt permission.”

“An’ ’ow’ll wi make dens fer th’ wild beasts, Lord?” axt Noah.

“Th’ lads an’ thee mun dig out caves for um. Yo’ll ’a’ to collect o soarts o’ food for um, too, an’ fer yersells, to keep yo’ o alive fer about a year,” said God.

“An’ ’ow are wi gooin’ to collect th’ creepin’ things, Lord?” axt Noah.

“Now, Noah! durn’t make difficulties wheer ther arn’t anny”, said God. “Theh owt to know bi now, as afore theh’s finish’t that theer Ark, th’ insects’ll ’a’ collected thesells. An’ ther’ll bi no thrubble, so far as ther consarnt, about th’ ’ousin problum, noather.”

“Yo’ mun excuse mi, Lord,” said Noah, “but th’ moor gone through o th’ dymentions an’ specifications very carefully wi’ Gabriel,” said God. “It’ll be a vessel o’ three storeys, wi’ a top on; no masts er sails, er owt o’ that soart. Ther mun bi rowms

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

fert various sets as couldn't very weel live together. Ther mun bi ladthers fro' one storey to another, so's everythin' con bi properly look't afther, an' kept clen. Ther'll 'a' to bi storidge rowm fer tg' food, an' th' seeds, an' th' tools; an' sleepin' rowm fer th' family. Thee an' thy lads con sleep i' yer turns, as somebody'll need to be on th' waatch, neet an' day, wi' a cargo o' sich consequence."

"Could aw yer what these specifications are, Lord? Awm itchin' to make a beginnin'," said Noah.

[9]

"Steady on, lad! Thert moor excited about this thing ner Me!" said God.

"Yo' mun excuse me, Lord! but when a thing's on mi mind, aw like to get at it," said Noah.

"Well, sit down, Noah," said God, wi' a smile, "an' Aw'll tell thi th' dymentions an' th' specifications. Aw recommend pine an' cypress fer th' timber. Thers nowt better ner them fer th' wayther an' th' 'ard weather. Th' Ark mun bi four 'undthert an' fifty feet lung, seventy-five feet broad, an' forty-five feet 'eigh. Put in a narrow window skirtin' o' round undthert ledge o' th' roof, about a foot an' a awf. An' make a greight fur i'th' side o'th' Ark, big enoof fer behemoth, an' th'elephants an' giraffes to goo in. Th' timbershell o'th' Ark mun bi daub't weel wi' pitch, both inside an' out, to make it wayther-tight. Yo'll want a greight platform o' timber, fer th'animals to goo up into th'Ark by, an'o. Now goo ahead, an' durn't worry. Aw'll bi comin' backerts an' forrats, an' if owt crops up, Wi con goo into it together. Bi sure an' lay a good solid keel, to begin wi'."

"Thank Yo', Lord," said Noah, "it's o'reet, an' we'll start th' fust thing i'th' mornin', an' look out th' threes, an' cut th' timber."

Yo con gouse, ther wer a fine shindy afore lung. Reet or wrung, a mon 'at winnot keep i' step wi' 'is neighbors is axin' fer thrubble. It started awhom. Thrubble often starts theer, if a mon gets a notion o' bein' a reformer, er owt o' that soart. An' Noah 'ad often yern th' length o' 'is wife's tongue afore. "Aw dunnot know what theh wants



*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

botherin' so mich about other foak for! It brings us no good an' plenty o' ill-will. But it's me as 'as to put up wi' th' neighbors skits. It ne'er seems to bother thee. Theh's a skin like a rhinoserus," 'ood say.

An' it wer sartinly throe as these taunts run off Noah like wayther off a rhinoseruse's back. 'Owever, this Ark proposition wer a rayther moor sarious business. "'Oo'll noan believe it, shos-ow-o-be," said Noah to 'issell, "an' aw'd met as weel't bi lowf't at, an' tongue-peck't, fer a sheep

[10]

as a lamb, as th' sayin' is, so 'oo's t'ave th' whul story." So when 'e went in, 'e up an' tow'd 'er o' about it."

Never afore 'ad 'e yern 'er goo on i' sich a fashion. "Aw've awlus known as theh wer a bit touch't, but this is th' limit," 'oo said, "now, thert gooin' shome us o, afore th' counthry side. Th' foak'll talk about us moor ner ever. If theh starts fiddlin' on wi' that Ark, as theh coes it, they'll ger up picnic parties an' come o' gallivantin' to see it at th' weekends, an' to make a mock on us! But what does theh care if thi family's fret'nt o' gooin' out fer fear o' bein' scof't at!"

As a matter of fact, Noah's wife proved a throe prophet i' that. Every passer-by, out fer a thraunce, flung a jest at Noah an' 'is lads, er went by sniggerin', when theh seed what theh wer busy wi'.

"Wheer arti gooin't sail it, owd lad? Is thi God gooin't dif thi a slip-way?" axt a lively youth.

"'E will," said Noah. "'Appen theh'll yer tell on it."

"Ow monny monkeys arti gooin't tak' wi' thi' on th' thrip?" axt another.

"Two," said Noah, wi' a twinkle, "but theh wurn't bi one on um."

"Gie us th' day o'th' month as theh intends sailin' on. Aw'd like to book mi passage, later," cried another joker.

"Th' date o' sailin's i' God's keepin', an' o th' bunks are o'ready tan up," said Noah, solemnly.



*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

There wer one thing as Noah's wife proved a false prophet in, when 'oo said as th' lads, Shem, Ham, an' Japhet, 'd lowf ther feyther to scorn. Whether they swallowed 'is tale er not, they sartinly jump't to this idea like th' wick young things they wer; fer remember 'at they wer nobbut about a aged mon o' six 'undthert, wi' only three' undthert an' fifty yers to look forrat to.

They'd 'ad monny a bit o a raft i' ther time, an' 'ad a lively bit o' fun wi' um on th' lodges i'th' rainy season. They'd even 'ad a go at makin' boats wi' ther feyther's 'elp. But to build a ship, four 'undthert an' fifty feet lung, an'

[11]

seventy five feet broad, an' forty feet 'eigh!--flood er no flood, they wer o for it wi' both 'onds, an' ther feet an' o. An' ther' wives an' childther wer for it, too. What youngsters could 'ave resisted a do o' this soart! Noah's wife wer disgusted wi' th' lot on um. "A pack o' yornyeds! That's what they are!" 'oo said, "an' ther feyther's th' wust, fer' e's owd enoof to 'a' moor sense. But 'e'd ne'er bi nowt but a ninny-'ommer, if 'e lived to be a thousand.

But they wer o to' busy, fotchin' an' carryin', cuttin' down threes, an' sich-like, to tak mich noatice o' 'er sauce. Shem wer oer th' moon about th' new axe 'e'd made fer 'issell, an' Ham 'd made a saw, an' Japhet some spades an' 'ommers out o' flints. Th' wimmen gethert th' chips o' wood fer cookin', an' th' pitch fer th' thatchin' an' plaistherin' up o' th' cracks in th' timbers o'th' Ark. As th' time went on, they'd to bring in th' animals an' brids an' mak' um comfertable. Th' childther did a bit o' osoarts. Th' little dakesays wer brastin' wi' excitement an' potther't about, diggin' an' fettlin', an' nobry wer busier ner them. An' th' Ark wer finish't, an' th' time o' th' Flood dhrawin' very nee, judgin' bi th' weather an' th' sky-signs, afore they'd anny time to spend on wondtherin' a greight dyel about it. Ther wer a fine to-do when th' greight dur wer flung oppen, an' th' monsther of a dhrawbridge wer let down, an' th' animals an' fowls, an' th' bigger end o'th' crawlin' crathers, begun to arrive.

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

Shem coom fust, shoutin' to Noah, 'at stood on board to shepherd um in. "Ere come leopards, 'orses, swine, goats an' cawves, sheep an' kine!" An' Ham coom, wi' another procession, cryin': "Ther's camels an' asses, 'art an' 'ind; buck, doe; beasts o' every kind." Then Japhet coom, namin' 'is lot: "Otter, fox an' fumert, cats an' dogs, weazels, squirrels, ferrets an' frogs."

Then coom a rigiment, led bi th' childther an' th' wimmen: bears an' wolves, rats an' mice, 'erons, cranes an' peacocks, geese an' swans, cocks an' crows an' ravens, doves an' apes an' owls, cuckoos an' snakes an' starlin's, adders, an' a

[12]

'undthert others. Not fergettin' th' last, but by no myens th' littlest: th' elephants, lions, tigers, osthrichters an' crocodiles. What a minadgery to bi sure! They went in two bi two, as th' song says; except th' clen beasts, which, bi spezhall ordther gin to Noah, 'ad to goo in seven bi seven. Ther wer no weighin' machines i' tham says, so aw cornt tell yo' what weight th' cargo coom to.

O this time the sky 'ad bin gettin' blacker an' blacker, an' it wer plain to bi seen as a bad storm wer brewin'. Some o'th' foak 'at'd scoft' begun to bi fret'nt, an' wondther't if ther wern't summat in it afther o; an' one or two coom round sperrin' to see if ther wer anny chance o' bein' tan on th' boat. But Noaj said 'e'd sthricht ordhers who 'e'd to let on.

God 'ad kept 'Is e'e on th' business fro' th' beginnin', an' now 'E sent word as 'E wer gooin't turn th' storms, an' floods, an' th' fountins on; an' Noah'd better get 'is family on board at once.

Noah'd no thrubble i' gettin' 'is family on board, that is, wi' one exception, fer they'd o bin 'ard at it till th' last minnit, fotchin' th' animals up. An' now they wer ready fer th' excitin' experience Noah'd tow'd um about. So, as soon as Noah gin th'ordther, they wer up th' gangway in a jiffy. Some o'th' childther wer actually pooin' at th' ropes to the th' gangway in, when Noah shouted to um. "Owd on theer, yer noan gooin' to levv yer gron'mother, are yo'?" An' turnin' to th' lads, 'e said: "Look 'ere,

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

it'll bi a ticklish job gettin' yer mother on shipboard. 'Oo still thinks we're o crazy, an' 'oo ax'd owd Jabe's wife to a sope o' leatheryed tay, an' a bit of a gossip. 'Oo's pertendin' 'oo knows nowt about eawr gooin's on, as 'oo coes um. Yo'n yern 'er say as 'oo's gooin't stop wheer 'oo is, an' 'oo'll tak some shiftin'. Well! yo' mun goo an' fotch 'er. Coax 'er if yo' con, bur aw 'a' mi doubts on that score. Bur if 'oo's obstropolus, yo' mun fotch 'er o th' same; aye! if yo' 'a' to carry 'er."

So off th' three lads went; a little ticklet, an' a bit fyert, at th' idea o'tacklin' a stiff job.

[13]

"What an yo' come 'ere for?" ax't ther mother, scentin' mischief th' minnit 'oo seed um. "Aw thowt yo' wer o so throng gerrin' ready for gallivantin' i' yer greight dreigh-lond sailer! An yo' gin it up?"

"Naw, mother! it's o ready fer startin'," said Shem, an' we'n come to fotch yo'."

"Oh! yo' an, an yo'!" 'oo said. "Well, yo' con goo back to 'im as sent yo' an' tell 'im awm not comin'. 'Ere 'ave another dhrink, Mrs. Jabe, ther's plenty.

"Look 'ere, mother!" said Ham, "we cornt levv yo' 'ere to bi drown't. Mi feyther's 'ad word as th' Flood's boun't start anny minnit. What d'yo think wi could do bowt yo'?"

"Yo' mun do th' best yo' con. If yo' think awm gooin't spend mi time feedin' a minadgery, yer sadly mistan. Afther o these yers alookin' afther yo' an' yer feyther, aye, an' yer childther, too! awm bound t' 'ave a rest. So yo' con goo on wi' yer pace-eggin', an' aw'll 'ave a bit o' pleasure wi' mi neighbors."

"But yo'll o bi dhrownt, mother! Thers a big storm brewin' now," said Japhet, "corn't yo' yer 'ow its thunnerin'?"

"Aye!" 'oo said, "an' aw yerd it thunner afore theh wer born, lad. Awm noan fyert of a bit o' thunner, if yo' are; naw, ner leetnin' oather. Now, off wi yo' when yer tow'd."

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

Th' lads wer a bit flummoxt at th' road ther mother answert 'um, an' it took a bit o' courage to tell 'er as oo'd getten to come, willy-nilly. At last, Shem said, "Well, mother, we're noan gooin' back bowt yo', so theer!"

"An' awm noan gooin' wi' yo', so theer!" 'oo said.

What th' lads would 'a' done next it's 'ard t o tell. Fer it wer abvious 'at th' owd lady'd 'a' tan a mort o' persuadin', an' a bit o' 'oggin', too. 'Oo wer just eggin' 'er neighbor on to 'ave some moor o' 'er nice liquer, when ther wer a terrible flash o' leetnin', an' a crash o' thunner. In a jiffy th' place wer full o' reech!"

"Th' tents o' feigher," cried Japhet, "look, it's comin' in fro' the' back!"

[14]

Jabe's wife wer off like streak't leetnin' itsell, an' ther mother fainted.

"Come on, lads," cried Shem, "this's eawr chance, afore 'oo comes round." They lifted 'er up on ther shouldthers, an' carried 'er off to th' Ark. Noah wer gradely fain when 'e seed um comin', an' coom down th' gangway to gie um a lift. 'Is wife wer just comin' round, an' said: "Neh, then! what th' 'angments are yo' thryin' on? 'Ave aw 'appent a' accident? Er dun yo' think awm a sheep, er summat?"

"Nay! owd lass, thert noan 'urt, as aw know on. But th' Lord's strech't forth 'Is mighty 'ond to save thi! Blest be 'Is name!" said Noah.

"Oh, dear! aw weesh theh'd gie o'er preichin'; awm teighert on it," 'oo said. "Th' fust when aw met thi, aw use't to think it wer fine. It wer partly that as decided mi to 'a' thi. Fer th' fust 'undthert yer er so, it wer o reet, bur it's a bit stale bi now. Besides it brings us nowt but ill-will. Thert so cranky, too. If theh'd only bi a gradely mon,--'ere! wheer are yo' takin' mi? Lemmi down! awm noan gooin' on yer fancy boat; aw've summat moor to do wi' mi time! Lemmi down, aw tell yo'! Theer! tak that, yo' soft yeds! 'oggin' yer mother about as if 'oo wer a sack o' flour!" An' 'oo gin Shem an' Ham a regler sous, apiece, i'th' yer-ole.

"Now, it's o reet, mother, yo' con ston' up now; yo' see, yo' fainted," said Ham.

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

“Aye! an’ aw’ll faint thee if thert not careful. What done yo’ reckon yo’n browt mi ‘ere for? Awm noan stoppin’, so yo’ con shift out o’th’ road; awm gooin’.”

“Awl up th’ dhrawbridge,” said Noah, quietly, to th’ lads, “aw’ll look afther yer mother. ‘Oo’s not quite recover’t ‘er reet senses.” An’ Ham an’ Japhet piked off to do as ther feyther’d towd um.

“Senses! My good lorjus days! Awve moor sense i’ mi little finger ner theh ever ‘ad i’ thi whul body; senses, indeed!” said th’ missis.

[15]

“It’s o’ reet, now, Mother!” said Noah, “ther’s no back dur, so yo’ met as weel t’ make yersell comfortable.”

“Aye! aw darsay! clennin’ dog kennils an’ brid cages. That Ark’ll arbour dirt; an’ no back dur! An’ feedin’ monkeys, an’ ostriches, an’ crocodiles, an’ elephants! A nice life fer a woman o’ my age! An’ aw’ll tell yo’ sthraight aw’ll ‘a’ nowt t’do wi’them tigers; ner th’ snakes an’ adders, noather. Aw durn’t thrust um.”

“It’s o’ reet, mother! We’ll look afther th’ animals. Durn’t worry yersell,” said Shem, “an’ eawr wives’ll help too,”

“Aye! Aw know yo’, a lot yo’ll o’ do, when yo’ ‘a’ mi to slave for yo’!” ‘oo said.

“Wi o’ know as yer bark’s wuss ner yer bite, annyroad,” Said Noah, “an’ when yo’ getten started clennin’ an’ rivin’ things about, yo’ll think yer awhom.”

O this time th’ wind ‘d bin wailin’, an’ th’ sky growin’ darker an’ darker, till it look’t welly like mindneet. Greight flocks o’ brids flutter’t backerts an’ forrats o’er th’ Ark. Animals prowlt about undhert its keel; an’ ther’ wer a soart o’ sickly leet playin’ round i’th’ darkness, as made th’ pitchblack Arch sheighn. Th’ air wer whut like a furnace. Even th’ wind wer a whut wind. Every now an’ then ther wer a greight crack o’ thunner, an’ a vivid flash o’ leetnin’, but not a spot o’ rain. Then o’ of a sudden, th’ clouds brasted, an’ th’ wayther coom tumblin’ down i’ bucket-fulls. Everythin’ wer soak’t in a jiffy. It coom up, too, as weel as down. Th’ ‘ard-bak’t lond wer brokken up as ‘eigh as th’ Ark itsell. O th’ brucks an’ rivers coom weeshin’ o’er ther banks, an’ th’

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

wayther soon started spreadin' everywheer. Th' Ark wer noan lung afore it begun to dither an' sweigh, an' lift an' 'eighve, undther th' force o'th' wayther. An' afther a toothry 'ours it begun to shift, an' th' greight thrip'd started.

Th' deluge shutthert down in a steady rattle o' rain on th' slantin' roof o' th' Ark. Th' waves o'th' floodin' waythers shook its wooden timbers wi' a sullen roar. Soon, nowt could bi seen through th' lung narrow windows but thick, broodin'

[16]

darkness, lit up, now an' then, bi flashes o' leetnin'. Shrill 'owlin' of beasts, an' shreikin' o' men an' wimmen' coom on th' wynt fro' a distance, but these gradually deed down. Then, nowt no moor wer yerd but th' sound o'th' blasts o'th' wynt an' th' thunner, an' th' swish o'th' wayther agen th' sides o' th' movin' vessel; except, now an' then, th' restless snortin' an' sighin' an' stirrin' o'th' beasts i'ther stalls.

Noah's wife wer gradely flabbergasted at o' this, an' only recover't 'er tongue at bed-time. "Little did aw lippen, as afther o' these yers, aw should bi made so shom't. To think aw've bin so mistan," 'oo said to Shem's wife that neet. "Thi feyther-i'-law's a greight mon, an' awlus 'as bin. Aw knowed 'e wer jannock, but aw thowt 'e wer too 'ard an' traigh-lac't. Mind thi! 'e wer awlus kind-spokken to mi, an' to yo' an' o, an' 'e'd never, willin'ly, 'urt a mouse. Naw! yo' met goo through th' records o' 'Eaven wi' a smo-tooth comb, but yo'd find nowt o' that soart. But aw'd soart o' gotten use't to that; an' aw thowt it quare as 'e wer so different fro' everybody else. Aw us't to say to misell, " 'E's sich a one lot! Why corn't 'e bi like other foak? Surelee! they corn't o' bi wrung, an' 'im awlus reet!" An' yet aw shouldn't 'a' liked 'im to 'a' bin like th' most o'them; gamblin' an' feightin', an' lyin' an' dhrinkin' o' th' day through. Not as 'e doesn't like a dhrop o' liquer issell, an' mi too, fer that matther."

Afther yezzin' 'er mind o' this nominy, 'oo went off to bed an' slept like a top till mornin'. Th' wimmen an' th' childther, excited wi' ther day's experiences, an' not sufferin' perticlerly fro' nerves, o' slept soundly till breakfast time. Th' clatter o'th' rain,

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

an' th' continuous weesh o'th' wayther agen th' boat, wer like soothin' serrup, sendin' um off to th' lond o' blanket fair.

But ther wer no sleep, that fust neet, fer Noah an' 'is lads. Th' beasts wer restless; shiftin' about unyezzily, an' eighvin' an' sighin' 'an groainin' i' ther quare floatin' quarters. An' th' feathert folk scratcht an' flutthert an' wittthert an'

[17]

fuss't like a 'en as waants to lay, an' cornt. So th' men, wi' ther' little clay lamps fed wi' ile an' a wick, went ther round fro' bunk to pen, an' fro' pen to stall till they wer gradely sure as o th' livin' cargo wer safe an' sound. As they went, they pept wi' ther little lamps into every nook an' cranny o'th' wooden boat to see if th' byems an' th' framewark wer stonin' th' sthrain'. An' they tested th' outside shell to satisfy thersell as th' jints wer wayther-tight an' plumb. Mornin' coom afore they could rest an' feed thersells, an' ther big an' mixt family. Afther that, they fix't up a neet watch.

"Wi cornt goo on o this road," said Noah, "if we're gooin't last out. We'll 'a' to tak turns. Yo' three con divide th' neet, an' co mi i' th' early 'ours. Aw wer gooin't say, co mi at dayleet, but this soart o'thing 'ardly desarves th' name. Wi con 'ardly see th' wayther we're smoo'ert in."

Fer forty sich days an' forty sich neets, th' rain pelted down an' th' Ark pitch't an toss't in th' swirl o' wayther, an' th' little compny o' foak fitted thersells in, doin' ther bits o'jobs. An' Noah cheer't um up like th' fine owd 'ero 'e wer. "We're i' God's 'onds," 'e said, "an' 'E's gin 'Is word. 'E's ne'er letten mi down yet, as aw know on." An' so things went on.

Th' childther seem't not to noatice th' surroundin' gloom. They 'elped to feed th' beasts, an' 'ad greight fun gien th' nuts to th' monkeys, an' big chunks o' feesh to th' crocodiles. But they wer th' most excited larnin' th' parrots to talk; "G'mornin'!" "Wheer's Grandad?" "Dusti think it's bound to rain?" an' sich-like questions were ther stock-i'-thrade. There wer no doubt 'at th' childher'd remember this thrip as lung as they lived. It wer toppin'.



*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

Time passed on. Sometimes th' owdther end axt one another if it wer possible 'at God's fergetten um. An' then Noah'd come along wi' 'is bit o' faith an' philosophy, an' cheer um up agen. Then, one mornin', Noah noatic't 'at things wer cheingin', an' 'e begun pracin' round th' boat, lookin' through th' window on one side an' then on th' tother.

"What's yer feyther reckon 'e's doin' now? axt 'is

[18]

wife, "'e's a' owd fuss-pot! Aw weesh 'e'd quiten 'issell down a bit. 'E's awlus meighterin' an' fancyin' summat's 'appenin'. But nowt never will, awm sartin.

Just then Noah 'ove i' seet, "It's slack'nin'," 'e said.

"Slack'nin! What's slack'nin?" axt his wife. "Is th' boat comin' to pieces, at th' finish? Aw suppose wi met 'a' expected it! An' if wi 'addent bin dhrown't, we'd a bin starv't to dyeth, fer aw know yo' corn't goo on feedin' o us, an' a crowd o' lions an' tigers an' elephants an' crocodiles an' sich-like, for ever. It doesn't ston' to reason!"

"Now, lass! 'ave a bit o' patience," said Noah, "we'n noan run out o' feedin' stuff yet. An' look out o'th' window, er 'earken to th' patther o' th' rain, an' yo'll find out summat 'at'll plezz yo', aw think."

"What!" cried th' lads, "is th' rain stoppin', feyther? That's a good job." An' they dash't off to th' window. It wer throe. Th' clouds still 'ung like a funeral pall o'er everythin'. but th' rain'd welly stop't."

"Now, yo'll bi able to do a bit o' feeshin' bowt gerrin' soppin' weet, an' so keep us o fro' starvin'," said Noah, grinnin' at 'is wife.

Fro' that day, th' leet gradually geet sthrunger, an' one mornin', when Ham wer comin' off 'is waatch, an' wer gooin't co' 'is feyther, 'e copt seet o' summat unusual i'th distance. It wer a silvery sthreak on' th' margin o' th' sky. 'Is 'eart lept up into 'is mouth, fer 'e knowed what it must be. "Feyther! feyther!" 'e shouted, "ger up, th' sun's sheighnin'!"

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

Noah wer soon bi 'is side, gazin' out, away tor't th' glimmer. "Aye, lad," said Noah, "that's sun-rise, reet enoof. An' yon mun bi th' east, an' we're thravellin' that road. Aw shouldn't wondther if we're gettin' tort th' mountins o' Ararat. Ther very 'eigh mountins i' Armenia, theh knows. Th' Lord'll know what 'E's dooin', an' 'E'll likely settle th' boat down on th' 'ollow slope o' one o' um."

[19]

When th' family geet up fer breakfast, ther wer fine excitement o'er seein' owd Sol agen; an' everythin' seem't so mich moor cheerful, wi' a bit moor leet comin' through th' window. Th' days now passed less wearily, as they could look out an' see what wer 'appenin' on th' wayther. Besides th' feeshin', th' childther, spezhally, kept findin' summat to cry out about. "Look, mother! yon's a bit of a 'ut floatin'," shouted one on um. "Awm sure that wer a corpse!" said another.

"If aw wer yo', aw'd keep away fro' that window," said ther mother, shudtherin'. "A good job it's o bin 'id fro' eawr een," 'oo said to 'ersell.

"Look!" cried th' lad, "awm sure that's a rock, reet out yon, i' th' mist."

"Aye! it is a rock," said one o'th' owder end, elbowin' 'im away. "'Urray!" they both shouted, as they sacamper't away to tell t'others. "A rock! a rock!"

An' it wer a rock, an' o! As it turn't out, it 'appen't to be one o' th' eightest pints o' Ararat. But it wir a lung time afore ther were mich moor on it to bi seen. Afther a 'undthert an' ninety days, Noah sent out a crow, bur it wer a bad chice, fer a crow's noan a perticler what it eights, that's why it's coed a carrion crow, an' ther wer plenty o' carrion-flesh floatin' about. Th' crow ne'er coom back, but that didn't prove as ther wer anny dhreigh lond. So, afther seven moor days, 'e thried agen; but this time 'e pick't a clenner brid. Th' tendther pigeon's a vegetarian, an'd bi bound to come back if ther wer nayther lond ner threes to rest an' feed on. Th' fust time, it wer back i' awf a jiff, but, afther seven moor days, 'e sent it out agen, an' this time it coom back wi' a olive levv in its beak. Afther another seven days, Noah sent it out agen, an' this time it tarried away. So they knowed 'at th' lond wer evidently gettin' dhreigh ' some places. In th'

**The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)**

myentime, th' sun wer gettin' moor power an' th' animals, feelin' th' waarmth, begun to rouse thersells; an' th' lungin' fer ther freedom, fer th' woods, an' th' fielts, an' th' valleys, begun to stir i' ther blood. Every soart o' neighze

[20]

as livin' crathers con make seem't to be gooin' on i'th' different storeys o'that vessel. Then, one fine day, th' Ark grated its keel on th' rocks, i'th' 'ollow between th' summits o'th' mountins o' Ararat, just as Noah thowt it would 'appen. It sounded as if th' rocks 'd rive th' keel i' two, bur it didn't.

"AN' TH' LORD GOD REMEMBERT NOAH," as it's written i'th' owd book. "It sounds as if they wer oppenin' th' dur, Yer 'Oliness!" said Gabriel. "Mi stars! but it's a real bobby-dazzler of a boat!"

"Ther't fergettin' thisell, Gabriel," said God. "Fer owt Aw know, th' *stars are Mine!* An' theh mun make a less neighze, er they'll yer thi. Keep weel i' th' shadow o' th' 'ill, er they'll 'appen see thi. Up to now, Noah only reckons on one God, but if 'e sees thee, an Michael, an Raphael, 'e'll 'appen get th' idea 'at thers three, er four."

Gabriel weren't a bit shom't; these ark-angils wer like childther i' some ways, an' it wer only a minnit afore Michael said excitedly, "Ther' comin' out, Lord!"

"Aye! Aw daresay Noah thinks Aw've welly nee fergetten 'im," said God. "'E'll maybi 'a' no idea 'ow carefully Awve waatch't o'er 'is little venture, an' 'ow cleuse Aw am to 'im now. An' yet, 'appen 'e 'as, fer 'e's a powerful mon o' faith."

"Yer yo'! that's th' dur oppenin', fer sure," said Raphael.

"'Oosht!" said God, "con't yo' bi still, Rafe?"

It wer th' dur, reet enoof. At th' fust it seem't to bi stickin'; an' no wondther. But, slowly, it oppent, an' Nosh stood i'th' dur'ole.

"Theer! that's done it. Ahhh!! said Noah, takkin' a deep breath o' freesh air, an' oppenin' 'is lungs. "This's God's grand country, at last! Thank God for it!"

"'E knows who's th' Gaffer, does owd Noah!" said Gabriel.

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

“Oosht! Theh owd tung-wagger!” said God, “ ’e’s summat on ‘is mind, an’ ‘e looks sober enoof t’ goo to a funeral, istoryad o’ shoutin’ fer jiy, as yo’d expect.”

“Mi lads,” said Noah, co-in’ inside, --“Shem, Ham, an’ Japhet; an’ yer wives an’ childther! O on yo come ‘ere,

[21]

i’th’ dur’ole o’ th’ Ark, an’ ler us o ston together, an’ gie thanks to God, fer ‘Is mercy i’ deliverin’ us fro’ th’ o’erwhelmin’ waste o’ waythers!”

They o geet together i’ th’ oppenin’ o’th’Ark, an’ Noah stood an’ said, “O Lord! wi’n often thowt as things wer gooin’ wrung; but they’n come reet. Wi’n often thowt as things wer fergetten us, but wi’n bin mistan. Wi’n often thowt th’ owd boat’d ne’er stond th’ racket o’th’ rain an’ flood. Wi’n often bin fret’nt as th’ animals would ‘a’ to go starved, an’ d grow wild wi’ fret an’ ‘unger. Wi’n even, sometimes, geet a notion as we met a bin on soart o’ wild goose chase, if Yo’ll excuse mi puttin’ it o that road, Lord! But, takkin’ it o in o, wi’n never otogether lost eawr ‘owd on Thee. Blessed be Thy Name! An’ we’re sure as Yo’n never left us otogether, Lord. Now, Lord, we’re gooin’ out on to th’ ill-side an’ down into th’ valley, an’ wi durn’t waant to goo a sthride bowt Theh gos wi’ us, Lord.”

“Adn’t Yo’ betther tell ‘im Ter intentions, Yer ‘Oliness!” said Gabriel.

“Aw’ve towd thee afore, Gabriel, as theh mis’t thi turn when patience wer bein’ gin out,” said God. “Keep thi tongue, if theh con, an’ look on this greight seet, sich as noather thee ner Me’ll ever see agen. Nowt less ner th’ beginnin’ of a new world!”

“Now, lads!” said Noah, “let down that dhrawbridge, an’ o’ yo’ gie a ‘ond i’ lerrin’ out th’animals. Steady now! that’s it. Now th’little uns fust.”

What a procession! But th’ weasels, cats an’ ‘airs, dogs, rabbits an’ stoats, an’ sich-like, wer away down th’ mountin side afore yo’ could say Jack Robinson, er th’ Flood name fer th’ same thing.

Then coom sheep an’ goats, cows an’ bulls, ‘orses an’ mares, ‘e an’ she asses, ‘erons an’ cranes, swans an’ paycocks, apes an’ owls, cocks an’ crows, cuckoos an’

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

curlews, an' sparrows an' robins an' swallows. Th' brids an' fowls flew off. An' th' animals, o full o' life, sleek an' weel-fed an' cared for, made off, i' ther own road, to get once moor to

[22]

ther native sile, an' to ther morthar earth. Then, up fro' th' lowest deck, coom th' bigger beasts, lookin' no wur fer ther cleuse confinement; th' lions, tigers, camels, osthiches, leopards, wolves, crocodiles an' elephants; an' last of o, th' mighty behemoth.

They sniff't at th'air, shook their shaggy coats, preened thersells, an' utthert ther nattharal cries, till th'air wer fill't wi' sound. An' Noah an' 'is foak fergeet to bi lonely, i'spite o' bein' th' only 'uman bein's on th'earth.

When th'Ark 'd bin emptied o' its livin' load, Noah coed 'is people together, an' said: "Afore wi put a bite between eawr lips, wi mun raise a' Alther, 'ere, an' offer up a sacrifice, fro' o these clen beats, to God. So ger agate gettin' ready for it as fast as yo' con."

"'E sartinly knows 'is duty, Lord," said Michael.

"If 'e didn't, 'e wouldn't 'a' bin 'ere," said God.

"Theer now," said Noah, "let this sweet savoury smell come up to Thee an' plezz Thee! O God." An' as th' reech begun to rise, they o bowed down as quite as meighse to th' earth.

"It smells good!" said Raphael.

"It is good!" said God.

"Yo' con goo now," said Noah to 'is family, "an' ger a meighl ready fer yersells. As fer me, aw'll stop 'ere an' rest a bit."

An' when they'd o gone, God spoke to Noah.

"Thi sacrifice 'as a sweet smell i' Mi nostrils; but betther ner that is th' sacrifice of a 'umble an' conthrite spirit. Theh's fun greight favour i' Mi seet, an' Mi blessin' shall be ever upon thi an' thy people. Then shall awlus 'a' plenty. Thi store an' thi barn; an'

*The Salamanca Corpus: Noah Th' Boat Buildther (1951)*

thi kith an' kin shall grow into a greight multitude. An' 'ere an' now, Aw tak back th' curse Aw laid on th' lond.

Now, as God wer speighkin', a wondtherful thing 'appent. A thin mist 'at 'ad bin gradually risin' fro' th' dreighin' earth, passed afore th' sun an' a greight rain-bow o' monny colours spread across th' sky. It arch't th' mountins an' valley's, an'

[23]

leeted up th' faces o'th' foak as they gazed at it. Noah screwed 'is owd een upperts at th' sthrange seet. An' God said, "Look weel at it, Noah. Fer it's a sign between thee an' Me that, now an' i' th' future, an' ferever moor, Aw'll never agen desthryi th'earth, ner th' foak on it. An' tak 'eed o' this! Ther may bi famine i' one place, an' failure o' crops in another, but takin' th'earth, broad an' lung, seedtime an' 'arvest an' Summer an' Winther shall never fail."

An' Noah lifted up 'is 'eart an' praised God wi' a loud neighze, sayin': "Glory an' 'onour, an' majesty an' sarvice, be unto 'Im, fer ever an' ever. Amen."

An' Gabriel said to God: "Aw 'ope it'll bi o' reet, this time, Lord!" "Why," said God, "asti onny doubts about it, Gabriel?"

"Well!" said Gabriel, "aw wouldn't like to commit misell to that. It's Yore job, Lord. An' mi judgment doesn't count. Yo'n done it, an' it'll bi o' reet!"

"Well! Gabriel," said God, "Awm 'opin' it'll turn out reet, but wi'st 'a' to wait an' see!"